National Park Service
Cultural Landscapes Inventory

2022

Oakland Plantation

Cane River Creole National Historical Park

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Introduction

Cultural Landscapes in the Cultural Resources Inventory System:

The Cultural Resources Information System (CRIS)

CRIS is the National Park Service's database of cultural resources on its lands, consisting of archeological sites, historic structures, ethnographic resources and cultural landscapes. The set of CRIS records for cultural landscapes is referred to as CRIS-CL.CRIS-CL records conform to a standardized data structure known as the Cultural
Landscapes Inventory (CLI).
The legislative, regulatory and policy directions for conducting and maintaining the CRIS are: Section 110 of the National Historic Preservation Act, NPS Management Policies (2006), Director's Order 28 (Cultural Resources) and Director's Order 28a (Archeology).

The Cultural Landscapes Inventory (CLI)

The CLI is the data structure within CRIS used to document and evaluate all potentially significant cultural landscapes in which NPS has, or plans to acquire any enforceable legal interest.
Each CRIS-CL record is certified complete when the landscape is determined to meet one of the following:
Landscape individually meets the National Register of Historic Places criteria for evaluation; or,
Landscape is a contributing element of a property that is eligible for the National Register; or,
Landscapes does not meet the National Register criteria, but is managed as cultural resources because of law, policy or decisions reached through the park planning process.
Cultural landscapes vary from historic sites, historic designed landscapes, historic vernacular landscapes to historic ethnographic landscapes, but may also fit within more than one type. Those eligible for the National Register have significance in the nation's history on a national, state or local level, as well as integrity or authenticity.
The legislative, regulatory and policy directions for conducting and maintaining the CLI within CRIS are:
National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (16 USC 470h-2(a)(1)). Each Federal agency shall establish…a preservation program for the identification, evaluation, and nomination to the National Register of Historic Places…of historic properties…

Executive Order 13287: Preserve America, 2003. Sec. 3(a)…Each agency with real property management responsibilities shall prepare an assessment of the current status of its inventory of historic properties required by section 110(a)(2) of the NHPA…No later than September 30, 2004, each covered agency shall complete a report of the assessment and make it available to the Chairman of the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation and the Secretary of the Interior…

Executive Order 13287: Preserve America, 2003. Sec. 3(c) Each agency with real property management responsibilities shall, by September 30, 2005, and every third year thereafter, prepare a report on its progress in identifying… historic properties in its ownership and make the report available to the Council and the Secretary…

The Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines for Federal Agency Historic Preservation Programs Pursuant to the National Historic Preservation Act, 1998. Standard 2: An agency provides for the timely identification and evaluation of historic properties under agency jurisdiction or control and/or subject to effect by agency actions (Sec. 110 (a)(2)(A) Management Policies 2006. 5.1.3.1 Inventories: The Park Service will (1) maintain and expand the following inventories…about cultural resources in units of the national park system…Cultural Landscape Inventory of historic designed landscapes, historic vernacular landscapes,… and historic sites…

Cultural Resource Management Guideline, 1997, Release No. 5, page 22 issued pursuant to Director's Order #28. As cultural resources are identified and evaluated, they should also be listed in the appropriate Service-wide inventories of cultural resources.

General Information

Property Level and CLI Numbers

Inventory Unit Name: Oakland Plantation

Resource Classification: Cultural Landscape

CLI Identification Number: 550072

Parent Landscape: 550072

Inventory Status:

Park Information

Park Name: Cane River Creole National Historical Park

Alpha Code: CARI

Park Organization Code: 5720

Park District: CARI

Region: Southeast

Restricted: Yes

Landscape Description:

Oakland Plantation is one of two units within Cane River Creole National Historical Park. Oakland is located along Cane River (Cane River Lake) about 10 miles south of Natchitoches and is comprised of approximately 45-acre parcel with approximately 40 historic structures and several landscape features. The site is bounded to the north by Hwy 494, to the east by Cane River Lake, and to the south and west by the former cotton fields and woodlands along Bayou Brevelle that were historically part of the plantation. The 45-acre property represents the heart of the plantation, though the former plantation was much larger and originally encompassed adjacent lands. The property is categorized as a historic vernacular landscape and historic site, even though the boundaries of the cultural landscape extend beyond the 45-acre NPS-owned property. The abundant historic features of the unit include the Main House, a Live Oak Allee, Bottle Garden, Overseer's House, Slave Quarters/Tenant Cabins, Plantation Store, Dr. Cottage, Cook's Cabin, Carpenter Shop, Seed House, barns, pigeonnaires, corn crib, grist mill, several smaller outbuildings, fences, cisterns, man-made minnow pond, corral, pecan and fruit orchard, jujube treeline and associated fenced yards.

Jean Pierre Emanuel (Emanuel) Prudhomme first acquired the land that would later become part of Oakland Plantation sometime between 1787 and 1797 (records are unclear) and started working and cultivating it with enslaved labor. By 1821, the Main House had been built on the property, the Oak Allee and Bottle Garden were planted shortly thereafter and the core of the plantation had been formed. Emanuel continued to acquire land, increase his enslaved workforce, and build several agricultural structures until his death. In 1850, his son Pierre Phanor (Phanor) acquired the property and continued growing cotton, corn, and livestock using an increasing number of enslaved workers. The outbreak of the Civil War in 1861 caused Louisiana to secede from the United States and Phanor was an avid supporter of the Confederacy. In 1864, soldiers involved in the Red River Campaign ransacked the plantation. Cotton bales and the cotton gin were burned, the Main House was plundered, and several of Phanor's enslaved workforce left with the Union army. By 1865, Phanor was in the process of trying to rebuild his property, when he passed away.

The end of the Civil War, emancipation of the enslaved, and the death of Phanor, brought significant changes to the Isle Brevelle property. In 1873, Phanor’s two sons divided the Bermuda property roughly in half, with Pierre Emanuel (Emanuel) claiming the property to the east of Cane River, which he renamed Atahoe, and Jacque Alphonse (Alphonse) claiming the property to the west, which he renamed Oakland. In addition to new boundaries and

ownership, a new agricultural system focused on sharecropping, tenant farming, and renting replaced the earlier system of enslaved labor. By 1873, Alphonse had added a Plantation Store at Oakland to provide goods and services for the tenants and the broader community, as well as a new revenue stream for the family. The Store would later also house the Bermuda Post Office.

Even with the new system of sharecropping and tenancy, agriculture continued in a more or less traditional manner throughout the late 19th and early 20th centuries, and agricultural land patterns remained largely unchanged. Descendants of the formerly enslaved—Helaires, Nargots, Toussaints, Williams, and others—continued to live on the property and work the land. However, by the mid-20th century, mechanized agriculture began to bring significant changes to Oakland. In 1959 or 1960, the last tenants, sharecropper descendants of the Helaires, finally departed the plantation, ending a nearly 150-year period of continuous African American occupation. Also, during the twentieth century, the Prudhommes developed other commercial ventures parallel with the rise of automobile culture and improvements to regional infrastructure, including tourism and preservation, creating rental fishing camps in the 1920s, opening the property for tours in the 1940s and 50s, and even leasing the property to the film industry in the late-1950s. By the 1980s, both the post office and store had closed, family-managed agriculture was declining, and the family was increasingly turning to heritage tourism for revenue. In the case of the Prudhommes, their decision to sell the property to the National Park Service (NPS) occurred at a point in time when the business model for agriculture had drastically changed, the maintenance of the plantation was no longer economically feasible, and heritage tourism seemed the most viable option.

In 1994, after years of discussion among family members, the NPS, and local preservation officials, the Cane River National Historical Park (CARI) and Cane River National Heritage Area (CARI-NHA) were created by Congressional legislation. In 1997, NPS acquired four parcels from two different families. One sale document was executed and accepted for the purchase of the Main House and its surroundings; the second sale document was executed and accepted for the purchase of the Doctor’s Cottage and its associated grounds. The last Prudhommes to reside on the property moved away in 1998. At this point, the NPS took ownership of the Oakland unit and began stabilizing structures at the property. Since the 1997 acquisition, the NPS has rehabilitated the outbuildings and Main House, constructed visitor use facilities and infrastructure, and conducted numerous research studies related to Oakland and the Cane River area.

Oakland Plantation was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1979. In 2001, it became a National Historic Landmark, significant as one of a very few remaining, intact plantation complexes in the American South and because it possesses some of the best examples of rural French Creole building techniques. Oakland's period of significance extends from 1821 to 1960, although Oakland continued to be farmed and serve as a Prudhomme family residence past this date. The park manages and interprets the plantation to represent its history through the late 1960s, when mechanization displaced most workers on the plantation.

Landscape Hierarchy Description:

Cane River Creole National Historical Park (CARI) consists of two properties along the Cane River outside Natchitoches, Louisiana. As a 42-acre portion of the historic 3,400-acre Oakland Plantation, the NPS owned portion of Oakland Plantation is classified as a component landscape. A second property, Magnolia Plantation, is an 18 acre landscape that acts as the core of a former 2,500 acre plantation. The Cultural Landscape Inventory - Level I (CLI-Level I) for Oakland Plantation was conducted in 1997. The purpose of the CLI-Level I is to gain a preliminary understanding of the scope of potentially significant cultural landscapes servicewide.

Landscape Type:

Ethnographic Landscape

Historic Vernacular Landscape

Historic Site

Other Names:

Other Name:	Jean Pierre Emmanuel Prud'homme Plantation	**Other Name Type:**	Historic
Other Name:	Oakland Plantation	**Other Name Type:**	Both Current And Historic
Other Name:	Bermuda	**Other Name Type:**	Historic

Figure 53 Existing Conditions plan (STA).

Site Plan of Oakland Plantation, 2020.

Figure 54 Existing Conditions enlargement of Main House (STA).

Enlargement of Site Plan surrounding Oakland Main House, 2020.

Figure 55 Existing Conditions enlargement at Doctor's Cottage (STA).

Enlargement of Site Plan surrounding Doctor's Cottage, 2020.

Revision:

Revised By	Type of Revision	Revision Date	Revision Narrative
NPS, Contractors	Other	08/09/2021	The CLI Level I was completed in 1997, and the park agreed to the content of the 1997 inventory, but the information was not considered complete by CLI standards. The 1997 inventory included field work and limited data entry for the landscape. In 2003, a Cultural Landscape Report Part 1 was completed by Ian Firth and Suzanne Turner, focusing on the plantation landscape from its initial development to 1865. A 1998 existing conditions map, existing conditions narrative, and preliminary treatment recommendations were also included. In 2016, a contract for the Oakland Cultural Landscape Report Part 2 was awarded to Joseph K. Opperman, with sub Suzanne Turner Associates, LLC. The final CLR Part 2 was completed in June 2021 and focused on the era between 1865 and 2020. The CLR Part 2 also included an updated existing conditions chapter, analysis, and more thorough treatment recommendations. This CLI, completed in FY22, is the culmination of all information from the early 1997 CLI, 2003 CLR, and 2021 CLR.

Geographic Information

State and County:

State	County
Louisiana	Natchitoches County

Size (Acres): 45

Land Tract Number(s)

Tract 102-01 (Main House, 42 acres), Tract 102-03 (Dr. Cottage, 2.16-acres)

Boundary Description:

The historic landscape of Oakland Plantation extends beyond the NPS-owned portion of the site. However, for the CLI, the boundary coincides with the NPS ownership. The CLI boundary roughly follows LA Highway 494 to the north and east, and follows a fence line to the south and west.

Boundary Coordinates

Source	Type of Point	Latitude	Longitude	Narrative
Aerial Photograph	Area	31.668461	-93.0064520196775	
Aerial Photograph	Area	31.6669	-93.000183	
Aerial Photograph	Area	31.663311	-93.00147	
Aerial Photograph	Area	31.661987	-93.0064525325916	
Aerial Photograph	Area	31.66406	-93.006287	

Location Map:

Map of Oakland Plantation within the greater Cane River and Natchitoches area.

Regional Landscape Contexts:

Type of Context: Cultural

Description:

The Natchitoches area is noted for its ethnically diverse history including Native American, French, Spanish, African, Creole and American influences. The Prudhomme family of Oakland Plantation has a long history as one of the most powerful and productive family run plantations along the Cane River. At one point, the Prudhomme family owned several thousand acres in the area, including Atahoe Plantation directly across Cane River.

Oakland Plantation is also known for its cultural associations with several African American families, including the Helaires. African Americans were first enslaved on the plantation and later worked as sharecroppers and tenant farmers. Several family lineages can be traced to Oakland for over 200 years. Although African American descendants did not own the land or houses they occupied, their contributions to Oakland are just as significant as the white, planter class of the Prudhommes family.

Type of Context: Physiographic

Description:

Oakland is located on Cane River Lake, a dammed portion of Cane River, in the level, fertile floodplain of the Red River Valley. Cane River was the main channel of the Red River until a log raft was removed upstream from Natchitoches in the 1820s-1830s, causing the main channel to shift to the east its current location. Afterwards, the Cane River became a secondary stream that was later dammed to create a lake.

The land in the valley is quite new, in geologic terms: it was deposited during the Holocene epoch, which spans only the last ten thousand years. The vegetation is lush and semi-tropical, with a forest canopy typically being in the Oak-Gum-Cypress association. Large specimens of live oak, pecan and catalpa are quite common in the cultural landscape.

Type of Context: Political

Description:

Oakland Plantation lies within the fourth Congressional District of Louisiana, a traditionally Republican part of the State.

Management Information

General Management Information

Management Category: Must be Preserved and Maintained

Management Category Date: 08/09/2021

Management Category Explanatory Narrative:

Oakland Plantation was listed as a National Historic Landmark in 2001 and must be preserved. It is also a fundamental park resource that is called out in the park's enabling legislation.

Management Agreements: N/A

Legal Interests:

Type of Interest: Fee Simple

Narrative:

Located in managed wilderness?: No

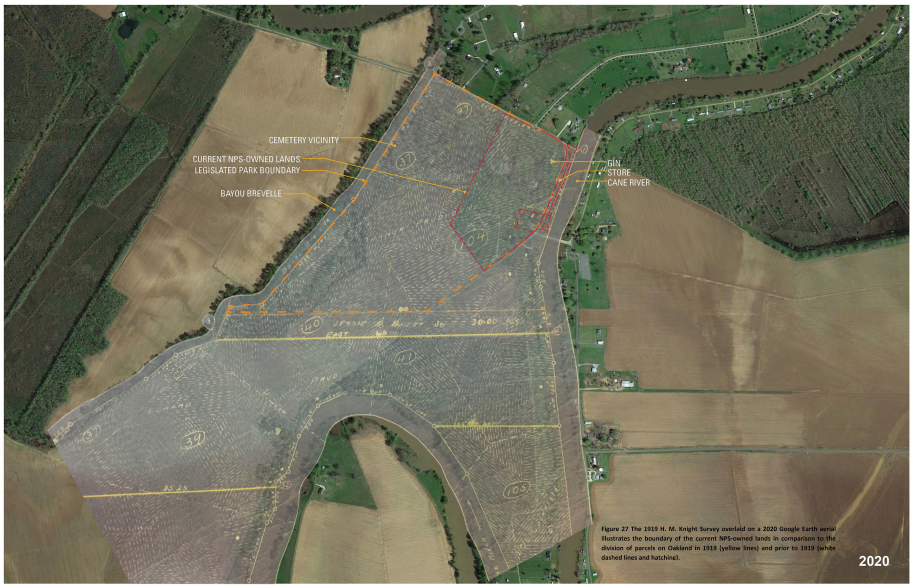
Adjacent Lands Information

Do Adjacent Lands Contribute? Yes

Adjacent Lands Narrative:

Adjacent landscape features contribute to the historical landscape and broader spatial patterns of the once-larger Oakland Plantation. Cane River Lake, while no longer a commercial route, still contributes visually to the cultural landscape. The 1912 steel trestle bridge (Bermuda Bridge) that spans Cane River and the enslaved cemetery adjacent to Bayou Brevelle are also important features. Some of the land is still in agricultural production, mainly producing corn and some cotton, as it has for two centuries. However, the primary land use on adjacent lands has shifted from agricultural to residential housing since 2000. Some remnant features remain on undeveloped tracts that are still in agricultural use.

Adjacent Lands Graphic:



Adjacent lands map, showing Oakland Plantation and surrounding features that were originally part of the larger plantation.

National Register Information

National Register of Historic Places

Documentation Status: Entered Inadequately Documented

Documentation Narrative Description:

A National Register nomination was completed by Mrs. J. Alphonse Prudhomme, co-owner of the home, in 1979. The nomination was accepted and certified that same year. The nomination focuses on the Main House and history of the family based on oral tradition; it does not provide adequate documentation of the outbuildings or agricultural landscape. An addendum was prepared by SHPO (Jonathan Frick) in 1989 that begins, though still insufficiently, to address the agricultural landscape and outbuildings. The addendum was not accepted, however, and the cultural landscape of Oakland remains inadequately documented both on the National Register and in the nomination forms.

Eligibility: Eligible -- Keeper

Concurrence Eligibility Date: 01/01/1979

Concurrence Narrative:

Significance Level: National

Contributing: Individual

Classification: District

Documentation Status: Entered Inadequately Documented

Documentation Narrative Description:

A National Historic Landmark nomination was completed for Oakland Plantation in 2001, shortly after the park was established. While it expands upon the significance and enumerates the contributing features of the plantation, several contributing landscape features were omitted.

Eligibility: Eligible -- Keeper

Concurrence Eligibility Date: 01/01/2001

Concurrence Narrative:

Significance Level: National

Contributing: Individual

Classification: District

Statement of Significance for National Register of Historic Places:

1979 National Register Nomination

Oakland Plantation was listed to the National Register of Historic Places (NR) in 1979, twenty years before the NPS assumed ownership of the current and much smaller Oakland Unit. The property was nominated under NR criteria A and C, for its “architectural and social significance.” The 1979 NR nomination focused on local and statewide significance and established the period of significance as 1800-1899, emphasizing the period between 1818-1821 likely to reflect when the first buildings of the plantation were constructed. Because Oakland’s nomination occurred before the broad recognition of the contribution of cultural landscapes to historic significance and prior to the establishment of a methodology for assessing landscape integrity, the document focused almost exclusively on descriptions of Oakland’s Creole architectural heritage and its agricultural history. Of the architecture, the 1979 Statement of Significance noted that Oakland is “one of the finest examples of a raised cottage plantation house in the area of Natchitoches Parish,” and “has the second most complete collection of surviving outbuildings of any plantation in the parish.” The Statement of Significance ascribed the property’s social significance to its ownership “by the same family throughout its entire history, something unusual in Louisiana.”

2001 National Historic Landmark Nomination

The National Historic Landmark (NHL) nomination prepared from 2000–2001 used the property’s National Register designation under criterion A (association with significant events of the past) and criterion C (embodiment of distinctive characteristics of the past) as the starting point for considering the property’s significance as a landmark. The NHL Statement of Significance asserted that “[Oakland] is of architectural significance as one of the nation’s most complete expressions of the rural French Creole building tradition. It is significant in the history of American agriculture as one of a very limited number of large plantation complexes remaining in the South.” Consequently, Oakland received NHL designation under Criteria 1, 4,

and 5, and under the themes of Developing the American Economy (Extraction and production) and Expressing Cultural Values (Architecture, landscape architecture, and urban design). The NHL designation expanded Oakland Plantation's level of significance from statewide to national. The designation also dramatically expanded the property's dates of significance. It expanded the Oakland's agricultural significance from 1818-1821 to 1818-1950, to capture the NR's fifty-year cutoff, noting that "Oakland continued to operate as a cotton plantation up to and past this date." It expanded the property's architectural significance from 1818-1821 to 1818-mid-19th century.

Evaluation of NR and NHL Designations

Within the 1979 NR and 2001 NHL statements of significance, the lack of discussion about the historic/former riverfront setting and cultural development patterns that occurred in response to riverfront and backswamp, hierarchical patterns of residential and commercial development on the property, which supported the property as a working plantation, and absence of meaningful discussion of the enslaved and tenant labor force that made the commercial operation achievable and profitable is problematic. These former statements of significance offer a narrow and limited perspective of Oakland's historical significance, and as a result, an incomplete evaluation and limited understanding of its integrity.

Oakland's historical record (family photographs, farm records, deeds, museum artifacts) heavily privileges the viewpoint of planter and slaveowner over that of tenant and enslaved person; the existing NR and NHL documents reflect this limited view. Landscape archeology might help to rectify some of this disparity and yield important clues to a past not recorded through text or image. In the interim, the CLR Part 2 recommended that the 1979 NR nomination, which includes little to no discussion of the landscapes of enslavement and tenancy, or indeed the cultural landscape at all, is outdated and deficient as a baseline preservation document for protecting Oakland's landscape and in need of serious revision. Likewise, the 2001 NHL nomination requires revision.

The discussion of agriculture in the NHL Statement of Significance states that "The plantation system represents a significant chapter in the history of American agriculture," and provides global context, noting that this system "has its origins in India in the eighth century, and that this system spread far and wide, developing "in North Africa and various parts of the New World." The statement acknowledges that "Plantations are an important aspect of American agricultural history," and "revolve around a cash crop grown at a large scale for profit." The statement notes that "A successful plantation region requires…abundant, landless, and cheap rural labor." Finally, it states that "the phrase 'southern plantation' conjures up all sorts of images, particularly the grand white-columned mansion…" Nowhere in the 2001 Statement of Significance do the authors directly acknowledge the plantation's foundational relationship to the institution of slavery, which evolved to sharecropping and tenancy farming, although in the document, "Sharecropping and Tenant farming" is a checked box listing one of Oakland's historic contexts.

The NR and NHL significance sections note the continuity of Prudhomme family ownership and management to historical significance, but they do not include explicit mention or description of the multiple generations of enslaved, sharecropper, and tenant laborers who made the plantation enterprise economically viable. This is understood today as an egregious oversight. Nor does the NHL contain any mention of the Cane River Lake setting and the seminal role this former river played in shaping the plantation landscape.

The NHL documentation does at least list the Bottle Garden and Live Oak Allée as contributing sites, but it provides no description of these features or statement of their significance. In fact, the NHL lists criterion numbers for which it designates the property (1, 4, and 5), but it provides no associated narrative. In both the NR and NHL designations, descriptions of the Bottle Garden and Live Oak Allée, the most distinctive designed landscape spaces on the property, should be expanded. These features should be reassessed as contributing elements to historic significance, along with expanded descriptions of the house yards, farm enclosures, historic fence lines, Doctor's Cottage landscape and other historic landscape elements. Once the separate Cultural Landscape Report for the Bottle Garden which is underway is completed, that garden's significance as a unique or rare example of its type (perhaps another expression of Creole heritage) will likely need to be reassessed and the descriptions revised and expanded within the documentation.

At a broader scale, the two documents must include a thorough and richer discussion of Cane River Lake, and the role the former river played in shaping Oakland Plantation's landscape rhythm and hierarchy. Furthermore, the NHL evaluation of landscape integrity is not based on the NPS categories of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. Although the 2001 GMP and 2006 Long-Range Interpretive Plan begin to address Oakland's more complex cultural landscape, management and planning documents must be supported by accurate and more adequate federal designations. As a result, the statement of significance offered here is the most comprehensive given the property's depth and breadth of history.

Statement of Significance

The updated Statement of Significance for this CLI (taken from CLR Part 2) acknowledges the complexity of Oakland's layered landscape and addresses the inadequacies of the earlier statements is outlined in this section. The outline serves as a framework and should be further developed within a formally updated NR nomination. NHL
numeric criteria designations are denoted at the end of relevant sections, in order to guide updates to that document, as well. The Statement of Significance outline/framework follows:

Oakland Plantation, including the approximately 45 acres within current park boundaries and the 144-acres within the property's legislative boundaries, is historically significant under Criteria A, B, C, and D:

The setting of Oakland on Cane River Lake (formerly Red River and Cane River, respectively), illuminates a distinctive cultural response to the river, which in effect, shaped the landscape that would become Oakland Plantation. The continuity of land use and labor, comprised of multiple generations of enslaved, sharecropper, and tenant laborers working and dwelling on the landscape and making the plantation enterprise economically viable, under the possession of multiple generations of the Prudhomme family (the enslavers and plantation owners) who continuously owned and dwelled on the plantation, provides an unusually complex and detailed window into the past.

As a cultural landscape, Oakland Plantation retains historic significance on multiple accounts:

Criterion A (Criterion 1): For its two-hundred-year continuum of evolving vernacular agricultural, social, and rural environmental history; for contributions to the preservation and understanding of historic cotton agriculture in the Cane River Valley and the plantation economy at large within the United States. The Plantation Store/Post Office is a well-preserved example of the rural commissary that emerged after Emancipation to facilitate the exchange of goods and services between sharecroppers, tenants, and landowners, as a clearinghouse for farm operations and business transactions, and ultimately, as a de facto community center.

Criterion B (Criterion 2): For its continuity of occupation, until mid-century, by generations of descendants of formerly enslaved Creoles and Africans who transformed Oakland's landscape during the Antebellum era, and whose Creole and African American descendants continued to shape the landscape from Emancipation until the mid-twentieth century as sharecroppers and tenant laborers residing on the land. Indeed, the enslaved labor force collectively built the Creole structures that are well preserved at Oakland, and their contributions to the American fabric should be explicitly recognized and elevated within the historical record and national narrative, as have long been those of generations of wealthy landowners in historical and culturally interpreted settings. The same enslaved labor force, and subsequently, descendant sharecroppers and residential tenant labor, plowed the fields, picked the cotton, tended the gardens, and shaped the landscapes of Oakland with their labor for some hundred and fifty years.

For its two-hundred-year continuum of ownership and dwelling by generations of a single Creole family, the Prud'hommes, which provides a rare opportunity to further research and interpret the cultural and widespread economic power of the institution of slavery and agricultural tenancy.

Criterion C (Criterion 4): For its association with Cane River Lake (formerly Red River and Cane River, respectively) and the associated backswamp, from which arpent patterns or longlot property divisions evolved, running east to west, to ensure that each landowner would have access to river commerce, fertile

levee soils, positive drainage, and valuable timber resources on their property. The long pie-shaped wedges ultimately established residential and commercial development and circulation patterns, including the locations of ditch lines and swales, field patterns, and lanes, whose traces are still evident today. Beyond influencing the physical development patterns, the riverfront and its backswamp informed yearly, seasonal, and daily rhythms of living on the land.

For its presentation and preservation of Creole cultural heritage—its unique and extensive collection of Creole residential architecture, commercial and farm structures; Oakland's oldest structures represent classic construction techniques of the French Creole tradition in Louisiana, including bousillage, French joinery, and cypress construction. Furthermore, the Bottle Garden, in its original location with its original materials, is one of the last extant Bottle Gardens in the United States.

Criterion D (Criterion 5): For the survival of a portion of the former Tenant Quarters Area with Overseer's House and Tenant Cabins/Slave Quarters, and the survival of a former Slave/African American Cemetery (located within the legislative boundary, but at this writing, not within the park property). Slave cemeteries, generally unmarked, have been and continue to be erased overtime and/or lost to development, and the cemetery at Oakland provides a rare opportunity to preserve and interpret this rare historic asset. Both areas provide the potential to yield important archeological information about former land patterns associated with this significant landscape of enslavement and later sharecropping and tenancy farming, along with potential insight into the daily lives of the generations of sharecroppers and tenant farmers who worked the land after Emancipation, just as their enslaved ancestors had before. Further archeological investigation may elucidate the complex stories concealed beneath the surface of the land.

Period of Significance (1821-1960)

Oakland's vernacular landscape, in its entirety (spanning its legislative boundaries), represents a continuum of evolution through time, rather than a static moment. This CLR recommends a start date of 1821 and an end date of 1960 for the Period of Significance. This start date corresponds to the year that the earliest landscape features, such as the Live Oak Allée and parterre garden, were established. This end date corresponds with the end of sharecropping and tenancy at Oakland—when the last tenant farmers vacated
the property, mechanized harvesters, herbicides, pesticides, and fertilizers were becoming increasingly available and widely used, and leasing fundamentally transformed traditional family agricultural practices—and when field patterns began to change and highways brought new development to the region. Furthermore, apart from minor fence line or lane repairs and realignments, no significant additions to landscape features or buildings on the part of the Prudhomme family appear to have occurred after 1960, and photos substantiate a general increase in volunteer vegetation and decline in building maintenance after that date.

Establishing 1960 as an end date at Oakland parallels a decision made at the Magnolia Unit to use the end of tenancy as a bookend date.96 It is also in keeping with the recommendations of the 2001 CARI GMP final draft, which provided five alternative approaches for managing the park, two of which recommended that the landscape should "reflect the continuum of history up to about 1960, when both plantations had ceased being family-run plantations." Additional research conducted for the Magnolia CLR yielded a later date for the end of tenancy there, and as a result, the Period of Significance for Magnolia has been extended to 1976 to better align with the end of the tenancy period. However, the end date for the Period of Significance at Oakland remains 1960 based on available evidence that this date marked the end of residential tenancy
there.

Assessment of Landscape Integrity

The National Register of Historic Places (NR) establishes the seven criteria by which to evaluate historical integrity: location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. These criteria provide the descriptive framework for comparing a landscape's existing conditions to its conditions during the period of significance. For vernacular agricultural landscapes, such as Oakland's, location, setting, feeling, and association might seem the most applicable criteria for evaluating integrity. But the remaining three criteria, design, materials, and workmanship, can also be applied here. Oakland's landscape, though not

designed in the most technical sense, exhibits architectural and spatial patterns related to the demands of agricultural production and labor, utilizes local materials such as cypress timber and bousillage in construction, and exhibits a high, rare, or vanishing level of vernacular workmanship, especially as the antebellum structures and landscape features were probably all largely the product of enslaved labor and craft, and then maintained, repaired and cultivated in later periods by generations of sharecropper and tenant descendants of the formerly enslaved.

An assessment of the integrity of the landscape at Oakland must be approached from two different scales; first, that of the broader agricultural landscape with its backswamps and wooded pastures, much of which is not contained within current NPS boundaries; and secondly, at the scale of the NPS-owned core historic property, with its various yards, enclosures, residences, dependencies, outbuildings, and peripheral farm buildings. The integrity of Oakland's landscape is assessed below using the seven categories previously noted: location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association.

Location

Oakland sits in the still largely rural agricultural landscape of the Isle Brevelle, a geographical island defined historically by the Red River (later Cane River) to the east and Bayou Brevelle to the west. Cane River (now Cane River Lake) is the seminal and most important feature for understanding the landscape at Oakland and the location of the plantation itself. The river was the historic lifeblood of the antebellum plantation, and the modern-day lake, a locus of local identity, remains the geographic anchor for the property along its eastern edge. The plantation sits on the fertile natural levees of the former river and the original land holdings extended from the river west to the backswamps along Bayou Brevelle. The backswamps were equally important to the establishment of the plantation because valuable cypress timber was sourced there, and later cattle were pastured.

Some of the historic arpent patterns or longlot property divisions, which extended from the center line of the river to the backswamps along perpendicular transect lines, creating long pie-shaped wedges, are stillapparent in the field patterns, older lanes, and ditch lines surrounding Oakland, and within the current property, notably in the axial orientation of the Main House and allée to the lakefront and the generally east-west orientation of the Farm Lane.

The traditional drainage ways and agricultural ditches that once conveyed water back from the higher levee land near the river to the backswamps, following property boundaries or field divisions, have been largely obscured by mechanized agriculture or later developments, such as the park entrance drive, which cuts across the landscape against the historic grain. The fact that visitors now enter this landscape from the rear, away from the river (and by car), and move from north to south, rather than from east to west, complicates the legibility of the historic patterns and their orientation to the river. But at least for now, the river remains the eastern anchor of the property and wooded backswamps still exist on adjacent property and are visible from the site.

Design

Although the Oakland Unit represents a mere fraction of the Prud'homme's former land holdings (and especially of the cultivated agricultural fields), the Historic Residential Core and associated landscapes are largely intact and, thanks to the stabilization efforts of the NPS, remarkably well preserved. The architectural details and construction techniques on display in the primary buildings (Main House, Overseer's House, plantation store) and dependencies (Pigeonniers) are significant expressions of the French Creole style, and are reinforced by landscape features, like the Bottle Garden and Live Oak Allée, that are unique or exemplary expressions of more formally designed spaces within this otherwise rural vernacular property. Most accounts suggest that the Live Oak Allée and Bottle Garden (at least the original parterre layout) were created in the decade or so after the Main House (1818-21), and, as such, present a unified and axial spatial arrangement focused on the Main House that dates from an early period in the agricultural development of the Cane River region. The vernacular landscape grew through accretion and necessity over time, but taken as a whole, represents a remarkable expression of pragmatic function, rural ingenuity and intensive labor, shaped largely by the hands of the plantation's enslaved inhabitants prior to Emancipation, then cultivated and maintained by several generations of sharecroppers and tenant farmers who were often descendants of the plantations formerly enslaved. This is a remarkable legacy of design in

the landscape (the Carpenter's shop still stands in the Main House yard as testament to the valued craftsmanship and design skills of the plantation's laborers; and the archeological site of the Blacksmith's shop/forge provides a further interpretive opportunity to expand upon this theme).

Setting

Much has changed in the landscape at Oakland since the agricultural heydays of the 1850s, but much in the natural setting has remained constant. Agricultural land and open fields have in some cases reverted to woodlots or suburban parcels along the river/lake; modern circulation routes have superseded and obscured historic road patterns; farm buildings, dependencies and tenement dwellings have vanished or been relocated within a shrinking agricultural acreage; even the Red River, whose patterns of flooding and deposition created the natural levees and fertile soils that supported plantation agriculture to begin with, shifted courses in the 1830s to create the Cane River (now Cane River Lake). As a result, the property is no longer on the Red River, but on a relic or distributary channel known as Cane River, which was further modified by the construction of dams in the 1910s to create the current Cane River Lake. As the lake became a recreational feature in the twentieth century, land patterns were further modified along its length by the creation of small residential parcels that front directly on the lake (there is at least one such residence within the immediate viewshed of Oakland opposite the drive to the Doctor's Cottage). These newer parcels do obscure the original longlot patterns and the orientation of the older plantation building clusters to the river. But the river and backswamp remain, if not part of park property, at least visible from it. A rural setting still predominates but might be compromised in the future if additional subdivision occurs south of the site and along the lake. Subdivisions have already enveloped the land to the north and west of the park along Hwy 494.

Materials and Workmanship

The assemblage of domestic and commercial architecture, associated yards, landscape and garden features, farm buildings, agricultural fence lines, and livestock enclosures provides a unique window into vernacular building craft and workmanship in the Cane River region. A number of the oldest structures exhibit construction techniques and materials associated with French Creole cultural traditions, including bousillage, French joinery, and cypress timber framing and cladding. Although, there are a few other extant examples of such constructions in Louisiana (Pointe Coupee/False River comes to mind), none is more concentrated than here. In addition, the various fences and fence types (rail, post and wire, picket, barbed, board) represented on the property (some historic, some modern, some reconstructed, some vanished) are indicative of a pragmatic and flexible approach to shaping space and separating function in the agricultural landscape. Whether original, reconstructed, or repaired over time, these small-scale features are significant to the rural vernacular character of the property and should be preserved and maintained.

In terms of designed spaces, the Bottle Garden and Live Oak Allée are perhaps most expressive of the level of horticultural detail and workmanship embellished on the more formal spaces that front the main plantation residence. The brick path in the garden, the picket fence, the paired live oaks along the allée are reminders of the specialized gardening skills and design vision, the desire for order and status, of an earlier generation. The whole property, architecture and landscape, could be viewed as an expression of specialized labor too, first by the enslaved who almost certainly built the original structures, cleared and cultivated the landscapes, and enclosed the fields, and maintained them over time, and later by their sharecropper and tenant descendants who continued to maintain and transform the Oakland landscape over the course of the twentieth century as day laborers.

Feeling

Even with the significant loss of acreage over time, the property still maintains the feeling of a rural agricultural property, largely due to its relative isolation. The natural setting along Cane River Lake is still an asset in this respect, despite modern incursions visible along its eastern banks. And because it is still surrounded to the south by working agricultural land, it can "borrow" views of the cultivated landscape, even though it no longer contains any actively cultivated ground. The balance of shaded residential yards and spaces with the openness of backfields and pasture also contributes to the sense of dwelling and working, leisure and labor, which have existed historically side by side on the plantation. The thinning and decline of older vegetation could begin to compromise this in the future as interior or perimeter views open

up and the sense of shaded enclosure around the residential structures begins to decline.

Association

The associations of the property with dwelling, commerce, and labor are still captured in the range of structures and landscapes preserved here. The Main House, Doctor's Cottage and their residential landscapes speak to the multi-generational occupation and management of the land by the extended Prudhomme family, the Store and Fishing Camp area speak to some of their diversifying commercial ventures after Emancipation and during the twentieth century, and the remnants of the agricultural landscape, including the quarter's area (Overseer's House and Tenant Cabins/Slave Quarters) and gin site, speak to the landscape of labor and the endurance, perseverance, and resilience of the property's other long-term occupants and shapers, the enslaved workers, sharecroppers and tenant farmers, who made the plantation enterprise viable. The recently restored gas pumps and Esso sign in the store yard help to reassert the commercial function and mid-century roadside aesthetic that was common to the rural country store. Taken as a whole, the property offers an intriguing glimpse into this complex former ecosystem and a wealth of interpretive possibilities.

National Register Significance Criteria:

A - Associated with events significant to broad patterns of our history

C - Embodies distinctive construction, work of master, or high artistic values

D - Has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important to prehistory or history

National Register Criteria Consideration:

National Register Periods of Significance (with Historic Context Themes):

Time Period: CE 1821 - CE 1960

Historic Context Theme	Subtheme	Facet	Other Facet
Expressing Cultural Values	Other Expressing Cultural Values	Other Expressing Cultural Values	
Creating Social Institutions and Movements	Ways of Life	Slavery And Plantation Life	
Creating Social Institutions and Movements	Ways of Life	Domesticity And Family Life	
Creating Social Institutions and Movements	Recreation	Tourism	
Developing the American Economy	Agriculture	Plantation Agriculture	
Developing the American Economy	Agriculture	Sharecropping, And Tenant Farming	
Peopling Places	Colonial Exploration and Settlement	French Exploration And Settlement	
Shaping the Political Landscape	The Civil War	The Antebellum South	
Shaping the Political Landscape	The Civil War	Abolishment Of Slavery	
Shaping the Political Landscape	Political and Military Affairs 1865-1939	The Reconstruction Era, 1865-1877	
Transforming the Environment	Other Transforming the Environment	Other Transforming the Environment	

Area of Significance:

Area of Significance Category: Agriculture

Area of Significance Category: Architecture

Area of Significance Category: Archeology

Area of Significance Category: Ethnic Heritage

Area of Significance Subcategory: Black

Area of Significance Category: Exploration - Settlement

Area of Significance Category: Social History

NRIS Information:

NRIS Name:	Jean Pierre Emmanuel Prudhomme Plantation (Oakland; Atahoe)
NRIS ID:	79001073
NRIS URL:	https://catalog.archives.gov/id/73974070
Primary Certification Date:	08/29/1979

State Register Documentation:

National Histric Landmarks:

National Historic Landmark?	Yes
Theme:	Agriculture
Contributing:	Individual
NHL ID:	
NHL URL:	
Date:	01/01/2021

Statement of Significance for National Historic Landmark:

The NHL nomination from 2001 lists Criteria 1, 4, and 5 for Oakland Plantation in the areas of Agriculture and Architecture. Refer to the 2001 NHL nomination for additional details. Also see discussion above regarding the inadequacies of the NHL nomination.

World Heritage Site:

World Heritage Site? No

Category:

WHS ID:

WHS URL:

Date:

Is Resource within a designated National Natural Landscape: No

Chronology and Physical History

Chronology:

Year	Event	Major Event Narrative
CE 1726	Settled	The first Prudhomme family member (Jean-Pierre Phillippe Prudhomme, Emanuel's grandfather) settles in Natchitoches in 1726 and is a soldier at Fort St. Jean Batiste (CLR Part 1, 39).
CE 1763	Land Transfer	Transfer of Louisiana from France to Spain (CLR Part 1, 36).
CE 1780 - 1789	Settled	Spanish authorities grant land that later becomes the core of Oakland Plantation to Nicholas Rosseau. The parcel is in disputed territory between Spain and France (CLR Part 1, 36 and 40).
CE 1787 - 1797	Settled	Emanuel Prudhomme acquires the Nicholas Rousseau tract, located thirteen miles south of Natchitoches. Family accounts suggest that Emanuel was working the land 19 years before he acquired it, and the acquisition took place in 1792. However, Emanuel later testifies to the US Government that the original acquisition date is January 18, 1797. Actual acquisition date unknown (CLR Part 1, 40). Around this same time, he acquires property adjacent to the Rousseau tract. Emanuel later testifies that this second tract was acquired on November 27, 1787 from "Congra, a free Negro, who purchased from Dominique Rachal." (CLR Part 1, 41).
CE 1800	Land Transfer	Louisiana is transferred from Spain to France.
CE 1803	Land Transfer	Louisiana is transferred from France to the United States as part of the Louisiana Purchase.
CE 1810	Inhabited	1810 Census: Emanuel owns 53 slaves.
CE 1812	Settled	The US Government certifies Emanuel's land claims, including ownership of the Rousseau Tract and adjacent parcel (CLR Part 1, 36).
CE 1816	Platted	Survey of Rosseau Tract records exact boundaries and size, totaling 716.74 acres. The adjacent parcel added another 100 acres to his land holdings (CLR Part 1, 36 and 41).
CE 1818 - 1821	Built	Construction of Oakland Main House (CLR Part 1, 36). Planting of Oak Allee and Bottle Garden also occur during this time (circa 1821-1826). According to the family, there was an earlier house on the property, but it was built lower to the ground and perhaps nearer to the river as it was continuously threatened by flooding (CLR Part 1, 43).
CE 1820	Inhabited	1820 Census: Emanuel reports owning 74 slaves (CLR Part 1, 36).

Year	Event	Major Event Narrative
CE 1821 - 1831	Expanded	Emanuel acquires additional land. Exchange of land between Emanuel and Benjamin Metoyer occurs in 1821, Emanuel purchases 40 arpents on Isle Brevelle from Balthazar Brevelle in 1829, and Emanuel purchases Jean Baptiste Rachal's plantation in 1831 (CLR Part 1, 36).
CE 1830	Inhabited	1830 Census: Emanuel owns 92 slaves (CLR Part 1, 43).
CE 1835	Inhabited	By the 1830s, Emanuel's son, Pierre-Phanor takes over the daily operations of the plantation. Phanor and his wife live in a new house south of the main house (CLR Part 1, 37 and 45).
CE 1835	Built	Formal garden (Bottle Garden) built in front of main house. Exact construction date unknown (circa 1821-1826 or 1835)
CE 1835 - 1849	Cultivated	Phanor tracks the plantation operations through notebooks and journals from the 1830s to 1849. His notes include details about enslaved people, cotton, corn, sweet potatoes, hogs, oxen, mules, and other livestock and crops grown on the plantation (CLR Part 1, 47-55). Fields required the construction of drainage ditches which were added in 1837. The livestock required the addition of fences and outbuildings on the plantation.
CE 1838	Cultivated	Phanor mentions two cotton mill (cotton gins) on the plantation (CLR Part 1, 56-57). A stable, storehouses, and slave hospital are also mentioned.
CE 1840	Inhabited	1840 Census: A total of 144 slaves work the plantation. 74 belong to Emanuel and 26 belong to Phanor (CLR Part 1, 47).
CE 1850	Land Transfer	Phanor purchases his parents plantation in 1850, following Emanuel's death in 1845. An inventory of the property taken in 1849 describes the plantation as "situated on the two banks of the Red [Cane] River at about thirteen miles from the town of Natchitoches, having an area on the two banks of 1250 acres more or less, of which 900 acres are cultivated, 200 in savane, 150 in wood, having a cotton gin on each bank of the river, an owner's house and dependencies, forge, storehouses, etc." (CLR Part 1, 57-58). The 103 enslaved people on the plantation were sold in 66 lots. Phanor purchased 29 of the 66 lots, keeping 46 people from the sale. Other members of the Prudhomme family bought the rest, so that only 7 of the lots were sold outside of the Prudhomme family (CLR Part 1, 60).

Year	Event	Major Event Narrative
CE 1853	Cultivated	An inventory of the property is completed after Phanor's wife dies. The inventory describes "All that certain tract of land or plantation situate on both sides of the Red River about Thirteen mi1es below the Town of Natchitoches Containing Two Thousand One hundred Acres more or less together with all the Building improvements and appurtenances Thereunto belonging:- Eight hundred acres of which are under cultivation and being the same on which the said Phanor Prudhomme now resides appraised at the sum of Twentyeight Thousand five hundred Dollars $28,500." (CLR Part 1, 65). In addition, Phanor owned 132 slaves (CLR Part 1, 68).
CE 1856 - 1861	Cultivated	Phanor mentions gardening in his journals, including planting trees such as bors d'arc (osage orange), cedars, "chevres vert" (probably live oaks), pecans, apples, and nectarines. He also mentions vegetables such as solid white celery, winnings cabbage, new prickly spinach, Avane's early cabbage, orange melons, and winter squad from Parish (CLR Part 1, 87).
CE 1860	Farmed/Harvested	1860 census notes Oakland Plantation contains 3,400 acres with 147 slaves.
CE 1860	Cultivated	A third cotton gin was built on the plantation, replacing the two earlier gins. A steam-powered gristrnill is also erected at this time (CLR Part 1, 75).
CE 1861	Military Operation	Civil War begins; Louisiana secedes from the Union, joining the Confederacy.
CE 1861	Built	Overseer's House is built in 1861. The overseer at the time is Seneca Pace, an Anglo-American from Mississippi who was employed at the plantation for 7 years (CLR Part 1, 75).
CE 1862	Built	Various small construction projects were started: fences around the Overseer's House and Doctor's yard were built, as well as a new cabin for the carpenter (possible carpenter shed), was constructed in the plantation yard (CLR Part 1, 92).
CE 1864	Military Operation	Red River Campaign occurs. Union forces reach the plantation by March 22. On March 31, Phanor writes "Several have camped in the yard- the men have pillaged my house - the whites. the blacks, the officers as well as the soldiers." About a quarter of the enslaved population, 11 men. 10 women, and 15 children leave with the Union Army (CLR Part 1, 104). The main house is ransacked again by a soldier on April 7. The following day, two additional enslaved people leave (CLR Part 1, 104).
CE 1864	Damaged	As soldiers from the Red River campaign retreat from Mansfield to the south through the Cane River area, 900 bales of cotton and the cotton gin is burned on Phanor's plantation (CLR Part 1, 105).

Year	Event	Major Event Narrative
CE 1865	Military Operation	The Civil War ends and Reconstruction begins. Phanor signs agreements with his formerly enslaved population to continue to work the plantation under a new system (CLR Part 1, 107).
CE 1865	Cultivated	Phanor's sharecroppers continue to plan crops that had been grown on previous years, including sugar cane, beans, melons, potatoes, millet, rice, com, and cotton. Work in the gardens continued with planting, pruning, and grafting (CLR Part 1, 108).
CE 1865	Land Transfer	Phanor dies and the plantation is inventoried. The listing suggests that the plantation was emerged from the war with limited damage to buildings, equipment, and livestock though the family's wealth drastically declined (CLR Part 1, 108).
CE 1866 - 1867	Land Transfer	Phanor's two sons, Alphonse and Emanuel, purchase the plantation for $12,500 (CLR Part 1, 109). In 1867, the two brothers agreed to divide the plantation holdings, with the land east of the Cane River forming Emmanuel's new Atahoe Plantation, named for the bayou to the east. The portion west of the river remained in the hands of Alphonse, who renamed his portion of the plantation Oakland, in recognition of the live oak allée planted in 1826 (HRS, Ch 6).
CE 1866 - 1867	Inhabited	Several of the formerly enslaved families remain at Oakland, including Solomon Wilson, a carpenter; Solomon Williams, a blacksmith; the Helairesl and the Nagots (HRS, Ch 6).
CE 1870	Cultivated	1870 Census: both Alphonse and his brother Emmanuel are listed as farmers. Alphonse claimed real estate at $9,000 and personal property worth $11,428, while Emmanuel claimed real estate valued at $8,000 and personal property of $2,500 (HSR, Ch 6).
CE 1873	Built	The Oakland Plantation Store is constructed, which sells items to the resident sharecroppers and tenant farmers (HRS, Ch 6).
CE 1873	Platted	A 1873 survey is completed for the division of the plantation property. The survey shows the overall boundaries of the 1904.36 acres (CLR Part 1, 111).
CE 1875 - 1895	Altered	Alphonse donates a railroad right-of-way across Oakland in 1875 in an effort to secure rail access. Between 1882 and 1895, at least two rail stations—Cypress Station and Brevelle or Prudhomme's Station were constructed (CLR Part 2, 18).
CE 1877	Altered	The Bermuda Post Office is established at the Oakland Plantation Store, which remained in operation until the late 1960s (HRS, Ch 6).
CE 1878	Inhabited	The first known photograph of Oakland Plantation is taken, showing the Store and East Pigeonnier (CLR Part 2, 14).

Year	Event	Major Event Narrative
CE 1870 - 1899	Altered	Several buildings are altered from the 1870s to 1890s, including the Main House, Store, and Dr. Cottage. The slave hospital was removed, and Dr. Barn and tennis courts were added (HRS, Ch 6).
CE 1904 - 1907	Cultivated	Alphonse's cotton from Oakland wins awards at the Louisiana Purchase Exposition, held in St. Louis in 1904 and in the Jamestown Exposition in 1907 (HRS, Ch 7).
CE 1906	Built	Telephones arrived along Cane River. The date of the Oakland telephone system is unknown, but likely dates to this time. Phones are placed in the Main House, Store, and Dr. Cottage (HRS, Ch 7).
CE 1908 - 1914	Altered	Cane River is dammed at the north and south ends, making it into a lake. By 1912, it's recognized as a game and fish preserve and is regularly stocked it with fish (HRS, Ch 7).
CE 1912	Built	A steel truss bridge (Bermuda Bridge) is erected over Cane River, opposite Oakland Plantation. The bridge increases vehicular traffic in the area, particularly at the Oakland Store, which later serves as a gas station (HRS, Ch 7).
CE 1914 - 1939	Built	A fishing camp is built north of the Main House. At least two cabins (Cook's Cabin and Washerwoman's Cabin) are relocated and rented out to sportsman. A minnow pond is built to the west of the cabins, and guests use the tennis courts to the east (HRS, Ch 7).
CE 1919	Land Transfer	Alphonse dies, and Oakland Plantation is transferred to his son, Pierre Phanor (Phanor II), who had already been managing the plantation since 1903. The property is surveyed by H. M. Knight. The Doctor's Cottage property is partitioned off and sold to Phanor’s brother, Edward (HRS, Ch 7).
CE 1919	Cultivated	Records show the plantation includes thirty-five head of mules and colts, fifty-two head of common cattle, six head of “graded cows,” one common bull, one “graded bull,” six old steers, eight calves, twenty hogs, and thirty-two head of common sheep, but no horses. It also includes a 1917 Chandler, four old wagons, one old surrey, and one buggy, along with a variety of plows, cultivators, and hand tools (HRS, Ch 7). Phanor II replaces the old steam engine at the cotton gin with a diesel engine (HRS, Ch 7).
CE 1920 - 1939	Altered	Several buildings are altered, expanded and improved, including the Main House, Store, and Dr. Cottage. Plumbing and electricity are added (HRS, Ch 7).
CE 1930 - 1939	Cultivated	Great Depression hits Cane River. The Prudhommes raise beef, pork, and poultry; collected produce from their large garden; and got milk from a small herd of dairy cows. They expand livestock herds and build a cattle dipping vat (HRS, Ch 7).

Year	Event	Major Event Narrative
CE 1940 - 1949	Cultivated	Written records list crops planted in the 1940s, which show diversification away from cotton. The cotton gin is closed by 1941 or 1942 (HRS, Ch 7).
CE 1940 - 1950	Altered	Tenant cabins in the Quarters receive electricity, though individual tenant cabins along Hwy 494 and Hwy 119 don't receive electricity until the early 1950s (HRS, Ch 7).
CE 1940 - 1950	Altered	A museum is established under the Main House; the Prudhommes begin to rely on tourism to supplement their income (HRS, Ch 7).
CE 1948 - 1950	Altered	Oakland begins moving away from hand-labor in 1948; the first large farm machinery is purchased in the 1950s (HRS, Ch 7).
CE 1948 - 1960	Altered	Sharecroppers and tenant farmers leave Oakland Plantation as part of the Great Migration. Increased mechanization displaces the labor force, who seek jobs elsewhere in northern and western cities (HRS, Ch 8).
CE 1948	Land Transfer	Phanor II dies in 1948, and the property transferred to his son James Alphonse Prudhomme II. He manages the store, while his sons James Alphonse III and Kenneth Andrew manage the farm operations (HRS, Ch 8).
CE 1948 - 1950	Built	Tractor Shed is built sometime after 1948 (HRS, Ch 8).
CE 1960	Built	Cotton Picker Shed (no longer extant) is built around 1960 (HRS, Ch 8).
CE 1959	Altered	The film, The Horse Soldier, is filmed at Oakland, featuring John Wayne, Constance Tower, and William Holden. The fence along Hwy 494 is modified by the film crew to create a rustic rail fence (CLR Part 2, 26).
CE 1960	Altered	The final tenant farmer leaves Oakland Plantation (CLR Part 2, 30).
CE 1961 - 1984	Cultivated	Large-scale mechanized farming continues at Oakland, managed by the Prudhomme family (HRS, Ch 8).
CE 1971	Built	The ornamental Oakland 1821 iron entrance sign and gate are erected (CLR Part 2, 33).
CE 1979	Memorialized	Oakland Plantation is placed on the National Register of Historic Places (CLR Part 2, 33).
CE 1980 - 1997	Abandoned	Several outbuildings are on the verge of collapse; the tenant cabins and Overseer's House have been abandoned for decades (CLR Part 2, 39).
CE 1982	Altered	The Oakland Store closes (HRS, Ch 8).
CE 1984	Altered	The Prudhomme family-run farming operation at Oakland ceases. The family auctions off equipment and leases the grounds (HRS, Ch 8).
CE 1987	Memorialized	Oakland Plantation is surveyed by the Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS). Drawings are drafted for the historic buildings and Bottle Garden, documenting the conditions of the time (CLR Part 2, 33).
CE 1988	Memorialized	Oakland is designated as a Bicentennial Farm (CLR Part 2, 33).
CE 1994	Established	Cane River Creole National Historical Park is established by Congress.

Year	Event	Major Event Narrative
CE 1997 - 1998	Land Transfer	Oakland Plantation is acquired by National Park Service through four separate tracts (CLR Part 2, 39).
CE 2001	Memorialized	Oakland Plantation is listed as a National Historic Landmark.
CE 2001 - 2009	Preserved	The National Park Service stabilizes, repairs, and rehabilitates several historic buildings and landscape features at Oakland Plantation (CLR Part 2, 44-45).

Physical History:

1714-1860

The settlement of Natchitoches is founded in 1714 as a French outpost in Louisiana and a fort is established along the frontier. Jean Pierre Philippe Prudhomme, whose descendants would later establish Oakland Plantation, emigrated from France to New Orleans as a soldier in the French Army. Prudhomme arrived in Natchitoches with his wife and first child by 1726, settling in the area to work at Fort St. Jean Batiste as a trader and merchant (Historic Resources Study, Ch 3).

Jean Pierre Philippe's grandson, Jean Pierre Emanuel (Emanuel) Prudhomme, established his own plantation, about 13 miles south of Natchitoches in Township 8 North, Range 6, Sections 104 and 44, which were located along Cane River. The exact date of his land purchase is unknown as historic documents have conflicting dates, but it likely took place sometime between 1787 and 1797. There is speculation that Emanuel's lands on Cane River may have been occupied by him via a rental agreement with the property's original grantee, Nicholas Rousseau. Prudhomme family tradition holds that Emmanuel was granted the land by the Spanish provincial governor, Estevan Miro, in 1789, but there is no supporting evidence for that account (HRS, Ch 3). Although he had his land on the Cane River under cultivation in the early 1790s, Emanuel actually lived on a 51-acre tract opposite the post in Natchitoches that he likely inherited from his father. It was not until around 1792 that Emanuel, his wife Catherine Lambre, and their children moved to the site of what is now Oakland Plantation (HRS, Ch 3). Although the family resided on the property, records indicate that its purchase from Nicholas Rosseau was not completed until about 1797. This date coincides with the date given during Emanuel's testimony to the US Government that the original acquisition date of Rousseau's land was January 18, 1797. According to additional testimony, Emanuel also purchased a second tract of land adjacent to the Rousseau tract from "Congra, a free Negro," on November 27, 1787, which may be part of some of the confusion (CLR Part 1, 41).

Little is known about the early years of the plantation, through the property likely included a residence for Emanuel and his family and separate residences for his enslaved workforce. Emanuel was engaged in the early cash crop economy, growing both tobacco and indigo. He was credited as being one of the earliest to grow tobacco as a cash crop, and his tobacco was described as being "noted for its superior quality." (HRS, Ch 3). By the tobacco boom of the 1780s and 1790s, Emanuel was one of the area's largest slave owners and tobacco producers, with thirty-eight slaves raising 47,000 pounds of tobacco. After the tobacco bust, like many of his contemporaries, he began growing indigo and hired an indigo specialist in 1795 to facilitate production. At that point, Emanuel was the third-largest slave-holder in Natchitoches (HRS, Ch 3).

The 1810 census provides the first written documentation Emanuel Prudhomme's residence along Cane River, listing "Emman'l Prud'homme" as residing on the property with a wife and three children and owning 53 slaves (HRS, Ch 4). By 1818, construction of the Main House was underway and was completed in 1821, replacing an earlier residence that was sited closer to the river. The Oak Allee was planted shortly thereafter in 1826, and an ornamental garden was planted in front of the house by 1835. The original ornamental garden was laid out as a boxwood-lined parterre, supposedly sometime between the late 1810s and the late 1820s, though it

was likely not planted until after the construction of the Main House. Parterre gardens, with their low plantings and geometric patterns, were designed to be seen from the gallery of the house. After a blight killed the boxwood hedges in the 1830s, bottles that had been collected in the wine cellar were used to replace them as garden edging (HRS, Ch 4). It is believed that the idea to do this was Marie Prudhomme's (Emanuel's wife), but the practice of using bottles as garden edging was not uncommon.

Throughout the 1820s and 1830s, Emanuel worked to acquire more lands and enslaved workers. Land was used for farming or timber, but the acquisitions may have been strategic as well. Many planters of the era purchased surplus property as an investment in case of crop failure. Cotton quickly became the most important crop in the area, and the power wielded by the planter class, increased along with their economic success (HRS, Ch 4).

By the 1830s, Emanuel's son, Phanor, was actively involved in the day-to-day management of the plantation. By 1850, Phanor had purchased the property after his parents' death and continued to expand his workings. Phanor's journals from the 1830s to the 1860s provide a detailed glimpse into the economic side of the operation, documenting crops, buildings, roads (turn-rows), and fences. In 1838, he mentions two cotton mills (cotton gins), a stable, storehouses, and slave hospital on the grounds (CLR Part 1, 56-57). Later in March 1856, he recorded the planting of pecans, apples, nectarines, and oaks from Affleck's Nursery in Mississippi. Between 1856 and 1861, Phanor also planted bois d'arc, likely to function as a fence, as well as sixteen cedar trees and four live oaks. In addition, he directed his gardener to plant "Lion's Paw solid white celery…cabbage, new prickly spinach, Avane's early cabbage…Orange melons…winter squash from Paris." (HRS, Ch 4). He also notes the "grand turnrow," as Phanor described the lane (Farm Lane) to Bayou Brevelle. It provided principal access to cultivated fields on the right hand side of the river and connected to a network of other turnrows that extended to cuts on either side. The drainage ditches, called "water furrows" by Phanor, were created with plows or dug by hand and more finely divided the cuts (HRS, Ch 4). Phanor also noted the yearly installation of a temporary wood bridge across Cane River to facilitate access between both sides of the plantation during low water. The bridge was removed each year as water levels rose to accommodate steam boat traffic (CLR Part 1, 99 and 116).

By 1860, slaveholdings of the Prudhomme family had reached an all-time high, and the plantation was at the height of its operation. Phanor owned a total of 145 people in 1860, putting him in the upper 9 percent of Louisiana slave owners and owning the third highest number of enslaved persons of any plantation owner in Natchitoches Parish. During the years of high cotton production in the late 1850s and 1860–1861, many slave cabins were torn down or rebuilt, suggesting that Phanor needed improved accommodations for his increasing workforce (HRS, Ch 4).

Just before the state of the Civil War, the first buildings of the plantation had developed the framework for its spatial organization. Buildings erected during the antebellum period included the Main House, Cook's Cabin, East and West Pigeonniers (ca. 1830–1850), Doctor's Cottage (1830s), Doctor's Barn, Square Crib (between 1820 and 1830), North Slave/Tenant Quarters (ca. 1860), South Slave/Tenant Quarters (ca. 1850s–1860s), smokehouse (1820s), and what is now a ruin called "Gabe Nargot's Cabin." There would also have been an overseer's house on the plantation, but its location is not known. The existing Overseer's House was constructed in 1861. A slave hospital was also present by 1850, and was located in the field between the Dr. Cottage and the Main House. Several of the largers buildings were built of local lumber (mostly cypress) and bousillage (a mud mixture to infill walls). Supposedly, the clay to make the bousillage was excavated to the north of the Main House; this excavation pit was later turned into a minnow pond in the 1920s-1930s (HRS, Ch 4).

Additional ancillary buildings, such as the Wash House, Fattening Pen, Storage Shed/Corn Crib, Chicken Coop, Setting Pen/Poultry House, Carpenters Shop, Privy, Turkey Shed, Wagon Shed, Square Crib Cistern (no date), and doctor's chicken coop, would have been present as well. The smaller outbuildings were added or removed over time as they were needed, and in some cases, earlier buildings were altered to meet current needs (HRS, Ch 4).

Records also indicate at least three different cotton gins present throughout the early years of the

property. The earliest known cotton gin at Oakland was constructed on the left bank of the river, opposite the Main House, sometime before 1836. By 1850, there were two gins on the property, one on each side of the river, which facilitated ginning on both sides of the river without having to haul the raw material from one side to the other. These gins were powered by mules until ca. 1854, when at least one of the gins, likely the one on the opposite side of the river from the Main House, was converted to steam. In 1857, Phanor installed a “Pratt gin” which could be powered by either mule/horse or steam. In 1859, construction began on a new gin complex, which became the second gin complex on the same side of the river as the Big House. The new gin complex, erected in 1859–1861, included a gin barn, seed house, and engine building to house the steam engine and its boiler. Between the gin barn and engine building was a cistern that collected water to power the steam engine. The gin barn housed both the gin stands, including the Pratt gin, and the indoor press, which had been moved from the gin complex on the opposite side of the river via low water bridge crossing. By 1860, the Phanor had three gins, one across the river and two on the side of the Main House, with the Pratt gin located south of the Overseer’s House (HRS, Ch 4).

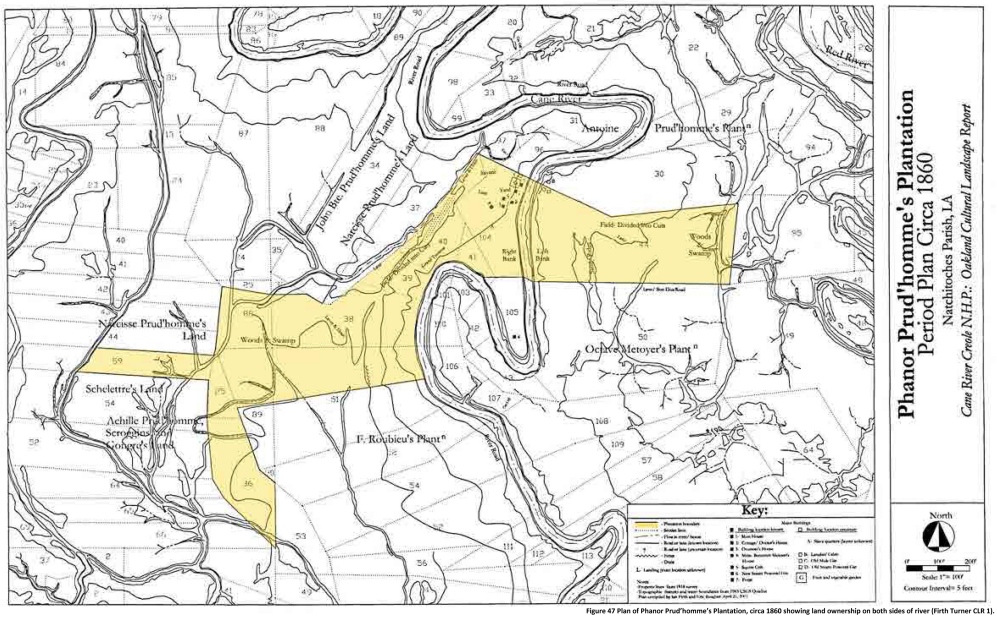


Figure 47 Plan of Phanor Prud'homme's Plantation, circa 1860 showing land ownership on both sides of river (Firth Turner CLR 1).

Oakland Plantation 1860 Period Plan

1860-1865

As the Civil War broke out in 1861 and Louisiana seceded from the Union, life at Phanor Prudhomme's plantation continued with relatively little change during the early years of the war. Phanor noted in his journal in 1861 that he planted pecans “to the right of the yard” and in the cabbage patch, where he marked them with two pickets, perhaps intending to transplant them later. He also noted that he planted plums and apricots, and pruned roses in the parterre garden in front of the house. In 1862, he wrote in his journal that “the rose trees by the stairs” were pruned and that scuppernongs were planted at the base of the lilacs in the yard. In early 1864, he had put up a fence,

pulled up some bois d'arc, manured both the vegetable and parterre gardens with cow dung, and planted and transplanted ornamentals and vegetables (HRS, Ch 5).

On a broader scale, cotton and other crops continued to be planted in the fields surrounding the Main House by an enslaved workforce. These same fields became necessary for survival and to provide Confederate troops with food and clothing as they fought in faraway places throughout the south. Records indicate continuing agricultural activity at the plantation, reporting that "new ground was being cleared for cultivation, and young mules were being broken in for work." A seed house was added to the new gin complex and work began on a new home for the overseer (Overseer's House). Crop plantings in the spring of 1861 included Irish potatoes, sugarcane, sweet potatoes, corn, millet, watermelon, pumpkins, "flour corn," "flint corn," cowpeas, and cotton, which was a mix of "Lecomte," "Petit Gulf," and Egyptian seed (HRS, Ch 5).

The largest change in the early war years came with the departure of Phanor's two sons and the plantation overseer (Seneca Pace), all three enlisted in the Confederate forces. This forced Phanor to manage the plantation on his own, and though he sought additional assistance from overseers during the war, none lasted long (HRS, Ch 5).

In 1862, many of the same activities continued. Enslaved workers cleaned the fields, plowed, ditched, fenced, hauled wood, and continued to gin and press cotton. A new cabin for the plantation carpenter (Carpenter Shop) was built within the plantation yard, and the yards surrounding the new Overseer's House and the Dr. Cottage were fenced. In December 1862, Natchitoches Parish planters, including Phanor, sent some of their "hands" to construct fortifications on the Red River. Phanor is credited with providing three workers at the initial call, then sending slaves three additional times: three in March, six in November, and two the following May (HRS, Ch 5).

The radical shift in the crops grown at the plantation was complete by 1863. No cotton was planted, temporarily ending decades of reliance on the crop. Instead, Phanor planted corn and sugarcane, even though sugarcane was notoriously difficult to raise as far north as the Cane River region. Instead of shipping the remaining stored cotton from previous years to textile mills in the northeast and overseas, Phanor employed local weavers to produce cotton cloth for the war effort. As the war advanced, the threat of slaves escaping with Union soldiers became a real threat. In May 1862, Phanor recorded having "2 loads of planks put along Bayou Congo to put up Shanties in case the Yankees trouble our Negros." The following year, he considered sent livestock to property in Texas and informed his manager that he should look for "lodging for 40 to 50 Negros" (HRS, Ch 5).

In late April and early May 1863, the threat of Union troops entering the region became a real possibility. Workers, including the overseer, and their families left the plantation and went upland into the "Pine Woods," probably in Kisatchie, while the Prudhomme family moved to their house in Natchitoches. In late May, a semblance of normalcy resumed as workers returned to plant peas and hoe corn. In early June, the Prudhommes returned to the plantation and their overseer brought his family back down from the uplands. In mid-June, a temporary bridge across Cane River was constructed so that wagons could haul corn across to the grist mill. Some of the cotton in storage was sold in Shreveport, probably to the Confederate Cotton Bureau. In September and October of 1863, corn was harvested, and there was so much to store that some of the excess was taken to the sawmill in Kisatchie for storage. Plantation workers also harvested rice, barley, sugarcane, sweet potatoes, peas, and pumpkins. Poaching remained a problem and watchmen were posted at night throughout important areas of the plantation. Stock animals were requisitioned for the war effort and enslaved workers were sent to construct riverine fortifications near Alexandria (HRS, Ch 5).

In March 1864, the Red River Campaign brought the war into the Cane River region and plantation operations were interrupted. The campaign, which lasted from March through May of 1864, directly affected many people in Natchitoches, bringing the war literally to the doorsteps of Oakland Plantation. In the prior year, Federal troops had come dangerously close, occupying Alexandria, Louisiana, which had become the temporary state capital after the fall of New Orleans. By March of 1864, Union forces directed their attention to northern Louisiana with the desire to capture the new capital in Shreveport and gain control of the northern part of the state (HRS, Ch 5).

Until this point, the northern Louisiana plantations had retained large amounts of cotton, stored in warehouses, because it had been prevented from reaching market by the Union blockade of Confederate ports. In the Natchitoches area alone, there were over 12,000 bales of cotton awaiting transportation. Phanor had over 900 bales on his plantation. Upon learning of the planned advance of the Union, the Confederacy implemented the governor's two-year-old proclamation that ordered "the destruction of all cotton within the limits of Louisiana that is in danger of falling into the hands of the enemy"; thus, the burning commenced. The cotton continued to burn into early April as the Union regiment drew near. The leader of the Confederate burning squadron, Second Lieutenant Grappe, recalled, "From the 24-Mile Ferry [below Cloutierville] up to the Town of Natchitoches, it looked like everything was on fire, every plantation had fire and smoke. Cotton was burning. Cotton gins and gin houses were burning. And it seemed to be a retreat of 24 miles through the fire and smoke of burning cotton and cotton houses and even when we arrived at Natchitoches, there was cotton burning on the opposite bank of the river." (HRS, Ch 5).

Union forces reached Phanor's plantation by March 22, and a few days later on March 31, Phanor wrote that "Several have camped in the yard- the men have pillaged my house - the whites. the blacks, the officers as well as the soldiers." About a quarter of the enslaved population, 11 men, 10 women, and 15 children left with the Union Army. About a week later, the main house was ransacked again by a soldier on April 7 and additional enslaved people left (CLR Part 1, 104).

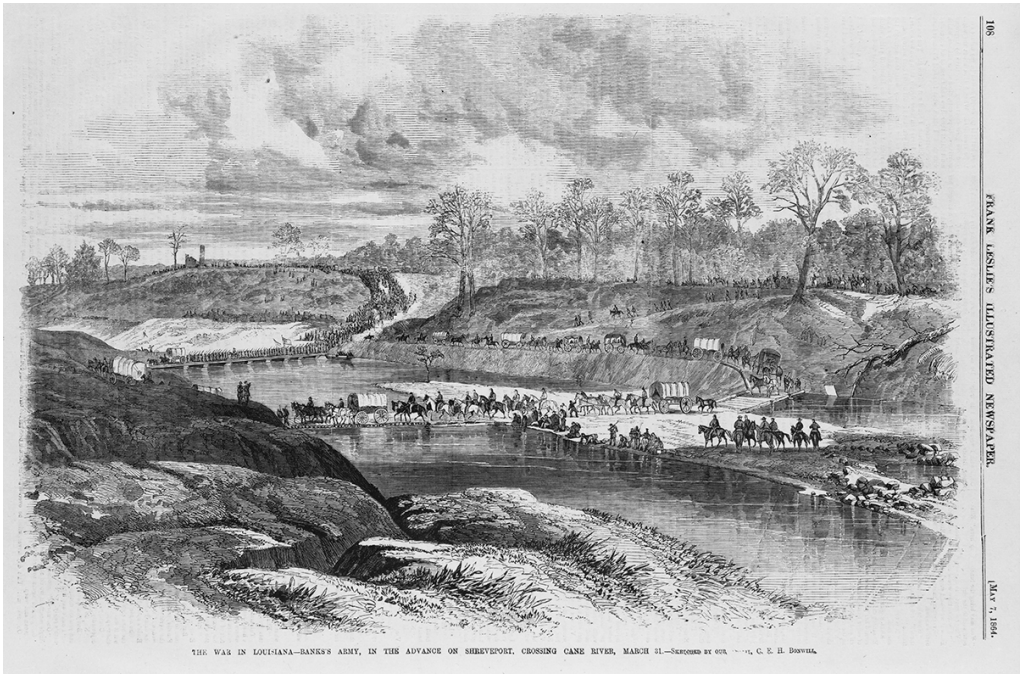
The Union army advanced as far as Mansfield and then officially began retreating on April 21, leaving south from Natchitoches. The Union's movement was described as a "frantic…relentless 30-hour long forced march" that took troops down Cane River. During the march, the troops executed "widespread looting and burning of civilian property. Witness accounts from the time recall every cabin, every cotton gin, every corn crib, and even chicken houses have been burned to the ground." As soldiers retreated through Phanor's property from April 22 to 24, they burned 900 bales of cotton and the cotton gin, valued at tens of thousands of dollars--over half a million dollars by modern standards (CLR Part 1, 105).

The Main House and many of the Prudhomme's personal items were spared this time around, but family tradition states that the portrait of Lise Prudhomme in the parlor was slashed by Union soldiers. At least three family legends suggest reasons that the Oakland Main House was spared from destruction. The first claims that loyal slaves moved all the furniture out of the house prior to the soldiers' arrival, and then pleaded with the soldiers to not ignite the building. The second legend claims that Phanor was ill and bedridden (he died the following year), and therefore the house was not destroyed. The third is that Phanor defied General Banks' troops with a shotgun and successfully protected his home (HRS, Ch 5).

Initially, 36 enslaved workers left with Union forces and joined the war effort. In the following weeks, many more workers left and took valuable implements and tools with them. Writing to his sister in France in 1865, reflecting on the previous year, Phanor wrote: "My magnificent cotton mill with its steam engine is burned. I have left four bales of cotton, my house, my stores, my camp and my land." Oddly, he writes: "I still have all my blacks with me, they work as in the past" seemingly unacknowledging that some of his workforce had left without his permission. That fall, Phanor recorded that he had recovered 97 head of cattle from the surrounding woods, and additionally purchased 25 head in December. He assigned duties to the remaining workers and distributed clothes and shoes, trying to return the plantation to a degree of normalcy. Those who remained or returned, negotiated contracts with Phanor for their labor in 1865 after the end of the Civil War. He planted many of the items produced in previous years and reintroduced cotton into the landscape (HRS, Ch 5).

Phanor continued to grow the plantation and by the time of his death in 1865, the property had reached 2,200 acres. Because of the war, he had lost a tremendous portion of his overall wealth with the emancipation of slaves. In addition, his real estate values were reduced to half of the 1860 levels. Despite these losses, Phanor's estate was still quite substantial at $45,986.76 and his succession records show that the Main House and its furnishings were intact, as were most of the outbuildings and their farm equipment, including wagons, a buggy, and a carriage. Although their cotton was gone, they still retained some agricultural products, including "a surprising amount of livestock" and

4,000 bushels of corn (HRS, Ch 5).



The war in Louisiana - Banks's army, in the advance of Shreveport, crossing Cane River, March 31. From Library of Congress.

1866-1900

With the death of their father, Phanor, on October 12, 1865, brothers Jacques Alphonse (Alphonse) and Pierre Emmanuel (Emmanuel) inherited the plantation. The brothers, along with their wives and children, all lived on the property following the Civil War until their financial situation began to improve. Phanor had previously begun to work with the Freedmen's Bureau to negotiate contracts with formerly enslaved workers for their services to return the plantation to normal operation. The annual contracts, which began each year on January 4 and required 22 to 25 days of work per month, paid the laborer wages ranging between $4 and $10. The Prudhomme contracts also included shelter and some food, as they had done prior to the Civil War. With Phanor's death, the task of settling contracts and new negotiations for another year of service fell to Alphonse. Freed African American workers were now employed at the plantation as hired laborers, sharecroppers, or tenant farmers (HRS, Ch 6).

Among the families that remained at Oakland Plantation to labor under contract were those of Solomon Wilson, a carpenter; Solomon Williams, a blacksmith; and the Helaires, whose family was associated with the plantation from near its beginning into the 1960s. The Nagot family, including Derzilin and his wife Marie, also remained at Oakland and raised their children there. Derzilin, who had worked in the surviving Gin Complex, signed his first labor contract in 1866 and another contract in 1867. Then, in 1868, his labor arrangements began to shift from simple paid wages to labor for a share of the crop, marking the beginning of sharecropping at Oakland Plantation (HRS, Ch 6).

Despite new labor arrangements, the Prudhommes struggled to return the plantation to a level of productivity that it had prior to the war. From 1866 and 1868, they produced more than 100 bales of cotton, compared to more than 600 bales in 1860. In 1867, they only produced seven bales, due to the severe flooding in the area. The number of cotton bales gradually increased, but production continued to be unpredictable. In 1870, the plantation produced a total of 133 bales of cotton, but in 1878, the plantation produced just twelve bales. Because the crops typically served as collateral for seed purchases and laborer wages, farmers were often forced to seek other sources from which to borrow, or had to go into debt in order to purchase supplies. The debt was especially hard for sharecroppers, who had few assets and no safety net. Many left the area to attempt independent homesteading instead of remaining in the cycle of sharecropping (HRS, Ch 6).

In 1867, the two brothers agreed to divide the plantation holdings, with the land east of the Cane River forming Emmanuel's new Atahoe Plantation, named for the bayou to the east. The portion west of the river remained in the hands of Alphonse, who renamed his portion of the plantation Oakland, in recognition of the live oak allée planted in 1826 (HRS, Ch 6). The 1870 census records list the occupations of both Alphonse and his brother Emmanuel as farmers. Alphonse claimed real estate at $9,000 and personal property worth $11,428, while Emmanuel claimed real estate valued at $8,000 and personal property of $2,500 (HSR, Ch 6).

The division of the property took several years to complete, and a survey was drawn up in 1873 to show the overall boundaries of the 1904.36 acres (CLR Part 1, 111). The survey shows that the property has some of the characteristics of colonial land grants, as it extends from the river to the bayous on each side. However, it's irregular shape indicated that the plantation was a composite of several land purchases acquired at different times. All of the additions to the Rousseau tract were located on the right bank - descending - so that 70% of the acreage was on that side. At first the plantation had barely reached Bayou Brevelle, but it eventually extended across that stream and reached Bayou Natchez (CLR Part 1, 111-112). By 1880,
the census indicated that Alphonse, who by then was the sole owner of Oakland, claimed a 300-acre "farm" valued at $7,000 (HRS, Ch 6).

In 1873, a new building was constructed at Oakland, the Plantation Store, which reshaped the organization and circulation of the plantation. The first written record of the Oakland Store is a retail merchant license was issued to Alphonse on June 3, 1873 by the State of Louisiana and Natchitoches Parish. A series of ledgers that begin that same year show a variety of staples that were sold, such as salt pork, flour, rice, sugar, coffee, and lard, but also, whiskey and tobacco. Candy, cheese, crackers, sardines, salt, pepper, and molasses were also offered, along with hardware, cookware, and sewing fabric. Further, the store sold coal oil and kerosene in bottles and five-gallon cans. Among specialty items were sherry, salmon, and oysters, and other nonessentials could also be ordered (HRS, Ch 6).

By 1877, the Store also housed the Bermuda Post Office, which remained in operation until the late 1960s. Family tradition has it that the plantation was historically known as Bermuda, although there is no record of this usage prior to the Civil War; the name appears to be linked to the naming of the post office there in December 1877 (HRS, Ch 3). The Store and Post Office represented an important expansion of the Prudhomme family's commercial activity after the Civil War, and a lucrative means to provide goods and services to the formerly enslaved laborers who remained on the property as sharecroppers, as well as to members of the surrounding community. As such, the store became a de facto neighborhood gathering spot, bringing a new level of commercial activity to the front of the property and riverfront (CLR Part 2, 14). A 1878 photograph, the first known photograph of Oakland, shows the store as a simple, front-gable, wood-frame building with a shed roof porch. The East Pigeonnier can be seen in the background to the left.

In 1875, Alphonse donated a railroad right-of-way across his property in an effort to secure rail access, and between 1882 and 1895, at least two rail stations—Cypress
Station and Brevelle or Prudhomme's Station—were established along the line running west of Bayou Brevelle (current route of Hwy 1), in close overland proximity to Oakland. The plantation may have been connected to the railroad via the east-west Farm Lane to a road or lane running southwest along the constructed levees of Bayou Brevelle and the backswamp regions, which then turned west

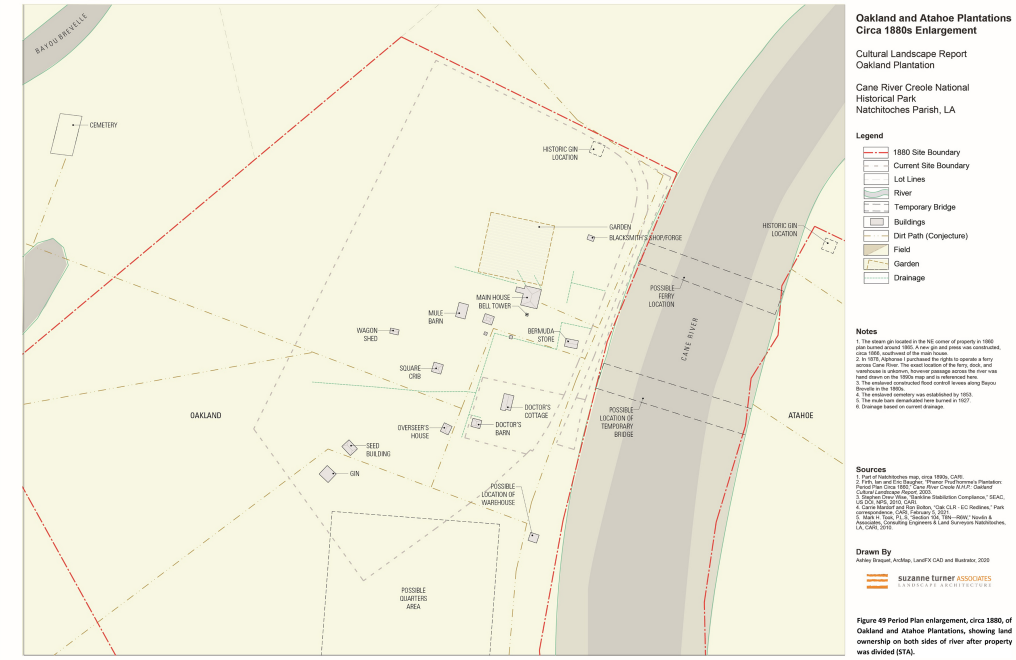
to connect to the rail stations. This suggests that the Farm Lane and road connecting to these stations likely became more active during the end of the nineteenth century, perhaps replacing to some degree the reliance on river transport. This is one of the earliest indications of a shift away from a wholly riverfront orientation at Oakland (CLR Part 2, 18). After the railroad was built, the variety of goods in the Oakland Store expanded even further with fresh produce, especially apples and oranges, along with canned goods (HRS, Ch 6).

Throughout the later years of the 19th century, plantation buildings and landscape continued to be altered to meet changing needs. At the Main House, a new kitchen was attached to the rear of the building and a connecting breezeway was constructed. About the same time, Alphonse added an office to the rear of the house, off the south end of the gallery. This addition may have contained a bathroom, as well, although it may have been part of a later remodel. A garçonniére was likely attached on either the rear of the Big House or on the northwest or southwest corner of the house. Family legend has it that this structure was removed around 1873 and moved to Atahoe after their main house burned. It could have been about this time that the “stranger’s room” was added to the north leg of the gallery. A central hallway was also added, which moved the front entry to the house from the parlor. In 1893, there was a chimney fire in the Main House, which required a bucket brigade to extinguish the blaze (HRS, Ch 6).

The Store was enlarged multiple times, first around 1880, when the core of the structure was expanded to the west to add the office, and extended the attic front-gable roof, replacing the original shed-roof of the porch. A small shed was added to the north elevation around 1885. In 1890, a rear room was to the shed to create an apartment for Jules “Uncle Buddy” Prudhomme, who served as the store manager from about 1893 until his death in 1916 (HRS, Ch 6).

Between the Store and the Dr. Cottage, the hospital (slave hospital) was demolished prior to 1893. Shortly after the Civil War, Dr. Joseph Leveque was hired as Oakland Plantation’s doctor, and his family moved into the Dr. Cottage, retrofitting a room for patient care after the hospital was removed. He remained on the plantation until his death in 1893. During his tenure, he made several improvements to his residence. Sometime prior to 1880, the southwest corner room of the building was expanded beyond the rear cabinet, necessitating the reconfiguration of the roof from its original hip form to the current gable form. Other changes included the construction of a detached kitchen west of the house. The kitchen may have been constructed as early as 1860, given that two doctors occupied the cottage prior to the arrival of Dr. Leveque. The cottage was enlarged two additional times before the end of the century, beginning with the enclosure of the Doctor’s Office, a small room at the south end of the front gallery, circa 1870. The second addition was the construction of two rooms at the north end of the original cottage (HRS, Ch 6).

Other changes in the landscape included the construction of the Doctor's Barn in 1870 and the addition of a tennis court in the 1890s. Some of the smaller ancillary structures, such as the coops, settling house, and hog houses, were likely rebuilt during this period, but there is no clear evidence that this occurred, or where these buildings would have been placed (HRS, Ch 6). Limited changes were likely made to the original Quarters Area. The formerly enslaved who now served as sharecroppers and tenants may have continued to occupy the same cabins as before the war, but this cannot be known with certainty, nor can it be known what changes were made to the landscapes around the occupants. Over time, however, it is likely that some of the original Quarters dwellings were moved to other locations within the fields or reoriented for privacy and an increased sense of personal space and autonomy, although the structures remained the property of the Prudhomme family (CLR Part 2, 17).



1880 Period Plan, Oakland Plantation.

Earliest known photograph of Oakland showing the Plantation Store, c. 1878 (Store HSR, 16).

1900-1960

At the dawn of the 20th century, life at Oakland was relatively unchanged with cotton remaining as the primary focus of the Cane River region. Alphonse's cotton from Oakland won awards at the Louisiana Purchase Exposition, held in St. Louis in 1904. He won additional awards from the Jamestown Exposition in 1907. A few years later, the local newspaper reported, “Bermuda…cotton is being picked and ginned rapidly. A fine crop is being made.” (HRS, Ch 7). In reality, it was likely the sharecroppers and tenant farmers that deserved the credit as several were still residing on the plantation. In 1912, a listing of sharecroppers and tenant farmers at Oakland Plantation included Frank, John, Edward, and Felix Helaire; Augustus Lewis; Collins Page; Julio Jean Baptiste; Ignacias Jean Baptiste (whose last name was later recorded as Batise or Batiste); Eviriste Dorcino, J. B. Edmonds (Bacquie), Sr.; Neville Jones; Emanuel Roques, Delina Roques; Anthony Roques; Amogee Roques; Eugene Metoyer; Alcee Metoyer; Clay LaCour; and Charles Jones (HSR Ch 7).

By 1912, modern advances in technology had also begun to change the plantation landscape. By 1906, telephones had arrived along Cane River. The date of the Oakland telephone system is unknown, but likely dates to this time. It had a local “intercom” system that connected the office in the Store to the Main House and to the Doctor’s Cottage. The first automobile, a Model T, was purchased by the Prudhommes in 1910, which necessitated road improvements throughout the area. Shortly thereafter in 1912, a steel bridge (Bermuda Bridge) was built opposite from Doctor's Cottage to link the two sides of Cane River. Upon its completion, the bridge increased the amount of traffic in the area particularly at the Oakland Store and post office (HRS, Ch 7).

Cane River was dammed thereby converting it into a lake, and by 1912 the State of Louisiana made it a game and fish preserve, regularly stocking it with fish. This effectively shifted the use of the river from transportation to recreation. In response, the Prudhommes relocated two cabins (Cook's Cabin and Washerwoman's Cabin) to an area north of the Main House and converted them in to fishing camps available for rent. Lawrence Helaire remembers there may have been as many as four small camp houses in the same area at one time, though photographs of the 1930s only show two cabins. The excavation pit that had been formed in the early 1800s from the excavation of clay for bousillage served as a minnow pond, and nearby catalpa trees (Catalpa bignonioides) provided worms used as fish bait. The adjacent tennis court between the cabins and river, continued to be used by family members and guests renting the fishing cabins (HRS, Ch 7). Recreational use of the plantation provided additional income, particularly as the area entered an economic depression a decade earlier than the rest of the country.

On February 16, 1919, Alphonse died, and Oakland Plantation was passed to Pierre Phanor (Phanor II), who had already been managing the plantation for is father since 1903. This land transfer is documented by a property survey/deed document from 1919, created by H. M. Knight. Knight’s survey appears to be overlaid on a pre-1919 survey, and shows subdivision of the Oakland property, including the inheritance of the Doctor’s Cottage parcel by Phanor’s brother, Edward. The survey also shows an overall reduction in the size of the property (CLR Part 2, 19). By 1920, census records indicate that Phanor II lived in the Doctor's Cottage, while the Main House was occupied by his mother and sister Julia. By 1925, Phanor II had relocated to the Main House, while other family members occupied the Doctor's Cottage and made improvements (HRS, Ch 7).

When Phanor II assumed control of the plantation in 1919, the estate included thirty-five head of mules and colts, fifty-two head of common cattle, six head of “graded cows,” one common bull, one “graded bull,” six old steers, eight calves, twenty hogs, and thirty-two head of common sheep, but no horses. The 1910 Ford Model-T had been replaced with a 1917 Chandler; other, more old-fashioned, plantation equipment included four old wagons, one old surrey, and one buggy, still used regularly for transportation. Records also list a variety of plows, cultivators, and hand tools, though Phanor II replaced the old steam engine at the gin with a diesel engine as soon as he could (HRS, Ch 7).

While Phanor II updated and replaced much of his equipment, the landscape surrounding the Main House remained relatively intact. Photos from the early to mid-20th century show a well-maintained front lawn, Live Oak Allée with lime-wash applied to the lower trunks of the live oaks, and Bottle Garden. The garden at this time appeared to have a freshly painted picket fence, an arched (rose) arbor over a wire garden gate, and what appears to be wooden railings or trellising along the edge of the garden's brick walkway (CLR Part 2, 21). Farther afield, the family would have continued to maintain their pecan orchard and expand them into other areas. The change from cotton fields to pecan orchards allowed the family to raise a cash-producing crop that required less labor (HRS, Ch 7).

Improvements were made to several of the buildings during this time to accommodate resident needs. The roof of the Main House was replaced with slate, acetylene gas lighting, was installed, and then hot and cold running water was installed in the early 1920s. By 1936, the Main House at Oakland had been electrified, and there is evidence from the family oral history of the earliest tourist and preservation activities, as renters of the fishing cabins and curious visitors began to request tours of the house and grounds. During the 1940s, Phanor II's wife, Lucille became actively involved in promoting Natchitoches history and a founding member of its early preservation society. During the 1940s, she established a "museum" of artifacts which were displayed in a room beneath the gallery at the rear of the Main House and included this in her tours for visitors (HRS, Ch 7).

Other buildings also underwent changes during this time. At the Plantation Store an addition on the south elevation was added in 1910, a gas pump erected in circa 1920, and running water and electricity added in the 1930s. Since the store was used only during the daylight hours, lighting was minimal. However, it enabled the store to add the Coca-Cola refrigeration bin in the front of the store. A bath and plumbing were added to the Doctor's Cottage between 1925 and 1929, and a fire damaged the plantation's smokehouse in 1927. Afterwards, the smokehouse structure was converted into a mule barn. Ancillary structures, such as the wagon shed and turkey shed were also added (HRS, Ch 7). The blacksmith shop had also been removed by the early 1940s (CLR Part 2, 25).

Despite their apparent wealth, the Prudhomme family had to "make do" during the Great Depression. They raised their own beef, pork, and poultry; collected produce from their large garden; and got milk from a small herd of dairy cows. As the Depression deepened, the family added sheep and goats to their livestock. Some fields were given up for cattle pasturage. The cattle dipping vat at Oakland was likely built during this time to treat livestock against ticks which carried disease called, variously, "Texas fever," "Texas cattle fever," or "Spanish fever," a generally fatal condition caused by parasites (HRS, Ch 7).

As the Prudhomme family supported itself through a combination of agriculture, tourism, and recreational enterprises throughout the 1930s and 1940s, sharecropping and tenant farming persisted at Oakland during this period. Few if any improvements were made to the tenant cabins, though electricity was installed in the Quarters in the 1940s. Individual tenant cabins located along Hwy 494 and Hwy 119 didn't receive electricity until a decade later. Crops planted in the 1940s show diversification away from cotton, which had created much of the area's economic downturn. In addition by 1941 or 1942 the gin was closed completely, and the last crop of cotton was ginned on the plantation. Phanor II's accounts from that era record crops of corn and peas in March 1940 and sweet potatoes in May. He also listed the crops of each sharecropper for 1942, with meticulous records of cotton, corn, soybeans, and sugar cane planted by all tenants and workers, and noted when they commenced replanting and "chopping out" the crops. He also tracked which vegetables were planted in the "truck patch and house garden." For the truck patch, he noted Irish potatoes, early sweet corn, cucumbers, squash, and okra. In the garden, he reported planting late February crops, including "beets, spinach, mustard [greens], lettuce, carrots, followed in March by waxbeans, roquet [sic], dill, sweet peas, large wakefield [sic] cabbage"; in April, he noted planting ninety-eight tomato plants, more radishes, lettuce, greens, wax beans, butter beans, and a row of musk melons (HRS, Ch 7).

By 1945, World War II had ended, and the US economy was rapidly expanding. As automobile ownership, leisure time, and tourism increased post-World War II, mechanization also began to drastically transform Oakland Plantation into the 1950s and 1960s. With tractors replacing animals,

crop yield rose to take advantage of more efficient machinery, so the focus of agricultural research turned to hybridization, chemical fertilizers, and chemical weed and insect control. With these improvements, farms needed fewer workers, leading to changes in the size and organization of labor. In the Cane River region, plantations faced economic concerns that led to the Prudhomme family giving up their sharecropping and tenant farming structure in favor of leasing their land to larger industrial farming operations. At Oakland, the plantation began moving away from hand-labor in 1948, with the first large farm machinery added to the property in the 1950s. Within ten years, even the cotton-picking was completed by mechanized equipment, virtually eliminating the need for tenant farmers and cheap day labor. In 1949, Lawrence Helaire and his wife were among the first of Oakland's tenants to leave the plantation. The final tenant left the property in 1959 or 1960 (HRS, Ch 8).

Phanor II died in 1948, and the property transferred to his son James Alphonse Prudhomme II. Managing the plantation continued to be a family affair as James Alphonse II managed the store, while his sons James Alphonse III and his brother Kenneth Andrew managed the farm operations. New gas pumps were erected at the Store circa 1950, while the post office continued to serve the local population until July 1967. With the addition of larger machinery, the Tractor Shed was added sometime after 1948 and the Cotton Picker Shed (no longer extant) was added around 1960. Both were located west of the Big House. To accommodate the larger machinery, family oral tradition holds that the west pigeonnier was moved approximately twenty feet to the south of its original position sometime between 1953 and 1955 to increase the clearance on the Farm Lane. With mechanized cotton pickers replacing the need for cotton gins, the gin barn was removed sometime between 1941 and 1957 (HRS, Ch 8).

In 1959, Oakland served as the setting for the filming of The Horse Soldier, a Hollywood historical drama starring John Wayne, Constance Tower, and William Holden. As part of the production, the existing wire fence enclosing the eastern edge of the Main House lawn along Hwy 494 was modified to create a rustic rail fence (the present-day configuration), by attaching irregular horizontal rails to the existing fence line (CLR Part 2, 26).

As African Americans continued to leave the region as part of the Great Migration from the 1950s and 1960s, the landscape of the tenant cabins and Overseer's House shifted. Mid-century aerials from 1941 show signs of domestic yards with trees and driveways connecting them to Hwy 494. However, aerials taken after 1960 show the gradual loss
of these features and the decline of these properties after their abandonment. Each tenant cabin had its own yard, driveway, gardens, fenced enclosures and dependency landscapes, distinctive from the landscape of the Main House. Images of the Overseer's House (from 1950s Metoyer family photos) show a picket fence enclosing a front yard of mature trees and ornamental species, and aerials from the era suggest that the landscaped yard and fence probably wrapped around the house. Similarly, the Doctor's Cottage became a separate parcel under separate ownership with independent entrance gate, fences, and ancillary outbuildings (CLR Part 2, 30).

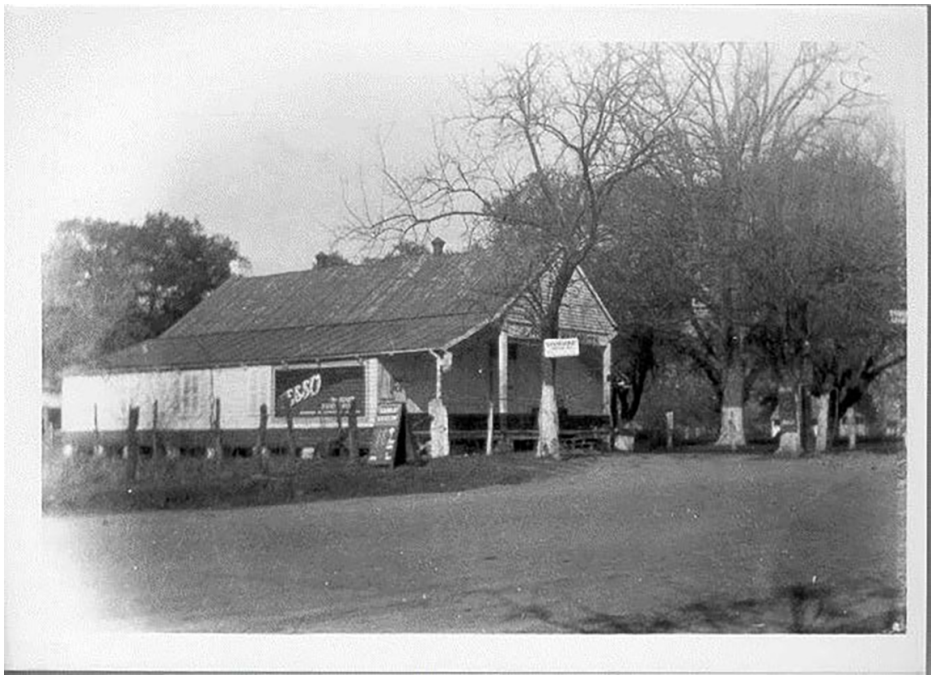
By 1960, the multitude of changes drastically changed farming and agricultural practices at Oakland, marked by increasing mechanization and by the departure of the last remaining tenant farmers/sharecroppers, whose families—Helaires, Nargots, Toussaints, Williams, among others—had continuously occupied and worked the Prudhomme lands since the antebellum period, descendants of the formerly enslaved who had remained on the land for multiple generations (CLR Part 2, 19).

Bottle Garden and Front Yard of Main House, circa 1912.

Oakland Plantation Survey, 1919.

Figure 50 Period Plan circa 1920 (STA).

1920s Period Plan, Oakland Plantation.

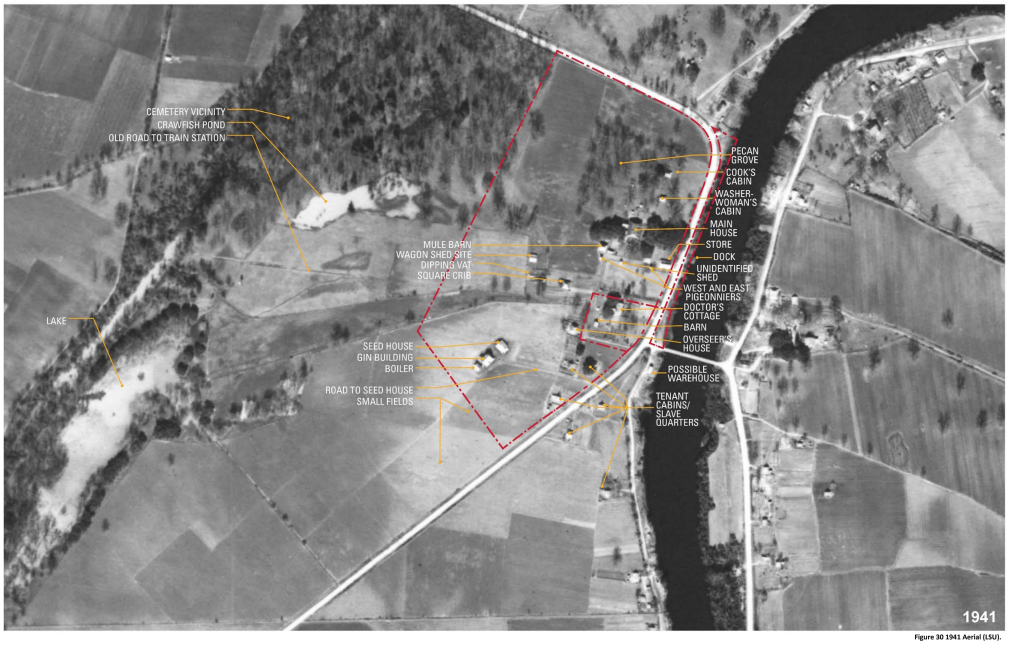


Oakland Store, 1930s-1940s

Fishing Camp showing Cooks Cabin and Washerwoman's Cabin, 1930s-1940s.

Oakland Plantation Main House, 1940. HABS photograph.

Oakland Overseer's House, 1940s.



1941 Aerial Photograph, Oakland Plantation.

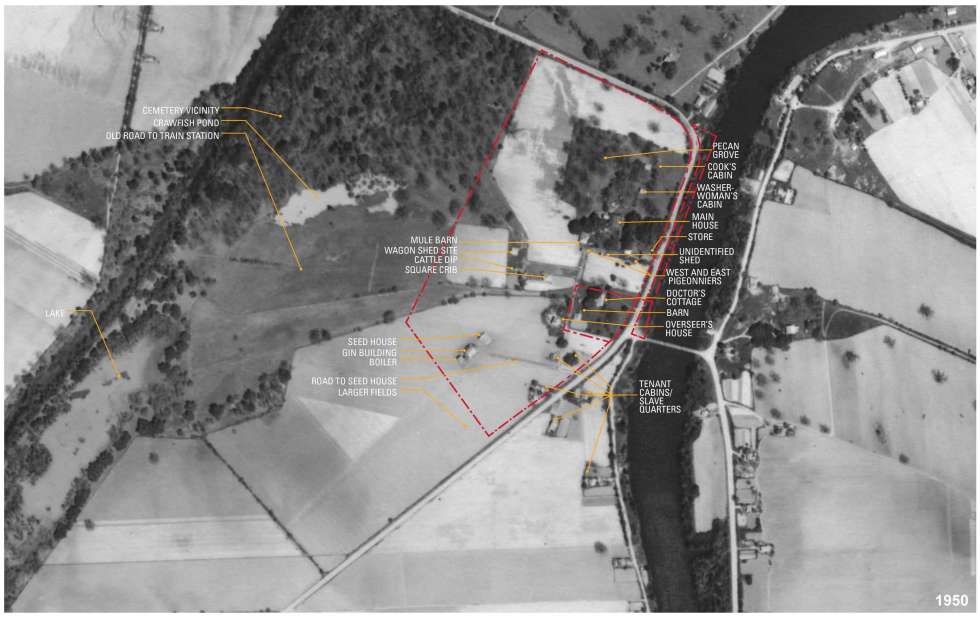


Figure 30 1950 Aerial (LSU).

1950 Aerial Photograph, Oakland Planation.

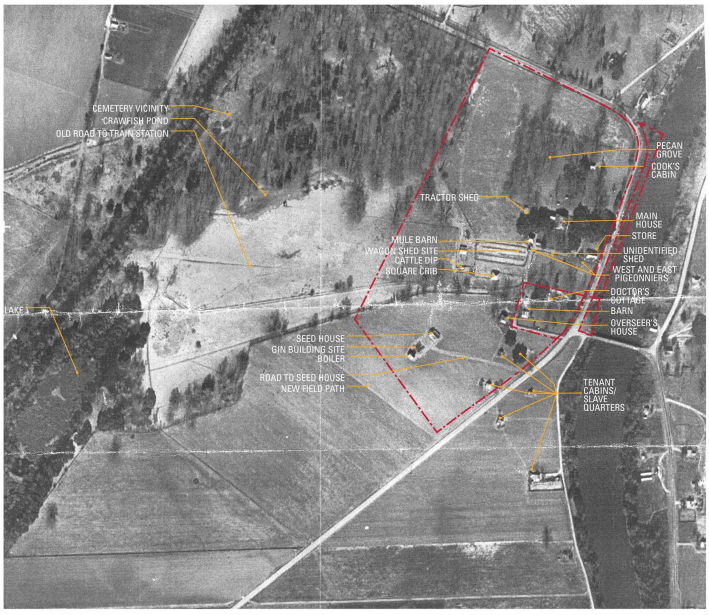


Figure 32 1958 Aerial (CARI).

1958 Aerial Photograph, Oakland Plantation

1961-1994

The Oakland Plantation landscape saw a slow and steady decline in the late 20th century as large-scale mechanized farming continued into the 1970s and 1980s. Although the Prudhomme family strove to maintain their holdings, in some cases, the sheer cost of upkeep meant that some buildings and landscape features were lost or actively removed. In the case of Gabe Nargot's cabin, which was standing in 1969, it was probably less expensive to remove these elements in the landscape than to maintain and repair them. Other small elements, such as fencing and remnant plantings in the landscape remained in place, but their conditions continued to decline (HRS, Ch 8).

Meanwhile, the Prudhomme family maintained and improved the landscape around the Main House. In 1971, the Oakland 1821 iron entrance sign and gateway were erected at the driveway entrance from Hwy 494. While some agricultural activity persisted on the property, the sign and gateway further signified the shift away from agricultural activity towards an increasing identification of the property as a significant piece of regional cultural heritage. The property was placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1979. (CLR Part 2, 33).

By the 1980s, Al and Kenneth Prudhomme knew that the end of their family farm was approaching. The Oakland Store closed in 1982, and in 1984, the family-run farming operation at Oakland ceased. When questioned about the decision, Kenneth told a reporter, "[t]he family has been at it for well on to two hundred years and finally decided we couldn't make a living at it." He continued, saying, "I'm tired of it. I want to get out before I go broke." Once the decision was made to close the operation, the family auctioned off the farm equipment, leased as much land as they could, and retired from farming entirely (HRS, Ch 8).

By 1982, the construction of a new concrete bridge next to the steel-trussed Bermuda Bridge was complete, and construction of I-49 to the west opened the property to further tourist activity and easier access for travelers en route from Dallas or Shreveport to Baton Rouge, New Orleans, and beyond. In 1988, the property was designated a Bicentennial Farm for its continuity of agricultural land use, and a commemorative sign was erected near the Main House gate to mark the honor. Around that same time in 1987, a number of Oakland's historic buildings and the Bottle Garden were documented in a series of HABS drawings that serve as an important historical record of extant structures, vegetative patterns, and horticultural species (CLR Part 2, 33).

Between the 1980s and 1990s, the condition of the landscape continued to decline. Several outbuildings were on the verge of collapsing, and volunteer trees were growing from building foundations on the tenant cabins and Overseer's House. In 1994, after a number of years of discussion among government officials, Prudhomme family members and local preservationists, Cane River National Historical Park (CARI) was legislatively established by act of Congress on November 2.

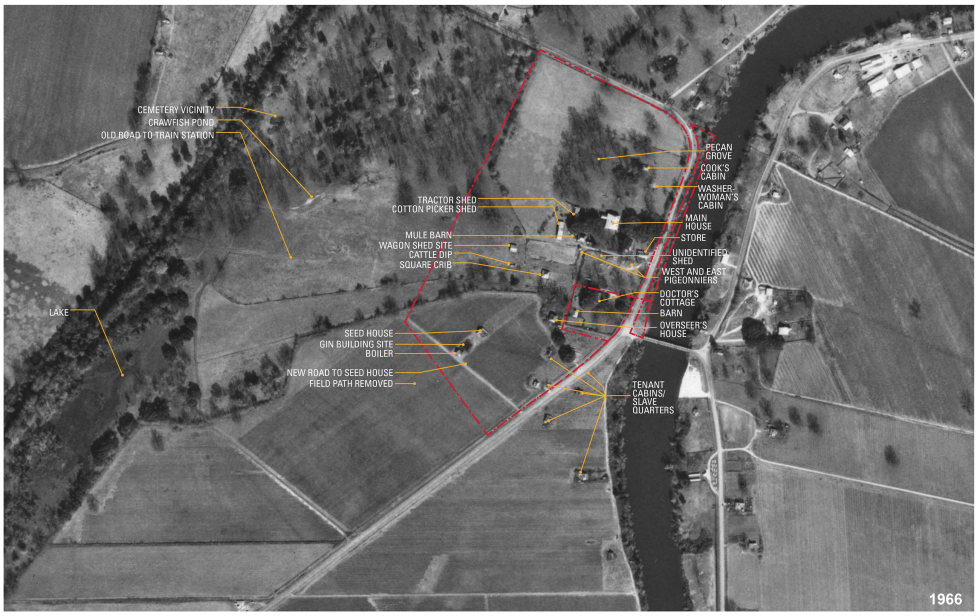


Figure 33 1966 Aerial (LSU)

1966 Aerial Photograph, Oakland Plantation.

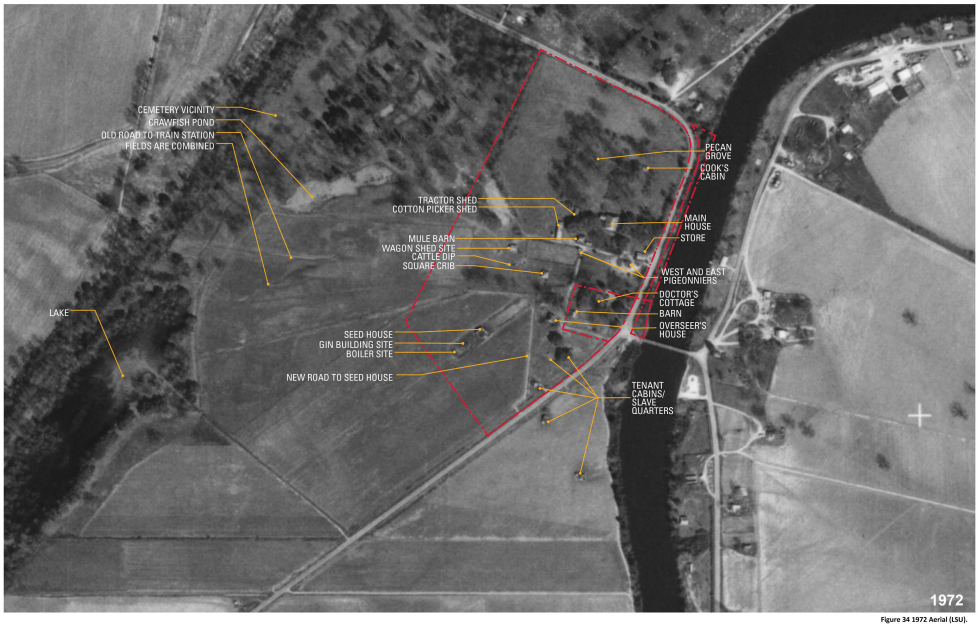


Figure 34 1972 Aerial (LSU).

1972 Aerial Photograph, Oakland Plantation.

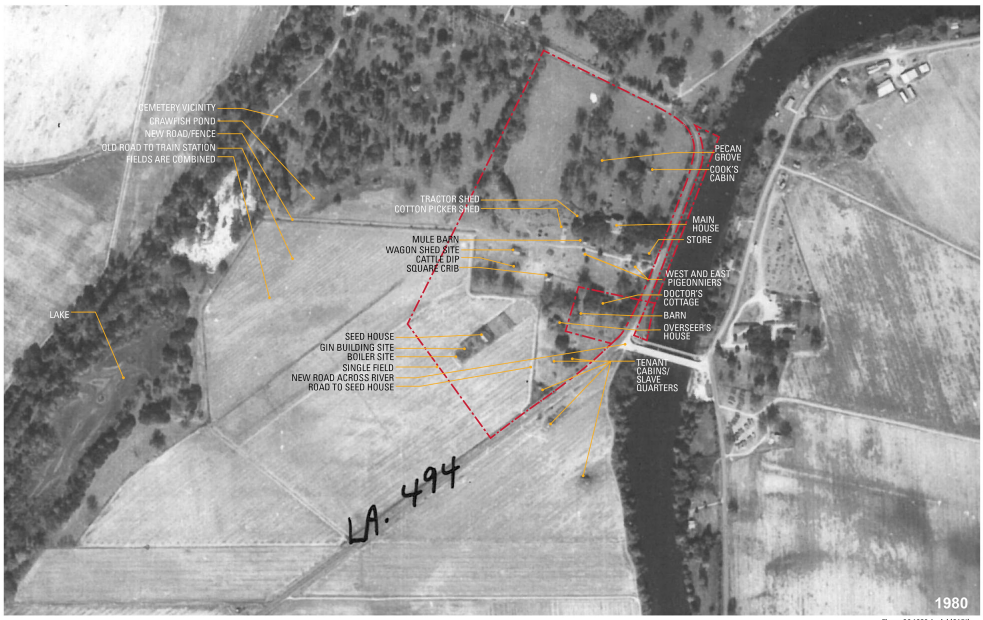


Figure 36 1980 Aerial (CARI).

1980 Aerial Photograph, Oakland Plantation.

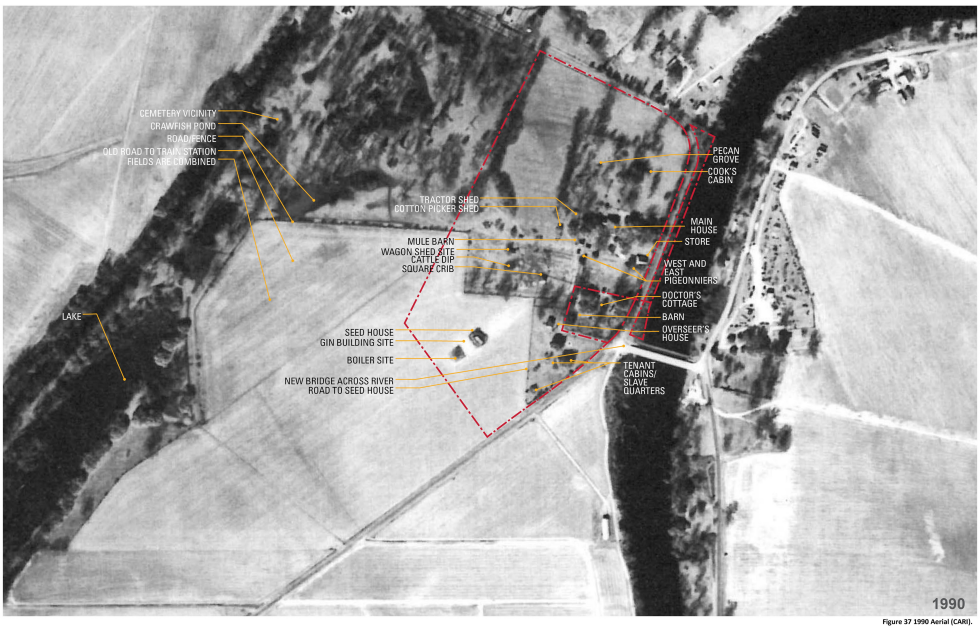


Figure 37 1990 Aerial (CARI).

1990 Aerial Photograph, Oakland Plantation.

Slave/Tenant Cabin at Oakland, late 1990s.

1994-2020

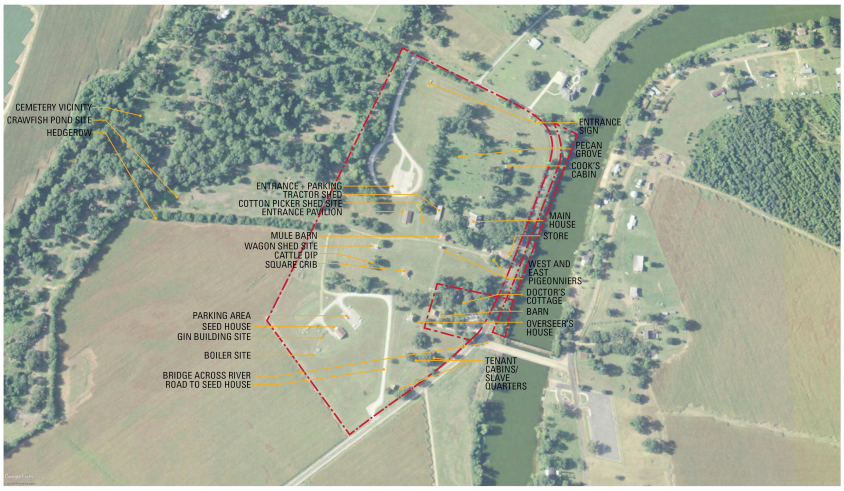
While Cane River Creole National Park was established in 1994, it took a few years before the land acquisition at Oakland Plantation was complete. Between 1997 and 1998, the NPS purchased the present 45-acre property in four separate parcels from the Prudhommes and Doris Vincent, but the Prudhommes continued to occupy the Main House until 1998. An additional 144 acres of adjacent family-owned land was included in the unit's legislatively authorized boundaries, but is not owned by the NPS (CLR Part 2, 39).

After the land acquisition, the NPS turned its efforts towards research, stabilization, and preservation of the Oakland site, including the development of a General Management Plan (GMP) to guide the development of new visitor services and infrastructure for park access. A number of architectural reports (Historic Structure Reports), archeological surveys and ethnographic studies were also conducted during this period as baselines for preservation and interpretation (CLR Part 2, 39). The NPS undertook extensive stabilization and restoration efforts on Oakland's Main House, Store, and the large number of deteriorating dependencies and farm structures. Following the recommendations of the 2001 GMP, new visitor use infrastructure was installed at Oakland, including a new park entrance, drive and Visitor Pavilion constructed in the fields west of the Main House (completed between 2001-2004), a network of accessible visitor paths installed to connect various structures and features in the landscape (completed by 2006), a new park service drive and maintenance area housed at the former Seed House/Gin site, and staff parking and offices at the Doctor's Cottage (both completed by 2004) (CLR Part 2, 44-45).

Around 2010, the park installed a system of engineered gabions along the western embankment of Cane River Lake as part of a bank stabilization project to check erosion in this area, which has created some on-going maintenance, access, and interpretation challenges for the park. In 2016, the park restored/replanted a portion of the original Pecan Grove to the north of the Main House, which can be seen in period photographs. The park has also maintained some young fruit trees near the northwest corner of the Main House as part of an effort to restore known historic orchard specimens near the kitchen wing of the house (CLR Part 2, 44-45).

Other projects have included the replacement of the Main House roof in 2015-2016, reconstruction of the cattle dipping vat near the wagon shed in 2016, a 2018 re-graveling of the visitor parking lot, Farm Lane, and park drives, the limewashing of all outbuildings in 2019-2020, replacement of the Main House gallery/porch in 2020, and, beginning in 2019, ongoing remediation of farm-era arsenic contamination at the dipping vat site and East and West Pigeonniers. In August of 2020, Hurricane Laura damaged the corn crib, wagon shed, and a number of trees. While the buildings were repaired, the damaged trees were removed. As of 2020, park is undergoing preliminary planning studies for new visitor trails and a wayside plan to be implemented over the next 2-3 years (CLR Part 2, 45).

2004 Aerial Photograph, Oakland Plantation.



2010 Aerial Photograph, Oakland Plantation.

Uses

Functions and Uses:

Major Category	Category	Use/Function	Historic	Current	Primary
Agriculture/Subsistence	Agriculture/Subsistence-Other	Agriculture/Subsistence-Other	Yes	No	Yes
Agriculture/Subsistence	Farm (Plantation)	Farm (Plantation)	Yes	No	No
Recreation/Culture	Museum (Exhibition Hall)	Museum (Exhibition Hall)-Other	No	Yes	Yes

Public Access:

Public Access: Unrestricted

Public Access Narrative:

Park is open to the public 7 days a week from 9 AM to 3:30 PM with the exception of federal holidays.

Associated Ethnographic Group

Ethnographic Group: Akiachak Native Community

Current: Yes

Historic Yes

Ethnographic Group: Native Village of Kiana

Current: Yes

Historic Yes

Ethnographic Group: Mammoth Cave Baptist Church Congregation and Descendants

Current: Yes

Historic Yes

Ethnographic Study Status: Yes-Unrestricted Information

Ethnographic Narrative:

The park has completed several ethnographic studies, including an Rapid Ethnographic Assessment (REAP, 1996), Ethnographic Overview and Assessment (Phase 1 - 2007), Lineal Descent Study (2018), and several interviews with traditionally associated people (TAP interviews, 2015 and 2018). The park also uses an ethnohistory entitled "We Know Who We Are" (1996) which focuses on the Creoles of Color along Cane River.

Analysis & Evaluation of Integrity

Analysis and Evaluation of Integrity Narrative Summary:

The Oakland Plantation landscape is complex and layered. The present 45-acre Oakland unit represents only a fraction of the Prudhomme family's original landholdings, namely its residential core around the Main House and a small portion of former agricultural land to the south and west. The landscape also retains a portion of the plantation's former Tenant Quarters Area, including the Overseer's House and two Tenant Cabins/Slave Quarters. Yet this significantly reduced property retains much of its integrity as a rural riverfront setting, though some areas bear more integrity to the mid-twentieth century than to the 1800s. The spatial organization apparent between individual residential buildings and their dependencies, former gardens, work yards, drives, and allées, expresses the inherently interwoven balance between the daily rituals of dwelling and labor in plantation life. This organization retains integrity to varying degrees within the Tenant Quarters Area and the area surrounding the Main House.

Tenant Quarters Area

Since the construction of slave cabins in the nineteenth century, the Tenant Quarters Area has experienced more alteration and change to its landscape context and spatial configuration than areas closer to the Main House, in the historic residential core. After the departure of the last tenants in 1960, the Tenant Quarters Area landscape declined rapidly. Traces of residential yards, lanes, and features that spoke to its continued inhabitation from the antebellum period (enslavement) to mid-twentieth century (tenancy) began to vanish from the landscape, including numerous tenant cabins scattered in the fields and along the former river on family lands to the south of current NPS-owned property, visible in the sequence of historic aerials dating from the 1950s to the 2000s. This is a story that was repeated throughout the rural plantation South—formerly inhabited sharecropper or tenant cabins, many evolved from former slave dwellings, were vacated by tenants, abandoned by the plantation owners, and left to fall to ruins in the fields.

Historic Residential Core (Main House Area)

It may seem that the Historic Residential Core, due to the persistence of key structures and features—the live oak allée, the Bottle Garden, the Farm Lane—from the nineteenth century until present, bears more sustained integrity to an earlier era than the now fragmented Historic Agricultural Core. But it could also be argued that this area, since the mid-century, has experienced even greater change to context and function since the midcentury than the Historic Agricultural Core. While the landscape of labor went into decline, the residential areas continued to evolve and adapt until, and even after, mid-century, to facilitate new commercial ventures and heritage tourism activities as alternative revenue streams for the Prudhomme family, necessitating modifications and adaptations to the landscapes.

Former Agricultural Lands

Like the Tenant Quarters Area, the former Seed House/Gin Site, which is located within former agricultural fields, has also experienced significant alterations to its landscape context. Indeed, the southernmost portions of the property reflect twentieth-century changes wrought by sharecropping, tenancy, mechanization of agriculture, and modern highway construction, rather than continuity of antebellum agriculture. They do, however, remind visitors of the landscapes of labor that made the entire plantation enterprise possible. It is also important to note the extant African American/Slave Cemetery, which sits outside of the park boundaries and to the west of the fields, closer to Bayou Brevelle. The former fields and Tenant Quarters Area together, with the African American/Slave Cemetery, are an invaluable component of the park and essential to balanced interpretation of Oakland's landscape legacy and the generations of human occupation and resident laborers who shaped the very lands on which they were later laid to rest.

Oakland Plantation

Taken as a whole, the Oakland Plantation property maintains integrity as an expression of rational spatial organization associated with plantation hierarchy. This potent expression of plantation social order, expressed through purposeful spatial organization of landscape and building, is uniquely combined and intact at Oakland. The organization begins with the river, where distinctive land patterning was derived from historic long lot property divisions and land patterns organized in axial relationship to Cane River Lake. The perpendicular alignment of key segments of historic lane, ditch, field and fence line to the center line of the lake are lingering expressions of historic longlot patterns common to the region and to Creole Louisiana, and express the importance of natural environment—the critical transect from river to backswamp—on plantation layout, with the river as source of transport, connectivity and soil fertility and the backswamp areas (Bayou Brevelle) as the source of timber, wildlife, and other natural bounty. Agriculture was established and thrived in the landscape in between, on the fertile alluvial soils nourished by the once meandering river.

A unique spatial expression of plantation social hierarchy was then layered on top of these patterns emanating from the landscape's natural systems and geography. In essence, the planter family lived at the top of the social and economic ladder, and on its widest rung (here to the North, on generously expansive grounds), and their human capital (the enslaved, and later, the descendant sharecroppers and tenants who built and maintained the fabric of the plantation) lived in denser conditions away from the planter family (to the south). Their social intermediaries—doctors and overseers—lived in the middle zone between the Main House and the Tenant Cabins/Slave Quarters, but even this space reflects a social and economic hierarchy. Doctors, who protected the slaveowner's human investment, occupied space slightly above (here north of) the overseers. Overseers, who directly managed the human capital and their production, occupied space slightly below (south of) the doctors. The Store, a post-bellum expression of commerce, exchange, and the new social order established between planter, overseer, and tenant, also sits in the middle ground between the planter and the formerly enslaved, yet it is publicly facing and outwardly oriented towards the expanding commercial opportunities of river and road, while retaining a "private face" or back door oriented towards the Main House. In summary, if the north to south spatial arrangement from the Main House to Tenant/Slave dwelling expresses Oakland's social and economic hierarchy, its "human pecking" order from leisure to labor, then the east to west transect of land use expresses its natural ordering from river to backswamp. These broad and distinctive patterns retain integrity and merit greater interpretation and understanding on the part of the visitor.

The following analysis focuses on key landscape characteristics and features at Oakland within the larger context of the areas noted above. Discussions on spatial organization, views and vistas, land use, topography, circulation, vegetation, small-scale features, natural systems, cultural traditions, buildings and structures, cluster arrangement, small-scale features, constructed water features, vegetation, and archeological sites are included to better understand the components of the property. Tables following this narrative list contributing and non-contributing features.

Landscape Characteristic: Buildings and Structures

Buildings and structures include “three-dimensional constructs such as houses, barns, garages, stables, bridges, and memorials.” In the Historic Residential Zone, the Main House and Doctor’s Cottage serve as the primary residential anchors, with many of the secondary structures (dependencies and outbuildings) organized in relationship to them or to the Farm Lane. The Store sits to the southeast of the Main House near the lakefront along Hwy 494, at the entrance to the Farm Lane. In the Historic Agricultural Zone, a number of farm buildings associated with equipment storage (wagon shed) or livestock enclosure (corn crib, corral shed) sit in the open fields to the west and south of the Historic Residential Zone. The Overseer’s House and Tenant Cabins/Slave Quarters are located further south near the southern property boundary at the edge of former agricultural fields. The Seed House and former Gin site sit in the fields to the southwest, a reminder of the much more extensive agricultural landscape that was once part of the family property.

The dates of construction, conditions, and contributing/non-contributing status of existing buildings and structures to Oakland’s historical significance have been documented in previous NPS reports and preservation databases (HRS, HSRs, CRIS-HS, NR, NHL), documents which the park may reference for further information or analysis regarding individual structures (especially the primary residences, store, and farm buildings). As a result, the status and integrity of individual buildings and structures is summarized in the table at the end of this section. The following analysis focuses instead on buildings that are known to have been torn down or moved within the landscape over time, buildings and structures that have been substantially reconstructed by the NPS, structures associated with the former Quarters/Tenant Area since these typically have been underrepresented, downplayed, or ignored in previous visual and textual documentation and within the historic record in general, and on the spatial or space-defining contributions of buildings to the landscape in aggregation, the role that they play in defining or reinforcing unique sub-landscapes (yards, allées, passageways, edges) or character areas (Tenant Quarters Area) within the broader Oakland landscape.

It would be clear to any observer that the property contains a remarkable collection of historic residential structures, dependencies and outbuildings, farm buildings, laborer and tenant housing, and commercial structures, many of which date to the nineteenth century and remain in or near their original locations. However, the very nature of vernacular architecture, and particularly wooden architecture, was that it could be moved, recycled, or repurposed according to need, shifting land use, functional or technological obsolescence. It is not surprising then that family oral history, archeology, and examination of aerial photos reveal that a number of the smaller structures have been moved over time or entirely lost, and that there is considerable uncertainty about the location of some structures, especially dependency structures, in earlier eras and certainly prior to 1941, the date of the earliest aerial photo.

For instance, the Cook’s Cabin was relocated from an earlier location, presumably near the current kitchen wing or rear of the house, to the meadow north of the Main House as a Fishing Camp in the late 1920s. Another cabin, the Washerwoman’s Cabin, was also moved to the Fishing Camp area at this time (it is visible along with the Cook’s Cabin in aerials from the 1940s-60s), but it had vanished by the 1970s—again, its former location is unknown. Sometime after indoor plumbing was installed in the Main House, the family moved the Main House Privy to the rear (west) of the Tractor Shed; the NPS restored the structure and relocated it to its current location to approximate the historic siting documented in photos (the privy appears in several historic family photographs but appears to be slightly further south than its current location). According to family oral history, at some point a collection of outbuildings located elsewhere (perhaps more dispersed) on the property were relocated to their current location just west of the Main House and aggregated in a row (fattening pen, wash house, chicken coop, laundry, etc.), forming the distinctive rear yard enclosure or configuration present today. Their former locations and the date of this reconfiguration is unknown. In addition, family interviews reveal that the West Pigeonnier was moved, though not far from its original location, sometime mid-century, possibly to widen lane access for new larger farm equipment. Little is known about a Children’s Playhouse or possible Garden Shed visible in a 1940s-era HABS photo at the northeast corner of the Bottle Garden, which disappears in later photographs and is not discernible in aerials. The historic/former riverfront Dock & Warehouse also

disappear from aerials around mid-century.

The historic Tenant Quarters Area presents a similar case, where the exact location and configuration of original dwellings is unknown, and an area for which there is scant photographic documentation. Were the former slave cabins moved or reconfigured and scattered through the landscape after Emancipation? How many were there originally? Did they have landscapes, yards and gardens of their own? Additional archeology in the area might eventually reveal more clues to some of these questions, but for now, there is much unknown. What remains of the former Quarters Area—two intact but heavily reconstructed Tenant Cabins/Slave Quarters and the foundation ruins of a third bucolically set within a grassy meadow likely represents only a small fragment of the original Quarters landscape and is more indicative in its present configuration and condition of the end of tenancy and post-1960s abandonment than of an earlier inhabited condition. The spatial integrity of this area has certainly been compromised by the loss of significant architectural fabric and landscape features over time (lanes, fences, yards, vegetation, perhaps other dwellings, etc), yet its untapped significance resides perhaps more in its archeological potential to reveal information not recorded in writing or photograph by the multiple generations of enslaved, sharecropper and tenant laborers to reside there.

Aerial photos taken mid-century do reveal some details about this area and its evolution. In the earliest photos (1941-50s), the existing North and South Tenant Cabins are connected to each other, Hwy 494, the gin site, and farm lane by an internal network of interconnected lanes or drives extending west from Hwy 494, but these driveways begin to fade away in aerials taken after 1960, presumably from lack of use after the last tenants (Helaires) moved away from Oakland, and the properties were subsequently abandoned. Without routine maintenance and upkeep, the structures and any distinct landscape elements surrounding them, such as fences or garden enclosures, horticultural specimens or yards, fell into decay and their traces were ultimately lost. The cistern at the northwest corner of the North Tenant Cabin serves as a reminder of the cycles of work and self-sufficiency associated with each of these former residences in the twentieth century; however their proximity to the Overseer's House just to the northwest reminds us of their former existence as part of a larger arrangement of slave quarters or cabins that existed in this area historically. Indeed, it is possible that the gridded lane network visible in the 1941 aerial was a residual trace of the earlier (perhaps even antebellum) spatial arrangement of cabins, but of course, this is merely speculative without further archeology. What does become clear in comparing the 1920 soil survey to the 1941 aerial is that the historic Quarters Area, whatever its original configuration, was bisected and disrupted by the construction of Hwy 494 sometime between those two dates.

Given their evolution from slave quarters in the early-nineteenth century to sharecropper and tenant houses after Emancipation up until the 1950s, the tenant houses at Oakland are physical reminders of the antebellum plantation landscape and its dependence upon enslaved labor. Unfortunately, the location, number and precise spatial arrangement of the original slave quarters is unknown, but judging by extant examples such as at Magnolia Plantation, CARI's sister unit, cabins were typically configured in a compact linear or gridded arrangement in close physical and visual proximity to the Overseer's House and agricultural fields, but out of the line of sight of the Main House and possibly also the Doctor's Cottage. After Emancipation and the emergence of sharecropping, some of the former slave cabins were almost certainly moved, repurposed, torn down or dispersed throughout the agricultural landscape to serve the needs of a now more autonomous or semi-autonomous population of tenant farmers. As a result, it is not clear whether the two existing cabins and the ruins of a third (Gabe Nargot cabin) represent the exact location of the original slave quarters, or merely an approximation. Further archeology would be required to establish this. Aerials show that prior to NPS acquisition, there were other tenant houses scattered across the fields to the south of current park property and along Hwy 494 near the river, but several of these have disappeared even in recent years to development along the river. As a result, the Quarters Area probably represents the area of greatest change over time to building number, arrangement and context, but it is still of paramount importance to the integrity and interpretation of the plantation property and its evolution through time.

A number of the farm buildings have been reconstructed or substantially restored by the NPS (Seed House, Wagon Shed, Cattle Dipping Vat, Doctor's Barn) but appear to be in their original locations,

and hence, can be classified as compatible if not entirely contributing in terms of their integrity and original fabric. For example, the reconstructed Cattle Dipping Vat to the south of the Wagon Shed is an important reminder of the former presence of livestock and animal husbandry that was essential to the plantation enterprise and farm operations, especially important to park interpretive efforts as livestock are no longer present in the landscape, and workaday features such as this give a more balanced view of farm operations.

Landscape Features:

Feature Name	CLI Feature ID	Feature Contribution	CRIS-HS Resource ID	Associated CRIS-AR ID	FMSS Record Type	FMSS Record Number	FMSS Exact Match
Historic Bermuda Bridge	191370	Contributing					No
Main House	191371	Contributing					No
Doctor’s Cottage	191372	Contributing					No
Store	191373	Contributing					No
Rear & Side Yard Dependencies (Main House) (7)	191374	Contributing					No
Rear Yard Dependencies (Doctor’s Cottage) (3)	191375	Contributing					No
Carriage House	191376	Contributing					No
Carpenter’s Shop	191377	Contributing					No
Doctor’s Barn	191378	Contributing					No
Doctor’s House Garage	191379	Contributing					No
Pigeonniers (East & West, 2)	191380	Contributing					No
Mule Barn (former Smokehouse)	191381	Contributing					No
Tractor Shed	191382	Contributing					No
Overseer’s House	191383	Contributing					No
Tenant Cabins/Slave Quarters (North & South)	191384	Contributing					No
Seed House	191385	Contributing					No
Corn Crib (Square Crib)	191386	Contributing					No
Corral Shed	191387	Contributing					No
Wagon Shed	191388	Contributing					No
Cattle Dipping Vat (reconstructed)	191389	Contributing					No
Entrance Pavilion (NPS)	191390	Non contributing					No

Landscape Characteristic Graphics:

North Slave/Tenant Cabin, 2020.

Overseer's House, 2020.

Doctor's Cottage (House), 2020.

Oakland Plantation Store, 2020.

Oakland Main House (Big House), 2020.

Landscape Characteristic: Circulation

Circulation is made up of the “spaces, features, and materials that constitute systems of movement.” The property has both a modern and historic layer of vehicular circulation. The new park entrance drive enters the property from the north at Hwy 494 and passes south to the visitor parking area and Entrance Pavilion located to the rear of the Historic Residential Core. At the southern end of the property, a park maintenance drive extends north and west from Hwy 494 to access the Seed House/former Gin site, before looping along the back of the property to pass the wagon shed and rejoin the Farm Lane near the rear [south] of the Entrance Pavilion. Just south of the Doctor’s Cottage near the junction of Hwy 494 and 119 (where the bridge crosses the lake), another service drive enters the property from Hwy 494 to access the staff parking area located in the yard south of the Doctor’s Cottage before passing through the rear yard to rejoin the north-south (dogleg) extension of the Farm Lane. The Farm Lane represents a reestablishment of a portion of the former historic lane that moved between the historic/former riverfront and the constructed ponds and backswamps along Bayou Brevelle. It serves as a central east-west organizing spine for the property but doglegs to the south at the West Pigeonnier and then returns to a west-southwest orientation to the rear of the Doctor’s Cottage to follow a once vegetated swale line between the Corn Crib enclosure and the Corral towards the rear of the property (see 1941 and 1950 aerials). The drive loop that extends between the Seed House west and north towards the Wagon Shed then returns east to reconnect with the Farm Lane at the West Pigeonnier was created by the NPS in the early 2000s, presumably to facilitate access to storage or maintenance staging areas near the rear of the property, but it does not show up on aerial photos dating back to 1941 and is, hence, non-historic. All park drives, lanes, and parking areas were resurfaced with a grey crushed limestone in 2018. Visitor pathways composed of a modular rubber mat path system connect from the Visitor Pavilion and entrance zone to various points of interest in the historic residential zone—along the north of the Farm Lane, north around the Main House yards, and south along the Farm Lane to the Doctor’s Cottage, Overseer’s House and Quarters Area. Mown paths provide access across meadow spaces to the Cook’s Cabin/Fishing Camp area, Pecan Grove and the various livestock enclosures and other areas within the historic agricultural landscape. In the front lawn and allée area, visitors can walk along the grassy surface of the formerly graveled drive, but this area is now inaccessible to vehicular traffic and blocked at its eastern end by gates.

The park has added a new layer of visitor service infrastructure since 2001 and the majority of the circulation routes at Oakland date to this period. The reduction in acreage during park acquisition and the construction of a new Visitor Entrance Drive & Parking, visitor paths, and entrance pavilion effectively reoriented the main approach to the property to the west to create a new centralized (and controlled) “back entrance.” Furthermore, the repurposing (adaptive reuse) of the Doctor’s Cottage, Seed House, and Store to house Staff Parking & Service, including administrative, maintenance, and visitor use functions, also altered perceived historic circulation routes and land use patterns. These changes have interrupted the rhythm and visual connection of house and dependency structures to field, bayou, and beyond, and have created a less historically accurate (and perhaps less legible) entrance setting than might have been achieved if arrival occurred in a more historically accurate way from the historic/former riverfront and along the Live Oak Allée. Such changes reflect a conscious shift in emphasis by park management away from a historical approach that might appear to privilege the narrative of the big house towards a backdoor or “back-of-big-house” approach that opens up a broader, more poly-vocal range of interpretive narratives (of field work, agricultural labor, and hence slavery, sharecropping and tenant farming).

Farm Lane (Hwy 494 to Corral/Corn Crib Area), contributing

The Farm Lane has long served as the historic circulation spine of the plantation property, connecting it from river to backswamp, and internally connecting the various elements of the historic residential and agricultural cores—the landscapes of dwelling and the landscapes of labor—through a series of secondary lanes, paths or drives. Early site documentation and twentieth century aerials show that the lane extended historically in an east-west alignment from its intersection with the highway just south of the Store to the West Pigeonnier and Mule Barn, then turned or “dog-legged” to the south until it reached the south edge of the Corn Crib enclosure near the rear of the Doctor’s Cottage. From here, it made a turn to the southwest to follow a prominent drainage ditch or swale and vegetated fence line that extended from the Corral area across the fields towards Bayou Brevelle (a fragment of this once prominent ditch line is visible where the wooden pedestrian bridge crosses a remnant swale along the path segment to the rear of the Doctor’s Cottage). An extension of the lane continued to the south past the Overseer’s House to intersect the lane connecting Hwy 494 to the Seed House/Gin site.

Service Drive to Gin Site/Maintenance Area, noncontributing

The current service drive to the Seed House/maintenance area follows an awkward and almost right angular alignment that dates from the 1970s (Figure 110), when the fields to the south were reconfigured for mechanized agriculture or row crops (cornfields) and apparently bounded from the residential core by new fence lines. The 1941 and 1950 aerials show an earlier alignment that ran straight and almost due east-west from Hwy 494, likely following the path of the historic turn row to the gin. This represents a more historically accurate approach to the gin site from the highway, which bisected the meadow between the existing tenant houses and intersected an extension of the farm lane running from the north. This
internal system of lanes between the main Farm Lane, Overseer’s House, Tenant/Quarters Area, Hwy 494 and the gin site connected the tenants to the landscape of labor, the agricultural fields to the west, as well as to the residential core of the property, where they likely also worked and performed domestic duties for the family. The portion of the current park service drive that loops to the north and west of the Seed House, connecting to the Wagon Shed, Entrance Pavilion and West Pigeonnier, is an NPS addition and is neither historic nor contributing.

Visitor Entrance Drive (NPS) & Parking, noncontributing

The current visitor entrance drive, which is oriented north to south, rather than east to west, brings visitors into the back of the property from the northwest corner (away from the river and through a former back pasture area). This automotive arrival sequence, which terminates at the NPS Entrance Pavilion, sets up an awkward and historically inaccurate pedestrian approach (from west to east along a meandering segment of new visitor path and eventually the Farm Lane) to the Historic Residential Core, introducing new segments of visitor circulation that do not correspond to historic alignments. This means that the visitor’s first experience of the historic structures is of their rear facades rather than their entrance or public facades (and their first site impression, the blank rear façade of the Tractor Shed). As a result, the Doctor’s Cottage, Main House and Store are now largely approached from the rear by visitors, and access to these structures, when possible, is generally also from the rear or by way of a rear or side yard; the Overseer’s House is approached from the front, but entered from the rear, and the North Tenant Cabin can be entered from the front or rear.

Staff Parking (at Doctor’s Cottage) & Service Drive, noncontributing

The gravel staff parking lot and service drive encircling the Doctor’s Cottage to the south and west are NPS additions and non-historic. Indeed, the creation of the parking lot and new drive entrance from Hwy 494 necessitated a break in the historic outer fenced enclosure of the Doctor’s Cottage yard and introduced cars and traffic into an area that was formerly a domestic workyard, garden area, or livestock enclosure area for the Doctor’s Cottage, compromising to some degree the spatial integrity and legibility of this former residential workyard.

Rubber Mat Visitor paths & composite landings, noncontributing

The rubber-mat path system that was installed by the NPS in the early 2000s (and is to be replaced soon) is overgrown with grass in certain areas (which does make it less visually obtrusive), but it is a visually dominant and distracting element in the overall visitor experience, both for its unnaturally green color and for its coarse texturing. It is a non-contributing element to the integrity of the landscape, but fortunately is impermanent and could be easily removed. The park is in the process of completing a new park trail system and interpretive waysides to be installed within the next two to three years.

Quarters/Tenant Area Path (Doctor's Cottage to Cabins), noncontributing

The visitor-use footpath that passes to the rear of the Doctor's Cottage and connects the Farm Lane to the Overseer's House and Quarters Area follows the historic path alignment (or Farm Lane extension) visible in mid-century aerials, although it is unclear from the aerials whether this was merely a dirt pathway or a graveled drive historically and by what means (culvert, low bridge, grating) this feature traversed the historic drainage ditch or swale near the Corral. To the south of the Overseer's House, the contemporary visitor path departs from the gridded lane alignment seen in the 1941 and 1950 aerials, following a more free-form and meandering alignment through the meadow towards the South Tenant Cabin.

Landscape Features:

Feature Name	CLI Feature ID	Feature Contribution	CRIS-HS Resource ID	Associated CRIS-AR ID	FMSS Record Type	FMSS Record Number	FMSS Exact Match
Farm Lane (Hwy 494 to Corral/Corn Crib area)	191363	Contributing					No
Service Drive to Gin Site/Maintenance Area	191364	Non contributing					No
Visitor Entrance Drive (NPS) & Parking	191365	Non contributing					No
Staff Parking (at Doctor's Cottage) & Service Drive	191366	Non contributing					No
Rubber Mat Visitor paths & composite landings	191367	Non contributing					No
Quarters/Tenant Area Path (Dr.'s Cottage to Cabins)	191368	Non contributing					No

Landscape Characteristic Graphics:

Farm Lane near Store looking toward Carriage House [right] and East Pigeonnier [left], with West Pigeonnier and Carpenter's Shop visible in background, 2017.

Photograph of path from Farm Lane to Quarters area near Doctor's Barn, 2020.

Path to Historic Residential Core, showing current mowing patterns and rubber-mat path system, 2020.

Staff parking lot at Dr. Cottage, 2017.

Landscape Characteristic: **Land Use**

Land use is the “organization, form, and shape of the landscape in response to the land use.” The broader landscape around Oakland, particularly to the south, remains largely agricultural, so visitors still experience a landscape of agricultural fields extending to distant woodlands arriving along Hwy 494 from the south. However, land use patterns to the east and north have discernably shifted in the latter half of the twentieth century due to the subdivision of larger farm properties and development of smaller residential and recreational (camp) tracts with access to the lake and highway. This has occurred along both sides of the lake and along the northern edge of Hwy 494 to the north of park boundaries. Many of these modern residential properties now intrude upon the viewshed at Oakland.

Beyond the park entrance to the northeast, in the direction of Natchitoches, the land use becomes noticeably more suburban, with a number of gated new developments cropping up in former fields. To the west, the areas along Bayou Brevelle remain largely wooded. Obviously, the park property itself is no longer residential or agricultural, but is managed as a heritage site and public park land accessible for day use by visitors.

Since 1865, Bermuda/Oakland has undergone three significant subdivisions or reductions in acreage related to inheritance, successions, or sales, which has dramatically reduced the extensive antebellum acreage from nearly 1900 acres to the present 45 acres owned by the park. The present-day NPS acreage includes almost none of the original agricultural fields to the south and southwest of the Main House complex nor the once extensive backswamp areas, although portions of these landscapes are still visible from the interior of the park (and potentially accessible on foot).

Current park holdings are focused on the Historic Residential Core, which includes all of the significant extant residential structures, outbuildings, and associated landscape features (yards, orchard, parterre garden, allée, etc.), historic farm and livestock enclosures close to the historic core, a portion of the historic Farm Lane, and a number of archeological resources associated with the former gin sites and previous vanished structures (blacksmith shop/forge, old gin site, former mule barn, cabin ruins). There are a few meadows, pastures, and fragments of former fields included in park acreage, but little of the cultivated cotton fields of the antebellum period or even the early twentieth century. The fields that are included in the park, around the Seed House and former Gin site probably supported a variety of crops historically, beyond just cotton fields. Toward the end of the twentieth century, they may have been planted in corn. Even though these former croplands are currently maintained in pasture grasses, they do still evoke the openness and expanse of an agricultural landscape and offer views over cultivated fields to the south that are now off-site but were once part of Oakland’s historic fields.

Tourism (Culture and Tourism), contributing

The primary contemporary land use at Oakland is tourism. This perpetuates and reflects the Prud’homme family’s endeavors in heritage and tourism beginning in the 20th century. The property’s primary historic land use, however, agriculture, has been lost and is now mainly captured through borrowed views of active agricultural fields to the south and southwest of NPS-boundaries.

Landscape Features:

Feature Name	CLI Feature ID	Feature Contribution	CRIS-HS Resource ID	Associated CRIS-AR ID	FMSS Record Type	FMSS Record Number	FMSS Exact Match
Tourism (Culture and Recreation)	191362	Contributing					No

Landscape Characteristic: Natural Systems and Features

Natural systems and features are “natural aspects that often influence the development and resultant form of a landscape.” Cane River Lake and its associated alluvial landscape of fertile natural levee, backswamp and bayous played a critical role in Oakland’s (Bermuda) historical evolution and setting. The embankment along the lake to the east of Hwy 494, although currently overgrown with volunteer vegetation and generally inaccessible, preserves a viewshed and physical connection to the former river that is a significant connection to the past and to the historic /former riverfront activity that was once essential to the life of the plantation. The modern bridge that crosses the present-day lake near the south end of the property provides some of the best views of the historic/former riverfront setting and of the 1912 steel-truss Bermuda Bridge. Although the property no longer includes the formerly timbered backswamp areas along Bayou Brevelle or the constructed ponds, these features still exist on adjacent family lands and provide visual backdrop across the fields of the woodlands to the west and southwest.

According to the CARI Historic Resource Study (HRS 2000), “the alluvial bottomlands of the area were dominated by willow (Salix nigra), Eastern cottonwood (Populus deltoids), sycamore (Platanus occidentalis), American sweetgum (Liquidambar styraciflua), and a mixed deciduous hardwood canopy of oaks (Quercus sp.), hackberry (Celtis occidentalis), elm (Ulmus sp.), and pecan (Cary illinoinensis). These woods were interspersed with Southern magnolia (Magnolia grandiflora) and other evergreen and deciduous trees and shrubs” (HRS 1-6). Furthermore, “The climate of the Cane River region is humid subtropical with short winters and long, humid summers. Rainfall is fairly consistent throughout the year, with some deluges during thunderstorm activity or when the remains of a tropical system cross the area, particularly in the summer. Windstorms are usually associated with frontal activity and occasional tornadoes. The region is far enough inland to escape the strongest winds of a hurricane if one comes ashore in Louisiana or east Texas” (HRS 1-7), although several recent hurricanes (Laura and Delta) have caused some significant damage to structures and vegetation. The site also experiences some spot flooding during heavy rains due to micro depressions and impoundments that interrupt the historic flow of water and drainage away from the river towards Bayou Brevelle. According to park staff, this is especially pronounced in the North Meadow/Pecan Orchard area, Visitor Use Area, and where new road grading (parking, entry drive, service drives) or the construction of visitor infrastructure has interrupted the normal east to west patterns of hydrological flow.

Cane River Lake/riverbank, contributing

The Cane River Lake bank is currently overgrown with volunteer vegetation along much of its length and is difficult to manage because of the engineered gabion system that was installed in 2010 to control erosion along the lake edge. However, Oakland’s connection to Cane River Lake and the riverbank is integral to the interpretation of the property. Arpent patterns or longlot divisions evolved in response to the value of the river and ensured that landowners would each have access to river commerce and access to positive drainage on their property. These divisions extended from the center line of the river to the backswamps, along perpendicular transect lines, creating long pie-shaped wedges. Therefore, preservation and management of the Lakefront Zone, as well as preservation and management of the evidence of longlots on the property, is an extremely important consideration for the park.

Bayou Brevelle and backswamps, off-site, contributing

The historic landscapes along Bayou Brevelle are no longer on park property or accessible to visitors. However, Bayou Brevelle and its associated backswamps were important to the establishment of the plantation. Valuable cypress timber was sourced there, and later cattle were pastured. The structural and spatial integrity of this area is unknown.

Savane (woodland pasture to west), off-site, contributing

Though not within current park boundaries, the savane is visible to the immediate northwest within the larger legislated boundaries. This area was historically wooded, in contrast to the surrounding grassy pastures and meadows and was used for livestock grazing and perhaps also for timber. It retains its wooded character. and though the age of existing vegetation is unknown, it presumably retains some degree of structural and spatial integrity from the historic period. Future acquisition of some or all of the former savane would diversify historic land cover within the park holdings and offer new interpretive opportunities, as well as greater species biodiversity and habitat variety.

Landscape Features:

Feature Name	CLI Feature ID	Feature Contribution	CRIS-HS Resource ID	Associated CRIS-AR ID	FMSS Record Type	FMSS Record Number	FMSS Exact Match
Cane River Lake/riverbank	191357	Contributing					No
Bayou Brevelle and backswamps	191358	Contributing					No
Savane (woodland pasture to west)	191359	Contributing					No

Landscape Characteristic Graphics:

View from Hwy 119 bridge (at Oakland) looking south at Cane River Lake, 2020.

Landscape Characteristic: **Small Scale Features**

Small-scale features are “elements that provide detail and diversity combined with function and aesthetics." Small-scale features include numerous fence lines and gates, the gas pumps and Esso sign in the front yard of the Store, the various cisterns (Store, Main House, Doctor’s Cottage,

Overseer's House, North Tenant Cabin, Jug Cistern at the Corn Crib), the "Oakland 1821" Entrance Gate sign and wooden plank grate, the rustic turnstile gate, and various farm or museum artifacts displayed (sugar kettles, antique hay rake near Mule Barn) throughout the site. The fence lines and enclosures of the Corn Crib area and Corral represent former livestock areas between the residential zone and the former agricultural landscape. And the rail fence along Hwy 494 serves as a reminder of the property's role in the 1959 film The Horse Soldiers. The picket fence along the front of the Bottle Garden is another distinctive element in the Main House landscape.

Fencing

The legibility of historic field patterns, livestock enclosures, and specialized yards around structures is connected to the persistence of fence lines over time, and the earlier CLR Phase 1 noted some modifications, additions and losses to historic fence lines and enclosures in the inner core of the property, making recommendations for removal or restoration of these where documentation justified such changes. Photos of Oakland—some historic, some modern—show numerous types of fencing used on the Oakland property. Historic photos typically dated to the 1930s to the 1960s. However, it is impossible to elaborate on specific dates or periods when certain fence types were used based on photos alone. Aerial photos sometimes clarify the location of fence lines, but they do not aid in identifying specific fence types or necessarily indicate whether the fence was extant or intact at the time the photo was taken. Moreover, it is unusual to discover photos that document the same location more than once.

What can be ascertained is the overall character of the fence types: the various fence types represented on the property are indicative of a utilitarian and flexible approach to shaping space and separating functions within the agricultural landscape. Moreover, these fences reinforced transparency across the landscape, with more private/less transparent fencing (board, picket or rail fencing) occurring only when necessary to enclose animals, or to announce socially valued and ornamental residential areas. Generally, the following types of fences can be seen on the property: wooden post with wire, mesh, or barb strands, board fencing, picket fencing, and rail fencing. Each of these types created a different feeling on the landscape and served a different purpose. Board or plank fencing appears in areas that held livestock adjacent to the Corral Shed and Corn Crib; this created more secure enclosure, which would have been necessary for large animals. Fences along the Farm Lane, which bisected the property, separating the Historic Residential Core from the beginnings of the Tenant Quarters Area and agricultural fields beyond, seem to have been composed of a mix of wooden post and wire historically. Likewise, fences that enclosed residential work yards, vegetable/kitchen gardens, and small animals seem to have been primarily composed of a mix of wooden post and wire, at least in so much as can be discerned from limited twentieth century photographs of these areas. The usage of post and wire fencing, regardless of the specific type of wire, created a sense of transparency or visibility on the landscape, maintaining sweeping views. This broad visibility would have been important for surveillance on plantation operations.

Picket fencing is used along the front (eastern edge) of the Bottle Garden enclosure and is documented in early twentieth century images of this garden, along with a now-vanished rose arbor arcing above the central metal wire gate. The 1987 HABS drawings also show a fence enclosure around the Doctor's Cottage. It is possible that this, too, might have been a picket fence historically, though there is no definitive evidence that this was the case. Picket fencing would have been low in height, allowing for transparency, while also more formally separating ornamental gardens and entry yards from the working landscape, effectively announcing a transition into a private residence that possessed a degree of importance in the social hierarchy. Picket fencing enclosed the yard at the Overseer's House, as seen in photos from the 1940s and 50s. A wooden rail fence can be seen along the front of the property; this fence was created as a modification to an existing fence in the late-1950s to serve as a movie prop but has become a character-defining feature along the highway and entrance approach to the Main House and store; this fence separated and announced the broader property to the outside world. It is reasonable to assume that board, rail, and picket fencing were more prevalent on the property prior to the advent of modern manufactured wire fencing, but again, this is largely speculative and the location and type of such fencing is not well substantiated by photographs or site documentation. Presumably, much of the property fencing was changed to post and wire over the course of the twentieth century due to the relative cost savings, greater ease

of replacement, and maintenance benefits of this modern type.

There appears to have been much variation in styles and material types used at Oakland. Whether original, reconstructed, or repaired over time, these small-scale features are significant to the rural vernacular character of the property. Key areas where fence lines are known to have been lost since mid-century or during NPS management include following: the North Pasture or meadow area around the Fishing Camp/Cook's Cabin; along the south edge of the Farm Lane near the East Pigeonnier, presumably enclosing a once-cultivated field between the Farm Lane and Doctor's Cottage; between the south side yard and the front drive area extending from the Bottle Garden to the Carriage House; and a fence line running along the north edge of the Main House yard and boundary with the north meadow, which that shows up in HABS documentation from the early 2000s. This latter fence does not seem to appear in images or aerials taken prior to 1976, and thus may not be historic. This fence probably served as a boundary between the Main House yards and the Pecan Grove and Fishing Camp areas in the late twentieth century. It was removed by the NPS. Fences known to be missing based on historic photographic documentation are discussed in more detail in the following paragraphs, and specific fences, condition, and status are included in the accompanying table.

Fishing Camp/North Meadow Area

Photos of the Fishing Camp area during a rare snow, as well as historic aerials, show two cabins, presumably the Cook's Cabin (extant) and the Washerwoman's Cabin (non-extant), fence lines and gated enclosures bounding this area from the Main House to the south and from the front pasture area to the north. Previous research established the presence of late-nineteenth century grass tennis courts in the area near Hwy 494, but it does not suggest whether they were enclosed or fenced from the Fishing Camp area to
the west.

Main House Front Lawn and South Side Yard

Other notable fences include the rail fence along Hwy 494 at the front of the property, extending between the northern corner boundary and the Store yard, which was created as a movie prop for the filming of The Horse Soldiers in 1959, and then replicated in more permanent form by the family afterwards. At some point, a rustic turnstile gate was added to this front fence by the family (date unknown) to control and allow tourist access to the site during the annual Pilgrimage events. This feature has been recently restored by the NPS and serves as a reminder of early heritage tourism activities on site. Historic photographs taken near or around the Main House indicate that fence types have changed over time in certain areas or have been lost. Photos of the Main House south side yard show multiple configurations of yards and fence enclosures over the years (with clotheslines, or children's swimming pools, or other features), and no particular arrangement persisting, which is typical of a vernacular property.

Overseer's House Yard Enclosure

A historic family photo (Metoyer) shows a picket fence around the front yard enclosure of the Overseer's House in the 1940s or 50s, with tree plantings, shrubs and ornamental vegetation within this fenced area. This feature has been lost.

Tenant/Quarters Area

It is unclear from the historic aerials (1941, 1950) whether the tenant landscape had discrete fencing around each cabin parcel prior to abandonment, but it seems almost certain that fencing would have been used by the tenants to enclose individual yards, work areas, and small animal enclosures, especially as the lane from Hwy 494 to the gin site ran directly through this area. Furthermore, the early aerials suggest fences or yard enclosures due to the presence in these images of discrete and noticeably vegetated edges around the individual cabins. Further archeology in this area might yield clues to former yard enclosures and fence line locations.

South Pasture/Farmyard

A 1940 HABS photo of the East Pigeonnier and Farm Lane shows a post and wire fence running along the southern edge of the farm lane towards Hwy 494, presumably enclosing the pasture area or cultivated field (perhaps a garden area for the Doctor's Cottage) visible to the south of the Farm Lane and north of the Doctor's Cottage yard. This area later evolved into a farm yard or storage area for large farm equipment (mechanized cotton pickers) post-1960, and the fence was presumably removed to facilitate easier entry and exit.

Additional Small-Scale Features (commercial artifacts, farm implements/museum artifacts, cisterns, signage)

The park has recently restored the gas pumps and Esso sign that contribute to the interpretation of the Store landscape. These small-scale features help to interpret the commercial function of this structure and evoke the mid-century roadside aesthetic that was common to the rural country store. Furthermore, they help to create a noteworthy moment of scenic nostalgia for visitors arriving along the highway. There are a few other small-scale features or artifacts from the extensive museum collection on display in the landscape, notably sugar kettles in the side and rear yards, and an antique hay rake near the mule barn, that add a further touch of rural authenticity to the farm landscape.

The Various Cisterns (Main House, Store, Overseer's House, Doctor's Cottage, jug cistern, gin cistern, North Tenant House) are also significant features of this rural agricultural landscape, and even though not operational in most cases, contribute to the integrity and authenticity of setting, and speak to plantation self-sufficiency and vernacular adaptation in the reuse of natural resources and handling of on-site drainage. This includes a water pump attached to the cistern on the front porch of the Store

The "Bicentennial Farm" sign (c.1985) and 1821 Oakland Entrance Sign & Gate (c. 1970s) post-date the period of significance but are compatible and speak to the emerging role of heritage tourism and the family's involvement in this enterprise to the evolution of Oakland over the course of the twentieth century. The park is currently in the process of reconstructing an Oakland Plantation riverbank sign that once stood along the highway edge opposite the Store and Farm Lane entrance and which was documented in at least
one historic photo.

The NPS has added Picnic Tables (near Entrance Pavilion to rear of Tractor Shed and to rear of Doctor's Cottage) and various NPS signage (entrance, informational, interpretive) as part of contemporary staff and visitor use infrastructure. These features are non-contributing and non-historic.

Missing Small-Scale Features

In addition to several noted fence lines or fenced yard enclosures, the landscape has lost at least one significant and frequently referenced small-scale feature that could aid in the interpretation of farm life and plantation rituals. The Bell Tower in the south yard of the Main House is documented in historic photographs and was constructed of rustic wood (bois d'arc) framing. The gate that leads into the side yard of the Main House from the Farm Lane, where the Bell Tower was originally located, is still called the bell gate by park staff and family. This gate is an important feature to restore as part of the Bell Tower story. It is currently in poor condition and in need of restoration or reconstruction.

Landscape Features:

Feature Name	CLI Feature ID	Feature Contribution	CRIS-HS Resource ID	Associated CRIS-AR ID	FMSS Record Type	FMSS Record Number	FMSS Exact Match
Rail Fence, Main House Front Lawn & Store Area	191395	Contributing					No
Rustic Turnstile Gate (restored)	191396	Contributing					No
Bottle Garden Picket Fence	191397	Contributing					No
Corn Crib & Corral Shed Plank Fencing (restored)	191398	Contributing					No
Wire fencing along Farm Lane/Bell Gate	191399	Contributing					No
Boundary Fences (post and wire)	191400	Contributing					No
Gas Pumps & Esso Sign (Store), restored	191401	Contributing					No
Cisterns (various, including pump at Store)	191402	Contributing					No
“Bicentennial Farm” sign	191403	Managed as cultural resource					No
1821 Oakland Entrance Sign & Gate	191404	Managed as cultural resource					No
Gin Stand Foundations (ruins)	191405	Contributing					No
Gabe Nargot Ruins	191406	Contributing					No
Picnic tables (NPS)	191407	Non contributing					No
NPS signage (entrance & informational)	191408	Non contributing					No

Landscape Characteristic Graphics:

Rustic turnstyle and split-rail fence along Hwy 494, 2020.

Bicentennial Farm sign at Oakland Plantation, 2020.

Gas pumps and Esso sign east of Oakland Store, 2020.

Landscape Characteristic: Vegetation

Vegetation is defined as “indigenous or introduced trees, shrubs, vines, ground covers, and herbaceous materials.” In general, the entire site is mown on a differential schedule (dictated largely by weather) and to varying heights, with outlying areas, meadows and fields maintained to a height of 2-3’ in extremes, 6-8” more commonly, and pathways, yards, lawns and visitor use areas around structures and archeological sites maintained more closely and frequently. Mature specimen trees (live oak, pecans, magnolia) tend to be clustered in the residence yards, with some smaller understory trees (crape myrtles) and ornamental shrubs (nandinas) along boundary fences, building foundations or within the Bottle Garden, which also has the most ornamental or flowering species (iris, crinum and spider lilies, ferns, the only two camellias on the property), forming the interior of its parterre beds. However, as earlier noted, the Bottle Garden seems to be suffering from a general loss of ground cover vegetation due to lack of maintenance, pest problems, or issues with drainage and erosion.

There are several distinct spaces defined by vegetation that are important to note. The front and side yards of the Main House are some of the most prominent areas at Oakland. The heavily shaded yard of the Doctor’s Cottage is another distinctive area combining mature canopy trees (oaks, magnolias) with a few surviving shrubs (nandina, quince) and understory specimens (crape myrtles, holly). A scattering of live oaks, catalpas and hackberries cluster near the Cook’s Cabin to the east, and volunteer species (hackberry, elm, cedar) inhabit the fence lines along the northern boundary fence and a remnant former fence line to the west of the Pecan Grove. According to park staff, two large chinaberry trees and a hackberry were recently removed from near the Cook’s Cabin and Turkey Shed after being uprooted by Hurricane Laura.

Cultivated, Rowed, or Geometric Vegetative Features

The Live Oak Allée is the most spatially significant geometric or designed vegetative feature contributing to the historic character of the Main House landscape, with the possible exception of the Bottle Garden. This geometric and formal entrance planting represents one of the earliest designed landscape features on the property and has survived intact for almost 200 years. In

addition, the recently replanted jujube row along the south pasture fence line and the replanted Pecan Orchard to the north of the Main House, both heavily restored or, in the case of the Pecan Grove, almost entirely reconstructed, are significant cultivated features contributing to the character of the historic residential zone and speak to the ethnographic importance of nuts and fruits to the nutrition and cultural practices of plantation residents, as well as their importance as commercial products (the pecans). The NPS has planted new specimens in the pecan orchard area over the last 10 years to restore a semblance of the original grove, but only some of the young trees have survived while others have died or succumbed to storm damage. Furthermore, the current planted zone (as indicated by the distinctive mowing pattern seen in the 2020 aerial) is considerably smaller than the original mature grove seen in earlier historic aerials, especially in its north-south dimension. The crape myrtles that line the rail fence to either side of the entrance gate also contribute to the ornamental character of the front lawn and are likely historic but the date of their establishment is unknown. A residual row of crape myrtles in the South Side Yard marks an earlier fence line configuration in this area, but again the date of this planting is unknown. The property currently has no agricultural crops or planted residential (vegetable) gardens, either original or reconstructed, which might contribute to the interpretation of once daily rituals of working and dwelling on this formerly inhabited landscape.

Specimen Trees

The contributions and conditions of specimen trees are summarized in the table at the end of this section. There are several mature specimen trees (two live oaks and at least one pecan) in the rear and south side yards of the Main House which are of a similar size and possibly age class to the Live Oak Allée plantings and which provide significant shade and spatial enclosure to these historic yard areas, contributing to their historic residential character and integrity. There are also mature live oaks to the rear of the Doctor's Cottage and in the Tenant Quarters Area that contribute to the canopied spatial quality and, judging by early aerial photos, remain from before mid-century. A mature pecan tree shades the restored gas pumps at the front of the Store, like trees seen shading this area in historic photos. According to park staff, however, this tree is a later volunteer tree that now occupies part of the former location of the gas pump foundation, which was moved slightly when these features were reset to accommodate this space-defining shade tree. Also significant from a cultural and interpretive perspective are the scattered specimen catalpa trees (Catalpa bignonioides) in the Fishing Camp area and the Osage Orange trees (Maclura pomifera) to the south and rear of the Store.

Volunteer Trees, Fence Line Vegetation, and Boundary Buffering

Volunteer trees have grown up along various boundary fences and internal fence lines within the property, or in scattered instances, within the former residential yards, pastures and meadow areas. In most cases, unless these specimens compromise the structural integrity of the fence or adjacent structures or block significant historic viewsheds (internal or external), these trees do not significantly compromise the integrity of the landscape. Instead, they reflect historic and vernacular patterns of volunteer vegetation common along fence lines of rural farm properties where grazing, rather than lawn mowing, was the normal maintenance regime. In some cases, volunteer vegetation provides much needed shade and spatial enclosure to former residential yards and should be maintained (the Doctor's Cottage front yard is a notable example). Volunteer vegetation also, in some cases, provides visual buffering along the property boundaries (notably the northern property line along Hwy 494). Along the lake, volunteer vegetation in places blocks the viewshed to the river (especially at the southern end near the Bermuda Bridge and opposite the Doctor's Cottage yard). Historically, it seems that the embankment was never uniformly cleared, so volunteer vegetation along the lake is not problematic, except where a view window is desired for interpretive or visitor use purposes. In some instances, additional volunteer vegetation should be encouraged (or planted) along the property boundaries to buffer or screen out incompatible development and undesirable views.

Bottle Garden

Surveying photographs from the past twenty years, it is clear that ornamental vegetation, especially

shrub level species, in the Bottle Garden has thinned, declined, or disappeared and that bare soil and drainage issues (probably related issues) have become more prevalent, especially near the foundations of the front gallery. There are signs of erosion (or subsidence) along the brick walkway edges, and it may need to be lifted and reset after proper drainage has been installed. The roof of the gallery and Main House drains directly down into the Bottle Garden parterres during heavy rain events, which has probably contributes to erosion and the decline or loss of vegetation in this area. Today, the roughly rectangular Bottle Garden contains beds in geometric shapes: rectangles, diamonds, hearts, waves, circles, clovers, and stars, laid out with “a keen sense of symmetry”. It has been suggested that the original design was planned around symbols found in a deck of playing cards. Not all of the borders are made with the inverted bottles; the larger beds are bordered in brick or a combination of brick and bottle. The bottle edging includes wine bottles from Taylor Wine Company, ale and stout beer bottles, salt-glazed stoneware bottles, Anheuser-Busch beer bottles, mineral water bottles, soda water bottles, and bitters bottles. The oldest date to around 1790 and may be artifacts from a home that stood on the site prior to the construction of the Main House.

Landscape Features:

Feature Name	CLI Feature ID	Feature Contribution	CRIS-HS Resource ID	Associated CRIS-AR ID	FMSS Record Type	FMSS Record Number	FMSS Exact Match
Live Oak Allée (8 mature oaks, 2 replantings)	191315	Contributing					No
Live Oaks (rear & south side yards, Main House)	191316	Contributing					No
Pecan (south side yard, Main House)	191317	Contributing					No
Catalpas/Pecans/Oaks (Fishing Camp area)	191318	Contributing					No
Crape Myrtles (along front lawn fence, Hwy 494)	191319	Contributing					No
Pecan Grove (newly replanted 2013-16)	191320	Contributing					No
Fruit Trees/Orchard (Fig, plums) (side yard)	191321	Contributing					No
Jujube/Chinese Dates (along front lawn fence at Hwy 494)	191322	Contributing					No
Live Oaks (rear of Doctor’s Cottage)	191323	Contributing					No
Live Oaks (Quarters/Tenant Area)	191324	Contributing					No
Osage Orange trees near Store	191326	Contributing					No
Volunteer trees along Fences	191327	Non contributing – compatible					No
Bottle Garden	191325	Contributing					No
Bulbs (Fall/Spring Ephemerals)	191328	Contributing					No

Landscape Characteristic Graphics:

Oak Allee in front of Main House, 2020.

Oakland Bottle Garden, 2020.

Fruit orchard (foreground) and pecan orchard (background), north of Main House, 2020.

Chinese dates (jube jube trees) planted along the fence line of Hwy 494, 2020.

Landscape Characteristic: **Spatial Organization**

Spatial organization is the "arrangement of elements creating the ground, vertical, and overhead planes that define and create spaces." The Oakland landscape can be divided into Landscape Character Areas (LCAs) including: 1) the Visitor Service/Entrance Zone; 2) the Historic Residential Core, which includes the Main House and associated outbuildings, dependencies and yards, the Farm Lane and its dependencies, the Plantation Store, and the Doctor's Cottage and associated outbuildings and yards; 3) the Historic Agricultural Zone, which includes the Corn Crib and Corral enclosures, the Overseer's House, Tenant Cabins/Slave Quarters (Tenant Quarters Area), and the Seed House/Gin site with its remnant fields; and 4) the Lakefront Zone, which preserves the

viewshed along Cane River Lake.

The Visitor Service Zone is organized from north to south by the new entrance drive sequence and the north-facing orientation of the Entrance Pavilion, but none of this reflects historic patterns or spatial arrangements.

The Historic Residential Core includes several distinct character areas (or sub-landscapes) that developed either simultaneously or sequentially in time and have their own distinctive spatial arrangements: 1) the Main House with its associated live oak allée/front lawn, parterre garden, side and rear yards, and rear dependency enclosures; 2) The Store with its enclosed front yard, commercial orientation to the highway, and proximity to the Farm Lane entrance; 3) the Farm Lane and dependencies along it, which serve as a central east-west organizing spine, and 4) the Doctor's Cottage with its associated yards and outbuildings/dependencies. At the Main House, the Live Oak Allée and Bottle Garden (parterre) are centered on the front gallery and house, establishing a formal landscape axis from the east. To the west of the house, the outbuildings and dependencies are organized along a north to south axis and connected by fencelines to create a series of rear yard enclosures. The Store sits at the southeast corner of the Main House front lawn, and immediately north of the entrance to the Farm Lane. The North Meadow with its Cook's Cabin/former Fishing Camp area to the east, Pecan Grove to the west, and former pasture (Front Pasture)/Old Gin site to the north is perhaps less distinctive as a discernible character area(s) because of its overlapping functions (it has housed both residential and agricultural functions over time), loss of fencelines and enclosures, and layered developmental history, but it could be considered either an independent area for management purposes or subsidiary to the Main House in terms of spatial organization.

Like the Main House, The Doctor's Cottage, associated yards and outbuildings (Barn, Coop, Shed, Privy, Garage) present a distinct spatial arrangement with the house and garage to the middle of an inner fenced yard and the barn and outbuildings in an outer enclosure that wraps to the rear and south. The house had its own driveway entrance from Hwy 494, which is still visible as a trace across the front lawn. Indeed, the Main House, Store and Doctor's Cottage are all independently oriented towards the river (and highway) in a line from north to south. The Farm Lane bisects the two primary residential landscapes and serves as the primary east-west circulation route, connecting the highway and lakefront through the Historic Residential Core to the agricultural landscapes and backswamp beyond. The South Meadow/Farm Yard, defined by the Farm Lane to the north and the Doctor's Cottage enclosure to the south, is less distinct as a unique character area – in fact, it could be considered an extension of the residential landscape or the agricultural landscape, depending on how its historical function is interpreted—but it is treated as part of the Historic Residential Core here.

Formal spatial arrangement is somewhat less clear or legible within the historic agricultural zone (which includes at least a portion of the former Quarters area) due to the twentieth century alignment of Hwy 494 to the south, which bisects part of the former property (in all probability the former Quarters area) and the subsequent loss of key features (agricultural lanes and turnrows, fence lines, ditches) from property line shifts, agricultural mechanization, and field consolidation in this area over time. The Corn Crib and Corral areas to the west of the Farm Lane's southern dogleg are organized into distinctive enclosures or pens by rail fence lines that define their perimeters, but moving south along the lane and visitor pathway, the spatial organization becomes less distinct moving towards the former Quarters Area. Indeed, the Overseer's House sits on the edge of the fields to the southwest of the Doctor's Cottage, facing east but not directly overlooking the Tenant Cabins/Slave Quarters, which are sited further south among a meadow of scattered live oaks. Because there are only two cabins and the ruins of a third remaining, the sense of deliberate spatial organization or historical logic among these structures—Overseer's House and Tenant Cabins/Slave Quarters—is not readily apparent and has probably diminished over time. The park visitor path running between them is what connects them spatially today.

The park maintenance drive and fence line that extends along it from Hwy 494 to the Seed House and Gin area cut off the former Quarters Area (Overseer's House and Tenant Cabins/Slave Quarters) from the agricultural landscape to which it once intimately belonged, all part of the

plantation's former landscape of labor. As a result, these structures now seem more oriented to Hwy 494 than to the fields or to each other. And consequently, the Seed House and Gin area seem more oriented to the modern service drive alignment than to historic field patterns, a turnrow or agricultural lane, as they probably were historically. 66 The newer service road alignment bisects this area from the residential core to the north and east and makes it feel somewhat remote and inaccessible. For organizational purposes then, distinctive character areas within the historic agricultural landscape could include 1) the Corn Crib and Corral enclosures, 2) the Quarters Area, including the Overseer's House and the Tenant Cabins/Slave Quarters, and 3) the former Cotton Gin site and Seed House in the southwestern fields.

The Lakefront Zone is a narrow strip of land between Hwy 494 and Cane River. Historically this was part of the larger parcel of land, but was likely cut off from the rest of the plantation as Hwy 494 was formalized in the 20th century. It's largely overgrown with invasive vegetation.

Longlot Patterns/Orientation to Lakefront, contributing

Arpent divisions that emerged in response to former Cane River were the earliest factors that influenced the historic spatial arrangement of the Oakland property. Some of these divisions are still apparent in Oakland's field patterns, alignment of older lanes, and ditch lines surrounding Oakland, and within the current property, notably in the axial orientation of the Main House and Live Oak Allée to the lakefront and the generally east-west orientation of the Farm Lane. Unfortunately, in terms of preservation, land patterns associated with residential tenancy and its physical connections to the agricultural fields quickly eroded after 1960. The historic patterns were replaced by new land patterns and alignments driven by the demands of industrial scale farming and mechanization, rather than by the human scale of foot path, plow, and mule. NPS-era additions have further obscured historic longlot orientations through the introduction of drive segments that cut across the historic grain and land uses. These additions, which support maintenance activity and storage, staff parking and service drives, and visitor use infrastructure, hinder the perception and interpretation of historic land patterns and land use for visitors and arguably impact integrity.

Although the contemporary park contains a mere fragment of the former agricultural lands, the former cotton fields of the plantation still extend south along LA-494 and east across Cane River Lake, and the wooded backswamps along Bayou Brevelle stand to the west. These now borrowed views are intact reminders of the once expansive plantation holdings. This elevates the importance of the fragment of agricultural landscape that does exist within park boundaries, making it especially critical to preserve and interpret. Despite these alterations, the essential larger orientations at Oakland Plantation are still visible and expressed through the unique spatial organization and arrangement of historic buildings and existing landscape features (yards, gardens, lanes, enclosures, fields), remnant and intact.

All of the primary residential and commercial structures (Main House, Doctor's Cottage, Overseer's House, Store) and many of the dependencies are oriented to the east (towards Cane River Lake), and would have been approached historically from the east, either by boat in the days when the former river was the major source of transport and arrival, or later by driveways extending into the residential parcels from the highway to the east. The only exceptions are residential structures that were moved or possibly relocated over time and dependencies that historically faced or opened to the Farm Lane or to their respective residences: the Cook's Cabin was relocated to the Fishing Camp area in the 1920s and reoriented facing east; the mule barn (former smokehouse) opens north-south to the Farm Lane and rear house yards; the Carriage House opens north-south to the Farm Lane and to the Main House Live Oak Allée entrance; the East Pigeonnier faces west towards the Main House and West Pigeonnier; and the North Tenant Cabin faces south (but could conceivably have been moved or reoriented at some point after Emancipation).100 In contrast, the South Tenant Cabin faces east towards the river and highway, hinting at a former internal lane alignment and drive connection between Hwy 119, the Tenant/Quarters Area, and the Seed House/Gin site visible in the 1941 and 1950 aerials but long since vanished.

Field Patterns, contributing

The historic spatial arrangement of the Oakland property was further affected by 1) subdivision in the 1870s—the carving of Oakland and Atahoe Plantations from the earlier Bermuda property; 2) the addition of the Plantation Store/PO along the river road around the same era (c. 1873), which shifted the commercial focus and orientation of the property away from the Main House and backfields towards the road approach; 3) the construction of the steel-truss Bermuda Bridge across Cane River Lake, and the damming of the lake at its northern and southern ends in the early twentieth century, which opened up vehicular traffic from the east bank; and 4) subsequent shifts and alterations in road infrastructure and rural electrification that brought new utilities to the area in the early- and mid-twentieth century. The nineteenth-century acreage was further reduced/altered by subdivision after the death and succession of Phanor Prudhomme in 1919, as evidenced by a survey from that date in park possession. At that time, the southern boundary of the Oakland property changed due to a reapportioning or sale of tracts to family members south of current park boundaries (north of the cutoff bend at Metoyer Point), and the Doctor's Cottage tract passed into the hands of Edward Carrington Prudhomme, Phanor's brother. After that point, the Doctor's Cottage and Main House served as separate and distinct family residences, and the Doctor's Cottage developed a more independent landscape and service areas as a result (the garage seems to date from around this period). For this reason, the Doctor's Cottage landscape can be considered a separate component landscape of the broader Oakland landscape.

Mid- to late-twentieth century changes to field patterns, fence lines and circulation in the landscape at Oakland are documented in the sequence of aerial photographs captured from 1941 onward. Some of the most notable changes were to the north meadow/front pasture area and to the agricultural area that extended westward from the Tenant Cabins/Slave Quarters to the Seed House/Gin Site. This included changes to fence lines, pastures, and field enclosures, especially in the Fishing Camp area and front pasture to the north of the Main House, where former boundary fences or pasture enclosures have been lost to time or removed during the NPS era. The aerials also document the removal or loss of the second fishing cabin (former Washerwoman's cabin) in the Fishing Camp area after the 1960s. It is unclear whether the blacksmith's shop (forge archeological site) was razed prior to the establishment of the Fishing Camp area or whether that structure too was used as one of the original rental cabins, but the 2000 archeological survey located it immediately southeast of the current Cook's Cabin. The minnow pond depression northwest of the Cook's Cabin is another reminder of this area's former use as a rental Fishing Camp, beginning in the late 1920s, probably to supplement family income during the lean years of the interwar and Depression era.

Historic Lane Alignment, contributing

Notable from the aerials is a changing road realignment of the lane to the Seed House/Gin Site (there were at least three different alignments between 1941 to the 1970s), and the loss or removal of the internal lane network connecting the individual tenant houses to the Farm Lane, Seed House/Gin Site, and Hwy. 494, presumably after the tenants began leaving or moving away in the late 1950s. These dwellings also appear to have had their own yards and gardens, although there are no known photos to substantiate this apart from what can be discerned from the aerials. It is also clear from aerials and family photos that the Overseer's House had a fenced and treed yard surrounding it as late as 1966.

The exact location and extent of former vegetable and kitchen gardens for the property's various residences—Main House, Doctor's Cottage, Overseer's House, Tenant Cabins/Slave Quarters—is not well documented by photography or visual evidence. Nonetheless, it seems almost certain that each of these former residences would have had its own gardens, front and side yards, and service areas, no matter how modest, and in fact, written records and a few photographs from earlier reports indicate such. The front/rear yard distinctions remain clearer at the Main House and Doctor's Cottage, and these residences also retain their major dependencies, outbuildings, fenced enclosures, drive alignments, and cisterns. These features and the sense of independent enclosure have been almost entirely lost, however, at the Overseer's House and the Tenant Cabins/Slave Quarters, which now appear to sit rather nakedly in open meadow areas at the edge of the fields to the south and west. Although this may reinforce the sense that these structures belonged to the plantation's agricultural landscape of labor and field in the nineteenth century, it clouds the fact that

they served as independent residences for much of the twentieth century. The loss of (and lack of photo documentation for) historic vegetable and/or ornamental gardens associated with the various residential structures (Doctor's Cottage, Overseer's House, individual Tenant Cabins/Slave Quarters) has diminished the sense of these areas as independent households, at least during the twentieth century. More recently, some of this loss can be attributed to the consolidation of these once separate residential parcels under a more homogeneous management regime during the park era. Earlier disappearance of the residential fabric of this landscape can be attributed to the loss of historic fence lines and yard enclosures, especially at the Overseer's House, and possibly at the Tenant Cabins/Slave Quarters, which would contribute to the story of each household. Both slavery and tenancy are part of the continuum, but if the landscapes of the two eras are determined through further research to have been significantly different in terms of enclosure and vegetation, spacing and features, research would probably favor the later period (tenancy) for landscape restoration or preservation efforts, due to the greater documentation available (aerials) and longer and more recent period of establishment for this era.

Live Oak Allée – Main House Entrance Drive, contributing

The front lawn/Live Oak Allée of the Main House is one of the most significant and distinctive landscape areas in the Historic Residential Core. Judging by photographs going back to the 1940s, the allée entry area retains a reasonably high degree of integrity to its mid-century or early twentieth century configuration, apart from some minor additions (mainly gates and signage) at the lakefront end. The eight mature live oaks and two younger specimens interplanted later create and retain the spatial enclosure of formal arrival to the Main House that almost certainly dates back to the time of its construction. After the Prudhommes acquired their first motor car in the 1910s, the drive would have been used as an automobile drive, rather than a carriage drive, but it is unknown exactly what changes this advancement necessitated in the landscape, or how much the front drive was used for routine entry and parking by the family as opposed to the Farm Lane entrance (since the Carriage House is accessible from either side). In the nineteenth century, when the house was accessed more from the former riverfront and by carriage or horseback, the allée would have served as the grand formal entrance for visitors, and probably continued to function as the primary visitor entrance in the twentieth century. Some features, including the Bicentennial Farm sign and Oakland 1821 Entrance gate, were added to this front entry landscape in the 1970s and 1980s, and while they may post-date the period of significance, they do not detract from the overall setting (compatible).

Bottle Garden/Parterre Garden, contributing

Accepting that the Bottle Garden also dates to this early era, the front landscape of the Main House retains a high degree of spatial integrity. The significance and integrity of the Bottle Garden will be assessed and discussed in a separate CLR currently underway.

Pecan Grove/Orchard, non-contributing and compatible

The small existing grove of pecan trees represents a reconstruction by the park (between about 2010-2016) of the much larger original pecan orchard documented in family photographs and aerials. It does not represent the full spatial extent of the original orchard and contains few if any of the original mature trees. Furthermore, in terms of health and vitality, several of the replanted trees have succumbed to disease, storms, or other factors. In its current configuration, it retains little integrity to the original mature orchard but rather serves an interpretive function as a reminder of the family's once commercial pecan enterprise. The loosely gridded and more geometric arrangement of pecan orchard plantings is characteristic of the region and, when the individual trees mature, would provide a lofty shaded counterpoint to the openness of surrounding pastures and fields, as well as a tangible expression of the range of the family's former commercial agriculture ventures on site.

Slave/African American Cemetery, off-site, contributing

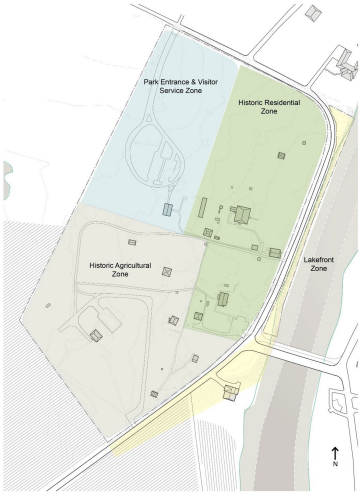
Although not within current park boundaries, the Slave/African American Cemetery is a uniquely valuable feature connected to the nearly 150-year continuum of African American occupation, from

enslavement to tenancy at Oakland. The cemetery should be preserved, and if possible, added to park holdings through future land acquisition. With its location outside of park holdings, the current condition of its physical integrity is unknown, but its historical, interpretive, and potential archeological significance is indisputable.

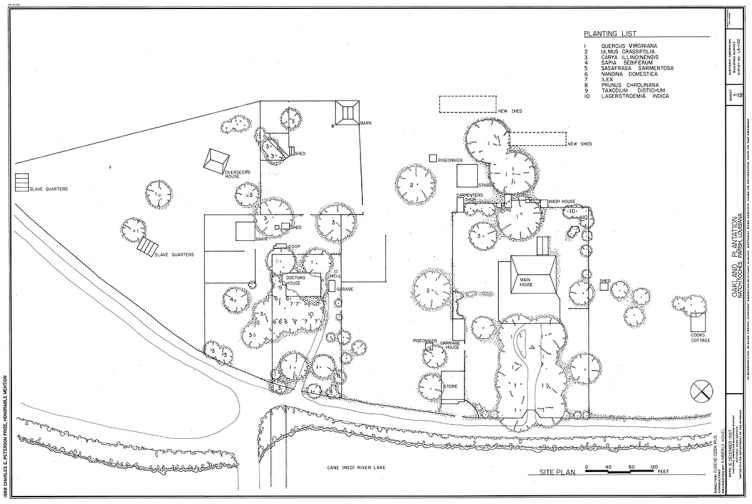
Landscape Features:

Feature Name	CLI Feature ID	Feature Contribution	CRIS-HS Resource ID	Associated CRIS-AR ID	FMSS Record Type	FMSS Record Number	FMSS Exact Match
Longlot Patterns/Orientation to lakefront	191348	Contributing					No
Field Patterns	191349	Contributing					No
Historic Lane Alignment	191350	Contributing					No
Live Oak Allée – Main House Entrance Drive	191351	Contributing					No
Bottle Garden/Parterre Garden	191352	Contributing					No
Pecan Grove/Orchard	191353	Contributing					No
Slave/African American Cemetery	191354	Contributing					No

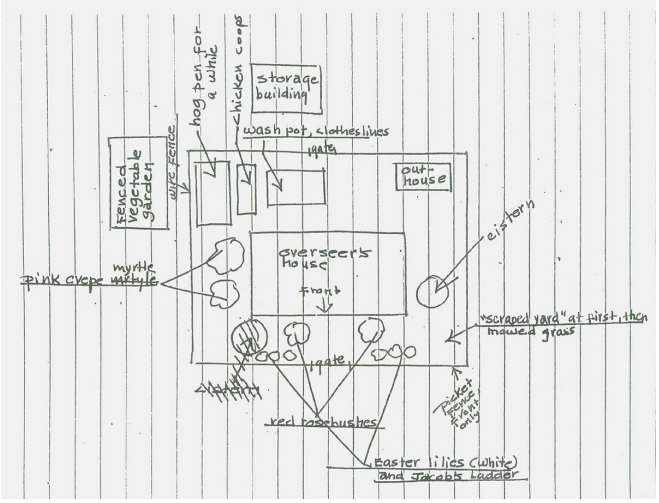
Landscape Characteristic Graphics:



Landscape Character Areas at Oakland Plantation.



Spatial organization of Oakland Main House and Dr. Cottage yards, 1987. HABS site plan.



Spatial organization of Oakland Overseer's House and Yard, circa 1950s.

Landscape Characteristic: **Views and Vistas**

Views and vistas are “features that create or allow a range of vision which can be natural or designed and controlled.” Views of the lakefront and bridges from the east of the property are partially blocked by volunteer vegetation that has grown up along much of the former river embankment, partially as a result of a bank stabilization project that was implemented around 2010. As part of that project, native trees and grasses were planted along the riverbank and structural gabions with the assumption that existing park staff could maintain this area, but invasive vegetation quickly took over which, ironically, made vegetation management more difficult. The park removed the row of river birch that were planted as part of this effort in 2019, which has made mowing (and viewshed maintenance) somewhat simpler. Modern residential development (houses, mobile homes and camps) along the opposite bank of the lake encroach upon the viewshed to the east, and residential development along Hwy 494 encroaches upon the viewshed to the north looking across the meadows near the former Fishing Camp area and Pecan Grove.

Views remain largely agricultural to the south of the property and wooded to the west, although a large modern residence along the lake south of the bridge presents a stark and jarring imposition on the viewshed within the former Quarters/Tenant Area.

Interior views vary based on the relative transparency or density of shrub level, understory, or canopy vegetation in and between yards and volunteer vegetation along fence lines, but in general interior views have become more open and transparent since park service acquisition due to the clearing of significant overgrowth that had enveloped many of the structures after the family stopped maintaining them and areas of the property they were no longer using between the 1960s and 1990s. One exception is the Doctor’s Cottage front yard, which appears to have become much more heavily canopied since mid-century as plantings likely installed then have matured and created a shadier condition than is seen in earlier aerial photos. Also, the landscape around the Overseer’s House is now largely open and devoid of vegetation or enclosure, although Metoyer family photos and aerials from mid-century (c. 1950) show a distinctive treed yard enclosure, with a boundary of trees (largely pecans) buffering it from the corral shed to the north.

At Oakland, historic lakefront views and character and rural agricultural views and character are both being compromised by modern residential development and creeping suburbanization. The property is experiencing significant encroachment by residential development to the north and northwest along Hwy 494 and to the east along both sides of Cane River Lake, as well as increasing encroachment and parceling of the land along the lake to the southeast of the property.

Views of Cane River Lake, contributing

The viewshed from the property to the lake highlights the role that the former river played in the origins of the plantation. The lakefront is currently an underutilized resource, however, due to its relative inaccessibility. Historic photos suggest that the lakefront was never entirely open but rather a combination of open and vegetated views. The most significant change impacting views and vistas from the property is the growth and creep of residential development along the lakefront to the east and Hwy 494 to the north, which impacts the rural agricultural viewshed from the core of the property, especially along the north and east. Views of contemporary residential development along the lake and Hwy 494 detract from the integrity of feeling and setting in areas near the perimeter of the property. Fortunately, this development is not so obtrusive or prevalent within the Historic Residential Core, which is still well shaded by mature vegetation.

Views of Agricultural Fields, contributing

Views from within the Historic Agricultural Core of land to the south and southwest of the property are especially important. If this land were to be acquired by a residential developer, it would likely compromise both agricultural and woodland viewsheds along Bayou Brevelle from the core of the property.

Landscape Features:

Feature Name	CLI Feature ID	Feature Contribution	CRIS-HS Resource ID	Associated CRIS-AR ID	FMSS Record Type	FMSS Record Number	FMSS Exact Match
Views of Cane River Lake	191355	Contributing					No
Views of Agricultural Fields	191356	Contributing					No

Landscape Characteristic Graphics:

View from park maintenance drive looking south across adjacent agricultural fields, 2017.

Landscape Characteristic: Topography

Topography is defined as the “Three-dimensional configuration of the landscape surface characterized by features and orientation.” Although Oakland’s landscape appears to be topographically featureless and flat, the property grades gradually and subtly downwards (declines) in elevation from the natural levees along Cane River Lake in the east to the former forested backswamp areas along Bayou Brevelle to the west. Since Bayou Brevelle lies off-site on adjacent property, the park has little control over drainage beyond the western property boundaries.

Surface drainage generally moves in an east to west direction across the property, except where it has been locally manipulated to move north-south. Historically, drainage ditches extended perpendicularly back from the river’s edge along property lines, lanes, or field edges to convey water away from the residential zone and agricultural fields towards Bayou Brevelle, but most of these have been lost in the twentieth century due to agricultural mechanization, new infrastructure (surfaced drives, etc.) that interrupt historic flows and create impoundments in the landscape, lack of maintenance, or inadvertent regrading from the accumulation of grass clippings and soils in

former ditch lines. One notable exception is the network of swales still visible in the front lawn/allée area that convey water away from the crowned entrance drive to the northwest and south/southwest. In fact, it seems likely from conversations with current park maintenance staff that these swales, which captured runoff from the front lawn and side yard of the house, connected historically to a network of larger ditch lines or swales that extended back perpendicularly from the river along the southern edge of the Farm Lane and along the lane to the rear of the Doctor's Cottage (where the pedestrian footbridge to the Tenant Quarters Area crosses a swale today), conveying surface waters towards the backswamp areas along Bayou Brevelle.

The minnow pond in the North Meadow/Fishing Camp area is the other notable example of a constructed topographic feature that is still generally distinguishable from the surrounding grades, even though its depression is now cloaked in meadow grasses. Due to the relatively shallow natural gradient and increasing heaviness of the soils towards the rear of the property, the landscape can become quite muddy and wet during heavy rain events and certainly in the many micro-depressions created from former farm or ongoing maintenance activities (tire and machinery ruts). It appears that there are micro depressions around the foundations of the Main House and, as previously noted, the Bottle Garden. The greater issue at the Bottle Garden is the build-up of the surrounding landscape through grass clippings over time. This is evident at the Bottle Garden fence where the grassy area has been built up over time and slopes down into the Bottle Garden, which is likely at the historic grade. Based on the discovery of brick pavers on the first level, it is known that the ground level of the house is the historic ground level, which also matches the grade of the Bottle Garden. Filling of the cisterns under the Main House has also contributed to erosion of the Bottle Garden, where all the water from the roof is dumped into the Garden (creating mud that sits for several days) and into surrounding grounds, instead of the cisterns. Water then flows to the lowest point, which is into the Garden and under the house.

The topography of Oakland grades almost imperceptibly back from the natural levee along Cane River Lake to the former backswamp areas along Bayou Brevelle, with natural elevations subtly declining from lakefront to bayou. In this low-lying and poorly drained alluvial landscape, agricultural and drainage ditches traditionally followed perpendicular alignments extending back from the primary waterways, with their fertile and higher natural levee soils, to the lower backswamp areas, often along arpent lines or longlot property divisions between adjacent property tracts, fencelines, or perpendicular turn rows extending into the fields. In the broader agricultural landscape surrounding Oakland, many of these historic ditches and drainage ways have been obscured or filled over time by the repeated actions of industrial-scale farm equipment moving across the fields, smoothing out the micro-topography over time, or similarly, in the property's residential core, by repeated industrial mowing in the lawn areas. However, there are still residual traces of historic drainage swales visible within the property (front lawn area, rear of Doctor's Cottage), although their functional integrity and connectivity to Bayou Brevelle have been compromised.

Cane River Lake natural levee/embankment, contributing

Much of the former riverfront batture along the park's eastern edge is now occupied by an engineered gabion structure that was installed by the park in 2010 for bank stabilization to control potential lakefront erosion. The gabion profile, although in places a bit steeper than the original embankment topography, retains the sloping profile of the historic batture and supports volunteer vegetative growth, much as the original embankment did. However, the routine maintenance of this embankment by park staff is now more complex as a result, and the lakefront is currently inaccessible to park visitors. The historic road alignment for Hwy 494 runs along the top of the natural levee parallel to the lake's edge, but it does not interfere with critical views of the lake. There is currently no physical means of access to the lakefront for park visitors. Historically the family had a dock located on the lake across from the Store, presumably with a path or access to it; this route is no longer viable given the gabion structure. Providing visitors with interpreted access between the property and the lakefront would enhance understanding of the importance of the historic river to the plantation's siting and operations.

Bayou Brevelle and backswamps: off-site, contributing

See discussion under Natural Systems and Features.

Landscape Features:

Feature Name	CLI Feature ID	Feature Contribution	CRIS-HS Resource ID	Associated CRIS-AR ID	FMSS Record Type	FMSS Record Number	FMSS Exact Match
Cane River Lake natural levee/embankment	191360	Contributing					No
Bayou Brevelle and backswamps	191361	Contributing					No

Landscape Characteristic: **Cultural Traditions**

One of the more interesting cultural traditions practiced at Oakland is the Limewashing of Specimen Tree Trunks, which can be observed in historic site photos showing the Live Oak Allée, Store front yard, and Pecan Grove/north meadow areas going back to the early twentieth century. The park staff recently re-established the practice on a demonstration basis to determine the long-term feasibility, durability and best method of application. From both an interpretive and a preservation perspective, it is important for the park to maintain this tradition if possible as a reminder of a once common, but increasingly vanishing regional landscape practice and a unique expression of Creole heritage.

Landscape Features:

Feature Name	CLI Feature ID	Feature Contribution	CRIS-HS Resource ID	Associated CRIS-AR ID	FMSS Record Type	FMSS Record Number	FMSS Exact Match
Limewashing of Specimen Trees	191369	Contributing					No

Landscape Characteristic: **Cluster Arrangement**

The most notable cluster arrangements at Oakland include the Rear & Side Yard Dependencies at the Main House, the Rear Yard Dependencies at the Doctor’s Cottage, the Corn Crib (Square Crib) and fenced enclosure, and the Corral Shed, chute and fenced enclosure, the status of which are noted in the table following this section. Because the Main House dependencies may have been moved by the family from elsewhere in midcentury and generally do not show up in historic aerials due to the heavy live oak canopy to the rear of the house, it is not clear how long they have been in their current location. Aerials suggest that the dependencies at the Doctor’s Cottage have remained in their current location since the 1940s, and that the Corn Crib and Corral Enclosure have also remained constant features since that time. All of these features, despite uncertainty about their location or status prior to 1941, represent the continuum of shifting vernacular land use and convey a sense of the working domestic yards and livestock enclosures appropriate to a rural farm property.

Landscape Features:

Feature Name	CLI Feature ID	Feature Contribution	CRIS-HS Resource ID	Associated CRIS-AR ID	FMSS Record Type	FMSS Record Number	FMSS Exact Match
Rear & Side Yard Dependencies (Main House) (7)	191391	Contributing					No
Rear Yard Dependencies (Doctor's Cottage) (3)	191392	Contributing					No
Corn Crib (Square Crib) and fenced enclosure	191393	Contributing					No
Corral Shed, chute and fenced enclosure	191394	Contributing					No

Landscape Characteristic Graphics:

View of rear and side yard dependencies west of the Main House, 2020.

Landscape Characteristic: **Constructed Water Features**

Constructed water features are “the built features and elements that utilize water for aesthetic or utilitarian functions.”

There is a notable system of Drainage Swales still visible in the front lawn area of the Main House, including a long ditch-like depression that runs perpendicular to the river and parallel to the drive edge just to the south of the Live Oak Allée with a short arm that is to the south just behind the Store into a short section of exposed clay pipe. This swale captures water draining off the south edge of the Live Oak Allée entry drive (the former drive has a crowned or rounded profile when observed in cross section) and front lawn area and conveys it away towards the back of the Store. Additional swales to the north of the entrance allée convey water away from the Main House and front lawn area towards the northwest. To the rear of the Doctor’s Cottage near the corral, there is a residual swale (crossed by a pedestrian footbridge) that once extended southwest across the fields and conveyed surface drainage away from the core property towards Bayou Brevelle.

The other constructed water feature of note on current park property is the topographic depression of the former Fishing Camp Minnow Pond, which serves an interpretive role but not a functional one due to the presumed puncturing or loss of its liner at some point in the past; however, this features does still occasionally and temporarily hold water in heavy rain events. The park maintains a mown path around the edge for interpretive purposes. The family’s former Crawfish Ponds located along Bayou Brevelle, outside of current park boundaries, presumably still also exist in some remnant form or depression but appear to have dried up or atrophied since 2004, judging by the historic aerials.

The Drainage Swale remnant (rear of Doctor’s Cottage/Corral) appears to be a remnant of a prominent vegetated drainage swale or agricultural ditch visible in aerials from 1941 to the 1970s, after which it disappears entirely, likely eradicated by the impacts of mechanized farm equipment and the demands of industrial scale agriculture. Although this is speculative, it may have been the chief drainage ditch serving the Historic Residential Core of the property and seems to have extended back to Bayou Brevelle in order to convey water away from the natural levee towards the backswamps and constructed ponds. As such, the original ditch was an expression of the arpent patterning so common to the region and to long lot property parcels, but its functional connectivity to Bayou Brevelle was disrupted and broken after mid-century. It would be difficult to restore this feature to function without adjacent land acquisition because a large portion of its former alignment (and indeed Bayou Brevelle) falls outside of current park boundaries to the west.

Landscape Features:

Feature Name	CLI Feature ID	Feature Contribution	CRIS-HS Resource ID	Associated CRIS-AR ID	FMSS Record Type	FMSS Record Number	FMSS Exact Match
Minnow Pond	191312	Contributing					No
Drainage Swales (front lawn/allée, Main House)	191313	Contributing					No
Drainage Swale (rear of Doctor’s Cottage/Corral)	191314	Contributing					No

Landscape Characteristic: **Archeological Sites**

Oakland contains significant archeological sites that were identified in sub-surface studies from the early 2000s, including the former Blacksmith's Shop/Forge Site, and the Gin Site (near the present gin cistern and pedestal ruins), which contribute to the significance and integrity of the landscape and enhance the park's ability to interpret the narratives of agricultural production and specialized labor that were essential to plantation self-sufficiency.

Other sites of potential archeological significance that require further investigation include the Former Mule Barn, which burned around 1927, the Old Mule Gin Site near the northeastern corner of the property (and possibly off-site), and perhaps, most interestingly for fleshing out the story of labor and laborers at Oakland, the Tenant Quarters Area, which includes the Overseer's House and extant tenant/former slave cabins. This area has seen the most change over time and is the most difficult to read from the clues on site due to its long period of abandonment and neglect after the end of tenancy, as well as the fact that some quarter's dwellings were likely moved and reconfigured after Emancipation. Future archeological investigation in the Tenant Quarters Area might help to guide the park in balancing the interpretation and presentation of this area between an antebellum, slave quarters narrative (1810s-1865, approximately fifty years of site history) and a later sharecropper/tenant narrative (1865-1960, nearly one hundred years of site history).

Although not currently part of the Oakland Unit, the Slave/African American Cemetery that has been identified on land to the west of the park is a significant and rare component of this former plantation landscape, a repository of memory for the African American and Creole communities that descended from Oakland's enslaved populations.

Landscape Features:

Feature Name	CLI Feature ID	Feature Contribution	CRIS-HS Resource ID	Associated CRIS-AR ID	FMSS Record Type	FMSS Record Number	FMSS Exact Match
Blacksmith Shop/Forge Site	191306	Undetermined					No
Cotton Gin Site (present day)	191307	Contributing					No
Former Mule Barn Site	191308	Undetermined					No
Old Mule Gin Site (19th C)	191309	Undetermined					No
Tenant Quarters Area	191310	Contributing					No
Slave/African American Cemetery	191311	Undetermined					No

Condition

Assessment Interval (Years): 6

Next Assessment Due Date: 08/09/2027

Condition Assessment and Impacts

Condition Assessment: Fair

Assessment Date: 09/30/1998

Condition Assessment Explanatory Narrative:

Condition Assessment: Good

Assessment Date: 08/09/2021

Condition Assessment Explanatory Narrative:

The landscape at Oakland is in good condition. Though some tree loss has recently occurred due to natural decline and Hurricane Laura (August 2020), substantial improvement has been made since 1998. Grounds are well maintained and trees are on a regular cyclic maintenance schedule.

Impacts

Type of Impact: Adjacent Lands

Other Impact:

External or Internal: None

Impact Narrative: Lands surrounding Oakland have been subdivided since the late 1990s and housing subdivisions are visible on adjacent lands. Several large, modern houses are visible from within park boundaries.

Date Identified: 08/09/2021

Type of Impact: Improper Drainage

Other Impact:

External or Internal: None

Impact Narrative: Historic ditches at Oakland no longer drain the landscape. Localized flooding and ponding is evident after storms, often flooding the Bottle Garden, main house foundation, and pedestrian paths.

Date Identified: 08/09/2021

Type of Impact: Removal/Replacement

Other Impact:

External or Internal: None

Impact Narrative: Removal and replacement is ongoing throughout the grounds at Oakland to keep trees, fences, and other small-scale features in good condition. Park attempts to replace all features in-kind where feasible.

Date Identified: 08/09/2021

Type of Impact: Vegetation/Invasive Plants

Other Impact:

External or Internal: None

Impact Narrative: Several large trees were lost during Hurricane Laura, which hit the park in August 2020. Mature pecans and chinaberry trees were the hardest hit and required removal. Other trees are nearing the end of their lifespan and have been removed as well. Replacement has not occurred as of 2021.

Date Identified: 08/09/2021

Type of Impact: Pests and Diseases

Other Impact:

External or Internal: None

Impact Narrative: Termites, bees, carpenter ants, fire ants, mud-dobbers, and other pests are regularly seen at Oakland. Pests generally impact historic structures on the property.

Date Identified: 08/09/2021

Type of Impact: Other

Other Impact: Environmental Contamination

External or Internal: None

Impact Narrative: High levels of arsenic and other pesticides/herbicides have been found in localized areas at Oakland (pigeonnaires, dipping vat). Remediation may likely require removal of soils and temporarily relocating outbuildings. As of 2021, the park is working with NPS Environmental Quality Division to follow CERCLA guidance for clean-up.

Date Identified: 08/09/2021

Treatment

Stabilization Measures

Approved Treatment

Treatment Type: Preservation

Completed: No

Approved Treatment Document: Cultural Landscape Report

Document Date: 2021-05-31

Narrative:

Approved Treatment Costs

Cost Narrative:

Treatment Type: Rehabilitation

Completed: No

Approved Treatment Document: Cultural Landscape Report

Document Date: 2021-05-31

Narrative:

Due to the continuum of vernacular evolution (especially early- to mid-twentieth century changes) embodied by Oakland's cultural landscape and the need to repurpose its structures and landscape for contemporary visitor use and park management, the recommended treatment approach is rehabilitation, which includes preservation and maintenance of the property's historic landscape features and building arrangements.

Rehabilitation is considered appropriate as a treatment "when repair and replacement of deteriorated features are necessary; when alterations or additions to the property are planned for a new or continued use; and when its depiction at a particular period of time is not appropriate."

At Oakland, rehabilitation would allow for replacement of small-scale features such as missing fence lines and, if desired, the plantation bell tower, guided by historic photo documentation, as well as replacement-in-kind of significant specimen tree species and, if staff or volunteer resources and budget allow in the future, selective establishment of small demonstration garden(s) features or crop plantings in appropriate or approximate historic locations in order to diversify and enhance interpretation of traditional cultural activities (farm and residential) and the rituals of labor. Rehabilitation would also allow for functional restoration of historic cisterns if practicable and feasible, which would enhance opportunities both for interpretation and sustainable water management.

Because the property is a vernacular agricultural property and has been subject to adaptation and change over the course of its more than 200-year history—labored on by generations of enslaved people, sharecroppers, and tenant farmers under the possession of the Prudhomme family and relations, who owned and occupied the property for generations—this CLR recommends treating the landscape and Period of Significance (POS) as a continuum through time, beginning in 1821 and ending in 1960, so as to encompass both the antebellum period and its reliance on enslaved labor, as well as the post-bellum and twentieth-century farm operation, with its reliance on tenancy and sharecropping.

Approved Treatment Costs

Cost Narrative:

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Bibliography and Supplemental Information

Bibliography:

Citation Author	Citation Title	Year of Publication	Citation Publisher	Citation Type	Citation Location	Citation Number
	HABS Report - Oakland Plantation			Both Graphic And Narrative	CARI	
	Historical Atlas of Louisiana			Both Graphic And Narrative	CARI	
	National Register of Historic Places--Addendum: Oakland Plantation	1989		Narrative	CARI	
	National Register of Historic Places--Nomination Form: Jean Pierre Emmanuel Prud'homme Plantation	1979		Narrative	CARI	
	Oakland Plantation CLR, Part 1	2003		Both Graphic And Narrative	CARI	
	Oakland Plantation CLR, Part 2	2021		Both Graphic And Narrative	CARI	
	National Historic Landmark Nomination, Oakland Plantation	2001		Narrative	CARI	

Supplemental Information:

Supplemental Information Title: Diagram of T.8.N.-R.6.W. from Surveyor General's Office in New Orleans, LA 3/18/97

Supplemental Information Narrative:

Supplemental Information:

Supplemental Information Title: Oakland Plantation, 1997 Survey (Draft), SEAC 8/1997

Supplemental Information Narrative:

Supplemental Information:

Supplemental Information Title: Sketch of Subdivisions of Section 94, T.8.N.-R.6.W. from Surveyor General's Office in Donaldsville, LA 12/1858

Supplemental Information Narrative:

Supplemental Information:

Supplemental Information Title: Township map for T.8.N.-R.6.W. from Surveyor General's Office in Donaldsville, La 12/18/58

Supplemental Information Narrative: