

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

Montrose (c.1880) is a modest, single story, frame, late Greek Revival plantation house located in a rural setting near Roundaway Bayou approximately 6½ miles southeast of Tallulah. Despite several additions, the house retains most of its original features and consequently its architectural value in Madison Parish.

Although documentary sources indicate that a house existed at Montrose as early as 1841, the architectural evidence indicates that the present house, in all likelihood, dates from about 1880. It has a central hall plan, one room deep, and a rear dining room wing. Originally there was a rear gallery, but it has since been enclosed and extended. The five-bay front facade has a five-bay gallery. The house is surmounted by a four plane bell cast pitched roof. Each of the three rooms has an end wall chimney. The house has two primitive features which belie its late date. These are the crude square front gallery posts and the hewn wooden piers which support the circular sawn frame structure. However, its late date is affirmed by the clapboard sheathing under the galleries (which in Louisiana is found almost exclusively in the late-nineteenth century or later) and the Victorian influenced mantels. The two remaining original mantels consist of heavy Greek Revival aedicule motifs with cyma recta moldings and Gothic arches cut in the lower portions of the entablatures. Unlike the mantels, the front doorway with its transom and side lights is pure Greek Revival.

Evidently in the early-twentieth century a pair of side galleries were added and one of the three original mantels was replaced by a crude Colonial Revival style mantel. Also, the original gallery balustrades were replaced.

More recent changes include:

- (1) the extension and enclosure of the old rear gallery;
- (2) the enclosure of the rear portions of the side galleries;
- (3) the construction of an extension to the original dining room wing which included a new gallery on the east side (now screened in); and
- (4) the addition of a small rear overhang to connect the house with an adjacent garage.

Assessment of Integrity:

Montrose's significance is based upon the fact that it is a provincial Greek Revival plantation house. All of the features which establish this identity are intact. Subsequent exterior appendages have not obscured them; they are still plainly visible and easily discernible.

Specific dates c.1880
Builder/Architect Probable Builder: George W. Montgomery,

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)
Criterion C

Montrose is locally significant in the area of architecture because it is a rare surviving example of a Greek Revival plantation house within the context of Madison Parish.

Montrose is a relatively late, provincial example of a modest size Greek Revival plantation house. This can be seen in the five-bay gallery with its simple posts and entablature, as well as in the mantels, the plan, the basic form, and the central front doorway.

Greek Revival plantation houses were undoubtedly once common in Madison Parish, as can be seen by examining the 1860 census records for the parish. The population of the parish was 88% slaves and there were 99 large slaveholdings (i.e., 50 or more slaves). Of these 99, the average size of a slaveholding was 89.6. The absentee ownership rate was 40%. Hence of the 99 large slaveholdings in the parish, 61 of them involved individuals who resided there. Also, presumably there were many more holdings of less than 50 slaves. Given these statistics, it would

be plausible to estimate that there may have been as many as 50 to 75 Greek Revival plantation houses in the parish on the eve of the Civil War. Today little remains of this once impressive building stock. As far as the State Historic Preservation Office can determine, Montrose stands as one of three surviving Greek Revival plantation houses in the parish.

Major Bibliographical References

Madison Parish Conveyance Records

Survey of Madison Parish Conducted by Division of Historic Preservation National Register Staff, February 1981.

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