

Bernardo D'Ortolan Rancho Site, Nacogdoches (V), Nacogdoches County, Texas

Narrative Description

The Bernardo D'Ortolan Rancho site (41NA299) is associated with the Rancho San Bernardo del Loco, established along El Camino Real de los Tejas in 1796 by Bernardo D'Ortolan. Born in 1750 in Bordeaux, France, he immigrated to Louisiana during the 1770s and became a successful rancher and military man. In the 1790s, D'Ortolan relocated from Louisiana to Texas where he established the rancho. The rancho was occupied until 1813 by D'Ortolan, who died in 1822, and then until 1838 by either his sons or by his freed slave, Raphael D'Ortolan. At the D'Ortolan site, foundation rocks comprise evidence of two structures that are believed to have been the primary residence of the D'Ortolan family during their occupation of the rancho. Artifacts recovered at the site include hundreds of manufactured European goods as well as aboriginal Caddo ceramic sherds.¹ The Bernardo D'Ortolan Rancho site offers a rich, detailed glimpse of domestic life in east Texas during the early nineteenth century. This site is being nominated under the *Historic Resources of El Camino Real de los Tejas National Historic Trail* Multiple Property Documentation Form.

Environmental Setting

The environmental discussion below is based upon the findings from Dee Ann Story (editor), *The Deshazo Site, Nacogdoches County, Volume 1*.^{2,3}

The nominated Bernardo D'Ortolan Rancho site (41NA299) is located on the middle reaches of the Angelina River drainage in east Texas. Situated in western Nacogdoches County, about 13 miles (21 kilometers) from the city of Nacogdoches, the D'Ortolan Rancho site lies on the south side of a spring-fed stream that drains west into Lake Nacogdoches. The lake is a manmade reservoir, created by damming Bayou Loco in 1976. The related Raphael D'Ortolan site (41NA300) is on the north side of the same spring-fed stream, about 1,000 feet away. Bayou Loco normally is a sluggish, meandering stream flowing year round, but, after heavy rains, it can quickly overflow its banks. Soils developed from alluvium deposited by the overflows are typically sandy or clay loams. Vegetation along the streams is similar to that of the bottomland in general, although overcup oak, persimmon, and water hickory trees are frequently found in the area. Exploitable animals inhabiting this environment include various species of fish, waterfowl, reptiles, and mammals including beaver and raccoon.

Nacogdoches County lies in the central part of east Texas within the West Gulf Coastal Plain section of the Coastal Plain Province. As a physiographic province, the area is relatively homogeneous, although some variation occurs between the level and hilly areas. The Nacogdoches region is rolling and well-dissected by a dendritic drainage system. The minor perennial streams flow in roughly parallel north-south courses and meander sluggishly through wide valleys with flat floodplains. Numerous tributary streams, both perennial and

¹ Timothy K. Perttula, with contributions by Tom Middlebrook, Bo Nelson, and LeeAnna Schniebs, *Archeological Investigations at the D'Ortolan Site (41NA299) and Other Late 18th Century to Early 20th Century Sites Along Bayou Loco in Western Nacogdoches County, Texas* (Archeological and Environmental Consultants, Austin, Texas, 2008).

² Story, Dee Ann (editor), *The Deshazo Site, Nacogdoches County, Volume 1* (Austin: Texas Antiquities Committee, 1982).

³ The DeShazo site (41NA27) is a short distance away, beneath Lake Nacogdoches. Intensive archeological investigations revealed at least three major components—Early Ceramic, late Caddoan, and Euro-American—present at the site.

Bernardo D'Ortolan Rancho Site, Nacogdoches (V), Nacogdoches County, Texas

intermittent, flow on the uplands. Elevation differences between the floodplains and the uplands are a maximum of 197 feet (60 meters).⁴

The modern climate of Nacogdoches County is one of mostly warm temperatures and abundant precipitation, characteristic of the south temperate humid section of the United States. The summers are warm and long, and winters are mild and short. The long growing season extends from late March to early November, with the number of days between the last frost of the spring and the first frost of the fall varying from 235 to 260. Thus, it is possible to raise two crops per year.⁵ Annual precipitation averages 48 inches (122 centimeters), with variations above or below the average amounting to as much as 15 to 20 inches (38 to 51 centimeters). This precipitation is generally not evenly distributed through the year. Increased rainfall coincides with the planting season in April and May. The average amount of rain in the summer decreases while the temperatures increase. Not infrequently, the area experiences a summer drought. When they do come, rains in the summer are often torrential and can cause flooding of cultivated bottomlands. The relatively small monthly amount of rain continues until late fall. Nonetheless, it can be seen from these data that overall the climate is well suited for agriculture.⁶

Nacogdoches County is within the Austroriparian Biotic Province, a geographical region distinguished by peculiarities of flora, fauna, climate, physiography, and soils. The area is commonly known as the Pineywoods and is part of the larger southeastern United States mixed pine-hardwood forest. The region is predominantly covered with oak and pine.⁷

Period of Use

The Bernardo D'Ortolan Rancho site (41NA299) was occupied by the D'Ortolan family between circa 1796 and 1838. This Period of Use encompasses the latter portion of the Spanish Colonial Period, which ended in 1821; the Mexican Period, 1821-1835; and the Texas Independence Period, 1835-1845 as defined in the Multiple Property Documentation Form Historic Resources of El Camino Real de los Tejas National Historic Trail.⁸

Identity of Associated Persons and Groups

The D'Ortolan family, headed by Bernardo D'Ortolan, a native of the Bordeaux region in France who immigrated to Louisiana during the 1770s, occupied the Bernardo D'Ortolan Rancho site (41NA299). D'Ortolan was twice widowed before moving to the rancho site and only two of D'Ortolan's children, Juan Baptiste and Raymond, survived into adulthood. Black slaves also occupied the site and the historical record suggests that D'Ortolan fathered one or more children with one of them, Marie Juana.

⁴ Story, *The Deshazo Site*, 13.

⁵ Story, *The Deshazo Site*, 14.

⁶ Story, *The Deshazo Site*, 14.

⁷ Story, *The Deshazo Site*, 14.

⁸ Lena Sweeten McDonald and Tony Scott, Historic Resources of El Camino Real de los Tejas National Historic Trail Multiple Property Documentation Form, on file at the Texas Historical Commission, Austin, 2011.

Bernardo D'Ortolan Rancho Site, Nacogdoches (V), Nacogdoches County, Texas

Description of Resources

The following resource descriptions are from Perttula et al., *Archeological Investigations at the D'Ortolan Site (41NA299) and Other Late 18th Century to Early 20th Century Sites Along Bayou Loco in Western Nacogdoches County, Texas*, pp. 6-34.

The D'Ortolan Rancho Site contains a late-eighteenth to early-nineteenth domestic archeological site. The distribution of positive shovel tests excavated during archeological investigations suggests that the D'Ortolan site may cover an approximate 121 by 344 feet (37 by 105 meter) area, or about 1 acre (0.4 hectares). Archeological investigations have identified the fireplace and outline of the main rancho house, and recovered a broad range of artifacts associated with the D'Ortolans' period of occupation.⁹

At the time of the occupation, the family had access to a wide variety of manufactured goods, including English ceramic plates and cups, French faience plates, dark and olive green hand-blown wine bottles, and an assortment of metal tools that were used and discarded during work on the rancho, among them horse or mule shoes, cast iron 3-legged kettles, an iron hook, a knife, and an iron awl. A decorative jingler or *higo* indicates the use of Spanish horse gear. Hand forged nails found in abundance here indicate that the structures were wood framed, and a very few pieces of thin window glass recovered in the investigations show that one of the structures had at least one window with panes of glass. A metal cabinet pull, a portion of a Spanish horse bridle, and a carved bone toothbrush also were recovered during the excavations.¹⁰

In the western part of the site, a red oxidized soil was encountered between 3.5 and 5.9 inches (9 and 15 centimeters) below surface, along with two hand-forged nails (ca. 1769-1820) and three pieces of animal bone. In 2005, a 1 by 1 meter unit (Unit 1) was excavated and a mass of oxidized sand and clay was exposed between 3.5 and 4.3 inches (9 and 11 centimeters) below surface in the western 60% of the unit. There were several large rocks in the unit, including several that had been oxidized because of their exposure to intense heat. The size of the feature, as well as the oxidized soil and rocks, suggest that this is a hearth or fireplace associated with a structure. Artifacts found in the vicinity of the hearth included wood charcoal, animal bones, a few pieces of British ceramics, and a number of hand-forged nails and nail shafts.¹¹

During the course of the various investigations completed at the D'Ortolan site in 2003-2004, a total of 477 artifacts were recovered, most from general site surface collections. In addition to a few faience sherds (French tin-glazed ceramics) and an olive jar sherd (probably from a vessel made in Mexico and transported north to Nacogdoches), the most commonly recovered artifacts at the site included sherds from English-made pearlware ceramic plates and cups (n=37), whiteware ceramic plate and cup sherds (n=177), olive green wine bottle glass (n=28), and hand-forged nails and nail fragments (n=81). Animal bone and pieces of wood charcoal also were relatively abundant in the archeological deposits, especially in the immediate proximity to the hearth or fireplace identified at the site.¹² During additional excavations in 2009-2010, investigators identified a 20 cm-

⁹ Perttula et al., *Archeological Investigations*, 6.

¹⁰ Perttula et al., *Archeological Investigations*, 34.

¹¹ Perttula et al., *Archeological Investigations*, 6.

¹² Perttula et al., *Archeological Investigations*, 8.

Bernardo D'Ortolan Rancho Site, Nacogdoches (V), Nacogdoches County, Texas

wide charred wooden beam running S/SW-N/NE parallel to the side rocks of the fireplace. This find, coupled with the remarkable condition of the nails at the site, suggests the house may have burned at some point.¹³

There are also aboriginal Caddo artifacts at the site, particularly ceramic sherds (n=24) from utility ware brushed vessels. During the late eighteenth century and the first quarter of the nineteenth century, Caddo groups living in the Nacogdoches area made bone-tempered brushed utility ware ceramic vessels as well as vessels (of uncertain decoration) tempered with grog and mussel shell. Examples of these vessels have been recovered at the D'Ortolan Rancho Site.¹⁴ These were found in the area of a rock-lined fireplace and hearth in the main structure on the rancho, as well as in an area about 8 meters southwest of the hearth, suggesting an outdoor cooking area.¹⁵ It is clear that Caddo cooking jars made by Caddo groups then still living in the Nacogdoches area were being used in the processing, preparation, and cooking of foodstuffs on the rancho. Most of them have been found in contexts that indicate that the sherds are from vessels that were in use at the time of the D'Ortolan occupation.¹⁶

One Kent dart point and a sandy paste Goose Creek Plain sherd also suggest that there was a small Woodland period (ca. 2500-1150 years B.P.) occupation at the D'Ortolan site.¹⁷

Likely Appearance during Period of Use

During the historic period of occupation, the rancho was located along a spring-fed tributary to the nearby Bayou Loco (which was subsumed by Lake Nacogdoches in 1976). In an 1809 census, the rancho was described as consisting of a league and a half in width and depth, and included field and summer pastures for horses and cattle. The Bernardo D'Ortolan Rancho is believed to have featured two buildings that comprised the family's dwelling. Archeological evidence indicates the buildings sat on stone foundations and were of timber construction attached with hand-forged nails. The presence of a few small pieces of glass indicates the buildings had at least some windows with panes of glass. A gristmill and granary on the property were mentioned in an 1809 Nacogdoches census.¹⁸

Current and Past Impacts

The D'Ortolan Rancho site has never been subjected to extensive development. Although it now is within an area that has been subjected to suburban residential development, the property owner has protected the site from disturbance, and has fenced it to assure future avoidance as well. Since 2003, archeological investigations have recovered hundreds of artifacts through surface collections, shovel testing, and 1m X 1m controlled excavations.

¹³ M. K. Jackson, T. Middlebrook, G. Avery, H. Shafer, and B. Meissner, *Trade and Cultural Interaction along El Camino Real de los Tejas During the Spanish Colonial and Republic Periods in Nacogdoches County, Texas*. 2 Vols. (Nine Flags Museum, Nacogdoches, 2012), 229.

¹⁴ Perttula et al., *Archeological Investigations*, 21.

¹⁵ Jackson et al, *Trade and Cultural Interaction*, 1007.

¹⁶ Perttula at al., *Archeological Investigations*, 13.

¹⁷ Perttula at al., *Archeological Investigations*, 13.

¹⁸ Institute of Texas Cultures, University of Texas, "Census Report of the Jurisdiction of Nacogdoches, May 31, 1809," in *Residents of Texas, 1782-1836*, Volume 2 (Nacogdoches: Ericson Books, 1984): 11.

Bernardo D'Ortolan Rancho Site, Nacogdoches (V), Nacogdoches County, Texas

Integrity

The Bernardo D'Ortolan Rancho site historically was located along a spring-fed tributary of Bayou Loco. In 1976, the Bayou Loco was subsumed by Lake Nacogdoches, a manmade reservoir encompassing 2,210 acres (894 hectares). The site is near the lake shoreline. During the early 2000s, land along the lake shoreline began to be developed for a residential subdivision. Occupying a wooded parcel and surrounded by a black, chain link fence, the D'Ortolan Rancho site does not appear to have ever been plowed, and archeological investigations have indicated that the archeological remains of the dwelling remain intact. Thus far, archeological investigations have proven that the deposits are relatively spatially discrete and functionally defined, allowing for good interpretation of what activities have taken place and when. Furthermore, the quality of the documentary records associated with the D'Ortolan's occupation is good and allows for the deposits to be assigned to a particular family's activities at the site. Consequently, although the setting has changed considerably in recent decades, the archeological deposits at the D'Ortolan Rancho site retain a high degree of integrity and the ability to yield important information.¹⁹

¹⁹ Sweeten McDonald and Scott, *Historic Resources of El Camino Real*.

Bernardo D'Ortolan Rancho Site, Nacogdoches (V), Nacogdoches County, Texas

Statement of Significance

The Bernardo D'Ortolan Rancho Site is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places at the statewide level of significance under Criterion D in the areas of Exploration/Settlement and Archeology for its high potential to yield important information pertaining to the history of settlement and trade along the historic El Camino Real. This rancho site is being nominated under the *Historic Resources of El Camino Real de los Tejas National Historic Trail* Multiple Property Documentation Form. The period of significance, 1796-1838, spans the period in which Bernardo D'Ortolan, his slaves, and/or his heirs occupied the site and encompasses the period of time for which the site has significant information potential. This site represents one of the only established locations of a Spanish rancho in East Texas and may be the earliest European construction known in the county. Given its relatively undisturbed status and the results of archeological investigations carried out here during the mid-2000s, the Bernardo D'Ortolan Rancho Site has demonstrated a high degree of archeological integrity and the potential to answer important research questions.

Deposits from the 1796-1838 occupation provide a rich and varied illustration of domestic life at an early nineteenth century rancho dating from late Spanish colonial-era Texas through the Mexican independence period and culminating during the Texas Republic period. The biography of Bernardo D'Ortolan is a microcosm of the cultural milieu within which colonial-era settlers lived. In varied capacities as an interpreter, military officer, and farmer, D'Ortolan had contact with Spanish, French, and Native American groups in colonial-era Louisiana and Texas. Although born in France, he served in the Spanish military for more than twenty years. Don Juan Maria de Ripperda, Governor of Texas, acknowledged him as a "faithful interpreter" in the "Royal Service." His neighbors at the adjoining rancho were the Irishman William Barr and Pennsylvanian Samuel Davenport, both very successful traders. Additionally, Caddo ceramics found at the site provide a tangible record of interaction and contact between the Caddo living in the Angelina River basin and the area's more recent European settlers.²⁰

The Bernardo D'Ortolan Rancho Site is located west of the city of Nacogdoches in Nacogdoches County. The site is situated a little more than 4 miles south of Texas Highway 21 which closely follows the upper route of El Camino Real de los Tejas (hereafter referred to as El Camino Real) and less than 1 mile north of Farm-to-Market Road 225 which approximately follows a lower and possibly older alignment of El Camino Real (also known as the John Durst or Lower Douglas Road),²¹ Segments of El Camino Real ran from Natchitoches through Nacogdoches, San Antonio, and ultimately to Mexico City. Nacogdoches was one of the first and most successful Spanish colonial-era settlements in east Texas. A segment of El Camino Real reached Nacogdoches during the Terán expedition of the early 1690s. El Camino Real grew to connect a series of Spanish missions and posts between Monclova, Mexico, and Los Adaes, the first capital of the province of Texas located in what is now northwestern Louisiana. The changing routes extended from Saltillo through Monclova and Guerrero, Coahuila, Mexico, into Texas by way of San Antonio and Nacogdoches, and as far as Los Adaes. It constituted the only primary overland route from the Río Grande to the Red River Valley in Louisiana during the Spanish Colonial Period. The Spanish-era missions Nuestra Señora de la Purísima Concepción de los Ainais, Nuestra

²⁰ Perttula et al., *Archeological Investigations*, 21. All archival research concerning Bernardo D'Ortolan was carried out or commissioned by Tom Middlebrook, Texas Archeological Steward and owner of the Bernardo D'Ortolan site. This Statement of Significance is based largely on Middlebrook's extensive work concerning the site's history.

²¹ Perttula et al., *Archeological Investigations*, 2.

Bernardo D'Ortolan Rancho Site, Nacogdoches (V), Nacogdoches County, Texas

Señora de Guadalupe de los Nacogdoches, and San José de los Nazonis, along with a presidio, all were within present-day Nacogdoches County. El Camino Real provided a principal means for settlers moving into Texas from the east. Bernardo D'Ortolan, a French immigrant who spent many years in the Spanish military, moved to the area during the 1790s from a homestead in Louisiana.²² D'Ortolan (also spelled Dortolan, Dortolant, or D'Ortolant) received a four-league land grant from Spanish authorities in the Nacogdoches District on October 17, 1796. About four leagues west of Nacogdoches, he built a house on the land near where the Lower Camino Real crossed Bayou Loco.²³

The following historic context regarding Bernardo D'Ortolan is taken from Tom Middlebrook's "Spanish Colonial Rancho of Bernardo D'Ortolan," pp. 1-5.

Bernardo D'Ortolan was born August 2, 1750, in Parish St. Michel, Bordeaux, France, the son and grandson of commissioned French ship captains.²⁴ The date and means of his passage to the New World have not yet been identified, but he was listed for the first time in Natchitoches Parish records in October, 1776, when he married Marie Anne Grappe, a woman from a prominent and wealthy local family.²⁵ During the twelve years of marriage before her death, Maria Grappe D'Ortolan gave birth to four sons and a daughter.²⁶ Apparently, only two sons survived until adulthood. Bernardo married again in July 1793, to Catharina Bardon, but he became a widower a second time the following year.²⁷ During the nearly twenty-five years he lived in Natchitoches, he became loyal to the Spanish crown and rose through the ranks of the military. In 1775, in a letter by Spanish colonial official, Baron de Ripperda, D'Ortolan was referred to as an interpreter for Louisiana and Texas authorities.²⁸ He also partnered in at least one ranching operation near Natchitoches. In 1778-1779 he accompanied the De Mezieres expedition to Bexar.²⁹ He may have followed the command of Bernardo de Galvez against the British at Manchac, Baton Rouge, and other encounters.³⁰ D'Ortolan spent over twenty years based in Natchitoches, where he was eventually promoted to the captain of the Spanish cavalry and militia.

In 1795, Bernardo was an interesting figure in what has been called the Natchitoches Revolt.³¹ An uprising among some of the French residents of Natchitoches against the ruling Spanish was prompted by their loyalty to a particular local Catholic authority and was perhaps also inspired by word of a plan by the French Revolutionary figure, Citizen Genet, to work with the Americans to seize Spanish Florida and Louisiana. While

²² National Park Service, United States Department of the Interior, *El Camino Real de los Tejas National Historic Trail Feasibility Study and Environmental Assessment* (July 1998), 7.

²³ Perttula et al., *Archeological Investigations*, 2.

²⁴ Archives Municipales de Bordeaux, Sacramental Registers of Ste-Croix, CG256, act 1387.

²⁵ Elizabeth Shown Mills, *Natchitoches, Abstracts of the Catholic Church Registers of the French and Spanish Post of St. Jean Baptiste des Natchitoches in Louisiana: 1729-1803* (New Orleans: Polyanthos, 1977), entry# 1026; H. Sophie Burton and F. Todd Smith, *Colonial Natchitoches: A Creole Community on the Louisiana-Texas Frontier* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2008): 39, 153.

²⁶ Mills, *Abstracts*, entries #1426, 1728, 1782, 1304, 1848, 1902.

²⁷ Mills, *Abstracts*, entry #3398; Melrose Collection, Northwestern State University of Louisiana, Watson Memorial Library, Cammie G. Henry Research Center, Folders 708-709.

²⁸ Perttula et al., *Archeological Investigations*, 2; Robert Bruce Blake, *Research Collection and Supplement*, Volume 1 (East Texas Collection, Stephen F. Austin State University, Nacogdoches, Texas, 1958): 140, 311.

²⁹ Institute of Texas Cultures, *Texas and the American Revolution* (San Antonio: The University of Texas at San Antonio, 1975): 49.

³⁰ Susan Holley, of Bastrop, Louisiana, personal communication to Tom Middlebrook, based on research of Bernardo D'Ortolan.

³¹ Juan José Andreu Ocaruz, "The Natchitoches Revolt" *Louisiana Studies* 3, no. 1 (1964): 117-132.

Bernardo D'Ortolan Rancho Site, Nacogdoches (V), Nacogdoches County, Texas

D'Ortolan was traveling to Bexar to inform authorities there of the unrest in Natchitoches, a group of four Frenchmen, calling themselves the *Revenantes* or “ghosts,” attacked (in Indian disguise) a group of partygoers who were Spanish loyalists. The attackers particularly beat a Jewish violinist named Ramben by smashing his violin over his head and also Ramben’s young son, who ran down the street. The rebellious French “ghosts” reveled in the success of their attack, and while under the influence of much wine, composed a ballad celebrating their intimidation of the Spanish sympathizers. Three of the stanzas made veiled reference to D'Ortolan, who they jeered for leaving Natchitoches when the attack was imminent. As D'Ortolan returned from Bexar, he heard of the ballad while passing through Nacogdoches. He was outraged and filed a lawsuit against one Domingo Prudhomme for “singing a French song” threatening and insulting D'Ortolan. The ballad said in part:

*The chief spy (D'Ortolan) flees from the hurricane (the disturbance in Natchitoches)
By departing on the pilgrimage (to Bexar)
For some time,
But the cords are all ready.
We shall beat your shoulders for you
When you return
Pilgrim, tell me, I beg you,
If you aren't afraid of the rage
Of the ghosts.³²*

Likely due to his more tenuous position following the Natchitoches Revolt, D'Ortolan was transferred to Nacogdoches as Captain of the Militia in 1795-1796.³³ He brought along two sons, Juan Baptiste, age 18, and Raymond, age 15, along with nine slaves, who included a “negress,” Marie Juana, her five daughters and one son, and two young adult males.³⁴

D'Ortolan soon received a large land grant in October 1796, dubbed “Rancho San Bernardo del Loco” in western Nacogdoches County along Bayou Loco and south of the aforementioned alignment of El Camino Real.³⁵ The Angelina River comprised the land grant’s southern boundary. Around 1805, D'Ortolan sold a portion of his grant to his friend and fellow French expatriate Joseph De La Baume.³⁶ The 1809 Nacogdoches Census described the D'Ortolan rancho as follows:

Ranch – two log houses for residence; one that covers a grist mill; another for granary and two for his negroes, on land consisting of a league and a half front and the same in depth, . . . on which he has a field and summer pastures; he has 26 horses and 26 head of cattle.³⁷

³² Mattie Austin Hatcher, “A Texas Border Ballad,” in *Rainbow in the Morning No. 5*, edited by J. Frank Dobie (Texas Folklore Society, Southern Methodist University, 1975): 49-55.

³³ Blake, *Research Collection and Supplement*, Volume 35, 272; Blake, *Research Collection and Supplement* Volume 4, 94.

³⁴ Institute of Texas Cultures, University of Texas, “Census Report of the Town of Our Lady of Pilar de Nacogdoches, December 31, 1797,” in *Residents of Texas, 1782-1836*, Volume 1 (Nacogdoches: Ericson Books, 1984): 290.

³⁵ Blake, *Research Collection and Supplement*, Volume 30, 220.

³⁶ Blake, *Research Collection and Supplement*, Volume 11, 228-229.

³⁷ Institute of Texas Cultures, *Residents of Texas*, Volume 2, 11.

Bernardo D'Ortolan Rancho Site, Nacogdoches (V), Nacogdoches County, Texas

From 1796 until 1813, D'Ortolan apparently split his time between farming and military service. He was noted in the Nacogdoches censuses of 1797, 1798, 1799, 1804, 1805, 1806 and 1809.³⁸ As late as 1806, he was still the captain of the Nacogdoches militia, the Third Company of the Provincial of Texas.³⁹

Perhaps typical of his times, D'Ortolan's relationship with his slaves appears complex. He may have been the father of some of Marie Juana's children; he saw to it that several were baptized in Natchitoches.⁴⁰ In 1808, however, Maria Juana, no longer living with D'Ortolan, petitioned the governor of Texas to allow her to buy the freedom of her oldest son, Santiago. Although D'Ortolan protested, this petition was ultimately granted.⁴¹ Later that year, Bernardo and his legitimate son, Raymond, were briefly jailed for the latter's beating of a slave named Lorenzo Maret.⁴² Despite this suggestion of cruelty, the first item in his Last Will and Testament was to state "it is my wish that my negro man slave named Raphael . . . who has been a true and faithful servant to me be emancipated from the day of my decease."⁴³

D'Ortolan's relationship with local Native American tribes, especially the Caddo, appears to have been based on trade relationships. Tribes traded extensively with European settlers in east Texas, supplying deer, bear, otter, and beaver skins in exchange for manufactured goods. D'Ortolan's fluency in the Caddo language, coupled with the Caddo-manufactured artifacts that have been recovered at the D'Ortolan Rancho site, provide substantial evidence of a trade relationship.⁴⁴

During the summer of 1813, D'Ortolan fled Texas because of his participation in the failed Gutiérrez-Magee expedition.⁴⁵ He left his land along the Bayou Loco in the care of his slave and possible illegitimate son, Raphael, who was born in 1788.⁴⁶ Raphael occupied his own dwelling on the property which is located approximately 1,000 feet northeast of the Bernardo D'Ortolan dwelling site (see Maps 1 and 3). Bernardo died outside Natchitoches, Louisiana, in 1821, at which time Raphael gained emancipation. A legitimate son, Raymond, inherited Rancho San Bernardo but remained in Natchitoches with his common-law wife, Marie Perot, and their five children.⁴⁷ Raymond's son-in-law, Victor La Baume, returned to live on the land briefly in 1827.⁴⁸ Raphael remained on the property until his participation in the failed Cordova Rebellion in 1838 against the Republic of Texas.⁴⁹ The D'Ortolan heirs lost control of the original grant to Anglo settlers during the 1840's.⁵⁰ In 1845, the grant was conveyed to Charles Chevalier of Nacogdoches.⁵¹

³⁸ Institute of Texas Cultures, *Residents of Texas*, Volume 1, 290, 308, 323, 368, 413, 425; Institute of Texas Cultures, *Residents of Texas*, Volume 2, 11.

³⁹ Perttula et al., *Archeological Investigations*, 5.

⁴⁰ Mills, *Abstracts*, entries #2319, 2365, 2422, 2581.

⁴¹ J. Villasana Haggard, *Translation of Spanish Archives* (Austin: University of Texas, 1942): 43, 58-59.

⁴² Haggard, *Translation*, 85-86, 115.

⁴³ Bernardo D'Ortolan, Last Will and Testament, Natchitoches Parish Court House, Book 2 (April 1816-March 1820), 459-462.

⁴⁴ Perttula et al., *Archeological Investigations*, 34-35.

⁴⁵ Blake, *Research Collection and Supplement*, Volume 30, 169.

⁴⁶ Blake, *Research Collection and Supplement*, Volume 30, 169; Mills, *Abstracts*, entry #2581.

⁴⁷ D'Ortolan, Last Will and Testament, 459-462; Blake, *Research Collection and Supplement*, Volume 30, 234.

⁴⁸ Blake, *Research Collection and Supplement*, Volume 30, 170.

⁴⁹ Linda Freeman, "The Cordova Rebellion: An Examination of the Reaction to American Intrusion in the Louisiana - Texas Borderland, 1812-1842" (master's thesis, Northwestern State University of Louisiana, 2004): 25-28.

⁵⁰ Blake, *Research Collection and Supplement*, Volume 30, 170; Nacogdoches County Deeds, Book H, 394-395.

⁵¹ Perttula et al., *Archeological Investigations*, 5.

Bernardo D'Ortolan Rancho Site, Nacogdoches (V), Nacogdoches County, Texas

Criterion D: Previous Investigations and Research Questions for Bernardo D'Ortolan Rancho Site

The general location of D'Ortolan's Spanish grant, Rancho San Bernardo del Loco, was discovered by Dr. James E. Corbin in 1975 as part of a reconnaissance of the shoreline of Lake Nacogdoches, which was under construction at the time.⁵² During Corbin's investigations, a broad scatter of late eighteenth- to early nineteenth-century artifacts were discovered on an upland slope.⁵³ The artifacts found here included a wide variety (n=318 sherds) of refined earthenware (English pottery with a hard paste), including hand-painted (n=20), blue and green shell-edged (n=21), and mocha (n=2) decorated sherds; and bottle glass (n=13). One of the sherds classified as a blue shell-edged piece more closely resembles examples of French faience recovered from the D'Ortolan site. Glass from dark green wine bottles comprise a substantial percentage of glass fragments found at the site.⁵⁴

As described in greater detail in Section 7, archeological investigations by a team of professional and avocational archeologists took place from 2003 until 2009. The investigations began in the summer of 2003 when Tom Middlebrook (member of the Texas Archeological Stewardship Network) obtained surface collections along a newly-cleared road right-of-way (approximately 8,000 ft. in length) for a proposed housing subdivision in the uplands on the east side of Lake Nacogdoches. At the time of the August 2003 investigations, the D'Ortolan site was wooded with hardwoods and pines, except for the area of the cleared subdivision road right-of-way. In addition to gathering a surface collection of artifacts from the cleared road, 25 shovel tests were excavated at the site to establish the general limits of the site as well as to locate concentrations of historic artifacts in the shallow (approximately 7.8 inches or 20 centimeters in thickness) archeological deposits that may mark areas of midden accumulation and/or features such as pits or chimneys. Twelve of these shovel tests contained historic archeological materials, at a relatively low density of 1.83 artifacts per positive shovel test, or 14.6 artifacts per square meter. These shovel tests contained both Caddo ceramics and late eighteenth- to early nineteenth-century artifacts.⁵⁵ Later, in 2009-2010, members of the East Texas Archeological Society conducted additional shovel tests and 1m X 1m controlled excavations, which uncovered a charred wooden beam near the fireplace and additional earthenware sherds, nails, and glass.⁵⁶

The D'Ortolan rancho site represents one of the only established locations of a Spanish rancho in East Texas and may be the earliest European construction known in the county. Research to date proves that there is significant potential for the site to yield important information about the character of commercial trade associated with El Camino Real and how it facilitated the interaction of different cultures and influenced settlement patterns. Additional archeological investigations and data recovery, along with further analysis of the work already conducted could answer the following research questions:

- What architectural information can be gleaned from excavations at the locations of the building(s)? Does it reflect French styles typical of Natchitoches or a more typical Spanish influence? Do construction techniques, sizes and materials of structures at the rancho differ from those in nearby villas/towns? What about those in different regions along El Camino Real?

⁵² Story, *The Deshazo Site*, 9, 51-53.

⁵³ Story, *The Deshazo Site*, 35.

⁵⁴ Story, *The Deshazo Site*, 125.

⁵⁵ Perttula et al., *Archeological Investigations*, 6.

⁵⁶ Jackson et al, *Trade and Cultural Interaction*, 219-239.

Bernardo D'Ortolan Rancho Site, Nacogdoches (V), Nacogdoches County, Texas

- How does a domestic set of artifacts from a Spanish colonial rancho compare or contrast to the domestic deposits in the nearest town of Nacogdoches? If different, what factors account for the differences?
- How did trade influence domestic wares of the rancho? What are the key commercial sources of these objects and how do they compare with other period material collections from Natchitoches, Los Adaes, Goliad and San Antonio, as well as the more remote ranchos in those regions?
- What can paleobotanical and zooarcheological remains tell us about late Spanish colonial diet in the eastern frontier along El Camino Real de los Tejas? What can this data tell us about food procurement and preparation? Do dietary differences exist between the remote colonial ranches and the town settlements? If different, what factors account for the differences?

The Bernardo D'Ortolan Rancho Site is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places at the statewide level of significance under Criterion D in the areas of Exploration/Settlement and Archeology for its high potential to yield important information pertaining to the history of settlement, trade, and cultural interaction along the historic El Camino Real. The period of significance, 1796-1838, spans the period in which Bernardo D'Ortolan and/or his heirs occupied the site and encompasses the period of time for which the site has significant information potential. Given its relatively undisturbed status and the results of archeological investigations carried out here during the mid-2000s, the Bernardo D'Ortolan Rancho Site demonstrate a high degree of archeological integrity and the potential to answer important research questions.

Bernardo D'Ortolan Rancho Site, Nacogdoches (V), Nacogdoches County, Texas

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RESTRICT FROM PUBLIC ACCESS MAPS 1 through 4

Map 1 (Restricted). Location on the [REDACTED] USGS Quadrangle Map in Nacogdoches County, Texas.

MAP REDACTED

Bernardo D'Ortolan Rancho Site, Nacogdoches (V), Nacogdoches County, Texas

Map 2 (Restricted). Photo key and site plan.

MAP REDACTED

Bernardo D'Ortolan Rancho Site, Nacogdoches (V), Nacogdoches County, Texas

Map 3 (Restricted). Site map of 41NA299 as recorded by Perttula (2008).

MAP REDACTED

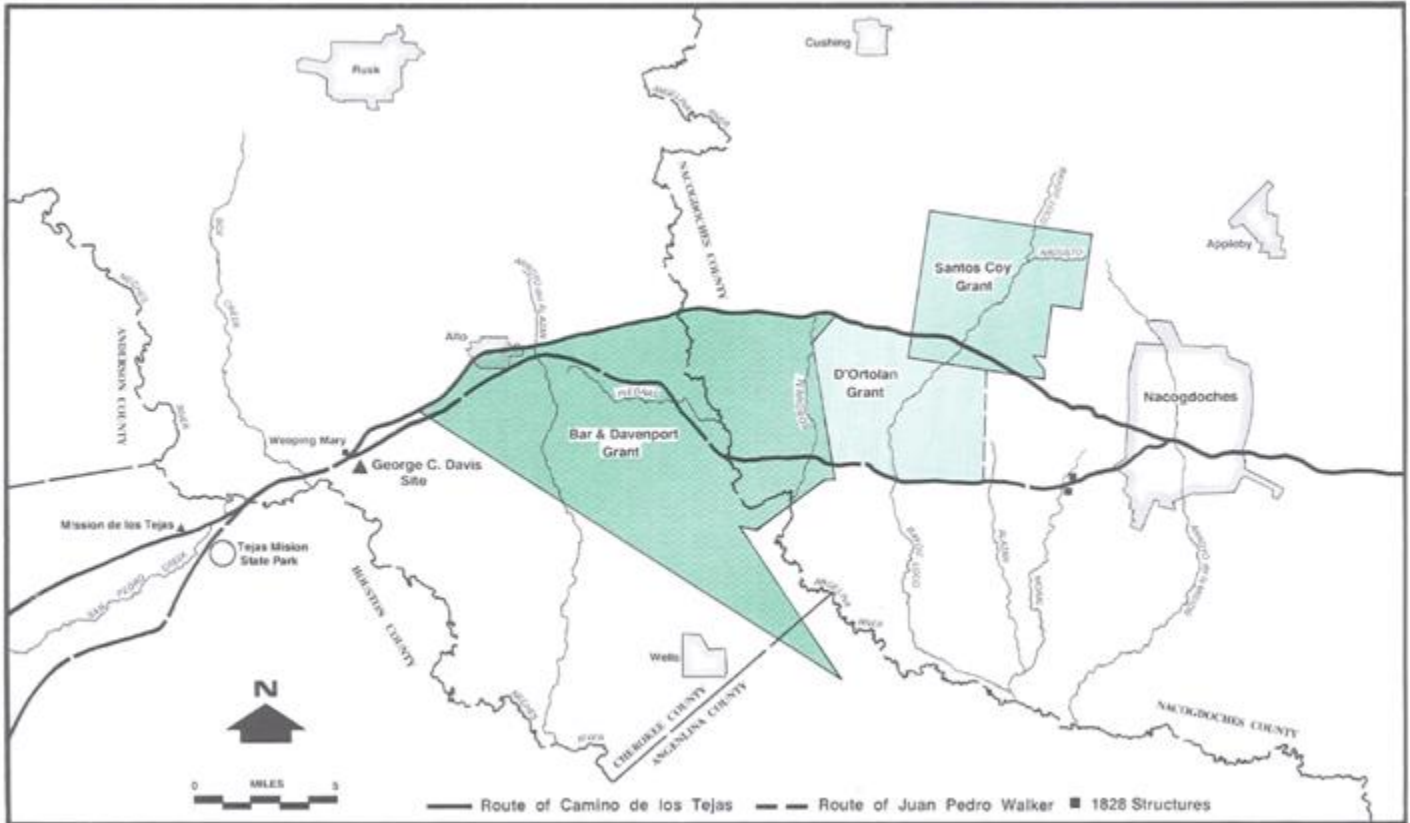
Bernardo D'Ortolan Rancho Site, Nacogdoches (V), Nacogdoches County, Texas

Map 4 (Restricted): Scaled Google Earth map depicts locational data for the nominated property.

MAP REDACTED

Bernardo D'Ortolan Rancho Site, Nacogdoches (V), Nacogdoches County, Texas

Figure 1. Map showing two approximate trail routes crossing the D'Ortolan Grant, taken from McGraw et al. (1991).



Bernardo D'Ortolan Rancho Site, Nacogdoches (V), Nacogdoches County, Texas

Figure 2. Portion of a French copy of the Juan Pedro Walker Map, circa 1806, which depicts two routes of the El Camino Real in relation to an apparent structure labeled Dortolon, taken from McGraw et al. (1991).

