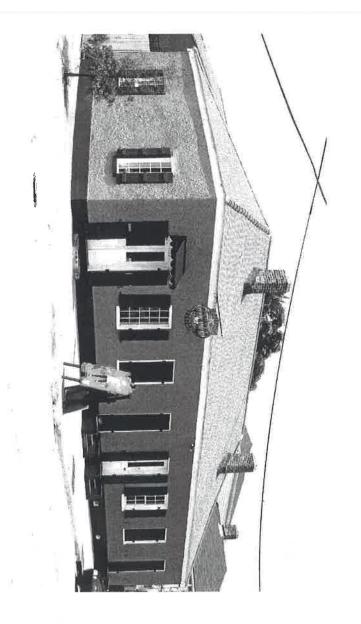
NEW ORLEANS HISTORIC DISTRICT LANDMARKS COMMISSION **DESIGNATION REPORT**



1539 RELIGIOUS STREET

THOMAIN-BAIRD RESIDENCE

CONSTRUCTED 1810-13

AUGUST 10, 2004

1539 RELIGIOUS STREET Landmark Designation Report

Architectural Rating: Blue

Construction Date: 1810-1813

Architect:

Unknown

Site Description

67'10"5"' front on Orange Street x 68'8" front on Religious Street b.p.l. 1st Municipal District, 1st Assessment District

Zoning: L-I, Light Industrial

Owner: David Baird

Nomination Information

Date Nominated: May 11, 1999

Recommended by: Lance Hiatt

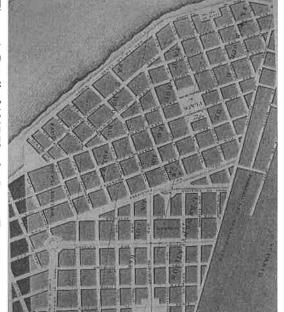
Nominated by: Walter Willard

Seconded by: Lansen Barrow & Vivienne Blair

qualifications for landmark status, as outlined in City Ordinance #5992 M.C.S., will be of the four areas of criteria used in determining whether a property is worthy of or meets the The nomination of this property was based upon its architectural and historical significance. Each

History of the Property

new Faubourg de la Course or Racetrack at one time part of the Jean Baptiste de Marigny up river side. (Figure 1) river side and by Faubourg Annunciation on the Figure 1. Detail of 1817 Plan by Jaques Tanasse Suburb. The new Faubourg was bounded by the plantation to Pierre Robin Delogny. Delogny de Marigny and his sister, Marie Celeste de plantation. Following his death in 1805, the Mississippi River, Faubourg Saulet on the down Bartholemy Lafon to subdivide the land into the immediately hired 1807, Livaudais sold the lower half of the Bernard Marigny's share of the property. Marigny, the wife of Jaques Francois Enoul de property was inherited by his brother, Bernard The land that 1539 Religious Street sits on was Livaudais. In 1806, Livaudais bought out engineer and surveyor,



Pierre Pedesclaux, is no longer held by the Notarial Archives or other local repositories. Bartholemy Lafon. Unfortunately, the plan of Faubourg La Course, deposited in the office of notary each measuring 60' front on Religious Street by 120" in depth in Square 20 (current square #79) to Soon following the subdivision of Faubourg La Course, Robin Delogny sold three lots of ground, Gabriel Callier. These lots were numbered 1, 2 & 3 on the original 1807 plan for the subdivision by

a will made before notary Narcisse Broutin in 1807, Callier southeastern part of France, now Rhône-Alpes. years. The three lots appeared to be vacant at that time. properties in Faubourg La Course as three lots that he purchased St. Marie, and Faubourg La Course. The will described the Marie Thérese Callier Grataca, aged 22, who lived in New York Married to Marie Magdalene Thomain, he had two daughters: stated that he was fifty-one years old and suffering from illness. from Robin Delogny to be paid for completely within three The will listed real estate owned by Callier in France, Faubourg City with her husband Pierre, and Françoise Callier, aged 13. Briancou in the Callier, a merchant, immigrated to Louisiana from Monetier de former province of Dauphiné in (Figure 2) In the



Figure 2. Old French Provinves

dependencies estimated to be worth \$3800. Thomain stated in a later inventory of her first husband's second marriage included five lots in square #20 facing Religious Street, including a house and at the time of her second marriage. Her property listed in the contract as assets she brought to the as a landlord and merchant. Also a native of Monetier de Briancou in France, she was 43 years old constructed sometime between 1807 and 1809. estate that she purchased two additional 60' x 120' lots adjacent to the three purchased by her first and her betrothed, Jean Mornet, was executed in November of 1809.2 The contract described her Following Callier's death, Marie Magdalene Thomain remarried. A marriage contract between her husband, numbered 4 and 5 following his death. Thomain then had the house and its dependencies

in Faubourg St. Marie, furniture, silverware, and included the five lots located in Square #20 which executed before Pierre Pedesclaux on November 19, 1810.4 The inventory listed several properties his estate equally between his wife and two daughters. portion of her father's estate. The succession of Gabriel Callier was finally opened in order to divide Following her marriage, Françoise and her husband sued Thomain and her husband for François' were described towit: Thomain's youngest daughter, Françoise was married in 1809 at the age of 15 to Toussaint Marot.³ A detailed inventory of his property was

¹Narcisse Broutin, July 17, 1807, New Orleans Notarial Archives.

²Narcisse Broutin, November 16, 1809. New Orleans Notarial Archives

³P.F. Godefroy, May 19, 1809, New Orleans Notarial Archives

⁴Pierre Pedesclaux, November 19, 1810, New Orleans Notarial Archives

shingles covered in weatherboards, divided into two rooms with a double a gallery, a kitchen in the courtyard, set on the ground, covered in wood wood shingles, divided in two "apartements" and two rear cabinets flanking Faubourg (La Course) numbered 1, 2, 3, 4 & 5 forming the corner of Religious, Orange and La Course (Race). The grounds surround a house, brick between post, covered in weatherboards on the exterior and covered in Five lots of ground, each measuring 60' by 120' on the general plan of the chimney.

The five lots with their buildings and improvements were appraised at \$4000

again on in march of 1813, to Louis Viales for \$8000. The properties at the time of this sale were unknown reasons, the five lots came back into the possession of the Caillier heirs and were sold described as Gabriel Callier.⁵ Lot #5 which included the house was sold to M. Tonard for \$1000. However, for A public auction was held in December of 1810, to sell the properties belonging to the estate of

60' front facing Religious by 120 feet in depth and bordered by Religious Five lots, situated in Faubourg La Course, numbered 1 through 5 having each houses and other buildings with their dependencies. Street on the font and on the sides by Orange and Race Streets with the two

constructed at the corner of Religious and Orange Streets. It seems likely that the current double of \$8000 three years later indicates that the property was substantially improved during that period. the roof structure, indicates that the construction date of 1539 Religious Street could lie between property, in conjunction with the building's construction type, style, and mortise and tenon joints in cottage is the same building described in the 1813 act of sale. The substantial jump in value of the The house described in the 1810 inventory may have been demolished and the double cottage Orleans above Canal Street 1810-1813. If this is the case, 1539 Religious Street may be the oldest known structure in New The jump in price from appraisal value of \$4000 for the five lots in the 1810 inventory to a sale price

Louis Viales resided in Pointe Coupée, Louisiana at the time he purchased the Caillier properties. Described as a landlord and merchant, Viales moved to Faubourg La Course in New Orleans in by John Lynd whose records from the year of 1817 have not survived. and Orange Streets, now numbered 3 & 4, to Eleazer Ripley⁶. Unfortunately this act was notarized by 120', and sold two 30' wide lots fronting on Orange Street and forming the corner of Religious May and September, he had the five lots subdivided into smaller lots measuring approximately 30' between 1812 and 1815. Viales mortgaged the five properties in Square 20 in May of 1817. Between 1814. Little is know about Viales but that he served as a "Syndic of the Upper District" sometime

⁵Pierre Pedesclaux, June 8, 1811, New Orleans Notarial Archives

⁶John Lynd, 9/5/1817. Record missing.

Eleazer Ripley, an attorney, is best known for his service in the army a brigadier general, as well as his tenure as a Louisiana Congressman. Mr. Ripley did not reside at 1539 Religious Street, but most likely purchased the property as an investment. Ripley owned the property for fifteen years until 1832 when, as a result of a lawsuit, lot # 4, forming the corner and containing the house and dependencies, was sold at auction by the United States Marshall to Dr. Henry James Cullen in 1832. A survey by Louis Bringier and Religious Streets that were sold at auction (Figure and Religious Streets that were sold at auction (Figure 5).

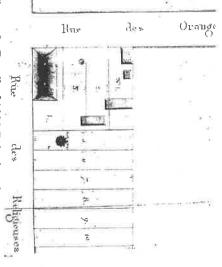


Figure 3. Detail of 1832 Bringier plan

creole cottage located at the Uptown lakeside corner of the square. Ancillary structures are located 1539 Religious Street was the main structure of a complex of buildings. to the rear in lots 1, 2, & 3. An oak tree is indicated in the lot #5. The survey demonstrates that

a wood kitchen, curbstones and bankets (sic) fully paid." For the next thirty-three years, the time noted that the two lots included "the buildings and improvements...consisting of a brick house, company sold the property at auction to John Donovan for \$5000. The property description at that group of commission merchants known as Godfrey, Blossman & Co in 1836. 10 Four years later, the Mexico, prior to moving to New Orleans. Dr. Cullen soon sold the two lots #3 & 4 together to a merchant, resided on Chartres Street in the French Quarter. He soon sold the property to Dr. Henry Donovan family would own the building. James Cullen in 1835.9 Dr. Cullen, who had been a resident of Matamoros in the state of Tamalipas, Gilbert Vance purchased the adjacent lot #3 in 1833 from Charles Lee.8 Vance, a commission

a draymaster with a business at the corner of Religious and Orange Streets. However, by 1853, listed as "keeps drays." During the 1850's, Dennis Donovan, possibly John's brother, was listed as held on to it for another twenty years until her death in January of 1873 Street property. John Donovan died in 1855 and the property was inherited by his widow Eliza, who Dennis, though he was listed as a drayman at other locations, no longer resided in the Religious John Donovan is listed in city directories as residing at 251 Camp Street. His profession in 1838 is

⁷William Christy, 3/29/1832, Vol. 11, p.426. New Orleans Notarial Archives.

⁸William Christy, 4/17/1833. New Orleans Notarial Archives

⁹Jules Mossy, 5/11/1835. New Orleans Notarial Archives

¹⁰Jules Mossy, 5/2/1836, Vol.12, Act 4. New Orleans Notarial Archives

¹¹Theodore Seghers, 5/23/1840. Vol. 36, Act 324. New Orleans Notarial Archives

Joseph, Catherine, Dennis, Ellen and Mary Frances. Ellen had corner of Religious and Orange streets. first marriage to Frank Ahern resulted in six children: Annie, remarried following his death to Frank Marshall, and that her the death of Mr. Ahern reflect that his wife Ellen Adams or 1880 census records. However, probate records following Ahern family does not appear in obituary records or the 1870 listed in the 1872 city directory as a grocer located at the for at least two years prior to purchasing the property as he is Ahern had apparently been renting some or all of the building The Donovan heirs sold the property to Frank Ahern in 1874. 12 Unfortunately, the

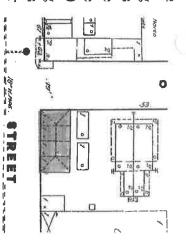


Figure 4. 1885 Sanborn Map

residences as seen in the 1885 Sanborn map. (Figure 4) across Orange Street at 51 Religious Street. Following Ahern's death, his heirs sold the building at two more children during her second marriage and is listed in the 1880 census as a grocer living building as "four brick cottages." By this point, the two houses had apparently been split into four public auction to John Spencer in 1877. The process verbal or transcript of the sale described the

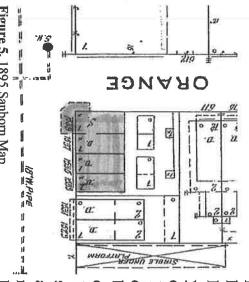


Figure 5. 1895 Sanborn Map

rear.(Figure 5) The building was most likely purchased accessory buildings and two privies were located in the stores, had been attached to the building. Two, one-story connected to commercial space created at the corner. By building contained three residences, during his period of ownership. city, none of whom resided on Religious Street. years 1891-1915 list several John Spencers living in the little is known about him. The city directory between the his death. However, due to a lack of obituary records, Mr. Spencer owned the building for fourteen years until by Mr. Spencer for investment as rental property. 1895 a wrap-around overhang, a typical feature of corner 1895 Sanborn map shows the footprint of the building At that time, the one of which

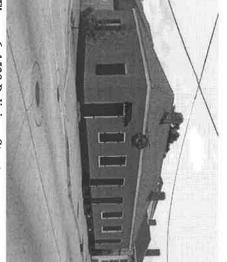
along with the masonry building; lot B comprised the remainder of the land. John Mahoney possession of James Mahoney and his decedents until 1945 purchased both lots A & B. 13 John Mahoney is listed in the 1900 census as a day laborer residing & B. Lot "A" measuring 67'10" five "front on Orange Street and 68' 8" front on Religious Street with his wife Margaret, three sons and niece at 623 Orange Street. The building remained in the In 1891, following the death of John Spencer, his heirs had lots #3 & 4 re-subdivided into lots A

¹²William Castell, 4/29/1874, Vol 42, Act 7772. New Orleans Notarial Archives.

¹³James Barnett, 9/17/1891, Vol. 5, Act 232. New Orleans Notarial Archives

Architectural Significance

the original interior floor plan. The ceiling features the structure remaining above Canal Street. the building dates from between 1810 and 1813, then original beaded ceiling joists with wide ceiling boards. If elements. Three original door casings remain, reflecting interior, although severely altered, retains some original openings. Two chimneys remain in the front rooms. The includes four door openings and four window openings. one massive hip roof. The structure is comprised of two Creole cottages under 1539 Religious Orange Street elevation consists of two window affixed heavily textured stucco on the exterior. Batten shutters (figure 6) The brick masonry has been finished in a with strap hinges protect the openings. Street would be the The Religious Street elevation oldest known The



en Figure 6. 1539 Religious Street

Architect

Unknown

Historic Personages none

Social, Economic and Political History

nineteenth century industrial and large scale low income housing developments, the area retains very shifts in use and development ranging from early nineteenth century rural development to late urban development following the subdivision of uptown plantations. Because the Religious and above Canal Street following the Louisiana Purchase. The building reflects the initial pattern of dating from prior to 1830 have survived in the uptown area. few cohesive streetscapes. This building is of particular significance due to the fact that no buildings Tchoupitoulas Street corridor, along with the St. Thomas Housing project have experienced several The building's early construction date renders it an artifact from the earliest period of development

Staff Recommendation

architectural and historical significance. The staff highly recommends that this building be designated as a landmark based on its

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