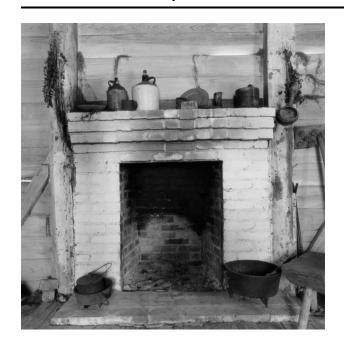# Basic Detail Report

Interior Slave Cabin, Oakley Plantation, Louisiana, from the series "Underground Railroad"

Date
2004

Primary Maker
William E. Williams

Medium
Gelatin silver print

Description
James and Lucy Pirrie built this plantation and in 1821 they hired John James Audubon as a drawing teacher for their daughter, Eliza. The plantation became Audubon's home for four months. Because the plantation remained in family hands into the 20th century, it has become an important archaeological site for interpreting African-American life on Southern plantations. This slave cabin is not original to the plantation. It was relocated to Oakley, now part of the Audubon Memorial State Park, and restored to illustrate slave life on Louisiana plantations. (SOURCE: Adair, et al., "Uncovering the Path to Freedom" exh. cat, p. 29) Oakley Plantation House is located in the Audubon Memorial State Park in West Feliciana Parish. Construction on the house began in 1799, when Ruffin Gray, a successful planter from Natachez, Mississippi, moved here on land purchased from the Spanish authorities. Gray died before the house was completed, and his widow Lucy Alston oversaw its completion. She later married James Pierre of Scotland. Eliza, the daughter of James Pierre and Lucy, was born here in 1805, and it was her future education that introduced Audubon to the Felicianas. Oakley's interior has been restored to the Federal period style (1790-1830), reflecting its appearance when Audubon stayed here. The three-story home expresses the colonial architecture adapted to the geographical location. Oakley Plantation House contains 17 rooms, with front and side entrances leading to the landscaped grounds, which are shaded by oak and ancient crape myrtle trees. (SOURCE: Oakley Plantation House, National Park Service, https://www.nps.gov/nr/travel/louisiana/okl.htm, accessed 4/17/18)

Dimensions
Composition: 7 5/8 × 7 5/8 in. (19.3 × 19.3 cm) Sheet: 9 13/16 × 8 in. (25 × 20.3 cm)