



STATE OF ALABAMA

ALABAMA HISTORICAL COMMISSION
725 MONROE STREET
MONTGOMERY, ALABAMA 36104
PHONE: 832-6621



ALABAMA REGISTER OF LANDMARKS AND HERITAGE NOMINATION FORM

COUNTY Chambers

PRESENT NAME Joe Rabbit House HISTORIC NAME Joe Rabbit House

LOCATION (Street and number)

TOWN (Give directions if rural) Approx. 1 1/2 miles off Ala. 50 at LaFayette, Ala.

PRESENT USE Vacant HISTORIC USE Indian Museum (Proposed)

OWNERSHIP: Public () Private (X) Public acquisition being considered (X)

OWNER'S NAME Darcey T. Tatum, Jr.

MAILING ADDRESS 908, 21st St. South
Birmingham, Ala. 35205

CONDITION: Excellent () Good () Fair (X) Ruins ()

INTEGRITY: Original site (X) Moved () When?

From where? Give details in significance

THREATS: No () Yes (X) By what? Vandalism and deterioration

RESTORATION WORK: Being considered (X) Underway () Completed () Not planned ()

SURROUNDING ENVIRONMENT: Open land () Woodland (X) Scattered buildings ()
Highway building density () Commercial () Industrial ()
Residential () Rural (X)

If there are numerous buildings in the area, could this structure be part of a Historic District? Yes

SIGNIFICANCE: Why is this important (X) associated with events, persons, or movements
Local (X) State (X) National (X)
(X) a good example of a type or style of structure
(X) other One of the few left in Ala.

Explain: This is a prime example of a log, 2 story dwelling, that was occupied by the Creek Indians during the period of around 1875 to their exodus from Alabama. If is believed that this structure was built during the year 1829.

SIGNIFICANCE (Continued)

Date of Construction Approx. 1829 Date of additions 1924 - to be Torn away

Architect or Builder Unknown - possibly an Indian of Wealth

Give a complete but concise history of the structure.

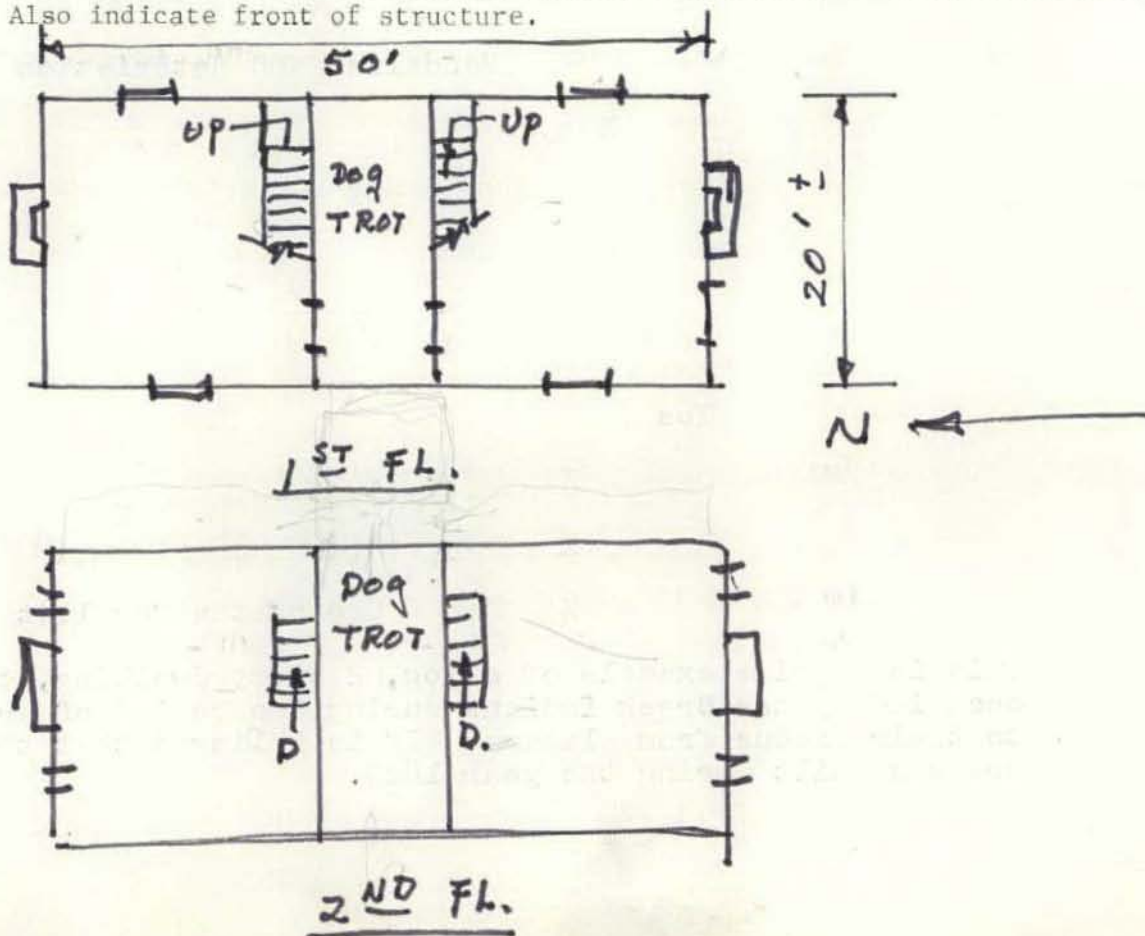
See enclosed write-up that appeared in the book: "Pine Log and Greek Revival".

State sources of information for the above:

DESCRIPTION

(For bridges, trestles, viaducts, tunnels, canals, railroad lines, or objects see supplement Form I)

Make a sketch of the floor plan of the building, showing dimensions, related structures, and north arrow. Also indicate front of structure.



DESCRIPTION (Continued)

Number of stories Two Foundation Stone Piers Basement None

WALL MATERIAL: (Note changes from one floor or wing to another)
(clapboard, brick, stone, wood shingle, board and batton, stucco over wood
or brick, metal, logs) PLEASE NOTE TYPE OF BRICK BONDING AND LOG NOTCHING.

Log Over-Lay Corner Construction hewn

STRUCTURAL SYSTEM (If known) Wood frame() Load-bearing masonry () Iron or steel ()

ROOF TYPE: (Gable, Gambrel, Mansard, Flat, Hipped, Combination)

Gable

ROOF COVERING: Wood shingle (x) Asphalt () Tile () Metal () Slate ()

ROOF TRIM: (If any) **None**

CHIMNEYS: (Number, location, and material)

(Two) Outside rock stack chimneys at each Gable End of House

PORCHES **#####** Type **Dog-Trot between downstairs Rooms**

Rear _____ Type _____

Side _____ Type _____

DOORS: Describe entrance door.

Describe other doors. **Cross braced boards**

WINDOWS: Types and number of each floor

Wood Openings with Shutters.

INTERIOR: Describe mantels, stairways, wainscoting, plasterwork and any unusual features.

The simplest of board construction.

Open Tread Stairs with hand-hewn hand-rail

DESCRIPTION (Continued)

OTHER: Use this space to describe any additions, alterations, outbuildings or other features of the structure and its surroundings.

I propose to give this structure with some acres of surrounding land to either the County of Chambers or the Chattahoochee Historical Society with the stipulation that the structure will be restored to its original state and for the sole use of an Indian Museum.

I would like to see the structure restored to appear as it did when an Indian actually lived on the land, with its out structures and etc.

A MAP WITH THE STRUCTURE MARKED AND PHOTOGRAPHS MUST BE SUBMITTED WITH THIS FORM.

Map: A U.S. Geological Survey Map is preferred, but if you are unable to obtain one a county highway map may be used.

Photographs: Must be black and white, glossy finish and either 5 x 7 or 8 x 10.

PREPARED BY _____ DATE _____

ADDRESS _____ PHONE _____

TOWN _____ ORGANIZATION _____

For Alabama Historical Commission use only

Map Reference: Map _____ Site number _____

Thematic Category _____

Added to ALABAMA REGISTER _____

NATIONAL REGISTER Potential

U T M

Latitude

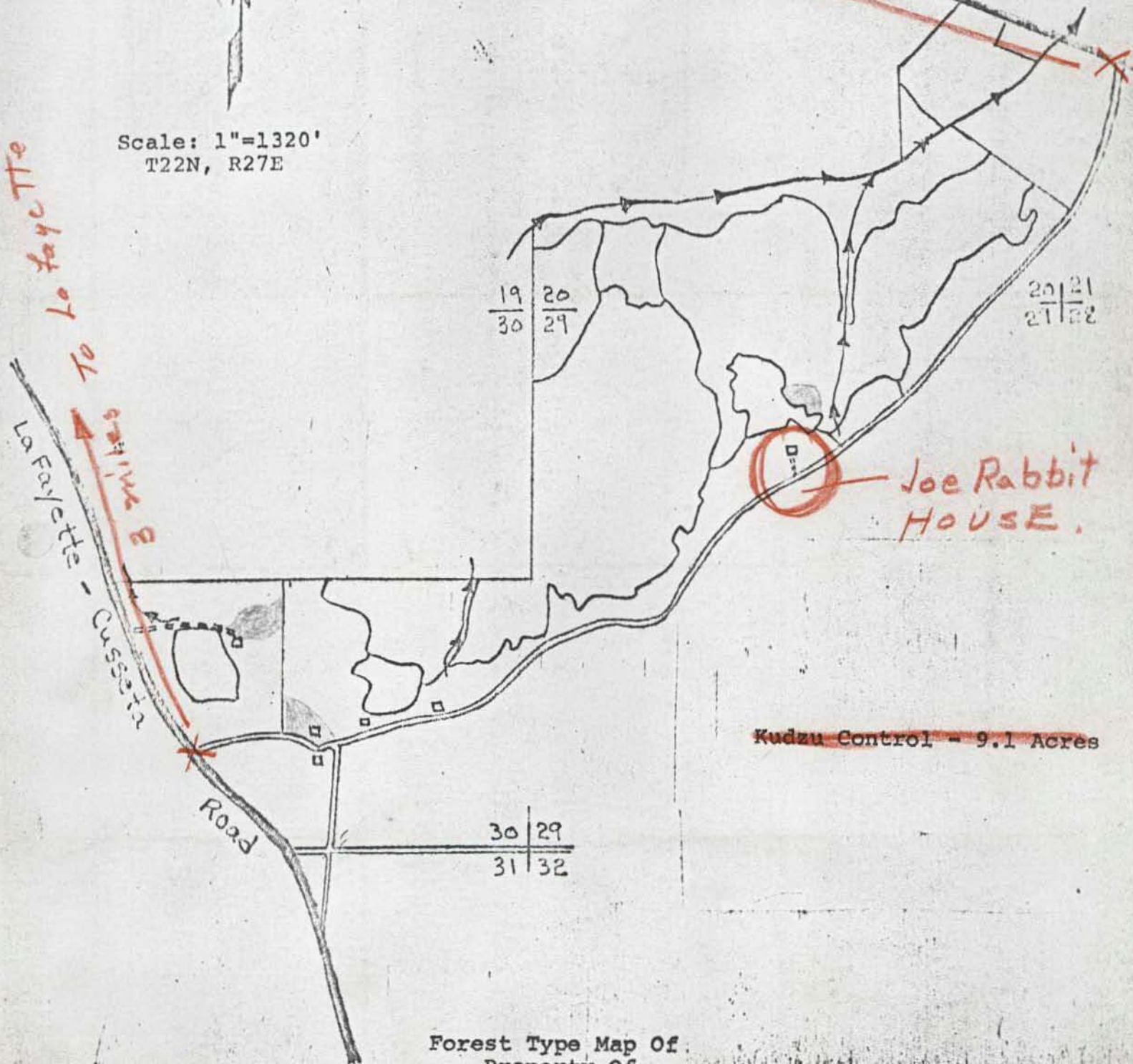
Longitude

Ala. Highway 50
3 miles To Lafayette



Scale: 1"=1320'
T22N, R27E

To Lafayette
3 miles
La Fayette - Cusseta



Kudzu Control - 9.1 Acres

Forest Type Map Of
Property Of
DARCY T. TATUM, JR.
Chambers County, Alabama
Drawn By
Piedmont Foresters, Inc.
June 1975



JOE RABBIT DARDEN HOUSE

The unusual Joe Rabbit Darden House is so named for a slave of the Darden family plantation, Joe Rabbit Darden, who lived here many years with his family following the War Between the States.

It is a notable early type of pioneer house in Chambers County, and quite likely was built before the county was organized in 1833, possibly by a wealthy Indian. Its basic plan is two units of a story and a half each, with an open passageway or dog-trot between, and an outside stack chimney at each end of the structure. There is a so called "Indian cemetery" near the house, where possibly some "Indians" and slaves are buried.

The logs of the house are hand hewn and squared, 12" or more wide and about six inches thick. The cracks between the logs on the interior are concealed by hand rived batten boards applied horizontally. Each section of the house has its own stairway to the upper room. The old dog-trot has been closed for years, and a door opens out of it now. A room and chimney have been added at the other end of this middle passageway.

The house was on the several thousand acre plantation of William Cargile Darden (1821-1898), and Caroline Elizabeth "Carrie" Holstun Darden (1845-1931), a daughter of Stanmore and Statira Holstun, early settlers in the county. After they married, they built their home nearer LaFayette. He was a cotton buyer, broker and influential merchant of West Point, Ga. In 1858, he was Judge of the Inferior Court of Troup County. He represented Chambers County in the legislature, however, in 1874.

A son, John Ben Darden (1875-1937), and wife, Ethel Metz Darden (1886-1953), came back to Chambers County to live in the Joe Rabbit Darden House, about 1924, remodeling it somewhat. They added the room to the end of the dog-trot, which gave the front of the house two porches. County tax assessor at his death, his son, Jim Darden, who also lived here, is presently county tax collector.

To reach the Joe Rabbit Darden House, turn off Ala. 50 to the left on unpaved road just before crossing Kellem Hill Creek, for about 1½ miles. The place has been owned by Darcey T. Tatum, of LaFayette, about thirty years.