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The Documentation of Nineteenth-Century Gardens: An Examination of the New Orleans Notarial Archives

Stephanie Blythe Lewis
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Disciplines

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THE DOCUMENTATION OF NINETEENTH-CENTURY GARDENS:
AN EXAMINATION OF THE NEW ORLEANS NOTARIAL ARCHIVES

STEPHANIE BLYTHE LEWIS

A THESIS

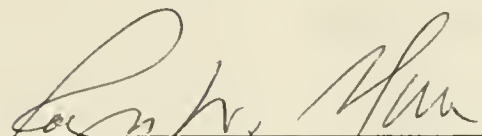
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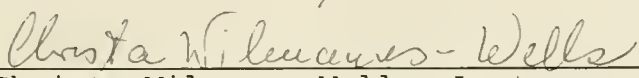
Presented to the faculties of the University of Pennsylvania
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of

MASTER OF SCIENCE

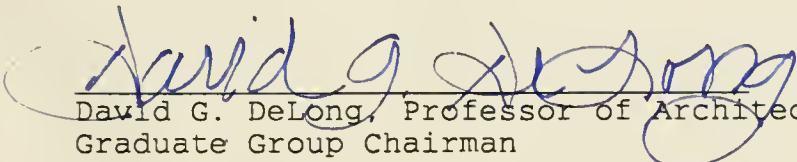
1994



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INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this thesis is to introduce the landscape research possibilities found in the New Orleans Notarial Archives. An exploration of this source yields pictorial evidence of the nineteenth-century gardens of New Orleans. The unique set of historical conditions that created Louisiana and its notarial system has left a rich documentation legacy. The academic and preservation implications of this archive are the possibilities of understanding the gardens of the nineteenth-century. This could produce more historically accurate restorations and re-creations. It would also mean a clearer vision of the lifestyles people created for themselves in and around their houses. The kitchen gardens and the decorative gardens are equally important to the sites, and equally important in the documentation process.

This study includes the discussion of nine specific properties represented in the Archives. Approximately twenty percent of the watercolors that include landscaping features were examined to determine the general characteristics of the Archive. This focus group illustrates how effective the watercolors can be in researching historic properties.

The work presented here is an introduction to the many types of information available at the Notarial Archives. This thesis avoids interpreting the evidence, and instead presents the issues found in the watercolors and the notarial acts. The actual landscaping facts must be compiled, organized, and disseminated by landscape historians. People with specific landscape knowledge will be able to create and correct, if necessary, the historic record on New Orleans gardens.

DESCRIPTION OF THE NOTARIAL ARCHIVES

History of the Notarial Archives

The Notarial Archives of Louisiana consists of approximately 37,000 bound volumes, dating from 1731 to the present, which document the non-adversarial legal history of Louisiana. Each act is recorded by a notary, who "functions as an impartial, third-party counsellor...[and]...as a witness to the acts he drafts, as a verifier of the identities of the parties...and as an archivist of the documents he creates."¹ This system reflects Louisiana's French and Spanish heritage and the civil law status of those two countries. Today Louisiana is the only civil law state in the United States.

The purpose of civil law is to give society a "set of procedures through which citizens can conduct legal and personal business within a system characterized ideally by fairness and least cost."² Standardized phrases are included in the acts "to create...faultless acts which will be both fair to all sides and comprehensive."³ Future litigation is avoided by protecting all parties in the act.

¹Sally Kittredge Reeves, "Spanish Colonial Records of the New Orleans Notarial Archives," Louisiana Library Association Bulletin 55(Summer 1992):7.

²Reeves, "Spanish Colonial Records," 7.

³Reeves, "Spanish Colonial Records", 8.

litigation is avoided by protecting all parties in the act. The notary only deals with agreements desired by private parties. He produces legal, not court documents.⁴ There are many types of business conducted in the archives: "contracts for sales, partitions, or donations of real property...slave sales and emancipations; building or repair contracts for...[buildings]...marriage contracts; inventories of estate."⁵

Contents of the Notarial Archives

For the historian, the Notarial Archives can provide important biographical details of people from all walks of life and property descriptions for all types of housing and businesses. This information is especially useful when undertaking historical documentation.

The notary creates records called "acts." These documents contain the names of those involved and the city where they reside. Professions are sometimes listed as well. For those acts concerned with property there are full descriptions of the land, including its location, size, the presence of improvements, where the property was acquired

⁴Reeves, "Spanish Colonial Records," 8.

⁵Reeves, "Spanish Colonial Records," 8.

(providing the researcher with the previous notarial act dealing with the property), and price.⁶ Slave sales and wills include more personal information about the parties involved. "Wills usually identify place of residence (including street), place of birth, marital status, and children, and may contain substantial descriptions of assets."⁷ The archives provide an abundance of personal information, that can be used to define a historical subject.

Included in the Notarial Archives are 5153 watercolors, that are each part of a recorded transaction. These watercolors were created by civil engineers and surveyors between 1803 and 1918, with the majority executed between 1830 and 1880. The watercolors are measured drawings, as well as legal documents, that were made to illustrate sales of property. Included in the collection of drawings are elevations of houses and commercial buildings, indications of the property's shape and size, and plans of both the land and the improvements. Plans are the most frequently used pictorial device. None of the drawings are actual architects' or builders' plans or design drawings. Almost

⁶Reeves, "Spanish Colonial Records," 10.

⁷Reeves, "Spanish Colonial Records," 10.

all of the drawings illustrate property for public auction sales. There are drawings depicting newly built houses, property whose owners were ready to sell, or new subdivisions of towns.

Within the collection there is a smaller group of drawings which include illustrations of landscape features associated with the property. The archives in this group vary from indications of green-spaces to intricate garden plans and pictures of gardens with identifiable plant material. The watercolors present a unique opportunity to see "snapshots" of properties. The buildings and the land were recorded in their existing conditions. This allows modern-day researchers to trace fashions, oddities, and changes in both specific properties and in general garden history.

Research Applications of the Notarial Archives

The Notarial Archives could be used for an almost limitless number of studies focusing on New Orleans. For example, Sally Reeves, archivist at the Archives, has

suggested a study of the numerous lettering styles used on the drawings.⁸ The architecture as shown in elevations, bird's-eye view indications, and plans, could be studied for style, colors, materials, size, location, design sources, ornamental and architectural details. The development of the City of New Orleans and the surrounding towns is also recorded in the archives. The illustrated landscape features could also be used extensively to identify plant materials, design sources, the use of paving materials and ornamental features, and the history of gardeners in New Orleans.

In this thesis some of the landscaping issues in the Notarial Archives will be examined. Specific watercolors, from the mid-nineteenth-century, will be studied in depth to illustrate the amount of material that can be gleaned from the Archives. Additionally, by combining documentation found in the Notarial Archives with other historical documents and modern research a full picture of the these properties begins to emerge.

⁸Sally Reeves mentioned this topic in January 1994 during a conversation we had at the Notarial Archives.

EXISTING NEW ORLEANS GARDEN RESEARCH

Garden history in New Orleans has not been researched and documented thoroughly. Although there have been studies on plant materials, such as Charlotte Seidenberg's The New Orleans Garden,⁹ there are no comprehensive scholarly studies on garden design. There are books which include some garden history, such as New Orleans Architecture, volume 1, The Lower Garden District,¹⁰ but for the most part architecture is studied without regard to its corresponding landscape. Additionally, there were no dissertations written on the subject of "New Orleans Gardens" or "Louisiana Gardens" between 1861 and 1993.¹¹

John Steele wrote a Master's thesis on The Courtyard and Patio Gardens of the Vieux Carre, 1718-1860.¹² Stephen Hand continued work on the same topic for his thesis, but studied the years 1861 to 1982.¹³ These papers consider the

⁹Charlotte Seidenberg, The New Orleans Garden (Jackson, MS: UP of Mississippi, 1993).

¹⁰Mary Louise Christovich, Roulhac Toledano, and Betsy Swanson, eds. and comps., New Orleans Architecture (Gretna, LA: Pelican, 1971), vol. 1, The Lower Garden District.

¹¹Dissertation Abstracts Ondisc was searched for theses or dissertations related to New Orleans gardens.

¹²John Steele, "The Courtyard and Patio Gardens of the Vieux Carre (1718-1860)" (Master's thesis, Louisiana State University, 1976).

¹³Stephen Hand, "The Courtyard and Patio Gardens of the Vieux Carre (1861-1982)" (Master's thesis, Louisiana State University, 1982).

development of French Quarter gardens, but do not document the larger spaces that existed outside the Quarter. Both theses examine evolutionary landscaping trends and the influence of New Orleans' social and economic history.

Hand's thesis overlooks the true growth of the gardening industry. There were at least 41 gardeners listed in Cohen's City Directory of 1854, yet Hand wrote that there are not any florists, horticulturists, or nurseries in an 1860 directory (the professionals can be found in the general directory, not in the section divided by category). He asserts that there was not a market for the landscaping industry until 1870.¹⁴ This oversight skews the reader's perception of New Orleans in the nineteenth-century.

There are numerous books on New Orleans architecture and New Orleans neighborhoods, but there are few academic books specifically written about the gardens. The garden books are more of the coffee table genre and are not based on thorough documentation and research. The New Orleans Architecture series of books mentions garden design, but this is not the focus. Garden District histories also mention gardens of famous families and those that were known

¹⁴Hand, "Gardens of the Vieux Carre," 37.

to have been beautiful. The authors, for the most part, are repeating well known stories, without real academic examination of the facts. An example of this type of treatment is The Great Days of the Garden District, which mixes important social history with undocumented garden history.¹⁵

The New Orleans Public Library has a copy of the 1858 book catalogue of the New Orleans Lyceum and Library Society. This list included some influential books on landscaping and architecture, including J.C. Loudon's Encyclopaedia of Gardening, Calvert Vaux's Villa and Cottage Residences, Gervase Wheeler's Rural Homes, and Andrew Jackson Downing's Fruits and Fruit Trees of America and Cottage Residences, Rural Architecture and Landscape Gardening.¹⁶ This rich source has not yet been studied to determine the extent to which such design sources might have influenced New Orleans garden design.

New Orleans gardens must be evaluated in terms of their design sources, local influences and the gardeners

¹⁵Martha Ann Brett Samuel and Ray Samuel, The Great Days of the Garden District, and the Old City of Lafayette (New Orleans: Parents' League of the Louise S. McGehee School, 1961).

¹⁶New Orleans Lyceum and Library Society, Catalogue of the Library of the Lyceum and Society, First District, City of New Orleans, 1858 (New Orleans Public Library, New Orleans), p.90-132, HQL750.

themselves. Although plant materials have been documented,¹⁷ this information must be combined with knowledge of garden plans and uses. The documents in the Notarial Archives are one such source for studying gardening issues, such as lay-out, size, and type, both ornamental and practical.

¹⁷Charlotte Seidenberg's The New Orleans Garden (see note 8) is one source.

LANDSCAPING ISSUES IN THE NOTARIAL ARCHIVES

Types of Landscape Information

Of the more than five thousand watercolors in the Notarial Archives less than two hundred watercolors include descriptive landscape designs or pictures. All of the Archives are now included in a computer database accessed by seven landscape categories: pictures, designs, vegetable gardens, orchards or farms, undifferentiated green space, neutral grounds and public squares, and trees on the lot. There is also a category entered when the database was begun that only indicates when there are landscape features. Most of these entries have since been changed to reflect the more specific categories. This study deals with approximately twenty percent of the watercolors that show designs and/or pictures. The examples were chosen to represent a variety of locations, sizes, and garden styles.

There is a wide variety of landscape information available in the watercolors of the Notarial Archives. While some of the watercolors only depict the general characteristics of a property, such as the location of open space, others show intricate garden plans and elevations. Research for this thesis shows that of the watercolors with landscape features can be divided into five categories: outbuildings, built features, plant materials, designed

decorative spaces, and functional spaces. The appearance and conditions of the gardens, recorded in each archive, must also be studied as a benchmark in the property's history. All this information could be used to study or recreate a specific property in time.

The surveyors recorded several facts about nineteenth-century outbuildings: frequency, arrangement, and use. These outbuildings include kitchens, cisterns, wells, wash houses, privies, stables, dog houses, chicken houses, pigeon houses, and coal sheds. Research and documentation of historic house sites is aided by the notation on the archives of building types. Archeological studies are also helped by the locations of the outbuildings on the watercolors.

Cisterns and water wells, for example, indicate household water source. Cisterns were placed at the rear of the house, usually at the corners, to catch rain water. Archives from the 1840s through the 1860s consistently show backyard locations for both the cisterns and the wells. Other dependencies were generally placed near, or on, the rear property line. The service buildings were separated from the house by as much space as realistically possible. Convenience and ease of use did not necessarily seem to dictate the arrangement of the outbuildings.

Built features recorded in the archives, such as fences, arbors, gazebos, and pavements, depict both stylish and popular treatments of the landscape. The details of many of these features are visible in the watercolors. Both iron and wood fence designs appear in the elevations, as well as in small detailed drawings. Arbors, trellis, and gazebo colors, designs, and materials are found in a small number of watercolors. Some detailed archives show the brick pavement patterns of the banquettes (sidewalks), walkways, or front yards. These landscape features are transient types of details that most likely do not survive, so the watercolors can provide clues to lost features.

The third category is plant materials. The elevation drawings that document the house and its surrounding landscape may provide specific plant information. Trees, bushes, and flowers are, for the most part, realistically depicted. If the exact plant type cannot be determined, then suggestions of the height, color, fullness, or age can be gleaned. Plan drawings usually do not indicate plant type, beyond the designation of "orchard" or "vegetable garden." The drawings do document plant location, which is an invaluable key to the intended decorative or functional design scheme.

Designed decorative spaces are well documented in the archives. Formal, geometrical, and symmetrical gardens appear in many watercolors. Repetition and compactness define many landscapes. In plan these designs reveal intentional and maintained order imposed on both small and large plots. Usually the gardens occur in front of the house, but some gardens surround the house on three or four sides. Functional spaces--vegetable gardens and orchards--often appear on the same property as formal gardens. The utilitarian garden beds are sometimes incorporated in the formal garden design. These plans reveal a nineteenth-century interest in combining beauty and function. Plan beds were laid out for ease of service and neat, if not artistic, appearance.

The elevations of gardens can also provide clues to the state of the garden: was it newly planted or was it in decline due to lack of maintenance? When the archives are studied, in conjunction with studies of the people who built, owned, and lived in the properties, the state of the landscaping becomes part of the story of the house.

Limitations of Landscape Information

There are limitations to the amount of information the watercolors can provide. The plant materials should be considered carefully, because it may be impossible to test the accuracy of their depiction. And some archives use undifferentiated green marks to represent plantings. Many surveyors did not distinguish between trees and bushes in garden plans. The larger pieces of land may have had random trees, but their location may not be faithfully represented. Greenery reflects the season it was painted and this should be taken into account. Even given these limitations, however, the general feeling of a property's landscaping can often be determined.

EXAMINATION OF ARCHIVAL WATERCOLORS

Examination of Study Group

Each watercolor in the Archive has its own catalogue number which identifies the property location in the city, the surveyor responsible for the watercolor, the year the watercolor was executed, and the type of view of the property. These numbers are for modern identification purposes and have no historical relevance. The watercolors are presently stored in drawers, so these name tags help locate them at the Archives.

The labels breakdown the Archive as follows: the first two numbers represent the plan book and the folio number where the drawing was deposited at the time of its completion; the third character is a letter representing the parish(county) where the property could be found; the fourth and fifth numbers are the district and square numbers where the property could be located on a map; the name of the surveyor (possibly in abbreviated form); next is the year of the watercolor; the last piece of information is the type of drawing(el=elevation, frg=fragment, ind=indication). Some surveyors and/or the date of the archive are not known and (n.d.) is used instead. The archival numbers of the examples presented below will only appear in the captions to identify the archive.

The Palfrey Summer House

This archive from 1847 documents the plan (figure 1) and the elevation (figure 2) of a house in the seventh district of Orleans Parish in what was previously called the town of Carrollton. The watercolor was created by Egloff and Hedin. The house is located in the middle of a tract of land that is formally landscaped. The entire lot, which measures approximately 237' by 186', is covered by the geometric design scheme. The galleried seven bay house is the centerpiece of the lot. Symmetrical features characterize both the architecture and the landscaping.

The plan shows the main entrance to the property off Levee Street (at the top), now called Leake Avenue, with a secondary entrance onto the old Public Road, which at that time ran along the Mississippi River. The plan also includes paths with circular elements in the middle, leading out to Jefferson Street on the left and to Cambronne Street on the right. The paths to the four corners of the property end in octagonal structures, which could be bird houses or pavilions.¹ Trees outline the paths and green spaces on

¹John Mahe, III, "The Development of a Town at Carrollton, Louisiana" (Master's thesis, Tulane University, 1976), 65.

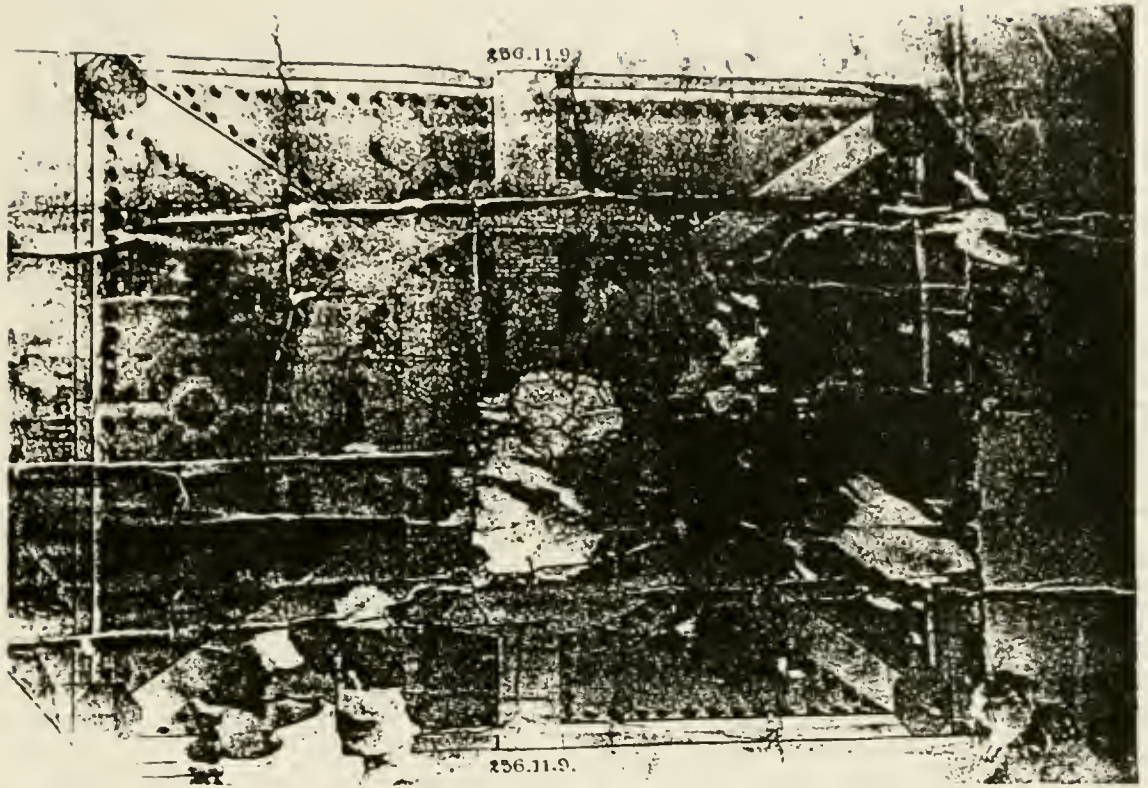


Fig. 1. Plan of Palfrey property, 1847.
50.2.O.7.90B.Egloff & Hedin.47.el., Notarial Archives

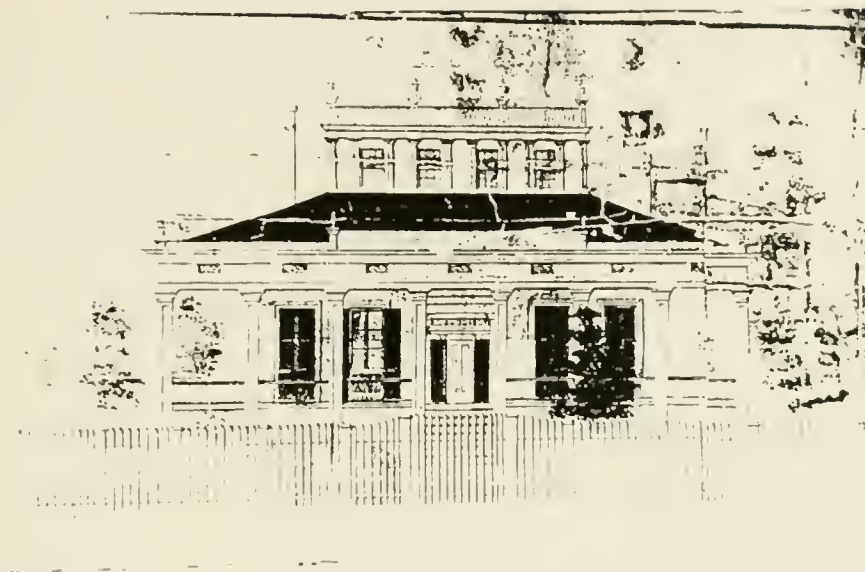


Fig. 2. Elevation of Palfrey House, 1847.
50.2.O.7.90.B.Egloff & Hedin.47.el., Notarial Archives

the property. The elevation indicates tall trees surrounding the house.

The property was constructed as a summer house by Henry William Palfrey. Chain-of-title investigations show the house was built in 1835 or 1836.² A belvedere on top of the house would have provided a clear vista to the Mississippi River. There are some New Orleans Greek Revival details on the facade: the box-shaped parapet, the broad entablature, the Doric capitals on the columns, and the flat-topped door and windows. Levee Street, the location of the house, was "the most prosperous street in the town... [of Carrollton]...since it was accessible to goods brought up from New Orleans either at the river front or from the railroad."³ The property was destroyed in 1853 when a new levee was constructed to control the river.

The house was located in Carrollton, now called the seventh district of New Orleans. The town, located eight miles from downtown New Orleans, was pleasant and fashionable. It was first subdivided in 1831-32.⁴ There was a suburban character to the area and it served as a retreat

²Mahe, "Town at Carrollton," 64.

³Mahe, "Town at Carrollton," 122.

⁴James Janssen and Waldeman S. Nelson, "The Town of Carrollton", Carrollton Vertical File, Louisiana Collection, Tulane University.

for New Orleanians. Beginning in 1835, the New Orleans and Carrollton Railroad connected the town with downtown, enabling commuters to live out in the "country."

An American Sector Property

This small property (figure 3), shown only in plan (the archive is incorrectly labelled), is located in Orleans Parish, behind what is now called Lee Circle. The survey was completed in 1836 by Charles Zimpel. There is a center hall house and two outbuildings. The kitchen was probably located in the outbuilding. The lot is approximately 127' long with an additional 48' in length forming the triangular section of the lot; the width is 68'.

The bullet-shaped property has three garden plots in front of the house, foundation plantings on either side of the stairs, and three more plots in the rear of the property. The landscaping materials are not differentiated in the watercolor, but the gardens in the front are probably decorative. The gardens in the back could have been either functional or decorative (the property's proximity to the French Quarter and the market, may have obviated the families' need for growing their own produce). The archive also shows a detailed depiction of the fence (figure 4) and

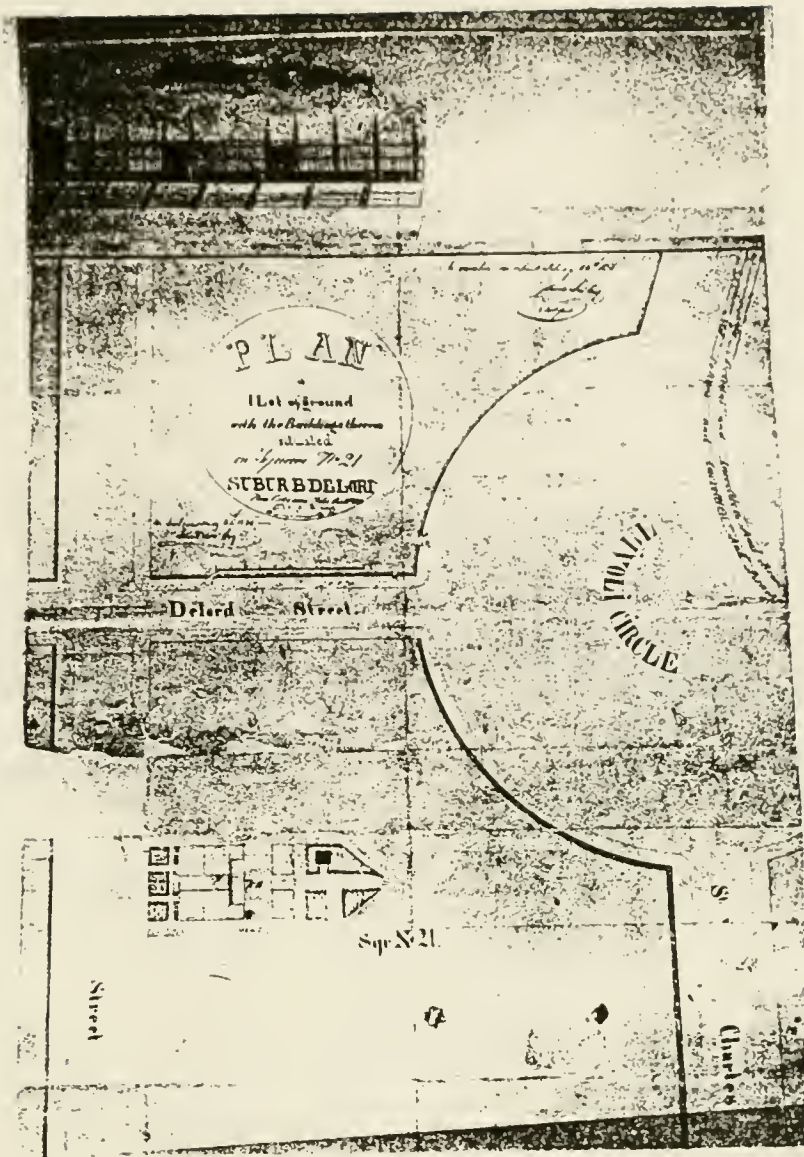


Fig. 3. Plan of small tract in the American Sector, 1836.
102.12.O.1.182.CFZ.36.el., Notarial Archives

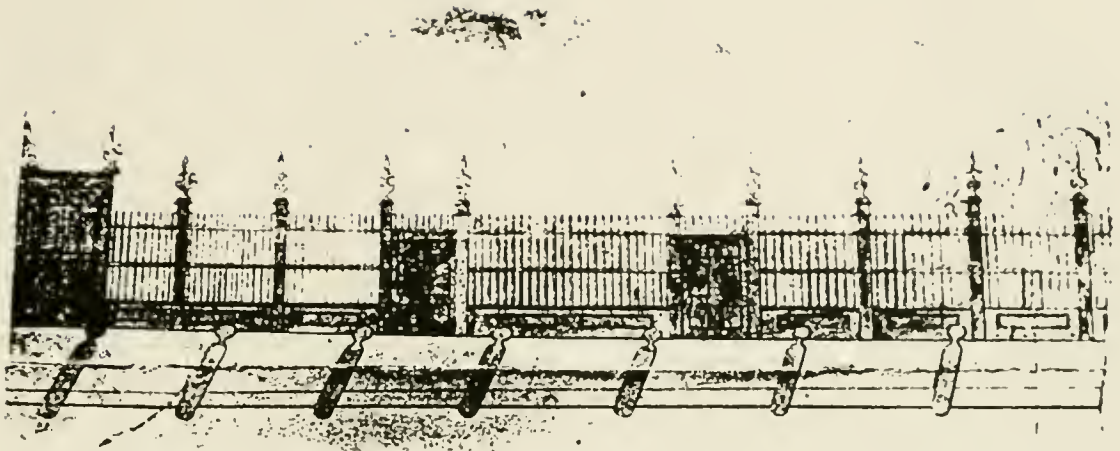


Fig. 4. Detail of fence in fig. 3.
102.12.O.1.182.CFZ.36.el., Notarial Archives

the banquette in front of the property.

This tract of land on Camp Street is located in what was previously called the Suburb Delord and the land originally belonged to the Delord family. It was planned in 1806 by Bartholemy Lafon, a French engineer. Tivoli Circle, the original name of Lee Circle, "was to be an outdoor pleasure garden, with a circular canal making an island of its center."⁵ Although this never happened, the area became fashionable in the 1840s.⁶

This section of New Orleans was known as the American Sector in the nineteenth-century. Immigrants from all over the United States moved here in the first thirty years of the 1800s, as New Orleans expanded in population and wealth. Canal Street, the division between the French Quarter and the upriver areas, such as the American Sector, "became...the principal business street of the city."⁷ The architect Benjamin Henry Latrobe wrote in 1819, "the American suburb, already exhibits the flat, dull, dingy character of Market Street, in Philadelphia...instead of the motley & picturesque effect of the stuccoed French buildings

⁵Mary Cable, Lost New Orleans (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1980), 76.

⁶Cable, Lost New Orleans, 76.

⁷Mary Louise Christovich et al., eds., New Orleans Architecture (Gretna: Pelican, 1972), vol. 2, The American Sector, 11.

of the city."⁸ He also complained that the only French architectural feature to be found in this area are the second story balconies.⁹




This house stood on the same block as the Howard Memorial Library, built by H.H. Richardson in the latter part of the nineteenth-century, which is still standing. The house itself was probably of the American cottage type. These houses adapted the symmetrical four-room plan, with cabinets (small rooms) in the rear, to a more traditional East Coast design. The addition of the center hall fundamentally changes Creole cottage of the French Quarter to an American house.

A Vegetable Garden in Lafayette

This property (figure 5) occupies an entire square of the fourth district of New Orleans. The house fronts on Jackson Street and the lot is backed by Philip Street, bounded by Prytanee (now Prytania) Street and Nayades

⁸Benjamin Henry B. Latrobe, Impressions Respecting New Orleans (New York: Columbia UP, 1951), 42.

⁹Latrobe, New Orleans, 106.

 OF
VALUABLE PROPERTY
 SITUATED IN THE CITY OF
LAFAYETTE.

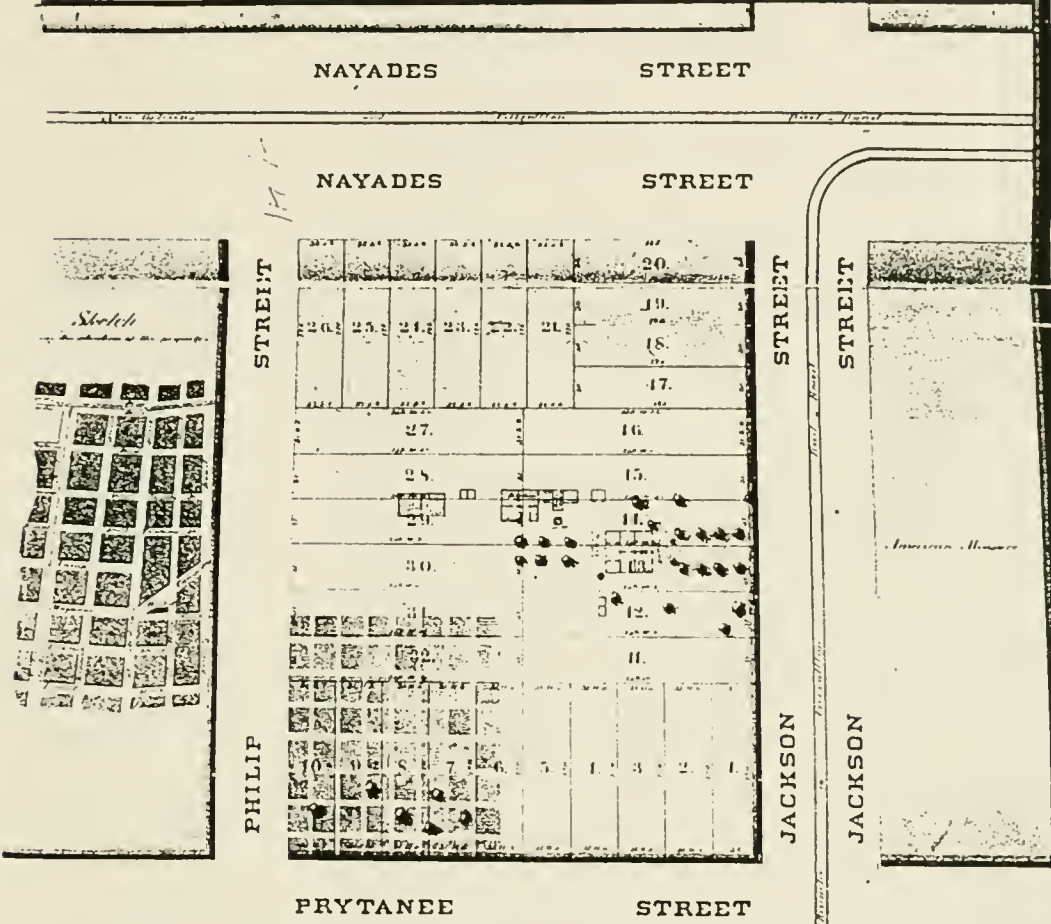


Fig. 5. Plan of square in Lafayette, no date.
 64.56.0.4.211.nd.nd.ind., Notarial Archives

Street (now St. Charles Avenue). The house has a gallery, but no hall, and was probably built prior to the 1850s. There is a stable in the rear, as well as a bath house. The land has been divided into 32 plots for the sale of the property.

The archive documents a tree-lined path from Jackson Street to the front entrance and another path behind the house. There is a large vegetable garden at the corner of Prytane and Philip divided into 64 equal squares with paths between each square. This amount of cultivated land is most likely large enough to have produced income for the owners, but this property is not on the scale of a plantation.

This part of the city was called Lafayette between 1833 and 1852 when it became part of New Orleans. Lafayette was the result of a consolidation of six plantations. These plantations, called faubourgs, were large land holdings owned by individual families. It is now known as the Garden District.

The name "Garden District" symbolizes "notions of high economic status, political and social identity, a gracious style of life, and architectural opulence."¹⁰ This area

¹⁰Frederick Starr, Southern Comfort: The Garden District of New Orleans, 1800-1900
(continued...)

became a suburb of New Orleans, connected with downtown by the New Orleans and Carrollton Rail Road beginning in 1835 which ran along Nayades Street and Jackson Street. This was a wealthy area and the 1850s was its greatest building period. The Lafayette Spectator reported that Lafayette "'is already the seat of fashionable residences. The property...has been greatly sought by merchants and bankers and professional men.'"¹¹

This archive records a property located along the major transportation route between New Orleans and the outlying residential communities. The entrance to the property was on Jackson Street, the "most elegant thoroughfare,"¹² in the area. The produce from the vegetable garden could easily have been sold from the property to the neighbors or transported to the markets on the trolley.

(...continued)

(Cambridge: MIT Press, 1989), 5.

¹¹Martha Ann Brett Samuel and Ray Samuel, The Great Days of the Garden District, and the Old City of Lafayette (New Orleans: Parents' League of the Louise S. McGehee School, 1961), 15.

¹²Samuel and Samuel, Great Days of the Garden District, 11.

James Robb's Romantic Garden

This watercolor (figure 6) of an elegant fourth district house shows a "natural" style garden, located on the side of the house. Joseph Pilie created the elevation and the plan of the property in 1860 for an upcoming auction. The landscaping layout has no straight lines or symmetrical features. Instead, the design takes on an organic, or naturalistic, profile in the 58' by 120'5" garden. The plan of the house shows steps out to the lush garden. There is a fence shown surrounding the property, which is probably cast-iron. "By 1860, cast iron was...popular in the private sector...Prefabricated cast-iron balconies, fences, gates...and...many other domestic items could now be bought from catalogues."¹³

The Italianate-style house at 1136-1138 Washington Avenue was built by the millionaire banker James Robb. It is a twin to a house he built at 1237 Washington Avenue. Both dwellings were built by the firm Gallier, Turpin & Co. for \$25,000.¹⁴ The two houses were used as rental properties. Robb probably intended to help beautify the neighborhood in which he also lived.

¹³Cable, Lost New Orleans, 91.

¹⁴New Orleans Crescent, 21 October 1856, Historic New Orleans Collection, New Orleans.

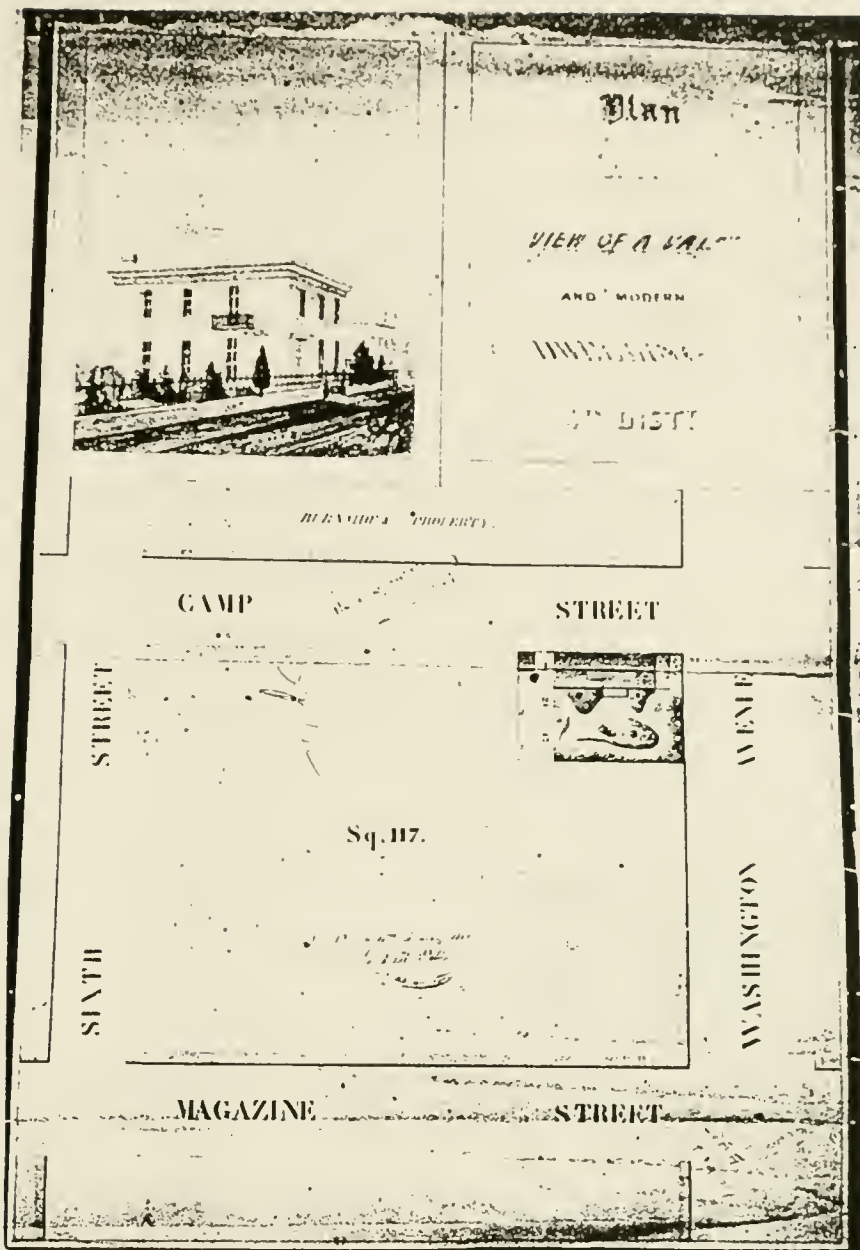


Fig. 6. Plan and elevation of James Robb's property, 1860. 64.45.O.4.152.Pilie.60.el., Notarial Archives

Henry Ruffin Alsobrook, who bought the house at the 1860 auction, rented the property beginning in 1857. City directories show Alsobrook living at the corner of Camp and Washington Avenue (the location of this house). It has been suggested by several historians that Robb built the two houses for his daughters. But only one of his four children, Isabella, was old enough to be married or to move out on her own in 1856 when the houses were built. Her name does not appear in any directory, nor does her husband's name; they most likely lived with her father.

Robb and his family lived on the property he owned across Camp Street, labelled "Burnside's property" on the archive. His palazzo-style mansion was set in an entire square and was surrounded by lavish gardens designed by a German gardener.¹⁵ The house was probably originally designed by Richard Morris Smith, a pupil of Thomas Ustick Walter, but the final drawings were signed by James Gallier. The dwelling was valued at \$65,000, soon after it was completed in 1856. The house was lavishly decorated and renowned for Robb's art collection, that included Hiram Power's sculpture, Greek Slave.¹⁶

¹⁵Samuel and Samuel, The Great Days of the Garden District, 22.

¹⁶Starr, Southern Comfort, 103-111.

Robb's financial situation went quickly downhill with the death of his wife, Louisa, in 1859. Edward Fernandez San Roman, Robb's son-in-law, decided to sue Robb for his wife, Isabella's, share of Louisa Robb's estate. Community property laws enabled San Roman to take Robb to court. Isabella Robb's husband, Edward, was a "Spanish nobleman-adventurer,"¹⁷ who successfully challenged Robb in court and accelerated his financial demise.

A family meeting in 1859 reveals that the Louisiana legislature passed an act of relief for Robb and his four children.¹⁸ Robb had not held a job since 1857 when there was a "worldwide panic...triggered by the failure of a Cincinnati insurance company."¹⁹ He supported his family by selling off his properties. He and his wife had accumulated \$682,303.32 in debt.²⁰ It was decided that all remaining property (four houses and various vacant lots) would be sold, including the family's mansion. The family was then expected to invest all profits in bonds that would yield about \$10,000 per year.²¹

¹⁷Starr, Southern Comfort, 113-117.

¹⁸W.H. Peters, 21 April 1859, Notarial Archives, New Orleans, Louisiana.

¹⁹Starr, Southern Comfort, 117

²⁰W.H. Peters, 21 April 1859, Notarial Archives.

²¹W.H. Peters, 21 April 1859, Notarial Archives.

This house still stands in the Garden District, although somewhat modified. The garden is the only one of its type in this study and the only one of its type found in the archive during the course of this research. Its marked difference from the formal geometric or symmetrical gardens of New Orleans, seen in the majority of the archives, indicates a need for future investigations. Research into the individual landscape designers practicing in New Orleans at the time may reveal the reasons for its unique appearance. One could also speculate that the lush landscape of Louisiana may have appeared to the nineteenth-century citizens more artfully arranged when formally sculpted, rather than the more "naturally" designed gardens popular in England and elsewhere in the United States.

The Smelzer House

This watercolor (figure 7) shows a New Orleans house that stood on the 1100 block of Josephine Street [appears in New Orleans Architecture, volume 1], in an area known as the Garden District. The house was built by Cooke and Morehouse.²² There is no known building contract, but the unbroken column style indicates construction in the late 1840s or early 1850s. Cooke and Morehouse employed the

²²W.H. Peters, 22 May 1856, Notarial Archives.

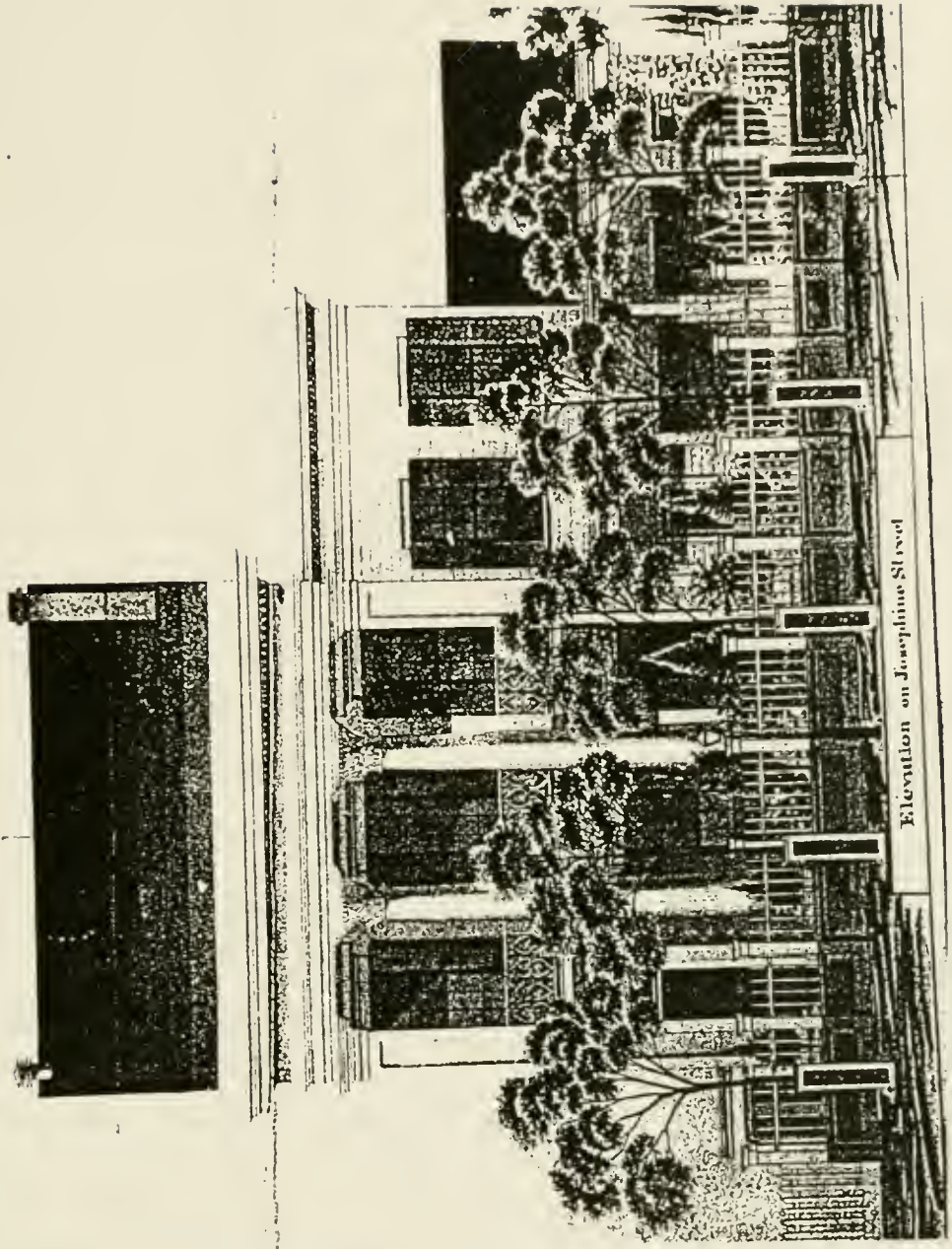


Fig. 7. Elevation of Smelzer House, 1856.
64.30.0.4.144.nd.56.el., Notarial Archives

Greek Revival style in the design of this house. This style had a "visual emphasis on entrances...side or center hallways; and...strong Classic and Italianate motifs."²³ Smelzer's house has "Tower of the Winds columns...placed between sturdy paneled square pillars at the ends."²⁴

Levi Smelzer, whose wife sold the property in 1856,²⁵ bought the lots 31 and 32 in 1847,²⁶ lot 30 in 1852,²⁷ and lot 29 in 1853.²⁸ The house is on lots 30, 31, and 32. The house was relatively new at the time of the watercolor. In 1856 the property sold for \$12,000.

Levi Smelzer's administration papers describe the house as "a large and elegant new two story dwelling...in the latest style."²⁹ There are seven rooms and a bathroom, in

²³Roulhac Toledano, Sally Kittredge Evans, and Mary Louise Christovich, comps., New Orleans Architecture (Gretna: Pelican, 1974), vol. 4, The Creole Faubourgs, 63.

²⁴Mary Louise Christovich, Roulhac Toledano, and Betsy Swanson, comps. and eds., New Orleans Architecture (Gretna: Pelican, 1971), vol. 1, The Lower Garden District, 82.

²⁵W.H. Peters, 22 May 1856, Notarial Archives.

²⁶S. St. Louis, 29 April 1847, Notarial Archives.

²⁷C. Brown, 10 January 1852, Notarial Archives.

²⁸C. Brown, 20 February 1853, Notarial Archives.

²⁹W.H. Peters, 22 May 1856, Notarial Archives.

the house, and dependencies out back, including servants' quarters and bathrooms.³⁰

Included with the act of sale and the papers settling Levi Smelzer's will is a bill for the advertising costs of selling this property. C.A. Hedin was paid \$20 to draw the site plan and newspaper advertising costs, in three papers, totaled \$114.³¹

The archive has both an elevation and a plan of the site. The elevation shows a wooden picket fence on the far right side and a wooden fence with large posts and thinner elements set on a solid base. The tall trees are planted outside the fence, on the banquette, and they are in some form of container. Inside the fence there are smaller trees and bushes.

The plan of the property, which totals 106' by 191', shows that the sections to the right of the tallest part of the house are successively set back. The low section to the far right has a designed green space in front of it, about 20' wide by about 50' long. The archive is damaged, so the landscaping plan is not clear. The plan also documents two

³⁰W.H. Peters, 22 May 1856, Notarial Archives.

³¹W.H. Peters, 22 May 1856, Notarial Archives.

cisterns, two privies, one water well, and several outbuildings. A vegetable garden, 26' wide by about 90' long, is identified at the back of the lot. The garden is divided into fourteen equal parts. This watercolor is well known from its publication in New Orleans Architecture.³² It is included in this study because the gardens are undocumented.

A Third District Garden

This property (figure 8) in the third district encompasses an entire square on Delery, backed by Tricou, bounded by Bienvenu and Delaronde, measuring 259'10"2'' by 268'. The archive dates to 1856 and Charles de Armas surveyed the property. The house has two dormer windows and a central fireplace. There are two cisterns, one at each rear corner of the house. The kitchen dependency is labelled, but the other outbuildings are not identified. It is set in an elaborate garden and extensive orchards.

The garden in front of the house has a central symmetrical pattern with a second pattern on either side. The design in the middle uses rectangular and "L" shaped

³²Mary Louise Christovich, et al., comps., and eds., The Lower Garden District, 78.

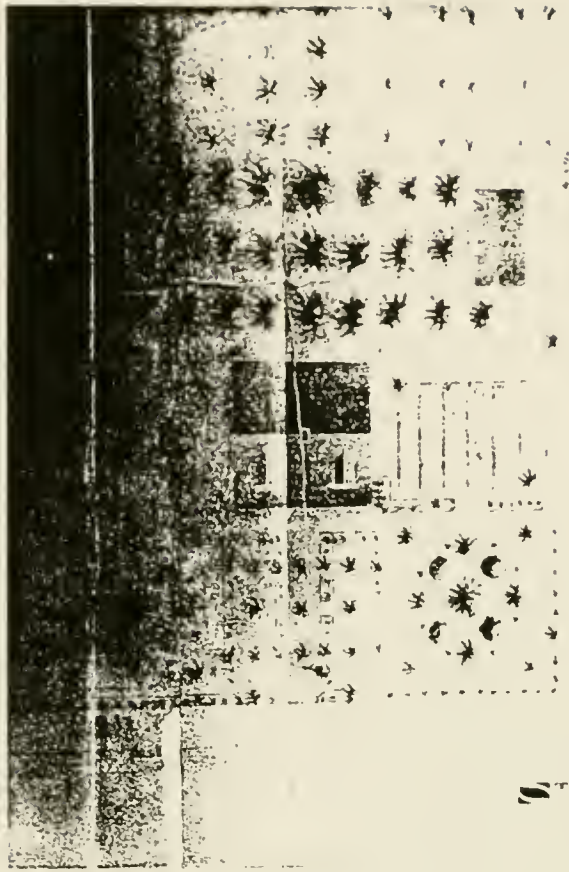


Fig. 8. Garden and house in the third district, 1856.
91.21.O.3.82.CdeA.56.ind.frg., Notarial Archives

planting beds with individual trees or bushes (undifferentiated in plan) interspersed between the beds. The side designs use two different materials to create a diamond design within a square. The garden and the residential complex are surrounded by a border of planting beds. The rest of the land is covered by orchards laid out in neat rows and a small unidentified section which is probably a vegetable garden.

The house was located below the city, two blocks from the Mississippi River and next to the U.S. Barracks and U.S. Hospital. The Barracks were built in 1835 to serve as quarters for troops.³³ Today the buildings, under the name of Jackson Barracks, are still used. The area around the house was divided into plantations that during the nineteenth-century were sold off and subdivided. Near the house was the Louisiana Sugar Refinery (built between 1831 and 1832) and the Ursuline Convent built in 1823.³⁴

Two Greenville Houses in a Garden Setting

This watercolor (figures 9 and 10) announces the 1847 auction of "241'4"4'" front on...New Orleans and Carrollton

³³Toledano, Evans, and Christovich, The Creole Faubourgs, 174.

³⁴Toledano, Evans, and Christovich, The Creole Faubourgs, 22-24.

Rail Road, 490' front on Walnut Street, 515'4" front on Chestnut Street and 240' on Carrollton Street."³⁵ This area of New Orleans was called Greenville at the time of the survey by Hedin.

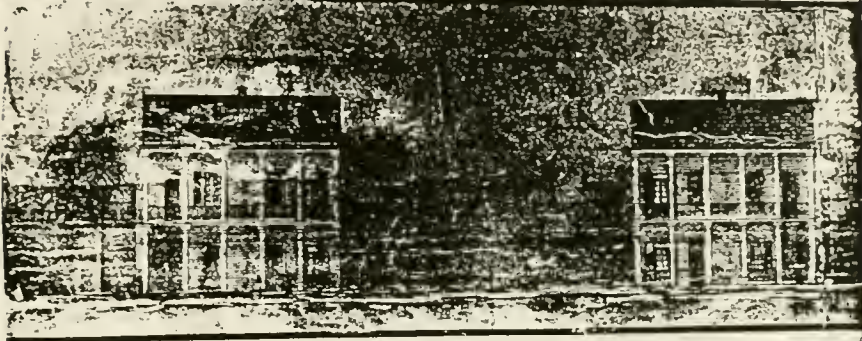
The property was sold at auction on May 8, 1847, by the auctioneers Beard, Calhoun and Company. Joseph Roberts Beard, a partner in the same auctioneer firm, bought the two houses and the land from the City Bank of New Orleans for \$6,250. The Bank acquired the property through a sheriff's sale on April 7, 1847.³⁶ Unfortunately the trail seems to start with this sale. The paperwork for earlier transactions cannot be found and the date of the buildings and improvements are not known.

The property, which consisted of a full square along what is now called St. Charles Avenue, sold two years later for \$9,500 and sold a year after that for \$10,000. In the mid-nineteenth-century this area was just beginning to be developed. Although Greenville had been subdivided, the

³⁵H.B. Cenas, 24 May 1847, Notarial Archives.

³⁶H.B. Cenas, 24 May 1847, Notarial Archives.

GREENVILLE



East Charleston, the two Greenville Houses in the background

Fig. 9. Two houses in Greenville, 1847.
27.22.0.6.Grnvle.68.Hedin.el., Notarial Archives

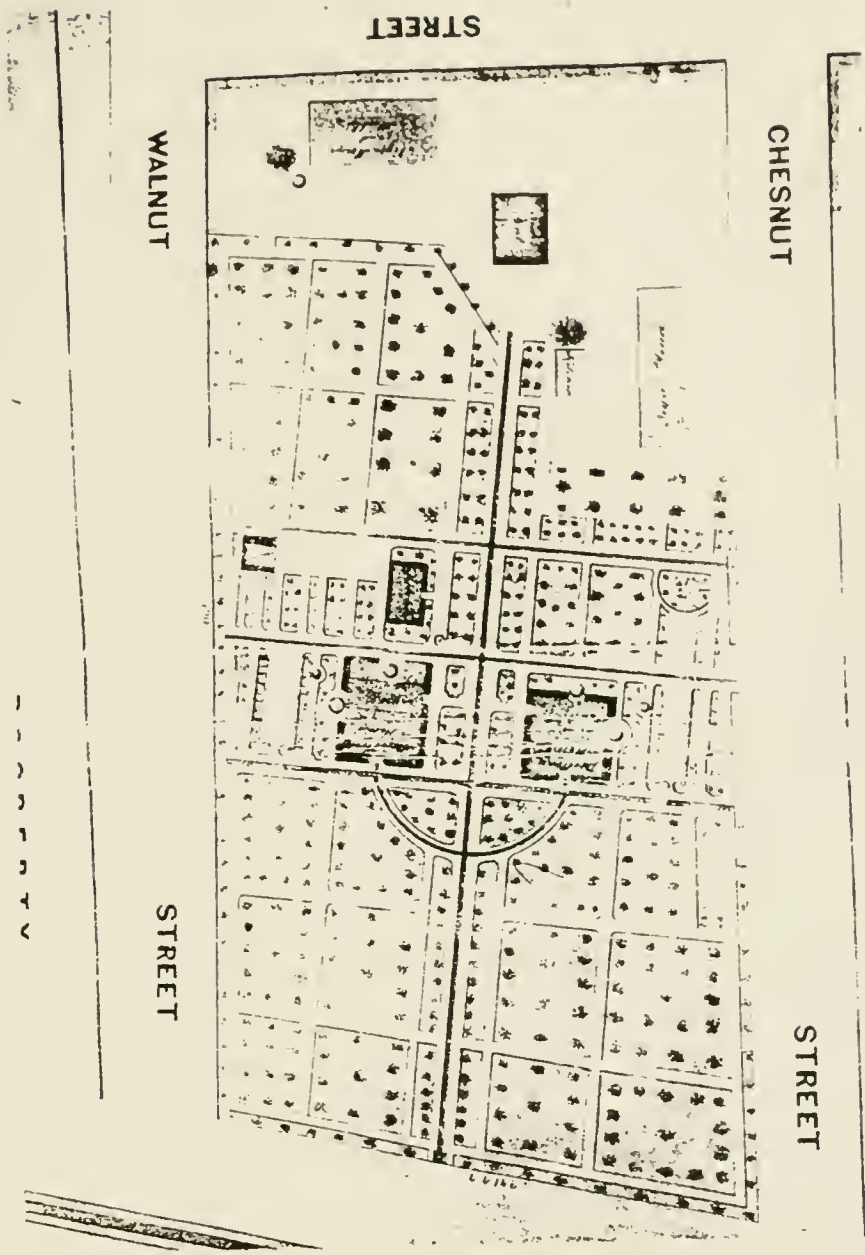


Fig. 10. Plan of property in Greenville, 1847.
27.22.0.6.Grnvle.68.Hedin.47.el., Notarial Archives

land on the Walnut side was still a large undivided tract. This land, owned by Pierre Foucher and his descendants was occupied by Confederate soldiers in the early 1860s and a Federal hospital between 1863 and 1867.³⁷ The land eventually became Audubon Park; it served as a site for the World's Industrial and Cotton Centennial Exposition in 1884. In the early 1890s Tulane University and Loyola University opened on St. Charles Avenue, across the street from the park.

The archive includes a plan and the elevation of the two houses on the lot. The two-storied, five-bay houses have identical facades, down to their wood cisterns. There are slave quarters, kitchens, and a stable on the grounds. The plan describes a well developed landscape scheme. The entrance is reached by a formal allée leading to a semicircular path which allows access to both houses. The gardens are an integral part of the layout of the property. The relationship between the architecture and the landscaping seems to reflect an encompassing design scheme.

The gardens in front of the houses are arranged in large, almost square, blocks with paths between them. Although there are not any formal design elements, such as

³⁷L. Ronald Forman, Audubon Park: An Urban Eden ([New Orleans]: Friends of the Zoo, 1985), n.p.

symmetrical geometric patterns, the gardens were laid out carefully to fit into the slightly skewed property. Surrounding the houses, on the sides and behind them, are vegetable gardens. The houses are a part of the large garden, serving as focal points from the street and within the property.

These houses and their gardens occupied a full block along St. Charles Avenue. Although the block is now covered with other buildings, this archive helps to recreate the appearance of the area prior to the late nineteenth-century changes.

A Geometric Garden in the First District

This first district property (figure 11) was sold to the Mississippi River Bridge Authority in the 1940s to make room for the Bridge right of the way. The archive remains a link to the early nineteenth-century character of the neighborhood. The property measures 143'11" in width by 127'10" in depth. The house, shown only as indication (bird's-eye view), seems to be raised, as indicated by the two staircases that run parallel to the facade. Behind the house there is a well, a cistern, and two unidentified outbuildings.

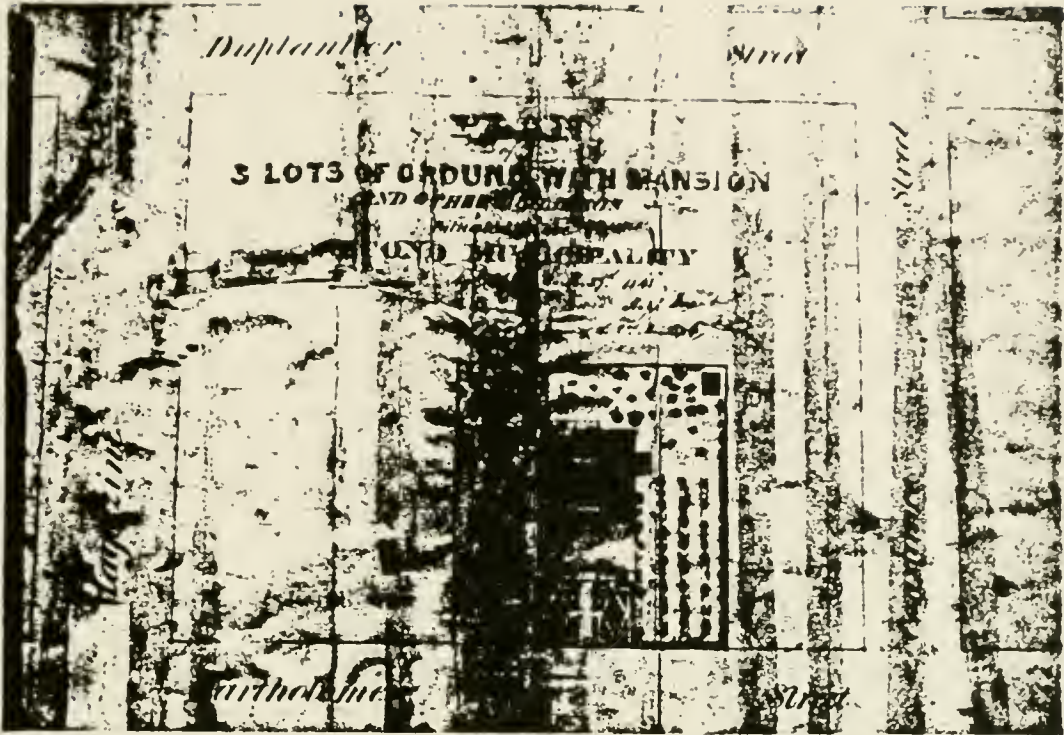


Fig. 11. Plan of property with geometric garden, 1841.
66.1.O.1.138.Grant.41.ind., Notarial Archives

In front of the house is a formally landscaped area, about 45' by 35'. There is a diamond within a rectangle pattern, repeated twice, with a path down the middle. Along one side of the house there are four rows about 70' long, and one row about 100' long, of plant material, possibly fruit trees. The rear of the lot also has trees, but they are scattered, without pattern or order.

The house seems to have been built between 1835 and 1836. William Thomas Mayo bought a lot of ground with a building in April, 1835, from Dr. John Rollins.³⁸ He paid \$1,532. This building does not appear to be the same house shown in the watercolor. In June of the same year he bought three adjoining lots, without buildings or improvements, for \$5,000.³⁹ In April 1836 he sold all four lots to William Sargeant. Lot one cost \$5,300, lot two cost \$5,600, lot three cost \$5,900, and lot four cost \$6,200, for a total sale price of \$23,000.⁴⁰ All the lots cost about the same, so it is difficult to tell if the house was on one of these lots or if the selling price was just divided into four parts, without taking the location of the house into account. In 1833 there were no improvements or buildings on

³⁸H.B. Cenas, 3 April 1835, Notarial Archives.

³⁹H.B. Cenas, 10 June 1835, Notarial Archives.

⁴⁰Joseph Marks, 11 April 1836, Notarial Archives.

the lots, according to the plan drawn by Zimpel, suggesting there was a change between 1833 and 1836.

In 1837 the transaction between Mayo and Sargeant was rescinded.⁴¹ Mayo then sold the 4 lots to Isidore Justamond for \$21,890.11. In 1841, the year of the archive, Justamond's creditors sold the property at auction led by John Bach to New Orleans Canal and Baking Company.⁴² They paid \$12,800 for three lots, having the same total dimensions as the original four lots. The Bank paid \$8,100 for lot 2, the lot containing the house. Just two years later the Bank sold the property to Augustus Whiting at auction for \$5,350.⁴³ This is a 77% difference in price from 1836, when the house was new.

This watercolor documents geometric landscape patterns. The property represents the many New Orleans gardens that are small in size and rely on simple geometric pattern to create interest and beauty. The front garden could have been planned by an owner or a gardener. It is important to record the popularity of this kind of design, that would

⁴¹Joseph Marks, 9 January 1837, Notarial Archives.

⁴²Theodore Seghers, 3 August 1841, Notarial Archives.

⁴³David McCay, 6 February 1843, Notarial Archives.

have been easy to create, but still have provided a sophisticated appearance.

Carrollton Villa: A Study of Three Archives

History of the Town of Carrollton

Carrollton is now a part of New Orleans, in Orleans Parish, but the town was originally a part of Jefferson Parish. The land was first owned by Jean Baptiste Le Moyne, Sieur de Bienville, who owned "all of Uptown New Orleans and adjacent parts of Jefferson Parish."⁴⁴ In 1719 he granted the land to Nicholas Chauvin de la Freniere and the property stayed in this family until 1795.⁴⁵ The land then became part of Jean Baptiste Macarty's plantation. In 1816 a crevasse in the plantation's levee caused a flood between the Mississippi River and Lake Ponchartrain and between Rampart Street and the Metairie Ridge.⁴⁶

New Orleans Canal and Banking Company, Samuel Kohn, Laurent Millaudon, and John Slidell purchased land (22 arpents fronting on the river by 40 arpents deep) from Macarty between 1831 and 1832 for speculative purposes.⁴⁷ The land was laid out by Charles Zimpel in 1832. He decided

⁴⁴Christovich, Toledano, and Swanson, Lower Garden District, 3.

⁴⁵New Orleans Architectural Tour of Carrollton, Carrollton Vertical File, Louisiana Collection, Tulane University.

⁴⁶"Did You Know?," 14 August 1967, Transit Riders' Digest, Carrollton Vertical File, Louisiana Collection, Tulane University.

⁴⁷James Janssen and Waldeman S. Nelson, "The Town of Carrollton," Carrollton Vertical File, Louisiana Collection, Tulane University. An arpent is equal to 0.85 acres.

that Carrollton Avenue, called Canal Avenue at the time, would be the focus of the plan with 650 feet by 650 feet squares with 50 foot streets between the squares surrounding the main thoroughfare. These squares were later "subdivided into 300-foot blocks intersected by 50-foot streets."⁴⁸ The area was incorporated in 1843, by which time it was already "a pleasant resort community... [with]...Amenities such as a racetrack, beer and botanical gardens and a hotel."⁴⁹

Carrollton became a popular area quickly after its inception. It was "a boom town for anyone with property to sell. Even swamp lands that stagnated underwater for much of the year were snatched up for 100 times their value,"⁵⁰ by both land speculators and people who wanted to move to the new town. The New Orleans and Carrollton Railroad, beginning in 1830s, connected Carrollton with downtown New Orleans via St. Charles Avenue, making the outlying suburbs more attractive to new inhabitants.

The town served as the seat of Jefferson Parish from 1852-after "the City of Lafayette was annexed by New

⁴⁸Janssen and Nelson, "The Town of Carrollton," n.p.

⁴⁹Kel Veillarrubia, "What's Next Door?: Zoning in Carrollton," Carrollton Vertical File, Louisiana Collection, Tulane University.

⁵⁰Marjorie Roehl, "Looking Back," Carrollton Vertical File, Louisiana Collection, Tulane University.

Orleans"⁵¹ in 1850-until 1874, when Carrollton was annexed by New Orleans. From its inception, the town catered to the wealthy population, that visited and lived in Carrollton. Local businesses focused on services and goods for these residents and visitors.⁵²

History of the Carrollton Villa

The Notarial Archives records a property in the Town of Carrollton through three periods of change.⁵³ There are three watercolors of the house and grounds as well as a building contract. The contract documents the change from the original appearance of the house to a more fashionable style. The archives, the building contract, and the chain-of-title will all be examined to produce a view of the Notarial Archives' unique collection. The history of the owners, the house, and the landscaping provide an entree to the nineteenth-century.

⁵¹Veillarrubia, "What's Next Door?" n.p.

⁵²Janssen and Nelson, "The Town of Carrollton," n.p.

⁵³Sally Reeves did the original chain-of-title research on the Carrollton Villa.

The first watercolor (figures 12 and 13) of the house dates to 1845 and the sale by Samuel Kohn to Greenbury Ridgely Stringer. Stringer paid \$3,000 for lot numbers six through eighteen in Square A, which had 150 feet on First Street (St. Charles Avenue), 300 feet on Burdet Street, 150 feet on Pearl Street, and 300 feet on Adams Street.⁵⁴ There were "buildings and improvements...[and]...a frame kitchen"⁵⁵ included in the sale. Stringer completed his acquisition of the entire square in 1846⁵⁶ and 1847,⁵⁷ with smaller land purchases totalling \$800.

Samuel Kohn, who was represented by his brother, Joachim Kohn, was one of the original founders of Carrollton. He was "a banker financier, and real estate magnate,"⁵⁸ who moved to Paris in 1832. His brother and other family members took care of his businesses in New Orleans.

Buildings and improvements on the property first appear in a sale in 1835. Louis Burdet put together a large tract

⁵⁴A.C. Ainsworth, 17 June 1845, Notarial Archives.

⁵⁵A.C. Ainsworth, 17 June 1845, Notarial Archives.

⁵⁶A.C. Ainsworth, 12 February 1846, Notarial Archives.

⁵⁷A.C. Ainsworth, 8 July 1847, Notarial Archives.

⁵⁸Dorothy G. Schlesinger, Robert J. Cangelosi, Jr., and Sally Kittredge Reeves, eds. and comps., New Orleans Architecture (Gretna: Pelican, 1989), Vol. 7, Jefferson City, 47.

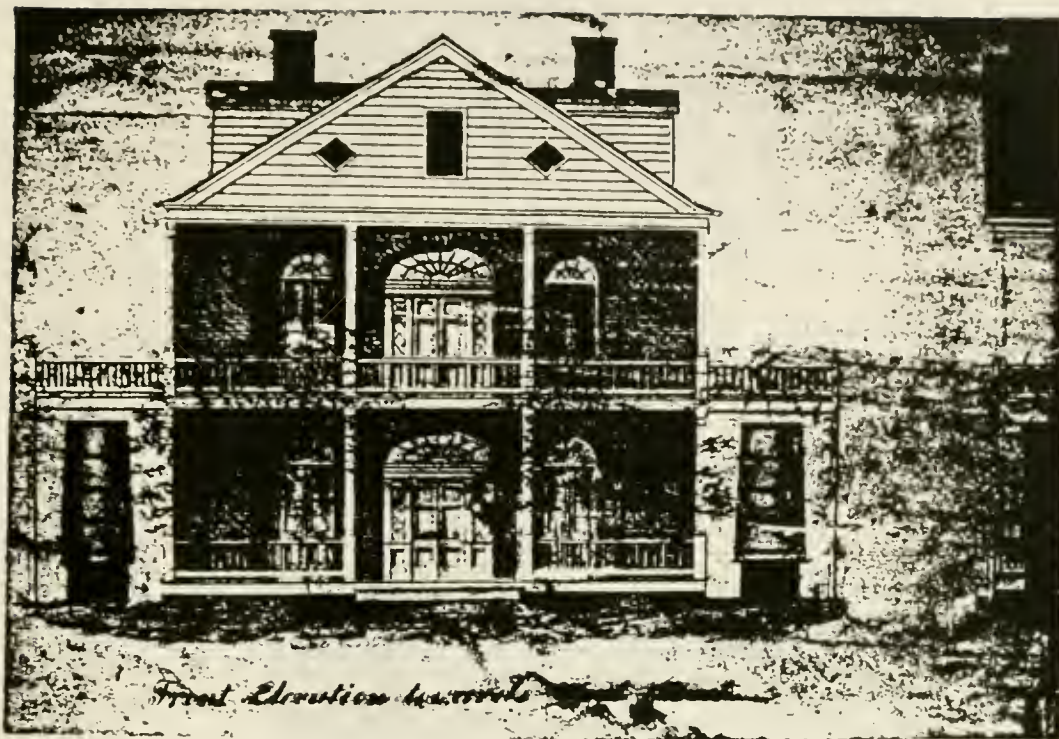


Fig. 12. elevation of Carrollton Villa, 1845.
26.3.0.7.Moell.45.el., Notarial Archives

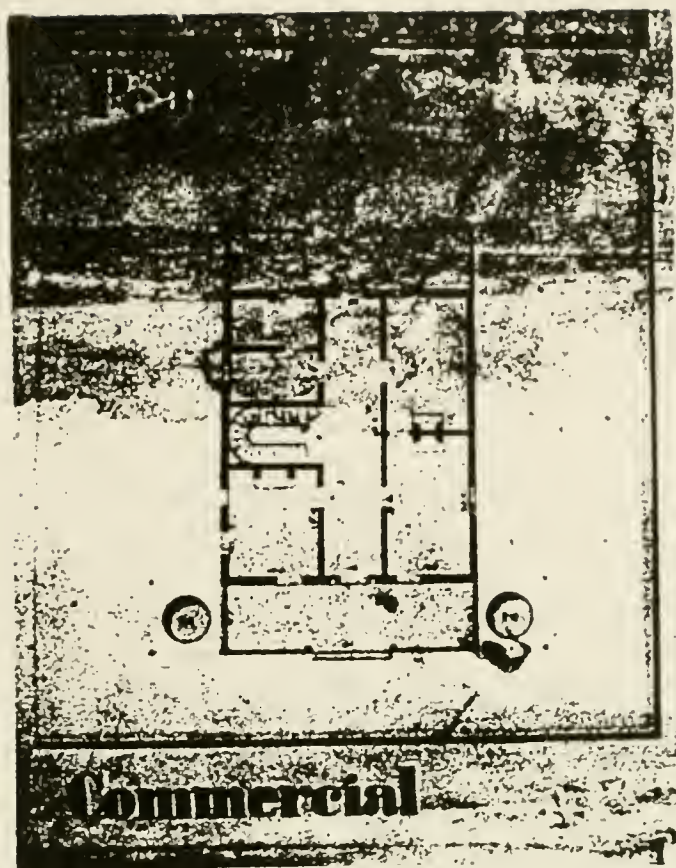


Fig. 13. Plan of Carrollton Villa, 1845.
26.3.O.7.55.Moell.45.el., Notarial Archives

of land, encompassing about ten squares of land without buildings between 1834 and 1835. He then sold 179 lots of ground to Michael Maher, located in two squares, for \$20,000.⁵⁹ This sale, in 1835, does include buildings and improvements. Burdet left his own legacy in Carrollton-
Burdette Street was named for him, even though it is spelled differently.

The house, in its first incarnation, was erected at the rear of the lot in either 1835 or 1836. There were at least ten transactions involving the property between 1833 and 1836. It does seem that Louis Burdet or Michael Maher was responsible for the construction of the house. The house was built of brick, which was rare for the area. It was probably the earliest brick building in the area, and it continued to be the only brick building until the 1870s.⁶⁰

The 1845 archive depicts a symmetrical facade organization. On both the first and second floors are central doors, flanked by shuttered windows, that are the same height as the doors. Second story balconies are provided on the front and the rear facades of the dwelling, creating cross-ventilation. The style could be described as

⁵⁹C. de Armas, 31 December 1835, Notarial Archives.

⁶⁰E.A. Robinson's Atlas of New Orleans (New York: 1883).

a combination of Federal and Creole influences. The formal doorways are typical Federal, with the elliptical fanlights that extend over the doors and the sidelights. The interior arrangement shows a central hall, but with the stairs in the middle of the hall. The rooms are neither symmetrical nor are they the same size; this differs from the house's exterior expression.

The appearance of the house changed for the first time in 1845 (figures 14 and 15) when G.R. Stringer hired Jacob Beaumiller to repair and update the dwelling.⁶¹ The building contract was deposited with a notary and now provides valuable insight. Stringer updated the house and its grounds. In addition to architectural changes, he created an extensive landscaping scheme. He was the only owner between the 1845 alterations and the 1849 archive, so it is possible to attribute the work to his period of ownership.

The building contract specifies repairs to all the hardware, floors, and plaster. It calls for "new Galleries front and in the rear...with 'in antis', hip roof and proper

⁶¹A.C. Ainsworth, 20 June 1845, Notarial Archives.

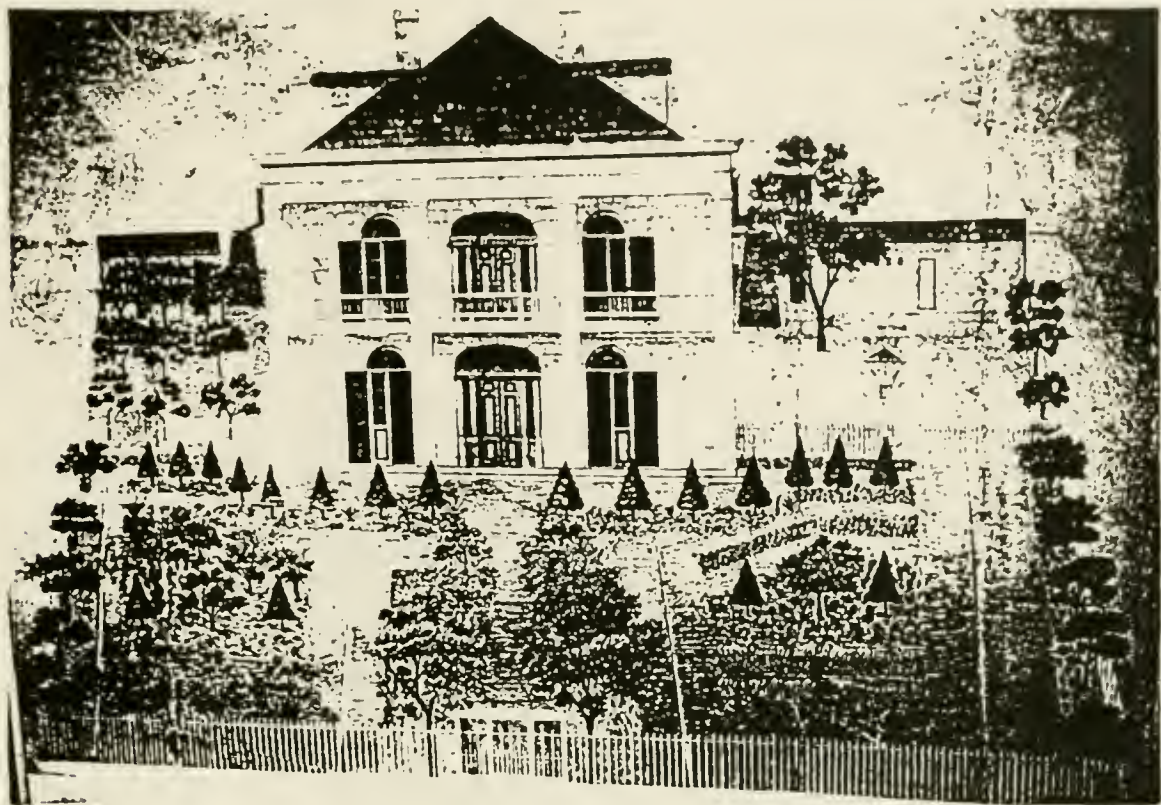


Fig. 14. Second appearance of Carrollton Villa, 1849.
25.20.0.7.64.Hedin.49.el., Notarial Archives

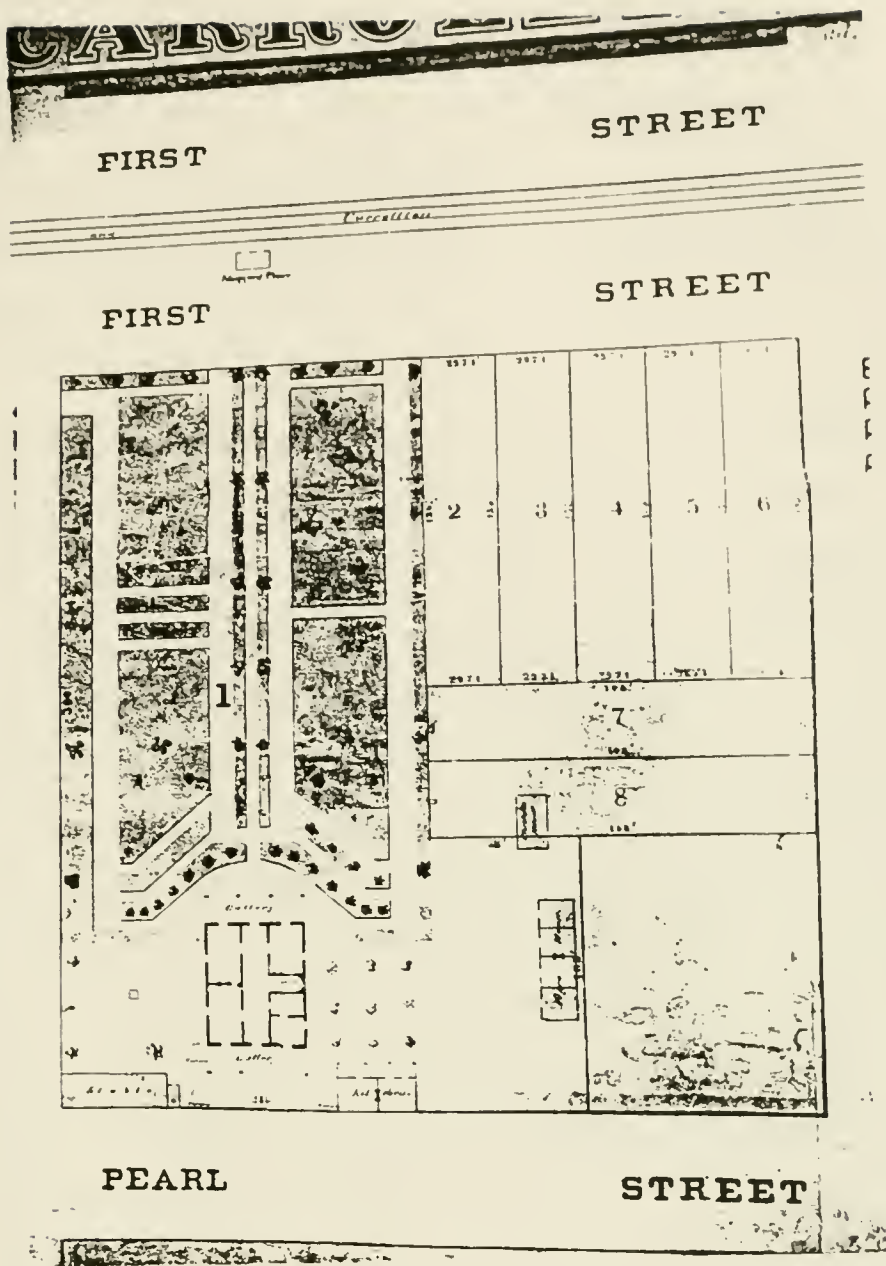


Fig. 15. Plan of Carrollton Villa, 1849.
 25.20.0.7.64.Hedin.49.el., Notarial Archives

cornice front and rear and with tin valleys to lead water to the cisterns at the back part of the house."⁶² Stringer also wanted some of the rear gallery enclosed to create a new room. The house was to be painted, inside and out. These changes updated the exterior to the then popular Greek Revival style.

Stringer, or possibly Beaumiller on his own, added Doric capitals to the columns, but he left the columns plain, without fluting. This is typical of work "during the revival periods to accord with American taste, often at the whim of the carpenters...The result was a free...interpretation of the ancient prototypes."⁶³ The Greek Revival transformation was not complete and many of the original architectural elements remained the same. The doors and windows kept their rounded fanlights. They are distinctly different than the Greek Revival openings, which "were always flat-topped, as ancient Greek structures did not use arches."⁶⁴ The stuccoed exterior was scored to look like stone.

⁶²A.C. Ainsworth, 20 June 1845, Notarial Archives.

⁶³Lloyd Vogt, New Orleans Houses: A House Watcher's Guide (Gretna, LA: Pelican, 1992), 65.

⁶⁴Vogt, New Orleans Houses, 63.

The garden has young-looking trees arranged in a stylized pattern. Stringer installed a long formal entrance path approaching the house, leading from fashionable St. Charles Avenue (labelled First Street). There is a park-like setting to this front lawn. The greenery seems carefully groomed and shaped.

The last watercolor (figure 16) dates to 1866. The estate of Marie Marthe Elmiere Montreuil, deceased wife of Laurent Millaudon, sold the property at auction to Widow Maria Trezevant for \$7,000.⁶⁵ The house and seven dependencies are included in this sale. In the 1850s the house served as a boarding school for girls. An advertisement in the Carrollton Star stated the school's costs: \$65 for boarding and washing for five months, \$25 for tuition, \$30 for music lessons and the use of an instrument, and \$20 for drawing and painting.⁶⁶ By the time of the 1866 auction, the house and the landscaping had changed dramatically.

⁶⁵S. Magner, 29 January 1866, Notarial Archives.

⁶⁶Carrollton Star, 29 March 1851.

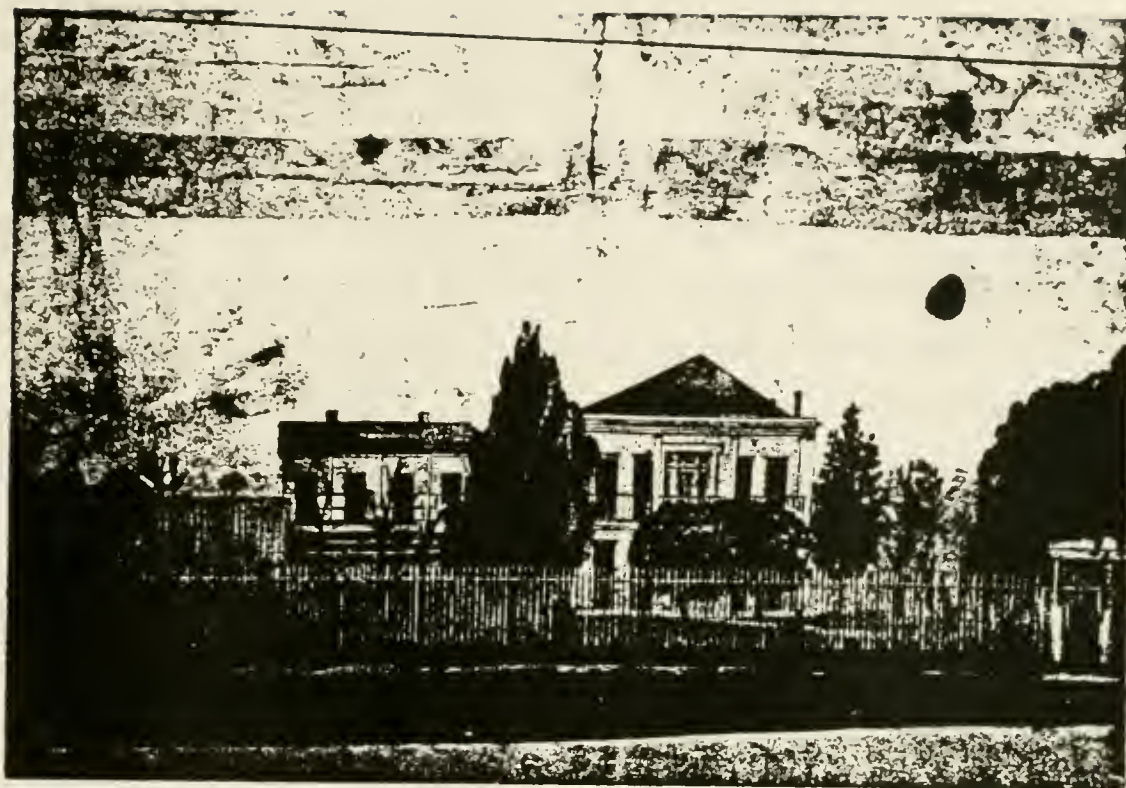


Fig. 16. Carrollton Villa in decline, 1866.
85.3.O.7.64.Cast & Cells.66.el., Notarial Archives

The facade now has Greek Revival doorways and louvered shutters covering flat-topped windows. These changes represent a full transformation to the Greek Revival. This style remained popular until after the Civil War,⁶⁷ so this house remained fashionable, even though its maintenance appears to have gone downhill. Additional buildings were constructed most likely to serve as dormitories for the boarding school. Perhaps the most obvious change has occurred in the garden. The entire property is somewhat hard to read in the archive, because of the attempt to show perspective. The relationship between the plantings and the house is blurred, but not obliterated by the artist's rendering. The trees seem lushly overgrown. The yard looks like what one might think of as typical New Orleans landscaping: the large and full trees, which were now almost twenty years old, thriving in the rich soil, the abundant rain, and the warm temperatures.

The three archives together represent both the history of Carrollton and the history of architectural tastes. This unique pictorial documentation is extraordinary without additional documentation, but the history of the town and the people completes the story of a grand suburban estate.

⁶⁷Vogt, New Orleans Houses, 63.

The gardens represented in the 1866 archive are more familiar to the twentieth-century observer of New Orleans, than the earlier formal lay-out. The last drawing shows a simplification of plan, as well as an apparently greater informality, possibly due to lack of maintenance.

Research Implications

These representations of the successive changes to the Carrollton property create an opportunity to study how people lived in their houses in the nineteenth-century, as well as modifications over time. The gardens can be examined for both plant material and design. The second archive, in particular, shows a complete plan of a mid-nineteenth-century garden. The same features shown in this large property may represent the design qualities used in fashionable gardens of all sizes.

The Carrollton Villa can be studied in terms of architectural and landscape evolution. Further studies will explain the changes. Fashion and fortune are the two most obvious reasons for the alterations. Additional reasons could be related to the individual owners and the neighborhood itself. The builder, Jacob Beaumiller, should be studied to determine how much of his hand appears in the

house's facade. The possibility of determining the gardener (who worked for Stringer) may be slim, but other properties in the surrounding area, at the time, should be examined for similarities. This could be accomplished by looking at additional Notarial Archives and other available views of Carrollton.

This property is the most dramatic representation of the potential for research in the archive. It demonstrates the large body of information that can be found relating to and about historic New Orleans. The story of the neighborhoods is particularly accessible through these "pictures" of the houses and gardens.

CONCLUSION

The documentation of nineteenth-century gardens in New Orleans, Louisiana, has been overlooked by modern scholars and historians. Nor are the design sources and the people who created the gardens satisfactorily documented. Yet the lush landscape of twentieth-century New Orleans owes its appearance to the work of earlier generations. It is hard to reconcile the lack of research; Louisiana has been so well documented while the designs of the building sites have been largely ignored. The possibility of defining the creative sources, as well as the stylistic evolution, is found in part in the New Orleans Notarial Archives. The Archives can act as the first step in understanding these gardens.

This thesis aims to introduce a rich source of primary information for studying New Orleans garden design. The Notarial Archives provide pictorial documentation of the architecture and the landscapes of the nineteenth-century. The surveyed properties depicted by watercolors in the Archive--as well as the written notarial acts--represent the actual conditions and appearance of each property at the time it was completed. This paper does not attempt to define design sources or plant materials. Instead, examples

from the Archives act as case studies to show the variety and breadth of information available.

After completing this research, it is apparent that there is much left to be done on the subject of garden design in New Orleans. To complete the story on life in New Orleans during the 1800s this work should be undertaken. The legacy of lives lived during the last century still exists in the houses, the neighborhoods, and even the plantings found throughout the city today. It is impossible to ignore the greenery in Louisiana; the weather and the soil have conspired to produce an unequaled abundance. To understand how New Orleans looks today, we must retrace those who made the gardens of her past.

APPENDIX: MAPS

LEGEND FOR MAP 1

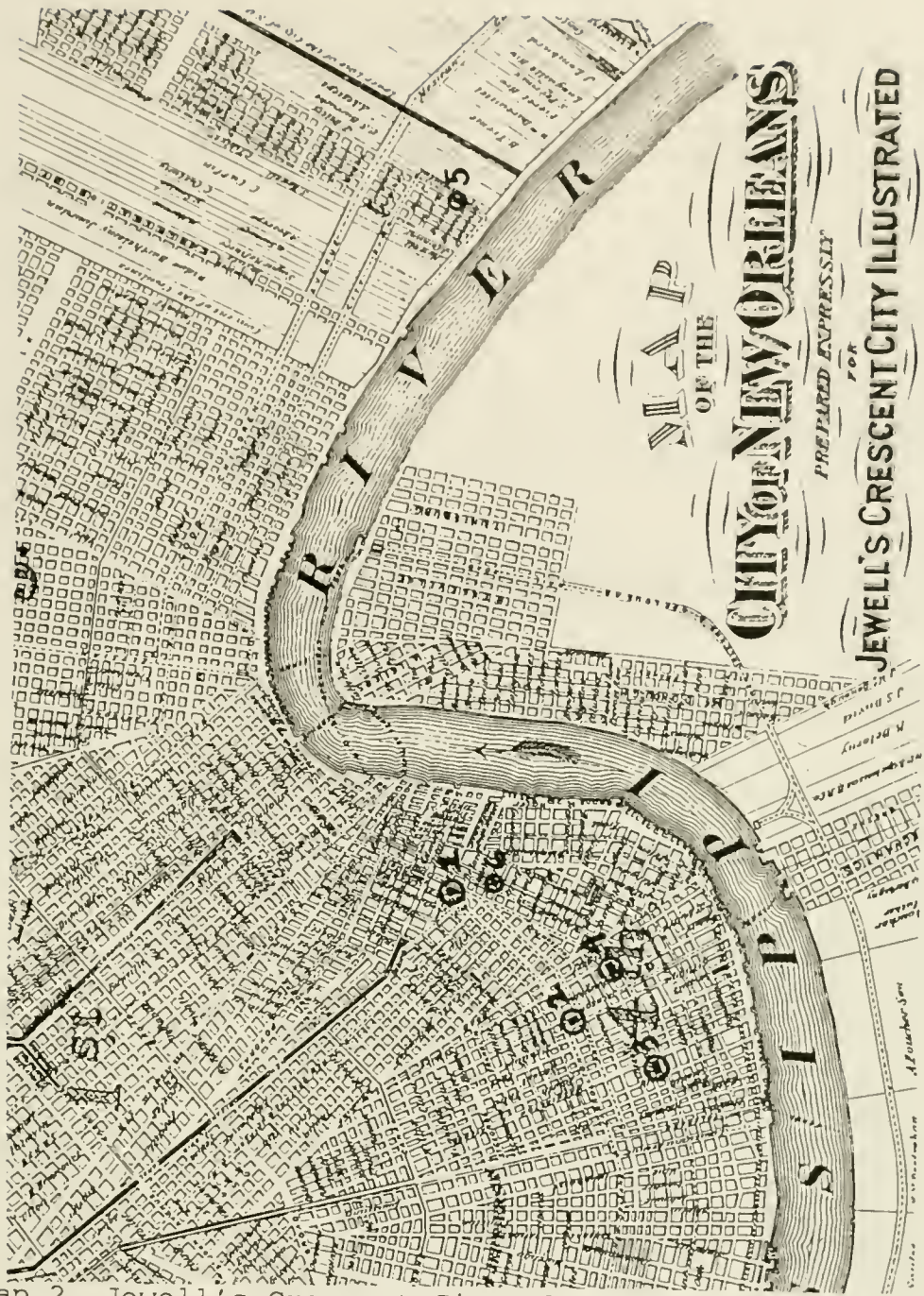
1. Two Greenville Houses in a Garden Setting
2. Carrollton Villa

LEGEND FOR MAP 2

1. An American Sector property
2. A Vegetable Garden in Lafayette
3. James Robb's Romantic Garden
4. The Smelzer House
5. A Third District Garden
6. A Geometric Garden in the First District



Map 1. Manouvrier and Simon. "Plan of New Orleans According to the Legislation of 1870, Showing the Six Districts and the Different Wards." New Orleans Maps, 1870-1873, Louisiana Collection, Tulane University.



Map 2. Jewell's Crescent City Illustrated. N.p., n.d. New Orleans Maps, 1870-1873, Louisiana Collection, Tulane University.

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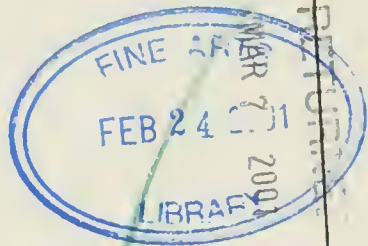
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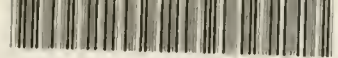
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