

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Sidney Martin House (c.1835) is a two and one half story classic raised cottage. The first story has walls constructed of common bond one and one half bricks thick. The first story floor is of cypress and is raised above the ground level about one foot. There are four fully finished rooms, three of which have fireplaces. This story retains an amazing amount of original architectural features including all original cypress mantels, glazed French doors, beaded ceilings, fabulous interior winding staircase and banisters as well as much of the wide cypress flooring.

The second story is of bousillage construction and has the typical six room Creole floor plan. The second story interior retains an unbelievable amount of original architectural fabric; the three cypress mantels and their hearth brickwork intact, all doors, almost all iron hardware, all flooring (never painted), all plaster, many original painted surfaces never repainted, and original glazed French doors. Throughout there is an almost eerie lack of marks of use and abuse almost always found in houses of this early period.

The attic story was originally composed of three rooms of bousillage construction, but was demolished in a 1919 remodeling and lowering of the roof.

The exterior form of the house is intact with the exception of the 1919 lowered roof line. Other 1919 renovation details include the second story columns, eave overhang and stucco on first story. The current owners are undertaking a complete archaeologically based restoration of the exterior and interior which will meet the Secretary of the Interior's standards for historic preservation projects.

Measurements:

Plan: 46'9" wide by 45'5"

Ceiling Height:	1st story	8'10"
	2nd story	9'0" front gallery and rear rooms 11'0" central three rooms

ITEM 7 ADDENDUM BY STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE

The 1919 alterations mentioned in the consultant prepared nomination form have to a large extent been corrected. The enclosed current photographs indicate the house's present appearance. The only feature which has not been corrected (and cannot be corrected) is the stuccoing of the first story. The replacement second story columns appear to have been copied from other period examples in the area. They are certainly appropriate to the house.

Assessment of Integrity:

Despite the aforementioned changes and replacements, the Martin House still retains most of its original Creole features--i.e., its plan, bousillage construction, form, French doors, staircase, hardware, mantels, etc. Moreover, in its restored state it conveys the Creole style very well.

Specific dates c. 1835
Builder/Architect Builder Juan Baptiste Mouton (Fils)

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Sidney Martin House is significant on the local level in the area of architecture in that it is a classic example of a medium size two and one half story Creole plantation house with a high level of originality and intactness. Though a building contract for it has not been uncovered, it was certainly built by "Mr. Moellon" who built the strikingly similar Charles Homer Mouton House and Courlet House. These three houses are certainly the most architecturally significant and intact plantation houses in Lafayette Parish today. Though these houses all represent the blending of both French Creole and Anglo-American style architectural motifs, of the three the Sidney Martin house exhibits the most French features--i.e., Creole hall-less floor plan, exterior French doors, bousillage walls, and internal fireplace locations. In the Sidney Martin house today one can discover (1) the polycultural makeup of early 19th century Louisiana, (2) inventive adaptation to environmental forces, as well as creative achievement in the visual arts using native materials.

ITEM 8 ADDENDUM BY STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE

The Sidney Martin House is locally significant in the area of architecture as an important example of the Creole style within the context of Lafayette Parish. The importance of the house can best be seen if one considers it as part of Lafayette Parish's overall historic patrimony. The Lafayette Council of Government's Historical Sites Inventory has identified 203 structures in the parish which date prior to 1921. Among these there are thirty-eight Creole or Creole influenced houses which date from the first half of the nineteenth century. These Creole houses are important because collectively they represent the parish's French heritage. The Martin House is important because it is one of only a handful of Creole houses in the parish which can be considered fully fledged plantation houses as opposed to cottages or cabins. It is one of only four examples which are two full stories high. In its restored state it presents the correct historical appearance of a Creole plantation house and hence stands as an architectural landmark in the parish.

NB: The Sidney Martin House is so named for the man who owned it from 1918 to 1976.

Major Bibliographical References

Lafayette Parish Conveyance Records