NOW ON DOYLE MELANCON ROAD

124-Year-Old House Has Been Moved Twice

By MARIO MAMALAKIS

Bridge have named the house that they acquired and renovated. It is located on the Doyle Melancon Road.

The house was built originally by Felix Berard in the 1890's on Ruth Sugar Cane Plantation between Parks and Breaux Bridge. Actually, it is now only a half mile from where it was originally built.

However, when in the early 1900's the plantation passed out of Berard's hands, he retained the house and moved it to St. Martinville to a site on New Market Street. The move by mule team required four months for the house to reach its destination. Berard served as St. Martinville's first president of the Police Jury.

The house eventually became the property of Mrs. Jemine Bienvenu Poitier, his granddaughter. In Jan. 1977 Mrs. Potier sold the house with its contents to Mr. and Mrs. Harry Mouton, who moved it to its present site on the Doyle Melancon Road.

Mouton immediately began making repairs and preparations for moving the house. The front gallery and the roof were removed, the upper story was dismantled and the pieces numbered and finally the structure was ready for the move in two pieces. In sharp contrast to the original move to St. Martinville, this move in June, 1977 required only one day.

Mouton recalls that all during the preparations for removal of the upper story and the roof there was a long dry spell. However, the day the roof came off, there also came a heavy rain. He oversaw the damage caused by this and went on to renovate to a point, when the family was able to move into the house in March of 1978.

In renovating the house, the Moutons were determined to maintain as much of the original plan of the house as was feasible and they have succeeded admirably.

A front view of the house reveals a gallery extending across the entire width of the house with wide steps in the center of the gallery.

Six posts support the roof overhang which covers the gallery. A railing between the posts extends to the sides of the gallery. The focal point of the gallery is the front door whose upper part is a beautifully designed stained glass. In the move the center portion was cracked and had to be substituted. There are narrow glass panels on either side of the door and a glass transom, which frames them. The door and the panels, was added by Mouton. In preparing to install the transom, evidence was found that there had originally been a transom above the door. On either side of the front door are floor to ceiling windows trimmed with shutters. Two dormer windows at the front of the house open into the second story and two chimney stacks rise through the roof.

A side view of the house reveals that there are four windows; one for each of the rooms downstairs and one for each of the rooms upstairs. The Moutons added a half 8' x 3' x 36' stained glass window on the east side of the house.

Originally, the downstairs floor plan consisted of a center hall with a staircase leading downstairs and lavabo in the master bedroom, the hall tree, the four-poster bed for the boys, upstairs bedroom, a dropleaf table in the study, the framed mirrors in the living room and downstairs bedroom. Armories doors found in the attic were used for the doors enclosing the washer-dryer area.

In the move some of the bricks in the fireplaces were cracked. Harry and Mrs. Mouton (the former Judy Comb) removed these and used them for the brick patio opening off the sun room. New brick was used for the fireplaces in the living room and downstairs bedroom.

There are many interesting pieces of antique furniture in

Originally Built On Sugar Cane Plantation

Moutons Wanted Much Of Original House Plan

upstairs and four bedrooms opening off this hall. The dining room and the kitchen were added later. The Moutons believe, since the kitchen in the early days of this area were usually built separately from the main house. The Moutons converted the side gallery to a sun room, using windows found in the eaves of the attic. The large stained glass window, which is predominantly yellow glass with blue also, gives a golden cast to the room. The large stained glass window was originally a door to a staircase leading downstairs and was re-leaded and framed as one solid piece.

Another interesting item in the house, which were acquired with the purchase of the house. Added to these are pieces of cypress. Mrs. Mouton had in the antique shop she operated, Les Vieux Temps, in Breaux Bridge over a three year period. Pieces that came with the house are a totem bed, a table, and the armories, which encloses the patio.

With the help of their brother-in-law, Leonard Lasseigne, Thibodaux, herculacetum professor at Nicholls State College, the Moutons are landscaping their yard. He is also helping them to secure the hand split cypress for the porch, which encloses the patio.

BAR AREA - The bar area of a room in La Maison Comb-Mouton shows the bar built by Harry Mouton from old doors found in the attic of the 124-year-old house.