

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Tally-Ho Plantation is located on the west bank of the Mississippi River at Bayou Goula, behind the levee and River Road. Because there are several large live oaks and because there is a concrete wall with planted vines which separates the property from the River Road, the house enjoys the privacy of its own naturalistic setting. The house faces south.

Although the house has been enlarged and modified over the years, its essential architectural character remains intact. Typical of many raised plantation houses, Tally-Ho's main (second) floor has three rooms front and back with front and rear galleries on both floors. Originally the main floor was reached by means of two corner staircases at the ends of the front gallery. There was no interior staircase and the ground floor, which was originally enclosed by Flemishbond brick walls and windows, contained only storage space and a central passageway from front to rear of the house. In the late 19th century the outside corner staircases were removed and replaced by a central front staircase which blocked the downstairs passage. A narrow stair was built inside the house.

Further modifications were made in the 20th century. The ground floor passage was enclosed and five rooms were created downstairs using wood and plaster partitions. A rear brick wing, containing a family room, was added at the ground floor level, which completely engulfed the downstairs rear gallery. The upstairs rear gallery was enclosed to create three small rooms. This work was done with old style clapboards and old glass so as to be hardly distinguishable from the original construction. Finally the central front steps, which were added in the date 19th century, were removed, bringing the main facade closer to its original appearance.

Except for the corner stairs the original main facade remains intact. The original clapboarding, 6-over-6 windows, crude Doric pillars S and central transom door remain, as do the original simple ear-molded mantels and transom doors in the major upstairs rooms.

The house is constructed of pit-sawn timbers on a brick base. The lower portions of the two exterior chimneys have been rebuilt recently to accommodate fireplaces downstairs.

SPECIFIC DATES ca. 1840
BUILDER, ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Tally-Ho is significant for its architectural value as a good representative example of a provincial Greek Revival raised plantation house. This can be seen in its simple transom doors, ear-molded mantels, its somewhat awkwardly proportioned 5-bay, front galleries, and its crude Doric pillars with their simple molded capitals. It is the type of plantation house which would have been found in plantations of medium to small holdings. Once plentiful, many houses of this type have disappeared in recent years.

Architectural evidence suggests that the house was built about 1840. Iberville Parish conveyance records show that at some time prior to 1835, the site was obtained by Jean Fleming, a free man of color. In 1835 he sold it to Alvery Fisk, who in turn sold it to the firm of Tenant and Navy in 1838. In 1843 this firm sold it back to Fisk. Then on May 26, 1848, John D. Murrell of Lynchburg, Virginia, purchased the property, along with 69 slaves, from Fisk, and Tally-Ho has been in the Murrell family ever since.

According to P.A. Champomier's sugar reports, John D. Murrell was a prominent sugar planter in the 1850's. His report for 1854 - 1855 states that Murrell's "Tallyhoe Plantation" had yielded 775 hogsheads of sugar for that year, which was the second largest crop in Iberville Parish (See P.A. Champomier, Statement of the Sugar Crop Made in Louisiana in 1854 - 1855 (New Orleans: Cook, Young, & Co., 1855), p. 10). In addition, Joseph K. Menn in The Large Slaveholders of Louisiana - 1860 (New Orleans: Pelican Publishing Co., 1964), p. 237. though he does not list Murrell as a slaveholder owning fifty or more slaves, noted that due to the poor condition of the census records for Iberville Parish some large slaveholders were probably omitted from his work. He also notes (p. 239) that Champomier's report for 1859 - 1860 listed J.W. Murrell as the producer of 345 hogsheads of sugar for that year.

MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Champomier, P.A., Statement of the Sugar Crop Made in Louisiana in 1854 - 1855. New Orleans: Cook, Young & Co., 1855.

Iberville Parish Conveyance Records.

Menn, Joseph K., The Large Slaveholders of Louisiana - 1860. New Orleans: Pelican Publishing Co., 1964.