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Oakland Plantation
Cane River Creole National Historical Park
Natchez, Louisiana

Oakland Plantation
Cultural Landscape Report: Phase 2



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FOREWORD

[PLACEHOLDER – NPS to update to standards.]

We are pleased to make available this Cultural Landscape Report, part of our ongoing effort to provide comprehensive documentation for the landscapes and historic structures of National Park Service (NPS) units in Interior Region 2. A number of individuals and institutions contributed to the successful completion of this work. We would particularly like to thank the staff at Cane River Creole Historical Park for their assistance throughout the process. We hope this study will be a useful tool for park management in continuing efforts to preserve the cultural landscape and to others interested in the significance of the park's many cultural resources.

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[To be inserted at 100%.]

PART 1: INTRODUCTION

Management Summary

Cane River Creole National Historical Park (CARI-NHP) was established in 1994 to commemorate the long and complex history of early European exploration and settlement of the Red River Valley in northwestern Louisiana in the eighteenth century; the resulting interactions among the French, Spanish, African and Indian peoples; and the subsequent development and evolution of Creole culture and plantation life along Cane River up to the mid-twentieth century. Oakland Plantation is one of two plantation units within the park (along with Magnolia Plantation) owned by the National Park Service (NPS). The Oakland unit provides a center for the interpretation of its own residential and agricultural history, as well as the broader cultural history of the Cane River region.

The NPS completed a General Management Plan (GMP) for the Park in March 2001 and approved Alternative 1 from among the options presented for public review as the Preferred Alternative to guide future site development and planning. Under Alternative 1, "the management emphasis at Cane River Creole National Historical Park would be on preserving and rehabilitating the landscapes, structures, and artifacts of the two national park units (Oakland and Magnolia Plantations), setting up basic operations to manage and maintain the resources, and establishing a quality visitor experience onsite and strong partnerships with the community. The physical treatment of the plantation's landscape, including structures, would generally reflect the continuum of history up to about 1960. This would result in few changes to the current configuration of plantation structures or general appearance of the landscape" (GMP 42). Furthermore, the park staff would establish strong partnerships with the community, including the development of a joint regional visitor center in the Natchitoches/Cane River area.

The GMP designated three management areas and two phases of site development for Oakland (see **Figure** 21): **1) Core Plantation Management Area**, which encompassed most of the property and emphasized preservation and adaptive reuse of historic structures and landscape features for visitor use, and construction of visitor pathways; **2) Development Management Area** of approximately 5 acres to the northwest corner of the property for the construction of new visitor use infrastructure and possible future maintenance facility during Phase 2; and **3) Administrative Adaptive Use Management Area** consisting of the Doctor's House, Doctor's Barn, and Seed House for initial housing of administrative facilities, storage, and park maintenance activities during Phase 1. An access road to the Seed House and staff parking would also be developed as part of Phase 1.

During Phase 1 of site development, administrative facilities, storage and maintenance were to be housed in existing structures on-site (Doctor's House, Doctor's Barn, Seed House), but in Phase 2, these facilities and activities were to be relocated to a new consolidated Regional Visitor Center (offsite) and to a new maintenance facility located either offsite or within the Development Management Area. As of 2021, most of the Phase 2 recommendations have yet to be realized, and maintenance facilities still prominently occupy the Seed House and adjacent agricultural landscape, making them largely inaccessible to visitors. Park management has acknowledged that the 2001 GMP is nearing the end of its anticipated lifespan and needs to be revisited or rewritten in the near future.

Historical Summary

The end of the Civil War, emancipation of the enslaved, and the death of Pierre Phanor Prud'homme (Phanor), the second-generation owner of Bermuda, in 1865, brought significant changes to the Isle Brevelle property. In 1873, Phanor's two sons divided the Bermuda property roughly in half, with Pierre Emmanuel claiming the property to the east of Cane River, which he renamed Atahoe, and Jacque Alphonse (Alphonse I) claiming the property to the west, which he renamed Oakland, the focus of this study. 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-nineteenth and early twentieth 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-twentieth 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 Prud'hommes 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 Prud'hommes, their decision to sell the property to the Park Service occurred at a point in time when the business model for agriculture had drastically changed, the maintenance of the historic residential core was no longer economically feasible, and heritage tourism seemed the most viable option.

In 1994, after years of discussion among family members, NPS, and local preservation officials, the Cane River National Historical Park (CARI-NHP) and Cane River National Heritage Area (CARI-NHA) were created by Congressional legislation. In 1997, a sales document for Oakland was executed and accepted, and the last Prud'hommes 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. In 1997, NPS-SERO completed the initial Cultural Landscape Inventory (CLI) for the Park. In 2001, the NPS completed the first General Management Plan (GMP) to guide future site development and planning. And in 2002, Firth and Turner conducted the first phase of a Part 1 CLR for Oakland, of which the current document is a continuation.

Scope of Work and Methodology

The purpose of the Cultural Landscape Report is to document the historical development and existing conditions of the landscape at Oakland in order to evaluate its historical significance and integrity and to provide direction for treatment and use. This report is one of a series of historical studies of the property conducted since 1994, and it borrows and summarizes findings from the earlier research. In fact, the Site History and Existing Conditions narratives of this report (Phase 2) are continuations of an earlier CLR Part 1 (Phase 1) completed by Firth and Turner in 2002, which focused on the history of settlement and antebellum agriculture at Bermuda Plantation, the precursor to Oakland, prior to 1865.

Research included multiple site visits, field inventory, and staff interviews conducted between 2016-2021, some text-based archival research, review, synthesis, and summary of existing site research documents (archeological, architectural, ethnographic), and visual analysis of photographs, maps, and historic aerials. Because it is impossible to understand Oakland without looking at the broader narratives of region, people and place, the Site History narrative addresses broader contextual history as well, summarizing findings from the 2019 CARI Historic Resource Study, which served as a major source for both contextual history and site history. The Phase 2 document also includes an updated Existing Conditions section and a new Analysis and Evaluation section.

Treatment Recommendations are included in Part 2 and are largely adapted from the draft treatment recommendations being contemporaneously developed for Oakland's sister unit, Magnolia Plantation (Magnolia unit), by Heritage Landscapes. These recommendations were provided to STA by Park Management as reference, but due to the high degree of overlap and similarity between the management issues and resources of the sister units, after discussion with Park and SERO staff, it was agreed that adapting, modifying and, where necessary, redacting the recommendations already developed and approved for Magnolia was perhaps the best and most expeditious way to ensure consistency of management, maintenance and treatment approaches between the two units. As such, the Treatment Recommendations section focuses first on recommendations unique to Oakland, and then provides general recommendations adapted directly or modified from Heritage Landscapes Magnolia CLR draft (2001).

Description of Study Boundaries

The study area is the approximately 45-acre Oakland unit, now owned by the NPS, which 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 property was purchased by the NPS in 1997 as four separate parcels acquired from two different families—the main house/farm parcel, the Doctor's house parcel, and two narrow parcels along the riverbank. For ease of description and consistency within the report, the property has been broken down into the following zones for Existing Conditions documentation, Analysis, and Treatment: 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 House and associated outbuildings and yards; 3) the Historic Agricultural Zone, which includes the Corn Crib and Corral enclosures, the Overseer's House, Enslaved and Tenant Houses (Quarter's Area), and the Seed House/Gin site with its remnant fields; and 4) the Lakefront/Batture Zone, which preserves the view shed along Cane River Lake. The cultural landscape includes remnants of arpent lot patterns dating to the early French land division system, a dramatic live oak allée extending from the river to the main house, a parterre garden with nineteenth-century bottles lining the beds, a number of fenced livestock, agricultural and dependency enclosures, several archeological sites, state-record trees, a fraction of the agricultural fields that once comprised the extensive holding, and a nearby former slave/ African American cemetery (off-site on family land).

The Park's enabling legislation includes an additional 144 acres of adjacent family lands (to the west and south of current property) within the authorized park boundaries, and the 2001 GMP recommended acquisition of some or all of this land as part of Phase 2 site development in order to protect viewsheds and offsite resources noted as valuable in the 1997 CLI report (former slave cemetery, 1912 steel-truss bridge, viewshed of lake). To date, no additional land acquisition has been achieved, but the property is increasingly threatened by residential development along the lakefront and Hwy 494.

A map illustrating the regional context of the site is included in the Introduction (**Figure 1**). A second map showing the location and boundaries of the Cane River Creole National Historical Park and National Heritage Area is also included here (**Figure 2**). The general location of Oakland Plantation is marked on both maps with a green asterisk.

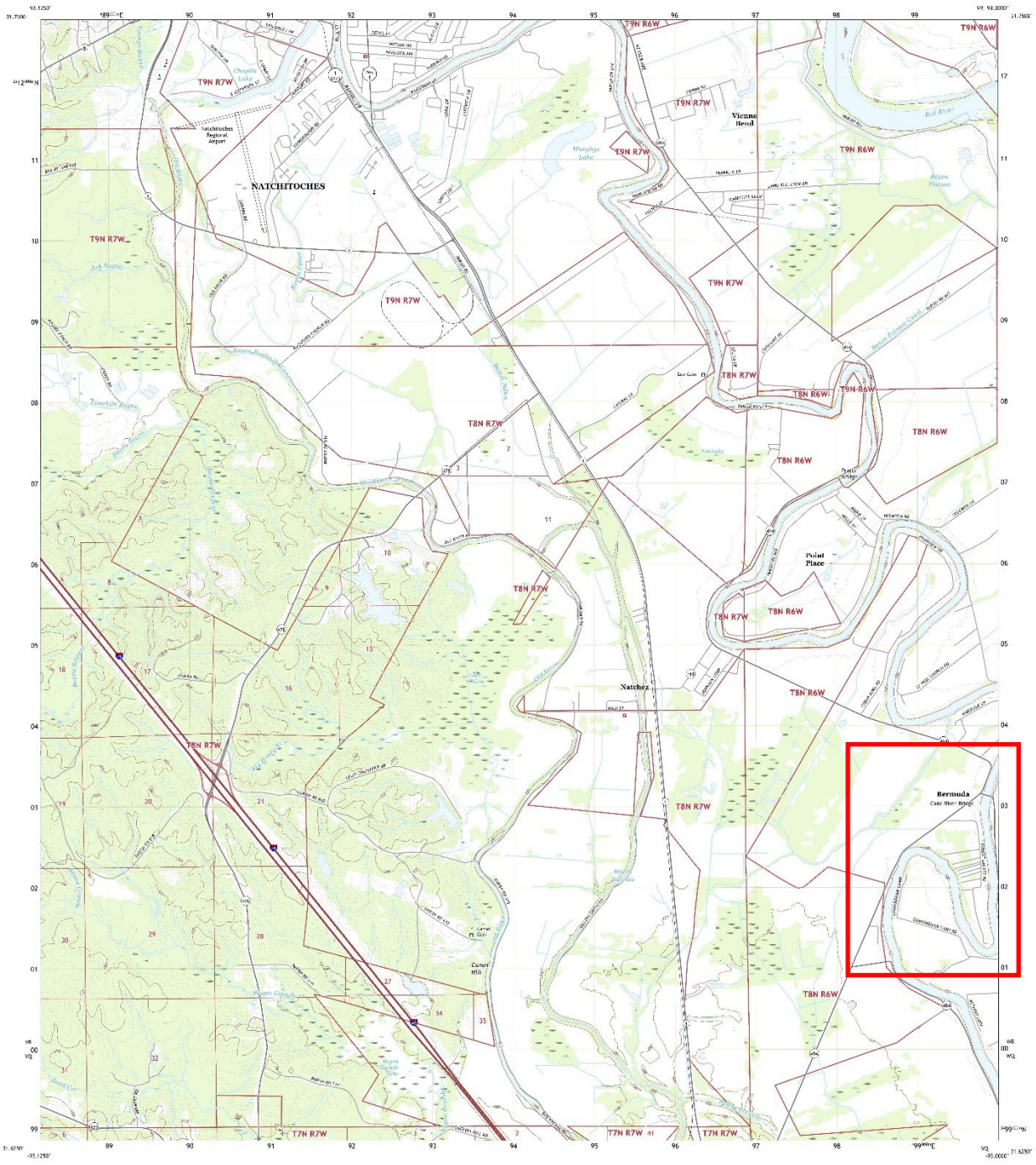


Figure 1 *Map of Cane River Creole National Historical Park and Heritage Area and its regional context. (NPS-CARI Long Range Interpretive Plan)*



Figure 2 *Map of Cane River Creole National Historical Park and Heritage Area. (NPS-CARI Long Range Interpretive Plan)*

Summary of Findings

The vernacular landscape of Oakland represents a continuum of evolution through time rather than a static moment, and research for this CLR has affirmed an end date of 1960 for the Period of Significance for the landscape as a whole. This corresponds to the end of sharecropping and tenancy at Oakland, parallels a similar decision made at the Magnolia Unit to use the end of tenancy as a bookend date for interpretation, and is in keeping with the recommendations of the 2001 GMP final draft. Obviously, the landscape is complex and layered, and different parts (character areas) may bear more integrity to the mid-twentieth century than others. In fact, it could be argued 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 a later era (possibly even 1980s) than the Historic Agricultural Core, which now is fragmented and has experienced greater change to context and function since mid-century (hence the 1960 end date). However, the residential areas too continued to evolve, change, and adapt until at least mid-century, to facilitate new commercial ventures and heritage/tourist activities as alternative revenue streams for the family, necessitating modifications and adaptations to the landscapes of the residential core.

In the Historic Agricultural Core, the former Quarter's Area/Tenant Houses have experienced more alteration and change to their landscape context and spatial configuration since their construction in the nineteenth century as slave dwellings than areas closer to the Main House. The same is true of the former Gin site too. As a result, 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. But they do remind us of the landscapes of labor that made the entire plantation enterprise possible and are an essential and invaluable component of a balanced interpretation of Oakland's landscape legacy and the generations of human occupation and labor that shaped it. Although there are still many historical ambiguities and unknowns surrounding the exact location and orientation of fields, turn rows, and crop patterns of the former agricultural landscape, what is clear from research is that in its reduced and fragmented condition, the whole of that landscape is not well represented by current park holdings, nor is it particularly accessible to visitors, cut off both by the service drive and by its relative remoteness from the visitor parking and historic residential core. Furthermore, the fact that park maintenance facilities and storage occupy much of this already limited fragment of agricultural land creates the unfortunate public perception that the landscapes of labor are somehow less significant and consequential to the visitor experience and park interpretation than the historic residential areas. This is in contra-indication to the recommendations of the 2001 GMP, which stipulated that the Seed House and gin area should be used only temporarily for maintenance activities during Phase 1 site development, and then eventually returned to educational use as maintenance activities were relocated offsite or to new facilities in the Development Management Area in Phase 2. In contrast, the historic residential core remains remarkably intact as an evolving expression of multiple generations of Prud'hommes and the enslaved, sharecropper, and tenant laborers who built, cultivated and maintained the landscape, structures, and cultural traditions of Oakland alongside the Prud'hommes for nearly one hundred and fifty years.

Currently, there are no landscape features addressed as distinct components in the National Historic Landmark designation. The Bottle Garden is mentioned, but it is not featured as an independent contributing feature, nor is the live oak allée, perhaps the most distinctive landscape space at Oakland. And perhaps the view shed of Cane River and the Farm Lane should also be included, as these are both features that date from the earliest years of plantation development. The NHL designation should be updated in the future to include noteworthy features of the cultural landscape, including the bottle garden, live oak

allée, and Farm Lane, as distinctive and contributing components. And although not currently part of the Oakland Unit, the former 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. The park would be wise to include this parcel in future land acquisition planning (or an easement to it) so that it is not lost to future generations, and so that it can be incorporated more fully into the park visitor's experience. In fact, the GMP and the 1997 CLI report both recommended acquisition and protection of this important resource, as well as the 1912 steel-truss bridge (which is also not on park property, but immediately adjacent and within its critical lakefront view shed).

Ultimately, the current visitor arrival experience, from the north and west, is problematic to a richer and more engaged landscape experience at Oakland in a number of ways: it deemphasizes the importance of Cane River (Lake) to the history and site geography, and despite the admirable planning intentions of the original GMP, still inadvertently privileges the narrative and geography of the big house over that of labor and fields, certainly from the perspective of physical proximity. The history and evolution of Oakland's landscape is perhaps easiest to understand if approached first from the river, then from the landscapes of labor and agriculture, with a progression towards the landscapes of dwelling and home. Spatially and symbolically, it is these rhythms and rituals of time and place—the rhythm of the river, the rhythm of the fields, the rhythms and rituals of home—rather than individual structures or discrete landscape features that bound together Oakland's various inhabitants over multiple generations. And given its importance to the development of the site and region, Cane River is definitely underutilized and underplayed in the overall site experience – its rhythms, ebbs and flows created this fertile landscape of levee and backswamp, and nurtured culture and dwelling over the course of geological, agricultural, and personal time.

In future planning efforts, the park should strive to strengthen the physical connection of visitors to the lakefront, providing access to a dock or interpretive platform with waysides on the riverbank near the bridge, and to work with local partners to preserve and stabilize the 1912 steel-truss bridge for pedestrian use and access from the Park's visitor trail system, as recommended in the 2001 GMP and 1997 CLI reports. The park should also prioritize adjacent land and viewshed protection through acquisition of some or all of the additional 144 acres within the park's authorized boundaries to protect and provide access to, notably, the former slave/African American cemetery on family land to the west, as well as the wetlands along Bayou Brevelle and agricultural viewsheds to the south and west. Lastly, but especially critical to balanced interpretation of the landscape, maintenance activities should be removed from the Historic Agricultural Landscape and Seed House area as recommended in Phase 2 of the 2001 GMP, so that this critical landscape of labor can be more integrated into the visitor experience with activities and even demonstration crops. Given that a new GMP will need to be developed in the short-term future, the Park should seriously consider the possibility of creating a new secondary (perhaps, eventually primary) visitors entrance from the south that would give easier access to the lakefront, bridge, and landscapes of labor (Tenants/Quarters area, agricultural fields, Seed House/Gin site).

CHAPTER 1: SITE HISTORY

Overview of Organization, Methodology & Summary of Phase 1 CLR Document

The following Site History is a continuation of the chronology provided in Firth and Turner's *Oakland Plantation: Cultural Landscape Report, Part 1* (CLR Part1, Phase 1, 2002), whose site narrative ends in 1865.[1] That narrative, in summary, focuses on the Prud'homme family's early land acquisitions and experiments with agriculture in the Natchitoches and Isle Brevelle regions during the French and Spanish Colonial periods (1718-1803), and more extensively on the subsequent acquisition, agricultural and residential development, and expansion of the Bermuda property by Phanor (I) Prud'homme during the Antebellum period (1820s-1860s).[2] The earlier report is richly documented with extensive reference to archived plantation records now housed in the historic collection of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. In terms of historical context, the Phase 1 Site History covers the rise of cotton agriculture in the Cane River Valley and the Isle Brevelle after 1793 (with Whitney's invention of the cotton gin) and its expansion during the Louisiana Purchase/ Territorial period (1803-1812), and the rapid expansion and dominance of cotton agriculture, slaveholding, and the slave economy that occurs after Louisiana Statehood (post-1812).[3] Indeed, the earlier research illustrates that the Prud'hommes increased both their land and property holdings (slaves, livestock, farm equipment, etc.) dramatically in the years leading up to the Civil War, and especially during the prosperous cotton harvests of the 1850s, adding cattle ranches and pine woods to their extensive land holdings. In fact, during the height of its antebellum prosperity until its first major partition in 1873, Phanor Prud'homme's plantation at Bermuda spanned both banks of the river, comprising some 1900 acres at its greatest extent (see **Figure** 47). By contrast, the current Oakland unit of the Cane River National Historical Park comprises a mere 45 acres of the original antebellum land holdings, namely its western- and northern-most portion.[4] And of course, that is one of the challenges of a study like this, to focus attention within current park boundaries and on existing site features for documentation, preservation, and site management purposes, while acknowledging the expanse and diversity—the context, if you will—of the former agricultural property and its natural setting—Cane River and Bayou Brevelle—for broader interpretive, archeological, and future planning purposes.

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[1] For clarity's sake, I refer to the current narrative as CLR Part 1, Phase 2, in order to distinguish it from Firth & Turner's earlier 2002 narrative, which I hereafter refer to as Part 1, Phase 1 or simply Phase 1.

[2] Family tradition holds that Jean-Pierre (Emanuel) Prud'homme began farming tobacco (and possibly indigo) at the Bermuda/Isle Brevelle lands in the late-1780s or 1790s, before he formally acquired the property through purchase, although there are no official records to verify this early date. The first record substantiating Prud'homme ownership at Bermuda comes around 1816, when proof of previous land ownership or grant had to be legally verified before the new government. It is therefore difficult to establish a precise date for purchase or settlement of the property, or for the beginnings of agriculture, although Malone places the date of Prud'homme settlement at 1818-21.

Similarly, family tradition holds that the existing Main House was built in the early1820s to replace an earlier, presumably more modest, structure located closer to the riverbank. The oak allée was planted sometime soon thereafter, c. 1826. The now-named Doctor's House was built a few years later, around 1835, to the south of the main house, ostensibly to house Phanor's son, J. Alphonse, and his new bride, Eliza Lecompte. With the addition of a new Overseer's house, c.1861, to replace an earlier structure, the residential core of the property that exists today was more or less established, added to over the years by the construction of various dependencies, farm structures, and slave or tenant quarters associated with either the residential core or the broader agricultural landscape.

[3] After Louisiana becomes a State in 1812, the Natchitoches region sees an influx of Anglo- and American settlers who, early on, live mainly at the margins of Creole settlement but who eventually threaten Creole cultural hegemony and language in the region in the years prior to and after the Civil War.

[4] The Oakland property was acquired by the NPS in 1997 as part of the newly designated Cane River Creole National Historical Park (CARI-NHP, legislatively established 1993). The NPS purchase consisted of four tracts in total, two large tracts to the west of Hwy 494, constituting the bulk of the current historic park core, and two narrow parcels fronting the lakefront to the east along Hwy 494.

In the latter respect (establishment of context), this document is largely complimentary to the findings of the 2019 Historic Resource Study (CARI HRS), which provides a thorough and thoughtful contextual history for the years covered by this document, and the most extensive and broad-ranging property history (architectural, landscape, archeological) compiled in a single source. The HRS includes a range of visual and textual documentation to illustrate the on-going evolution of the landscape at Oakland and documents many of the known changes to structures and landscape features from the early-nineteenth century until present. [5] The current site history will not attempt to duplicate the research or record provided in the HRS, but will reference its landscape-related findings and images, as well as that of a number of other NPS-generated reports, including Historic Structure Reports for the Oakland Plantation Big House (2004), Prud'homme's Store (2004), The Cottage/Doctor's House (2002), and ethnographic studies, oral histories and archeological reports. In essence, this document summarizes, consolidates, and reflects upon findings from these earlier documents, while expanding on landscape-specific details of the written or graphic record not included in earlier reports. This includes visual analysis drawn from the greater (but still hardly extensive) record of graphic documentation available from the early twentieth century onwards through family photos, property plats and surveys, and successive aerial photographs showing the property from 1941 until present. [6]

The Phase 1 document drew heavily from written plantation records and physical, architectural, and archeological evidence observed on site for analysis and conclusions about the Antebellum landscape. Not surprisingly, given the period of investigation of the earlier narrative (1700s-1865), there was little graphic documentation to illustrate the primarily textual descriptions of agricultural and landscape maintenance activities so meticulously maintained in the written records of Phanor (I), or recorded by various plantation overseers, family members and acquaintances. As a result, the locations of specific structures, features, places, and farm activities described in plantation records remain largely obscure and subject to conjecture due to the lack of any supporting maps or graphic record. In contrast, the current Site History narrative draws more extensively from visual documentation, especially twentieth-century family photographs, a sequence of aerial photographs dating from 1941, and various period plans, maps and deed documents dating back to the first major subdivision of the Bermuda property by J. Alphonse (I) and his brother Pierre Emmanuel in 1873, following the death of their father and the succession of his estate. Indeed, the current document relies much less on the analysis of twentieth-century farm records, which, like earlier farm records, may give details about yields, expenses, amounts and species, but generally less about specific location and locale, and more heavily on visual and photographic analysis in general for its conclusions, as well as on anecdotal evidence gleaned from the various ethnographic studies, oral histories and research reports generated since the park's inception. Obviously, park history has now become part of Oakland's site history, and in this latter respect, this document analyzes and reflects upon the changes that have occurred on the property since NPS management began, now nearly twenty-five years ago, from a historical perspective.

[5] The HRS includes historic family photographs, historic plans, deed documents, and maps, and textual references to census records and successions, oral histories, ethnographic studies, and family archival records, etc.

[6] Family photos provide a somewhat selective glimpse of micro-scale details and features of certain areas of the landscape, generally around the main residences—Main House, Doctor's House, Overseer's House—and Store, but far less in the more agricultural reaches of the property, and around the Tenant Houses; property plats and aerial photos from post-1941 show broader changes to land use and circulation patterns over time and the appearance and disappearance of cabins and dependency structures, fencelines and enclosures during that period, but little micro-scale detail.

Period Plans

Four Period Plans were developed to illustrate the findings of the Phase 2 Site History narrative: 1880, 1920, 1960, and 2004 (**Figure**s 48-51). These plans correspond to significant moments of transition or change in the landscape at Oakland, providing period snapshots of evolving property boundaries and site features, with their dates of focus falling into almost exact forty-year increments. The dates selected also correspond to key historical documents (property surveys, deed maps, aerial photos) referenced to establish a base condition for each era. In addition, the 1860 Period Plan from Firth and Turner's CLR Phase 1 Site History is also included for reference (**Figure** 47). Still uncertainty remains about the location of certain non-extant features and structures (turn rows, lanes, docks, ferry landings, gin sites, etc.) described by earlier historical texts or archeological research but not depicted on period maps, so conjecture has been necessary in some cases and is generally noted. In particular, the 1873 property map from the first major partition of Bermuda under Alphonse I, the 1919 map from the second partition of Oakland under Phanor (II) (**Figure** 9), and the 1921 soil survey (**Figure** 3) do not provide precise location or detail for every structure and feature on the property, but they do provide significant information about context, circulation and broader land patterns. Also worth noting, there are very few photographs from before 1920 to depict landscape features so information had to be derived largely from text sources and earlier reports (archeological, architectural, ethnographic) for those periods. For the later periods (1960 and 2004), there was greater photographic documentation and a sequence of aerial photographs dating back to 1941 to document broad patterns of change and the evolution of key features of the residential and agricultural landscapes (**Figure**s 29-46). In general and not surprisingly, there is less graphic documentation for the agricultural landscape, which includes the former Quarters Area/Tenant Houses. As a result, the following chronology focuses more on the evolution of the historic residential landscapes, the family's various commercial ventures in the late-nineteenth and early twentieth century, and known changes to specific features or context than on the agricultural landscape, which was addressed more extensively in Firth and Turner's Phase 1 CLR, and little of which is included within current park boundaries.

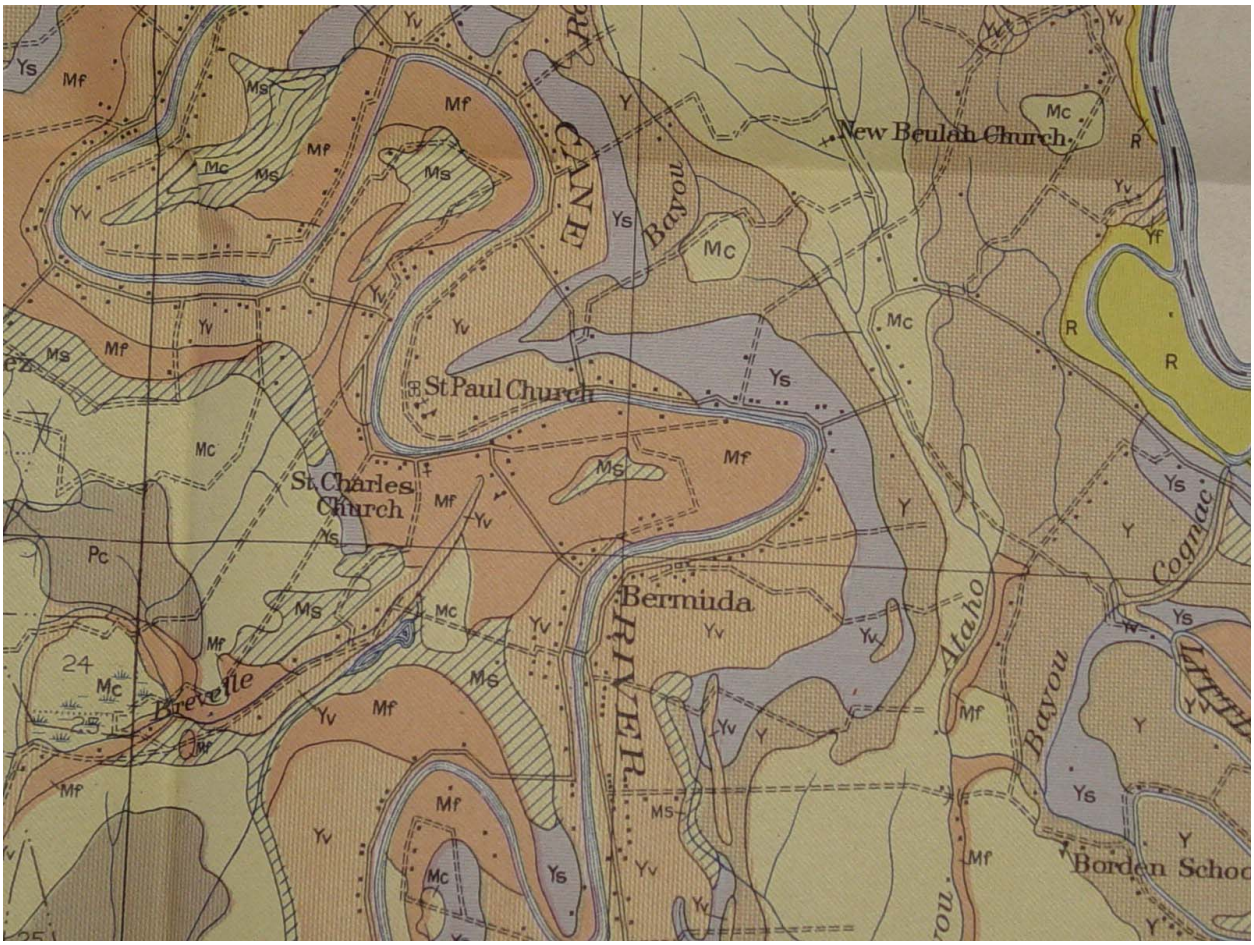


Figure 3 *Detail of 1920s Soils Map showing Oakland vicinity with period circulation routes and waterways. (CARI-NHP Collection)*

Post-Civil War, 1873 Partition of Bermuda, and the Rise of Sharecropping/Tenancy



Figure 4 *Earliest known photograph of Prud'homme's Store, c. 1878. (Prud'homme's Store HSR, 16)*

In the Phase 1 Site History, Firth and Turner trace the physical evolution and changes in the landscape at Bermuda under the second and third generation of Prud'hommes living and working on the Isle Brevelle property.[7] They conclude their narrative in 1865, a touchstone date marking a number of significant events in the life of Oakland: the end of the Civil War, the death of patriarch and plantation manager Phanor (I) Prud'homme, the new beginnings and challenges brought on by Emancipation, and the subsequent social and economic upheavals and reorganization of the plantation's remaining labor force of formerly enslaved individuals as sharecroppers and tenants under the supervision of the Freedman's Bureau during the early years of Reconstruction (1865-1877).[8] The post-Civil War era brought about some radical changes to the economy and organization of plantation agriculture and planter class society in general, but probably far fewer changes to the physical landscape and agricultural land patterns than one might imagine. From a landscape perspective, agriculture continued at Oakland in a fairly traditional and highly labor-intensive manner during Reconstruction and for almost three-quarters of a century afterwards, until large-scale mechanized agriculture facilitated by tractors and industrial cotton pickers replaced the manual labor of sharecroppers, tenant farmers, and mules during the 1950s.[9] As a result, and as all previous research into the site history suggests, the agricultural landscape and broad field patterns remained largely intact from the end of the Civil War until at least the mid-twentieth century, and various plantation structures built during the nineteenth century were repaired, repurposed, adapted, and sometimes relocated for evolving use rather than torn down or replaced by newer structures.[10]

[7] The original Bermuda plantation was subdivided to become Oakland and Atahoe Plantations in 1873.

[8] Although some of the formerly enslaved inhabitants left Oakland during the war and after Emancipation, many apparently remained to become tenant sharecroppers in the post-war period, including the Nargots, Helaires, Toussaints, and Williams.

[9] The CARI Historic Resource Study (2019) provides extensive historical context on Reconstruction, sharecropping and tenancy, and the impacts of Jim Crow laws and segregation on Oakland's formerly enslaved populations who continued to work the land as sharecroppers or tenant farmers during the late-nineteenth and early twentieth century.

[10] The core residential structures (Main House, Doctor's House, Overseer's House, Slave Quarters) were in place by the early 1860s, as were many of the key farm buildings. It appears that after this point, it was mainly the former slave quarters/Tenant Houses that were moved, either to allow greater privacy to sharecroppers and tenants as they dispersed to various corners of the property, or to accommodate new commercial ventures (i.e. a rental fishing camp venture) in the early twentieth century. It seems that only a few entirely new structures were added in the twentieth century, including a 1950s Tractor Shed (extant) and a Cotton Pickers shed, which the NPS removed. According to family oral history, the original mule barn burned down in the late 1920s from lightning strike, and the former smokehouse, located along the Farm Lane southwest of the Main House, was repurposed as the new mule barn. The Civil War-era gin, which was located in (or just outside) the northeast corner of the current property, was destroyed at the end of the Civil War, and archeology has verified that a Blacksmith's shop/forge sat near the present-day location of the Cook's Cabin in the North Meadow. According to interviews with family, the West Pigeonnier was moved to its present location along the Farm Lane sometime in the mid-twentieth century from a location some 20 feet away.

The current narrative picks up where the Phase 1 narrative ends, with brothers Jacques Alphonse (I) and Pierre Emanuel (II), sons of Phanor and Eliza (Lecompte) Prud'homme, the third generation of family members to inhabit the Bermuda property and to manage the plantation enterprise. After their father's death in 1865, the brothers began apparently protracted legal proceedings to settle the succession, pay off debts incurred during the war period, and formally partition the property into two separate estates. In 1873, the approximately 1900 acres of property consolidated by Phanor I was legally divided between the two brothers, with Alphonse retaining (purchasing) the land on the west bank of the river, which he subsequently renamed Oakland, and Pierre Emmanuel claiming (purchasing) the property on the east side of the river, which he renamed Atahoe, for the bayou that runs along the backswamp area to the east of the property (**Figure** 48). Obviously, in the days before the advent of the automobile and more permanent road networks, the construction of the first permanent bridge across the river (lake) in 1912, or the creation of Cane River Lake from the damming of the river (1908 or 1914) [11], the neighboring family properties were much more reliant on the river for transportation of their agricultural products (cotton) downriver to New Orleans, and import of household goods on boats coming up the river, and were connected by ferry and temporary bridges built across the river to convey raw cotton for ginning between the plantations' gin sites. [12]

Around this same period (1873), we find the first written record of Oakland Plantation's (Prud'homme's) Store in public records related to business licensing, as well as the first known photograph of the property in 1878 (**Figure** 4). [13] For the next one hundred years, various family members managed the store operation and plantation activities from an office added to the rear of the structure. By 1877, the Store building also housed the Bermuda Post Office, which remained in operation until the late 1960s, with various family members also serving as Bermuda's postmaster. The Store and Post Office represented an important expansion of the Prud'homme 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. [14] As such, the store became a de facto neighborhood gathering spot, creating a locus of identity for the surrounding community and bringing a new level of commercial activity to the front of the property and riverfront (**Figure** 5). In fact, before the river was dammed and goods could still be shipped upriver from New Orleans, records (and perhaps at least one family photo) indicate that the Prud'hommes had a storage warehouse on the river near their dock, presumably to offload goods for the store and to store cotton before shipping (**Figure** 6). [15] It is unclear when the dock and warehouse were torn down but it is likely that they persisted for some time after the damming of the lake and maybe well into mid-century.

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[11] Different sources give the date for the damming of Cane River as 1908 or 1914, and one as late as the 1930s, but 1914 is the most frequently cited date. The damming of the lake effectively ended commercial transportation and navigation on the river (steamboats, flatboats, etc), making the surrounding plantations more reliant on overland transportation, which was further facilitated by the advent of automobiles and the construction of the first permanent bridge across the lake in 1912.

[12] See Firth & Turner, CLR Phase 1 Site History. Temporary bridges were constructed across the river in late spring after high water subsided and removed late fall before seasonal winter rains and flooding made crossings difficult. This facilitated cross-river transport of people, goods, and raw cotton for processing at the brothers' various east or west bank gin sites, which were apparently shared. Furthermore, Breedlove's thesis states that Emanuel (II) purchased the rights to operate a ferry across the river in 1878, p. 46.

[13] The earliest known photograph of the structure (and Oakland) is from 1878. See Prud'homme's Store HSR (2004) for other historic photos of the store.

[14] Sharecroppers and tenants were extended store credit by the landowner against the proceeds of their future crop yields. They received the proceeds from the sale of their shares only after debts or store accounts were settled. This system is seen by some critics as a more nuanced form of economic indenture or servitude, while not as egregious as chattel slavery, by which the loyalty and continued indebtedness of laborer to landowner was reaffirmed. See *Prud'homme's Store HSR* for further discussion of this.

[15] Ibid, 15. The exact site of this warehouse or the plantation dock is not shown in records.



Figure 5 *Mid-century image of Oakland Store, showing lime-washed tree trunks and commercial signage, date unknown. (CARI)*

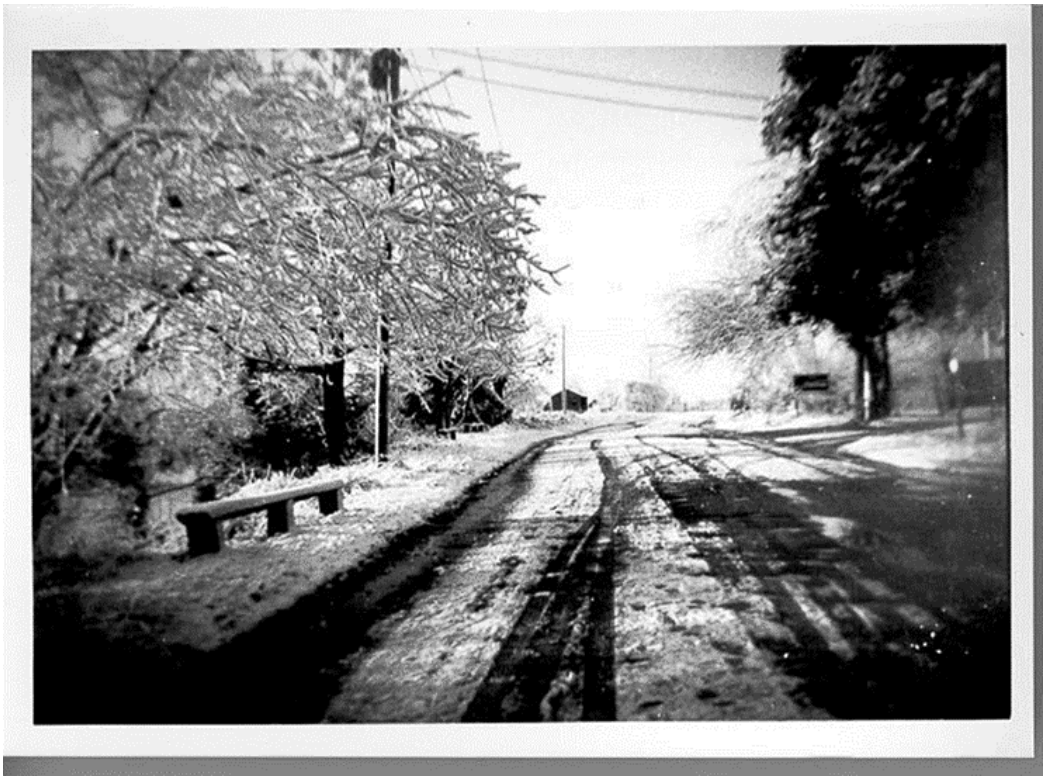


Figure 6 *Hwy 494 in front of main house looking south along the riverbank, showing wooden bench and presumed warehouse building along lakefront in distance, date unknown. (Prud'homme family collection)*

It is reasonable to assume that after Emancipation and during Reconstruction at least, limited changes were made to the original Quarter's Area, which probably extended south from the Overseer's House. The formerly enslaved who now served as sharecroppers and tenants to the Prud'hommes may have continued to occupy the same cabins as before the war, but of course, we can't know this for certain, nor can we know what changes might have been made to the landscapes around them. With time, however, it is likely that some of the original Quarter's 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 Prud'homme family. Aerials from mid-twentieth century show small cabins or tenant houses stretching along the lakefront and road south of existing park property on family lands, suggesting that these may have been original Quarter's dwellings moved in an earlier period (see Figs. 29-30). Additional archeology in this area might allow greater insight into the evolution of the Quarter's Area after Emancipation and during the early sharecropping and tenancy periods.

The Overseer's House continued to be occupied by white or Creole tenants (the Metoyer family in the early- to mid-twentieth century) who helped with plantation oversight and management. Photographic documentation shows that by the mid-twentieth century, the homestead had developed its own distinctive landscape with an enclosed yard and ornamental vegetation. Metoyer family photos from the 1940s or 50s show a picket fence enclosing a front yard with shrubs and ornamental plantings (possibly daylilies) near the walkway, although it is difficult to determine exact species from the images (Figure 7). A hand drawn sketch from a 1997 oral history interview with former resident Camille Metoyer provides some additional detail to the setting for the house, showing that in addition to a fenced yard enclosure, the parcel had its own cistern (extant), vegetable garden, hog pen, chicken coops, wash pot and clothes lines, and a storage building to the rear (west) of the house, as well as ornamental plantings to the front (east) and south side of the house, including pink crepe myrtles, red rose bushes, white Easter lilies and Jacob's Ladder (**Figure** 8). Furthermore, the 1950 aerial photo clearly captures some of the vegetation, dependency features, and vegetated yard enclosure surrounding the Overseer's House at that time (Figure 29).



Figure 7 *Overseer's House showing picket fence and planted yard, c. 1940s-50s (CARI, Metoyer family photos)*

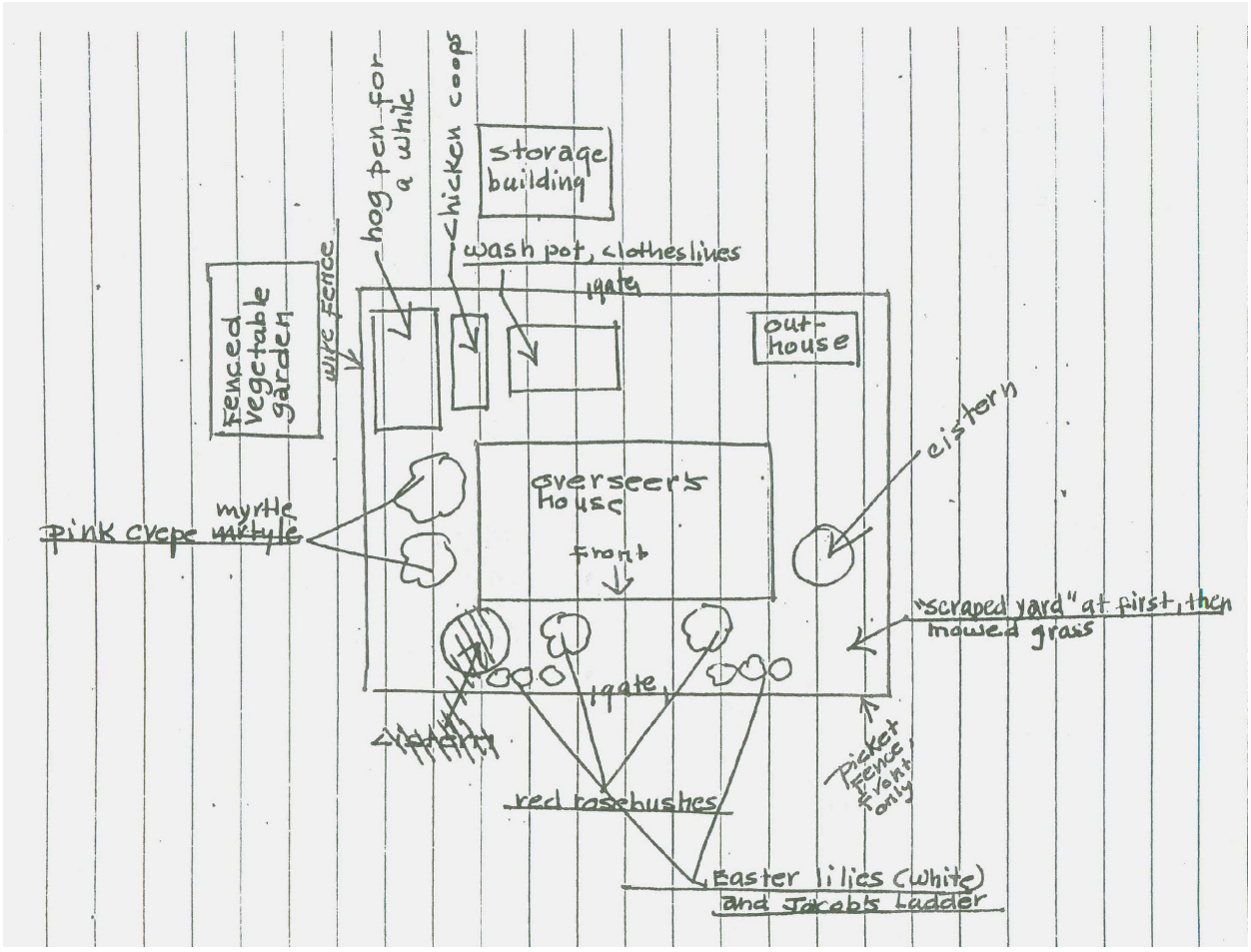


Figure 8 *Sketch from 1997 oral history interview with Camille Metoyer showing recollected features. (CARI-NHP)*

During the last quarter of the nineteenth century, the construction of regional railroads brought further changes to the landscape at Oakland, primarily related to transportation of goods, circulation patterns, and orientation to the river. According to Breedlove, 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 Prud'homme's Station—were established along the line running west of Bayou Brevelle (current route of Hwy 1), in close overland proximity to Oakland. [16] Firth and Turner's 1860 Period Plan (**Figure** 47) and the 1873 property map suggest that the property was connected via its 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 at Cypress and Brevelle. [17] 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.

[16] See Breedlove, p. 45. See also *Prud'homme Store HSR* (2004)

[17] See CLR Phase 1 Site History. There are no further findings to disprove or substantiate Firth and Turner's conjecture that there was a road or lane connecting from Oakland's backswamp area (Bayou Brevelle) to the rail station.

The 1880 Period Plan captures Oakland's landscape after this first major partition and the construction of the Store, as new commercial activity began to activate the property and railroads provided an alternative to river transport and orientation (**Figure** 48).

Early Twentieth Century: Modernizations, Subdivision, & Migrations

In the early twentieth century, the advent of the automobile, the building of new roadways and bridges, and the damming of Cane River by the Army Corps brought further changes to the landscape at Oakland, followed soon after by a second partition of the property (**Figure** 9). After the construction of the first metal-truss bridge across the river in 1912, the property, and especially the Store/PO, became more easily accessible by land and ultimately automobile, which likely increased business for the Store and necessitated the addition of gas and a gas pump to the store's amenities.[18] By 1914, the river was dammed at its north and south ends by the Army Corps of Engineers, becoming Cane River Lake, and after this point, was no longer navigable by riverboat or larger commercial vessels.[19] The damming of the river to create the lake would also open up new opportunities for recreational activity along the waterway, and largely controlled previously unpredictable flooding. Although sharecropping and tenant farming continued at Oakland during this period, it is probable that some out-migration of tenants occurred after World War I, during the first wave of Northern Migration, when African Americans left the region for new opportunities in the industrialized cities of the northeast and Midwest.[20] Much greater out-migration would occur in the years after World War II. However, because sharecropping largely maintained the farming practices and land patterns of the nineteenth century, alterations to the broader agricultural landscape were probably still relatively minor during this period.

[18] The family purchased their first car around 1911, which may have necessitated some changes to the drive sequences near the Store and Main House, and the addition of a gas pump at the store.

[19] There is some discrepancy here in the dates—sources claim either 1908 or 1914 for dam construction.

[20] See CARI HRS (2019) for further historical context on the out-migration of African-Americans from the South during this era.



Figure 9 *The 1919 H. M. Knight Survey drawn for Phanor Prud'homme overlaid on a 2020 Google Earth Aerial (CARI/Google/STA)*



Figure 10 *1919 survey by H. M. Knight documenting the second major subdivision of property after the death of J. Alphonse.*

The second major subdivision of the Oakland property occurred in 1919, after the death of J. Alphonse and the subsequent succession of his property, which then passed to his son Phanor (II). This partition is documented by a property survey/deed document from 1919, created by H. M. Knight, showing subdivision of the Oakland property, and a reduction in its overall size due to the purchase or inheritance of former lands near the neck of Metoyer Point by other family members (Figs 9 & 10), as well as the inheritance of the Doctor's House parcel by Phanor's brother, Edward Carrington Prud'homme. Although he had apparently been managing the plantation for his father since 1903, Phanor (II) took ownership of the northern portion of the property after the 1919 succession, managing Oakland's agricultural enterprises until 1943. [21]



Figure 11 *Phonsie Prud'homme in the bottle garden with oak allée, lime-washed trees and car visible in background, c. 1912-14. (CARI)*

It could be around this time, after Phanor (II) and his wife Marie Laure assumed residency at the Main House, that the Bottle Garden was conceived to replace or embellish the earlier boxwood parterres; or this transformation might have occurred earlier when Alphonse I took over at Oakland in the 1870s. [22] In any case, Phanor's inheritance probably occasioned improvements to the domestic landscape surrounding the main house. [23] Photos from the early- to mid-twentieth century show a well-maintained front lawn, live oak allée, and bottle garden, with lime-wash applied to the lower trunks of the live oaks and other trees in this area near the front of the property, apparently a long-established practice at Oakland. A photo from the early teens (possibly c. 1912-14) shows a young Phonsie (Alphonse II) hamming it up in the bottle garden, with the freshly white-washed trunks of live oaks visible along the entrance allée, a freshly painted picket fence along the front of the bottle garden, an arched (rose) arbor over the wire garden gate, and what appears to be wooden railings or trellising along the edge of the garden's brick walkway (**Figure** 11). An early model car can be seen parked along the driveway under the live oaks, perhaps the first family vehicle, which was purchased around 1911.

[21] His son J. Alphonse II ("Phonsie") purchases the property from him in 1942.

[22] Although the exact date of the transformation is unknown and some sources place the Bottle Garden's origins in the late nineteenth century, the parterre garden, which had stood in front of the Main House since perhaps the 1820s, was reworked at some point to incorporate upended glass bottles as edging along the paths and beds, replacing an earlier version in boxwood (or privet) hedging. It is also possible that this happened when Alphonse I took over at Oakland in the 1870s. A separate CLR soon to be conducted on the Bottle Garden may provide more clarity on the origins and evolution of this unusual feature.

[23] His brother Edward's inheritance of the Doctor's House at the same time may have brought improvements to the landscape of that residence as well, and likely led to the development of a more distinctive yard enclosure and vegetative plantings there.



Figure 12 *1940 HABS photo of Oakland Main House, Allée, and Bottle Garden, showing lime-washed trees and garden shed or children's playhouse. (LOC, Lester Jones, 1940)*



Figure 13 *South side yard of the main house, with clotheslines, small trees, and watering troughs. (Library of Congress, HABS, Lester Jones, February 28, 1940)*

The 1920 Period Plan (Figure 49?) depicts Oakland at the time of the second partition, after the construction of the original steel-truss bridge (1912) and the damming of the river to form Cane River Lake (1908-14). A series of Historic American Building Survey (HABS) images from the 1940s by photographer Lester Jones gives additional insight into the features, vegetation, yard configuration and general maintenance of the domestic landscape surrounding the Oakland main house in the first half of the twentieth century. The first photo looks west along the oak allée and entrance drive towards the main house and shows white-washed oak trunks along the allée, a dirt or gravel driveway extending from Hwy 494, and the picket fence and an arched arbor over the gate leading into the bottle garden. It also depicts a small garden shed or children's playhouse (not extant) at the northeast corner of the bottle garden; it is not known when this structure was constructed, removed, or its exact function (Figure 12). The second image shows the south side yard of the main house with a post-and-wire fence enclosure, clotheslines, small trees and watering troughs along the fence (**Figure** 13). The final image shows a pigeonnier (perhaps the east pigeonnier or more likely, a third non-extant one that appears in several mid-century aerial photos near the midpoint of the lane--see **Figure**s 29-30) sitting in or near the edge of the farm lane, perhaps prior to being moved or relocated, with the edge of what appears to be the carriage house in the background (Figure 14). Overall, the farm property appears well maintained and the house freshly painted, and there is little to no volunteer vegetation visible along the farm lane, fence lines, or the bases of structures (of course, these images were taken in the winter, and the family may have conducted additional maintenance in anticipation of this photo documentation). Together, these photos capture a glimpse of the changing vernacular nature of the property, its various yards, fences and enclosures, and persistent cultural practices (lime-washing, livestock watering, fence maintenance) over time.

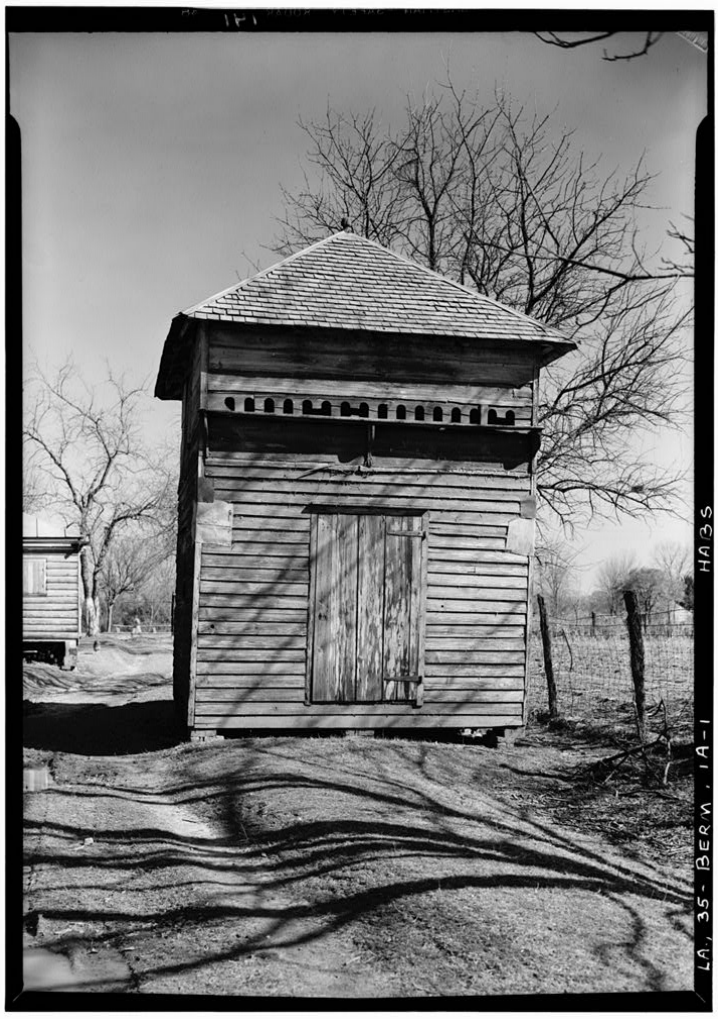


Figure 14 *View east along farm lane with pigeonnier. (LOC, HABS, 1940)*



Figure 15 *Above, fishing cabins during a rare snow, showing the cook's cabin, washerwoman's cabin, historic fence enclosures, and a wooden tree swing in the north meadow area, date unknown. (CARI)*

1

2

Expanded Commercial Ventures, Heritage Tourism & Early Preservation

In the late 1920s, probably in response to financial hardships related to the Great Depression, falling cotton prices, recurring boll weevil infestations, or simply the need to economically diversify their activities, the family established a rental fishing camp venture in the meadow areas north of the Main House, moving several former tenant cabins, including the Cook's Cabin (still extant) and the Washerwoman's Cabin (not extant), from the rear yards or other locations to an area east of the pecan grove and orchard areas and west of the lakefront and Hwy 494.[24] Family photos show the fishing camp area after a rare snow, with two cabins visible among what appears to be a mix of pecan and other deciduous trees, and fence lines, enclosures, and a wooden tree swing that are no longer present (**Figure 15**). Another set of photos shows two fishermen (or family members) displaying an impressive catch of fish strung up along one of the fence lines (**Figure 16**). The family dug a minnow pond as a source of bait, and catalpa trees were either planted or encouraged in the area surrounding the rental cabins. [25]



Figure 16 *Fishermen with an impressive haul of fish, date unknown (Prud'homme family photos)*

Recent archeological investigation (2000) has established the likely location of the former Blacksmith's Shop/Forge site in this same area, just southeast of the Cook's Cabin, but it is not clear if this structure was still present at the time the fishing camp was established, or, more likely, had vanished by the early twentieth century. Historic documents and family history also record the presence of a grass tennis court (dated to the 1890s) to the east of the fishing camp area, near the highway, east property boundary, and pre-Civil

[24] The Cook's and Washerwoman's Cabins were probably originally located in the rear yard of the main house, somewhere near the modern kitchen extension.

[25] A number of mature catalpa trees exist near the Cook's Cabin; family oral history holds that the web/tent worms that proliferate in these species were used as a source of bait for cabin renters. The topographic depression of the minnow pond is still apparent in the north meadow between the pecan grove and the cook's cabin.

War-era gin site, but it appears to have vanished by the time of the 1941 aerial photo (see **Figure 29**).[26] According to family oral history, the Prud'hommes ceased to gin cotton at Oakland altogether by the early 1940s, and instead transported it elsewhere for processing, so the present steam gin site (c. 1860s) to the southwest of the main house complex was apparently also inactive after this period. By the 1970s, the Gin building itself had disappeared, as evidenced by the 1966 and 1972 aerials (**Figures 33-34**).[27]

By the 1930s, Oakland had been electrified, and we have evidence from 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, Phonsie's wife, Lucille ("Lulu") Keator Prud'homme, became actively involved in promoting the history of Natchitoches and the Cane River region 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. As automobile ownership, leisure time, and tourism increased post-World War II and into the 1950s, interest in the property and in regional heritage also increased, and the family increasingly adapted to the intrusion of curious strangers stopping to see the property. The 1940 HABS photos document the property from around this time, during the early years of heritage tourism (see **Figures 12-14**), as do several mid-century family photos showing a picket fence between the dependency sheds in the rear yard **(Figure 17)** and, in a rather candid photo of a young female family member, what appears to be strips of corrugated metal or bumper edging along the fence line separating the south side yard from the front lawn area, as well as a glimpse of the south edge of the bottle garden, and the rear end of a car parked in front of the carriage house on the lawn side **(Figure 18).**

A set of new gas pumps (leaded and unleaded) was added at the Store around this time to service increasing automotive traffic, replacing the original single globed pump (**Figure 19**). The wooden turnstile gate to the north of the main house entrance gates was also constructed during this era to control the entry of paid ticket holders for organized tours of Oakland during the Natchitoches Pilgrimage. Family photos show various Prud'homme women in gowns or antebellum costume awaiting pilgrimage visitors on the front lawn near the house (**Figure 20**). 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. The family apparently liked this change and decided to make it permanent. The depiction of Oakland in a mainstream film likely increased interest in the property as a historic site, as well as the family's awareness of its heritage value.

[26] The tennis court was apparently established in the 1890s and maintained through at least the 1920s, according to park staff, but it had vanished by the time of the 1941 aerial. The Civil War-era gin was burned in 1864, and a new steam gin was built in the fields to the southwest of the Main House complex and Corn Crib area either slightly before this or just after.

[27] In the 1941 aerial, there are three structures visible at the Gin site, but two of them disappear between the 1966 and 1972 photos. See comparative graphic in Analysis section.



Figure 17 *Main house rear yard showing live oak and picket fence between dependencies, date unknown (family collection)*



Figure 18 *Young family member in front lawn near carriage house, view towards south side yard and bottle garden with car and metal edging visible along post and wire fence (family collection).*



Figure 19 *Oakland (Prud'homme's) Store, showing single gas pump, Osage orange tree and lime-washed tree trunks (CARI)*



Figure 20 *Hostesses at Oakland during Natchitoches Pilgrimage tours, c. 1950s-60s, Vivian Prudhomme Duggan collection. (CARI)*



Figure 21 *Detail of 1941 aerial photo of Oakland, showing scattered tenant houses south of Hwy 494 and along the lake (LSU)*

The 1950s also brought some significant changes to farming and agricultural practices at Oakland, marked by increasing mechanization, and by the end of the 1950s, the departure of the last remaining tenant farmers/sharecroppers, whose families—Helaires, Nargots, Toussaints, Williams, among others—had continuously occupied and worked the Prud'homme lands since the antebellum period, descendants of the formerly enslaved who had remained on the land for multiple generations. In the earliest aerial photograph from 1941, we can see a number of sharecropper or tenant houses to the south of the Doctor's House, including the extant North and South Tenant Houses (**Figure 21**). These cabins clearly functioned as independent residences for their inhabitants, and mid-century aerials 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 (see **Figures 33-35**).

From the late-nineteenth to mid-twentieth century, various family members, acquaintances, renters and plantation overseers occupied the Doctor's House and Overseer's House, the other primary residences on

site, modifying both the structures and landscapes periodically to meet their needs and that of the times. [28] In fact, family photos from mid-century show that these residences had their own yards, driveways, gardens, fenced enclosures and dependency landscapes, distinctive from the landscape of the Main House. Indeed, the Doctor's House was out-parceled or inherited by Prud'homme son and heir Edward Carrington Prud'homme as a separate property after the 1919 succession. [29] The entrance gate and trace of the original drive alignment from Hwy 494 are still visible crossing the front lawn area, and its dependencies—Grist Mill Shed, Privy, Chicken Coop and Barn—still stand to the rear [west] of the house in their own fenced enclosures. Mid-century images of the Overseer's House (from 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 (**Fig 7**). Obviously, any signs of this earlier domestic landscape have been lost; indeed, the house now sits rather starkly at the edge of the fields to the west of the Doctor's Cottage, the cistern to the north the only indication that it might have once had its own landscape and perhaps garden features. A rare hand drawn plan of the property from 1950, likely traced from an aerial photo, presumably by Phonsie Prud'homme (it is drawn on plantation letterhead emprinted with "J. Alphonse Prudhomme, Oakland Plantation") shows some of the spatial patterns of the time, including fence lines, enclosures and major trees in the residential core (**Figs 22 & 23**). This drawing provides further evidence that the Overseer's House had its own defined landscape, or at least a shadier one, during this period, and it shows the earlier lane alignment to the gin site running roughly perpendicular from Hwy 494 and bisecting the current Quarters area between the north and south tenant houses (see 1950 aerial, **Figure 30**).

[28] The Doctor's House is so named apparently because the plantation doctor, Dr. Leveque, occupied the house from 1866-1893. Seneca Pace, the plantation overseer at the outbreak of the Civil War, lived in the Overseer's House when it was completed in 1861.

[29] The Doctor's House parcel was acquired as a separate tract in the 1997 purchase agreement with the NPS.



Figure 22 *Phanor Prud'homme's 1950 hand-drawn map of Oakland and vicinity.*



Figure 23 *Enlargement of Phanor Prud'homme's 1950 hand-drawn map of Oakland and vicinity)*



Figure 24 *General view to house from outside main entrance gate (gate open), 2002 HABS photograph, Jack Boucher. (Library of Congress)*

Agricultural Mechanization, End of Tenancy, & Decline of Family-Run Agriculture

According to oral history interviews conducted with Alphonse III ("Al") and Kenneth ("Kenny") Prud'homme in the 2010s, plantation lands were manually farmed using mules and plows until 1951 or 1952, when their father, Alphonse II ("Phonsie"), bought his first tractor. Soon afterwards, a Tractor Shed (extant) was built to the west of the rear yard to house the new machinery. In 1959, the family purchased their first mechanized cotton picker, signaling a further shift away from manual labor towards industrial-scale agriculture.[30] After this period, the family continued to employ day or wage laborers to help with the farm, but residential tenancy had effectively ended by 1960. Phonsie served as Bermuda's postmaster from 1924 until 1962 and continued to run the Store until its closure in 1982. In 1967, The Bermuda Post Office closed for good, replaced by rural mail routes. Due to dramatic improvements to the region's road networks and increased access to Natchitoches in the post-war period, as well as the emergence of cheaper and more competitive chain stores and five-and-dimes, rural stores such as Prud'hommes faced increasing competition. As a result, store business almost certainly declined after the departure of tenants in the 1950s, and probably significantly so by the late-1960s. In 1971, the Oakland 1821 iron entrance sign and gateway was erected at the main house entrance from Hwy 494 (**Figure 24**), a further sign of the shift away from

[30] The Cotton Pickers shed, which was constructed in the late 1950s or early 1960s slightly southwest of the Tractor Shed, was removed by the NPS sometime in the early 2000s. It is visible in aerials from the 1980s-90s.

agricultural activity towards an increasing identification of the property as a significant piece of regional cultural heritage.

The 1960 Period Plan depicts Oakland at the end of the sharecropper/tenant era, before the field patterns were significantly altered by larger scale mechanizations, and before I-49 and other infrastructural improvements significantly altered residential land patterns along the river (**Figure 50**).

During the early 1980s, the construction of a new concrete bridge across the lake to replace the older metal one and the 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.[31] In 1988, the property was designated a Bicentennial Farm for its continuity of agricultural land use, and a commemorative sign was erected near the Store to mark the honor. According to a timeline included in the *Oakland Big House HSR* (2004), the Prud'hommes auctioned their farm equipment in 1984. This probably represented the effective end of on-site family management of farm activities stretching back to the late eighteenth century and heralded a new era in the soon-to-be story of Oakland as a heritage site. In 1987, a number of Oakland's individual structures, the historic residential core landscape, 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. The 1987 Site Plan (**Figure 25**) depicts a number of fence lines, including the one to the north of the main house yard which also defines the southern edge of the pecan grove and north meadow/fishing camp area, and a small semi-enclosure (possible garden plot) to the northwest of the Doctor's House, that are no longer extant, as well as the outlines (dashed) of the 1950s tractor shed (extant, labeled "new shed," top right) and the 1960s cotton picker shed (not extant, removed by NPS, labeled "new shed," top left). It does not show the farm lane, which apparently was overgrown at the time or had not been maintained. In this drawing, the east and west pigeonniers appear much closer to the approximate southern edge of the farm lane than at present, which suggests that either they were moved at a later period to widen and/or straighten the alignment and appearance of the farm lane, or that the drawing is not especially accurate (the Overseer's House and North Tenant House also appear to be on an unusually slanted axis here compared to the aerial photos). The plan also shows the Store and Carriage House, the Cook's Cabin, the rear dependencies and yard, the corn crib enclosure and corral, the driveway to the Doctor's House, fence lines, enclosures and dependencies around the Doctor's House, the Overseer's House, and north and south Tenant Houses, as well as key specimen trees. The Bottle Garden drawing (**Figure 26**) shows details of the garden's horticultural plantings, parterre bed configuration, and brick walkway in plan, as well as a section of the picket fence and front gate. A second round of HABS photographs was completed In 2002 to record the primary buildings and landscape condition at that time.

[31]The new bridge was opened in 1982, the same year that the steel-truss bridge (Bermuda Bridge) was abandoned, according to CARI Superintendent Carrie Mardorf in written comments referencing a draft NR nomination for the older bridge.

AF 31773

PLANTING LIST

1	QUERCUS VIRGINIANA
2	ULMUS CRASSIFOLIA
3	CARYA ILLINOINENSIS
4	SAPIA SEBIFERUM
5	SASAFRASA SARMENTOSA
6	NANDINA DOMESTICA
7	ILEX
8	PRUNUS CHROLINANA
9	TAXODIUM DISTICHUM
10	LAGERSTROEMIA INDICA

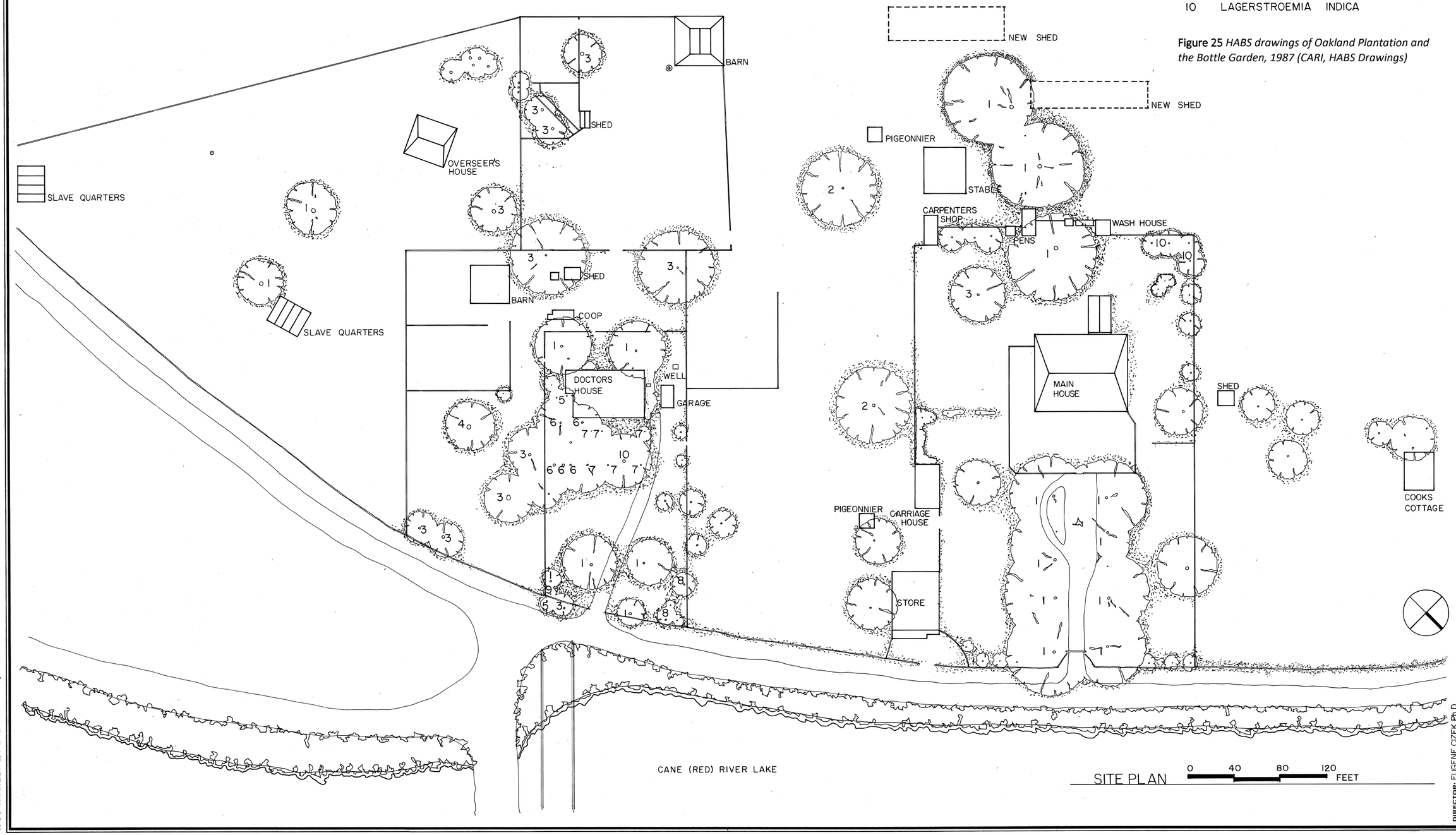


Figure 25 *HABS drawings of Oakland Plantation and the Bottle Garden, 1987 (CARI, HABS Drawings)*

OAKLAND PLANTATION
NATCHITOCHES PARISH, LOUISIANA

DIRECTOR: EUGENE OZEK Ph.D.
CONSULTANT
DELINEATED BY: KIMBERLY KOVEL

DATE: 16 DECEMBER 1987
HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDING SURVEY
SURVEY NO. LA-1192

SHEET 5 OF 32

IF REPRODUCED, PLEASE CREDIT: HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDING SURVEY, NATIONAL PARK SERVICE. NAME OF DELINEATOR. DATE OF THE DRAWING

1988 CHARLES E. PETERSON PRIZE, HONORABLE MENTION

AF 31773

Figure 26 *HABS drawings of Oakland Plantation and the Bottle Garden, 1987 (CARI, HABS Drawings*

THE FRONT GARDEN AT OAKLAND PLANTATION WAS LAID OUT IN 1835. THE SHAPED BEDS WERE ORIGINALLY EDGED IN BOXWOOD. THE EDGING WAS CHANGED IN THE LATE NINETEENTH CENTURY TO INVERTED BOTTLES IN THE TRADITIONAL CREOLE MANNER.

PLANTING LIST

KEY	BOTANICAL NAME	COMMON NAME	KEY	BOTANICAL NAME	COMMON NAME
BS/B	BUXUS SEMPERVIRENS	BOXWOOD	LJ/WL	LIGUSTRUM JAPONICUM	WAX LEAF LIGUSTRUM
CJ/C	CAMELLIA JAPONICA	CAMELLIA	LC/L	LONTANA CAMARA	LONTANA
CG/C	CANNA GENERALIS	CANNA	LR/SL	LYCORIS RADIATA	SPIDER LILY
CI/P	CARYA ILLINOINENSIS	PECAN	ND/N	NANDINA DOMESTICA	NANDINA
C/C	CRINUM "GENERALIS"	CRINUM	PA/DF	POLYSTICHUM ACROSTICHOIDES	DAGGER FERN
HH/EI	HEDERA HELIX	ENGLISH IVY	QV/LO	QUERCUS VIRGINIANA	SOUTHERN LIVE OAK
IL/LI	IRIS "LOUISIANA"	LOUISIANA IRIS	RH/R	ROSA "HYBRID"	ROSE
LI/CM	LAGERSTROEMIA INDICA	CRAPE MYRTLE			

GARDEN PLAN

PICKET FENCE ELEVATION

FRONT GARDEN

0 1 2 3 4 5 FEET 1/4"=1'-0"

0 100 200 400 CENTIMETERS 1:48

OAKLAND PLANTATION
NATCHITOCHES PARISH, LOUISIANA

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDING SURVEY
SURVEY NO. LA-1192

SHEET 5 OF 32

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS PHOTOCOPY NUMBER

DIRECTOR: EUGENE CIZEK Ph.D.
CONSULTANT
DELINEATED BY: LARRY WEINTRAUB, FRADELL WEINSTEIN

DATE: 16 DECEMBER 1987
HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

IF REPRODUCED, PLEASE CREDIT: HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDING SURVEY, NATIONAL PARK SERVICE, DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, FROM THE HABS/HAER/HALS COLLECTION AT THE LIBRARY OF CONGRESS
PREPARED WITH HISTORIC PRESERVATION FUNDS FROM THE STATE OF LOUISIANA AND THE TULANE UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF ARCHITECTURE.

1988 CHARLES E. PETERSON PRIZE, HONORABLE MENTION

CARI NHP Designation, NPS Land Acquisition, Research & General Management Plan (2001)—Preferred Alternative

In 1994, after a number of years of discussion among government officials, Prud'homme family members and local preservationists, Cane River National Historical Park (CARI) was legislatively established by act of Congress. Between 1997 and 1998, the NPS purchased the present 45-acre property in four separate parcels from the Prud'hommes and Doris Vincent, but the Prud'hommes continued to occupy the Main House until 1998.[32] An additional 144 acres of adjacent family-owned land was included in the unit's legislatively authorized boundaries. 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.

The NPS completed and approved a General Management Plan (GMP) for the Park in March 2001, adopting Alternative 1 from among 5 options presented for public review as the Preferred Alternative to guide future site development and planning. Under Alternative 1, "the management emphasis at Cane River Creole National Historical Park would be on preserving and rehabilitating the landscapes, structures, and artifacts of the two national park units, setting up basic operations to manage and maintain the resources, and establishing a quality visitor experience onsite and strong partnerships with the community. The physical treatment of the plantation's landscape, including structures, would generally reflect the continuum of history up to about 1960. This would result in few changes to the current configuration of plantation structures or general appearance of the landscape….By 1960, both plantations had stopped being traditional family-run operations and plantation property was being sold or leased out to other farmers, the operations were mechanized, and the sharecroppers and tenant farmers had left to pursue work elsewhere" (GMP 42). Under Alternative 1, the Cotton Pickers Shed was removed because it was thought to post-date the circa 1960 reference date (it first appears in the 1966 aerial, **Figure 33**, but not in the 1958 one, even though the family bought the first mechanized cotton picker in 1958 or 1959, according to family oral history); but the Tractor Shed, which had also been slated for removal in an earlier draft of the GMP, was ultimately maintained because documentation showed that it dated from the early 1950s (it first appears in the 1952 aerial, **Figure 31**).

The GMP designated three management zones and two planning phases for site development at Oakland (**Figure 27**):

1) **Core Plantation Management Area**, which encompassed the entire property boundaries and emphasized preservation of historic structures and landscape features, as well as the adaptive reuse of certain historic structures for visitor use and the construction of visitor pathways;

2) **Development Management Area** in the northwest/north quadrant of the property (to the west of the Main House) for the construction of new visitor use infrastructure (entrance drive, visitor parking, Visitor Pavilion) and as the possible future location of a new maintenance facility during Phase 2 site development; and

[32] The NPS acquired the Doctor's House parcel from Doris Vincent in 1998 and two narrow parcels along the riverbank separately from the Main House/Farm parcel in 1997 (see *Historic Resource Study*, chapter 9-2, 2000).

3) **Administrative Adaptive Use Management Area** for the temporary housing of administrative facilities, storage, and park maintenance activities during Phase 1. This included the Doctor's House as the initial location for park offices and staff meeting space, the Doctor's Barn for storage and maintenance, and the Seed House for the temporary housing of park maintenance activities, to be converted later to educational space for groups. An access road to the Seed House and adjacent staff parking would also be developed during Phase 1, with alignment from Hwy 494 to be determined.

In Phase 2, the GMP stipulated that the park's administrative offices should be consolidated within a new Regional Visitor Center located off-site and that maintenance activities and storage should be relocated from the Seed House and Gin area to a new maintenance facility either offsite or within the Development Management Area. Phase 2 also stipulated additional land protection through acquisition of part or all of the additional 144-acres of adjacent family land included within the legislatively authorized park boundaries. In particular, the report pointed out the importance of acquiring and protecting the former slave/African American cemetery to the west, the wetlands along Bayou Brevelle, and additional agricultural acreage for viewshed buffering and interpretive purposes.

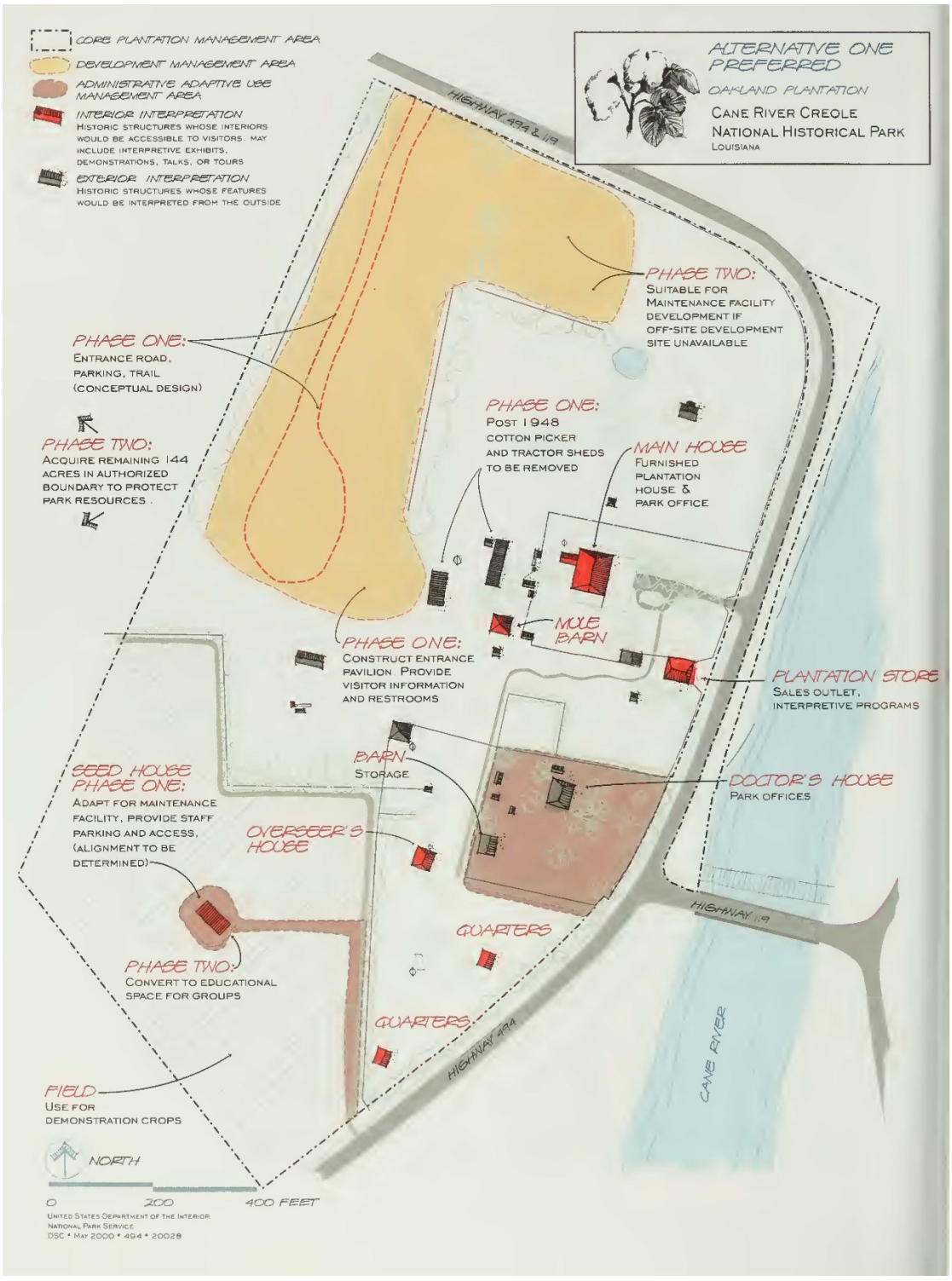


Figure 27 *Preferred Alternative 1, General Management Plan, CARI-NHP, 2001 (44)*

After acquiring the property, the NPS undertook extensive stabilization and restoration efforts on Oakland's Main House, Store, and the large number of deteriorating dependencies and farm structures, many of which were seriously overgrown with vegetation and in danger of collapse. Following the recommendations of the 2001 GMP, new visitor use infrastructure was installed at the Oakland unit, including a new Park entrance, drive and Visitor Pavilion constructed in the fields west of the Main House (completed between 2001-2004, see 2004 aerial**, Figure 38**), a network of accessible visitor paths installed to connect various structures and features in the landscape (completed by 2006, see 2006 aerial**, Figure 39**), 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 House (both completed by 2004, see 2004 aerial, **Figure 38**). 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 (**Figure 28**). The Park has also replanted some young fruit trees (plums, fig) 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.



Figure 28 *View from former Pecan Grove looking south towards main house, date unknown, family photo. (CARI)*

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 connecting the historic residential core to the agricultural landscape, the limewashing of all outbuildings in 2019-2020, the replacement of the main house gallery/porch in 2020, and ongoing remediation (started in 2019) of farm-era arsenic contamination at the dipping vat site and East and West

Pigeonniers, which at last site visit, were surrounded by orange safety fencing (**Figure 65**). In 2020, Hurricane Laura damaged the corn crib, wagon shed, and a number of trees. The park has recently completed preliminary planning studies for new visitor trails and a wayside plan to be implemented over the next 2-3 years; park management currently awaits the findings and recommendations of this report to further guide them in these efforts. The park also plans to replicate and replace a historic "Oakland Plantation" sign that existed along the riverbank near the store within the next year.

As of 2021, many of the GMP's Phase 2 recommendations have yet to be realized, including the construction of a new maintenance facility offsite or in the Development Management Area, and the development of a joint Regional Visitor Center to house Park administrative functions. As a result, maintenance activities and parking still occupy much of the small fragment of agricultural land contained within park boundaries near the Seed House and gin stand area, and staff parking occupies a visually prominent area near the Doctor's and Tenant Houses and Hwy 494.

The 2004 Period Plan represents Oakland at the beginning of the twenty-first century, after the end of Prud'homme ownership and during the early years of NPS management and stewardship (**Figure 51**).

Aerial Photos & Period Plans for Oakland

The following section includes a chronologically arranged sequence of aerial photographs dating from 1941 to 2020 (**Figures 29-46**), depicting both broad- and finer-scale changes to the landscape at Oakland over the second half of the twentieth century and up to present. Many of these aerials are referenced in the text,and serve as important documentation of changes to land use, occupancy, cover, boundary edges, and circulation/ drive alignments during the twentieth century. They were especially informative about incremental alterations near the southern end of current park property, especially the landscapes surrounding the Overseer's House, Tenant Houses and Seed House/Gin site. The aerials are followed by Period Plans that were developed to accompany the Site History, providing snapshots of key features of the landscape for the years 1880, 1920, 1960, and 2004 based on primary reference documents (historic surveys, maps, aerials). The 1860 Period Plan from Firth and Turner's Phase 1 CLR is also reproduced here for reference purposes.

1
2



Figure 29 *1941 Aerial (LSU)*

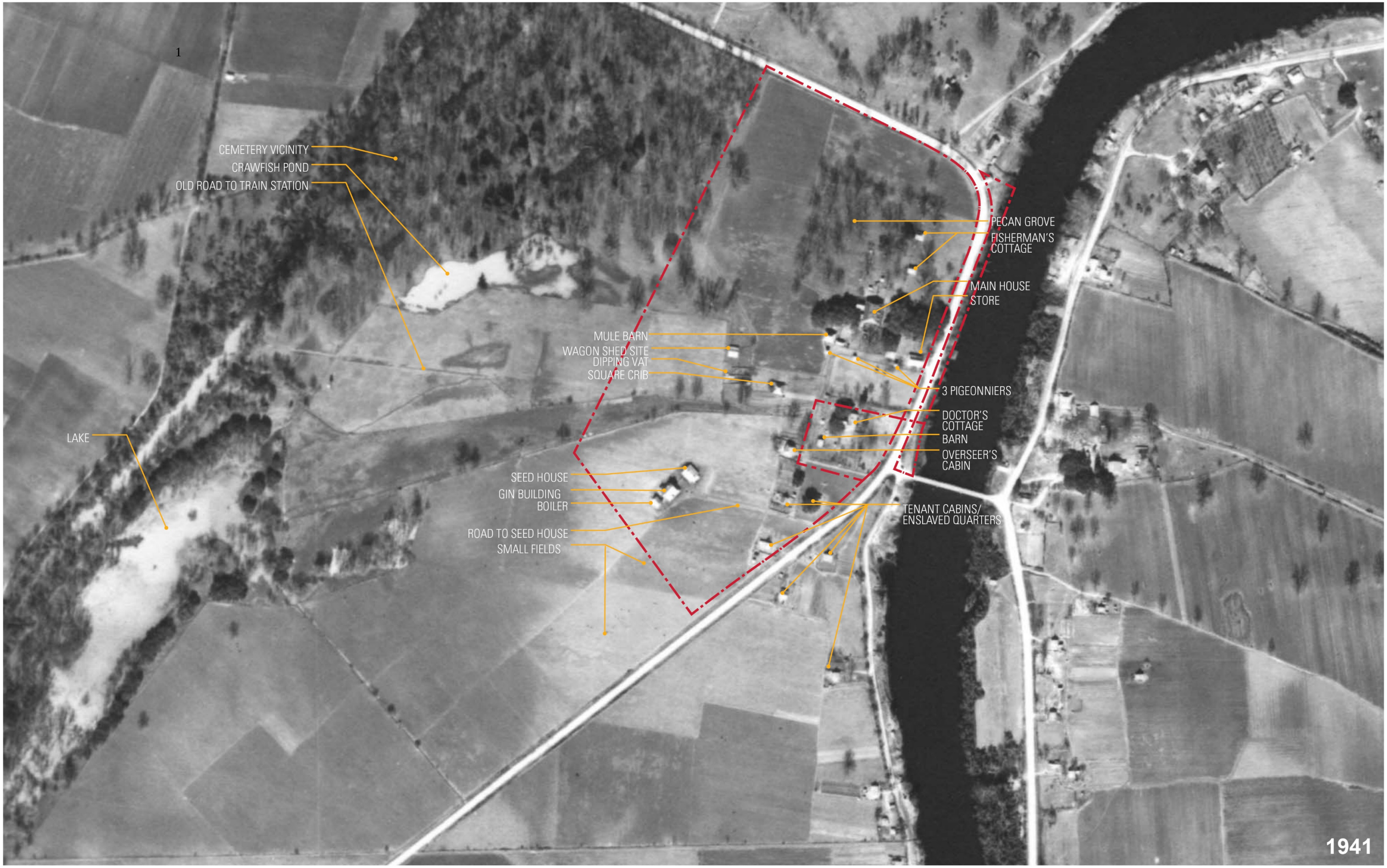

CEMETERY VICINITY
CRAWFISH POND
OLD ROAD TO TRAIN STATION
LAKE
SEED HOUSE
GIN BUILDING
BOILER
ROAD TO SEED HOUSE
SMALL FIELDS
MULE BARN
WAGON SHED SITE
DIPPING VAT
SQUARE CRIB
PECAN GROVE
FISHERMAN'S COTTAGE
MAIN HOUSE
STORE
3 PIGEONNIERS
DOCTOR'S COTTAGE
BARN
OVERSEER'S CABIN
TENANT CABINS/ ENSLAVED QUARTERS
1941



Figure 30 *1950 Aerial (LSU)*

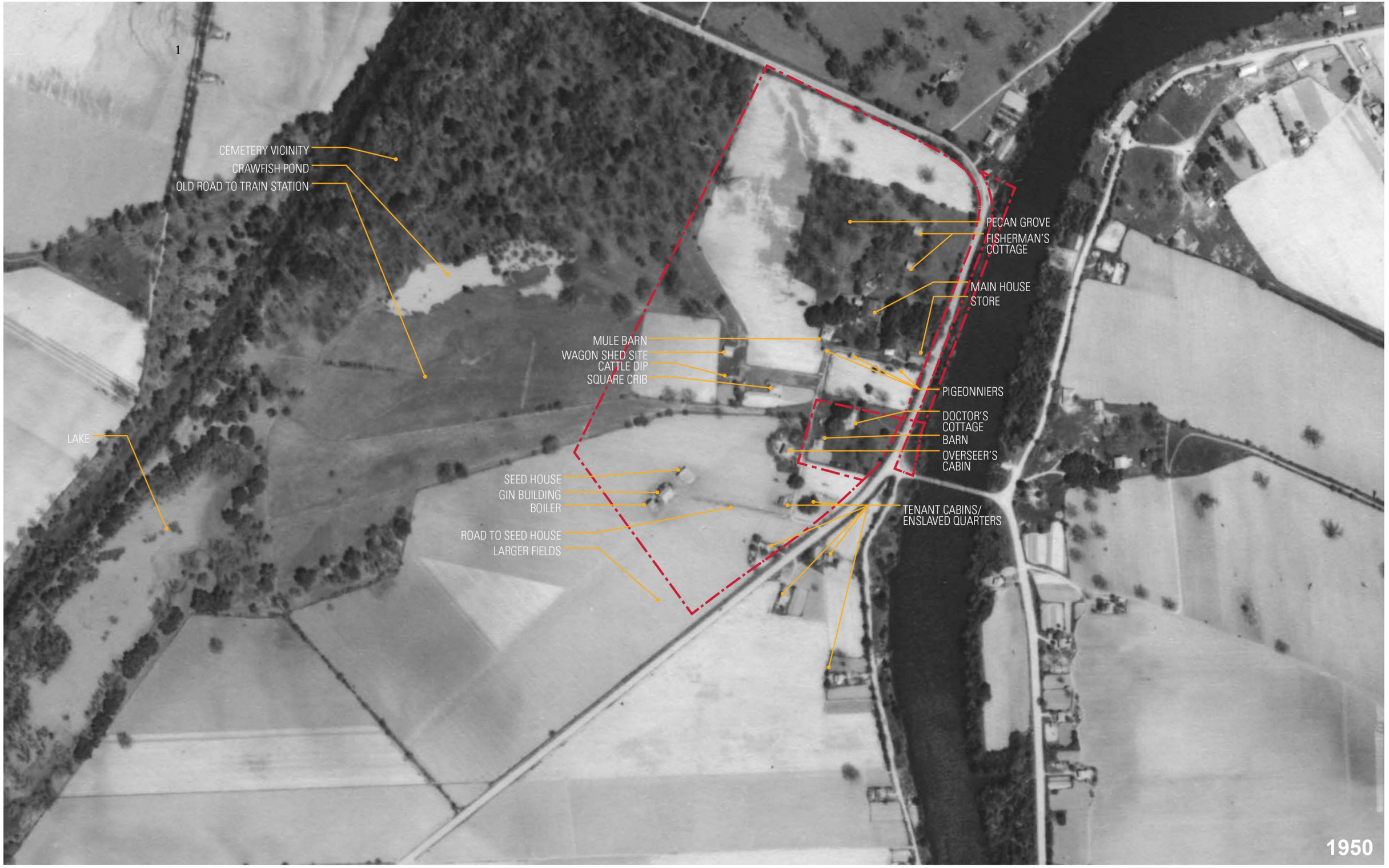
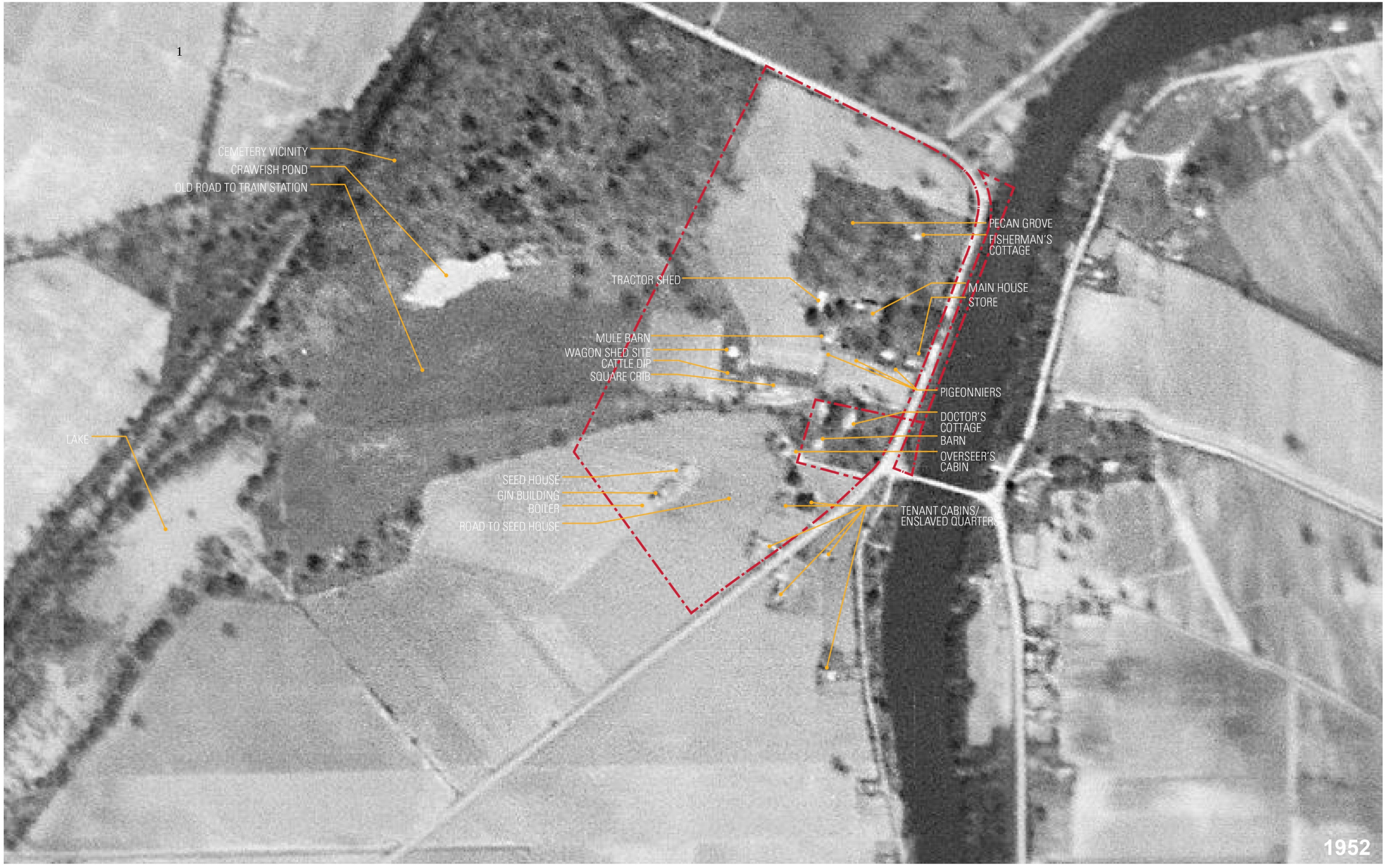
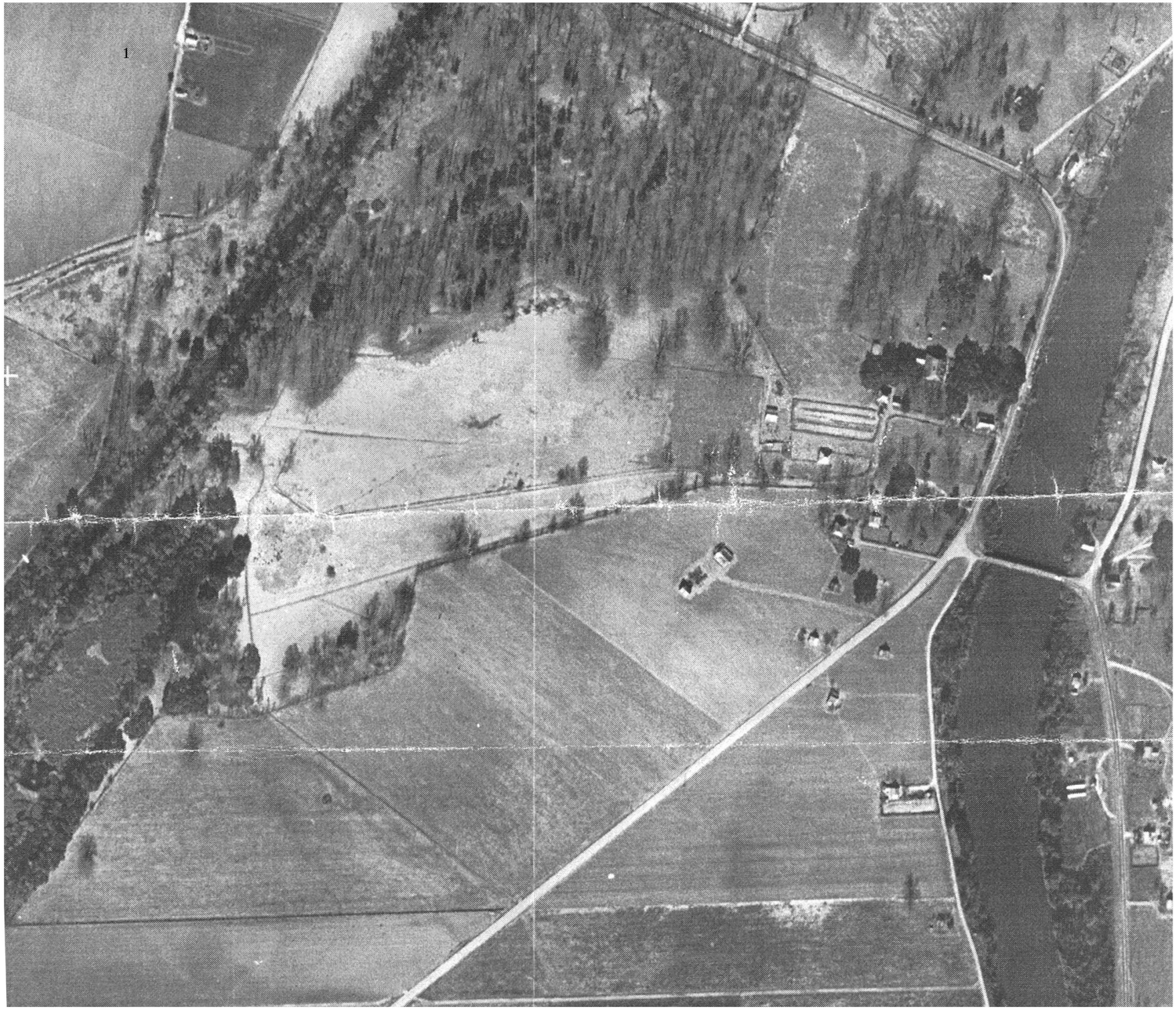

CEMETERY VICINITY
CRAWFISH POND
OLD ROAD TO TRAIN STATION
LAKE
MULE BARN
WAGON SHED SITE
CATTLE DIP
SQUARE CRIB
SEED HOUSE
GIN BUILDING
BOILER
ROAD TO SEED HOUSE
LARGER FIELDS
PECAN GROVE
FISHERMAN'S COTTAGE
MAIN HOUSE
STORE
PIGEONNIERS
DOCTOR'S COTTAGE
BARN
OVERSEER'S CABIN
TENANT CABINS/ ENSLAVED QUARTERS
1950



Figure 31 *1952 Aerial (USGS)*


CEMETERY VICINITY
CRAWFISH POND
OLD ROAD TO TRAIN STATION
LAKE
PECAN GROVE
FISHERMAN'S COTTAGE
TRACTOR SHED
MAIN HOUSE
STORE
MULE BARN
WAGON SHED SITE
CATTLE DIP
SQUARE CRIB
PIGEONNIERS
DOCTOR'S COTTAGE
BARN
OVERSEER'S CABIN
SEED HOUSE
GIN BUILDING
BOILER
ROAD TO SEED HOUSE
TENANT CABINS/ ENSLAVED QUARTERS
1952



1958

Figure 32 *1958 Aerial (CARI)*

1


CEMETERY VICINITY
CRAWFISH POND
OLD ROAD TO TRAIN STATION
LAKE
TRACTOR SHED
MULE BARN
WAGON SHED SITE
CATTLE DIP
SQUARE CRIB
SEED HOUSE
GIN BUILDING SITE
BOILER
ROAD TO SEED HOUSE
NEW FIELD PATH
PECAN GROVE
FISHERMAN'S COTTAGE
MAIN HOUSE
STORE
PIGEONNIERS
DOCTOR'S COTTAGE
BARN
OVERSEER'S CABIN
TENANT CABINS/ ENSLAVED QUARTERS

1958



Figure 33 *1966 Aerial (LSU)*

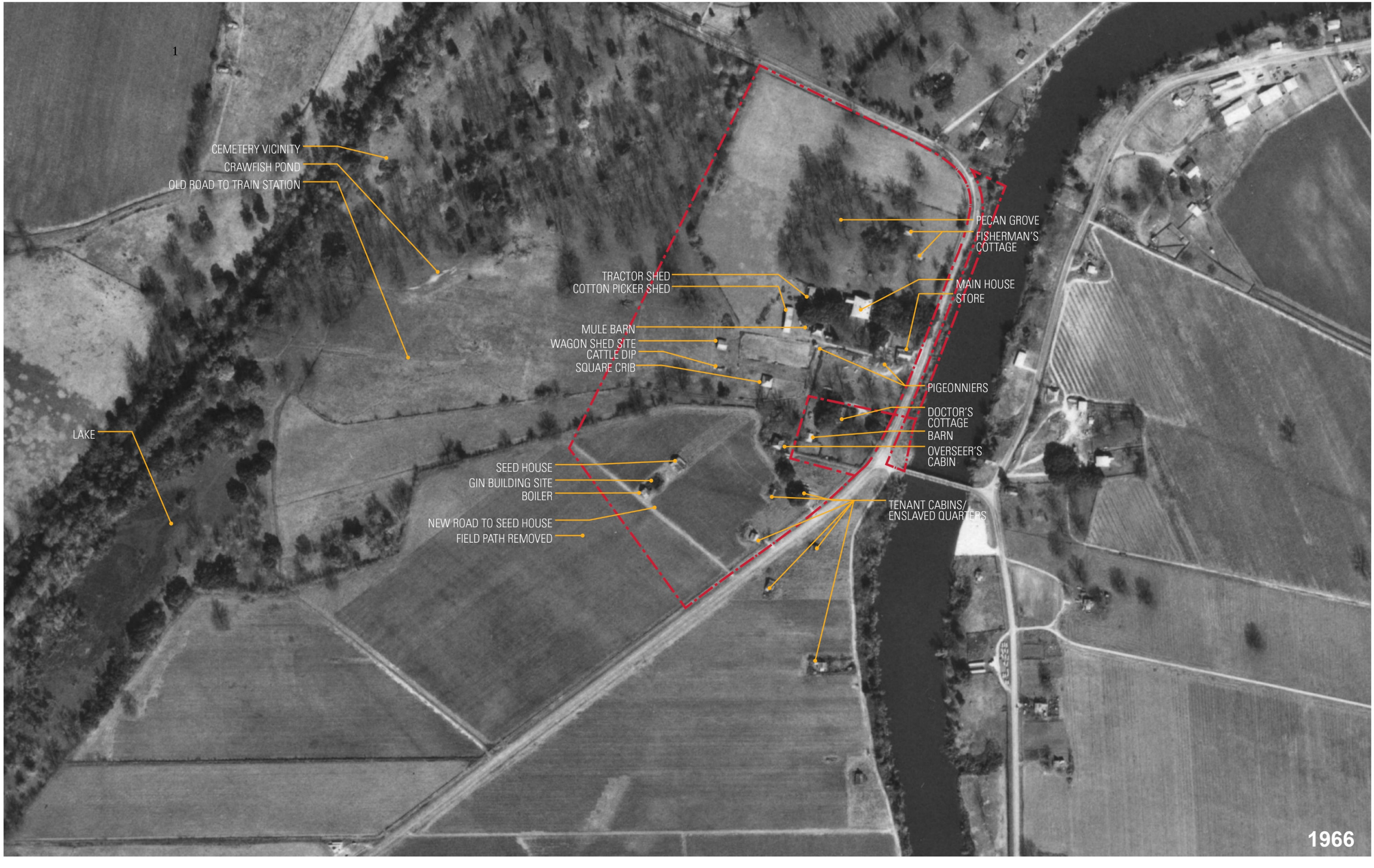
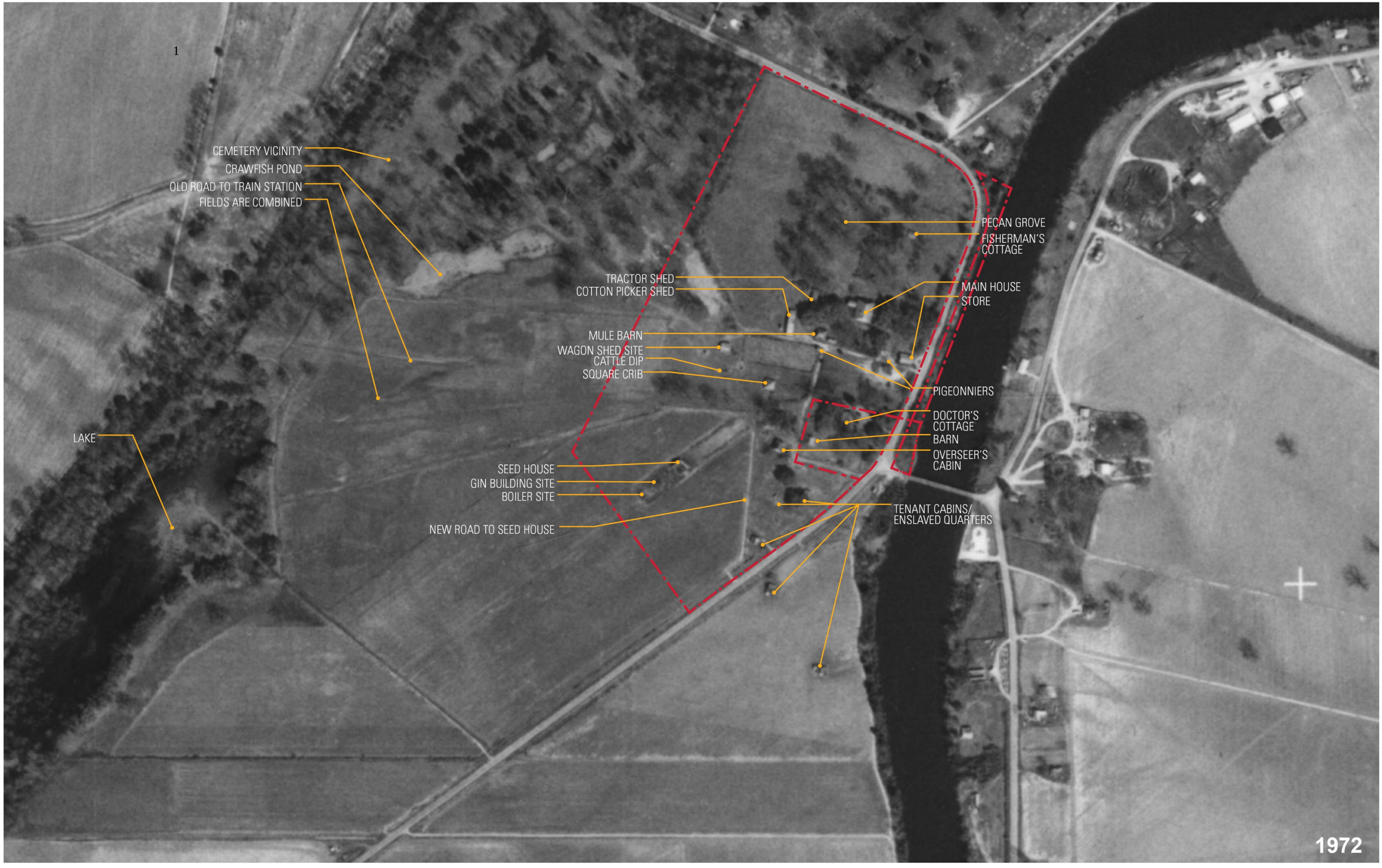

CEMETERY VICINITY
CRAWFISH POND
OLD ROAD TO TRAIN STATION
LAKE
SEED HOUSE
GIN BUILDING SITE
BOILER
NEW ROAD TO SEED HOUSE
FIELD PATH REMOVED
TRACTOR SHED
COTTON PICKER SHED
MULE BARN
WAGON SHED SITE
CATTLE DIP
SQUARE CRIB
PECAN GROVE
FISHERMAN'S COTTAGE
MAIN HOUSE
STORE
PIGEONNIERS
DOCTOR'S COTTAGE
BARN
OVERSEER'S CABIN
TENANT CABINS/ ENSLAVED QUARTERS
1966



Figure 34 *1972 Aerial (LSU)*


CEMETERY VICINITY
CRAWFISH POND
OLD ROAD TO TRAIN STATION
FIELDS ARE COMBINED
LAKE
TRACTOR SHED
COTTON PICKER SHED
MULE BARN
WAGON SHED SITE
CATTLE DIP
SQUARE CRIB
SEED HOUSE
GIN BUILDING SITE
BOILER SITE
NEW ROAD TO SEED HOUSE
PECAN GROVE
FISHERMAN'S COTTAGE
MAIN HOUSE
STORE
PIGEONNIERS
DOCTOR'S COTTAGE
BARN
OVERSEER'S CABIN
TENANT CABINS/ ENSLAVED QUARTERS
1972

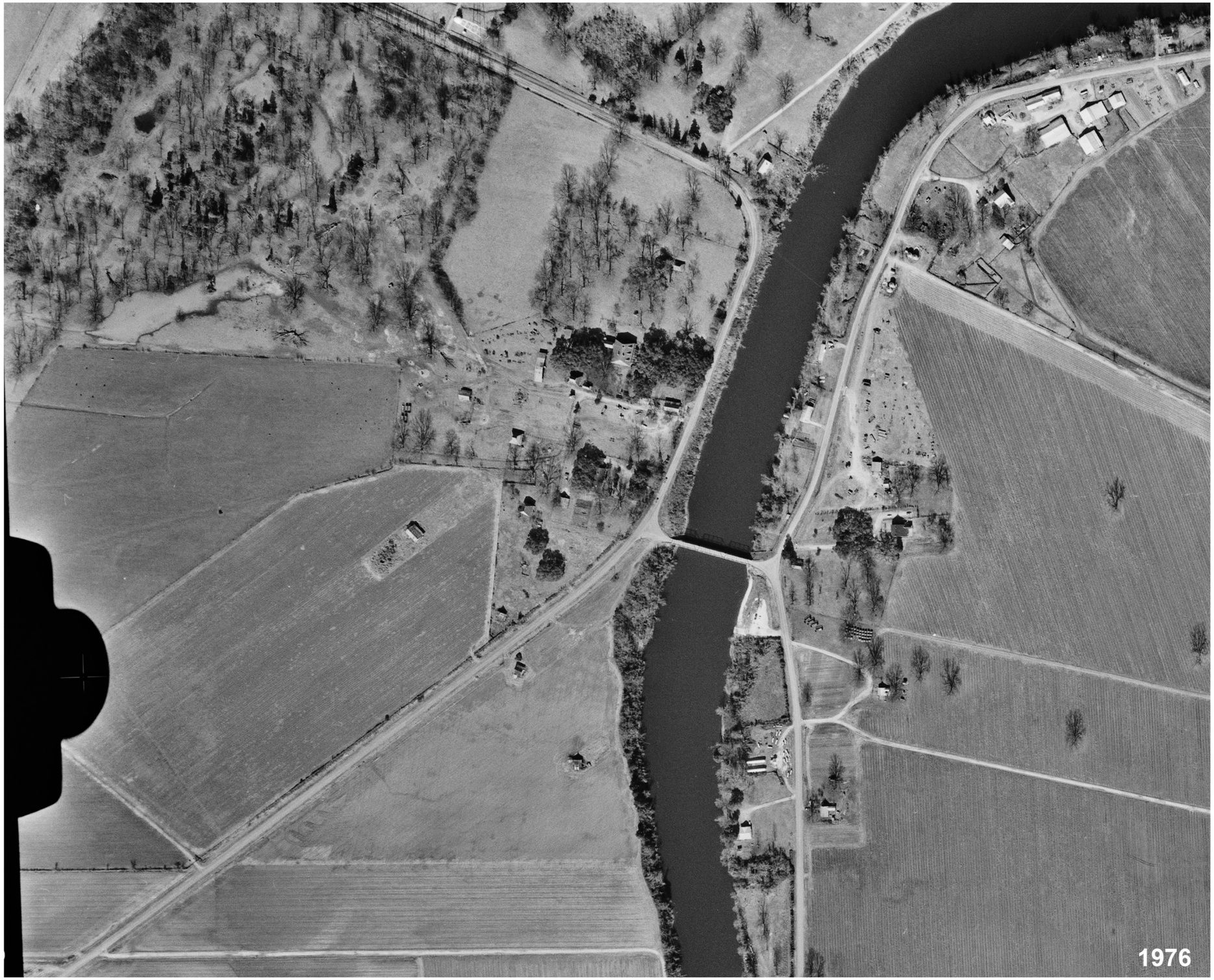


Figure 35 *1976 Aerial (USGS)*

1

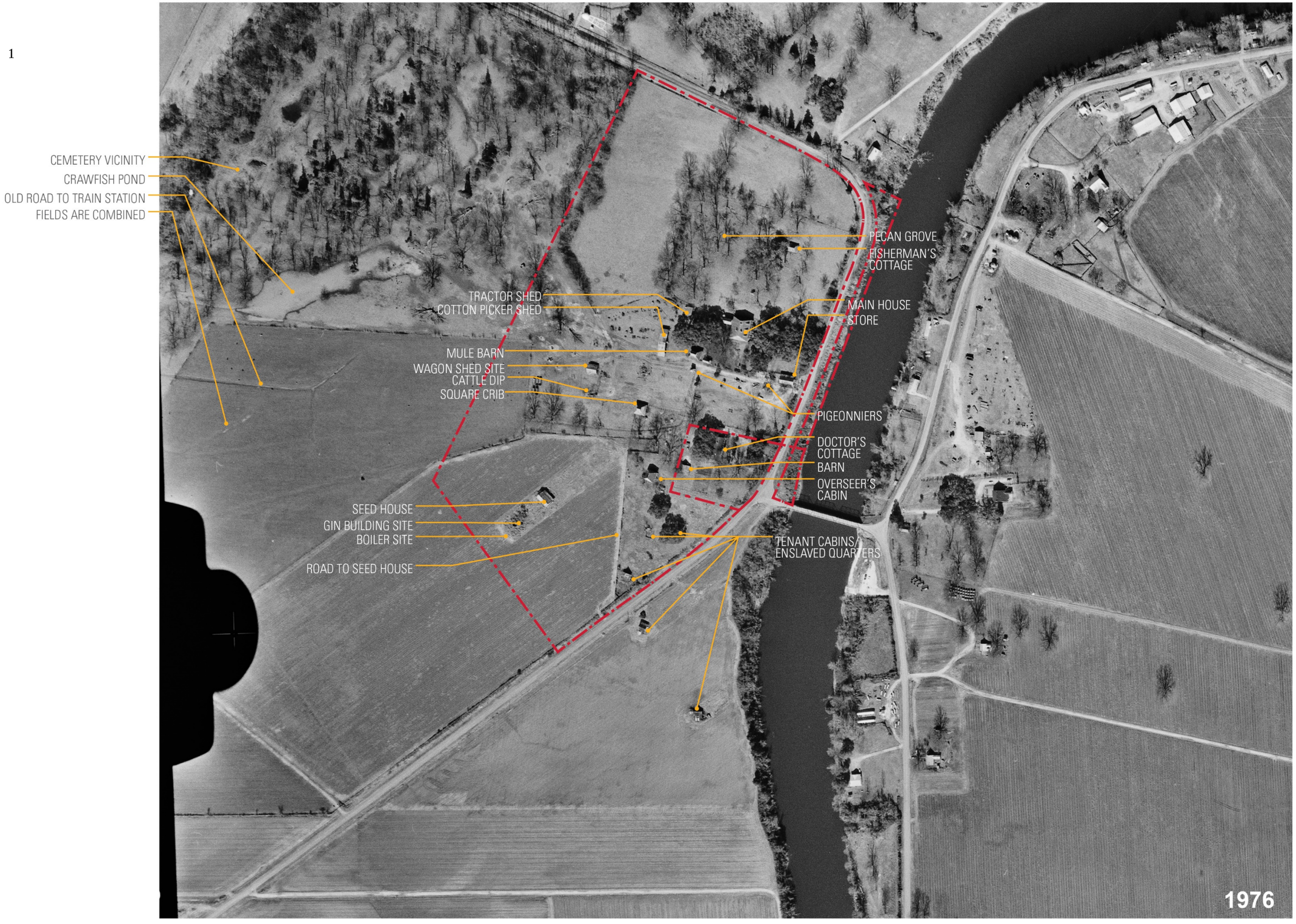

CEMETERY VICINITY
CRAWFISH POND
OLD ROAD TO TRAIN STATION
FIELDS ARE COMBINED
PECAN GROVE
FISHERMAN'S COTTAGE
TRACTOR SHED
COTTON PICKER SHED
MAIN HOUSE
STORE
MULE BARN
WAGON SHED SITE
CATTLE DIP
SQUARE CRIB
PIGEONNIERS
DOCTOR'S COTTAGE
BARN
OVERSEER'S CABIN
SEED HOUSE
GIN BUILDING SITE
BOILER SITE
ROAD TO SEED HOUSE
TENANT CABINS/ ENSLAVED QUARTERS
1976



Figure 36 *1980 Aerial (CARI)*


CEMETERY VICINITY
CRAWFISH POND
NEW ROAD/FENCE
OLD ROAD TO TRAIN STATION
FIELDS ARE COMBINED
LAKE
TRACTOR SHED
COTTON PICKER SHED
MULE BARN
WAGON SHED SITE
CATTLE DIP
SQUARE CRIB
SEED HOUSE
GIN BUILDING SITE
BOILER SITE
SINGLE FIELD
NEW ROAD ACROSS RIVER
ROAD TO SEED HOUSE
PECAN GROVE
FISHERMAN'S COTTAGE
MAIN HOUSE
STORE
PIGEONNIERS
DOCTOR'S COTTAGE
BARN
OVERSEER'S CABIN
TENANT CABINS/ ENSLAVED QUARTERS
LA. 494
1980

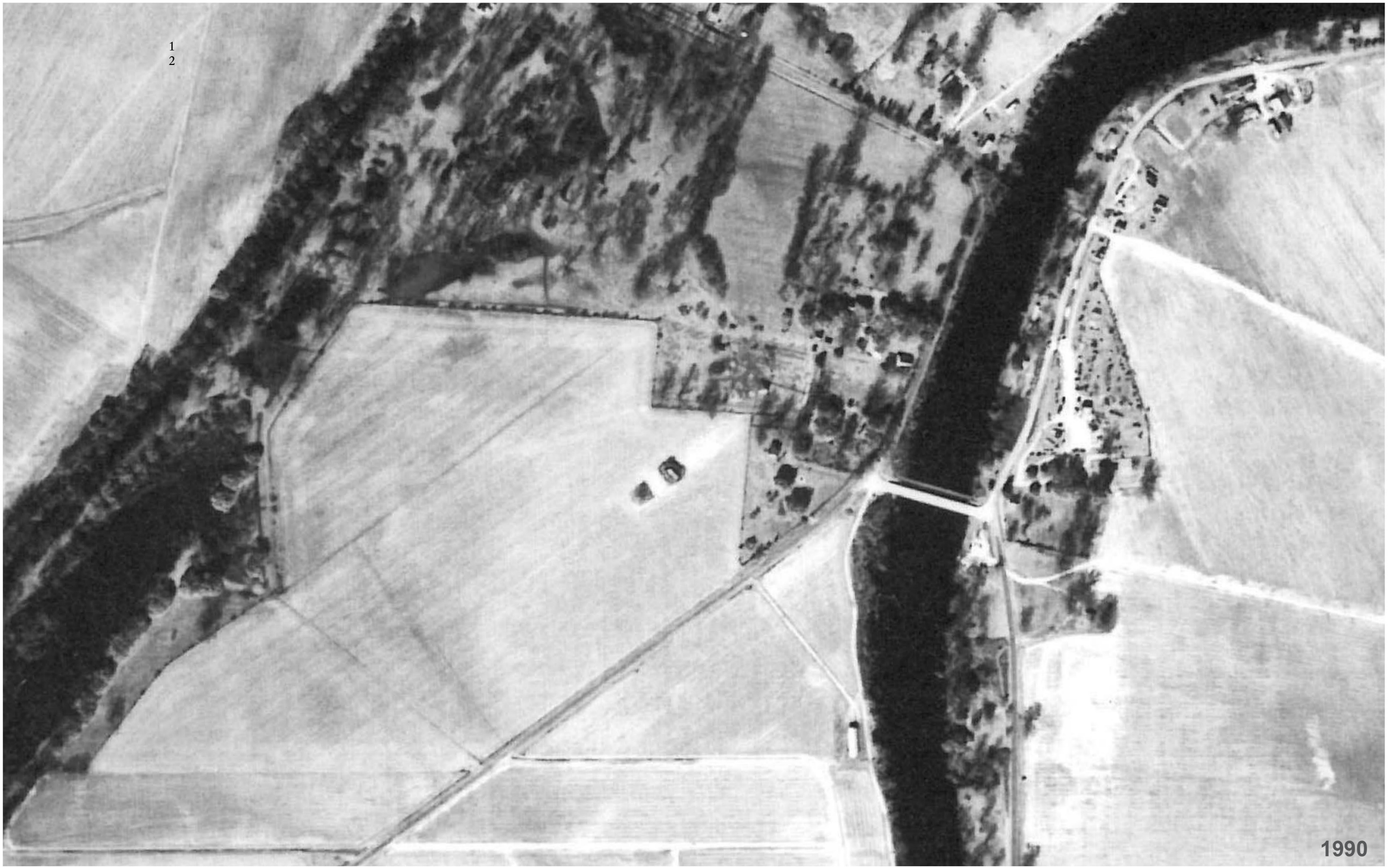


Figure 37 *1990 Aerial (CARI).*


CEMETERY VICINITY
CRAWFISH POND
ROAD/FENCE
OLD ROAD TO TRAIN STATION
FIELDS ARE COMBINED
LAKE
TRACTOR SHED
COTTON PICKER SHED
MULE BARN
WAGON SHED SITE
CATTLE DIP
SQUARE CRIB
SEED HOUSE
GIN BUILDING SITE
BOILER SITE
NEW BRIDGE ACROSS RIVER
ROAD TO SEED HOUSE
PECAN GROVE
FISHERMAN'S COTTAGE
MAIN HOUSE
STORE
PIGEONNIERS
DOCTOR'S COTTAGE
BARN
OVERSEER'S CABIN
TENANT CABINS/ ENSLAVED QUARTERS
1990



2004

Figure 38 *2004 Aerial (Google)*


CEMETERY VICINITY
CRAWFISH POND
HEDGEROW
OLD ROAD TO TRAIN STATION
FIELDS ARE COMBINED
LAKE
NEW ENTRANCE + PARKING
TRACTOR SHED
COTTON PICKER SHED
NEW ENTRANCE PAVILION
MULE BARN
WAGON SHED SITE
CATTLE DIP
SQUARE CRIB
NPS CIRCULATION + STRUCTURES
SEED HOUSE
GIN BUILDING SITE
BOILER SITE
BRIDGE ACROSS RIVER
ROAD TO SEED HOUSE
PECAN GROVE
FISHERMAN'S COTTAGE
MAIN HOUSE
STORE
PIGEONNIERS
DOCTOR'S COTTAGE
BARN
OVERSEER'S CABIN
TENANT CABINS/ ENSLAVED QUARTERS

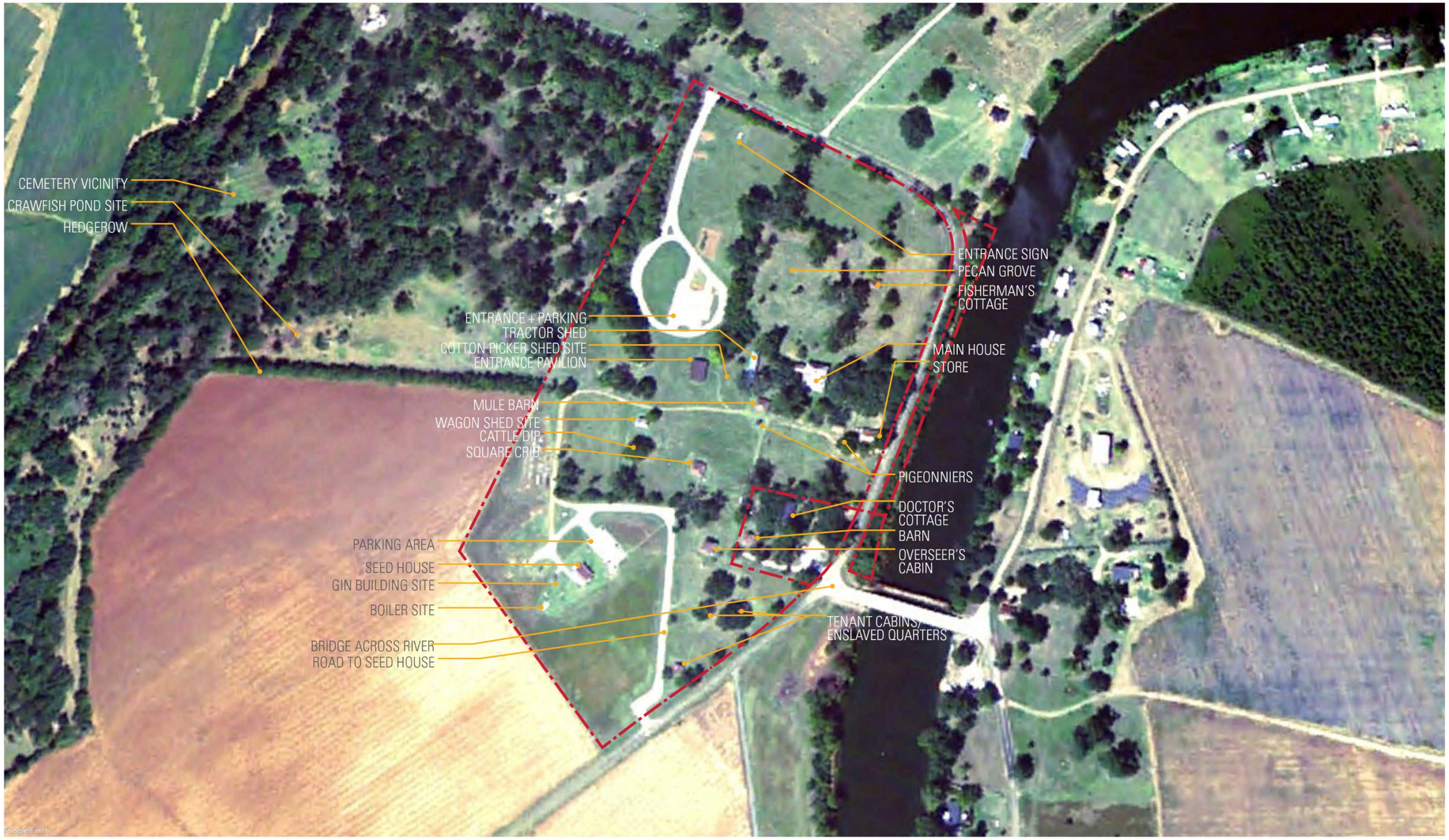
2004



2006

Figure 39 *2006 Aerial (LSU)*

1


CEMETERY VICINITY
CRAWFISH POND SITE
HEDGEROW
ENTRANCE + PARKING
TRACTOR SHED
COTTON PICKER SHED SITE
ENTRANCE PAVILION
MULE BARN
WAGON SHED SITE
CATTLE DIP
SQUARE CRIB
PARKING AREA
SEED HOUSE
GIN BUILDING SITE
BOILER SITE
BRIDGE ACROSS RIVER
ROAD TO SEED HOUSE
ENTRANCE SIGN
PECAN GROVE
FISHERMAN'S COTTAGE
MAIN HOUSE
STORE
PIGEONNIERS
DOCTOR'S COTTAGE
BARN
OVERSEER'S CABIN
TENANT CABINS/ ENSLAVED QUARTERS
Google Earth

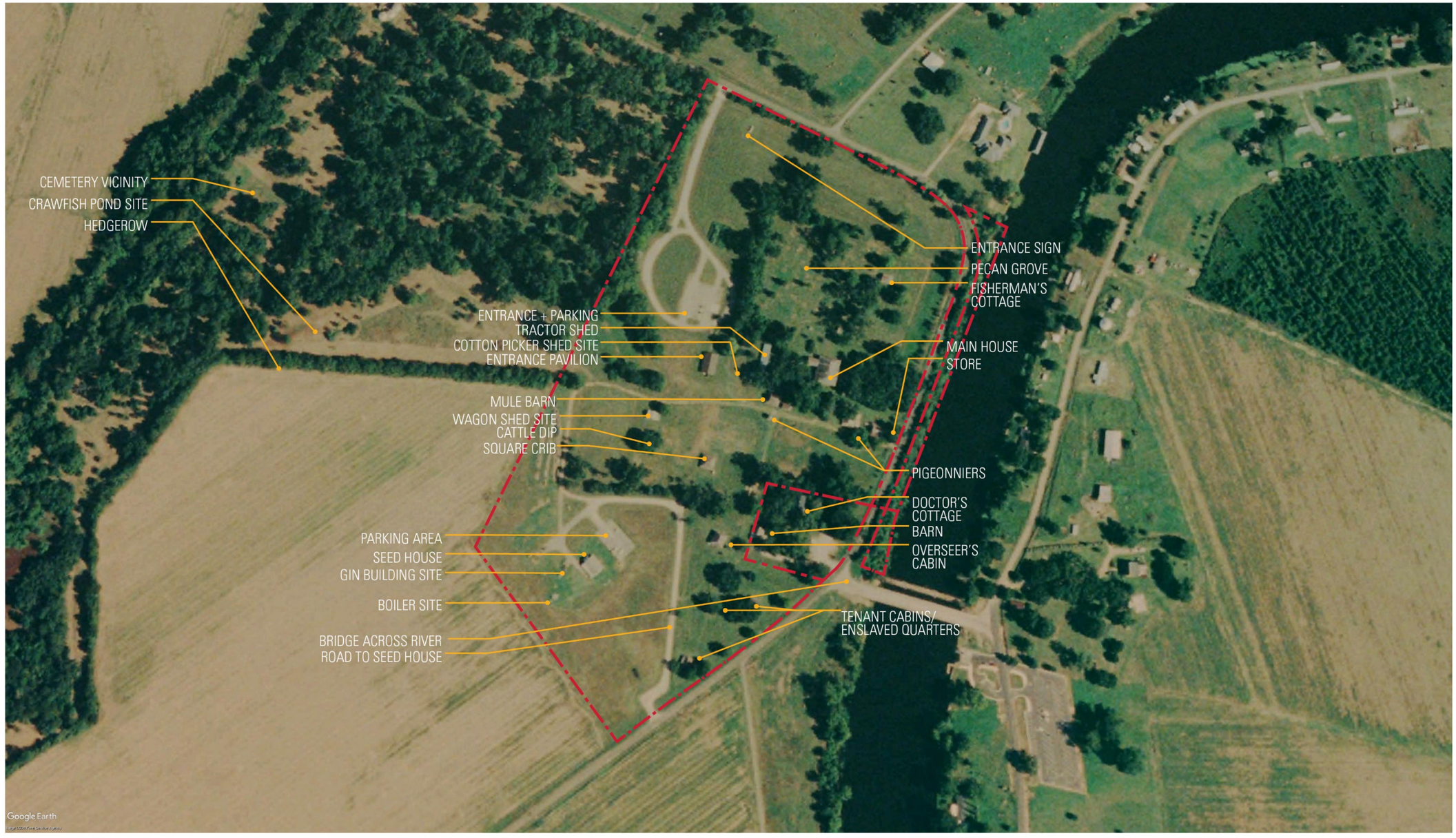
2006



2007

Figure 40 *2007 Aerial (Google)*

1


CEMETERY VICINITY
CRAWFISH POND SITE
HEDGEROW
ENTRANCE + PARKING
TRACTOR SHED
COTTON PICKER SHED SITE
ENTRANCE PAVILION
MULE BARN
WAGON SHED SITE
CATTLE DIP
SQUARE CRIB
PARKING AREA
SEED HOUSE
GIN BUILDING SITE
BOILER SITE
BRIDGE ACROSS RIVER
ROAD TO SEED HOUSE
ENTRANCE SIGN
PECAN GROVE
FISHERMAN'S COTTAGE
MAIN HOUSE
STORE
PIGEONNIERS
DOCTOR'S COTTAGE
BARN
OVERSEER'S CABIN
TENANT CABINS/ ENSLAVED QUARTERS
Google Earth

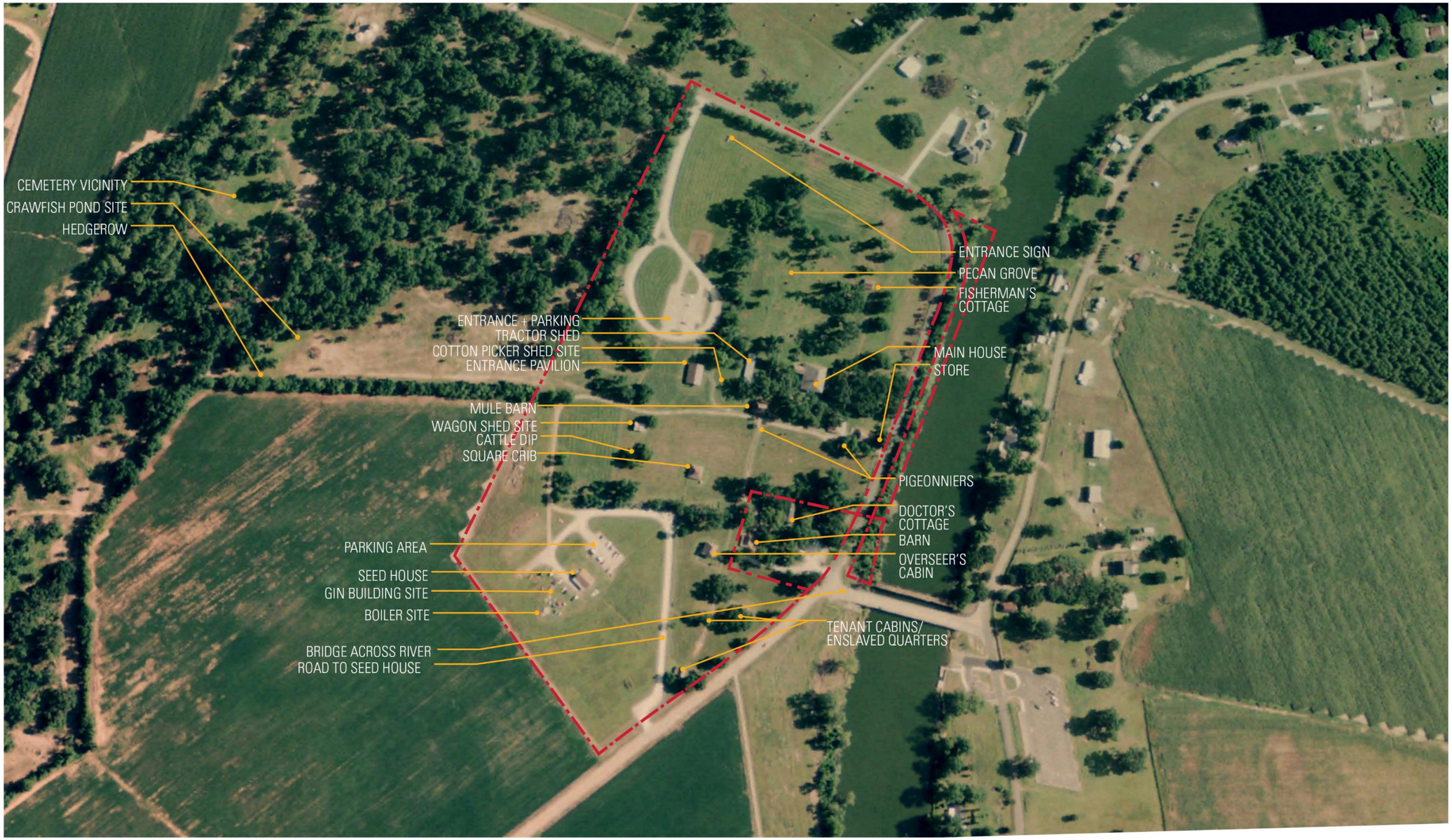
2007



2009

Figure 41 *2009 Aerial (Google)37*

1


CEMETERY VICINITY
CRAWFISH POND SITE
HEDGEROW
ENTRANCE + PARKING
TRACTOR SHED
COTTON PICKER SHED SITE
ENTRANCE PAVILION
MULE BARN
WAGON SHED SITE
CATTLE DIP
SQUARE CRIB
PARKING AREA
SEED HOUSE
GIN BUILDING SITE
BOILER SITE
BRIDGE ACROSS RIVER
ROAD TO SEED HOUSE
ENTRANCE SIGN
PECAN GROVE
FISHERMAN'S COTTAGE
MAIN HOUSE
STORE
PIGEONNIERS
DOCTOR'S COTTAGE
BARN
OVERSEER'S CABIN
TENANT CABINS/ ENSLAVED QUARTERS

2009



2010

Figure 42 *2010 Aerial (Google*

1


CEMETERY VICINITY
CRAWFISH POND SITE
HEDGEROW
ENTRANCE + PARKING
TRACTOR SHED
COTTON PICKER SHED SITE
ENTRANCE PAVILION
MULE BARN
WAGON SHED SITE
CATTLE DIP
SQUARE CRIB
PARKING AREA
SEED HOUSE
GIN BUILDING SITE
BOILER SITE
BRIDGE ACROSS RIVER
ROAD TO SEED HOUSE
ENTRANCE SIGN
PECAN GROVE
FISHERMAN'S COTTAGE
MAIN HOUSE
STORE
PIGEONNIERS
DOCTOR'S COTTAGE
BARN
OVERSEER'S CABIN
TENANT CABINS/ ENSLAVED QUARTERS
Google Earth

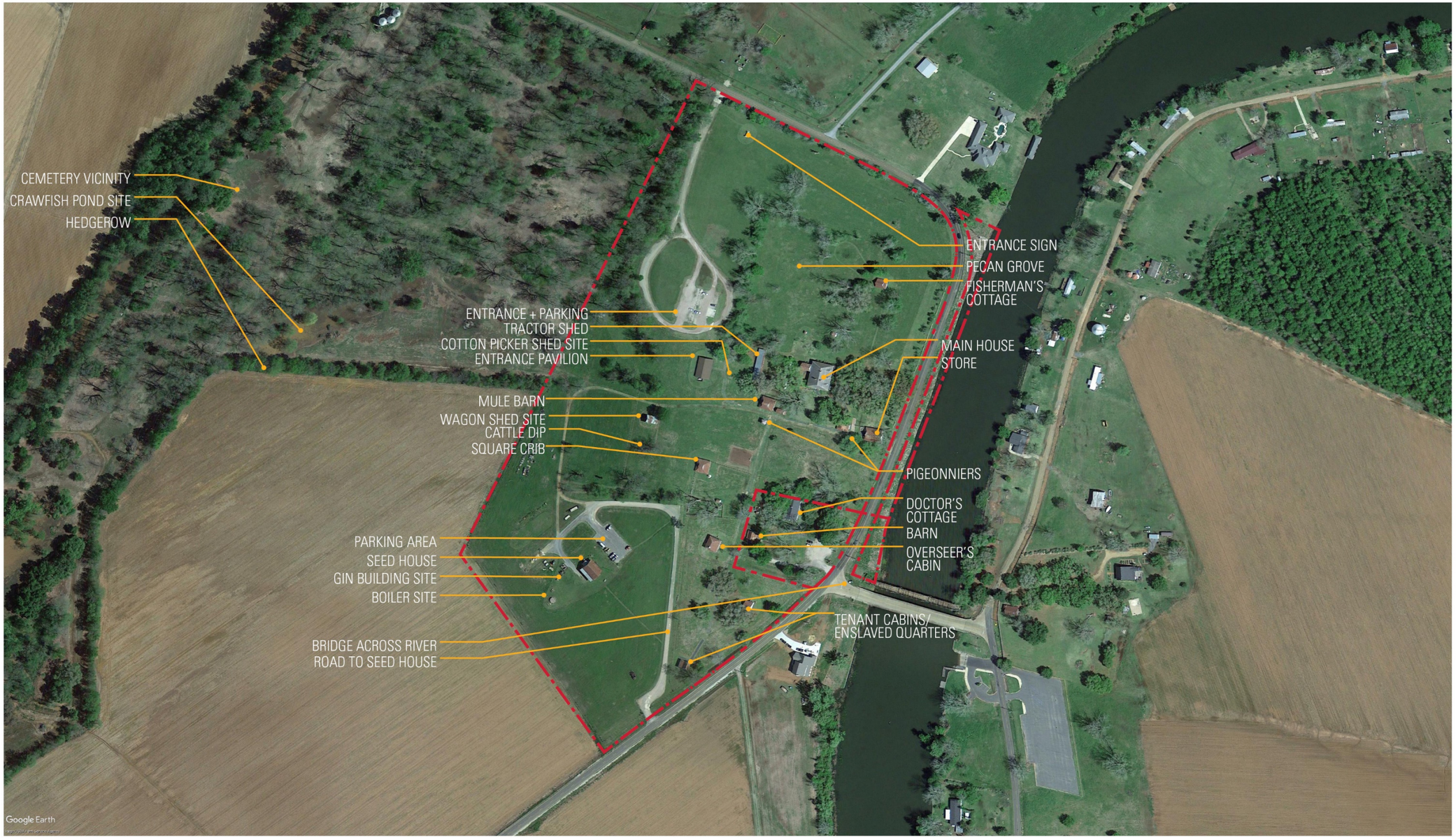
2010



2013

Figure 43 *2013 Aerial (Google)*

1


CEMETERY VICINITY
CRAWFISH POND SITE
HEDGEROW
ENTRANCE + PARKING
TRACTOR SHED
COTTON PICKER SHED SITE
ENTRANCE PAVILION
MULE BARN
WAGON SHED SITE
CATTLE DIP
SQUARE CRIB
PARKING AREA
SEED HOUSE
GIN BUILDING SITE
BOILER SITE
BRIDGE ACROSS RIVER
ROAD TO SEED HOUSE
ENTRANCE SIGN
PECAN GROVE
FISHERMAN'S COTTAGE
MAIN HOUSE
STORE
PIGEONNIERS
DOCTOR'S COTTAGE
BARN
OVERSEER'S CABIN
TENANT CABINS/ ENSLAVED QUARTERS
Google Earth

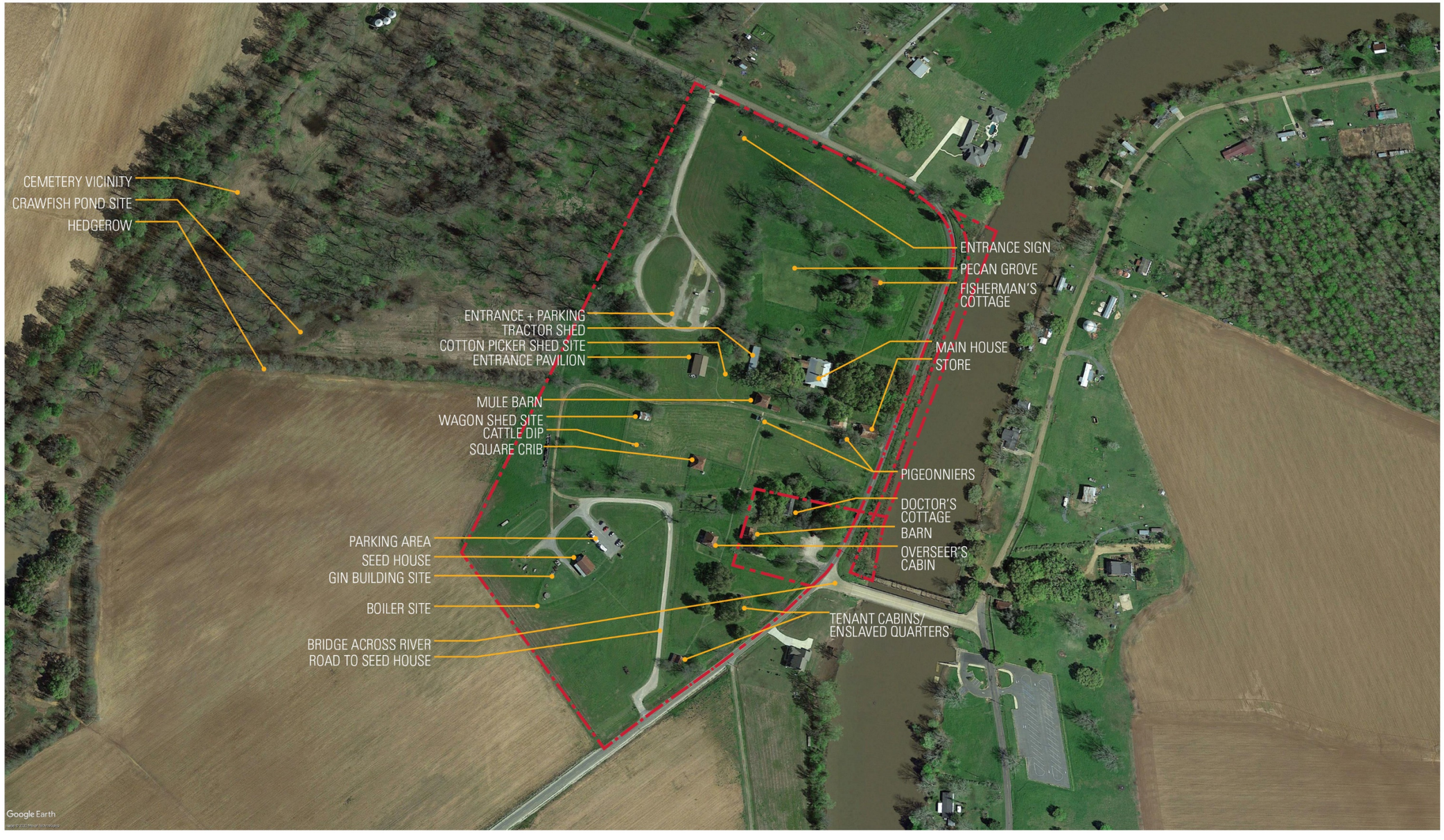
2013



2016

Figure 44 *2016 Aerial (Google)*

1


CEMETERY VICINITY
CRAWFISH POND SITE
HEDGEROW
ENTRANCE + PARKING
TRACTOR SHED
COTTON PICKER SHED SITE
ENTRANCE PAVILION
MULE BARN
WAGON SHED SITE
CATTLE DIP
SQUARE CRIB
PARKING AREA
SEED HOUSE
GIN BUILDING SITE
BOILER SITE
BRIDGE ACROSS RIVER
ROAD TO SEED HOUSE
ENTRANCE SIGN
PECAN GROVE
FISHERMAN'S COTTAGE
MAIN HOUSE
STORE
PIGEONNIERS
DOCTOR'S COTTAGE
BARN
OVERSEER'S CABIN
TENANT CABINS/ ENSLAVED QUARTERS
Google Earth

2016

1
2



2017

Figure 45 *2017 Aerial (USGS)*

1

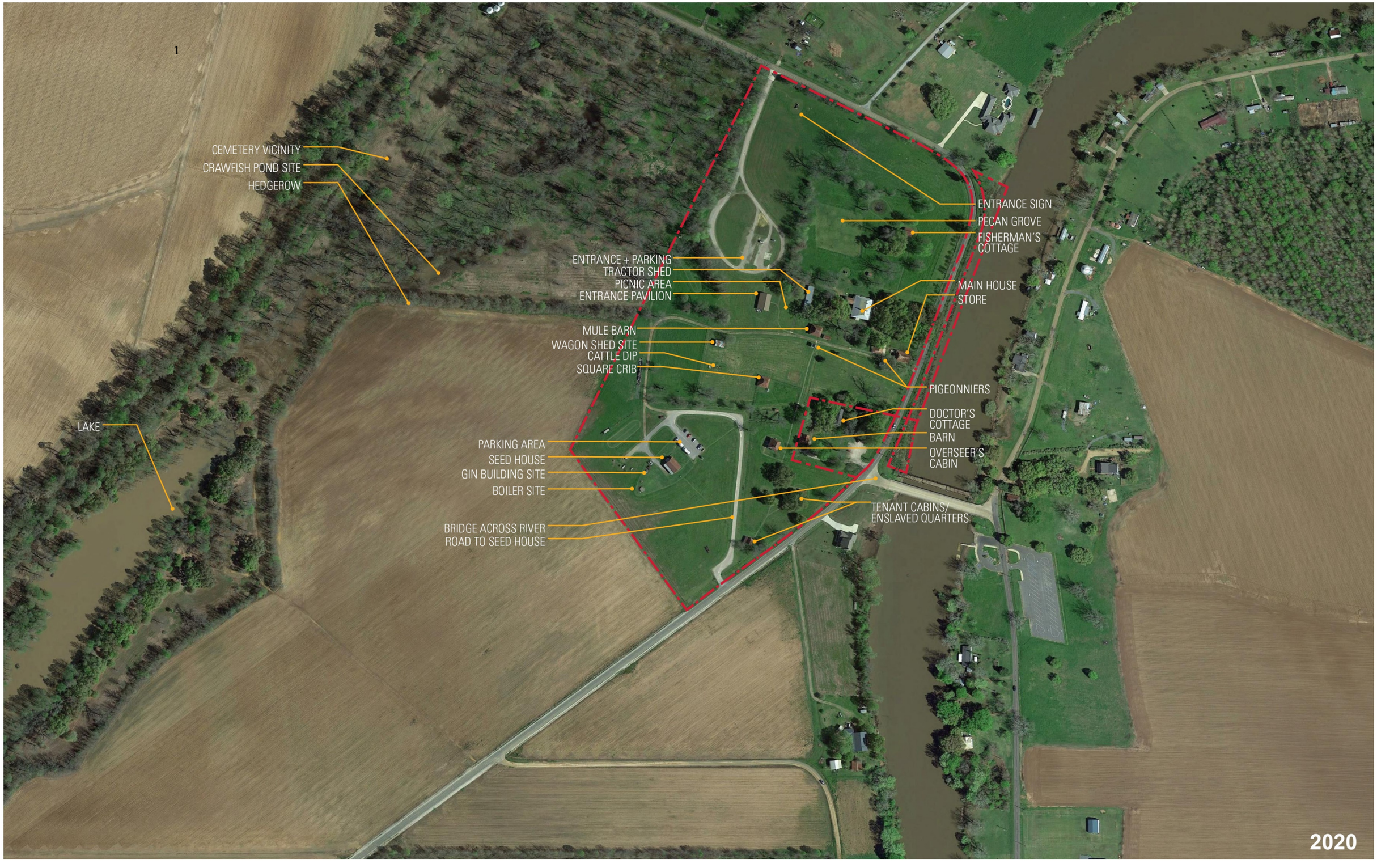

CEMETERY VICINITY
CRAWFISH POND SITE
HEDGEROW
LAKE
ENTRANCE + PARKING
TRACTOR SHED
PICNIC AREA
ENTRANCE PAVILION
MULE BARN
WAGON SHED SITE
CATTLE DIP
SQUARE CRIB
PARKING AREA
SEED HOUSE
GIN BUILDING SITE
BOILER SITE
BRIDGE ACROSS RIVER
ROAD TO SEED HOUSE
ENTRANCE SIGN
PECAN GROVE
FISHERMAN'S COTTAGE
MAIN HOUSE
STORE
PIGEONNIERS
DOCTOR'S COTTAGE
BARN
OVERSEER'S CABIN
TENANT CABINS/ ENSLAVED QUARTERS

2017

1
2



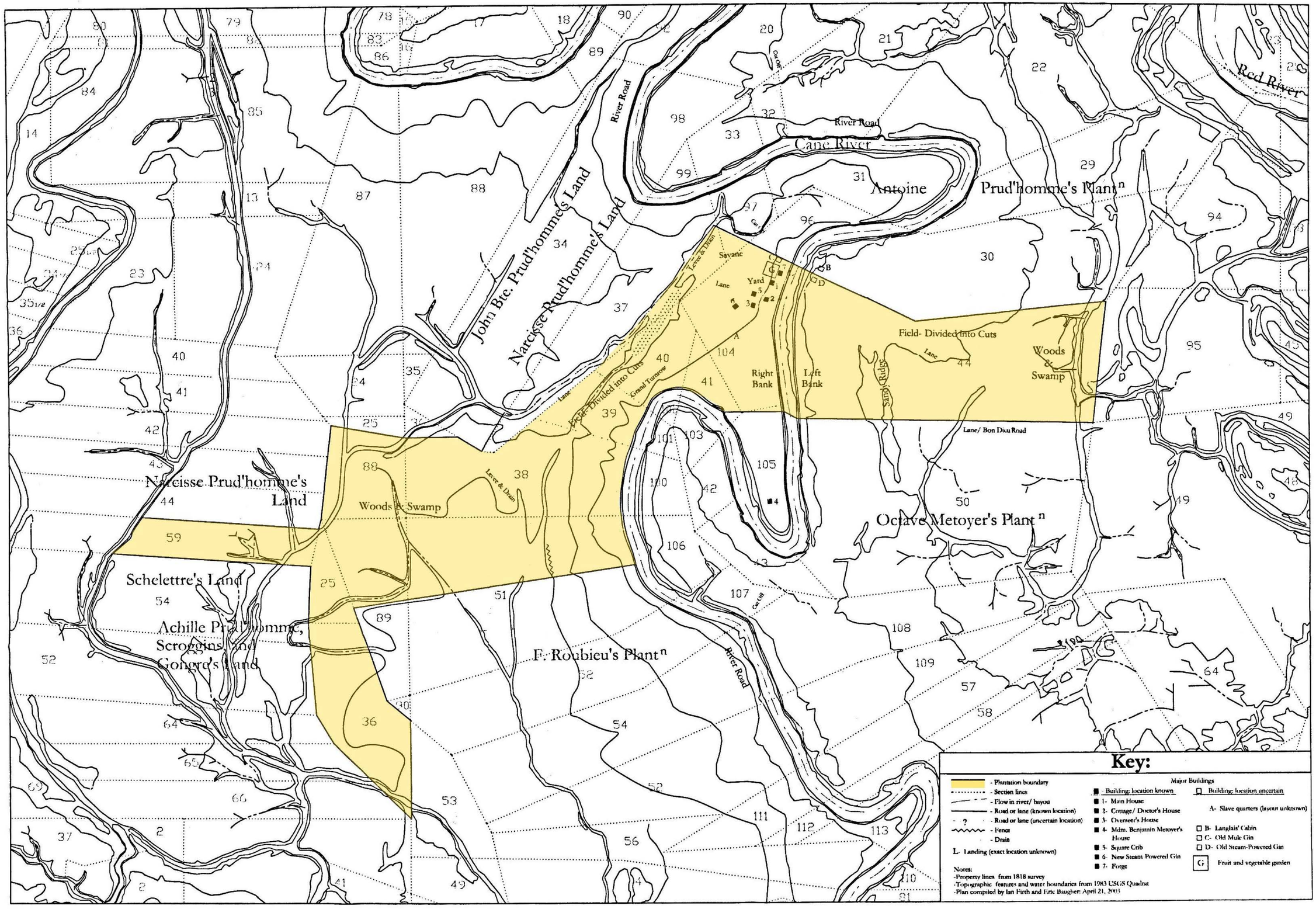
Figure 46 *2020 Aerial (Google)*


CEMETERY VICINITY
CRAWFISH POND SITE
HEDGEROW
LAKE
ENTRANCE + PARKING
TRACTOR SHED
PICNIC AREA
ENTRANCE PAVILION
MULE BARN
WAGON SHED SITE
CATTLE DIP
SQUARE CRIB
PARKING AREA
SEED HOUSE
GIN BUILDING SITE
BOILER SITE
BRIDGE ACROSS RIVER
ROAD TO SEED HOUSE
ENTRANCE SIGN
PECAN GROVE
FISHERMAN'S COTTAGE
MAIN HOUSE
STORE
PIGEONNIERS
DOCTOR'S COTTAGE
BARN
OVERSEER'S CABIN
TENANT CABINS/ ENSLAVED QUARTERS
2020

Phanor Prud'homme's Plantation
Period Plan Circa 1860

Natchitoches Parish, LA

Cane River Creole N.H.P.: Oakland Cultural Landscape Report



North

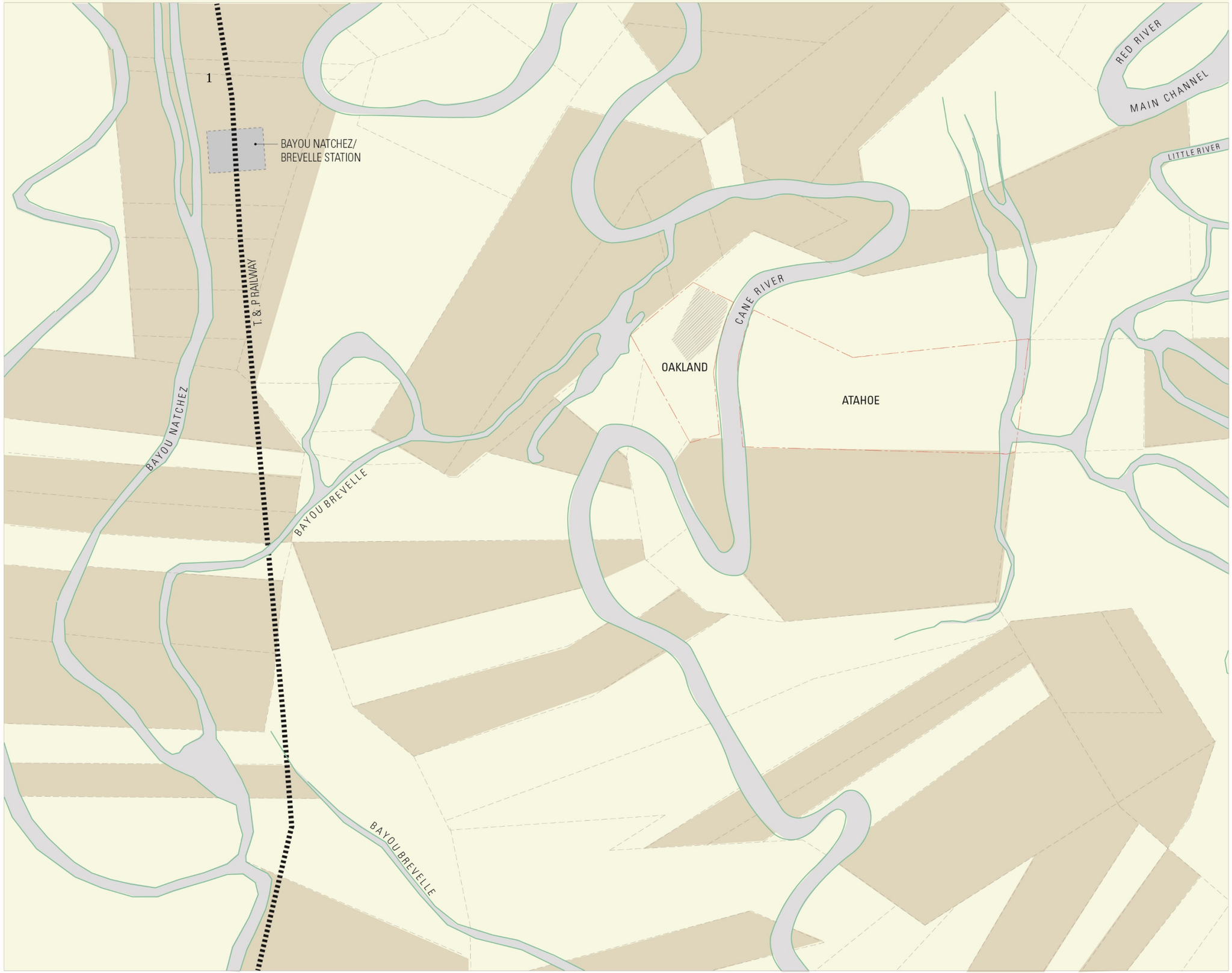
0' 100' 200'

Scale: 1"= 100'

Contour Interval= 5 feet

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

1



Oakland and Atahoe Plantations Circa 1880s

Cultural Landscape Report
Oakland Plantation

Cane River Creole National Historical Park
Natchitoches Parish, LA

Legend

- 1880 Site Boundary
- Current Site Boundary
- Lot Lines
- River
- Railway
- Fields

Notes

1. In 1875, Alphonse I donated R.O.W across property to T. &. P. Railway.

Figure 48 *Period Plan and enlargement (following page), circa 1880, of Oakland and Atahoe Plantations, circa 1880 showing land ownership on both sides of river after property was divided. (STA)*

Sources

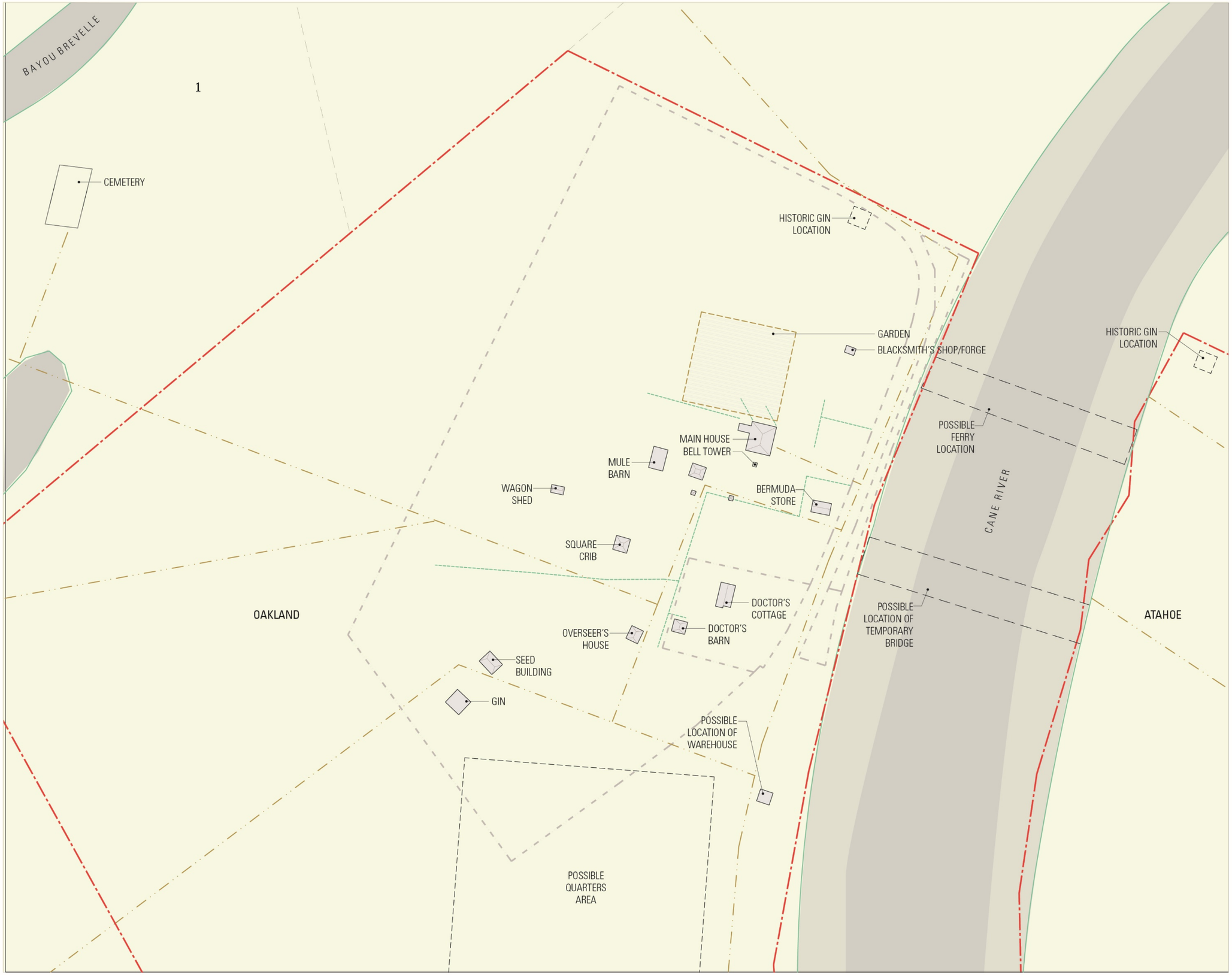
1. Part of Natchitoches map, circa 1890s, CARI.
2. Firth, Ian and Eric Baugher, "Phanor Prud'homme's Plantation: Period Plan Circa 1860", *Cane River Creole N.H.P.: Oakland Cultural Landscape Report,* 2003.
3. Mark H. Took, P.L.S, "Section 104, T8N—R6W," Nowlin & Associates, Consulting Engineers & Land Surveyors Natchitoches, LA, CARI, 2010.

Drawn By

Ashley Braquet, ArcMap, LandFX CAD and Illustrator, 2020

suzanne turner ASSOCIATES
LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE

1



Oakland and Atahoe Plantations Circa 1880s Enlargement

Cultural Landscape Report
Oakland Plantation

Cane River Creole National Historical Park
Natchitoches Parish, LA

Legend

- 1880 Site Boundary
- Current Site Boundary
- Lot Lines
- River
- Temporary Bridge
- Buildings
- Dirt Path (Conjecture)
- Field
- Garden
- Drainage

Notes

1. The steam gin located in the NE corner of property in 1860 plan burned around 1865. A new gin and press was constructed, circa 1866, southwest of the main house.
2. In 1878, Alphonse I purchased the rights to operate a ferry across Cane River. The exact location of the ferry, dock, and warehouse is unkonwn, however passage across the river was hand drawn on the 1890s map and is referenced here.
3. The enslaved constructed flood controll levees along Bayou Brevelle in the 1860s.
4. The enslaved cemetery was established by 1853.
5. The mule barn demarkated here burned in 1927.
6. Drainage based on current drainage.

Sources

1. Part of Natchitoches map, circa 1890s, CARI.
2. Firth, Ian and Eric Baugher, "Phanor Prud'homme's Plantation: Period Plan Circa 1860," *Cane River Creole N.H.P.: Oakland Cultural Landscape Report,* 2003.
3. Stephen Drew Wise, "Bankline Stabilization Compliance," SEAC, US DOI, NPS, 2010, CARI.
4. Carrie Mardorf and Ron Bolton, "Oak CLR - EC Redlines," Park correspondence, CARI, February 5, 2021.
5. Mark H. Took, P.L.S, "Section 104, T8N—R6W," Nowlin & Associates, Consulting Engineers & Land Surveyors Natchitoches, LA, CARI, 2010.

Drawn By

Ashley Braquet, ArcMap, LandFX CAD and Illustrator, 2020

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1

Oakland Plantation
Tenant Farming
Circa 1920s

Cultural Landscape Report
Oakland Plantation

Cane River Creole National
Historical Park
Natchitoches Parish, LA

Legend

- 1920 Site Boundary
- Current Site Boundary
- Contours
- River
- Buildings
- Field
- Fences
- Gravel Road
- Dirt Road
- Trees
- Residential Yard
- Agricultural Yard
- Drainage

HISTORIC GIN LOCATION
PECAN GROVE
MINNOW POND
COOKS CABIN
BLACKSMITH'S SHOP/FORGE
CAMP COTTAGE
TENNIS COURT
MAIN HOUSE
BELL TOWER
WAGON SHED
MULE BARN
PIGEONNIERES
CARRIAGE HOUSE
DIPPING VAT
VEGETABLE GARDENS
SQUARE CRIB
PIGEONIERRE
BERMUDA STORE
OVERSEER'S HOUSE
DOCTOR'S COTTAGE
BARN
SEED HOUSE
GIN
VEGETABLE GARDEN
BOILER
TENANT CABINS/ SLAVE QUARTERS
HISTORIC GIN LOCATION
CANE RIVER

Notes

1. The river was dammed in 19xx at the north end near Natchitoches, and to the south of Melrose Plantation. This effectively ended river travel, and all goods came by train thereafter.

Figure 49 *Period Plan circa 1920 (STA)*

Sources

1. Aerial photography, LSU Geography Department,1941.
2. Knight Survey, 1919, CARI.
3. Firth, Ian and Eric Baugher, "Phanor Prud'homme's Plantation: Period Plan Circa 1860", *Cane River Creole N.H.P.: Oakland Cultural Landscape Report*, 2003.
4. Carrie Mardorf and Ron Bolton, "Oak CLR - EC Redlines," Park correspondence, CARI, February 5, 2021.
5. Mark H. Took, P.L.S, "Section 104, T8N—R6W," Nowlin & Associates, Consulting Engineers & Land Surveyors Natchitoches, LA, CARI, 2010.

Drawn By

Ashley Braquet, ArcMap, LandFX CAD and Illustrator, 2020

suzanne turner ASSOCIATES
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1

Oakland Plantation
Mechanization of Agriculture
Circa 1960

Cultural Landscape Report
Oakland Plantation

Cane River Creole National
Historical Park
Natchitoches Parish, LA

Legend

- 1960 Site Boundary
- Site Boundary
- Contours
- River
- Buildings
- Field
- Fences
- Paved Road
- Dirt/Gravel Road
- Trees
- Residential Yard
- Agricultural Yard
- Drainage

Notes

1.

Figure 50 *Period Plan circa 1960. (STA)*

Sources

1. Aerial photography, LSU Geography Department,1966.
2. Carrie Mardorf and Ron Bolton, "Oak CLR - EC Redlines," Park correspondence, CARI, February 5, 2021.
3. Mark H. Took, P.L.S, "Section 104, T8N—R6W," Nowlin & Associates, Consulting Engineers & Land Surveyors Natchitoches, LA, CARI, 2010.

Drawn By

Ashley Braquet, ArcMap, LandFX CAD and Illustrator, 2020

suzanne turner ASSOCIATES
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0 250' 500' N

1



Oakland Plantation
NPS Stewardship
Circa 2004

Cultural Landscape Report
Oakland Plantation

Cane River Creole National
Historical Park
Natchitoches Parish, LA

Legend

- 2000 Site Boundary
- Contours
- River
- Buildings
- Field
- Fences
- Paved Road
- Dirt Road
- Gravel Road
- Trees
- Residential Yard
- Agricultural Yard
- Drainage

Notes

1.

Figure 51 *Period Plan circa 2000. (STA)*

Sources

1. Aerial photography, Google Earth, USDA, 2004.
2. Carrie Mardorf and Ron Bolton, "Oak CLR - EC Redlines," Park correspondence, CARI, February 5, 2021.
Mark H. Took, P.L.S, "Section 104, T8N—R6W," Nowlin & Associates, Consulting Engineers & Land Surveyors Natchitoches, LA, CARI, 2010.

Drawn By

Ashley Braquet, ArcMap, LandFX CAD and Illustrator, 2020

suzanne turner ASSOCIATES
LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE

1
2

CHAPTER 2: EXISTING CONDITIONS

Overview of Organization

In order to maintain a consistent organization within the Existing Conditions, Analysis and Treatment Recommendations sections of this report, and also to simplify the complexity of Oakland's layered landscape as a whole, the author has organized Oakland's existing landscape (the 45 acres owned by the NPS) into four zones (**Figures 55-59**): 1) Visitor Service/Park Entrance Zone, 2) Historic Residential Core, 3) Historic Agricultural Core, and 4) Lakefront Zone.[33] Each Zone will be described in detail, including sub-landscapes or character areas within the historic residential and agricultural zones, through text, photographs, and keyed plans. After description and photographic documentation of the individual zones and character areas, the section concludes with a summary of existing conditions organized by Landscape Characteristic: Natural Systems and Features, Topography, Land Use, Spatial Organization, Views and Vistas, Vegetation, Circulation, Buildings and Structures, and Small-Scale Features.

The Existing Conditions narrative [Phase 2] picks up where the 2002 CLR left off, focusing on contemporary impacts of NPS-era preservation and stabilization efforts, park infrastructural improvements, the installation of new visitor use facilities and services, and on-going and evolving park maintenance efforts, as well as on surrounding changes to context and land use. In that respect, this section serves as an update of the 2002 Existing Conditions and is focused on current Park Service management and cyclic maintenance practices and recent and future preservation and planning initiatives as they impact the landscape. Because the landscape at Oakland now functions (and is managed) as a historic landscape site devoted to visitor use and interpretation, rather than as a functioning agricultural landscape with inhabited residences, the existing conditions narrative is organized from the point of view of a visitor arriving on site.

The narrative and images are organized to highlight the current visitor experience of arriving and moving through the landscape at Oakland, first by car and then on foot: from entrance at the Visitor Service Zone with its Entrance Pavilion (c. 2003) to the rear [west] of the Main House complex, along the established foot paths (c. 2005) to the Farm Lane and east towards the Store and Historic Residential core, circulating around the Main House to the north, rear and south, and then south and west towards the Historic Agricultural Landscape, and finally returning to the Lakefront Zone, a narrow tract between the river embankment and Hwy 494 that preserves the view shed of Cane River Lake, but is not currently accessible by formal pathway or connection.[34] This narrow lakefront zone is treated as a separate entity because it was acquired as two smaller tracts in the original NPS purchase (1997), and is non-contiguous and physically separated from the two larger parcels that make up Oakland's historic core by Hwy 494 and its right-of-way. Obviously, this area offers its own unique management and access challenges, including bank stabilization, volunteer vegetation and view shed management, in addition to visitor-use connectivity. In the future, park management would like to establish a formal trail connection and road crossing to allow

[33] The Visitor Service/Park Entrance Zone corresponds to the Development Management Area designated in the 2001 GMP; the remaining three zones-- Historic Residential Core, Historic Agricultural Core, and Lakefront Zone--comprise the Core Plantation Management and Administrative Adaptive Use Management Areas designated in the GMP [see Fig 27].

[34] In the nineteenth century, Cane River (Lake) was the transportation lifeblood of Oakland's commercial activities and served as the "front door" entrance to the property while the river was still navigable (until early 20th century). However, focus on the river shifted during the course of the twentieth century with the advent of automobiles and an improved network of roads and highways that, even when they parallel the river/lake's edge, as Hwy 494-119 does in front of Oakland today, tend to physically separate riverfront properties from their once contiguous waterfront edge.

visitors to access the lakefront near the bridges at the southern end of the property. This would allow Cane River to become a stronger part of the park's interpretative program and would give visitors physical access and views to the lake and steel-truss bridge (1912). The historic slave/African American cemetery near Bayou Brevelle, on family lands not currently owned by the NPS but within legislatively authorized boundaries, is another feature of significant archeological and interpretive value to Oakland's story identified in the 1997 CLI and 2001 GMP for future land acquisition. Park planning maps show proposed connections to this site to the west of current park boundaries.



Oakland Plantation Existing Conditions Plan 2020

Cultural Landscape Report
Oakland Plantation

Cane River Creole National Historical Park
Natchitoches Parish, LA

Legend

- 2020 Site Boundary
- Contours
- River
- Buildings
- Field
- Net or Barbed Wire Fence
- Picket Fence
- Board or Rail Fence
- Paved Road
- Gravel Road or Path
- Mowed Path
- Trees
- Residential Yard
- Agricultural Yard
- Drainage
- Seasonal Planting

Notes

1.

Figure 52 *Existing Conditions plan (STA)*

Sources

1. Aerial photography, Flash Earth, Microsoft, 2020 and 2017.
2. Carrie Mardorf and Ron Bolton, "Oak CLR - EC Redlines," Park correspondence, CARI, February 5, 2021.
3. Mark H. Took, P.L.S, "Section 104, T8N—R6W," Nowlin & Associates, Consulting Engineers & Land Surveyors Natchitoches, LA, CARI, 2010.

Drawn By

Ashley Braquet, ArcMap, LandFX CAD and Illustrator, 2020

suzanne turner ASSOCIATES
LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE

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Figure 53 *Existing Conditions enlargement of Main House (STA)*

Oakland Plantation
Existing Conditions Plan 2020
Enlargement 01

Cultural Landscape Report
Oakland Plantation

Cane River Creole National
Historical Park
Natchitoches Parish, LA

Legend

- 2020 Site Boundary
- Contours
- River
- Buildings
- Hog/Barbed Wire RR Tie Fence
- Picket Fence
- Board or Rail Fence
- Rubber Mat Path
- Paved Road
- Gravel Road or Path
- Mowed Path
- Trees
- Residential Yard
- Agricultural Yard
- Drainage
- Seasonal Planting

TREE SPECIES
LO - Live Oak (*Quercus virginiana*)
WO - Water Oak (*Quercus nigra*)
PI - Pine (*Pinus sp.*)
PE - Pecan (*Carya illinoinensis*)
CT - Chinese Tallow (*Triadica sebifera*)
CB - Chinaberry (*Melia azedarach*)
HO - Holly (*Ilex sp.*)
CM - Crepemyrtle (*Lagerstromeia indica*)
JJ - Jujube (*Ziziphus jujuba*)
FM - Paper Mulberry (*Broussonetia papyrifera*)
HB - Hackberry (*Celtis occidentalis*)
PL - Plum (*Prunus domestica*)
LC - Locust (*Gleditsia tricanthos*)
JV - Eastern Red Cedar (*Juniperus virginiana*)
JM - Japanese Magnolia (*Magnolia x soulangeana*)
BA - Bois d'arc (*Maclura pomifera*)

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Drawn By

Ashley Braquet, ArcMap, LandFX CAD and Illustrator, 2021.

suzanne turner ASSOCIATES
LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE

1

Oakland Plantation
Existing Conditions Plan 2020
Enlargement 02

Cultural Landscape Report
Oakland Plantation

Cane River Creole National
Historical Park
Natchitoches Parish, LA



Figure 54 *Existing Conditions enlargement at Doctor's Cottage (STA)*

Legend

- 2020 Site Boundary
- Contours
- River
- Buildings
- Hog/Barbed Wire RR Tie Fence
- Picket Fence
- Board or Rail Fence
- Rubber Mat Path
- Paved Road
- Gravel Road or Path
- Mowed Path
- Trees
- Residential Yard
- Agricultural Yard
- Drainage
- Seasonal Planting

TREE SPECIES

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Drawn By

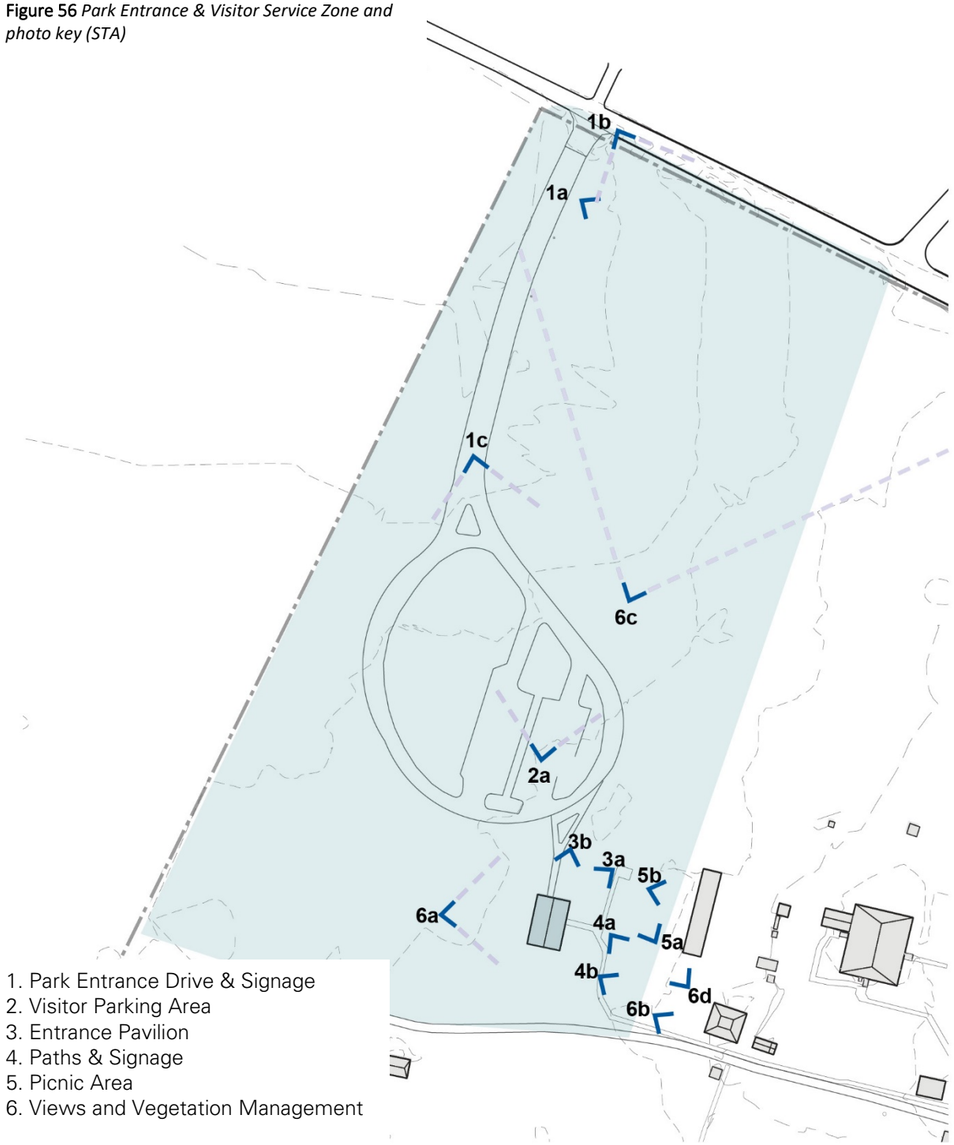
Ashley Braquet, ArcMap, LandFX CAD and Illustrator, 2021.

suzanne turner ASSOCIATES
LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE



Figure 55 *Zone map of Oakland (STA)*

Figure 56 *Park Entrance & Visitor Service Zone and photo key (STA)*



PARK ENTRANCE & VISITOR SERVICE ZONE

1. Park Entrance Drive & Signage
2. Visitor Parking Area
3. Visitor Pavilion
4. Paths & Signage
5. Picnic Area
6. Views and Vegetation Management























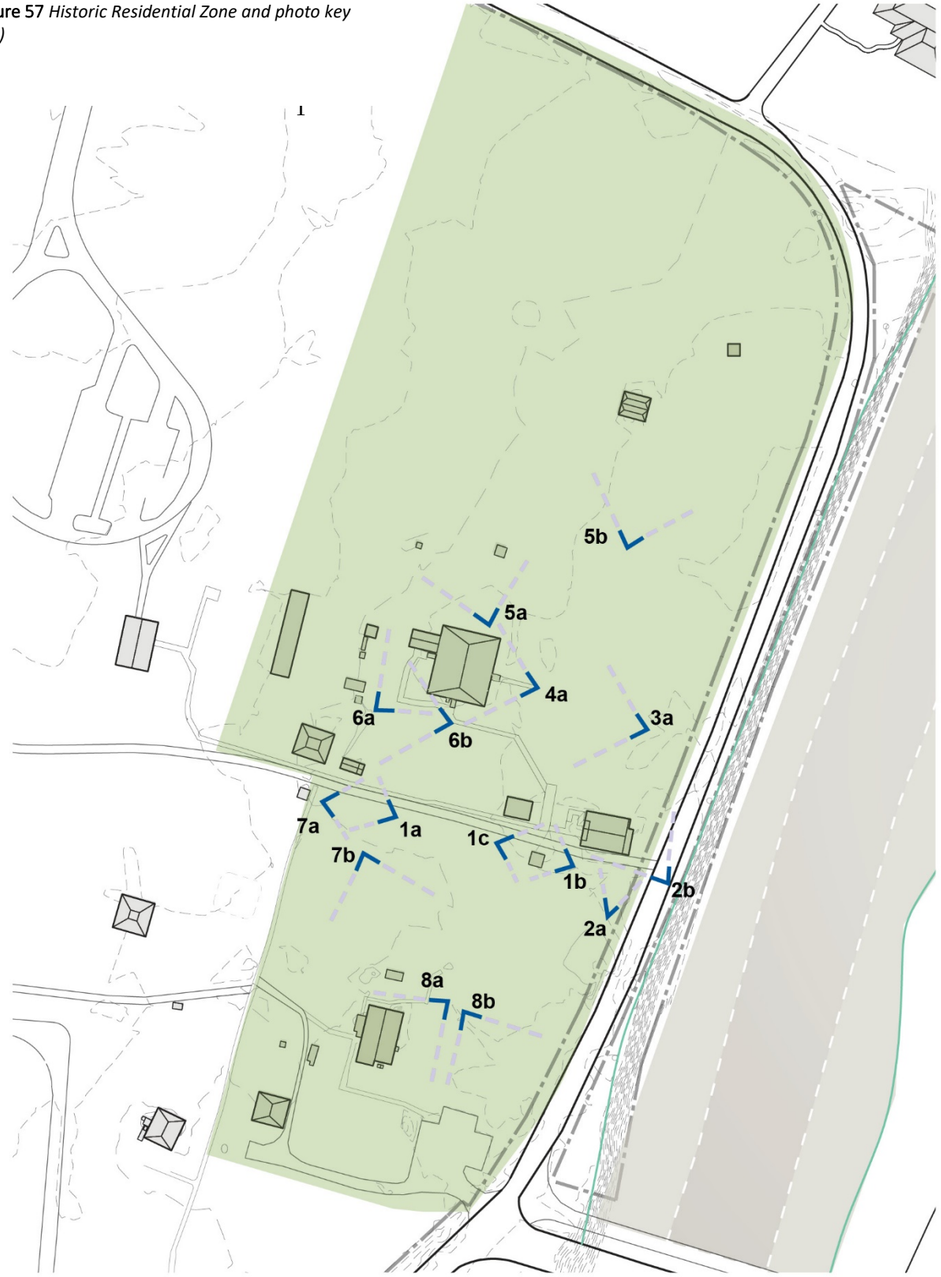






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Figure 57 *Historic Residential Zone and photo key (STA)*



HISTORIC RESIDENTIAL ZONE

1. Farm Lane, Pigeonniers & Outbuildings
2. Store and Lane Entrance
3. Live Oak Allee & Front Lawn
4. Bottle Garden
5. North Meadow (Pasture), Cook's Cabin & Orchard
6. Main House, Rear & Side Yards, and Rear Farm Dependencies
7. South Pasture/Farm Yard
8. Doctor's House, Yard & Dependencies

N

























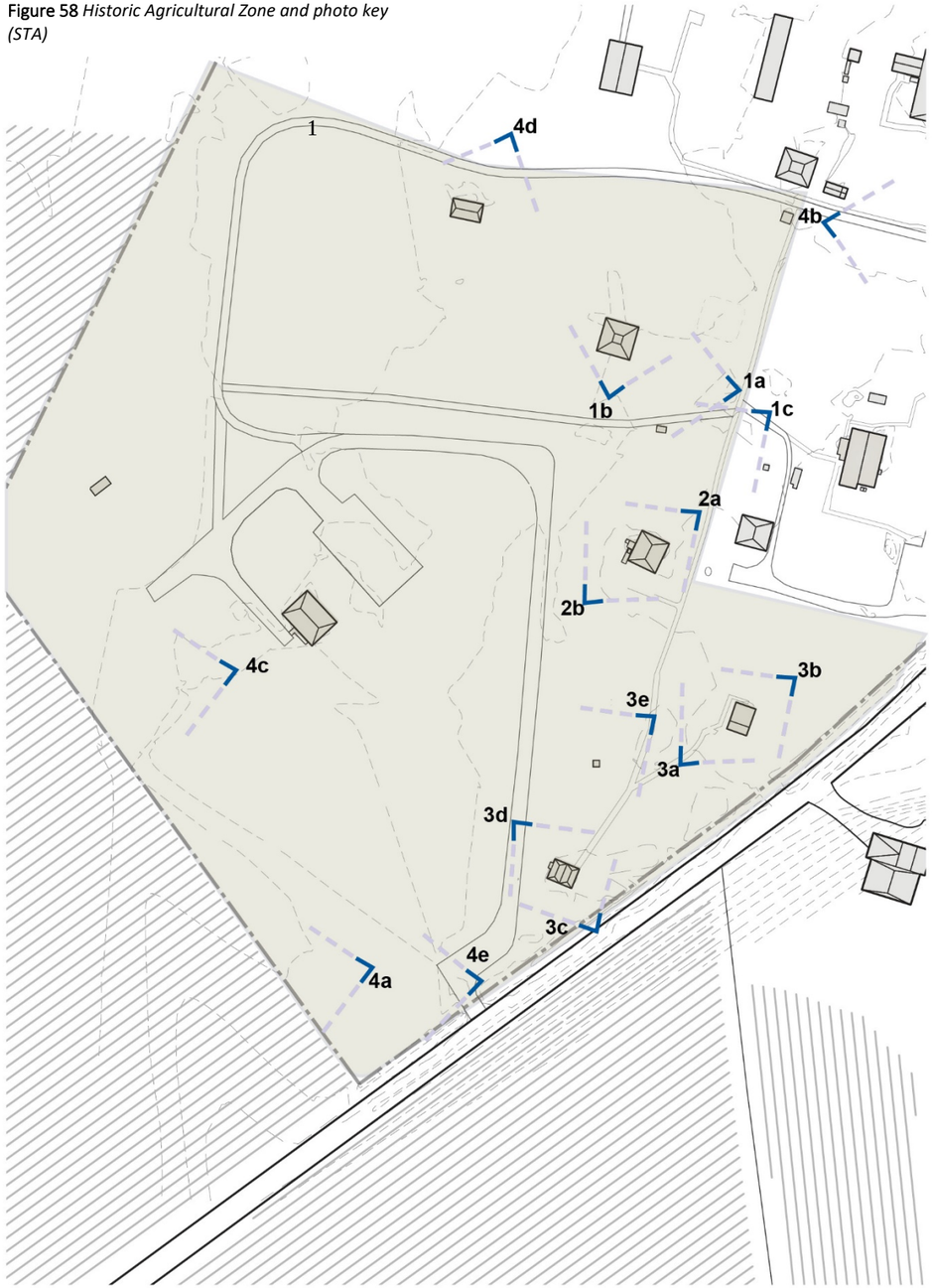






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Figure 58 *Historic Agricultural Zone and photo key (STA)*



HISTORICAL AGRICULTURAL ZONE
1. Back Pastures & Farm Enclosures - Corn Crib & Corral Area
2. Overseer's House
3. Quarter's Area & Tenant Houses - Former Slave Quarters
4. Agricultural Fields, Seed House, Gin Site, & Wagon Shed - Park Maintenance Area & Service Road

N























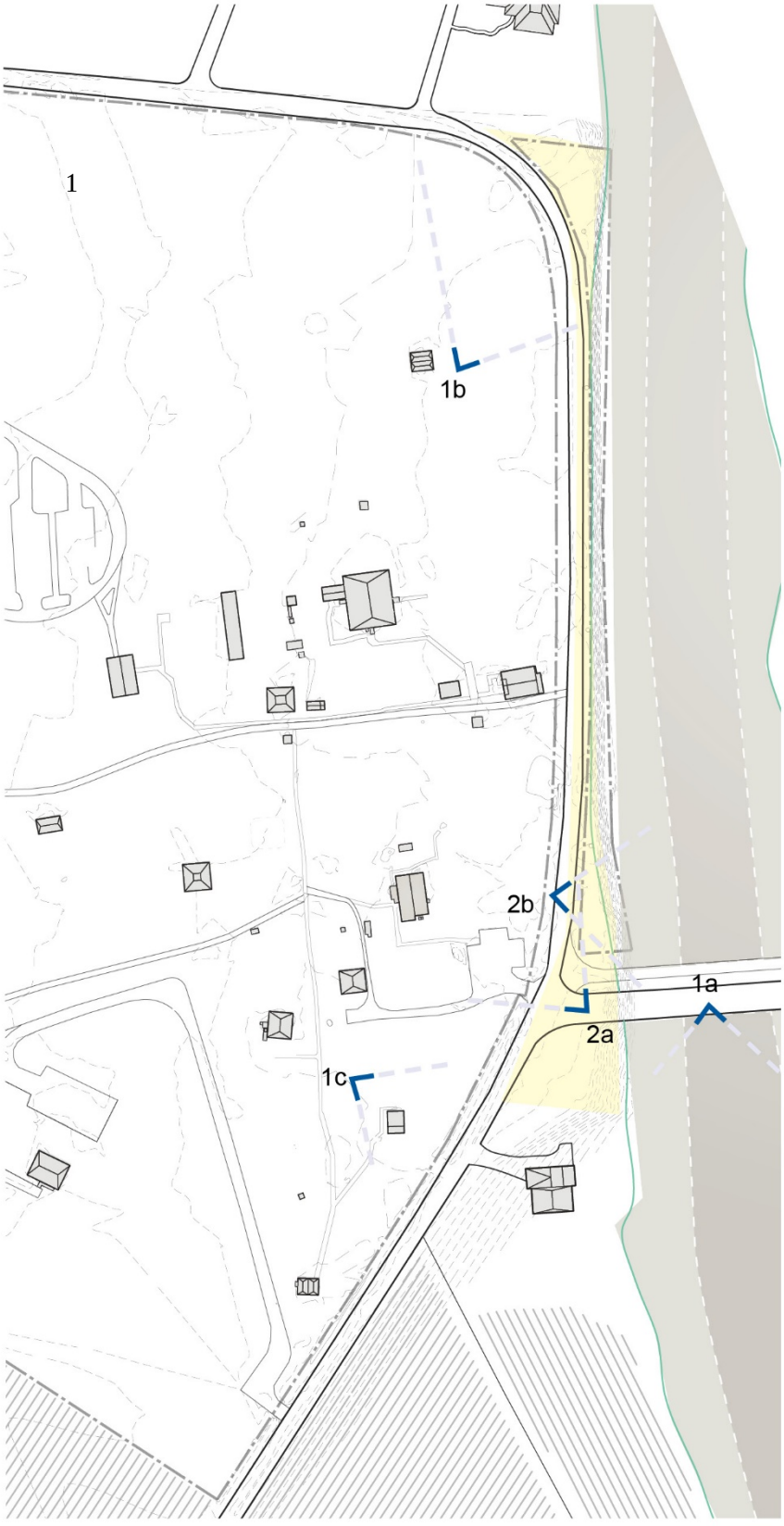








1













LAKEFRONT ZONE
1. Viewsheds
2. Trail Circulation

N

Figure 59 *Lakefront Zone (STA)*

Visitor Service/Park Entrance Zone

The approximately 5-acre Visitor Service/ Park Entrance Zone is located in the northwest quadrant of the property, entered by a gravel drive leading from Hwy 494 (**Figure 56**). This area, designated in the park's initial GMP planning process as the Development Management Area, includes an entrance gate, park entry sign, and gravel drive which leads from Hwy 494 south along a one-way loop to a series of gravel parking bays (and a paved handicap bay with 2 spaces) that give access to the open-air Visitor Pavilion built at the western edge of the Historic Residential Core. From the Entrance Pavilion, mown and rubber-mat paths lead across the field to the southeast towards the historic Farm Lane and Historic Residential Core. A picnic area with tables for visitors has been created to the rear [west] of the Tractor Shed (c. 1952), in a shaded area facing the pavilion.

Although this area is now primarily devoted to visitor entrance, services and orientation, it occupies a former pasture or backfield area west of the main house and rear yards, near an adjacent wooded area referred to as the Savane in archival records (this is now largely on neighboring property to the west).[35] This area was identified as a potential park entrance in the initial GMP planning alternatives (2000) and eventually selected as part of the preferred development strategy, creating a "back door" or "back of big house" alternate entry point to the park that would de-emphasize or suspend the visual primacy of the big house and, hopefully, the visitor's subsequent rush to it upon arrival, by placing them in the fields to the west.[36] It was also intended to convey an approach to the property that was more in keeping with the perspective of the enslaved or tenant workers who would almost certainly have approached from the south—and the vicinity of the historic Quarter's area--rather than from the front. However, this is not exactly what happens here, and this new approach does create some interpretive and logistical challenges for the park and for visitors. Namely, it deemphasizes the property's historic approach and orientation to the riverfront, and creates a certain degree of confusion about where the entry point to the park actually is as most visitors approach the site from the south travelling along Hwy 494 after exiting I-49. As views of the property and lake edge become visible along the drive north, visitors frequently pull off at the other drive entrances or staff parking area along Hwy 494 to take pictures, thinking that they have arrived, while the official park entrance is hidden away in the northwest corner of the site, out of view around a bend to the north.[37] And visitors arriving from Natchitoches along Hwy 494 from the north frequently overshoot the park entrance drive entirely, unaware until they end up in front of the entrance gate and allée leading to the main house. The auto-directional signs meant to announce the park entry from either direction were poorly located to begin with and are now missing or frequently hidden by vegetation.

Furthermore, the current approach does not correspond to or reinforce the historic sense of arrival from the riverfront or across the open fields from the south, but funnels visitors rather informally into the rear yards and back spaces of the main house, or east along the Farm Lane to the Store and a side entry to the main house and front lawn. Ironically, because the entrance zone is located far from the landscapes of labor associated with the Overseer's House, Quarters Area/ Tenant Houses, and the Seed House/Gin site near the southern end of the property, visitors are probably less likely to visit these key interpretive areas on a

[35] See CLR Part 1 for discussion of the savane, and former wooded pasture areas.

[36] This is typical of many historic plantation sites open to the public where the house, entrance allée and gardens take front and center stage, and the agricultural fields and landscapes of labor are sometimes cropped out or missed entirely as part of the visitor experience. It seems that the Park hoped to reframe the approach narrative here.

[37] There are at least 4 drives, lanes or apparent pull-offs encountered when travelling from the south along the property en route to the main visitor entrance, including the maintenance drive to the Seed House/Gin at the southern end of park property, the staff parking lot and driveway just south of the Doctor's House and opposite the bridge, the gated entry to the historic Farm Lane just to the south of the Store, and the former drive entrance/pull out to the Main House from in front of the entrance gate, a frequent photo stop for tourists wanting a postcard shot of the house and live oak allée.

hot summer day, when the shade of the main house lawn and allée beckons from the Farm Lane. The best and most expansive views of Oakland's former agricultural landscape are experienced from the southern end of the site, and the most engaging views of Oakland—its vernacular clustering of houses and dependencies silhouetted against the live oaks—is also experienced arriving along the highway from the south, but little of the former agricultural fields are included in current park boundaries.





Figure 60 *Park entrance from Hwy 494, showing trees along northern boundary fence, hidden park sign, and gate (STA 2017).*

The entrance drive is difficult to see when approaching along Hwy 494 from the south, and in fact presents an almost blind turn to the south [left], blocked from sight by a row of mature trees (largely hackberries) that have volunteered along the northern property line fence. To visitors arriving from the south, the Park's entry sign is likewise blocked from view in the field behind this row of trees (**Figure 60**).

New residential development has sprouted along the edge of Hwy 494 just to the north of the park entrance and is visible from several areas in the northern interior of the site. From the entrance, the gravel drive proceeds south through a mown open field to the Entrance Pavilion and parking area. A line of trees and volunteer vegetation to the east indicates the location of a former fence line marking the edge between the North Meadow/Front Pasture/Pecan Grove areas to the north of the Main House and the Visitor Service Zone to the west. Thick successional woods--the former Savane area referenced previously--border the property line and boundary fence to the west of the entrance drive.

The Visitor Service Zone landscape is maintained as an open grassy meadow mown regularly to a height of 6-8" at its remote edges (and bush-hogged when grasses reach 18-24"), with more closely mown swathes maintained around the Entrance Pavilion and along visitor paths and roadway edges for visibility, safety

and convenience.[38] A picnic area has been created to the rear of the Tractor Shed, in the shade of mature trees. A system of interlocking and porous rubber-mat paths connects from the parking area to the pavilion and southeast towards the Farm Lane and historic residential core (**Figure 62**). The Entrance Pavilion houses restrooms, water fountains, introductory interpretive exhibits, and additional picnic table seating under the cover of its roof (**Figure 61**), but is open sided, allowing views of the parking lot, tractor shed to the east, and woods to the west, none of which are particularly attractive or note-worthy.



Figure 61 *Entrance pavilion from northeast corner (STA 2020).*

[38] The park does occasionally allow the grasses to grow longer if conditions are especially wet or when other projects demand maintenance attention elsewhere, but the area can become quite unsightly and is a known habitat for rats.



Figure 62 *Path to historic residential core, showing current mowing patterns and rubber-mat path system (STA 2020).*

Historic Residential Zone

Historic Farm Lane, Pigeonniers, and Outbuildings

The Historic Residential Zone is located in the heart of the property (Figure 57). From the Entrance Pavilion, visitors walk along the mown/mat path system across a meadow to the southeast towards the graveled Farm Lane, which serves as an east-west organizing spine connecting the backfields at the rear [west] of the property to Hwy 494 and the river/lakefront to the east (**Figure 63**). As visitors walk from west to east along the gravel lane (or on a parallel rubber mat pathway now largely overgrown by grasses and weeds), the lane gives access to various farm structures, main house dependencies and outbuildings along the way—the Mule Barn, the West Pigeonnier, the Carpenter's Shop, the Carriage House, the East Pigeonnier—before connecting to Hwy 494 just south of the Store at the lane's gated eastern end (**Figure 68**). [39] The lane delineates the southern edge of the Main House and dependency yards to the north. In fact, the post-barbed-and hogwire fence enclosure that extends from the Carpenter's Shop along the lane's northern edge, past the Main House side yard to the Carriage House and Store, defines the southern edge of the Main House's rear yard, south side yard and front lawn/live oak allée.

[39] The Farm Lane would have been accessed historically from its eastern end, where it intersects with the highway and lakefront, just south of the Store. However, this entry is no longer accessible to park visitors and remains gated.



Figure 63 *Farm Lane looking west towards Entrance Pavilion, with West Pigeonnier on left and Mule Barn on right (STA 2017).*

The interior of the Mule Barn, which is the first structure encountered walking along the lane from the Entrance Pavilion, is open to the north and south, and visitors may pass through its stalled interior from the Farm Lane into the rear yards of the Main House. Because of the fence line that connects to it, the Carpenter's Shop is closed off from the lane and only accessible from inside the yard of the house. Just across the lane to the south, the West Pigeonnier sits along the edge of the field that extends to the Corn Crib. During a July 2020 site visit, both the East and West Pigeonniers were inaccessible to visitors, encircled by orange plastic safety fencing due to concerns over past arsenic storage and possible contamination (**Figures 64-65**). Further east, just south of the Main House, a sagging metal gate (Bell Gate) leads from the lane into the south side yard of the Main House (**Figure 65**), where the wooden bell tower documented in family photographs once stood (see **Figure 112**).



Figure 64 *View from Mule Barn [right] looking south towards West Pigeonnier [surrounded by orange safety fencing], with Corral Shed and Overseer's House visible in distance, Farm Lane at center and left, and antique hay rake in foreground (STA 2020).*

To the south of the lane, views open up first towards the agricultural landscape of pastures, fields, and livestock enclosures near the Corn Crib and Corral, but beyond the West Pigeonnier and the dogleg junction of the lane that leads south towards the Overseer's House and Tenant House/ Quarter's Area, the shaded enclosure of the Doctor's House comes into sight in the distance, across the South Meadow/Farm Yard area (see **Figure 85**). Further to the east approaching the lakefront, the Carriage House (to the north) and East Pigeonnier (to the south) stand across the lane from each other (**Figure 65**). The Carriage House is oriented towards the lane along its south façade and towards the house and side yard to the north, allowing carriages to enter from the entrance allée side historically, and cars and farm machinery to enter from the lane side in later periods.

Between the Carriage House, East Pigeonnier and Store, the lane widens out to form a kind of loosely defined service area/visitor gathering area with benches and a handicap ramp to the rear of the Store (**Figure 66**).[40] From this point, visitors can enter the Store from its rear porch entrance, walk along the Lane towards the front of the Store, or enter the allée/front lawn of the Main House along the visitor path to the north (**Figure 70**). In 2018, the Farm Lane was re-graveled along its length with a light grey chert and

[40] Aerial photos dating from 1966-2006 show the farm lane wrapping around the east pigeonnier to the south (or encircling it), rather than following the current (and more historically accurate) straight alignment between the store and pigeonnier (see Figs 33-39). The 1941 and 1950 aerials depict a straight lane alignment and what appears to be a third pigeonnier (or other small dependency structure, now non-extant) near the middle of the farm lane along its southern edge (see Figs 29-30).

has since become the preferred walk surface for most visitors, even though it is not ADA-accessible.[41] The modular rubber mat path that parallels the lane's northern edge has subsequently become obscured by grass and weeds growing through its porous grid after the park stopped spraying and string-trimming it and the re-graveled lane gave visitors an alternative walk surface. This rubber mat path system is used throughout the park to define visitor pathways, but it does not blend well with the natural setting or recede visually into the rural surroundings due to its unnaturally green color and coarse visual texture (**Figure 62**).



Figure 65 *Top image shows view from Carpenter's Shop on left looking east along Farm Lane towards Carriage House & East Pigeonnier (STA 2020). Middle image show view looking toward side of Main House from Bell Gate (STA 2020). Bottom image shows East Pigeonnier with orange safety fencing in view (STA 2020).*

[41] In 2016 site visit photos, the lanes are worn and not freshly graveled, presenting a more understated (rustic) appearance (see Fig 67). Historic photos of the entrance drive depict a tan- or brown-toned aggregate along the allée, blending with the soil color.





Figure 66 *Above: Rear of Store showing informal visitor gathering area, handicap ramp, signage, and uneven surfaces (STA 2020). Below: Visible on side of Store are Utility boxes, a temporary construction dumpster, and wooden benches (STA 2020).*



Figure 67 *Above: View west along Farm Lane from between Carriage House [right] and East Pigeonnier [left], with West Pigeonnier and Carpenter's Shop visible in background (STA 2017). Below: Recently resurfaced Farm Lane looking west from same location with Corn Crib, West Pigeonnier and Carpenter's Shop visible in distance (STA 2020).*

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Store and Farm Lane Entrance

To the east of the Carriage House and East Pigeonnier, the Farm Lane intersects Hwy 494 just south of Prud'homme's Store. The lane is gated here, blocked from direct highway access by a double metal service gate (**Figure 68**). The Store faces Hwy 494, and its recently restored historic gas pumps and Esso sign are prominently displayed in the yard to the east, reminders of its twentieth century commercial activity (**Figure 69**). The front yard area of the Store is not easily accessible from the side without crawling over a fence or scrambling up onto the porch from the Farm Lane—the rail fence of the main house lawn encloses along the northern yard edge and a wire mesh fence encloses to the gate at the south lane entrance. The Store cistern and pump sit under the porch overhang along the front façade. From the front yard of the store, views of the lake are partially obscured by volunteer vegetation along the lake embankment and Hwy 494 right-of-way, but residential camps and new development along the opposite (east) bank can be glimpsed through gaps in the overgrowth. A painted Esso sign on the south façade of the Store is a recent restoration, and there are a number of utility/service boxes (A/C) near the foundation along the Farm Lane. At the time of the last site visit (July 2000), a blue construction dumpster sat in the grass south of the store and lane (**Figure 66**), but it has apparently since been removed. The area to the rear of the store presents a rather unsightly mixture of paving surfaces, path materials, turf grass and gravel.



Figure 68 *Southeast corner of store with farm lane and gate in foreground, restored Esso sign on side of store, and damaged osage orange tree to left (STA 2020).*



Figure 69 *Photographs showing area around store with restored gas pumps above and water pump below (STA 2020).*

Live Oak Allée and Front Lawn

Between the rear of the Store and the Carriage House, the visitor path (here an obtrusive rusty brown composite wood material) turns north to enter the live oak allée and front lawn area of the Main House (**Figure 70**). A wooden rail fence defines the edge of the lawn here, which is accessed through a metal gate via a visitor path that leads north and west towards the south façade of the Main House. A limewashed live oak, recently repainted as a test by current Park Superintendent, sits just to the west of the path along with a sugar kettle display near the edge of the south side yard. A border planting of crepe myrtles marks the spatial boundary between the south side yard and the front lawn enclosure/allée area. To the east of the front lawn entrance, a prominent drainage swale cuts perpendicularly across the lawn from the live oak allée to a remnant clay culvert pipe embedded in the grass near the rear of the Store. This short swale connects to a longer swale that runs perpendicular to the river and parallels the live oak allée along its southern edge. This drainage feature served to convey rainwater away from the crowned entrance drive towards a now somewhat obscured drainage ditch along the Farm Lane that conveyed water back towards the backswamps and Bayou Brevelle to the west.

The live oak allée forms one of the most distinctive landscape spaces in the residential core, and from its centerline axis provides dramatic enframing views of the house to the west and Cane River Lake, viewed through the entrance gates, to the east (**Figure 71**). Although the oak-lined allée once served as a grand entrance drive to the house from Hwy 494, the entire area is now grassed and gated at its eastern end, which makes the high dappled space feel more like a semi-enclosed and shaded extension of the lawn areas to the immediate north and south. The allée is defined by four stately (but aging) pairs of mature live oaks shading its length, and a pair of younger replacement trees inter-planted or in-filled under the older trees near the western end. Visitors walk east along the allée to the entrance gate at Hwy 494 for views of the lake, or west to the picket fence and gate surrounding the Bottle Garden at the front of the Main House (**Figure 73**). Looking south from the allée, the north façades of the Store and Carriage House define the southern edge of the Main House lawn, and to the north, one glimpses distant views across the North Meadow/Front Pasture area. At the lakefront end of the allée, visitors can see the "Oakland 1821" entrance sign, rustic turnstile gate, and the rail fence that was modified for the filming of *The Horse Soldiers* (1959), as well as glimpses of the lake and development on the opposite shore though the overgrown vegetation along the embankment (**Figure 72**). Crape myrtles line the rail fence along the interior lawn edge, several of which have been lost in recent years to hurricanes (Laura and Delta) and one to a careless driver who crashed into the fence (c. 2017). A plank (cattle) grate at the front entrance gate has some damaged planks and needs repair. Walking west along the allée, visitors approach the Bottle Garden's picket fence enclosure and the Main House, which is currently accessed not from the Bottle Garden and front gallery stairs, but from a path along the south side yard that leads to the south gallery stairs and an accessible visitor lift to the main house gallery (**Figure 70**).



Figure 70 *Views of main house front lawn and south side yard, showing composite wood path in top photo, and whitewashed oak and sugar kettle in lower image with visitor path leading to south gallery stairs and main house (STA 2020).*





Figure 71 *Live oak allée looking east along former main house drive towards Oakland entrance gate and Highway 494 (STA 2020).*



Figure 72 *Gates, rail fence, and signage near the historic front entrance to the Main House (STA 2017).*



Figure 73 *Live oak allée with bottle garden and main house in background (STA 2020).*

The Bottle Garden

The Bottle Garden, which is referred to as the parterre garden in earlier reports, is the subject of a separate CLR effort already underway, so it will be treated only summarily here. The Bottle Garden sits on axis with the Main House and is enclosed along its eastern edge by a white picket fence and gate that can (with permission) be entered from the western end of the live oak allée (**Figure 73**). Its central brick path sits on axis with the allée, front gallery stairs and main house door, and from the front gallery, visitors can overlook the parterres and live oak allée to the east from an elevated vantage point. The north and south sides of the garden are enclosed by woven-wire fencing with wire garden gates leading to the south and north side yards (**Figure 74**). The central brick path is constructed of a bold soldier course pattern with contrasting basketweave edge, leading to a herringbone patterned landing and brick stairs that ascend to the front gallery (**Figure 75**). The individual parterre beds are edged by upended and colored glass bottles of assorted provenance assembled over the years from the family's cellars, with dates ranging from the late-eighteenth century to the mid-1990s (**Figure 74**). The plant material in the parterres is rather sparse and there are signs of erosion, poor drainage and bare earth near the gallery edges, along the brick pathway edges, and on the inner turf parterre paths. Horticultural species noted include canna lilies, Louisiana iris, crinum lilies, spider lilies, ferns, nandinas along the picket fence, camellias along the gallery foundations, and crape myrtles framing the gallery stairs, but overall, the garden felt scruffy and a bit unkempt on the most recent site visit and there were signs of invasive weeds and seedlings scattered in the beds. Due to the fragility of the bottles, their susceptibility to damage and theft, and the garden's deteriorated condition, the Bottle Garden is currently off-limits to visitors but can be viewed from outside the fenced enclosure or from the gallery above. The bottle garden fence panel was damaged by a fallen tree limb during Hurricane Laura, and other segments of the picket fence are loose or rotten.



Figure 74 *Bottle garden showing bottle edging within parterres (above) and south gate and wire fencing below (STA 2020).*

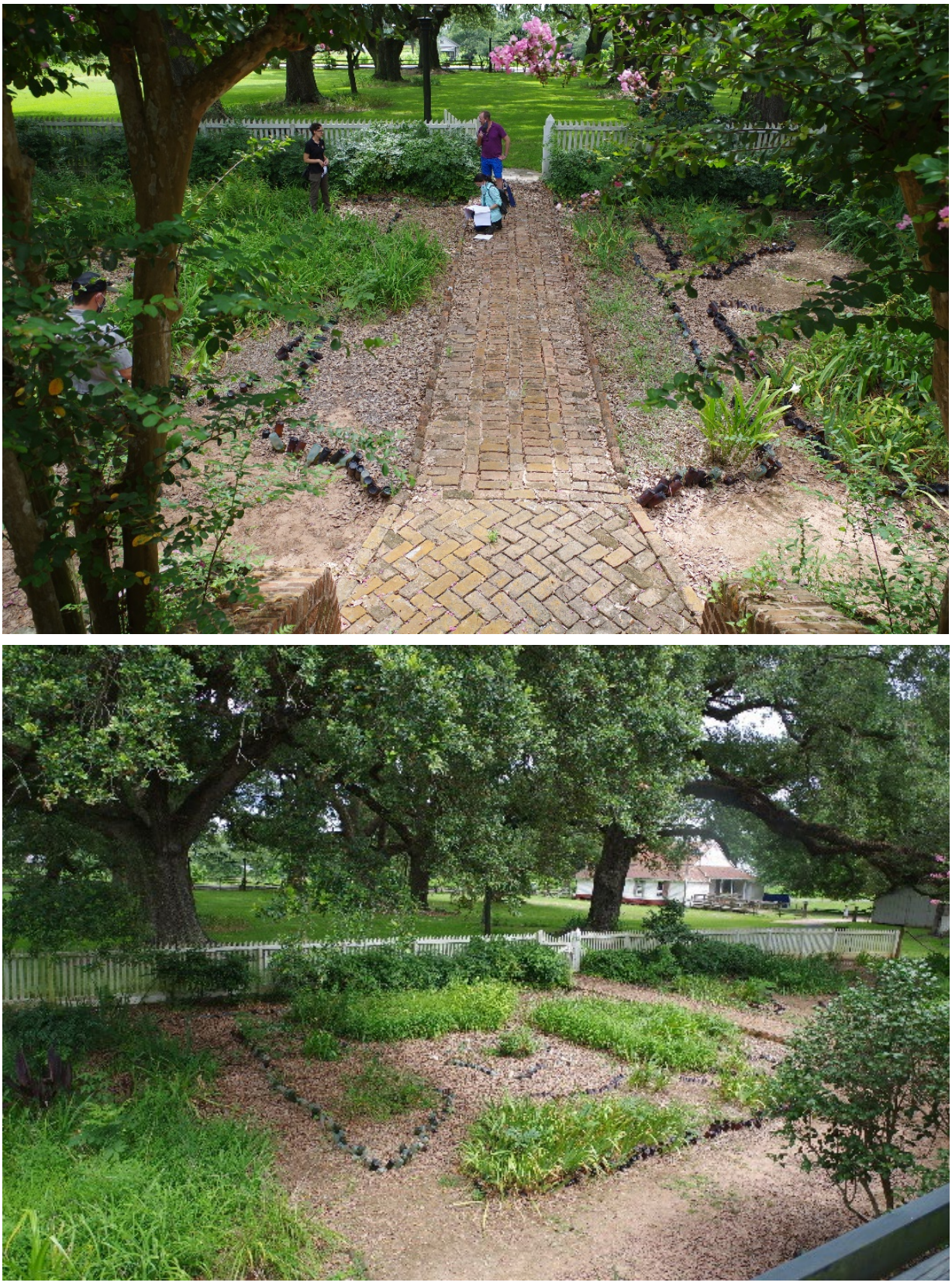


Figure 75 *View from front porch of Main house showing the bottle garden and brick walkway (STA 2020).*

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Figure 76 *North Meadow/Front Pasture showing outbuildings, the Cook's Cabin/Fishing Camp area, mown paths, and replanted pecan grove (STA 2020).*



Figure 77 *Cook's Cabin/Fishing camp at center with mown path, pecan, oak, and catalpa trees surrounding building (STA 2020).*

North Meadow/Front Pasture, Cook's Cabin/Fishing Camp Area, & Pecan Grove/Orchard

To the north of the Bottle Garden and Main House, the North Meadow/Front Pasture, Cook's Cabin/Fishing Camp area, and Pecan Grove/Orchard extend northward towards Hwy 494 as the road bends west to form the northern property boundary. The Cook's Cabin nestles within a grove of mature catalpas, oaks and pecans near the middle of the meadow, visible across the tall grasses, while in the distance, glimpses of residential development along the highway peak out from beyond the vegetation, contemporary impositions on the view shed **(Figures 76-77**). As in other less frequented areas of the Park, grasses in the North Meadow, Fishing Camp and Pecan Grove areas are generally maintained to a height of 6-8" by periodic mowing (and bush-hogged when grasses reach 18-24"), with more closely mown paths leading to the Cook's Cabin, and neater swathes providing buffers and visitor access to dependencies (Turkey house, Privy) and landscape features, including the minnow pond depression to the west of the Cook's Cabin. The entire North Meadow/Front Pasture area, which contains some coarse and aggressive Johnson grass, can grow unsightly at times and has elicited complaints from neighbors in the past, according to park staff. There are a number of mature trees (pecans, catalpas, oaks) clustered in the North Meadow near the Cook's Cabin, and the trunks of some are overgrown with vines. The Pecan Grove stands to the west of the Cook's cabin and minnow pond and is connected by a continuation of the mown path. The NPS began replanting a portion of the former pecan orchard as early as 2013 and has continued to add a variety of cultivars to replace declining specimens visible in earlier photos, including a major replanting effort in 2016. [42] Several large specimens (3-4) have been lost in recent years to disease, decline or hurricane damage.

The side yard along the north face of the house is more closely mown, and a number of fruit trees have been planted (plums-*prunus*, a fig-*ficus*), or else have survived from earlier plantings, along its border with the meadow, remaining specimens of the fruit-bearing species known to have existed in this area historically and visible in twentieth century photos (**Figure 78**). The Turkey House and Privy stand along this grassy verge between the North Meadow and the side yard, and one of the house cisterns sits beneath a wooden

[42] It is unclear when the pecan grove was first established and whether it was conceived as a commercial enterprise paralleling that of the Fishing Camp, or mainly for family use. It does, however, occupy the area that was identified by Firth & Turner as the probable site of the main house gardens during the late-eighteenth century.

cover near the northwest corner of the house (**Figure 79**).[43] The 1987 HABS Site Plan (**Figure 25**) and a 2002 HABS photo of Oakland's entrance gate (**Figure 24**) show a fence line defining the boundary between the north side yard and North Meadow area, but this features does not seem to appear in images prior to 1976 and has been removed by the NPS since the earliest (c. 2016) site visits.[44]



Figure 78 *North side of Main House showing fruit trees (fig) and shrubs, covered cistern, and kitchen wing (STA 2020).*

Main House, Rear & Side Yards and Rear Dependencies

To the rear [west] of the Main House and its kitchen wing, clustered arrangements of smaller outbuildings form a series of loosely defined yards, with several mature specimen trees (live oak, pecan, locust, etc.) forming arching canopies or ceilings over the various grassy spaces formed between these structures. Fence lines connect a number of the dependencies and serve to define a series of layered or controlled enclosures moving east to west. To the immediate rear of the kitchen wing, the Wash House, Fattening Pen, and Storage Shed sit in a row paralleling the rear façade of the house, creating an irregular rear yard space defined by the western elevation of the house and the east facades of the outbuildings. A large live oak arcs over the rear yard space, forming a high canopy. A collection of iron kettles (pots) rests overturned among the roots of this tree (**Figure 80**).

[43] The privy was relocated to this area by the NPS from behind the Tractor Shed, presumably for interpretive reasons

[44] Historic family photos (Figs 15-16) and aerials from 1941 and 1950 (Figs 29-30) depict a number of fencelines and gated enclosures within the North Meadow/Fishing Camp area at mid-century that are no longer present. In addition, the 1987 HABS Site Plan and 2002 HABS photos by Boucher and Buono depict a fence or remnant fence line along the edge of the north side yard marking the boundary with the pecan grove, orchard and former garden areas. However, this feature does not seem to appear in photos or aerials prior to 1976, which suggests that it might be a late twentieth century addition.



Figure 79 *Privy and turkey shed near pecan grove and covered cistern north of Main House (STA 2020).*

Further south along this roughly axial line of dependencies sit the Chicken Coop and Setting Pen, and beyond, anchored off the Farm Lane, the Mule Barn. To the east of the Mule Barn, the Carpenter's Shop sits along the northern edge of the Farm Lane, at the southwest corner of the yard as it wraps to the south.[45] To the rear [west] of the Carpenter's Shop, an antique hay rake is displayed in the grassy space defined between the rear façade of that structure and the east façade of the Mule Barn; this space opens to the Farm Lane on the south side (**Figure 81**).



Figure 80 *Photographs of rear dependencies of Main House. Top image shows a storage shed, fattening pen and wash house (STA 2020). Middle image from left shows the carpenter's shop, mule barn, setting pen, and chicken coop (STA 2017). Bottom image shows the view looking north at rear dependencies with main house on right and large live oak (STA 2020).*

[45] Unlike the Mule Barn, the Carpenter's Shop can only be accessed from the main house yard, not from the lane.

To the west of this immediate rear yard, a second rectangular yard (tractor shed yard) is defined by the rear/west facades of the previously mentioned outbuildings, which form the eastern edge of the space, the Tractor Shed, which forms its western edge, and the Mule Barn, which forms the southern edge (**Figure 81**). This space opens at its southwest corner towards the Entrance Pavilion and serves as an informal point of entry (or exit) to the rear yards.



Figure 81 *Top image shows view between Mule Barn and Carpenter's Shop. Middle image shows view facing south with Main House on left, rear yard dependencies at center and Mule Barn on right (STA 2020). Bottom image shows the tractor shed located behind the rear dependencies (STA 2020).*



Figure 82 *Cisterns and rubber mat path system at rear of the Main House (STA 2020).*

Returning towards the rear of the house and kitchen wing, the rubber mat path system wraps around the structure from north and south, providing a sort of informal gathering area in the yard, and visitor access to the rear stair and gallery (**Figure 82**). Climbing the stairs to the rear gallery (or exiting from the house), visitors receive the most comprehensive overview of the rear yard and outbuilding arrangements, as well as views of the historic cisterns tucked away under the house. One of the cisterns is clearly visible underneath the kitchen wing, and the larger one is hidden away behind a slatted wooden door beneath the gallery to the south of the rear stairs (**Figure 83**). The historic cisterns are no longer functioning but are interpreted by park staff as significant and once operable landscape (small-scale) features. Flexible drainage pipes have been added to the downspouts along the front and rear elevations of the house and at corners to channel rainwater away from the foundations. [46]

To the south of the Main House, the south side yard is maintained as a grassy open lawn space, wrapping around the house from the front and rear yards (**Figure 84**). This yard serves as the current point of visitor entry for the house, which is accessed either via the south gallery stairs or a service lift appended to the south façade of the structure. The house and gallery are accessed by the visitor path that leads from the rear of the Store and crosses this space towards the rear yard. The lawn here blends almost seamlessly with the rear yard area, and a mature pecan tree shades its western edge. A row of crape myrtles defines the eastern edge of this space near its intersection with The Bottle Garden and the east façade of the house (see **Figure 70**). The fence line along the Farm Lane defines the southern edge of this yard space, and the metal gate (Bell Gate) that gave access to this yard historically is still present, although sagging and somewhat dilapidated, at the center of the fence line. A rustic wooden bell tower (**see Figure 112**) once sat within this yard near the gate still referred to as the "Bell Gate" to signal time to distant workers in the field, a feature that has been discussed for possible future restoration.

[46] These black corrugated pipes are conspicuous, unattractive and a potential tripping hazard, but they are provisional attempts to deal with rainwater and drainage concerns in the absence of functional cisterns.





Figure 83 *Rear gallery and stair to the Main House, and below, a large cistern hidden under the rear gallery (STA 2020).*



Figure 84 *Rear of Main House and south side yard, showing rubber mat path to side gallery stairs and lift access (STA 2020).*



Figure 85 *South Meadow/ Farm Yard area looking toward Doctor's Cottage (STA 2020).*

South Meadow/ Farm Yard

From the Main House yards, visitors can exit west towards the Entrance Pavilion through the tractor shed yard, or walk southeast to rejoin the Farm Lane near the Store and Carriage House, or alternately, from between the Carpenter's Shop and Mule Barn. Just to the east of the West Pigeonnier, the east-west Farm Lane is intersected by an NPS-era graveled drive and visitor path that turns (doglegs) south towards the Doctor's House and the southern portion of the historic residential core.[47] The South Meadow/Farm Yard lies along the southern edge of the Farm Lane near its eastern end, between the East and West Pigeonniers, and the shaded landscape of the Doctor's House yard is visible across the meadow to the south (**Figure 85**). This meadow area is defined to the east by a fence line along Hwy 494, and to the west by the farm lane extension and visitor path that turn south at the West Pigeonnier.

Along the fence line at Hwy 494, Park staff have replanted/restored an earlier row of jujubes (*Ziziphus jujube*), Chinese date trees, which have cultural significance in the Creole traditions of the region (**Figure 86**). At least one large tree is original, some are resprouted from original roots, and approximately five are new plantings. A mown path cuts across the meadow from the Farm Lane near the rear of the Carriage House to a gate in the northern boundary fence of the Doctor's House yard (see **Figure 90**). The field is largely grassy and open except for a large red cedar tree that stands near the southern juncture of the Farm Lane, opposite [east of] the West Pigeonnier. As in other outlying areas of the park, the grass is maintained

[47] The historic agricultural zone is accessed from the Farm Lane by a gravel drive and walking path extension that leads south past the Corn Crib to the rear of the Doctor's House and then by pathway to the Overseer's House and Tenant House/Quarters Area.

at a taller height here (18-24”), apart from the more closely mown visitor path. An electric (night} light pole stands near the middle of the field, and the meadow is defined by fence lines to the east and south. Because of its central location between the two main residences and near the lane and highway, the historical function of this space seems to have varied over time as seen in historic aerials, suggesting that it variously served as a pasture, meadow, or cultivated area up until mid-century (1950s-60s) and then as an extended service area or farm yard for the main house and Doctor’s House after 1960 (see 1966 aerial). The 1987 HABS Site Plan shows a partial fenced enclosure in the northwest corner, which suggests that part of it may have served as a garden for the Doctor’s House, but this is not certain. It does seem to belong more to the historic residential core.



Figure 86 *South Meadow, with jujubes or Chinese dates planted along the highway (STA 2020).*



Figure 87 *Rear service lane entrance to the Doctor's House yard, with Overseer's House and Quarter's path visible to right (STA 2020).*

Doctor's House, Yards, & Dependencies

Although south of the Main House, Store, and Farm Lane, the Doctor's House also belongs to what is classified here as the historic residential core, due to its continuous, and somewhat independent, history of residential occupation (it could be classified as a distinct character area within the residential core for management and interpretive purposes). Walking south along the Farm Lane past the Corn Crib and Corral areas to the west, the Doctor's House and its rear yards come into view near the intersection of the lane and the visitor path that leads south to the Overseer's House and Quarters Area/Tenant Houses (Quarter's Path) (**Figure 87**). This once separate parcel is surrounded by fences on all sides, and is divided into distinctive rear, front and side yards. The yards are shaded by a canopy of mature trees. To the south of the inner fenced yard, a graveled drive enters from Hwy 494 (leading to the staff parking area) and passes through an outer fenced enclosure along the southern edge of the tract, turning north between the barn and outbuilding sheds at the rear of the house to reconnect with the Farm Lane at the intersection of the lane and walking path to the Quarter's area (Quarter's Path). There is a metal farm gate in the rear fence through which the drive and visitor path passes into the rear yards (**Figure 89**). The Grist Mill Shed and Privy sit to the west of the rear drive as it encircles the house in an outer fenced enclosure near the western fence line. These sheds face south towards the Chicken Coop, which sits on the other side [south] of the drive, facing south towards the rear of the house (**Figure 88**). There is a picnic table in the rear yard, presumably for staff use (the Doctor's House is used for park staff offices). Currently, few visitors seem to continue into the front yard of the Doctor's House from this more staff- and maintenance-oriented area to the rear of the house and around the barn (**Figure 91**), but the park would like to change this in the future by redirecting

visitors and reorienting paths through this area. Currently, the enclosed front yard forms a sort of circulation dead end that requires back-tracking to the north or west due to the fencing that encloses it on all sides. The graveled staff parking lot to the south of the front yard fence creates a further physical impediment and a visually incompatible element for park visitors wishing to continue south to the Tenant Cabins and former Quarter's Area (**see Figures 90 & 92**).





Figure 88 *Dependencies in rear yard of Doctor's House. Image above shows the Doctor's Privy on left and the Grist Mill Shed on right (STA 2017) and image below shows the Doctor's Chicken Coop (STA 2017).*

The visitors path departs from the rear drive near the Chicken Coop and passes east through a second fence line (inner enclosure) to the rear yard of the house. A wooden handicap ramp leads to the rear of the house from the west. To the northwest of the house is a small, detached garage with a cistern (or well) behind it [to the west], and the visitor path passes between this garage and the north façade of the house to enter the front yard, which faces east towards Hwy 494 and the lakefront (**Figure 89**). To the north and east of the garage, a gate in the north yard fence provides access to a mown path that cuts across the South Pasture towards the Farm Lane and Carriage House (**Figure 90**). The front yard is shaded by mature trees, including a magnolia, live oaks and crepe myrtles, and there are a number of ornamental shrubs planted near the front and south sides of the house, and ephemeral bulbs (spider lilies) along the fence lines. As at the Main House, flexible drainage pipes have been added to the downspouts to funnel water away from the house, and there are a number of utility/service boxes (A/C) near the house foundations.





Figure 89 *Image above shows the rear yard of the Doctor's House with handicap ramp, picnic table, and garage (STA 2020), and image below shows the view looking southwest towards the front of the Doctor's House (STA 2017).*



Figure 90 *Photographs show yards at Doctor's House. Top image shows view looking north towards the Carriage House, with seasonal spider lilies in view (STA 2017). Middle image shows the front yard with mature trees shading the yard (STA 2020) Bottom image shows view to southeast toward staff parking lot, with new residential development visible in background (STA 2020).*



Figure 91 Photograph of path from Farm Lane to Quarter's area near Doctor's Barn (STA 2020).

The graveled staff parking area is visible just to the south of the yard's southern fence and is accessed from Hwy 494 via the drive that encircles the rear of the property near the barn, which sits in the southwest corner of the tract (**Figures 90-91**). Along the eastern property line, the inset and gate marking the original drive entrance is still present in the fence line along Hwy 494, and the topographic trace of the original drive visibly arcs across the front lawn towards the garage (**Figure 92**).







Figure 92 *Top image shows the former Hwy 494 entrance to Doctor's House and garage (STA 2017). Center and bottom images show the current staff service drive and parking lot from Highway 494 (STA 2017).*



Figure 93 *Gravel service drive and visitors path behind Doctor's House, with small wooden bridge crossing drainage swale in center, and Overseer's House and farm dependencies (corral shed) in background (STA 2017)*

Historic Agricultural Zone

Back Pastures & Farm Enclosures - Corn Crib, Jug Cistern and Corral Area

The Historic Agricultural Zone is located in the southern portion of the property (Figure 58). As previously noted, from the Doctor's House front yard, visitors are presented with a bit of a circulation impasse due to the lack of a gate or point of egress in the fence line along the southern edge of the yard, which would lead them towards the historic agricultural landscape and Quarter's area to the south and west. As a result, visitors must backtrack through the rear yard to visit the historic agricultural zone, which extends south and west from the junction of the Farm Lane and the footpath that leads south past the Doctor's Barn to the Overseer's House and Quarter's Area/Tenant Cabins (**Figure 93**). Alternately, they may opt to take the path that cuts through the north yard fence across the South Pasture to the Farm Lane, missing the Overseer's House and Quarter's Area entirely.[48] In any case, the circulation system is most convoluted in this area, and requires some backtracking no matter which path is taken. Returning to the Farm Lane service drive extension at the rear of the Doctor's House yard, visitors may walk slightly east along the path to visit the Corn Crib and Jug Cistern, which sit within a partially fenced enclosure to the north and west of the lane where it turns west towards Bayou Brevelle and the backswamp (**Figure 94**). Here as the drive passes west, it divides the Corn Crib area and its fenced pen to the north from the Corral and Corral Shed area to the south. Each of these paddock or pen-like areas is defined by a system of wooden rail fencing around the perimeter edges, creating a number of nested livestock enclosures, pens, and openings within the interior spaces. Railed enclosures extend south and east from the Corn Crib's western facade, and a rail fence line extends eastward from its northeast corner to the farm lane, defining a kind of inner yard or pasture area that faces east. The distinctive Jug Cistern sits just to the southeast corner of the Corn Crib in this inner yard. The Corral and Corral Shed sit just to the south of the Corn Crib, across the Farm Lane. The Corral enclosure has a tighter and more constricted arrangement of fencing creating an inner chute and openings for moving or containing livestock.

[48] For some visitors, this may be a point of frustration, exhaustion, or turning where they opt to return to the farm lane and Entrance Pavilion, rather than continue on to the historic agricultural zone to the south and west.



Figure 94 *Photographs of back pastures and farm enclosures. Top image shows the Corn Crib and jug cistern with wooden rail fence to left (STA 2017). Middle image shows the Corral and Corral Shed (STA 2017). Bottom image shows view to the northeast of the corn crib with rail fence enclosure (STA 2017).*



Figure 95 *Overseer's House with cistern on right, seen from across the post and wire fence to rear of Doctor's House (STA 2020).*

Overseer's House

Returning south along the Farm Lane service drive extension, visitors come to a wooden footbridge crossing a drainage swale near the rear of the Doctor's House, which connects the lane to a footpath leading to the Overseer's House and Quarter's Area to the south (**Figure 93**). At this awkward intersection of drive, lane and path, the Overseer's House comes into full view, sitting in the edge of the former agricultural fields to the southwest of the Doctor's Barn (**Figure 95**). The Seed House and Gin area are visible in the background to the west of the house. The house sits nakedly in the landscape, with no fenced enclosure, shade trees, or landscape features, apart from two small crape myrtle trees planted to the southeast corner along the path edge. In the yard to the north of the house sits its cistern, connected to the roof by a metal downspout. The house, which contains interpretive exhibits for visitors, is currently accessed from the rear by means of a service lift and stair. There are no distinguishing landscape features around it save for the cistern. Spider lilies are known to pop up seasonally in the front yard area, along the edges of the former front walkway. [49]

[49] A 2016 site visit photo shows surprise lilies lining the former front walkway to the house.



Figure 96 *South façade of North Tenant Cabin (STA 2020).*

Quarter's Area, Tenant Cabins, & Gabe Nargot Cabin Ruins

Continuing along the Quarter's Path to the south, the path turns slightly east past the Doctor's Barn, and the North Tenant Cabin comes into view across the fields, nestled under a large live oak tree (**Figure 96**). To the east of Hwy 494 in the distance, a contemporary residence along the lake edge intrudes upon the otherwise agricultural view shed in this area (**Figure 97**). To the west, open views extend across the fields towards the Seed House and agricultural fields beyond, the most sweeping and expansive views on the property, and the only ones that capture the former agricultural nature of the plantation landscape. As the path approaches the North Tenant Cabin, the cistern to the northeast corner of the structure becomes apparent, with a downspout connecting it to the roofline. The path wraps under the live oak to the front of the house [south facing]. The north cabin is furnished and open to the public, providing a glimpse into the lives of the tenant farmers and formerly enslaved who once labored on the property and made their lives in these modest dwellings. According to park staff, few visitors walk beyond the north cabin because the south cabin is not accessible to the public.

For the intrepid or determined visitor, the path continues to the south across a grassy meadow, bending around a cluster of live oaks, passing the brick ruins of the Gabe Nargot cabin, and terminating in front of the South Tenant Cabin near the south property line (**Figures 97-98**). To the rear of the South Cabin, an opening in the fence along the park maintenance drive provides access to the drive and a mown path for staff use that cuts west across the fields towards the distant Seed House and Gin area. However, it is unlikely that visitors take this walk because the park does not encourage it and the service drive cuts this area off from the fields to the west, making it appear even further off limits. The Quarter's area is mown and maintained as elsewhere with longer grasses in the central areas and mown swathes along the path, fence lines and around the structures themselves. The residence previously noted along the lakefront to the northeast is highly visible from the south end of the Quarter's Area (**Figure 97**).



Figure 97 *Photo above shows view looking southeast with modern residence along lakefront and North Tenant Cabin on right (STA 2017). Photo below shows rubber mat path through Quarter's Area looking south toward Gabe Nargot Cabin ruins and South Tenant Cabin (STA 2020).*







Figure 98 *Photographs showing Quarter's Area and tenant cabins within historic agricultural zone. Top image shows the ruins of the Gabe Nargot Cabin (STA 2020). Middle image, shows view looking south to the South Tenant cabin with agricultural fields in background (STA 2017). Bottom image shows view of the South Tenant Cabin with Seed House visible in background (STA 2020).*

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Figure 99 *View from park maintenance drive looking south across adjacent agricultural fields (STA 2017).*

Agricultural Fields, Seed House/Gin Area, Wagon Shed - Park Maintenance & Service Drive

At the southern end of the site, a gravel service drive leads from a service gate at Hwy 494 northwest past the rear of the South Tenant House and Overseer's House and through open fields towards the former Gin site and Seed House, which has been rehabilitated for park maintenance activities and auxiliary services (**Figure 100**). There is a gate in the fence to the rear of the South Tenant Cabin that leads across the service drive to the Seed House along a mown path, but the Park does not encourage visitors to access the area around the Seed House and gin stand. The path does not appear to be used frequently, and many visitors who make it to the south end of the Quarter's area probably return towards the Farm Lane and Main House, skipping the former Gin site and agricultural fields entirely, both because the area is occupied by maintenance equipment and storage and appears off-limits, and is exposed, unshaded, and a far walk in hot weather.

Indeed, maintenance activities, service drives, and staff parking occupy much of the small fragment of agricultural land contained within park boundaries around the Seed House and gin stand area. This hinders visitor access to the landscapes of labor, both because the service drive cuts the agricultural area off physically from the historic residential core, and because its occupation with maintenance activities conveys a not-so-subtle message to the public that the agricultural landscape, most strongly associated with the labor and legacy of the enslaved, sharecroppers and tenants of color, is secondary to that of house and garden, inhospitable, largely inaccessible and physically remote. This seems especially problematic given the current national dialogue on race, diversity and equity, and the Park's stated aspirations to be inclusive in its interpretation of the lives and lifeways of all past inhabitants of Oakland, owner and laborer alike.







Figure 100 *Photographs of Agricultural Fields, Seed House, Gin Site, and Wagon Shed. Top image shows the Service Road leading to the Seed House (STA 2017). Middle image shows the Seed House, with staff parking visible (STA 2017). Bottom image shows the Seed House and noncontributing utilities (STA 2017).*



Figure 101 *Photographs of former gin stand site, cistern and Seed House. Top image shows view looking north at the Gin Cistern in foreground and Seed House in background (STA 2017). Bottom image shows the Gin Cistern with agricultural fields behind (STA 2017).*

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Figure 102 *Above is the park service road connecting the Seed House and Wagon Shed, and below is the Wagon Shed and a temporary tented staging area, presumably used during the reconstruction of the cattle dipping vat (STA 2017).*

To the northeast of the Seed House is a gravel parking lot for park staff and long-term volunteers using the RV hookups or participating in auxiliary activities that occasionally occur here. Various utilities, propane tanks, RV hookups, and other non-contributing elements are scattered in the grassy landscape surrounding the structure (**Figure 100**). The Gin Cistern (part of the former Gin/archeological site) sits at the edge of the fields to the south of the Seed House, and the brick pedestals or foundations of the former gin stand are also visible nearby (**Figure 101**). Open views of agricultural fields on the adjacent lands (non-NPS) extend to the south; this is the only part of current Park property to capture the feeling and openness of the once expansive agricultural landscape at Oakland (**Figure 99**). From the Seed House, a gravel drive continues west towards the woodlands near the back of the property, then loops north and east to the Wagon Shed and nearby cattle dipping vat (reconstructed), to reconnect with the Farm Lane just south of the Entrance Pavilion (Figure 102). The Wagon Shed and cattle dipping vat area are probably also infrequently visited as they are somewhat easier to access by vehicle than on foot and are to the rear of the property.



Figure 103 *View from Hwy 119 bridge looking south at Cane River Lake (STA 2020).*

Lakefront Zone

The lakefront zone (Figure 59) protects the historic view shed and access to Cane River Lake (**Figure 103**) along the eastern edge of the property,[50] It is separated from the historic residential core by Hwy 494-119, which presents a physical but not a visual barrier. The embankment has become somewhat overgrown with volunteer vegetation, especially along its southernmost reach, so views of the lake are currently limited from inside the property. Residential development along the opposite side of the lake is especially visible from the entrance allée and store yard, where gaps in the vegetation allow glimpses of the lake (**Figure 104**). A large contemporary residence near the southern end of the site further impacts the lakefront viewshed (**Figure 97**) and suggests probable future encroachments (recreational, residential) if left unchecked. Opposite the Doctor's House, the zone provides potential access to the probable location of the former Oakland dock and warehouse site, as well as to the currently inaccessible 1912 steel-truss Bermuda Bridge (**Figure 105**), which has been highlighted for future stabilization and pedestrian use in a number of previous park planning documents (1997 CLI, 2001 GMP, Heritage area NR nomination draft). To provide future trail access to the bridge and dock area, a pedestrian cross walk would have to be developed across Hwy 494 here. The embankment was modified in 2010 by a series of engineered gabions meant to stabilize and prevent further erosion, but this has created new management challenges for the park as the structure itself is failing, and the volunteer vegetation that grows up through the gabion structure must now be managed using a boom mower and extension.

[50] This area was apparently acquired as two separate but adjacent parcels during the NPS purchase (1997-98). Details of the NPS land acquisition are addressed in the Historic Resource Study (2000, 9-2).



Figure 104 *Views along lakefront and Hwy 494, showing growth of batture vegetation through gabion structure along Cane River (STA 2020).*

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Summary of Existing Conditions by Landscape Characteristics:

Natural Systems and Features

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 view shed and physical connection to the former river that is a significant connection to the past and to the riverfront activity that was once essential to the life of the plantation. The modern bridge that crosses the lake near the south end of the property provides some of the best views of the former riverfront setting and of the 1912 metal-truss Bermuda Bridge (**Figure 105**). 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.



Figure 105 *Historic bridge with overgrowth of vegetation (STA 2017).*

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.[51]

Topography

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. As a result, 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 would have 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 House (where the pedestrian footbridge to the Quarter's 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 on-going maintenance activities (tire and machinery ruts).[52] It appears that there are micro depressions around the foundations of the main house and, as previously noted, the Bottle Garden too due to subsidence and/or erosion, which may perpetuate drainage issues in these areas. And since Bayou Brevelle lies off-site on adjacent property, the park has little control over drainage beyond the western property boundaries.

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

[51] For additional discussion of the potential impacts of global climate change on park resources, see HRS 10-3 to 10-7.

[52] This was noted by park maintenance staff during site visits.

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 view shed at Oakland (see **Figures 97 & 106**). 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.

Spatial Organization

As previously noted, 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 House 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 House, 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 House 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 riverfront 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 House 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 Quarter's 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 Quarter's 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.[53] 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 House, facing east but not directly overlooking the Tenant Cabins/former Slave Cabins, 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/former slave quarters—is not readily apparent and has probably diminished over time.[54] 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 Quarter's Area (Overseer's House and Tenant Cabins) 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.[55] 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 Quarter's Area, including the Overseer's House and the Slave/Tenant Cabins, and 3) the former Cotton Gin site and Seed House in the southwestern fields.[56]

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.

Views and Vistas

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 view shed maintenance) somewhat simpler. Modern residential

[53] The 1941, 1950, and 1966 aerials show a number of other tenant houses to the south of Hwy 494.

[54] It seems likely that the historic Slave Quarter's area was reconfigured with the rise of sharecropping and tenant farming, with some cabins moved or relocated to other areas of the property and fields to meet the evolving needs of sharecropper tenants for privacy or greater autonomy, or the family, who may have adapted some for alternate uses within the residential zone. Furthermore, by the mid-twentieth century, the Overseer's House and Tenant Houses functioned as independent residences (though still owned by the Prud'homme family) with their own yards, driveways, and possibly gardens, as evidenced by photos and aerials from mid-century. This probably served to diminish further any perceived historical spatial relationship among them.

[55] Mid-century aerials show two different but more direct lane routes from the highway to the Seed House/Gin area, straight and almost due west (1941, 1950), and then straight and northwesterly (1966). The current dogleg alignment to the north with a 90 degree turn to the west behind the Overseer's House first appears in the 1972 aerial. Until the 1960s, the lane to the Gin site bisected the Quarters area between the North and South Tenant Houses.

[56] An argument could be made for treating the Overseer's House as a separate character area distinct from the Tenant Quarters to the south, since it had a distinctive enclosed and vegetated landscape by the mid-twentieth century that no longer remains.

development (houses, mobile homes and camps) along the opposite bank of the lake encroach upon the view shed to the east, and residential development along Hwy 494 encroaches upon the view shed to the north looking across the meadows near the former fishing camp area and pecan grove (**Figure 106**). 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 view shed within the former Quarter's/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 House 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 (**Figure**s 7 & 30).



Figure 106 *Views out of site showing modern houses and overgrowth of batture vegetation (STA 2020).*

1

2

Vegetation

As noted above, understory and fence line vegetation seems to have declined somewhat in the last twenty years, probably due both to NPS removal of previous overgrowth and also to a park maintenance regime that favors string trimming, frequent mowing and herbicide application along fence lines. As a result, the interior of the site seems more open than one might expect and vegetation is thinning noticeably in certain areas, probably both from age and natural decline, and also from over-maintenance (maintenance that does not approximate the more varied, manual, or less intensive management methods of the historic occupancy period, which would have included haying, grazing, harvesting, scything, some mowing, pruning-garden horticulture, etc). 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, camellias) 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), 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.

The live oak allée at the Main House forms the most distinctive and formal vegetative space, complimented by a row of crape myrtles along the front fence line (**Figure 107**). The heavily shaded yard of the Doctor's House is another distinctive area combining mature canopy trees (oaks, magnolias) with a few surviving shrubs (nandina, camellias) and understory specimens (crape myrtle). The Pecan Grove to the north of the main house has been partially replanted by the NPS (2013-16), but the trees remain young and some have died and/or were damaged by Hurricane Laura, so it will take some time and probably a new concerted replanting strategy to restore a sense of the structure, high shaded canopy, and extent of the former orchard to this meadow-like area. 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 or other storm events.

A single pecan tree stands in the front yard of the store, shading the gas pumps (historic photos also show an osage orange that once stood next to the pumps--**Fig 19**). Another large osage orange (bois d'arc) still shades the East Pigeonnier and the edge of the Farm Lane, but it was damaged during a recent hurricane and is in decline.[57] A scattering of live oaks shades the Quarter's/Tenant Cabin area, with hackberry and other volunteer species along the fence line with Hwy 494. There is also a significant arching live oak that canopies the rear yard of the main house and creates a sense of spatial definition, as well as a large pecan near the southwest corner of the south side yard. Scattered volunteer trees stand along the fence lines to the rear of the property and near the wagon shed and cattle dipping vat. And as noted, the lakefront embankment is largely overgrown with volunteer vegetation.

[57] Bois d'Arc was a culturally significant source of hardwood for structures and fenceposts, and was commonly cultivated and prized on rural farm properties. The historic rustic bell tower was said to be built of bois d'arc wood (Fig 112).



Figure 107 *Historic live oak allée and former entrance drive looking east toward Cane River Lake (STA 2017).*

Circulation

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 House 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 House 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 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 House 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, **Figure**s 29-30). 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 House, Overseer's House and Quarter's 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.

Buildings and Structures

In the Historic Residential Zone, the Main House and Doctor's House 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 Quarter's Area/Tenant Cabins 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.

Constructed Water Features

The former minnow pond, which is now a dry, grassy depression in the meadow west of the Cook's Cabin, was once a significant constructed water feature on the current property. However, its liner failed at some point and it no longer holds water. Visitors can walk around the perimeter of the pond on a mown path that leads from the Cook's Cabin. The pond depression now serves as a reminder of the family's former fishing camp enterprise from the early-twentieth century (1920s).

Other constructed water features also include the drainage ditches and swales apparent near the edges of the main house front lawn and live oak allée, to the rear of the store, and the once vegetated swale line that cuts between the corn crib and corral areas (a pedestrian footbridge now crosses this swale to the rear of the Doctor's House), which historically cut across the fields to the southwest to connect to the constructed ponds and backswamp areas along Bayou Brevelle, features not on current park property (see 1941 aerial, **Figure** 29, for swale alignment).

There is a constructed (crawfish) pond off site to the west on former family land near Bayou Brevelle, but as it is no longer part of the Oakland unit, its condition is unknown. If the NPS were to acquire the former family lands extending back to Bayou Brevelle, this feature might need to be re-evaluated.

Small-Scale Features

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 House, 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.

CHAPTER 3: ANALYSIS AND EVALUATION

This chapter provides an evaluation of the historical significance of the Oakland Plantation Unit landscape and an analysis of its integrity using guidelines developed by the National Park Service. Under these guidelines, in order for a landscape to have historical significance, it must retain a level of physical integrity capable of conveying its historical and cultural associations. This implies a certain continuity of land use and management over the years, and at least partial preservation of significant landscape features and spatial relationships from periods in the landscape's past. Integrity is assessed by comparing a landscape's present (existing) condition with its condition during a determined period from the past, often referred to as the period of significance. Historical significance can then be attributed based on the measure of integrity retained from the period of significance. [58]

Period of Significance Discussion & Summary (1818-1960)

Oakland Plantation has a long and continuous history of vernacular agricultural land use going back to its origins in the early nineteenth century. The 1997 National Register (NR) listing for Oakland established the Period of Significance (POS) in the area of agriculture as 1818-1950. However, the National Historic Landmark (NHL) nomination, which was prepared in 2000-2001, expanded those dates from 1818 to 1960, to include the approximate date when the last sharecropper tenants left Oakland and when mechanical harvesters, herbicides, pesticides, and fertilizers were becoming commonly available and widely used. The findings of this CLR correspond with and corroborate the end date for significance established in the NHL documentation and in the 2001 GMP—1960. This is the date when the last tenant farmers vacated the property and mechanized agriculture and leasing fundamentally transformed traditional family agricultural practices and land use. Furthermore, no significant additions to landscape features or buildings on the part of the Prud'homme family appear to have occurred after 1960. [59]

As a cultural landscape, Oakland retains significance and integrity on multiple accounts: for its two hundred year continuum of evolving agricultural practice under the management of a single family, the Prud'hommes and for contributions to the preservation and understanding of historic cotton agriculture in the Cane River Valley; for its unique and extensive collection of Creole residential architecture, commercial and farm structures, and landscape features, and more broadly its presentation and preservation of Creole cultural heritage; and for its continuity of occupation, until mid-century, by generations of descendants of the formerly enslaved who first transformed Oakland's landscape during the Antebellum era, and whose descendants continued to shape the landscape from Emancipation until the mid-twentieth century as sharecroppers and tenant laborers residing on the land. This continuity of land use and labor, cultural tradition and exchange, working and dwelling on the landscape by multiple generations of the Prud'homme family and the enslaved, sharecropper and tenant laborers who made the plantation enterprise economically viable provides an unusually complex and detailed window into the past. And although the present Oakland unit represents only a fraction of the family's original landholdings, namely the historic residential core with a small portion of former agricultural land to the south and west, the property still retains much of its rural, riverfront setting. It also retains a portion of the plantation's

[58] It is important to note that the interpretive significance of a landscape is distinct from its historical significance, the latter being based on the integrity of existing features and physical characteristics; interpretive significance may be substantial even when the physical integrity of the landscape is not. When a landscape exhibits multiple periods of significance, analysis must be repeated for each significant period in the landscape's evolution in order to determine the most appropriate preservation strategy.

[59] The NPS did, however, remove a late 1950s or early-1960s cotton picker shed in the early 2000s, presumably because it fell outside of the period of significance.

former quarter's area, although fragmented and altered over time, including the overseer's house and two slave quarter dwellings which evolved into sharecropper/tenant housing and remained in use by tenants until approximately 1960. The former cotton fields of the plantation extend south along LA-494 and east across Cane River, and the wooded backswamps along Bayou Brevelle stand to the west, now borrowed views but a reminder of the once expansive holdings.

Assessment of Landscape Integrity

The National Register of Historic Places (NR) establishes the following 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.[60] 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 still apparent 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.

[60] The present-day Cane River was once the Red River, prior to the 1830s, after the latter waterway migrated east to a new channel. The lake was created from the river in the 1910s, when it was dammed at both ends.

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 House). 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) 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 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 House and their residential landscapes speak to the multi-generational occupation and management of the land by the extended Prud'homme 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) 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.

Analysis of Landscape Characteristics and Features

The following section focuses in more detail on key landscape characteristics and the contributions of various features within the established zones (visitor service/entrance zone, historic residential core, historic agricultural zone, and the lakefront zone) to the historic character, significance and integrity of the property.

Natural Systems and Features

The connection to Cane River is integral to the interpretation of the property, so the preservation and management of the Lakefront zone is an extremely important consideration for the park. This zone 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. The view shed from the property to the lake highlights the role that the river played in the origins of the plantation and the lakefront is currently an underutilized resource due to its relative inaccessibility. Historic photos suggest that the riverbank/lakefront was never entirely open but rather a combination of open and vegetated views. The possibility exists to connect visitors more strongly to the lake by trail in the future and to use the historic Bermuda Bridge, once stabilized, as a point of connection to the river and for views of Oakland from the water.

Riverbank and view shed of Cane River Lake: Contributing

The historic landscapes along Bayou Brevelle are no longer on park property or accessible to visitors, but they are within the view shed from the western edge of the park. For the park to gain access to this former backswamp region of the plantation would require future land acquisition from within the legislatively authorized boundaries.

Bayou Brevelle: off-site and non-contributing

Topography

The topography of Oakland grades almost imperceptibly back from the natural levee along Cane River 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.

Land Use

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). This, of course, means that the present-day NPS acreage includes almost none of the original agricultural fields to the south and southwest of the main house complex or 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 instead 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, were probably cornfields historically rather than cotton fields, but they do still evoke the openness and expanse of an agricultural landscape and offer views over cultivated fields to the south that were once part of Oakland's historic fields but are now off-site.

Spatial Organization

The historic spatial arrangement of the Bermuda/Oakland property was most 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 almost certainly 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 Prud'homme in 1919, as evidenced by a survey from that date in park possession (Fig 9). 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 House tract passed into the hands of Edward Carrington Prud'homme, Phanor's brother. After that point, the Doctor's House and Main House served as separate and distinct family residences, and the Doctor's House developed a more independent landscape and service areas as a result (the garage seems to date from around this period). In fact, the Doctor's House landscape could be considered a separate component landscape of the broader Oakland landscape for this reason.[61]

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 and, judging by photographs going back to the 1940s, retains a reasonably high degree of integrity to its mid-century or early twentieth century configuration, apart from some minor additions (mainly signage) at the lakefront end (see **Figure 24**). 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.[62] After the Prud'hommes

[61] Furthermore, it was acquired by the NPS from Doris Vincent in 1998 as a separate parcel from the main house tract.

[62] Although several sources assert that the allee was planted around 1826 after the Main House was completed, the trees, along with other significant specimens on site, could be dated through core sampling to establish a firmer date for planting.

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 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. If we accept that the Bottle Garden too dates from this early era, the front landscape of the main house retains a high degree of spatial integrity. Some features, including the Bicentennial Farm sign and Oakland 1821 Entrance gate, were added in the 1970s and 1980s, and while they may post-date the period of significance, they do not detract from the overall setting (compatible).

Mid- to late-twentieth century changes to field patterns, fence lines and circulation in the landscape at Oakland are fairly well-documented in the sequence of aerial photographs captured from 1941 onward (**Figures 29-46**). 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 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 washer woman's cabin) in the fishing camp area after the 1960s. It is not clear 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.

Also notable from the aerials is a changing road realignment for the lane to the seed house/gin site (there were at least 3 different alignments from 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 (see discussion of the Metoyer photos and sketch plan in the Site History).

The exact location and extent of former vegetable and kitchen gardens for the property's various residences—Main House, Doctor's House, Overseer's House, Tenant Houses—is not particularly well documented by photography or visual evidence, but 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.[63] Obviously, the front/rear yard distinctions remain clearer at the Main House and Doctor's House, and these residences also retain their major dependencies, outbuildings, fenced enclosures, drive alignments and cisterns, but these features and the sense of independent enclosure have been almost entirely lost at the Overseer's

[63] Mid-twentieth century aerials and family photos show a defined front and rear yard of trees and shrubs, surrounded by a picket fence, at the Overseer's House. Park files contained no analogous photos to document the existence or condition of landscape features, yards or gardens at the tenant cabins during their occupation (until the late 1950s), apart from the internal driveway network visible in aerial photos. It seems possible that descendants of the last tenants (Helaires or others) might possess family photos taken near these cabins showing landscape features, which might aid in interpretation or restoration efforts in the future.

House and the Tenant Cabins/Former Slave Cabins, 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 House, Overseer's House, individual Tenant Cabins) has diminished the sense of these areas as independent households, at least during the twentieth century, within the larger Oakland landscape. Of course, some of this can be attributed to the consolidation of these once separate residential parcels under a more homogeneous management regime during the park era, as well as to the loss of historic fence lines and yard enclosures, especially at the Overseer's House, and possibly at the Tenant Cabins too, that would contribute to the story of each. Both are part of the continuum here, 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.

Views and Vistas

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 view shed from the core of the property, especially along the north, east, and south property boundaries. Fortunately, although views of contemporary residential development along the lake and Hwy 494 certainly detract from the integrity of feeling and setting in areas near the perimeter of the property, they are not so obtrusive or prevalent within the historic residential core, which is still fairly well shaded by mature vegetation, to compromise the broader integrity.

Vegetation

A general survey of family photos and HABS documentation of Oakland from the 1920s to the 1960s routinely shows a relatively high level of maintenance and upkeep of vegetation and vegetated landscape features, at least near the primary residences. However, this appears to have gradually shifted after the 1960s as tenant day laborers moved away, agriculture became more mechanized, and the family stopped maintaining parts of the property to the same levels as previously. By the time the NPS took over management of the property in 1998, heavy overgrowth had overtaken many of the structures, and landscape features (fence lines, ditches, etc.) were obscured by vegetation. The NPS cleared this overgrowth during early stabilization efforts and now manages the site largely as a closely mown and park-like landscape in the historic residential core, with differential mowing heights to simulate more field-like conditions in outlying agricultural areas, former pastures, meadows, and fields As commonly occurs when agricultural landscapes cease to be working landscapes and become interpretive sites or parks, vegetation may be gradually and almost imperceptibly groomed away by contemporary park management practices, which favor industrial lawn mowers and string trimmers over grazing, haying and more manual methods. [64] Furthermore, a gradual thinning and loss of vegetation (specimen trees, shrubs, volunteer vegetation, annuals, perennials) tends to occur naturally over time due to storm damage, disease, and natural decline.

[64] Recently the park has taken to spraying broad-leaf herbicide along fence lines and other hard to mow areas in order to control weeds, but inconsistent application and/or overspray creates unsightly patches of brown or dead grass that is neither attractive nor reflective of historic fence line conditions. Historically, fence lines were only groomed to the extent that livestock browsed there.

Park management practices and loss of agriculture/ grazing have changed the visual texturing of the landscape over time, making it less farm-like and ultimately more lawn or park-like, opening up the understory and views in certain areas. The current park mowing regime, which has replaced haying or grazing in historic pasture and meadow areas with more frequent lawn mowing, has perhaps also encouraged the growth or recurrence of some undesirable species such as Johnson grass, while suppressing native grass species in the process.[65] Lawns of the residential yard areas are typically St. Augustine. Former pasture and paddock areas are no longer grazed or trodden by hoofs, which also makes the texturing more uniform and manicured.

Without the tangible presence of livestock and farm animals (cattle, chickens, horses) enlivening the various pens, paddocks, enclosures and farmyard scene with their sounds and aromas, and the irregular grazing patterns they produce, it is hard to capture the sense of a working landscape through mowing alone. Even when the structures, landscape features and visual elements remain relatively intact from the agricultural heyday of the property, visitors must use their imagination to "envision" a working landscape of sometimes messy textures (trodden muddy pastures and paddocks, woody or weedy fencerows, volunteer vegetation along boundaries and edges), sounds (the bell tower ringing out, cattle baying or horses neighing) and odors (manure) that are no longer present in the core landscape.

Because the Bottle Garden is the subject of a separate Cultural Landscape Report (by Liz Sargent), a more detailed vegetation survey and documentation of landscape conditions and integrity of this sub-landscape or character area will be reserved for that report. 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 probably needs 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 contributed to erosion and the decline or loss of vegetation in this area. [66]

The recently replanted jujube row along the south pasture fence line and the replanted Pecan orchard to the north of the main house are also significant 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 crape myrtles that line the front rail fence to either side of the entrance gate are also historic and contribute to the ornamental character of the front lawn. And certainly, the live oak allée is the most spatially significant vegetative feature contributing to the historic character of the main house landscape. There are several other mature specimen trees (a live oak and at least one pecan) in the rear and south side yards of the main house which are of similar age to the allée plantings and provide significant shade and spatial enclosure to these historic yard areas, contributing to their historic character and integrity.

[65] Close, more frequent mowing favors warm- or cool-season turf grasses with shallow spreading root networks, whereas seasonal haying or less frequent mowing at higher blade heights favors clump forming native grasses, whose root systems may be damaged and growth suppressed by frequent close mowing.

[66] The 1987 HABS drawing set for Oakland provides documentation of the Bottle Garden prior to NPS acquisition, when the Prud'homme family was still actively living in the Main House and maintaining its landscapes. Drawings include the layout of paths and parterre beds, as well as a species key for ornamental plantings within the garden beds and perimeter.

Circulation

The Park has added a new layer of visitor service infrastructure since 2001 that has to be evaluated as part of the analysis. The reduction in acreage during park acquisition and the construction of a new visitor entrance drive, parking lot, and entrance pavilion effectively reoriented the main approach to the property to the west in order to create a new centralized (and controlled) "back entrance." Furthermore, the repurposing (adaptive reuse) of the Doctor's House, Seed House, and Store to house 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 riverfront and along the live oak allée.[67] 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).

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 makes 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 has already completed studies for a new park trail system and interpretive waysides to be installed within the next two to three years.

The current service drive to the seed shed/maintenance area follows an awkward and almost right angular alignment that dates from the 1970s (see Figure 109, comparative aerials), 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.[68] This internal system of lanes between the main farm lane, overseer's house, tenant houses, 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 historic farm lane alignment (at least in the early- to mid- twentieth century, and as evidenced by the aerials) consisted of an east-west stretch from Hwy 494 to the West Pigeonnier, then a north-south dogleg to the rear of the Doctor's House/corral shed, and then a southwesterly turn along the historic drainage swale between the corn crib and corral back to the constructed ponds along Bayou Brevelle. 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. 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.

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[67] Obviously this would have been challenging from a visitor use perspective due to parking and space considerations.

[68] The second alignment variation, which appears in the 1966 aerial, shows the drive entering from Hwy 494 south of the south tenant house, and then running northwest in a straight line to the gin site. This drive alignment no longer bisected the tenant house area but is probably located outside of current park property.

Buildings and Structures

The dates of construction, conditions and contributing/non-contributing status of buildings and structures to Oakland's historical significance have been addressed in other reports (HRS, NR, NHL, CRIS), so the focus here is more on their spatial or space-defining contributions to the landscape in aggregation, the role that they play in defining or reinforcing unique sub-landscapes (yards, allées, passageways, edges) or character areas (quarter's 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, so it is not surprising that family oral history and archeology have revealed that a number of the smaller structures have been moved over time, and that there is uncertainty about the location of some structures in earlier eras. This holds true for the Cook's Cabin, which was relocated to the meadow north of the main house as a fishing camp in the late 1920s from an earlier location, presumably nearer the current kitchen wing or rear of the house. 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 1950s-60s), but it had vanished by the 1970s – again, its former location is unknown.

The main house privy was also moved by the NPS from a location behind the tractor shed to its current location to approximate its historic location before indoor plumbing was installed in the house (the privy appears in several historic family photographs but appears to be slightly further south than its current location). Family interviews have revealed that the West Pigeonnier was moved, though not far from its original location, at some point mid-century, in order to widen lane access for new wider farm equipment. The historic quarter's/tenant house area presents a similar case, where the exact location and configuration of original dwellings is unknown. Were they 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.

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, it seems likely that both 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, although 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 historically in this area.

Due to their historical evolution, evolving from slave quarters in the early-nineteenth century to sharecropper and tenant houses after Emancipation up until the 1950s, the tenant houses are a reminder of the antebellum plantation landscape that was dependent upon enslaved labor. The exact location, number and spatial arrangement of Oakland's slave quarters during the antebellum era is unknown, although,

judging by extant examples, such as at CARI's sister unit Magnolia Plantation, the cabins were typically configured in a compact linear or gridded arrangement in close physical and visual proximity to the overseer's house, but probably out of the line of sight of the main house and possibly also the Doctor's House.[69] 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 a number of other tenant houses scattered across the fields to the south of current park property and along Hwy 494 near the river, but several of those have disappeared even in recent years to development along the river. As a result, the quarter's 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.

Constructed Water Features

There is a notable system of 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 Ts to the south just behind the Store into a short section of exposed clay pipe (Figure 70). This swale captures water draining off the south edge of the entrance drive/allée (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. There are additional swales to the north of the entrance allée that convey water away from the house and front lawn area towards the northwest, and to the rear of the Doctor's House near the corral, 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 (see Figures 29-30).[70] The only other constructed water features 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. The park maintains a mown path around the edge for interpretive purposes.

Small-Scale Features

The legibility of historic field patterns, livestock enclosures, and specialized yards around structures is obviously 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 some recommendations for removal or restoration of these where documentation seemed to justify such changes. Key areas where fence lines have been lost since mid-century or during NPS management include the North Pasture or meadow area around the fishing camp/Cook's Cabin, and a fence line along the north edge of the main house yard and boundary with the north meadow that shows up in HABS documentation from the early 2000s (**Figure 111**). However, this fence does not seem to appear in images or aerials prior to 1976, and thus is probably not historic. This fence probably served as a boundary between

[69] The Doctor's House was presumptively built around 1835 for one of the Prud'homme sons, but the plantation doctor, Dr. Leveque, took up residence in the 1860s, hence the name.

[70] This large vegetated swale appears prominently in the 1941 and 1950 aerials cutting across the fields to the southwest just north of the Seed House but vanishes after the 1966 aerial, presumably due to the transformation and consolidation of field patterns to accommodate large-scale mechanized agriculture.

the main house yards and the pecan grove and fishing camp areas in the late twentieth century. It was removed by the NPS.



Figure 108 *General view from vicinity of entrance gate looking north to cook's house (HABS, Jack Boucher 2002).*

Photos of the fishing camp area during a rare snow, as well as the historic aerials) show two cabins, presumably the Cook's Cabin (extant) and the Washer Woman's Cabin (non-extant), and fence lines bounding this area from the main house to the south and from the front pasture area to the north (see Figure 15). [71] Previous research also established the presence of late-nineteenth century grass tennis courts in this area near Hwy 494, but it does not suggest whether they were enclosed or fenced from the fishing camp area to the west.

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. Photographs 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. 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 (see Figures 7-8). This feature has been lost.

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The landscape has lost several significant and frequently referenced small-scale features that could aid in the interpretation of farm life and plantation rituals, notably the Bell Tower in the south yard of the Main House, which is documented in historic photographs and was constructed of rustic wood (bois d'arc) framing (**Figure 112**). 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. it is an important feature to preserve/restore as part of the bell tower story.



Figure 109 *Comparative aerials (1941, 1950, 1966, 1972) of Quarter's Area and Gin Site, showing progressive changes to driveways and yard configurations at Tenant Houses, as well as alterations to Gin Site (STA 2020).*

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Figure 110 *Comparative aerials (1941, 1950, 1966, 1972) of Fishing Camp and Pecan Grove area, showing loss of Washerwoman's Cabin, and changes to fence lines, vegetation, and enclosures over time (STA 2020).*

1

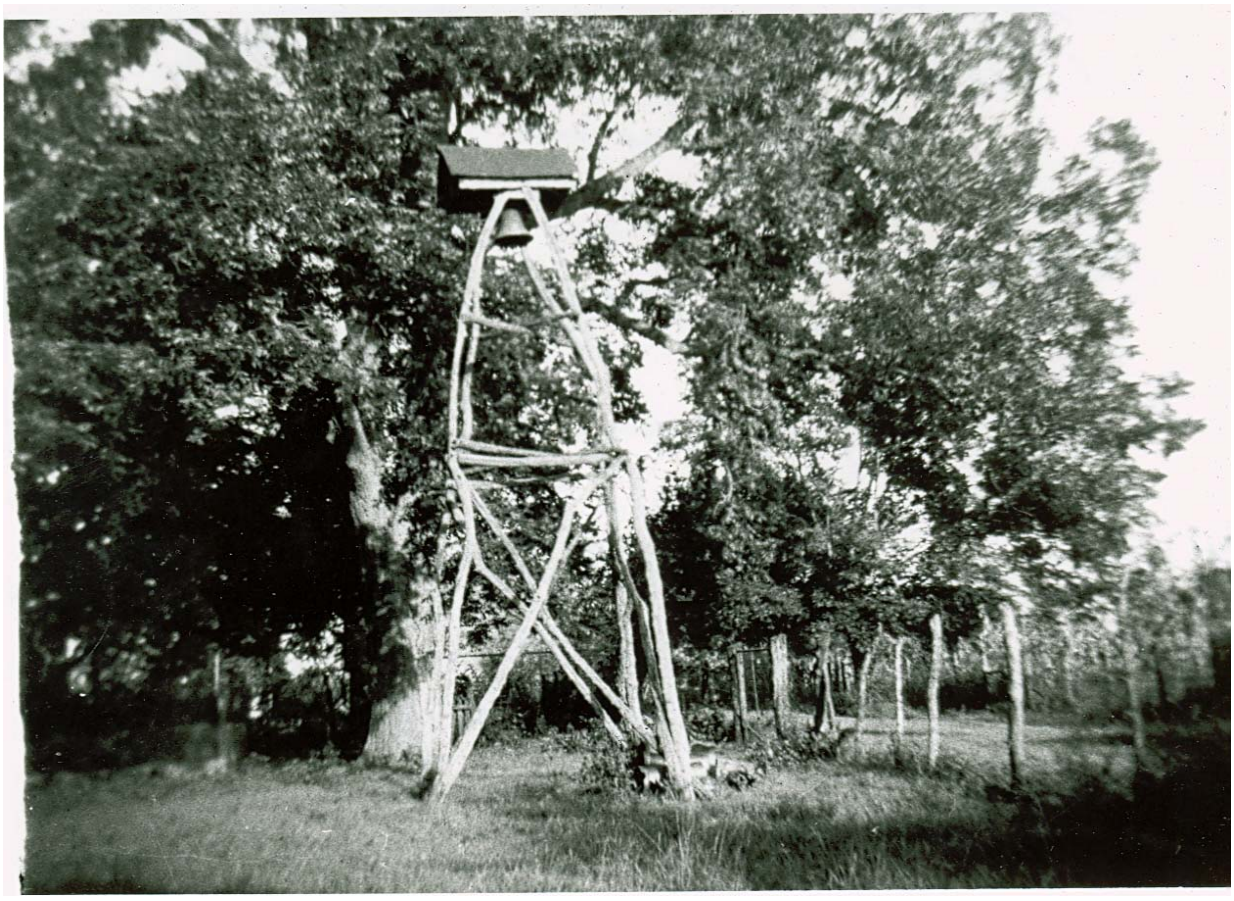


Figure 111 *Oakland Plantation Belltower (Vivian Duggan Collection, date unknown).*

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 house, 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.[72]

Archeological Sites

The park 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

[72] Though it might be cost prohibitive to do so, restoring some of the cisterns (especially at the main house) to working condition might aid with drainage around the house foundations and would provide more vivid interpretive opportunities.

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 in the northeastern corner of the property, and perhaps, most interestingly for fleshing out the story of labor and laborers at Oakland, the quarter's 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 Quarter's/Tenant 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 African-American/former slave 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. The park would be wise to include this parcel in future land acquisition planning so that it is not lost to future generations and can be incorporated more fully into the visitor experience.

Statement of Significance/National Register Listing

In order to be eligible to the National Register of Historic Places, a landscape must meet one or more of the following criteria for historical significance, in addition to possessing an adequate measure of integrity:

A) be associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history;
B) be associated with the lives of persons significant in our past;
C) embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or that represent the work of a master, or that possess high artistic values, or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction; or
D) have yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Oakland Plantation was listed to the National Register of Historic Places in 1979, twenty years before the NPS assumed ownership of the current and much smaller Oakland Unit. The property was nominated under categories A and C, for its historical significance in the areas of agriculture (Period of Significance, 1818-1950), and architecture (Period of Significance, 1818-mid-nineteenth century). Because Oakland's original nomination came before the broad recognition of the contribution of the cultural landscape to historic significance and prior to the establishment of a methodology for assessing landscape integrity, the earlier document focused almost exclusively on descriptions of its Creole architectural heritage and its continuous agricultural history, rather than on the contributions of landscape features. [73]

The NR listing established the Period of Significance in the area of agriculture as 1818-1950, an end date that should be extended to 1960 for the cultural landscape based on the findings of this report; this date represents the end of sharecropper/tenant occupation and the decline of manual agriculture at Oakland, a significant aspect of the plantation story. Furthermore, descriptions of the bottle garden and live oak allée, the most distinctive designed landscape spaces on the property, should be expanded and these features

[73] Prior to the 1990s, most properties were evaluated and assessed based largely on their architectural features so many pre-1990s nominations lack any significant description of landscape elements as contributing features.

reassessed as contributing elements to historic significance, along with expanded descriptions of the house yards, farm enclosures, historic fence lines, Doctor's House landscape and other historic landscape elements. Once the separate Cultural Landscape Report for the Bottle Garden 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.

Statement of Significance/National Historic Landmark Designation

In 2000-2001, a separate National Historic Landmark (NHL) nomination was prepared for Oakland, with updated descriptions of the property and its Period of Significance included. The 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." [74] Consequently, Oakland was designated 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).[75] The Period of Significance (POS) for the NHL listing extends from 1818 to 1960, the approximate date when the last sharecropper tenants left Oakland. This end date differs from the 1950 end date for the POS in the NR listing, but corresponds with that of the 2001 GMP.

Although there is little to no mention of the landscape setting or specific landscape features in the NHL documentation, it does at least list the bottle garden and allée as contributing sites but provides no description of these features or statement of their significance. No mention is made of the Cane River setting. And while the significance section includes a statement noting the continuity of Prud'homme family ownership and management to historical significance, it does not include any explicit mention or description of the multiple generations of enslaved, sharecropper and tenant laborers who made the plantation enterprise economically viable, and indeed built the Creole structures, plowed the fields, picked the cotton, tended the gardens, and shaped the landscapes of Oakland with their labor for some hundred and fifty years. This now seems like an egregious oversight.

Furthermore, the documentation does not include a statement of significance or evaluation of landscape integrity based on the categories of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. Given the potential of Oakland's landscape (the Quarter's Area especially) to yield future archeological information related to the lives of sharecroppers, tenant farmers, or the formerly enslaved, it is possible that the property could additionally be considered under Criterion 6, but this would require further archeological investigation and extensive supporting documentation. Ultimately, the current NHL

[74] Oakland NHL description, Fricker, 2000.

[75] The six criteria for National Historic Landmark consideration are: Criterion 1: Properties that are associated with events that have made a significant contribution to, and are identified with, or that outstandingly represent, the broad national patterns of United States history and from which an understanding and appreciation of those patterns may be gained; Criterion 2: Properties that are associated importantly with the lives of persons nationally significant in the history of the United States; Criterion 3: Properties that represent some great idea or ideal of the American people; Criterion 4: Properties that embody the distinguishing characteristics of an architectural type specimen exceptionally valuable for a study of a period, style, or method of construction, or that represent a significant, distinctive and exceptional entity whose components may lack individual distinction; Criterion 5: Properties that are composed of integral parts of the environment not sufficiently significant by reason of historical association or artistic merit to warrant individual recognition but collectively compose an entity of exceptional historical or artistic significance, or outstandingly commemorate or illustrate a way of life or culture; and Criterion 6: Properties that have yielded or may be likely to yield information of major scientific important by revealing new cultures, or by shedding light upon periods of occupation over large areas of the United States. Such sites are those which have yielded, or which may reasonably be expected to yield, data affecting theories, concepts and ideas to a major degree.

listing should be amended to include a Statement of Significance (SOS) narrative for each of the criteria for which the property was designated (1, 4 & 5):[76]

Criterion 1—Oakland Plantation represents a continuum of American agricultural, social, and rural environmental history. The main house, supporting structures and associated landscapes are important expressions of the French Creole cultural heritage that developed in the Cane River region. 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. Furthermore, the survival of a portion of the former quarter's area with overseer's house and tenant cabins/former slave dwellings provides potential insight into the lives of the generations of sharecroppers and tenant farmers who worked the land after Emancipation, just as their enslaved ancestors had before.

Criterion 4—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 should be added to the statement of significance under Criterion 4—it is one of the last extant bottle gardens in the United States, in its original location with its original materials.

Criterion 5—the architectural, landscape, and archeological resources of the Oakland unit collectively exemplify the major components of a working plantation with its residential structures and dependencies, its farm-related outbuildings and livestock enclosures, its commissary, and ornamental buildings, like the pigeonniers that served both alimentary and plantation storage function.

In general, the NR and NHL documentation, as well as the original LCS (now CRIS) inventory for Oakland, focuses almost exclusively on the site's historic structures (houses, quarters, cabins, outbuildings, farm structures), apart from two archeological sites (the former gin stand pedestal site and the Gabe Nargot cabin ruins) and several small-scale features (the house entrance gate and historic cisterns associated with various buildings). An argument can and probably should be made to include significant landscape features from both the historic residential core and the farm/agricultural landscape to these documents and to the CRIS inventory, including the farm lane, the live oak allée, the bottle garden, the viewshed to Cane River, possibly the 1959 rail fence along the front lawn area, and the restored gas pumps & Esso sign from the Store yard, along with confirmed archeological sites (the blacksmith/ forge site), as well as the historic slave/African-American cemetery (off-site).

Conclusions: Historical Significance/ Period of Significance Assessment (1818-1960)

Oakland's vernacular landscape represents a continuum of evolution through time rather than a static moment, and research for this CLR affirms an end date of 1960 for the Period of Significance for the landscape as a whole. This corresponds to the end of sharecropping and tenancy at Oakland, when field patterns began to change and highways brought new development to the region, parallels a similar decision made at the Magnolia Unit to use the end of tenancy as a bookend date for interpretation, and is in keeping with the recommendations of the 2001 GMP final draft. Obviously, the landscape is complex and layered, and different parts (character areas) may bear more integrity to the mid-twentieth century than others. In fact, it could be argued 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 a later era (possibly even 1980s) than the Historic Agricultural Core, which

[76] The current SOS lists the criterion numbers but provides no associated narrative to support the designations.

now is fragmented and has experienced greater change to context and function since mid-century (hence the 1960 end date). However, the residential areas too continued to evolve, change, and adapt until at least mid-century, to facilitate new commercial ventures and heritage/tourist activities as alternative revenue streams for the family, necessitating modifications and adaptations to the landscapes of the residential core.

In the Historic Agricultural Core, the former Quarter's Area/Tenant Cabins have experienced more alteration and change to their landscape context and spatial configuration since their construction in the nineteenth century as slave dwellings than areas closer to the Main House. The same is true of the former Gin site too. As a result, 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. But they do remind us of the landscapes of labor that made the entire plantation enterprise possible and are an essential and invaluable component of a balanced interpretation of Oakland's landscape legacy and the generations of human occupation and labor that shaped it. Although there are still many historical ambiguities and unknowns surrounding the exact location and orientation of fields, turn rows, and crop patterns of the former agricultural landscape, what is clear from research is that in its reduced and fragmented condition, the whole of that landscape is not well represented by current park holdings, nor is it particularly accessible to visitors, cut off both by the service drive and by its relative remoteness from the visitor parking and historic residential core. Furthermore, the fact that park maintenance facilities and storage occupy much of this already limited fragment of agricultural land creates the unfortunate public perception that the landscapes of labor are somehow less significant and consequential to the visitor experience and park interpretation than the historic residential areas. This is in contra-indication to the recommendations of the 2001 GMP, which stipulated that the Seed House and gin area should be used only temporarily for maintenance activities during Phase 1 site development, and then eventually returned to educational use as maintenance activities were relocated offsite or to new facilities in the Development Management Area during Phase 2. In contrast, the historic residential core remains remarkably intact as an evolving expression of multiple generations of Prud'hommes and the enslaved, sharecropper, and tenant laborers who built, cultivated and maintained the landscape, structures, and cultural traditions of Oakland alongside the Prud'hommes for nearly one hundred and fifty years.

Although the historic residential landscape retains significant integrity from a spatial perspective, what has most certainly been lost are the sounds, smells, textures, and physical activities of the past – mules whinnying in the pastures and chickens clucking in the yards, the musky smell of manure, steamboat whistles blasting out from the dock, the sounds of laborers singing in the fields, the whoosh of the steam gin, the peal of the plantation bell announcing lunch time, cotton lint floating on the breeze, the squeals of Prud'homme, Metoyer, and Helaire children playing in the yards or swimming in the lake, the workaday life of farm activity that must now be largely imagined. And of course, the sights and sounds of the plantation past were not all uniformly bucolic or pleasant, the groans from back-breaking labor and the crack of the whip too were equally part of the plantation landscape, although we do not know to what extent such punishments were used by Oakland's overseers. This is, of course, the quandary of heritage and the past, interpreting and managing a landscape whose sole function—whose use and users—has fundamentally changed, and bringing it to life for contemporary visitors in all its complexity, messy vitality, and unvarnished contradiction. Such is the challenge at Oakland.

Figure 112 *Contributing Features Table (STA)*

Feature Name	Date of Origin	Contributing	Non-Contributing	Missing	Condition
Natural Systems and Features					
Cane River (Cane River Lake)	No Date	X			Good
Missing Natural Systems and Features					
Bayou Brevelle	No Date		X	Off-site	Unknown
Savane (woodland pasture to west)	N/A		X	Off-site	Unknown
Topography					
Cane River natural levee/embankment	N/A	X			Good/Fair
Land Use					
Tourism (Recreation and Heritage)	1998		X		N/A
Missing Land Uses					
Residential	1818			X	N/A
Agriculture	1818			X	N/A
Cultural Traditions					
Traditional building methods	1818	X			Good
Historic agricultural practices	1818			X	N/A
Sharecropping/Tenancy	1866			X	N/A
Tourism (Recreation and Heritage)	1998		X		Good
Buildings and Structures					
Main House	1820s	X			Good
Doctor's House	1835-60s	X			Good
Store	1873	X			Good
Overseer's House	1860s	X			Good
Tenant Cabins (North & South)	19th C	X			Fair
Seed House	Unknown	X	compatible	rebuilt	Good
Mule Barn (former Smokehouse)	19th C	X			Good
Corn Crib (Square Crib)	19th C	X			Good
Rear & Side Yard Dependencies, Main House (7)	19th C	X			Fair
Rear Yard Dependencies, Doctor's House (3)	Unknown	X			Fair
Carriage House	19th C	X			Good
Carpenter's Shop	19th C	X			Good
Corral Shed	19th C	X			Fair
Wagon Shed	Unknown	X	compatible	rebuilt?	Good
Tractor Shed	C. 1952	X			Good
Doctor's Barn	Unknown	X	compatible	rebuilt?	Good
Pigeonniers (East & West, 2)	19th C	X			Fair
Entrance Pavilion (NPS)	c. 2003		X		Good
Historic Bermuda Bridge	1912		compatible	off-site	Poor
Missing Buildings and Structures					
Original Mule Barn	19th C			X	N/A
Blacksmith's Shop/Forge	19th C			X	N/A
Original Mule Gin	19th C			X	N/A
Steam Gin Barn/Gin buildings	19th C			X	N/A
Various Tenant Cabins/Former Slave Quarters	19th C			X	N/A
Washerwoman's Cabin	19th C			X	N/A
Cotton Picker Shed	c. 1960			X	N/A
Dock & Warehouse (on riverbank)	late 19th C.			X	N/A

Feature Name	Date of Origin	Contributing	Non-Contributing	Missing	Condition
Spatial Organization					
Historic Lane Alignment					Good
Pecan Grove/Orchard	20th C	X			Poor
Live Oak Allee – Main House Entrance Drive	1820s	X			Good
Bottle Garden/Parterre Garden	1820s	X			Fair
African American/ Slave Cemetery (adjacent land)	19th C		compatible	Off-site	unknown
Missing Patterns of Spatial Organization					
Historic field patterns	19th-20th C			X	N/A
Historic dock/landing on riverfront	19th C			X	N/A
Vegetable gardens, residential	19th-20th C			X	N/A
Cluster Arrangement					
Rear Yard Dependencies – Main House	19th C	X			Good
Rear Yard Dependencies – Doctor's House	unknown	X			Good
Missing Cluster Arrangement					
Vegetation					
Live Oak Allee (8 mature oaks, 2 replantings)	1820s	X			Good
Crepe Myrtles along front lawn fence, Hwy 494	unknown	X			Good
Pecans in grove (newly replanted 2013-16)	2016	X			Fair/Poor
Live Oak in rear yard, Main House	1820s?	X			Good/Fair
Pecan in south side yard, Main House	unknown	X			Good
Catalpas/ pecans/ oaks in fishing camp area	1920s	X			Fair/Poor
Live Oaks to rear of Doctor's House	19th C.	X			unknown
Live Oaks in Tenant/ Quarter's area	unknown	X			unknown
Jujube/ Chinese date trees (some replanted)	unknown	X			Good
Fruit trees (fig, plums - replanted), side yard	unknown	X			Good
Missing Vegetation					
Agricultural Crops (corn, cotton)	19th-20th c			X	N/A
Pecan Orchard (mature specimens)	1920s			X	N/A
Rose arbor over front gate, Bottle Garden	pre-1920s			X	N/A
Yard plantings at Overseer's House	pre-1960s			X	N/A
Fruit trees (orchard species)	19th c			X	N/A
Full Extent of Agricultural Crops	19th c			X	N/A
Pecans at Corral/ Corral shed	pre-1960s			X	N/A
Osage Orange/ Bois d'Arc (front of store & other)	unknown			X	N/A

Feature Name	Date of Origin	Contributing	Non-Contributing	Missing	Condition
Circulation					
Farm Lane (Hwy 494 to Corral/Corn Crib area)	19th-20th C	X			Good
Quarter's path (rear of Dr's House to Tenant Cabins)	2000s	?	X		Fair
Service drive to Gin site/ maintenance area	1970s-2000s		X		Good
Rubber Mat Visitor paths & composite landings	c. 2005		X		Poor
Visitor Entrance Drive (NPS) & Parking	c. 2002		X		Good
Staff Parking (at Doctor's House) & service drive	2000s		X		Good
Missing Circulation Features					
Historic lane alignment to Gin site from Hwy 494	pre-1960s			X	N/A
Internal lanes/drives, Tenant/Quarter's area	pre-1960s			X	N/A
Farm Lane (corn crib area to Bayou Brevelle)	pre-1960s			X	N/A
Views and Vistas					
Views of Cane River (Lake)	N/A	X			Fair
Views of Agricultural Fields (to south-southwest)	N/A	X			Good
Small Scale Features					
Rail Fence, Main House Front Lawn & Store area	1959	X			Good
Bottle Garden Picket Fence	pre-1920s	X			Poor
"Bicentennial Farm" sign	1980s		compatible		Good
1821 Oakland Entrance Sign & Gate	1971		compatible		Good
Wire fencing along Farm Lane/ Bell Gate	unknown	X			Poor
Cisterns (various)	19th C.	X			Fair
Boundary fences (post and wire)	unknown		compatible		?
Gin stand foundations (ruins)	19th C	X			Poor
Cattle Dipping Vat (reconstructed)	c. 2016	?	compatible	rebuilt	unknown
Corn Crib & Corral Shed plank fencing	pre-1960s	X			Good
Picnic tables (NPS)	2000s		X		Fair
Missing Small Scale Features					
Bell Tower	Unknown			X	N/A
Picket Fence yard enclosure, Overseer's House	pre-1960s			X	N/A
Grass Tennis Courts (north meadow/front pasture)	1890s			X	N/A
Constructed Water Features					
Minnow Pond (depression)	1920s		compatible		poor
Drainage swales in front lawn/allée, Main House	unknown		X		fair
Drainage swale to rear of Dr's House/ Corral	pre-1960s		X		unknown
Missing Constructed Water Features					
Vegetated Drainage Swale/Ditch, corral area to Bayou Brevelle	pre-1960s			X	N/A
Constructed ponds (crawfish ponds) along Bayou Brevelle	unknown		Compatible	off-site	unknown

PART 2: CHAPTER 4: TREATMENT

Introduction to Cultural Landscape Treatment

The focus for this CLR Part 2 is landscape preservation treatment for the Oakland Plantation cultural landscape. NPS uses the term "treatment" to describe the management plan that results from CLR analysis and evaluation of a landscape's site history and historical context, existing conditions, significance, and integrity. Treatment is the work carried out to achieve a cultural landscape's long-term preservation goals—in effect, it is an action plan. As the Cane River Creole National Historical Park (CARI) continues to refine and fulfill its mission, treatment must align with preservation best practices. Treatment includes recommendations for near and long-term management. These strategies are based on the landscape's significance, existing conditions, management constraints, and CARI's intended visitor experience.

America's current social and cultural climate mandates aggressively and dramatically addressing systemic racism and equity across disciplines. This is another factor that informs treatment recommendations related to Oakland's cultural landscape. Historically, landscapes of enslavement, which are as integral to American history as they are to the present and future, have been undervalued. As a result, many if not most of these landscapes have been lost to development or, especially in rural areas, forgotten and erased over time, only to be misrepresented and/or misunderstood as purely bucolic settings or repurposed as "back of the house" settings. Recommendations in this CLR include ways that CARI can proactively evolve the management and interpretation of Oakland Plantation's cultural landscape to reveal its foundational aspects of slavery and later, tenancy sharecropping.

Additionally, aspects of Oakland's cultural landscape face environmental threats, including changing river dynamics, impacts from more frequent and intense weather events, pests, and other factors that contribute to processes of landscape deterioration. Landscape preservation treatment recommendations seeks to elevate the visitor's understanding of the historic relationship between the Oakland Plantation cultural landscape and Cane River, to minimize further environmental deterioration, and aid in protecting its landscape character-defining features.

Collectively, the treatment recommendations seek to preserve the extant layers of historic landscape resources and, to the degree possible, to recapture the landscape's historic character through site-wide interventions that support landscape interpretation. Overall considerations include consistency in treating related CARI units and existing treatment guidance, cultural landscape treatment goals and objectives, ongoing and planned park projects, and proactively contributing to racial justice and climate resiliency. These considerations form the basis for determining the most appropriate treatment approaches for the Oakland Plantation cultural landscape.

Consistent Treatment of Unit Properties

CARI is responsible for the oversight and management of two sister units—Oakland Plantation (Oakland unit) and Magnolia Plantation (Magnolia unit). A Magnolia Plantation CLR, authored by Heritage Landscapes is currently underway. Given that the two properties have shared management and a related history, their treatments must align. Park Management provided the Magnolia Plantation CLR draft (2001) treatment recommendations to STA as reference during the development of the Oakland CLR treatment plan. Due to the high degree of overlap and similarity between the management issues and resources of the

sister units, and to ensure consistency of management, maintenance, and treatment approaches between the two units, the Magnolia CLR draft treatment is included as an appendix to this CLR.

The Treatment Recommendations section of this chapter focuses on recommendations unique to Oakland. Many recommendations in the Magnolia CLR draft are also relevant to Oakland's cultural landscape. In particular, many recommendations related to management, maintenance, and materials for fence types, paths, wayfinding, mowing regimes, and general care of significant trees and other vegetation should be consistent between the two units. Leadership and management at CARI should adapt and utilize these relevant Magnolia CLR recommendations at the Oakland property.

Cultural Landscape Treatment Goals and Objectives

Just as at Magnolia Plantation, landscape treatment goals and objectives at Oakland Plantation include preservation and stewardship to protect the cultural landscape of Oakland Plantation as a valued heritage asset, responding to contemporary needs and imperatives while conserving it as a place of learning available to the public. Oakland Plantation preservation treatment goals align with preservation treatment goals stated in the Magnolia Plantation CLR. Listed below as they appear in the Magnolia CLR, these goals establish conceptual guidance for landscape projects and management at Oakland:

- Apply NPS management guidance as directed through cultural landscape preservation documents
- Preserve unique aspects of historic character and contributing features
- Reestablish cohesion between preserved buildings and structures and the broader landscape
- Reinforce historic integrity of the landscape character areas (LCAs) to evoke historic spatial organization and land use
- Protect archeologically sensitive soil strata
- Steward the cultural landscape as a place of learning
- Accommodate compatible contemporary visitor uses
- Expand universal access for people of all abilities
- Balance preservation objectives with maintenance requirements for long-term sustainability
- Apply best practices to improve landscape adaptation and resilience

Treatment Approach

"The Secretary of Interior's Standards for Treatment of Historic Properties and the Guidelines for the Treatment of Cultural Landscapes" prescribes four treatment preservation approaches:

> *Preservation* requires "retention of the greatest amount of historic fabric, including historic form, features, and details as they have evolved over time."

> *Rehabilitation* "acknowledges the need to alter or add to a cultural landscape to meet continuing or new uses while retaining the landscape's historic character."

> *Restoration* allows for "the depiction of a landscape at a particular time in its history by preserving materials from the period of significance and removing materials from other periods."

> *Reconstruction* establishes a framework for "recreating a vanished or non-surviving landscape with new materials, primarily for interpretive purposes."[77]

The recommended treatment approach for the Oakland Plantation cultural landscape is primarily *preservation*, including retention and maintenance of existing landscape features and building clusters. Secondary treatment approaches include *rehabilitation* and limited *restoration* (stabilization) of historic small-scale features such as fencelines, *reconstruction* of small-scale features such as the bell tower and gate, guided by historic photo documentation, as well as *reconstruction*, such as gardens and replacement in kind of significant specimen tree species.

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—occupied by the Prud'homme family and relations, as well as by generations of enslaved, sharecropper, and tenant laborers—this CLR recommends treating the landscape and Period of Significance as a continuum through time, beginning in the 1820s[78] and ending in 1960. This end date coincides with the departure of the last tenant farmer and accelerated changes to the family farming operation. Although a precise date for the last tenant vacating is uncertain, oral history (with Al and Kenneth) suggests 1959 or 1960, and a sequence of aerial photos from the 1950s to early 1970s documents the changing management and ultimate abandonment of the tenant/quarters landscape around this point in time. Furthermore, no significant additions to the landscape (apart from minor fenceline or lane repairs) seem to have been made after this period, and photos substantiate a general increase in volunteer vegetation and decline in building maintenance after 1960. The Period of Significance and treatment approach proposed for Oakland are also consistent with the approach for Period of Significance and treatment established at Magnolia Plantation.

Summary of Treatment Focus and Priorities

The current visitor arrival experience, from the north and west, is problematic to a richer and more engaged landscape experience at Oakland in a number of ways: it deemphasizes the importance of Cane River (lake) to the history and site geography; despite the admirable planning intentions of the original GMP, from the perspective of physical proximity, it still inadvertently privileges the narrative and geography of the big house over that of labor and field. The history and evolution of Oakland's landscape is perhaps easiest to understand and interpret if approached first from the river, then from the landscapes of labor and agriculture to the south, with a progression towards the landscapes of dwelling and home to the north. Spatially and symbolically, it is these rhythms and rituals of time and place—the rhythm of the river, the rhythm of the fields, the rhythms and rituals of home—rather than individual structures or discrete landscape features that bound together Oakland's inhabitants, Prud'homme, Metoyer, Nargot and Helaire alike (insert other slave or sharecropper names here, perhaps a longer list), over multiple generations.

This suggests a broader planning perspective on the landscape at Oakland that might be tied to a reimagined visitor approach, from the south and east, using the river as an entry and orientation point into site geography, the Quarter's area and agricultural fields as an entrée into the rhythms of agricultural labor (daily, seasonal, annual—planting, weeding, harvesting, haying, ginning, repairing), with a progression towards the rhythms and rituals of domestic life and home—washing, drying, ironing, gardening, picking,

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[77] "The Secretary of Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties and Guidelines for the Treatment of Cultural Landscapes," U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, Washington, D.C. 1993.

78 The Prud-hommes claim that the family farmed the property prior to establishing permanent dwelling there in 1821. This CLR did not discover any substantiating evidence of this claim, however, if conclusive evidence later corroborates this claim, the Period of Significance should begin prior to 1821.

preserving, cooking, painting, repairing, mending, lime washing of buildings and tree trunks, etc. Many of the discrete landscape spaces (yards, pens, enclosures, orchards, fields) surrounding the residential structures are tied to these rituals and might be interpreted through the lens of shared activity and cultural practice.

At the broader landscape scale, we have the river to the east, and the slave cemetery to the west, symbolizing the larger progressions, rituals, and cycles of life and death at Oakland, with the river as plantation lifeblood (which supports the case for a riverfront walking approach from across the bridge), and the cemetery as place of burial and repose (which supports future acquisition of this tract as part of a future planning initiative). This could lead the Park into a multi-tiered approach to treatment that begins at the broadest planning level (site reorientation, visitor experience, future land acquisition, new trails and waysides, which are already underway) and then focuses downward or inward in scale towards discrete management issues (mowing, horticulture, drainage) related to individual character or management areas. Given its importance to the development of the site and region, Cane River is underutilized and underplayed in the overall site experience—its rhythms, ebbs and flows created this fertile landscape of levee and backswamp, and nurtured culture and dwelling over the course of geological, agricultural, and personal time. The river and the backswamp, labor and leisure, work and dwelling, commerce and recreation, all intertwined here to create the living landscape, the place we call Oakland.

Among the treatment recommendations, a few priorities—some of which will require an update to the GMP and future planning efforts—rise to the surface as being critical to the preservation and interpretation of this landscape. These include the following:

- **Elevate the connection to and importance of Cane River.** Strengthen the physical connection between the Oakland landscape and the lakefront so the visitor will better understand the historic connection.

- **Make legible the landscapes of labor and enslavement.** Through major circulation and land acquisition interventions, improve the visual and/or physical access to the landscapes of labor and enslavement, including agricultural lands and the African American/slave cemetery.

- **Make legible the "lived-on" (residential) vernacular landscape.** Preserve, rehabilitate, and reconstruct fencelines and enclosures, garden areas, and workyards in order to improve the legibility of residential areas to help the visitor comprehend this cultural landscape as a dynamic, "lived-on" vernacular landscape.

- **Celebrate distinctive vegetation features**. Strengthen the legibility of the pecan grove, develop a plan to preserve the live oak allée, preserve or replace-in-kind specimen trees, such as catalpa trees and crape myrtles, and create a demonstration garden(s) in proximity to the tenant area.

These priorities are reflected in the treatment recommendations and can be accomplished through numerous strategies, noted in the treatment recommendation table.

Treatment Recommendations for Oakland Plantation Cultural Landscape

Figure 113 *The following Treatment Recommendations are specific and unique to Oakland Plantation's cultural landscape.*

Treatment Recommendations for Oakland Plantation Cultural Landscape		
Landscape Characteristics (LC)		
Item #	Recommendation	Overlapping Recs
LC-1	*Reconstruction:* Using mowing patterns, delineate tenant spaces, such as small gardens and workyards.	
LC-2	*Rehabilitation:* In the future, add selective screening—or allow areas of successional growth to develop—along property boundaries in key locations where the views are particularly disruptive to the rural mood.	
LC-3	*Restoration:* Painted features on the landscape, including the Esso Sign and Post, Archway, National Bicentennial Farm sign, and fence features, should be restored in consultation with an architectural historian.	SSF-11

Natural Systems and Features (NSF)		
Notes: The connection to Cane River is integral to the interpretation of the property, so the preservation and management of the Lakefront zone is an extremely important consideration for the park.		
Item #	Recommendation	Overlapping Recs
NSF-1	*Preservation + Rehabilitation:* Protect the viewshed of Cane River/Lake; buffer from intrusive development where necessary, but retain some open viewlines.	VV-1
NSF-2	*Rehabilitation:* In the future, create visitor access between riverfront and Oakland landscape, using the Bermuda Bridge as a point of connection to the river for views of Oakland from the riverfront.	Cir-1
NSF-3	*Preservation + Rehabilitation:* In the future, acquire historic landscapes along Bayou Brevelle, so that the visitor has access to this important backswamp region of the plantation.	NSF-4
NSF-4	*Preservation + Rehabilitation:* In the future, acquire the former African American/slave cemetery in the backswamp area west of the current Park lands. It represents a disappearing/erased landscape of enslavement and must be preserved. If this area is made accessible, it will bring the visitor closer to the former backswamp region of the plantation. If this area is not made accessible to the public, it should be interpreted for its continuous African American occupation from the antebellum period until midcentury.	NSF-3, CT-4

Topography (Top)		
Item #	Recommendation	Overlapping Recs
Top-1	*Rehabilitation:* New visitor paths and raised or resurfaced park drives should be implemented to avoid subtle impoundments in the natural drainage patterns from front to back of property and create areas where rain waters collect.	Cir-8
Top-2	*Rehabilitation:* Because of the backward draining nature of Oakland's topography, care must be taken in any future infrastructure or circulation (path, road) improvements to properly address drainage flow to the west and to ensure that micro-impoundments do not occur, especially in heavy visitor use areas.	Cir-8
Top-3	*Preservation:* There is one notable system of swales still visible in the front lawn area of the Main House, with a long ditch-like depression running perpendicular to the river and drive edge just to the south of the live oak allée, and a short arm that Ts to the south just behind the Store to a short section of exposed clay pipe. This swale should be preserved and interpreted as part of the historic drainage system.	
Top-4	*Rehabilitation:* In the future, install sub-surface French drains with gravel or sand in the Bottle Garden to improve drainage and carry it away from the residence foundations.	
Top-5	*Preservation:* Periodically clean out drainage ditches and catch basins, to alleviate drainage issues	

Spatial Organization, Cluster Arrangement, and Land Use (SCL)		
Notes: The front/rear yard distinctions remain clearer at the Main House and Doctor's House, and these residences retain their major dependencies, outbuildings, fenced enclosures, drive alignments and cisterns. However, these features and the sense of independent enclosure have been almost entirely lost at the Overseer's House and the Tenant Houses/Former Slave Cabins, which now appear to sit 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 more to the agricultural landscape of labor and field in the nineteenth century, it obscures the fact that they served as dynamic and "lived-in" independent residences for much of the twentieth century.		
Item #	Recommendation	Overlapping Recs
SCL-1	*Reconstruction:* Using mowing patterns, delineate tenant spaces, such as small gardens and workyards.	AF-2
SCL-2	*Reconstruction:* Using mowing patterns or path materials, delineate former drive/lane alignments within Tenant/Quarter's area, and their connection to the Farm Lane and gin site lane (see 1941 & 1950 aerials)	AF-2
SCL-3	*Rehabilitation:* Move maintenance area to the current visitor entry area, in conjunction with the construction of a new visitor entry area.	Cir-4

Buildings and Structures (BS)		
Item #	Recommendation	Overlapping Recs
BS-1	*Preservation:* Because the exact location of the original historic quarters/tenant houses are unknown, additional archeology should be conducted, which might eventually reveal more clues to some of these questions: Were these dwellings moved or reconfigured and scattered through the landscape after Emancipation? How many dwellings were originally there? Did they have landscapes, yards and gardens of their own?	AF-3

Circulation (Cir)		
Item #	Recommendation	Overlapping Recs
Cir-1	*Rehabilitation:* In the future, create visitor access between riverfront and Oakland landscape, using the modern bridge deck as a point of connection to the river for views of Oakland from the riverfront.	NSF-2
Cir-2	*Rehabilitation:* Conduct long-range planning to relocate the visitor arrival sequence to the south, nearer to the landscapes of labor and enslavement (at the gin site or near the quarters area). Realign the service/maintenance Farm Lane to the Seed House/Gin area to the 1940s historic configuration, connecting from the highway along riverfront through Tenant/Quarters area. The current configuration is not historic and bisects the Quarters Area from the Seed House/Gin. Realignment of the graveled Farm Lane will enable the Park to reconsider the approach from the south and to create a primary visitor approach from the Quarters area or agricultural fields. This will increase the opportunity and likelihood that Park visitors experience a full progression and spectrum of landscapes and interpretive threads on the site.	
Cir-2	*Rehabilitation:* Steel-truss Bermuda Bridge, in partnership with Parish and local preservation organizations for access to lake and as part of possible future visitor approach from the waterfront.	
Cir-3	*Restoration:* Realign Tenant housing area drive or lane network to the location shown in 1950 aerial.	
Cir-4	*Rehabilitation:* Plan and implement a new visitor entry at the south end of the property.	SCL-3
Cir-5	*Restoration:* Replace gravel on Farm Lane from Hwy 494 to Mule Barn with gravel of appropriate historic color	
Cir-6	*Reconstruction:* Realign Service Drive to Seed House/Gin to mid-century alignment extending from Tenant Area, in order to correct the bisection of the landscape of labor from the core of the historic residential property.	

1
2

Item #	Recommendation	Overlapping Recs
Cir-7	*Rehabilitation:* Visitor paths should blend in with the environment and be as unobtrusive but stable as possible. Materials used for new visitor paths should be compatible with the rural setting and historic materials, neutral in color (not reflective or shiny, perhaps closer to the color of the local soil), and unobtrusive in pattern and texture in order not to compete with the surroundings or to stand out visually. Where or if ADA requirements will allow for this, mulch, a tawny or earth-toned compacted aggregate or simple mown paths in stable low traffic areas are preferable to the current mat system, from a visual perspective. Or where possible, visitors can simply walk along the graveled farm lane as they already do, rather than on a separate path to the side. The historic gravel is tan-colored chert and material quarried from local sand pits. This was the treatment for the Farm Lane and the areas in front and behind the Store, and the entrance to the Main House and Oak Allee lane. The NPS recently re-surfaced the roads with gray-colored crushed limestone, a stark contrast to the historic tan-colored gravel.	
Cir-8	*Rehabilitation:* New visitor paths and raised or resurfaced park drives should be implemented to avoid subtle impoundments in the natural drainage patterns from front to back of property and create areas where rain waters collect.	Top-1, Top-2

Vegetation (Veg)		
Item #	Recommendation	Overlapping Recs
Veg-1	*Rehabilitation—Mowing regime:* The current park mowing regime, which has replaced haying or grazing in certain historic pasture and meadow areas with primarily, and more frequent, lawn mowing, has also encouraged the growth or recurrence of some coarse or undesirable grass species (Johnson grass) in a mix that would once have been dominated by pasture species, while suppressing the native or historic grass species in the process. seasonal haying or less frequent mowing at higher blade heights favors clump forming native grasses and pasture grasses, whose root systems may be damaged and growth suppressed by close frequent mowing.	
Veg-2	*Rehabilitation—Bottle Garden:* Increase, thicken and restore the historic groundcover species and shrub layer in order to increase rainwater absorption and increase shading of the soil, while decreasing erosion or undercutting of the path foundations at its edges.59F59F[79]	
Veg-3	*Rehabilitation—Demonstration Garden:* Implement a demonstration garden north of the corn crib.	
Veg-4	*Preservation:* Crape myrtles that line the front rail fence at either side of entrance gate should be preserved and maintained, along with the boundary row of crape myrtles (4) along the south side yard of the main house that marks its historic edge with the bottle garden and front lawn.	
Veg-5	*Preservation:* Within the live oak allée, every effort should be made to ensure the health and longevity of the individual specimen trees, as well as planning for their replacement in kind when they eventually decline. There are a number of other old specimen live oaks (and at least one pecan) in the rear and side yards of the main house which are likely of similar age to the allée plantings. These provide significant shade and spatial enclosure to this historic yard areas and should be routinely maintained to ensure their health and longevity, and also replaced in kind as they decline.	
Veg-6	*Preservation + Reconstruction:* Significant existing fruit trees including fig and plum should be maintained and replaced in kind.	

1

[79] The 1987 HABS drawing set for Oakland provides documentation of the Bottle Garden prior to NPS acquisition, when the Prud'homme family was still actively living in the Main House and maintaining its landscapes. Drawings include the layout of paths and parterre beds, as well as a species key for ornamental plantings within the garden beds and perimeter. a

Item #	Recommendation	Overlapping Recs
Veg-7	*Preservation + Reconstruction:* Significant historic trees including pecan, chinaberry, cedar, hackberry, paper mulberry, and water oak, should be replanted on the property. Only a portion of the pecan grove was replanted and the Park continues to lose more large pecans after summer thunderstorms and recent hurricanes. The entire pecan grove should be replanted to its former extent.	

1

Views and Vistas (VV)		
Item #	Recommendation	Overlapping Recs
VV-1	*Preservation + Rehabilitation:* Protect the viewshed of Cane River/Lake; buffer from intrusive development where necessary, but retain some open viewlines.	NSF-1
VV-2	*Preservation:* Protect viewshed to open agricultural fields to the south and west.	
VV-3	*Preservation:* Retain the vegetated buffer along north property boundary/Hwy. 494.	
VV-4	*Rehabilitation:* In the future, add selective screening—or allow areas of successional growth to develop—along property boundaries in key locations where the views are particularly disruptive to the rural mood.	LC-2

2
3

Small Scale Features (SSF)		
Notes: The landscape has lost several significant and frequently referenced small-scale features that could aid in the interpretation of farm life and plantation rituals, such as the Bell Tower in the south yard of the Main House.		
Item #	Recommendation	Overlapping Recs
SSF-1	*Preservation:* Refurbish/stabilize Bell Gate	
SSF-2	*Preservation:* Fenceline along Farm Lane	
SSF-3	*Preservation:* Rail fence along Hwy. 494, defining the front lawn area and Store yard	
SSF-4	*Preservation:* Picket Fence around Bottle Garden	
SSF-5	*Preservation:* Fencing between the main house and rear dependencies	
SSF-6	*Preservation:* Corn Crib and Corral enclosure fences	
SSF-7	*Preservation:* Enclosure around the Doctor's House parcel	
SSF-8	*Reconstruction:* Photographic documentation is likely adequate to reconstruct the Bell Tower. It would add a unique and personalized note (and sound) to the domestic yard of the main house, and the bell could ring out once again marking plantation time.	
SSF-9	*Reconstruction:* Picket fence enclosing yard area of Overseer's House	
SSF-10	*Reconstruction(?):* North side yard fence, between main house and orchard/fishing camp area (in order to define the side yard to the house as distinct from the pecan grove and meadow areas). Not sure if this fence line is historic, pre-1960s – needs further research.	
SSF-11	*Reconstruction:* Painted features on the landscape, including the Esso Sign and Post, Archway, National Bicentennial Farm sign, and fence features, should be restored in consultation with an architectural historian.	
SSF-12	*Rehabilitation:* Using historic photos, interpret various side yard enclosures and variations at main house.	

Item #	Recommendation	Overlapping Recs
SSF-13	*Reconstruction:* Recreate historic riverfront dock (or a compatible interpretive platform) for lakefront visitor access; this may require additional archeology. This should also include interpretation (through wayside or other means) of the historic riverfront warehouse building.	

Cultural Traditions (CT)		
Item #	Recommendation	Overlapping Recs
CT-1	*Reconstruction:* (Demonstration) garden north of the corn crib.	
CT-2	*Reconstruction:* Workyard east of the proposed demonstration garden.	CT-1
CT-3	*Reconstruction:* Using mowing patterns, delineate tenant spaces, such as small gardens and workyards. This may require additional archeology.	
CT-4	*Preservation:* In the future, acquire the former African American/slave cemetery in the area to the west of the current Park lands. This cemetery represents a disappearing/erased landscape of enslavement and must be preserved. If this area is made accessible, it will bring the visitor closer to the former backswamp region of the plantation. If this area is not made accessible to the public, it should be interpreted for its continuous African American occupation from the antebellum period until the midcentury.	NSF-3, NSF-4

Archeological Features (AF)		
Item #	Recommendation	Overlapping Recs
AF-1	*Preservation + Reconstruction:* Conduct ground-penetrating radar around Overseer's House and yard to facilitate future reconstruction of picket fence and planted yard enclosure.	
AF-2	*Preservation + Reconstruction:* In the future, conduct archeological investigation in the Quarter's/Tenant area to guide the Park in balancing the interpretation and presentation of the landscape 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). (Current and future research likely favors the latter period for any landscape preservation or reconstruction efforts, due to the greater documentation available (aerials) and longer and more recent period of establishment for this era.)	SCL-1, SCL-2
AF-3	*Preservation:* Because the exact location of the original historic quarters/tenant houses are unknown, additional archeology should be conducted, which might reveal answers to the following questions: Were these dwellings moved/ reconfigured and scattered through the landscape after Emancipation? How many dwellings were originally there? Did each have a landscape/yard/garden?	BS-1



Oakland Plantation Existing Conditions Plan 2020

Cultural Landscape Report
Oakland Plantation

Cane River Creole National Historical Park
Natchitoches Parish, LA

Legend

- 2020 Site Boundary
- Contours
- River
- Buildings
- Field
- Net or Barbed Wire Fence
- Picket Fence
- Board or Rail Fence
- Paved Road
- Gravel Road or Path
- Mowed Path
- Trees
- Residential Yard
- Agricultural Yard
- Drainage
- Seasonal Planting

Notes

1.

Figure 114 *Treatment Plan Overall (STA 2020).*

Sources

1. Aerial photography, Flash Earth, Microsoft, 2020 and 2017.
2. Carrie Mardorf and Ron Bolton, "Oak CLR - EC Redlines," Park correspondence, CARI, February 5, 2021.
3. Mark H. Took, P.L.S, "Section 104, T8N—R6W," Nowlin & Associates, Consulting Engineers & Land Surveyors Natchitoches, LA, CARI, 2010.

Drawn By

Ashley Braquet, ArcMap, LandFX CAD and Illustrator, 2020

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1



Oakland Plantation
Existing Conditions Plan 2020
Enlargement 01

Cultural Landscape Report
Oakland Plantation

Cane River Creole National
Historical Park
Natchitoches Parish, LA

Legend

- 2020 Site Boundary
- Contours
- River
- Buildings
- Hog/Barbed Wire RR Tie Fence
- Picket Fence
- Board or Rail Fence
- Rubber Mat Path
- Paved Road
- Gravel Road or Path
- Mowed Path
- Trees
- Residential Yard
- Agricultural Yard
- Drainage
- Seasonal Planting

TREE SPECIES
LO - Live Oak (*Quercus virginiana*)
WO - Water Oak (*Quercus nigra*)
PI - Pine (*Pinus sp.*)
PE - Pecan (*Carya illinoinensis*)
CT - Chinese Tallow (*Triadica sebifera*)
CB - Chinaberry (*Melia azedarach*)
HO - Holly (*Ilex sp.*)
CM - Crepemyrtle (*Lagerstromeia indica*)
HB - Hackberry (*Celtis occidentalis*)
PL - Plum (*Prunus domestica*)
LC - Locust (*Gleditsia tricanthos*)
JV - Eastern Red Cedar (*Juniperus virginiana*)
JM - Japanese Magnolia (*Magnolia x soulangeana*)
BA - Bois d'arc (*Maclura pomifera*)

Sources

1. Aerial photography, Flash Earth, Microsoft, 2020 and 2017.
2. Carrie Mardorf and Ron Bolton, "Oak CLR - EC Redlines," Park correspondence, CARI, February 5, 2021.
3. Mark H. Took, P.L.S, "Section 104, T8N—R6W," Nowlin & Associates, Consulting Engineers & Land Surveyors Natchitoches, LA, CARI, 2010.

Drawn By

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Figure 115 *Treatment Plan Enlargement 01 (STA 2020).*

1



Oakland Plantation
Existing Conditions Plan 2020
Enlargement 02

Cultural Landscape Report
Oakland Plantation

Cane River Creole National Historical Park
Natchitoches Parish, LA

Legend

- 2020 Site Boundary
- Contours
- River
- Buildings
- Hog/Barbed Wire RR Tie Fence
- Picket Fence
- Board or Rail Fence
- Rubber Mat Path
- Paved Road
- Gravel Road or Path
- Mowed Path
- Trees
- Residential Yard
- Agricultural Yard
- Drainage
- Seasonal Planting

TREE SPECIES

LO - Live Oak (*Quercus virginiana*)
WO - Water Oak (*Quercus nigra*)
PI - Pine (*Pinus sp.*)
PE - Pecan (*Carya illinoinensis*)
CT - Chinese Tallow (*Triadica sebifera*)
CB - Chinaberry (*Melia azedarach*)
HO - Holly (*Ilex sp.*)
CM - Crepemyrtle (*Lagerstromeia indica*)

Figure 116 *Treatment Plan Enlargement 02 (STA 2020).*

HB - Hackberry (*Celtis occidentalis*)
PL - Plum (*Prunus domestica*)
LC - Locust (*Gleditsia tricanthos*)
JV - Eastern Red Cedar (*Juniperus virginiana*)
JM - Japanese Magnolia (*Magnolia x soulangeana*)
BA - Bois d'arc (*Maclura pomifera*)

Sources

1. Aerial photography, Flash Earth, Microsoft, 2020 and 2017.
2. Carrie Mardorf and Ron Bolton, "Oak CLR - EC Redlines," Park correspondence, CARI, February 5, 2021.
3. Mark H. Took, P.L.S, "Section 104, T8N—R6W," Nowlin & Associates, Consulting Engineers & Land Surveyors Natchitoches, LA, CARI, 2010.

Drawn By

Ashley Braquet, ArcMap, LandFX CAD and Illustrator, 2021.

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1

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APPENDIX A

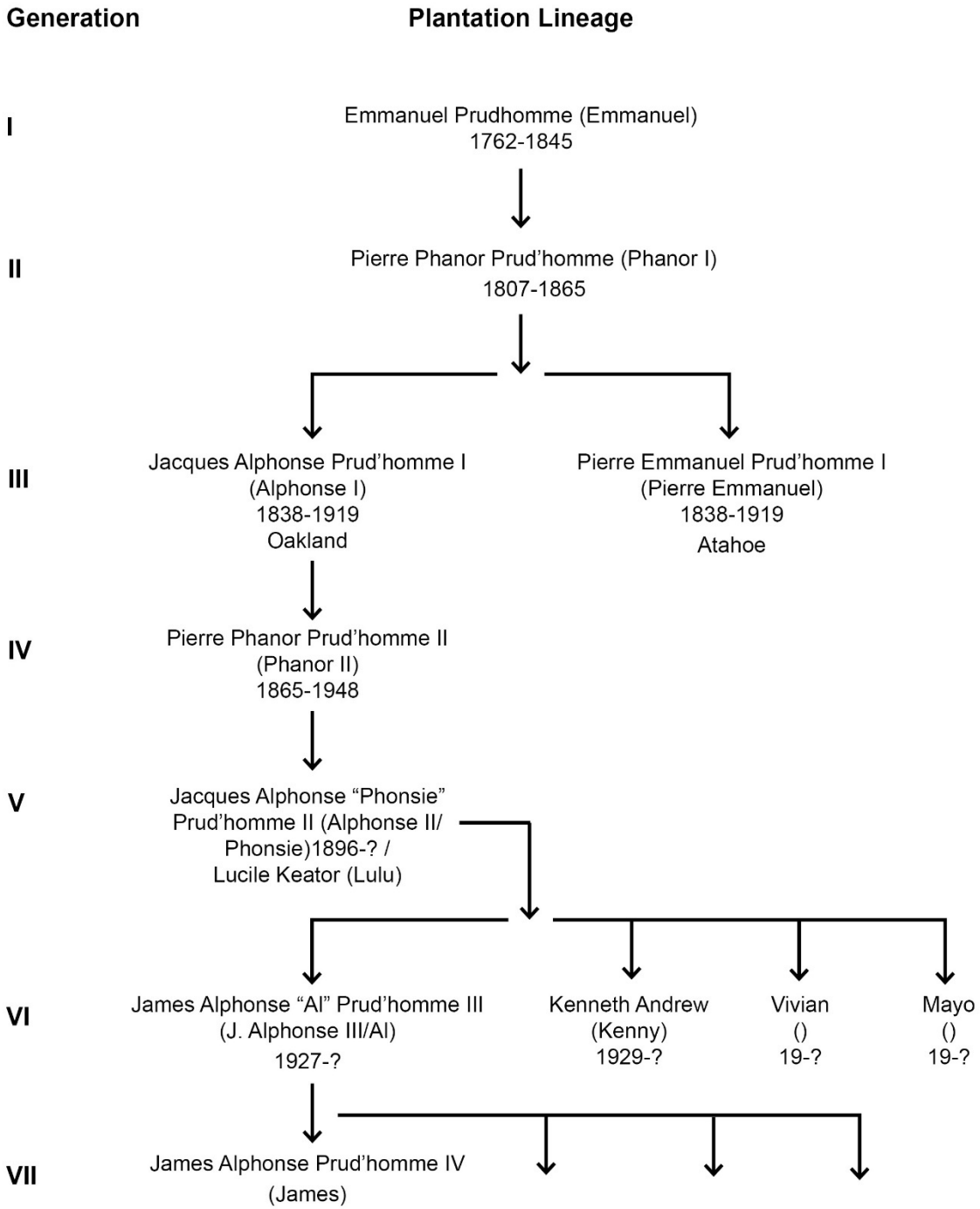


Figure 117 *Prud'homme Family Tree (STA)*

APPENDIX B

Preservation Landscapes Magnolia Plantation CLR Treatment Chapter