

Washington, D.C.
12/20/89

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in *Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms* (National Register Bulletin 18). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property

historic name Martin, Pierre, House
other names/site number Boismenu House, (locally known as)

2. Location

street & number First Street at Old Route 3, (AKA Water Str.) not for publication
city, town North Dupu vicinity
state Illinois code IL county St. Clair code 163 zip code 62240

3. Classification

Ownership of Property	Category of Property	Number of Resources within Property	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	Contributing	Noncontributing
<input type="checkbox"/> public-local	<input type="checkbox"/> district	<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>
<input type="checkbox"/> public-State	<input type="checkbox"/> site	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
<input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
	<input type="checkbox"/> object	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
		<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>
Name of related multiple property listing: <u>N/A</u>		Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register <u>0</u>	

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.

[Signature] _____ Date 12-15-89
Signature of certifying official
ILLINOIS HISTORIC PRESERVATION AGENCY
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.

Signature of commenting or other official Date _____
State or Federal agency and bureau

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

entered in the National Register.
 See continuation sheet.

determined eligible for the National Register. See continuation sheet.

determined not eligible for the National Register.

removed from the National Register.

other, (explain:)

Signature of the Keeper Date of Action _____

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

~~Domestic (Single Dwelling)~~

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Work in Progress

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(enter categories from instructions)

Colonial / French Colonial

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation Stone/Limestone

walls Stone/Limestone

Wood/Log

roof Wood/Shingle

other Wood/Weatherboard

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

The Pierre Martin House is a transitional French Creole one story building with a stone basement kitchen. This building of vertical grooved log wall, called "poteaux sur solle", or post on sill construction is located in Prairie du Pont, (presently referred to as North Dupo) on lots 3 and 4 of block 2, Boismenu's addition in survey 145 in the Commonfields of Prairie du Pont, at the corner of First Street and Old Route 3, (AKA Water Street). Prairie du Pont is an unincorporated area under township government and is about 1 mile south of Cahokia. In 1790 the house was considered to be in the village limits of Prairie du Pont, and by 1857, the earliest plat available, it was sited across the street from the village limits. The building is slightly out of square with the 1912 subdivision streetgrid, but is more in line with the original grid of Prairie du Pont. Except for the house itself there are no other structures on the two lots in question. The lots are 50' X 140' and the house is sited with its long axis across the 50' width of lot 4 and its northerly front face approximately 50' back from First Street. Its westerly end is approximately 13' from the lot line and approximately 40' from Old Route 3. This intervening strip of land was an electric railroad right of way. The surrounding area is flat with scattered trees and is unevenly filled with residences and outbuildings, most of them 20th century. Across First Street to the North is the local firehouse. The nearest structure to the Pierre Martin House is an outbuilding about 58' behind it to the south on lot 5 of Block 2.

Presently the building is two stories in height as a result of a 1913 modernization when the original roof was removed and a second story was added. The date of construction was changed at that time by the county, evidently at the owner's request, to 1913. At that time at least one addition was put onto the rear of the house and the rear gallery was definitely removed, if that had not already been done earlier. The front evidently had a small porch put on it as early as 1888 to provide a front entrance. The foundations for both the small porch and the rear additions are still in place. The rear additions were being demolished when the actual type of structure being exposed in a wall of the original building was discovered by the laying bare of the vertical timber frame. The additions have been completely removed with the exception of the second story which acts to temporarily protect the original single story frame.

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The present layout of the house is as follows, (long sides on a nearly E - W line): Outside foundation dimensions: W 20'4.5" X S 35'8.75" X E 20'1.5" X N 35'3.5". Outside foundation height above grade varies around 1'10".

LAYOUT BY FLOOR:

Basement: One room, 17'6" X 18', under the west end of the house having stone walls, flagstone floor with a fireplace centered on the west outside end wall between two small window openings high on the wall. Access is by one external stone stair, (original), and one internal stair from the upstairs hall, (added possibly in 1913). Headroom is 6'10" under the ceiling joists. The remaining area under the house is made up of a crawl space with at the east end and somewhat off center to the north the foundation of a fireplace and hearth above.

Main floor: 2 rooms with a central hall.
The west room is 13'wide X 18'8.5 deep with a 1'11" wide X 1'5.25" deep brick stove chimney centered on the west exterior wall between two 3'3" X 5'4.75" two over two windows, (probably inserted in the 1913 alterations). On the south wall of the room is a door to the demolished back addition, (this door was cut out of an original window opening), mirrored on the north or front wall by a window, both of approximately 2'9" width. The east wall has two doors leading to the central hall, one at each end of the wall. The headroom below boxed beams is approximately 9'.

The hall is 6'9" wide and runs the depth of the house having a door at each end, two doors into the west room and one into the east room. On the west wall of the hall is a 3'2" wide stair running from front to back to the second floor and underneath a boxed in stair down to the basement running from back to front. The stairs have been cut through at a later date than the original construction. The two walls that form the hall are also not original to the base structure. They are 5.25" thick, are fully plastered over horizontal cut lath and most probably date to the 1913 alterations.

The east room is 13'6" wide X 18'10" deep. It is further divided into two connected spaces by a 10" thick pocket door wall ca. 7'6" back from the front wall. This room has one window in the front or northern wall, a door to the demolished back addition on the opposite wall that has been cut out of an original window, a brick stove chimney next to this door and two windows on the east wall, (also cut through an original wall at a later date). The walls in this room are fully plastered as well. The ceiling here had been covered over and to hold the lath and plaster jack joists were installed between the original joists. These newer joists were cut with a circular saw.

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Flooring on the whole main floor and second floor is oak strip laid over an older possibly original floor.

The second floor consists of two rooms on either side of a central hall with a bath inserted at the last 6'3" at the north end of the hall. These rooms are approximately the same size as the rooms below, plus two inches at each exterior wall due to the thinner 2x4 walls. The upstairs has been virtually gutted, leaving the roof framing visible from below. The roof framing is modern 2x framing, and the roof is a shallow pitch full hipped roof. The roofing material is asphalt shingles. The two existing chimneys continue up from the first floor through the upstairs rooms and through the roof with the same dimensions as below and are basically complete as built for the 1913 modernization.

The exterior of the structure is partially covered with a narrow weather wood lap siding typical of the period of 1913. The exposed portions on the first floor show the wide hewn vertical logs of the original building with some stone nogging left. The exposed areas on the second floor show 2x4 framing.

EXISTING FABRIC FROM THE ORIGINAL STRUCTURE:

The basement and foundation are 100% original materials. The walls, floors and fireplace are limestone and are of high quality work. The stone has been roughly dressed and is of a quality between coursed rubble and cut ashlar. The stone walls show evidence of full plaster in the corners. The foundation walls vary between 14" and 19" thick. The basement room, set up like a kitchen, is 17'2.5" long X 18' wide. The centered fireplace on the west wall is 1'6" deep X 3'11" wide in a chimney breast that is 7'11.5" wide. Two small window openings 2' wide set high in the west wall frame the fireplace. The only original access opening is a 4'2.5" wide stone stair leading to the outside in back in the south wall. The east wall of the basement is 12" thick and only 4'6.5" high, giving a view to the crawl space under the east end of the house and the off center base for a fireplace and chimney on the first floor that have been removed at some point. The ceiling of the finished kitchen consists of seven 5" X 8.75" hand hewn squared beams, 32"+/- on center, the upper half of which is notched into the sill. In one of these beams near the fireplace there is still a rose headed spike, evidently used to hang objects. The crawl space ceiling consists of five 9" diameter logs still covered by bark that have been hewn flat on their upper face to accept flooring above. These too have been notched into the sills on their upper half. There are also two beams that run down the center span of the floor joists to act as supports. The first one starts on top of the truncated chimney foundation at the east end and runs toward the west, being cut off at the point just beyond where the finished basement starts and where the later stairway descends. This is a 6" X 8" hand hewn beam. It is further supported by two 9" X 6" posts, the last one of which sits on the

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short dividing wall. It is possible that this beam is original and that it ended in the chimney on the west end. The demolition of that chimney above the remaining fireplace makes it difficult to tell. The second is a 6" x 6" wood beam that is offset to the south from the centerline by 1'7" and sits on two 6" X 6", posts the first at the west edge of the stairs and ending on top of the chimney remnant at the west wall. This beam is later. The ceiling boards for the basement area are the floor boards for the main floor and are possibly the original ones. They consist of 1"+/- thick boards of random widths varying between 5" and 7", laid in an alternating wider - narrower pattern. The wider boards are double tongued and the narrower are double grooved, with a periodic exception where an odd size board will have both a tongue and a groove in it. The ceiling shows evidence of patches above the two chimney bases, one at each end, that would match the chimney size below.

The main floor sills are pieced together of 8.75" X 8.25" walnut square hewn logs. The sill measures, on the west, 19'8.5" X S, 35'3.75" X E, 19'10.5" X N, 35'0.5". The vertical walnut logs that make up the typical walls of the French Creole house are 9'8.5" long on the end walls from sill to plate and 11'5" from sill to plate on the long front and rear walls. Their sectional dimensions are 4.5" to 5" thick and from 6" to 12" wide. They are grooved on their narrow edges to accept stone nogging' or "**pierrotage**". This nogging is of limestone here and is approximately 30% intact on this structure. The top plates are 5.5" X 5.5" hewn single beams. The vertical logs are morticed and tenoned into both the sills and the plates and pegged into place. The twelve original 2.5"+/- X 8.75"+/-, 32" on center slash-sawn ceiling joists are through tenoned in their full dimensions through their respective vertical timbers and individually pegged into place. The ends of the joists are flush with the exterior face of the vertical logs.

The order of construction would have to be to first lay out the sills with pre-cut mortices and corner joints. Then sub-assemblies such as door, window and chimney back openings as well as the 'two-uprights-and-one-joist' groups would be made up and pegged. The next step would be to put the two end walls together and put their top plates on and peg the uprights to the plates and the plates to the two taller end uprights for the front wall corners. Then one of the end walls would be raised and inserted into the mortices in the sill, braced in place to be followed by the individual loose uprights and sub-assemblies in order to the other end wall followed by the placing of the two long top plates. The final step would be to drill and peg the remaining joints into a rigid box. This box is corner braced with 45 degree braces let into the vertical logs and morticed and pegged into the sills and the corner posts.

The ceiling boards are original. They are also of random width, varying between 7" and 12" and are laid in an alternating order of wider and narrower boards. The wider boards are double grooved and the narrower ones are double

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tongued, (the opposite order to the main floorboards. Over the west room each board has one edge beaded on the bottom side. The ceiling over the east room has been papered over between the boxed in beams and it isn't clear if these were also beaded. The date of the boxing in of the beams in this room is unclear at the moment. Here there is evidence that the ceilings have been patched directly above the chimney base and the fireplace respectively existing in the crawl space and basement room below.

On the exterior there is structural evidence that the chimney backs were visible for a height of 4'10" above the sill. The sills in these two spots show no signs of mortice or peg holes and there is in both cases an existing cross piece at the given height that is morticed and pegged into place. The uprights from that point up to the top plate are morticed and pegged into both. This is very much like the Cahokia Courthouse where the chimney back is visible all the way from the sill to the plate. There is evidence behind the chimney on the S wall of the east room of original split willow lath diagonally laid and original plaster still in situ. The lath is visible from the outside at a point where the **pierrotage** has partially fallen out. The willow still has the bark attached. There is some evidence of riven diagonal lath and plaster possibly still in situ on the north wall of the same room. As the room is uniformly plastered on the inside it is possible that some idea could be made of how the original rooms were finished off on the inside.

There is evidence in the ceiling showing a patch where a ladder or steep stair went up to the habitable garret in the SE corner of the east room. The ceiling was whitewashed at some point and there is an area along one beam that is free of whitewash traces that seems to indicate an enclosure of a boxed in stair. The stair would have had a 90 degree turn at the bottom to come out into the room while the top would have come out next to the chimney above. Such a stair and internal access to a garret is an Anglo-American characteristic. This would also account for the fact that this chimney was off center on the east wall of the house. The south side of the chimney where the patch in the ceiling is visible is a 7'6" space while the north side is only 4'2". Until the modern floor and the two walls for the hall and the stairs have been removed it will not be possible to tell much about this corner stair or where the original dividing wall was placed between the two original rooms. There should be wear markings and possibly notches in the floor to mark that spot and the spot where the connecting door might have been.

The framing is about 80% intact. The roof framing and the framing for both the front and rear galleries has been lost as well as portions of some the wall timbers. The wall timbers have been cut mostly to insert windows into the end walls and to create two doors out of original windows in the back wall. The bottom cross sills for the windows have all been lost when the windows were lengthened for the 1913 modernization. The original dimensions

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of a 2'9" X 4'10.5" rough opening for a window are still visible through the presence of the peg holes in the vertical timbers and the accompanying mortices. This could fit a 24 lite 6"X 8" glass casement window. Doors were approximately 3' wide and ended flush with the tops of the windows. There is one section of sill that has been replaced under the east end chimney back opening, and one 3' section of top plate in the SE corner of the south wall where a door had been cut through to the 1913 addition. The two short top plates have had the top inside corner cut away to a depth and height of two inches to allow the baseboard to be flush with the 2X4 stud wall above it when the second floor was added. Here cut wood shingles painted green have been found in use as shims. It is known that both the Jarrot house and the Pierre Menard house had painted wood shingles as roofing material around 1800.

The fact of the uneven top plate height as well as physical evidence of the notches in the top plates for framing above the plates shows us that this was a gable ended house, with a usable garret and galleries only on the front and back. The two lower end plates have 3.5" X 1.75" X 1" +/- deep notches, 24" on center, cut into the outside face of the plate for studs to be let in for a gable wall. The two higher, (1'9" higher), long plates have 4" X 3" X 1" +/- deep horizontal notches on the inside edge of the top face, spaced +/- 34" on center, for rafters. The roof was a common rafter system. Four slanted diagonal cuts in the top plates, one near each end of the two long plates indicate a diagonal brace to the peaks of the gables, acting as wind braces. These are an Anglo-American characteristic and preclude the need for a Norman truss for roof rigidity. Had the roof been a full hipped roof with four galleries the plates would have had to be all of equal height, and there would have been diagonal cross braces across each corner with horizontal dovetails to tie the walls together.

External evidence has been located for the front and rear galleries. This evidence is only available for the front and rear, none was found for side galleries. Just below the through tenons for the end walls on the side walls there are the stubs of gallerie joists that had been morticed and tenoned and pegged into the corner vertical log and then cut off flush with the exterior at some later date. The notches for railings have also been found lower down on the same upright.

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The primary archaeological component represented in the excavations to date relates to the late eighteenth - early nineteenth century habitation at the Pierre Martin House. General ceramic types recovered include creamware, pearlware, whiteware, ironstone, coarse earthenware, and stoneware. The lack of French faience ceramics (which were dominant in excavations at the nearby French village of Cahokia) is to be expected for at least two reasons: (1) with the end of French domination and the imposition of British rule in 1765, it may be assumed that trade and importation of ceramics as well as other commodities from France and/or French Canada halted; and (2) in general by the 1770s-1780s, the British ceramic industry boomed and with the introduction of new wares, such as creamware and pearlware, these became the popular imported tablewares in North America. The early nineteenth century also saw the increase in local potters to supply much of the utilitarian ware. Although relative dates for creamware (ca 1770-1820) and pearlware (ca. 1780-1820) span several decades, the presence, although uncommon, of these ceramic types substantiate the dating of this archaeological assemblage. Associated artifactual materials included kaolin pipes, flintlock gun accouterments, pewter and brass buttons, trade beads, and possibly, numerous faunal remains, toys, and personal items.

While the archaeological integrity of the Pierre Martin property appears to have been moderately disturbed near to the dwelling as discussed above, the remainder of the two lots (approximately 50 by 140 feet) appear to be intact. Local informants were not aware of any recent disturbances and the undulating nature of the backlots indicate they were not leveled by landscaping as was done in the frontyard. Based on excavations and the documentary records from other nearby French habitations this area may include such support facilities as a barn (ecurie), shed (hangard), hen house (poulailler), corn crib (cabane a mahis), oven (four), or even slave dwellings (cabane a negres). Another interesting feature that may be present is the typical French property fence or enclosure (pieux debouts) that surrounded habitations. Visual examination of the backlots indicates at least one relatively small depression probably representing a subsurface feature such as well, cistern, or privy. Such features should be present in this area. The Pierre Martin property provides an excellent opportunity to investigate a relatively undisturbed "backyard" area of an early French habitation to compliment our knowledge of French domestic dwelling archaeology.

8. Statement of Significance

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

nationally statewide locally

Applicable National Register Criteria A B C D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions) A B C D E F G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)

Architecture
Archeology (Historic, Non-Aboriginal)
Exploration/Settlement

Period of Significance

c. 1790
c. 1790 - c. 1850
c. 1790 - 1807

Significant Dates

c. 1790

c. 1790, 1807

Cultural Affiliation

Significant Person

N/A

Architect/Builder

Unknown

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

The Pierre Martin House meets criterion C as it is an example of the transitional style of the Creole Illinois Country House dating to 1790. It is presently one of the oldest known houses in the state and is the only one representing the class of the upper middle economic strata among the six known remaining "poteaux sur solle" or post on sill structures in Illinois. Only one of the other 33 known vertical log structures in the United States has a finished stone basement. It is representative of a style and type that was once dominant in the area known as the Illinois Country, and in some form or other all along the French settled Mississippi valley. It shows the mixing of architectural influences from areas as widely ranging as Normandy in France via Quebec, the Caribbean via the Bahamas and Haiti and the Anglo-American. Criterion A is met in that the house is a survivor of that important and, unfortunately, little known and represented period of American history: the French colonial settlement in the New World, especially in the middle Mississippi valley, and its affect on the Mid West. The French were the first European settlers in this area and were represented by first, second and third generation colonists. The mix of diverse sources led these settlers to adopt specific agricultural and architectural systems quite early on. These systems became a major factor in their identity and continued to affect their growth and expansion even after the end of the colonial period. There are clear associations of early settlement patterns in the post colonial expansion of Cahokia settlers into the Prairie du Pont area and its elevation to village status. These are clearly visible in the Pierre Martin House and its relationship to the commonfield lots associated with it.

This property is also significant for the archaeological potential of the site (Criterion D) as indicated by the preliminary excavations carried out under the supervision of Bill Iseminger, Site Interpreter, Cahokia Mounds State Historic Site. The Pierre Martin House lot is one of the few known, intact domestic yards preserved in French Colonial Cahokia.

See continuation sheet

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Preliminary investigations indicate that privies, outbuildings, midden features, wells, and cisterns may be present, as well as a surrounding palisade enclosure. While archaeological investigations have taken place at the Cahokia Courthouse, the Cahokia Wedge, and the Jarrot Mansion, none of these properties represent common domestic dwellings. The Pierre Martin property should provide the opportunity to gather information on French domestic lot use, outbuilding placement, refuse disposal within a circumscribed area. The assemblage suggests that there is good archeological cultural material through the mid-19th century. Therefore, the period of significance for archeology extends to ca. 1850 in order to take into account the full transition from French to English to American cultural domination.

Prairie du Pont, the site of the Pierre Martin House was a subordinate village to Cahokia, the first permanent settlement along the Mississippi, founded in 1699 by French missionary priests to the Indians. It is even possible that the original site of the Cahokia settlement was closer to the Prairie du Pont site than to the present site of Cahokia. (CIF C.E. Petersen, "Notes on Old Cahokia" Pp 13, 14, 15, map and notes by Charlevoix, 1735). From a very early date there is evidence that in periods of peace and security there were those who farmed and lived outside of the village limits of Cahokia. During periods of insecurity these outlying areas would be abandoned for the safety of the formal village limits. The most important of these areas was Prairie du Pont, so named because of the bridge over the river or creek separating it from Cahokia. The road crossing the river at that point went up towards the Falling Spring and up onto the bluffs towards Kaskaskia. The river and bridge area became the site for a series of water mills and later the base for the village. The land had been part of a **seigneurie** or feudal estate belonging to the missionary church in Cahokia. In 1762-3 during the transfer of power to the British, this area, which had hardly been improved by the mission, was sold. This sale was later deemed invalid by the US government and the land was added to the US public lands. From the 1760s, though, there is evidence of some of the land being used on a permanent basis, though the evidence of a settlement or village dates from Cahokia court records of grants starting in late 1779 or 80 in favor of the then claimant Antoine Girardin. By 1783 the court of Cahokia was forced to concede that Prairie du Pont had the status of a village and granted it the rights of commonfields and a commons. The Cahokia court retained jurisdiction over legal matters and land matters. On June 11 1783 the court disposed of certain unallotted

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lands at Prairie du Pont by lottery, and in the years that followed certain specific grants were made.

It is possible that the first owner of this house received title to the land through one of these lotteries or grants. In 1789 Pierre Martin was listed in court documents as living in Cahokia but being forced to sell his residence there to pay debts. In 1790 he is officially listed in Wm. St. Clair's census as resident head of family in Prairie du Pont. When governor St. Clair had to confirm lands to the lawful owners in 1790 and, later in 1808, the Kaskaskia Land Office had to survey and reconfirm those holdings, Pierre Martin is listed both times as owning two village lots in Prairie du Pont and two commonfields of one arpent width each. The description is the same in both records. The confirmation for these holdings was based on present occupation of same and original improvement of same. There is no record of Martin ever selling his residence in Prairie du Pont during the period 1790 - 1807, or of his purchasing any village lots. A footnote to his reconfirmation in 1808 to his claims of two village lots containing a house and a barn respectively and two commonfield lots of one arpent width each, from the Prairie du Pont river to the hills, indicates that no claim number had ever been found, filed, or known for the survey number 142, the upper commonfield lot, and that Pierre Martin had evidently always owned and farmed it, at least to the satisfaction of the former governor, St. Clair. The index of claim numbers indicates that the rest of his claim was filed under number 1442-1-2. The commonfield lot, given survey number 145, was 1442-1 and the two village lots were 1442-2, indicating that the final confirmation by the Kaskaskia Land Office in 1808 was for the same lots indicated in 1790 on the St. Clair list as drawn up by Antoine Girardin. There were no prior claimants or owners listed for these claim numbers, and the present owner at the time of confirmation was given as Pierre Martin for claim number 1442-1-2 and the heirs of Pierre Martin for survey number 142, indicating that the latter was finalized after his death in 1807, while the former was finalized before his death.

The french commonfield system as practiced in the Illinois Country was a holdover from medieval practices that in most parts of Europe had already been abandoned. The commonfields were a series of narrow, (one **Arpent**, or 192 foot, wide), strips, usually running back a great length from an easily definable line such as a river or bluffs, that were owned in fee simple but protected by a common fence around its outer perimeter to protect the crops from the deprivations of both wild and domestic cattle etc. A true commons acting as a woodlot and grazing area was usually also laid out. In French Canada land along

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the St. Laurence had been laid out so that each **habitant**, or farmer, had a narrow frontage on the river and a share of the good bottomlands as well as a share of wooded and unusable lands. Each usually built his house and outbuildings near the river on his own commonfield. In the Illinois Country the system was slightly different in that the **habitants** lived in a village tract and depending on the size and number of their village lots were granted commonfields of one **Arpent** increments in width in a separate are laid out as commonfields. Another area was laid out as the commons. In the case of Cahokia, and later, Prairie du Pont, the commonfield grants ran from the bluff line to either the Mississippi river or one of the creeks , depending on the specific location of the field. Cahokia was laid out over time by the French authorities and by 1780 was a mature village. Due to such reasons as flood damage, exhaustion of their fields, (the french did not practice crop rotation), population pressures, and speculative interests, various individuals began to express an interest in farming the area of Prairie du Pont, and living there. The court of Cahokia allowed this and individuals were granted and bought fields as they were laid out and, as the **habitants** of Canada had done, the **habitants** of Prairie du Pont began by building on the ends of their commonfields where they met the river du Pont , especially at the point where the bridge had been built for the road to Kaskaskia from Cahokia and where the mill had been built. By 1790 the grouping of houses had taken on the look of a village and specific lots were being created and sold that did not connect to a specific commonfield. Pierre Martin's house was one of those that was on his own commonfield tract, and was listed as a town lot. On his death in 1807 the house was sold separately from the commonfield tract that it had originally been part of, (survey nr. 145)

The great majority of the people who came to Cahokia and Prairie du Pont were 2nd or 3rd generation colonists from Quebec, who because of the availability of rich land in the Mississippi valley, came to increase their economic prospects. The rest were a mix of people from the lower Louisiana area and a number of Frenchmen direct from France who, by the 1780s, were mostly fleeing political unrest at home, (there was also a small but steady stream of Americans by that time. Land was the big interest in this area, farming was the basic way of life for the inhabitants of Cahokia and Prairie du Pont. The land value and the political situation fueled speculation for certain individuals but grain was the basic economic product. This area was the bread basket of the upper and lower Louisiana areas, feeding both St. Louis and New Orleans for a long period.

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The Pierre Martin House as a transitional form of an architectural type of great rarity in the United States as a whole and in Illinois is in an excellent location viz a vis other surviving vertical timber structures. Its location in a one mile vicinity of the Cahokia Court House, (ca. 1737), the Jarrot House, (1806-08, an Anglo-American style built by a Frenchman), the Church of the Holy Family, (1799, a representative of Quebec and Norman styles), as well as the La Croix house of Prairie du Pont, a few hundred yards away, (date unknown, but a single room transitional structure with an added basement and foundation ca 1940), puts it in a area rich in French history and valuable for its Creole architecture. The Courthouse and the Church are representative of the French colonial styles in their earlier form. The Pierre Martin House is the transitional form between the Creole and the rapidly encroaching and soon to be dominant Anglo-American style represented by the Jarrot house. The Pierre Menard House in Kaskaskia, (1802), is a hybrid structure, one that is more properly a connection between the Louisiana Creole and the Illinois Country Creole, with definite Anglo-American influences in the interior trim. The Creole House of Prairie du Rocher, (approximately 1810) is not a vertical log structure, but it is indicative of how the Creole type house has influenced vernacular building in the Mississippi valley in a way that has become local and mostly unrecognizable today. There is one other potential vertical log structure in the Prairie du Rocher area. This is a late, (ca.1860), single room structure with split and planed logs, possibly cottonwood, of great width, ca. 20" by 4" thick, where the upright members are nailed to the top plate and sill with wire nails and the uprights touch each other rather than having a nogging. The inside face of the logs is beveled at the joints, much like car siding. The structure has been abandoned for some time and is collapsing and due to be demolished. Its value probably lies in the evidence that a version of vertical log construction was still being used at such a late date, possibly to keep costs down for the builder.

These **poteaux sur solle** structures are architecturally important because they show a continuation of an ancient building tradition that was dying out in most parts of Europe when the first colonists came to America, but that had a reflowering in the hands of the French and then grew to take on new directions in the French colonial world. The closely spaced vertical timber frame with its high, steeply pitched roof came from northern France via Quebec; the galleries came from Africa and the Caribbean via Louisiana; the meeting in the mid Mississippi valley formed the Illinois Country house. Today the gallery is growing again in popularity and a 'new' phenomenon, the

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pole barn and house continue another facet of this ancient building system.

Pierre Martin was also a traveler in his time and an interesting individual. He was originally from Quebec and had come to Cahokia evidently in the hopes of making his fortune. He married there, probably his second wife, he being her second husband. He was constantly borrowing money to be able to start business ventures, such as in 1787 when he borrowed a considerable sum, 2940 **livres**, (\$588.00), from August Chouteau of St Louis to do business in Vincennes. Such a loan from such a person meant that he had credit. He was not fully successful in that he lost part of his collateral the next year to pay the debt off: a male negro slave valued at 1500 livres. Later he would be constantly in debt, mostly evidently to speculate in land claims. He was illiterate but was elected to various village and court offices, once being a judge of court and once administrator of fences and assessor of damages for the village of Prairie du Pont. At his death his whole estate was sold to meet his debts, a total of 698.61 **Piastres**, (dollars). His house and one lot was sold for 96.00 **Piastres**, (dollars). This can be equated to the probate of the wealthiest man in the area, Michel Girardin, whose house sold for 5000 **Livres**, (1000.00 dollars), in 1795 or so and whose estate was valued at 16000.00 **Livres**, (3200.00 dollars).

Pierre Martin was trying to become one of the wealthy elite through his land speculations and was trying to live like one, and his house shows it. It is larger than most and boasts a finished basement in stone with a fireplace for use as a kitchen, (evidence in the ceiling framing for cooking pivots being present, and the evidence of the rose headed spike in the beam), a usage otherwise only reserved for stone or brick houses of the rich, (CIF the Jarrot house, Cahokia 1806-08). His inventory includes a **chandelier** with its "**ferrails**" or metal accoutrements, a rare object even if not of great value, (67.5 cents). The only other references to under the main floor areas in "**poteaux sur solle**" or vertical timber structures is to "**caves**", which generally refer to dirt floored areas such as food storage or crawl space storage areas.

Charles E. Peterson in his publication "Notes on Old Cahokia" writes that those buildings surviving from this period should be preserved before they disappear. This was in the 1930's when there were more than twice as many left as there are now. This is still his opinion today after having seen the Pierre Martin House and before its early date was known. Buildings are not just valuable for their structure,

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their feel and ambiance indicate what the people must have been like who built them and lived in them.

The following is a discussion of the archaeological significance of the Pierre Martin House site: A partial analysis of recovered artifacts indicates that the primary occupation falls in the late 18th-early 19th century. The artifact assemblage consists primarily of domestic household items such as ceramics, household utensils, coins, toys, faunal remains, building hardware, metal tools, etc. French colonial material culture assemblages from this area are extremely limited but can be compared with those from the Cahokia Wedge, Cahokia Courthouse, and Jarrot Mansion. The Martin archaeological data can provide important baseline information on the material assemblage of late French domestic households. The Martin assemblage covers an important time period in the French occupation of Illinois - the transition from French to English to American domination. Investigations at the site could provide documentation on the effects on the material culture of the "Americanization" of the French Cahokians in the early 19th century.

Due to the survival of vast stores of court, probate and land office documents from the period of 1780-1820, in both French and English, the building, its first occupant, Pierre Martin, and the period can be well documented. St. Clair County records contain a full probate list of all Pierre Martin's goods, including land holdings at death and his household goods, furnishings and animals. Because of the existence of both the contrasting/complimentary documentary and archaeological records the Martin property is a significant opportunity to provide a more complete understanding of late French Colonial lifeways. These independent databases allow the formulation and testing of hypotheses on French Colonial socio-economic patterns, subsistence practices, trade patterns, and other topics that could not be dealt with on the basis of only a single line of evidence.

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9. Continued:

Peterson, Charles E. : Colonial St. Louis, Building a Creole Capital.
Missouri Historical Society, St. Louis, MO. 1949

----- : American State Papers, Public Lands.
Washington, D.C., 1834

Unpublished works and documents:

-: Deed Books A, B, C, St. Clair County, period c. 1790 -1818.

-: Original Documents and Files of early Cahokia Court Cases, 1791 - 1808.

-: Perrin Collection: (a collection of original documents relating to the period of French settlement in the 'Illinois Country'.)

-: Volumes 49 A, B, C, D, E, in Auditor of Public Accounts Arrangement, (hand written original documents and transcript copies of original documents made at the time about land grants and claims in the period 1790 -1818.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

- Alvord, Clarence Walworth, Ed. : Collections Of The Illinois State Historical Library, Vol. II, Virginia Series, Vol. I, Cahokia Records 1778-1790. Illinois State Historical Library, Springfield, IL. 1907
- Carter, Clarence Edwin, Ed. : The Territorial Papers of the United States, Vol. II The Territory Northwest of the River Ohio, 1787-1803 U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C., 1934
- McDermott, John Francis, Ed. : The French in the Mississippi Valley University of Illinois Press, Urbana IL., 1965
- Peterson, Charles E. : A Guide to Ste. Genevieve, with notes on its Architecture, 2nd Ed. 1940, U.S. Dept of the Interior, National Parks Service, Jefferson National Expansion Memorial.
- Peterson, Charles E. : Notes on Old Cahokia, Parts I, II, III, Journal of the Illinois State Historical Society, 1949.

See continuation sheet

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- State historic preservation office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Specify repository:

Illinois State Archives & St. Clair County Courthouse

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of property Less than one acre.

UTM References

A

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4	2	7	0	0	8	0
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Zone Easting Northing

C

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B

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Zone Easting Northing

D

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See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

The nominated property occupies lots 3 and 4 in block 2 of Boisemenu's Subdivision of Prairie du Pont, IL., in the commonfields of Prairie du Pont.

See continuation sheet

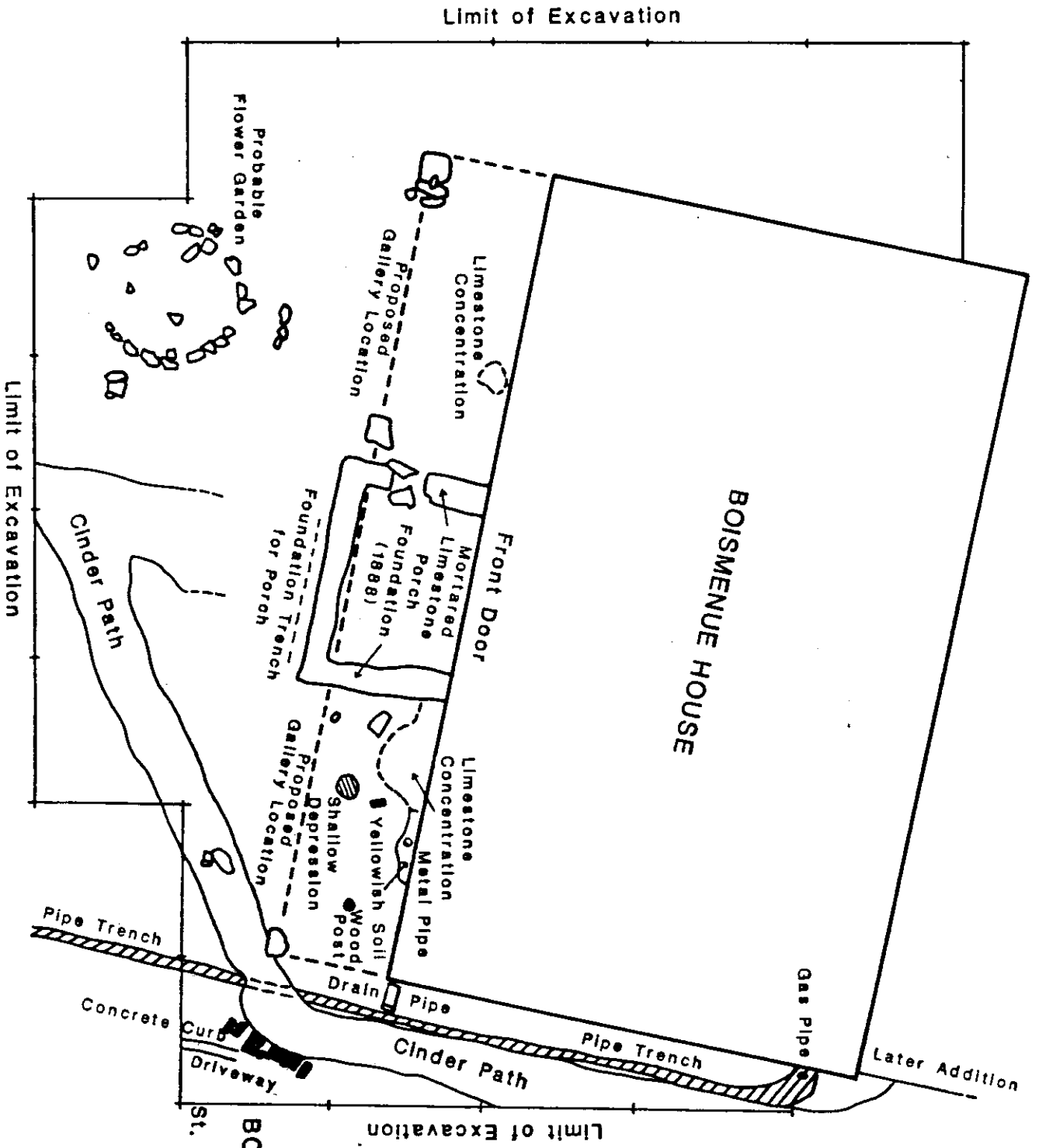
Boundary Justification

The boundary encompasses the city lots that historically has been associated with the property.

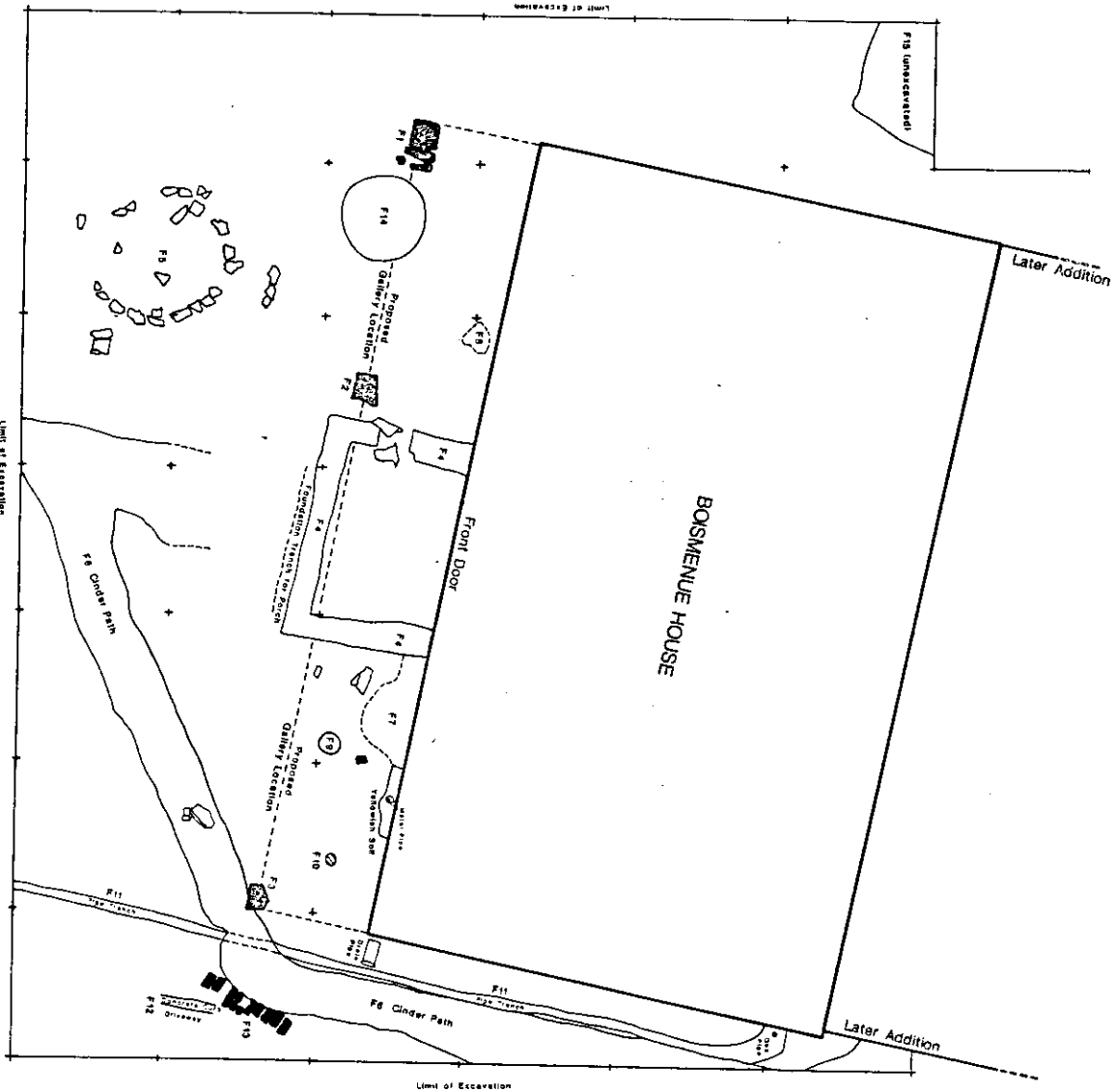
See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

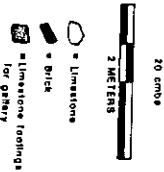
name/title Eric Mack, Associate
 organization Luer & Associates date 10 October 1989
 street & number 911 Park telephone (314) 436-1147
 city or town St. Louis state MO zip code 63104



BOISMENU HOUSE
 Prairie du Pont
 St. Clair County, Illinois



BOSMENUE HOUSE
 Prairie du Pont
 St. Clair County, Illinois



The following properties were also entered in the National Register but were excluded from a previous notice:

KEY: Property Name, Multiple Name, Address/Boundary, City, Vicinity, Reference Number, NHL status

ILLINOIS

St. Clair County
Martin, Pierre, House
First St. at Old Rt. 3
North Dupo 2/09/90 89002350

IOWA

Marion County
Van Spancheren, B. H. and J. H. H., Row Houses
505-507 Franklin St.
Pella 2/12/90 90000004

MASSACHUSETTS

Bristol County
Anthony, David N., House
Swansea NRA
98 Bay Point Ave.
Swansea 2/16/90 90000059
Anthony, Harold H., House
Swansea NRA
132 Bay Point Ave.
Swansea 2/16/90 90000058
Bark Street School
Swansea NRA
Stevens Rd. at Bark St.
Swansea 2/16/90 90000062
Barneyville Historic District
Swansea NRA
Old Providence and Barneyville Rds.
Swansea 2/16/90 90000052
Bend of the Lane
Swansea NRA
181 Cedar Ave.
Swansea 2/16/90 90000057
Brown, John, IV, House
Swansea NRA
703 Pearse Rd.
Swansea 2/16/90 90000064
Buffington, Deacon John, House
Swansea NRA
262 Cedar Ave.
Swansea 2/16/90 90000056

MASSACHUSETTS

Bristol County
Church of Christ, Swansea
Swansea NRA
G. P. R. Hwy./US 6 at Maple Ave.
Swansea 2/16/90 90000075
Cole, Benjamin, House
Swansea NRA
412 Old Warren Rd.
Swansea 2/16/90 90000066
Colony Historic District
Swansea NRA
Gardner's Neck and Mattapoisett Rds. at Mt. Hope Bay
Swansea 2/16/90 90000079
First Baptist Church and Society
Swansea NRA
Baptist St.
Swansea 2/16/90 90000060
Gardner, Francis L., House
Swansea NRA
1129 Gardner's Neck Rd.
Swansea 2/16/90 90000077
Gardner, Joseph, House
Swansea NRA
1205 Gardner's Neck Rd.
Swansea 2/16/90 90000076
Gardner, Preserved, House
Swansea NRA
90 Milford Rd.
Swansea 2/16/90 90000061
Gardner, Samuel, House
Swansea NRA
1035 Gardner's Neck Rd.
Swansea 2/16/90 90000068
Hortonville Historic District
Swansea NRA
Locust St. from Oak St. to Hortonville Rd.
Swansea 2/16/90 90000051
Luther's Corner
Swansea NRA
Old Warren and Pierce Rds.
Swansea 2/16/90 90000054
Luther, William, House
Swansea NRA
79 Old Warren Rd.
Swansea 2/16/90 90000067
Horton House
Swansea NRA
61 Old Providence Rd.
Swansea 2/16/90 90000078

MASSACHUSETTS

Bristol County
Short's Tavern
Swansea NRA
282 Market St.
Swansea 2/16/90 90000072
Sincock House
Swansea NRA
1074 Sharps Lot Rd.
Swansea 2/16/90 90000063
Snuggler's House
Swansea NRA
351 Pearse Rd.
Swansea 2/16/90 90000065
South Swansea Union Church
Swansea NRA
Gardner's Neck Rd.
Swansea 2/16/90 90000055
Swansea Village Historic District
Swansea NRA
Roughly Main St. from Gardner's Neck Rd. to Stephens Rd., and Ledge Rd.
Swansea 2/16/90 90000053
Walkden Farm
Swansea NRA
495 Marvel St.
Swansea 2/16/90 90000071

MISSOURI

Wayne County
Old Greenville (23WE637)
Address Restricted
Greenville vicinity 2/17/90 90000005

MONTANA

Rosebud County
Anderson, Herman and Hannah, House
Forsyth NPS
209 S. 7th Ave.
Forsyth 2/12/90 90000084
Blue Front Booming House
Forsyth NPS
1187 Main St.
Forsyth 2/12/90 90000085
Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers Hall
Forsyth NPS
262 S. 7th Ave.
Forsyth 2/12/90 90000086

MONTANA

Rosebud County
First Presbyterian Church and Manse
Forsyth NPS
1160-1180 Cedar St.
Forsyth 2/12/90 90000089
Forsyth Bridge
Forsyth NPS
3rd Ave. at the Yellowstone River
Forsyth 2/12/90 90000090
Forsyth Main Street Historic District
Forsyth NPS
Roughly bounded by Cedar St., 11th Ave., Main St., and 8th St.
Forsyth 2/12/90 90000081
Forsyth Residential Historic District
Forsyth NPS
Roughly bounded by Cedar St., 11th Ave., Willow St., 12th Ave., Oak St., and 14th Ave.
Forsyth 2/12/90 90000082
Forsyth Water Pumping Station
Forsyth NPS
3rd Ave. at the Yellowstone River
Forsyth 2/12/90 90000087
Marcyes, Claude G., House
Forsyth NPS
390 S. 7th Ave.
Forsyth 2/12/90 90000088