

The Adam Lobell House (c. 1862) is a one story frame cottage in the French Creole style. It stands within a large fenced yard facing Louisiana Highway 16 in the Village of French Settlement. Although it has experienced changes and additions over the years, its National Register eligibility remains intact.

Creole features found in the Adam Lobell House include the following:

- 1) a Class III gabled roof with central chimney,
- 2) two wraparound mantels with plain detailing,
- 3) a full length front gallery with exposed unbeaded ceiling beams, and
- 4) a floorplan displaying Creole geometry. This plan consists of two equal sized rooms facing the front gallery, two rooms of unequal size behind the front rooms, and a very narrow rear gallery.

The alterations to the original Creole structure are as follows:

- 1) A large pitched roof addition was appended to the rear of the home. Its exact date is unknown. As a result of this addition, the original narrow rear gallery was enclosed. The addition itself consisted of one large room with an accompanying new rear gallery. Later this new gallery was enclosed to create a modern kitchen and a shed roof porch was attached behind it. A second shed roof porch was built on one side of the rear addition. It has subsequently been partly enclosed to serve as a utility room and pantry.
- 2) New sheathing materials were installed throughout the original four room cottage. For example, each room received a new floor and a new acoustic tile ceiling which covered the original exposed ceiling beams. Sheetrock walls, double windows and new entrance doors were installed in the two front rooms. The walls of the rear rooms received pine paneling.
- 3) The smaller of the rear rooms was converted into a bath, the narrow enclosed gallery was subdivided to create two closets, and the stairway which once connected this area to the attic was removed.
- 4) Half of the front gallery was screened, and a lattice balustrade was installed on the gallery's other side.
- 5) A false gallery was added to the main gallery roof.

Despite these changes, the cottage retains its Creole identity. Its massing, French wraparound mantels, exposed gallery ceiling beams, and Creole floorplan survive relatively intact. The interior's ceiling beams also survive above the acoustic tiles. The false gallery changes the roof shape slightly but is easily dominated by the large and pronounced original Creole roofline. The visual impact of the partially screened gallery and lattice balustrade is minimal, and the additions at the side and rear do not impact the facade. With its c. 1862 construction date, the Adam Lobell House is the earliest known Creole home in French Settlement. As such, it is a legitimate candidate for National Register listing.

Non-Contributing Elements

There are four frame sheds within the nominated acreage that are substantial enough in size and scale to be counted. While they are over fifty years old, they were not present during the period of significance and do not relate to the significance of the Lobell House. Nor are they individually eligible for the Register. For these reasons, they are being counted as non-contributing elements.

Significant dates c.1862
Architect/Builder unknown
Criterion C

The Adam Lobell House is locally significant in the area of architecture because it is a rare example of the French Creole style within the context of Livingston Parish. It is also the oldest known example of the Creole building tradition in the area.

A Historic Structures Survey has not yet been implemented for Livingston Parish. However, the area was settled primarily by persons of Anglo descent, and few structures influenced by the Creole building tradition were erected there. Just one French enclave--the Village of French Settlement--is known to exist. A windshield survey of French Settlement has identified only twenty surviving houses which can be classified as Creole. Almost all of these dwellings are the result of a lumber boom which occurred between 1880 and 1915. Many French Settlement men worked in the lumber mills and had access to inexpensive or free lumber, which they used to build new houses for their families. Almost all of French Settlement's older homes were replaced at this time. The Adam Lobell House is one of only two known survivors of the village's earlier Creole patrimony. With its c. 1862 construction date, it is the earlier of the two. As a rare and old example of a style not generally associated with Livingston Parish, the Adam Lobell House is a legitimate candidate for National Register listing.

Historical Note

The cottage was built for the Adam Lobell family in 1862 and remained in their hands for three generations until it was purchased by the current owners.

Major Bibliographical References

Windshield Survey of French Settlement, LA by Dr. Jay Edwards, Department of Geography and Anthropology, LSU, Baton Rouge.

Site visit by National Register staff.

Edwards, Jay. Draft National Register Nomination, Department of Geography and Anthropology, LSU, Baton Rouge.