

Jean Baptiste Valle House
Main and Market Streets
Sainte Genevieve, Mo.

HABS No. 31-10

HABS
MO
97-SAIGEN,
1

PHOTOGRAPHS
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA
District No. 31

MULTIPLE
ADDENDUMS
FOLLOW

Historic American Buildings Survey
Wilbur T. Trueblood, District Officer
1520 Chemical Building
St. Louis, Missouri

COPY.

MRS. EDWARD SCHAAF
Saint Marys, Missouri.

MO
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August 29th, 1936.

Mr. Charles Peterson,
St. Louis, Missouri.

Dear Mr. Peterson:

I have your letter of the 28th and am replying for I can give you bits of information of the houses measured. You do not get the CORRECT information in Ste. Genevieve. Why is a mystery.

The Jean Baptiste Valle house was the original Fort of the town. There is not another of its kind anywhere. It was, no doubt, a Block House. The descendants of Jean Baptiste Valle claim he built it in 1787. IT WAS A FORT AS LATE AS 1796. It was granted to Valle after the Fort was abandoned and he used it as a residence.

The Felix Valle home was built by a Jew merchant, named Philipson, in 1818. This is from the records.

The Indian trading post was a trading post or, rather, the warehouse of the merchant Jean Baptiste Bossier. How early it was built I can't say but Bossier lived in his store house next the post when Philipson bought the lot to build his house. (1818)

The Old Stone House is not so old but I have not the records on it.

There are other houses much older which I will show you.

Cordially,

IDA M. SCHAAF

P.S. At the Jefferson Memorial, in the Ste. Genevieve archives, there is the inventory of estate of Parfait Dufour, 1787, I think. In it is described his lot, house and stable. That house is standing.

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY
DISTRICT OF MISSOURI (NO. 1.)

HABS
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PROJECT NO. 400

"Jean Baptiste Valle Home"
Ste. Genevieve, MAIN & MARKET STS
Missouri.

This residence was built in 1785 and from 1796 until this territory was admitted to the Union as a State, the house served as the home of the Commandants.

The house was built by Jean Baptiste Valle who acted as Civil and Military Commandant from 1804. His father and brother were also Commandants before him. The building was originally built in 1782 in the old village and after the flood of 1785 was brought to the new site and reassembled.

It is a fine example of sturdy French architecture and is in excellent condition.

Now owned by ^JVion Papin of St. Louis.

It is one and one-half story brick, surrounded by a wide veranda. Gable roof and dormers.

Information, Harry Petroquin.

EUGENE L. PLEITSCH.

W 6/2/37

Addendum to
Jean Baptiste Valle House
(Jean Baptiste House)
Main and Market Streets
Ste. Genevieve
Ste. Genevieve County
Missouri

HABS No. MO-31-10

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PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

ADDENDUM
FOOTNOTES

Historic American Buildings Survey
National Park Service
Department of the Interior
Washington, D.C. 20013-7127

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HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

Addendum to JOHN BAPTISTE VALLE HOUSE

HABS No. MO-31-10

Location: Main and Market Streets, Ste. Genevieve, Ste. Genevieve County,
Missouri

HISTORICAL AND ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

The following information was recorded by Alexander Piaget and Charles van Ravenswaay at the time the photograph was taken:

"The Vion Papin House...the date of building we do not know, but do know it was the main building or Block House of a Fort and was a Fort as late as 1796, any other statement to the contrary notwithstanding." (Mrs. Ida M. Schaaf of St. Marys, Mo., to Charles van Ravenswaay, August 1937).

"Erected by my great, great grandfather, Jean Baptiste Valle and occupied by his direct descendants up to and including my father as a child...It was never the fort of the community, which, as a matter of fact, was located on the South Gabourie, adjoining the residence of his brother, Francois Valle, Jr., who was Commandant under the Spanish up to the time of his death...Is it not logical that the fort should be near the military Commandants headquarters rather than at his brother's residence some distance away?" (M . Jules F. Valle to Charles van Ravenswaay, August 1937).

Main body upright logs on stone foundation. Roof and interior changed; dormers added ca. 1860s. The brick addition was added at a later date. The barn in the rear of the house was built in 1857 with an interesting form of cement. The gardens were laid out by the Vion family about 1867.

PROJECT INFORMATION

The Piaget-van Ravenswaay Survey consists of a number of photographs, primarily of sites and structures in Missouri, which were taken before 1938 by Alexander Piaget and after that by Paul Piaget, both in conjunction with Charles van Ravenswaay. Photographs of buildings were incorporated into the HABS collection in 1985 by Laura Rupp and in 1986 by Deborah Fulton, HABS historians. A master list is available in the records for MO-1800.

Addendum to
Jean Baptiste Valle House
(Jean Baptiste House)
99 S. Main Street (Northwest corner of
Main and Market Streets)
Ste. Genevieve
Ste. Genevieve County
Missouri

HABS No. MO-31-10

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PHOTOGRAPHS

ADDENDUM
FOLLOWS

Historic American Buildings Survey
National Park Service
Department of the Interior
Washington, DC 20013-7127

Addendum

Jean Baptiste Valle House
(Jean Baptiste House)
North Main Street
Ste. Genevieve
Ste. Genevieve County
Missouri

HABS No. MO-³¹⁻¹⁰~~1106~~

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REDUCED COPIES OF MEASURED DRAWINGS

Historic American Buildings Survey
National Park Service
Department of the Interior
Washington, D.C. 20240

Addendum to
Jean Baptiste Valle House I
(Jean Baptiste House)
99 South Main Street
Ste. Genevieve
Ste. Genevieve County
Missouri

HABS No. MO-31-10

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REDUCED COPIES OF MEASURED DRAWINGS
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey
National Park Service
Department of the Interior
Washington, DC 20013-7127

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY
JEAN BAPTISTE VALLE HOUSE I

Location: 99 S. Main Street, Ste. Genevieve, Ste. Genevieve
County, Missouri, 63670

Present Owner: Vion Papin Schram

Present Occupant: Bernard K. and Vion Papin Schram

Present Use: Residence

Significance: This house is a major example of the creole tradition for vertical log construction (poteaux sur sole). It is one of the largest early houses in the new village of Ste. Genevieve, a National Historic Landmark Historic District. Including its Greek Revival trim from a mid-nineteenth century period of remodeling, it is also one of the most elegant. The house occupies a central position in the new settlement and preserves its large early lot and setting.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History:

1. Date of Erection: c. 1794. Jean Baptiste Valle and his wife Jeanne Barbeau built this house about 1794. Tree-ring analysis dates the last year of growth of timbers in the house to 1794 and a deed to adjoining properties mentions Valle as a bounding owner in 1796.
2. Original and subsequent owners: Legal description: Part of block number 9 in the town of Sainte Genevieve, and being the northwest corner of Main and Market Streets.
Chain of title:
 - a. October 25, 1796, mention of Valle as bunding owner in possession of this lot at the time. Land Records 207 (SGA58).
 - b. February 8, 1815, by deed of trust from Jean Bte. Valle to Etienne Parent for \$1500.00, released March 4, 1817. Deed book B, page 36.
 - c. October 25, 1825, certificate from the Recorder of Land titles, Theodore Hunt, confirming claim of John B. Valle for this lot in Ste. Genevieve.
 - d. August 9, 1849, by will of John Bte. Valle dated January 14, 1839 to Felix Valle and other heirs. Deed book G, page 476.
 - e. August 12, 1853, by general warranty deed from Felix Valle et. al. (heirs of John Bte. Valle) to Anthony Lagrave. Deed book H, page 706.

- f. August 19, 1853, by quit claim from heirs of Jean Bte. Valle to Anthony Lagrave. Deed book H, pages 610-611.
 - g. March 29, 1862, by deed of trust from Anthony Lagrave and Mary, his wife to Frances C. Rozier for \$1500.00, released on May 14, 1864. Deed book P, page 190.
 - h. July 29, 1862, by deed of trust from Anthony Lagrave and Mary, his wife to Merchants Bank of St. Louis for \$2,917.00, released May 11, 1864. Deed book P, page 301.
 - i. March 20, 1867, by general warranty deed from Anthony Lagrave and Mary, his wife to Leon Vion for \$8,000.00 Deed book R, page 490.
 - j. November 9, 1877, by will of Leon Vion dated April 1, 1875 to Fannie Vion, wife and children, Adelaid Papin, Julia Vion, and Ernestine Masson. Deed book 30, page 51.
 - k. December 27, 1922, by will of Fannie Vion dated August 21, 1920 to Joseph Vion Papin. Deed book 90, page 341.
 - l. January 11, 1945 by will of J. Vion Papin dated September 26, 1944 to Fannie Locket Papin, wife. Deed book 123, page 236.
 - m. June 27, 1968 by will of Fannie Locket Papin dated May 1, 1954 to Vion Papin Schram. Estate #132-627.
3. Alterations and additions: During the time LaGrave owned the property, 1853-67, the house was extensively remodelled on the interior, perhaps in 1862 when it was heavily mortgaged. Four Greek Revival mantels, no longer in use, are stored in the cellar. Painted on the back of one, apparently shipping instructions, is: "A. LaGrave, Ste. Genevieve M'o." The house was remodelled and returned in the 1960s by the present owners.

B. Historical Context:

Jean Baptiste Valle, the builder of the house, came from Colonial Ste. Genevieve's leading family which had prospered in mining and mercantile business and had supplied one of the town's earlier commandants. Valle was appointed Civil and Military Commandant of the district in 1804 on the death of his brother Francois, thus the house belonged to the last commandant of Ste. Genevieve. The building was a center for governmental activity during the final days of Spanish rule and, since the American government reappointed Valle, the first period of American rule as well.

A. General Statement:

1. Architectural character: This is a large example of vertical log construction on a stone foundation, what the French called "poteaux sur sole." Its general form, and much of its construction detail are characteristic of creole architecture. The central hall plan is probably due to the remodeling of c. 1862.
2. Condition of fabric: excellent.

B. Description of Exterior:

1. Over-all dimensions: One story on a basement with a high attic, 80'-4" across the front by 59'-7" deep.
2. Foundations: stone and brick.
3. Walls: Vertical, hewn, white oak logs, mortised into a sill, infilled with bouzillage, plastered. Horizontal clapboards cover the attic gables.
4. Structural system, framing: Vertical log structure on a sill carrying a plate, hewn logs closely spaced, floor beams mortised into the sill and the plate, vertical sawn, pine roof rafters with 3" x 5" collar beams spaced about 2'-6" on center.
5. Porches: An interrupted French colonial gallery exists on all four sides of the house.
6. Chimneys: There are four chimneys that carry a fireplace. Additionally, an original chimney carrying two fireplaces, one in the basement and one in the story directly above it, survives. Another chimney exists at the southwest of the house. The location of the chimneys appear original, but the materials have been altered. They are constructed of brick rather than the traditional limestone, suggesting they have been rebuilt.
7. Openings: Principal entrances at the center of both long sides of the house open into a hallway flanked by one room on each side. About five secondary entrances open into rooms at the southwest and northwest ends of the house. A separate entrance under the gallery at the west of the house leads into the cellar.
 - a. Doorways and doors: later entrance door with transom light, probably from c. 1862 remodeling.
 - b. Windows and shutters: double hung windows, six light sash, louvered shutters.

8. Roof:
 - a. Shape, covering: gable roof over the main part of the house with asphalt shingles. Flat roofs over the galleries.
 - b. Cornice, eaves: No eave projection, boxed in plate at eave line of the porch.
 - c. Dormers: gable roofed dormers, front and rear.

C. Description of Interior:

1. Floor plans:
 - a. First floor: The large creole house was Americanized in the mid-nineteenth century to an 11 room plan with central hall entrances at both front and rear of house. The central passageway runs the depth of the house and is divided by a wall and door at the middle of the house. The plan more closely resembles the hall and parlor types of the Anglo-american tradition rather than the French creole types. The interior space was probably altered c. 1862 when it was owned by Anthony Lagrave. The interior was remodeled and restored in the 1960s by the present owners.
 - b. Cellar: The full, finished basement is divided into nine rooms and used primarily for storage. A shop, recreation room, wine cellar and special room for garden tools are designated rooms in this space.
 - c. Attic: The upper floor is finished with bedrooms and bath.
2. Stairways: open string stairway with wooden handrail.
3. Flooring: wood.
4. Wall and ceiling finish: Plaster walls. Exposed ceiling beams.
5. Openings:

Doorways and doors: Early 6 panel door between the library and guest room. The door from the kitchen to the pantry was originally a window.
6. Decorative features and trim: Much of the interior woodwork was constructed for the present owners during the 1960s in a style compatible with the mid-nineteenth century remodeling of the house.

8. Mechanical equipment: Modern heating, air conditioning, lighting and plumbing.

D. Site:

1. General setting and orientation: The house faces east on South Main Street. It occupies a central position in the new settlement and preserves its large early lot and setting.
2. Historic landscape design: A large vegetable garden and small vineyard comprise part of the grounds. Remnants of an early formal garden served as the model for a garden maintained by the present owners. Plantings on the lot include silver maple, redbud, dogwood, pecan, hackberry, shagbark, hickory, sycamore, ash, cedar, yellow, poplar, apricot, cherry, bald cypress, and elm tree varieties.
3. Outbuildings: The location of a former corn crib, dovecote, and privy were determined. The incinerator and chicken house survive. The privy was demolished by a snowstorm in February 1982 and a new garage was constructed on the site of the original barn which also collapsed in February 1982.

PART III. SOURCES OF INFORMATION

- A. Early Views: Early photographs of the house, c. 1900-1920, are preserved in the Vincent J. Dunker Collection, owned by Mrs. Elmer L. Donze, 15 South Fourth Street, Ste. Genevieve, copy negatives owned by the University of Missouri-Columbia Ste. Genevieve Project.
- B. Interviews: August 31, 1985, with Bernard K. Schram.
- C. Bibliography:
 1. Primary and unpublished sources: Deed records in the Ste. Genevieve County Clerk's Office, County Courthouse. Other records in the Ste. Genevieve Archives (SGA), collected on microfilm, Western Historical Manuscripts Collection, University of Missouri-Columbia.
 2. Secondary and published sources:

Ekberg, Carl J., Colonial Ste. Genevieve, An Adventure on the Mississippi Frontier (Gerald, Missouri: The Patrice Press, 1985).

Franzwa, Gregory M., The Story of Old Ste. Genevieve (St. Louis: The Patrice Press, 1967).

Peterson, Charles E., "Early Ste. Genevieve and its Architecture," The Missouri Historical Review, XXXV:2 (January 1941), pp. 207-232.

Porterfield, Neil H. "Ste. Genevieve, Missouri," in John Francis McDermott, editor, Frenchmen and French Ways in the Mississippi Valley (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1969), pp. 141-177.

Writers' Program of the Work Projects Administration, Missouri, A Guide to the "Show Me" State (Missouri State Highway Department, 1941).

PART IV. PROJECT INFORMATION

This project was undertaken by the Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS) team of the Rocky Mountain Regional Office, National Park Service, under the direction of Historical Architect Thomas G. Keohan. Documentation was carried out during the summer of 1985 at the HABS field office in Ste. Genevieve, Missouri, by project supervisor Osmund Overby (University of Missouri-Columbia), project architects James Q. Marsh (Hemet, California), William D. Cesaletti (Keaau, Hawaii), and Terance A. Gruenhagen (North Dakota State University), and project historian Claudia A. Barbero (University of Missouri-Columbia).

Prepared by: Osmund Overby
Professor of Art History
and Toni M. Prawl
Research Assistant
University of Missouri-Columbia
January 17, 1987

ADDENDUM TO
JEAN BAPTISTE VALLE HOUSE
(JEAN BAPTISTE HOUSE)
99 South Main Street
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Ste. Genevieve County
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