

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Marston House is constructed of gray limestone. It is of purely classical design. It is built of brick, plastered over inside and outside. Originally the outside plaster was scored to appear as stone.

The building is 50 feet wide and 56 feet deep, including front porch. There were originally double galleries and a kitchen on the back. Six massive round columns two stories high with clear and beautiful Ionic capitals are across the front of the building. The Greek influence is noted in the interior wood work (facings and mantels).

The four bedrooms downstairs are 20 ft. x 24 ft., ceilings are 13 ft. Upstairs rooms were the same until a dividing partition was removed from the north room, sometimes in the late 40's.

The two downstairs rooms on the north side of the building were used for the bank, housed in the structure from its construction in 1837, to about 1888. It is for this reason that the downstairs front room on the north has a walk-in bank vault in the southeast corner of the room.

Records of July 3, 1837, indicate a bill for "laying 37538 bricks in partition walls, extra of amount contract \$187.68 at \$5.00 per thousand". Time for taking down columns at the bank and rebuilding the same after the late storm. 20 days for brick layers at \$3.50 per day. 20 days laboring work at \$1.50 per day. Partitions walls carried up two stories instead of one as originally intended. June 29, 1838. Plastering 6 columns @ \$25.00 each.

Front door measures 54" x 110" and weights 500 pounds.

Locks on front and back doors are original and are signed Carpenter's locks.

The four chimneys are concealed within the walls.

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Marston House derives its name from its close ties with Henry Marston, born in Boston, Mass. Sept. 1, 1794 and died Nov. 15, 1884 at age 90. He was one of seven children.

He was the son and grandson of American patriots. His grandfather, John Marston, owned and operated taverns and was closely associated with such revolutionary incendiaries as Samuel Adams and Paul Revere. He is said to have been proprietor of the tavern "Bunch of Grapes" in which some of the meetings of the sons of Liberty were held. A large silver bowl, made by Paul Revere, housed in the Metropolitan Museum bears the names of 15 revolutionary patriots, among which is John Marston.

Henry's father, John Marston, served in the Revolutionary war under George Washington. He lived to be 90 years of age and died in Boston in 1846, revered and respected by his family and friends and was the possessor of wealth and land holdings.

Henry was exposed at an early age to the intense Marston family patriotism and named his plantation in East Feliciana "Washington Place" in honor of "the Father of my Country".

Henry moved to East Feliciana in 1822 and purchased a 640 acre plantation near the bank of Pretty Creek. With little money, high hopes the New Englander, without plantation experience and fresh from an environment of good schooling, refinement and eastern culture sought to carve out his destiny just outside the budding community of Clinton.

Mr. Marston kept very complete diaries, records and papers which are now housed in the archives at Louisiana State University. In 1955 Jacob Edward Pulwers, wrote a thesis "Henry Marston, Ante-bellum Planter and Business man of East Feliciana". At present a Princeton doctor, or student is using the Marston Papers in preparation for his dissertation.

In February 1828 he married Miss Abigail Fowler Johnson who was 17, (he was 32) and with the marriage her dowry brought more lands to Marston. This land was on Sandy Creek and was named Fowler's Heath after his mother-in-law. This is where they lived until he completed the Marston House and moved there.

The property where Marston House stands was sold to the Union Bank of New Orleans by Lee Hardesty and his wife Eliza for \$425.00 on June 30 1836. Franklin Hardesty, President of the Union Bank of Clinton, represented the purchaser at the sale. A small additional plot of land was sold by Mr. & Mrs. Lee Hardesty to the Union Bank of Clinton, January 11, 1837.

During the 1840's the Union Bank of New Orleans suffered extremely during a wide-spread depression and feared it would be unable to complete the building for the branch bank. Henry Marston offered to complete the structure at his own expense, providing he was made cashier of the bank and that he could have the entire upstairs as a residence. The bank accepted his offer.

Official records show that the land on which the Marston House stands was sold to Henry Marston by the Union Bank of Clinton, along with several other pieces of property on November 28, 1851, with all improvements, buildings, constructions and appurtenances on the properties. Thus, did Mr. Marston become owner of the Marston House, home of the family for nearly a century.

The will of Mrs. Henry W. Larston, whose husband preceded her in death left all her property, which included the Marston House, to Miss Abigail Marston, her daughter. This document is dated February 10, 1888.

Upon her death, it was willed to the Bulow W. Marston Estate. The will of Miss Marston was dated August 6, 1935.

The Estate gave the Marston House to the Parish of East Feliciana in 1941 and the Police Jury in turn leased it to the East Feliciana Pilgrimage and Garden Club in 1958 for 99 years. The club has undertaken its restoration and in 13 years have invested approximately \$20,000. in restoration.

Because of its solidity and strength, Marston House was used as an emergency hospital during the war between the states.

Today, 134 years after it was started, the Marston house stands strong and classic a top a Bank Street hill, between Clinton's Courthouse Square and Old Silliman College.

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