

RESEARCH DESIGN

Architectural & Historical Resources of Louisiana, Missouri Louisiana, Pike County, Missouri

Project No. 29-04-19326-594



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June 5, 2004

**Architectural & Historical Resources of Louisiana, Missouri
Louisiana, Pike County, Missouri**

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PROJECT OBJECTIVES

This project will consist of a windshield survey of the city limits of Louisiana, Missouri, the preparation of a multiple property cover document for the architectural and historic resources of Louisiana and the preparation of a National Register historic district nomination.

The survey area for the project, which encompasses the city limits of Louisiana, an area of approximately 3.5 square miles, will identify all of the buildings within the city limits that appear to be eligible for listing on the National Register either individually or as part of an historic district. (Figure One.) Potential National Register District boundaries and thematic groupings, as well as individually eligible properties will be noted and mapped. Individual inventory forms will be completed for at least 20 buildings outside the previously listed and proposed district boundaries.

Based on information derived from the survey and from archival research, a multiple property cover document entitled "Architectural and Historic Resources of Louisiana, Missouri" will be prepared. This cover document will include historic contexts for the major periods of development in Louisiana and for the architectural development of the town. It will also include property type descriptions and registration requirements for all of the major property types identified in the survey.

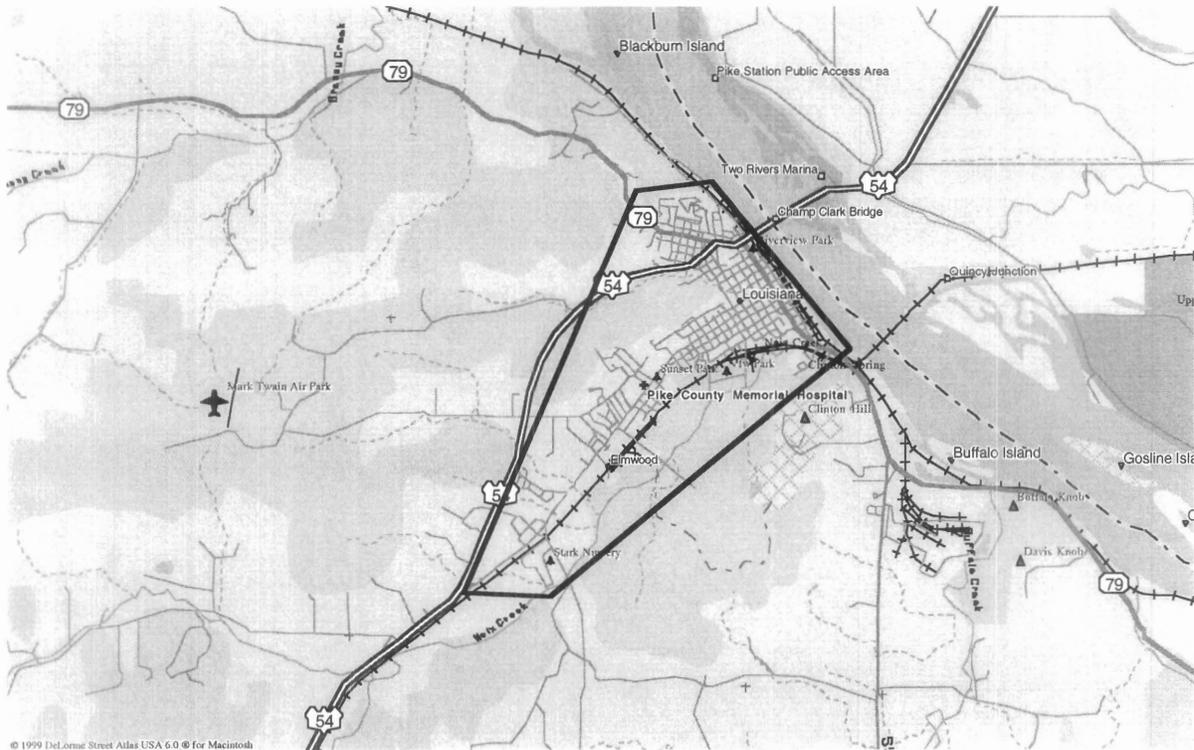
The National Register district nomination will focus on a residential area of Louisiana roughly bounded by Noyes Street on the north, Georgia Street on the South, North Main Street on the east and North Third Street on the west. However, the boundaries of the district will be drawn to encompass the greatest number of contributing resources in the area.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PROJECT AREA

Geography

Louisiana, Missouri, the largest city in Pike County, is situated in the northeast part of the county on the eastern border of the state. Part of Buffalo Township, it is located along the western bank of the Mississippi River approximately 75 miles north of St. Louis at the junction of U. S. Highway 54 and State Highway 79. Two rail lines run through Louisiana; one runs north/south along the Mississippi River

Figure One: Louisiana, MO - General Survey Area Boundaries
Source: Delorme Street Atlas, 1999.



and one runs east/west crossing into Illinois on one of the oldest railroad bridges on the Mississippi River.¹

The city of Louisiana is laid out in an orthogonal grid of streets. The grid is slightly skewed to follow the course of the Mississippi River. Thus, streets in the original town run northwest/southeast and northeast/southwest. In later additions to the city, some streets follow a more meandering path.

The topography of the city ranges from the gently rolling hills to steep bluffs. The commercial district sits atop a hill, which rises from the Mississippi River, is fairly level, and falls away gently to the south and west. A steep crescent-shaped line of hills partially encircles the city on the north and west.

Historical Development

In 1817, John Bryson, a native of South Carolina, made the first permanent settlement in the area that is now Louisiana, a quarter section of land near the confluence of Noix Creek and the Mississippi River.² The following year, he sold off part of his claim.

Joel Shaw and Samuel Caldwell came out from Kentucky for the purpose of locating a town site, and being very favorably impressed with Mr. Bryson's location, bought that part of his claim adjacent to the river. This was laid out into lots, and constitutes what is shown on the original plat as the town of Louisiana.³ (See Figure Two.)

The town was named for the state of Louisiana and served as the county seat until it was moved in 1823 to the more centrally located town of Bowling Green.⁴ The north/south streets were assigned numbers

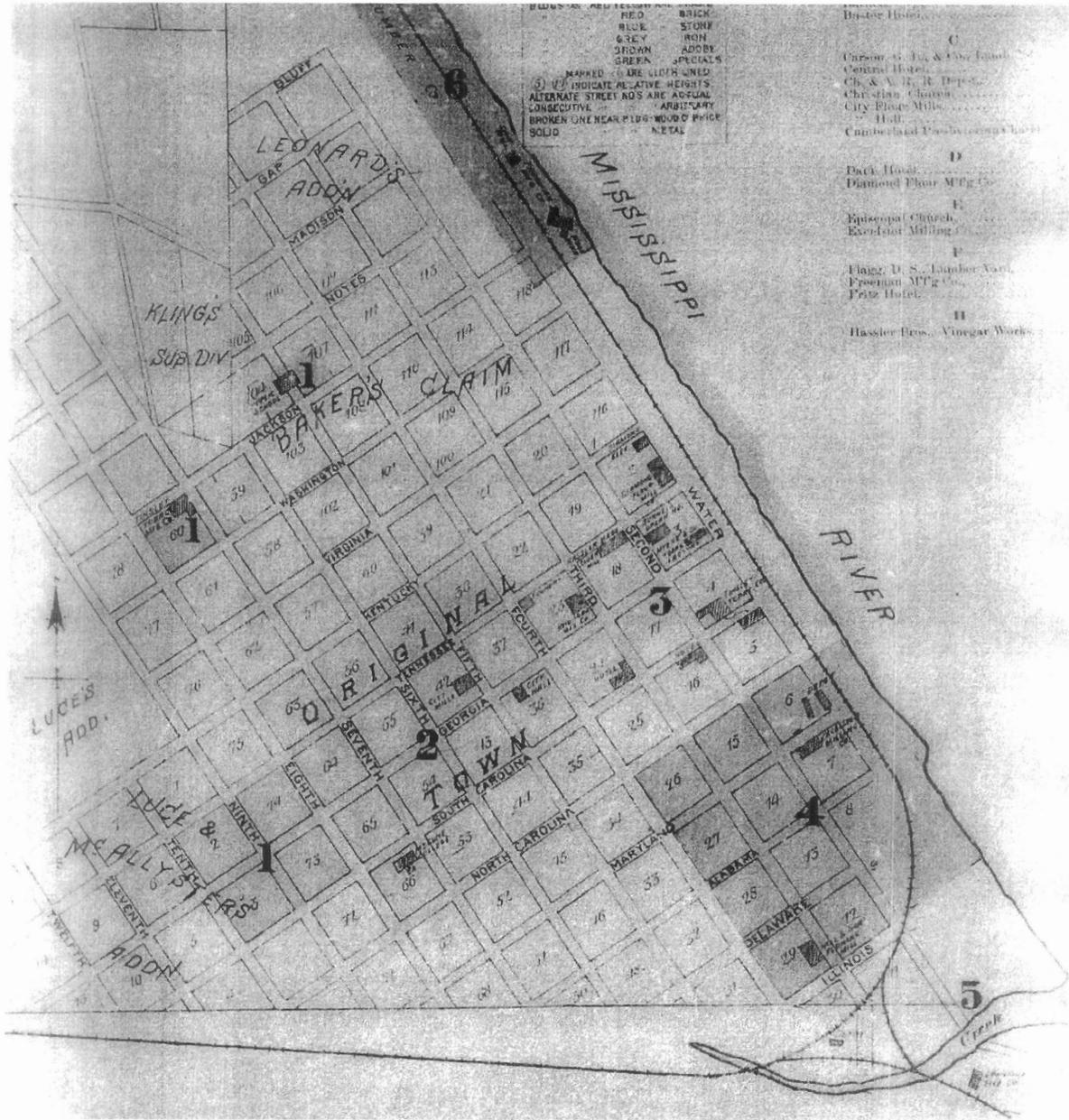
¹ James W. Goodrich & Lynn Wolf Gentzler, Marking Missouri History. (Columbia, MO: The State Historical Society of Missouri, 1998), p. 80.

² Karen Schwadron, Pike County, Missouri : people, places & Pikers. (Marceline, MO: Walsworth Pub. Co., 1981), p. 12.

³ History of Pike County, Missouri. (Des Moines: Mills & Company, 1883), p. 644.

⁴ Workers of the Writers' Program of the Works Projects Administration in Missouri, Missouri: The W.P.A. Guide to the Show-Me State. (St. Louis: Reprint by the

Figure Two: Map Louisiana, Missouri
 Source: Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, 1885.



Missouri Historical Society Press, 1998). (Original, Missouri State Highway Department, 1941), p. 553.

beginning at the river and increasing to the west. The east/west streets were assigned the names of many of the southern states. Louisiana and Pike County, along with a number of other north and eastern counties in Missouri, are considered part of the "Little Dixie" region because many of the earliest settlers moved to Missouri from states such as Kentucky, Tennessee and Virginia and were pro-slavery.⁵

Although the initial development of the town was slow with only a few homes and businesses along Water or Front Street, the construction of a ferry across the Mississippi in 1821 spurred settlement and the establishment of new businesses in Louisiana. "In 1828 it was said that Louisiana occupied the finest town site and had the best landing on the Mississippi above St. Louis."⁶ Within the next ten years, Louisiana had become "quite a trading post and the stores had increased from one or two to ten or twelve."⁷ The community was incorporated as a town in 1845 and a number of improvements were made to the city to make it more habitable. Streets were cut into the wilderness; some of the hills were graded and a levee was constructed to prevent the encroachment of the Mississippi River.⁸ In response to the growing population, Methodist, Christian Church and Catholic congregations had been established in Louisiana by 1840. Presbyterian, Baptist and Episcopal congregations followed in the 1850s.⁹

By 1860, Louisiana's population had grown to 2,436 and was the 12th largest city in Missouri.¹⁰ Much of this growth was due to the town's development as a river port and as a trading center. "Inland freight was shipped there by boat and hauled by wagons to inland points, and products from the interior were hauled to Louisiana for shipment."¹¹ Both the lumber and tobacco became prominent industries in Louisiana, and by the mid-nineteenth century Stark Brothers, at the time located just outside the city limits, had become one of the largest

⁵ Howard W. Marshall, Folk Architecture in Little Dixie: A Regional Culture in Missouri. (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1981), pp.1-18.

⁶ Floyd Shoemaker, "Pike County," Missouri Historical Review. Vol. 52, No. 4, July 1959, pp. 318-319.

⁷ History of Pike County, Missouri, p.645.

⁸ Schwadron, p. 13.

⁹ History of Pike County, Missouri, p.657-664.

¹⁰ Sesquicentennial of Louisiana, Missouri, 1818-1968. (Louisiana, MO: Centennial Committee, 1968), np.

¹¹ Shoemaker, p. 319.

nurseries in the United States. The earliest of the tobacco companies in Louisiana, the Marzolf and Seibert Cigar Factory, was established in 1860, manufactured approximately 750,000 cigars per year and was one of the leading employers in town for many years.¹²

As was the case in many counties in Missouri, loyalties among local citizens were divided during the Civil War. Many Pike County settlers went south and joined Confederate forces, but the county was officially under federal control. A Union headquarters was established in a house at Kentucky and Ninth Streets in Louisiana. Only one Civil War battle occurred in Pike County; it took place at Ashley, Missouri on August 28, 1861.¹³

Between 1871 and 1882, four rail lines were completed through Louisiana. The Louisiana and Missouri River Railroad and the Quincy, Alton and St. Louis Railroad were both completed in 1873. The former ran from Louisiana through Bowling Green to Mexico, Missouri and the latter known ran from Quincy, IL to Louisiana. The St. Louis, Keokuk and Northwestern was completed in 1879 and the St. Louis and Hannibal, which was known as the Short Line, opened three years later.¹⁴ Unlike many towns, the construction of rail lines through Louisiana actually hurt the town's development. The town's population continued to grow throughout the late nineteenth century reaching a peak population of 5,131 in 1900 and new additions were platted around the original town, but river traffic and shipping dwindled as a result of the construction of railroad lines and "commerce that previously came to Louisiana found the markets in St. Louis and Chicago easily accessible."¹⁵ As a result, Louisiana never grew to the population of 20,000 that was predicted by many of its early residents.

Although Louisiana's prominence as a river port declined in the late nineteenth century after the construction of the railroads, the river

¹² Schwadron, p.128.

¹³ Schwadron, p. 94.

¹⁴ Shoemaker, p. 321.

¹⁵ United States Census Records, Population Schedule for Pike County 1830-1930. Microfilm on file with the State Historical Society of Missouri, Columbia, Missouri. and Urban Research and Design Center, Washington University and Pike County Historical Society, Architectural/Historical Resource Inventory of the Central Business District of Louisiana, Missouri. (St. Louis: Urban Research and Design Center, Washington University and Pike County Historical Society, 1978), p. 5.

continued to support many of the town's industries. Industries such the Excelsior Flour Milling Company and the LaCrosse Lumber Company used the river for power and for shipping. Drawn to Louisiana by the town's site along the river and along several rail lines, LaCrosse Lumber Company was established in Louisiana in 1873, expanded throughout Missouri in the twentieth century, and continues to operate today with its headquarters in Louisiana.

In the 1880s and 1890s, Louisiana lost a number of buildings to fires, but these were replaced by handsome brick buildings. During the same period, the town also gained modern amenities such as telephone service, treated water, electric street lights and several hard gravel roads.¹⁶ An attempt to locate a natural gas source in Louisiana in the late 1880s yielded no natural gas, but "excellent mineral water" was discovered. The water was piped to the surface and a sanitarium was opened on the site at the corner of Fifth and Kentucky Streets in 1888.

In the Historical and Descriptive Review of Missouri published in 1892, the author notes that Louisiana

is substantially built, and has the most perfect natural drainage. Many ornate private residences are to be seen, while its churches and public buildings are models of modern architectural beauty and finish....The business houses are especially attractive, giving this portion of the city an imposing appearance, and the city has an air of business thrift and energy noticeable at all times.¹⁷

After the turn of the twentieth century, the population of Louisiana declined and some of the industries that had sustained the town in the late nineteenth century discontinued operations. However, the town continued to attract new industries and prosper as a commercial center. New businesses such as the Nord-Buffum Pearl Button Company and the Wells Lamont Corporation opened in the early twentieth century. Established in 1902 in a former tobacco factory building, the Nord-Buffum Company used mussel shells from the riverbed to make buttons. The Wells Lamont Corporation began

¹⁶ Schwadron, p.46-50.

¹⁷ Historical and Descriptive Review of Missouri, 1891-1892. Vol. II, (Kansas City: Jno Lethem, 1892), p. 41.

making all type of work gloves in Louisiana in 1929. Although these industries closed in the mid-twentieth century, they were replaced by other manufacturing facilities. In the mid-twentieth century, Louisiana's location on the river resulted in the construction chemical, cement and plastics plants there.¹⁸

Funded in part or completely by local and state taxes, amenities such as a new library, new school buildings, a new hospital and a bridge across the Mississippi River were provided to Louisiana citizens in the early to mid-twentieth century.

The first half of the twentieth century in Louisiana was marked by better educational and medical facilities and improved transportation routes. The first decade of the twentieth century brought Louisiana residents granitoid sidewalks and a new public library. As Karen Schwadron notes in *Pike County: People, Places and Pikers*, "a book store proprietor's belief that people should have access to a free public library coupled with a wealthy industrialist's money resulted in the Louisiana Public Library."¹⁹ In 1903, Anna Draper, the proprietor of a local bookstore, organized a group to establish a library. One of the members of the group, A. J. Murphy, contacted Andrew Carnegie and within two years, Louisiana had a new Carnegie library.

In 1913, the original public school building in Louisiana, which had been constructed in 1870, was replaced by a new brick school building. Twenty-five years later, "the R. R. Rowley Annex was completed to relieve crowded conditions."²⁰

In 1928, two new medical facilities opened in Louisiana. The Pike County Hospital was dedicated in June 1928 and later that year, the Mineral Springs Bath House, which provided mineral baths, massages and osteopathic treatments, opened.

Two of Louisiana's most prominent citizens, Frank Buffum and Lloyd Stark, were highly influential in the development of good roads in Missouri in the early twentieth century. Frank Buffum, the son of the founder of LaCrosse Lumber, the organizer of the Buffum Telephone Company and the founder of the Buffum Tool Company, was appointed chairman of Missouri's first highway commission. Buffum, known as

¹⁸ Schwadron, p. 166, 172, 179.

¹⁹ Schwadron, p. 184.

²⁰ Schwadron, p. 145.

the "father of good roads" is credited with the design of several new routes through Missouri.

Lloyd Stark, an executive in the Stark Nursery and Orchard Company and Governor of Missouri from 1937-1941, was also very active in promoting and developing better roads in Missouri. During his tenure as president of the Missouri-Illinois Bridge Company, the company built the Champ Clark Bridge across the Mississippi River at Louisiana. It was dedicated in 1928 and was named for the U. S. Congressman from Louisiana. In addition, as president of the U.S. Highway 54 Association, Stark lobbied for the new transcontinental to run through Louisiana. Construction on that highway began in the early 1930s.

Throughout the second half of the twentieth century, Louisiana has maintained a population around 4, 000, and is the largest town in Pike County. The town continues to serve as a commercial center for the agriculturally based local community and several manufacturing plants are still located in and around the town. In proportion to other towns of its size in Missouri, Louisiana appears to have a large number of extant nineteenth and twentieth century residences and commercial buildings.

METHODOLOGY

Archival Research

Archival research will be conducted with two goals in mind. General research will identify information about the general history of Louisiana, about broad historical contexts, and about prominent citizens who were active during the period in which the buildings in the survey area were constructed. Second, an intensive study of primary sources will be done to assist in the dating and evaluation of at least twenty (20) individual properties identified as eligible for listing on the National Register and of the properties within the boundaries of the proposed historic district.

Research to date has uncovered historical information in a variety of locations including the Pike County Courthouse, the Louisiana Public Library, the Pike County Historical Society, the State Historical Society of Missouri, Ellis Library at the University of Missouri – Columbia, and

the private collections of several local citizens. The report from the survey of the central business district, which was completed in 1986, and the individual and district nominations, which have been prepared for properties in Louisiana, will also provide additional information about the city's history and about significant historic properties in the area. (See attached bibliography)

County courthouse records will be used to fix construction dates and to identify early owners. The local newspapers, which date back to the mid-nineteenth century, will also be used to develop additional information about the properties, their early owners, and local architects and builders. Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps that date back to 1885 will also be used to date buildings and to trace the development of the city.

The City of Louisiana will be asked to assist in the compilation of current ownership and address information for properties within the district boundaries and for individual properties identified as eligible for National Register listing. The City will also supply base maps of the survey area.

Field Work

The majority of the fieldwork will consist of a windshield survey of Louisiana. All of the streets within the city limits, with the exception of the commercial areas previously surveyed, will be driven and surveyed. Although there will be some commercial buildings which are beyond the central business district, that will be surveyed, the majority of resources will be residential and public buildings. The address and basic physical information about buildings which appear to be fifty years or older and are substantially intact will be recorded and these properties will be annotated on a map of the city. Areas of potential historic districts will also be noted and annotated on a map of the city.

At least twenty (20) of the individual properties which appear to be the most historically or architecturally significant will be further documented. Inventory forms will be completed for these properties, and each of these properties will be photographed using black and white film. Furthermore, these properties will be researched to determine approximate construction date, ownership history and property function. (See Appendix I) An electronic template for the inventory forms has been developed using Filemaker Pro 5.0. Final

inventory forms will be printed on archival paper, as will all project documents.

Door to door survey will be conducted to record physical information about the buildings in the area of the proposed district. Historical and physical information about each of the property in the proposed will be recorded for use in the district nomination.

The majority of the photography will be done during the initial fieldwork. However, photography of some buildings and potential districts will have to be taken after the trees have dropped their leaves. Streetscape photographs of the district will be taken once the trees have dropped their leaves in the late fall.

Expected Results

The windshield survey is expected to identify the substantially intact properties in the survey area, which were built prior to 1954. At least twenty (20) of the most significant properties will be fully documented with inventory forms and black and white photographs. Furthermore, a list of properties that appear to be individually eligible for listing on the National Register will be developed and a summary of areas, which are potentially eligible for listing as a historic district, will be written. The survey should also identify threatened resources.

When completed, the Multiple Property Submission Cover Document will lay the foundation for the systemic nomination of historic resources throughout Louisiana, Missouri. The multiple property listing "Historic and Architectural Resources of Louisiana, Missouri" will be organized around the important historic contexts in the development of the city of Louisiana. Property type descriptions and registration requirements will facilitate future National Register listings.

The National Register Historic District Nomination, that will be prepared as a part of this project, will focus on the residential area located on the east side of the city to the north of the commercial district. This area appears to be one of the most densely concentrated areas of historic residential buildings in the city. The nomination of this historic district will represent the first residential district in Louisiana.

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APPENDIX ONE:

Inventory Forms

