

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

Bayside (1850) is a two story brick Greek Revival plantation house located in a park-like setting on Bayou Teche near the town of Jeanerette. Despite some alteration, the house retains its National Register eligibility.

When viewed from the front, Bayside seems like a straightforward Greek Revival plantation house, but it actually has a complex architectural history which is not entirely possible to discern. Old pictures show various wings and accretions which have disappeared. In addition, there are certain features of the house which may or may not be original.

The present pitched roof house has a central hall plan two rooms deep with a double parlor on the southeast side. The five bay facade has a colossal Tuscan gallery supporting a somewhat meager entablature. The second story gallery has an unusual balustrade formed of linked "U" shaped members. Another unusual feature of the house is its central front and rear doorways. In most Greek Revival houses the side lights are incorporated with the transom and door casing into a single unit, but at Bayside the side lights are separately articulated as individual windows.

The interior features shoulder molded openings formed of beveled planks, molded ceiling medallions, and panels below the windows. The staircase in the central hall culminates in a heavy turned newel post. Evidently some of the doors have been moved around, but most appear to be original. Some are of the two panel type, some are of the four panel type, and some are double leaf.

The architectural evidence at Bayside is augmented by four old photographs of the house in the possession of the present owner. But these do not provide a clear picture of the house's architectural development. For example, one of the old photographs shows a rear galleried wing appended to the northern corner of the house. From the style, it looks as if this wing could have been an original feature, but because it no longer exists, one cannot say. In about 1890 a large semi-octagonal bay was appended to the house near the eastern corner. Evidently this contained a single room on each story. The only evidence of it today is a framed recess in the rear parlor wall showing the location of the door which gave access to the bay room. In about 1900 the aforementioned rear wing (which may have been original) was evidently replaced, rebuilt, or incorporated into a larger wing. Whatever happened, an early twentieth century photograph shows the house with a new larger wing, in the same location, with imbricated shingles and the suggestion of a turret. Like the bay, this wing was removed in the twentieth century.

One of the most puzzling aspects of Bayside is its present rear gallery. The rear gallery is twice as deep as the front gallery and has its own hip roof, separate from the main roof of the house. Because of its peculiar appearance and application to the house, one is tempted to conclude that it is not original, but this does not appear to be the case. Much of the detailing on the rear gallery is similar to the front gallery. In addition, the rear elevation of the house has three upstairs doorways, all of which are original. Obviously they must have opened onto some kind of gallery. Evidently the present rear gallery staircase was added in the late nineteenth century.

Another puzzling aspect of the house is its three marble Rococo Revival mantels on the ground story. The official history of the house asserts that these mantels were installed in the early twentieth century. Although they look salvaged, mantels of this sort are not unexpected in a house of the age and size of Bayside. For the record, there are two wooden aedicule style mantels upstairs which are obviously original to the house. There is also a cast-iron Rococo Revival mantel upstairs which is undoubtedly a late nineteenth century addition.

More Recent Changes:

- (1) In 1962 a small wing was built on the southeast side.

(2) A small carport has been added on the northwest side of the house.

(3) Most of the upstairs portion of the rear gallery has been enclosed.

Assessment of Integrity:

Despite all of the changes Bayside has undergone, it still retains its principal Greek Revival features which establish its importance as an example of the style (see Item 3).

To the rear of the property is a brick milk house which could well be contemporaneous with the house. It is listed as a contributing element.

Specific dates 1850
Builder/Architect Builder: Francis D. Richardson

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)
Criterion C

Bayside is locally significant in the area of architecture as one of Iberia Parish's finest Greek Revival structures. The statewide comprehensive historic structures survey has identified 876 50+ year old buildings in the parish. Although the area that became Iberia Parish was fairly well settled by the late 1700's, the vast majority of the historic building stock dates from the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Typically these consist of bungalows, "vernacular" commercial buildings, Queen Anne Revival houses, and plain cottages. The handful of Creole and Greek Revival structures represent the architectural cream of the parish. The survey identified some twenty-three Greek Revival houses, most of which are galleried cottages. Bayside is conspicuous among this group because it is one of only four two story examples. Of these, it is one of only two which feature colossal columns. (The other is Shadows-on-the-Teche, a National Historic Landmark.) Other noteworthy features include the shoulder molded openings, the two wooden mantels, the floor plan, the doors, and the interior staircase.

Major Bibliographical References

Historic Structures Survey, Iberia Parish, State Historic Preservation Office.

Historical data submitted by owner. Copies in file. Old photographs are in possession of owner.