

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

As first built, this was a one-story ell-shaped building with three rooms and a central hall, front and rear gallery, detached kitchen and dependencies, occupying approximately one acre and located on the east bank facing the Ouachita River, 20 miles below the present city of Monroe.

Hewn timbers approximately 9 X 12 with mortise and tenon joinings were used in the foundation. Cypress and blue poplar were the major woods used in framing. Sassafras wood was used in the walls and ceiling of the drawing room while pine was used in the remaining rooms and hall. Pine floors in all rooms are 5" - 6" wide and 1 1/4" thick, random centered, tongue and groove.

The original modified Federal raised cottage was enlarged in 1840 (date incised in chimney added at that time confirms family records and legends of the time - also coincides with completion of the big house of Boscobel) at which time it began to take on its present simple Greek Revival style.

One early outbuilding is extant, probably a plantation office; it has been faithfully restored. An additional building has been reconstructed for adaptive use; a two-story building raised to accommodate a garage underneath. The upper floor is used as a guesthouse.

The interior of the house is distinctly late Federal with only minor changes. Two original Federal mantels remain; a third has been partially restored and a fourth which was original to the 1840 addition also remains.

Most of the hardware is, if not original, very early and much of the original glass remains. Moldings, where not original, have been copied from fragments found during the restoration (1976).

Although now closed in, the house rests on its original foundations of brick and cypress. The front gallery was altered in 1840, 4 X 4 chamfered colonettes were first used (a portion of one was found during the 1976 restoration). The alteration recessed the gallery on each side from the side of the house and added six square plain wood columns separated by handrail and slender wooden banisters.

The Victorian room on the north side of the house (now used as a kitchen) was added in the late nineteenth century. This gave something of a "front" away from the River toward Cordell Lane.

Lattice and trellage were used on the back gallery but had been removed along with a front yard wellhouse prior to 1920. Both were rebuilt in 1976. Also in 1976 the far right end of the back gallery immediately behind the front bedroom was enclosed making a second bath.

SPECIFIC DATES	c.1820
BUILDER/ARCHITECT	Judge Henry Bry

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Boscobel Cottage is significant architecturally as one of the oldest extant plantation houses in northeastern Louisiana. The narrow central hall, the lightly proportioned gallery, the narrow transom door, the Adams mantel in the dining room, and the late Georgian mantel in the front parlor all speak of a house built during the first third of the nineteenth century. There are few houses in the region which date back that far and show the character of a raised plantation house before the

Greek Revival influence became pervasive. Indeed the aforementioned mantels, which are most properly viewed within the context of the Federal style, are very rare in this area of the state.

Boscobel is significant in the area of local history for its association with the Bry family, who were important figures in the historical development of northeastern Louisiana, particularly the Monroe area. According to local tradition, Boscobel Cottage was built about 1820 by Judge Henry Bry (1781-1858), who at the time was serving as the agent and custodian for the owners of the land. The Judge's son Henry M. Bry obtained title to the land and house in 1835 from Daniel Coxe (See Ouachita Parish Records, Conveyance Book H, p. 221). According to local tradition, the Judge and his son were farming and logging in this area by 1820, and they lived in Boscobel Cottage while the nearby "big house" which became the center of their holdings was being constructed. The younger Bry owned the cottage until 1846 at which time the tract was seized by the sheriff as a result of a suit and sold to A. Ledoux and Company (See Ouachita Parish Records, Conveyance Book H, pp. 335-337).

Judge Henry Bry, who according to tradition was the builder of the cottage, was a native of Geneva, Switzerland and a relative of the prominent Jeffersonian, Albert Gallatin. He moved to the Ouachita Valley soon after the Louisiana Purchase. As early as 1807, he laid claim to 500 arpents along Bayou DeSiard, a tributary of the Ouachita River. By the time Louisiana became a state in 1812, Bry had served as parish judge, legislator in the House of Representatives of the Orleans Territory, receiver of Public Moneys for the Public Land Office for the District North of the Red River, and a member of the convention which wrote the state's first constitution. He was also a close advisor to Governor William C. C. Claiborne. Also involved in local affairs, Bry led the impromptu celebration when the first steamboat to ascend the Ouachita, the James Monroe, arrived. In addition, he promoted a mail route for the Ouachita country and served as a trustee of the local academy.

Bry was also a fairly prosperous planter. In 1810 he was master of five slaves. By 1850 he owned more than 70 slaves and owned real estate worth \$59,450. He was also something of an amateur scientist and naturalist. Bry wrote an excellent description of the Ouachita country for De Bow's Review which was published in 1847. The next year, his son Henry M. Bry, who also lived in Boscobel Cottage and owned the land for a time, wrote a description of northern Louisiana and southern Arkansas which was also published in De Bow's Review.

Boscobel Cottage is one of only three remaining buildings associated with the Bry family. The other two are the "big house" at Boscobel (which is deteriorated beyond the possibility of renovation) and Mulberry Grove (which was modified beyond recognition circa 1912). Thus, Boscobel Cottage is the only one of the three buildings which still conveys a sense of the time of the Brys.

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