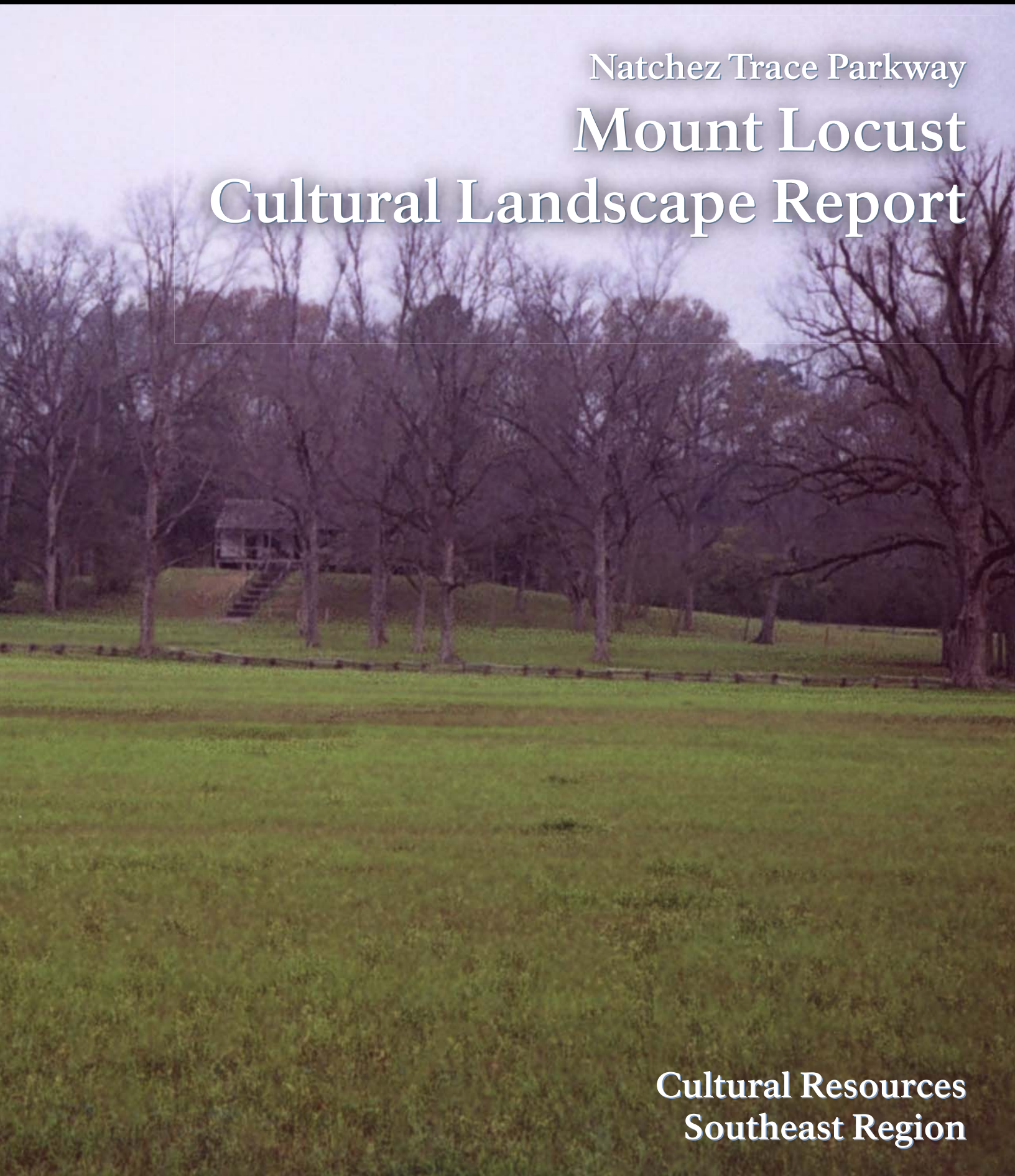
National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Natchez Trace Parkway
Tupelo, Mississippi



Natchez Trace Parkway

# Mount Locust Cultural Landscape Report

Cultural Resources
Southeast Region

Mount Locust

# Cultural Landscape Report

July 2009

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About the cover: Mount Locust, 2007. Photograph by author.

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**Natchez Trace Parkway**
**Mount Locust**
**Cultural Landscape Report**

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# Mount Locust
# Cultural Landscape Report

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# Introduction

## Management Summary

The National Park Service (NPS) acquired Mount Locust as part of the Natchez Trace Parkway (NATR) right-of-way in 1937. Mount Locust is the only surviving inn of the more than fifty that stood along the Natchez Trace from the late 1700s through the mid-1820s. Mount Locust is also one of the oldest surviving structures in the state of Mississippi and predates many of the antebellum properties in nearby Natchez.

The Mount Locust Cultural Landscape Report (CLR) documents changes to the landscape over time and evaluates the landscape's significance in order to provide treatment recommendations for the preservation of its significant features. Cultural landscapes are settings man has created in the natural world. They reveal fundamental ties between people and the land because of our need to grow food, give form to our settlements, meet requirements for recreation, and find suitable places to bury our dead. Landscapes are intertwined patterns of things both natural and constructed. They range from formal gardens to historic cotton fields and from cemeteries to community settlements. They are special places— expressions of human manipulation and adaptation of the land.

A General Management Plan (GMP) for the Natchez Trace Parkway was completed in 1987.

## Historical Summary

The tract of land on which Mount Locust stands is half of a British land grant of 650 arpents made to Thomas Harmon in 1779.[1] At some point prior to 1781, Harmon's tract was transferred to John Blommart, who led an unsuccessful attempt to take Natchez from Spanish control in 1781. He was jailed and all his property confiscated. Silas Crane acquired the Blommart tract from the Spanish government in 1782. In 1784, half of the Blommart tract was acquired by William Ferguson. The first survey, which occurred in 1785, included the notation "Mr. Wm Ferguson's dwelling house."

The house may have been built prior to 1781 by John Blommart or John Harmon in compliance with the 1779 land grant. One condition on which the West Florida government granted land in the Natchez District was that the grantee agreed to work at least three acres of each fifty "accounted plantable," or erect "one good Dwelling House to contain at least twenty feet in length, sixteen feet in Breadth." However, since the 1781 confiscation document described the tract as having "no settlement," it seems likely that the house was built by William Ferguson between 1782-1785. A detailed architectural evaluation of the house in 1954 revealed that certain additions had been made to the original structure very early—possibly prior to 1800—and that it had been significantly changed and enlarged around 1820 and again during the 1840s.

Family tradition maintains that the house was used as an inn or stand during the period when the Natchez Trace was heavily traveled by flatboat crews returning north after bringing goods down the Mississippi River to New Orleans. Traffic along the Natchez Trace increased dramatically after 1798, when the Mississippi Territory was organized. Beginning in the 1820s, the Old Trace ceased to be the main route between Natchez and Nashville. As new roads were cleared, and especially after the Jefferson County seat was moved to Fayette in 1825, that part of the Old Trace near Mount Locust became merely another road from Natchez to Jackson.

Mount Locust was operated as a typical frontier plantation, using slave labor, until after the Civil War. The plantation was largely dependent on the cash crop cotton. The property experienced a slow decline after the Civil War. Mount Locust was occupied by the Ferguson-Chamberlain family until its acquisition in 1937 as part of section 3-W of the Natchez Trace Parkway. After a decision to return

1. 1 arpent = 0.84628 acre.

the house to its circa 1820 configuration, a restoration program began in 1955 and was completed in 1956. Site development and further work on the house occurred from 1957 to 1959.

## Study Boundary

Mount Locust is located in Jefferson County, Mississippi, at Milepost 15.5 on the Natchez Trace Parkway, 6 miles north of U.S. 61. The 34.7-acre site consists of the c. 1782 house and grounds, an information-exhibit facility with a thirty-car parking area, a maintenance complex, and a ranger's office. The house stands on high ground overlooking the historic Natchez Trace and near an early settlement called Uniontown, which has now completely disappeared. The historic landscape associated with Mount Locust includes the original structure and the grounds surrounding it. No original outbuildings survive.

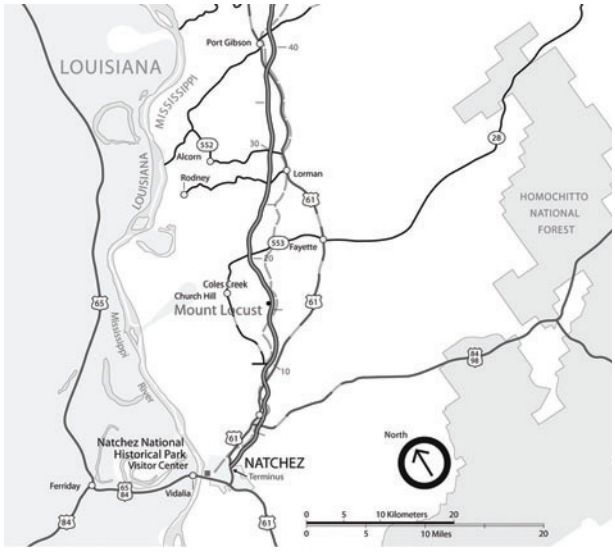



**FIGURE 1.** Mount Locust location map. (NPS image)

## Scope of Work and Methodology

The CLR for Mount Locust has several objectives. Part 1 documents the historical development of the landscape characteristics and associated features, materials, and qualities that make a landscape eligible for the National Register. The site history, existing conditions, and analysis and evaluation sections identify the historical values associated with the landscape, document extant landscape characteristics and features, and define the significance and integrity of the landscape. Part 2 outlines treatment recommendations, which will enable the park to better manage its cultural landscape.

The most recent documentation and evaluation of the landscape features is the *Historic Grounds Report* completed in 1980 and the *Historic Structure Report* completed in 1998.

Other park planning documents consulted include the *Natchez Trace Parkway Administrative History*, *Design Guidelines Natchez Trace Parkway*, and archeological studies conducted between 1996 and 2003. Additional archival research for the CLR was undertaken at the NATR archives.

In addition to park planning documents, *Travel, Trade, and Travail: Slavery on the Old Natchez Trace* by Obernuefemann and Thomas; *The Cultural Geography of the Natchez Trace Area to 1861* by Myers; *Agriculture in Ante-Bellum Mississippi* by Moore; *The South-West by a Yankee* by Ingraham; *Gardens and Historic Plants of the Antebellum South* by Cothran; and *The Slave States* by Olmsted were consulted, as well as numerous NPS reports.

## Summary of Findings

The period of significance for the Mount Locust cultural landscape is 1779-1820. This period encompasses the probable construction dates of the house and the major landscape features at Mount Locust that still maintain integrity, including the outbuilding foundations, cisterns, a system of brick walkways, and two cemeteries.

The dwelling house is the centerpiece of the Mount Locust cultural landscape. It is the only surviving historic building at Mount Locust, which at one time operated both as a small plantation and as an inn for travelers along the Natchez Trace. The house has been restored to a period of c. 1820, when travel along the historic Natchez Trace was at a peak. The house retains integrity of location, design, materials, feeling, and association.

The Mount Locust cultural landscape retains integrity of location, setting, materials, feeling, and

association. Even with the loss of the spatial relationships of the house and the outbuildings, Mount Locust has not lost its sense of time and place along the historic Natchez Trace.

The overarching treatment recommended for the historic landscape is preservation of all identified historic resources. Additional archeology is recommended in the area surrounding and north of the dwelling house. It is apparent that significant subsurface historic features exist around the structure, and their location would enhance interpretation of the historic spatial patterns of the landscape, a character-defining feature. Additional testing is also recommended for the field southwest of the dwelling house where an apparent Native American village site was identified by geophysical survey and limited excavation in 2003.[2]

2. Charles F. Lawson to Director, Southeast Archeological Center, October 24, 2002; Charles F. Lawson to Director, Southeast Archeological Center, June 27, 2003.

# Site History

*Mississippian* is the term used by archeologists to describe the diverse pre-European contact societies of Native Americans who inhabited the fertile river valleys of the Tennessee, Cumberland, and Mississippi Rivers from approximately A.D. 700 to the arrival of the first European explorers during the sixteenth century. The mound-building Mississippians thrived, sustained primarily by agriculture, and the cultivation of maize or corn allowed them to produce food surpluses, which eventually led to a more centralized society. European contact, beginning with the Spanish explorer Hernando de Soto on the west coast of Florida in 1539, brought diseases that ravaged the Mississippian Indians. As their populations plummeted, the surviving Mississippians began uniting into new tribes, dominated by the Creek, the Chickasaw, the Choctaw, and the Seminole.[1]

## The Natchez Indians

The Natchez were a well-known American Indian tribe that formerly lived on and about St. Catherine's Creek, east and south of what became the town of Natchez, Mississippi. They interacted with the French and English during the colonial period. Their language, related to the Muskhogean language family, indicates that the historic Natchez were the same ethnic group as the prehistoric Plaquemine culture of the Lower Mississippi River Valley, part of the larger Mississippian culture, who constructed Emerald Mound, the Grand Village, and other Mississippi period sites in the Natchez area. Construction of the mounds at the Grand Village was done in stages, probably beginning in the thirteen century.

The Natchez Indians as the Europeans knew them were a confederacy of several ethnic groups, with the descendants of the people who built Emerald Mound and the Grand Village serving as the core population. Their mound building activity had ceased sometime before the arrival of French explorers in the late 1600s, but archeological evidence indicates that they continued to use the mounds in a ceremonial way. Emerald Mound may have been the main ceremonial mound center for the tribe before that status was shifted to the Grand Village sometime prior to European contact.

The Mississippi Territory was first explored by Hernando de Soto in 1541 while searching for gold. In 1682, the Frenchman, Robert Cavelier, Sieur de la Salle, came down the Mississippi River from Canada. He claimed the entire Mississippi River Valley for Louis XIV and named it "Louisiana".

Following La Salle's contact with the Natchez Indians, French and English explorers, priests, and military personnel made frequent visits to the area. In 1716, the French established Fort Rosalie at present-day Natchez as the nucleus of a colony. Over the next thirteen years, the French colony at Natchez grew. However, disputes and misunderstandings between the French and the Natchez resulted in a series of conflicts.

The situation worsened as the Natchez were caught up in the eighteenth-century struggle for control of North America between England and France. By the 1720s, English agents were successful in turning a significant portion of the Natchez tribe against the French.



**FIGURE 2.** Aerial view of Emerald Mound, 1958. (Natchez Trace archives)

1. National Park Service, *Lower Mississippi Delta Region* (Denver: National Park Service, Denver Service Center, 1998), 15-16. The Cherokee, who occupied the hill and mountain country of western North Carolina and eastern Tennessee, eventually became the largest tribe in the Southeast.

The Natchez attacked Fort Rosalie in 1729, killing most of the French garrison there. In response, the French organized a retaliatory expedition in 1730. They and their Choctaw Indian allies occupied the Grand Village, using the location to lay siege to the Natchez, who had withdrawn into stockaded fortifications to the south. During the siege, French troops used the central mound as an emplacement for their artillery.

This confrontation marked the beginning of the destruction of the Natchez as a nation. Although the siege failed to force their surrender, the Natchez permanently abandoned their traditional territory as a result of it. Fewer than 300 of the Natchez eventually were captured by the French and sold into slavery in the West Indies. The remainder escaped to join other tribes as refugees, including the Chickasaw, the Creek, and the Cherokee.[2]

## The Chickasaw and the Choctaw

The Chickasaw and Choctaw were Mississippi's two largest Indian groups. Before the United States government forced their removal in the 1830s, the Chickasaw resided in north Mississippi with their villages centered between the headwaters of the Yazoo and Tombigbee Rivers around present-day Tupelo. They also claimed lands covering present-day western Tennessee. The Choctaw were concentrated in east central Mississippi, from the lower Alabama, Tombigbee, and Black Warrior Rivers on the east to the Mississippi River on the west.

Culturally, both groups spoke a nearly identical language. Their societies were organized matrilineally (meaning that ancestry was traced only through the mother's line), political power was decentralized so that each of their seven or so villages had their own chiefs and other leaders, and they viewed the sun as the ultimate expression of spiritual power for its ability to create and sustain life. It has been conjectured that the Chickasaw and the Choctaw were one tribe just before European contact. There was no "northern" province of the Choctaw nation - just southern, central, eastern and western. Chickasaws inhabited the area that would




**FIGURE 3.** The Choctaw, the Chickasaw, and the Natchez. (NPS image)

have reasonably constituted a northern Choctaw district.

A network of well-defined, interconnecting trails along a northeast/southwest axis facilitated intertribal contact. The two primary links that later became the Natchez Trace connected the area near present-day Nashville, Tennessee, with the Chickasaw settlements near Pontotoc, Mississippi, and the area from the Natchez District northward to the same Chickasaw settlements. Their economies were based on agriculture, hunting, gathering, and trade.[3]

During the winter of 1540-41, Hernando de Soto's ill-fated Spanish expedition encountered Chickasaws, who attacked them repeatedly until the Spanish moved west across the Mississippi River. By the 1690s, Chickasaws, well-armed with English guns, were attacking Choctaws to the south, seizing captives and selling them to the English. In 1699, France established the colony of Louisiana, creating a presence within territory previously claimed by the British colony of South Carolina. Choctaws defended themselves with guns from the French, thus ending the Chickasaw captive raids.

In two periods, 1720-1725 and 1733-1743, the Chickasaw fought against France and her ally the Choctaw. Attacks and counter-attacks occurred over the years. French attacks in 1736 and 1739 both failed, and France and the Chickasaw signed a truce

2. Jim Barnett, "The Natchez Indians," *Mississippi History Now. http://mshistory.k12.ms.us/features/feature1/natchezindians.html.* "Indian Mounds of Mississippi," *http://nps.gov/history/nr/travel/mounds.htm*

3. Michael H. Bureman, "An Historical Overview of the Natchez Trace" (Natchez Trace Parkway, 1985, photocopy), 24.



**FIGURE 4.** Painting of Choctaw village by Bernard, 1869. (Courtesy of Peabody Museum Collections/Harvard University)

in 1740, allowing French boats to travel unmolested on the Mississippi River. When France lost the Seven Years War to Britain in 1763, they no longer posed a threat to the Chickasaw. The Chickasaw and Choctaw also patched up their relations during the Seven Years War, ending decades of conflict. The Chickasaw survived France's attempt to destroy them, but their population dropped dramatically during this period.

With their ally and long-time trading partner England in control of much of the eastern territory of the Gulf of Mexico and the Mississippi River area after 1763, the Chickasaw experienced few threats to their existence. That agreeable situation ended when the American Revolution erupted in 1776. The Chickasaw tried to remain neutral, but they eventually sided with Britain because of the long history between the two nations.

After the American Revolution, the Chickasaw quickly established relations with the United States and with Spain. The Treaty of Paris, which ended the Revolutionary War in 1783, allowed Spain to control a large portion of the Gulf Coast from Florida to Texas.

During the 1780s and 1790s, the Chickasaw and Choctaw established trade with both countries while refusing to be dominated by either. That state of affairs ended in 1795 when, in the Treaty of San Lorenzo, Spain ceded any claim to lands above the 31st parallel. The Mississippi Territory was formed three years later, and Americans flooded into lands along the Mississippi River and then along portions of the Natchez Trace that went through the middle of Chickasaw lands. After 1801, the Indians were under constant pressure to surrender their lands, which continued to shrink through a series of land cessions.

In the early nineteenth century, Protestant missionaries began converting Chickasaws to Christianity and teaching English, arithmetic, and domestic skills. The U.S. government suggested that Indians could use these new "civilized" abilities to become American citizens. Unfortunately, even though many Chickasaws and Choctaws did adopt the values, economics, and religion of their

American neighbors, residents of Mississippi, which became a state in 1817, insisted that Indians had no right to possess lands that Euro-American citizens could own and farm. The Mississippi government passed a law in February 1829 that extinguished all Indian land claims in the state and extended state jurisdiction over those lands.

Following the 1830 passage of the Indian Removal Act by the U.S. government, the Treaty of Dancing Rabbit Creek forcibly removed most Choctaws to land west of the Mississippi River, in the present state of Oklahoma. In the summer of 1830, Chickasaw representatives met with U.S. delegates, including President Andrew Jackson, at Franklin, Tennessee, and a treaty was signed August 31. The Chickasaw agreed to cede their lands east of the Mississippi River in exchange for an equal amount of land in the west, but this treaty became void when a suitable area could not be found. New negotiations for removal were undertaken in 1832 in Chickasaw territory at Pontotoc Creek. On October 20, a treaty was signed that ceded Chickasaw lands in Mississippi to the U.S. government. The lands were to be surveyed and sold immediately with each adult Chickasaw receiving a temporary allotment that would also be sold and all monies placed in a fund to cover the costs of removal.

Settlers quickly occupied the Chickasaw lands beginning in 1832, despite a provision of the treaty promising that the U.S. government would prevent new settlement until the Chickasaw actually left Mississippi. A suitable new homeland in the west was not found until January 1837 when a meeting was held at Doaksville, the principle town in the new Choctaw Nation in Indian Territory, and the Choctaw sold the western part of their new territory to the Chickasaw. Although this agreement between the two tribes was not a treaty with the United States, President Jackson submitted it to the Senate for approval anyway, which was accomplished in February 1837. Further details about the exact extent of territory and rights granted the Chickasaw were decided in two additional agreements between the two Indian nations in 1854 and 1855.[4]



**FIGURE 5.** Sketch of Fort Rosalie by Collot, 1797. (Courtesy Historic Natchez Foundation)

## The Old Natchez District (1682-1860)

From 1682 to 1763, West Florida, a province on the north shore of the Gulf of Mexico now forming parts of the states of Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama, and Florida, was divided between the Spanish, who held an outpost at Pensacola as part of their Florida colony, and the French, who garrisoned Mobile as part of their colony of Louisiana. By 1713, a French trading post had been opened at the site of Natchez, and in 1716, the French established Fort Rosalie to protect the settlers. The removal of the seat of government of the Louisiana colony from Mobile to New Orleans in 1723 probably helped the growth of the Fort Rosalie settlement. The population of the Natchez area was over 700 in 1729, the year that the Natchez Indians attacked Fort Rosalie, killing most of the garrison. After the massacre, there was a limited reoccupation of the Natchez settlements. A 1745 census showed eight white males and less than twenty slaves in Natchez.[5]

In treaty negotiations concluding the Seven Years War in 1763, Britain received all North American possessions east of the Mississippi River, except New Orleans, from France and the colony of Florida from Spain. The British reorganized this territory into the provinces of East Florida, which consisted of most of the present-day state of Florida, and West Florida, bounded by the Mississippi River and Lake Pontchartrain on the west, by the 31st parallel on the north, and the Apalachicola River on the east (Figure 6). In 1764, the British moved the northern

4. Greg O'Brien, "Chickasaws: The Unconquerable People," *Mississippi History Now*. http://mshistory.k12.ms.us/features/feature40/chickasaw.html

5. M. W. Myers, "The Cultural Geography of the Natchez Trace Area to 1861" (Tupelo, MS: Natchez Trace Parkway, 1960), 37-42.

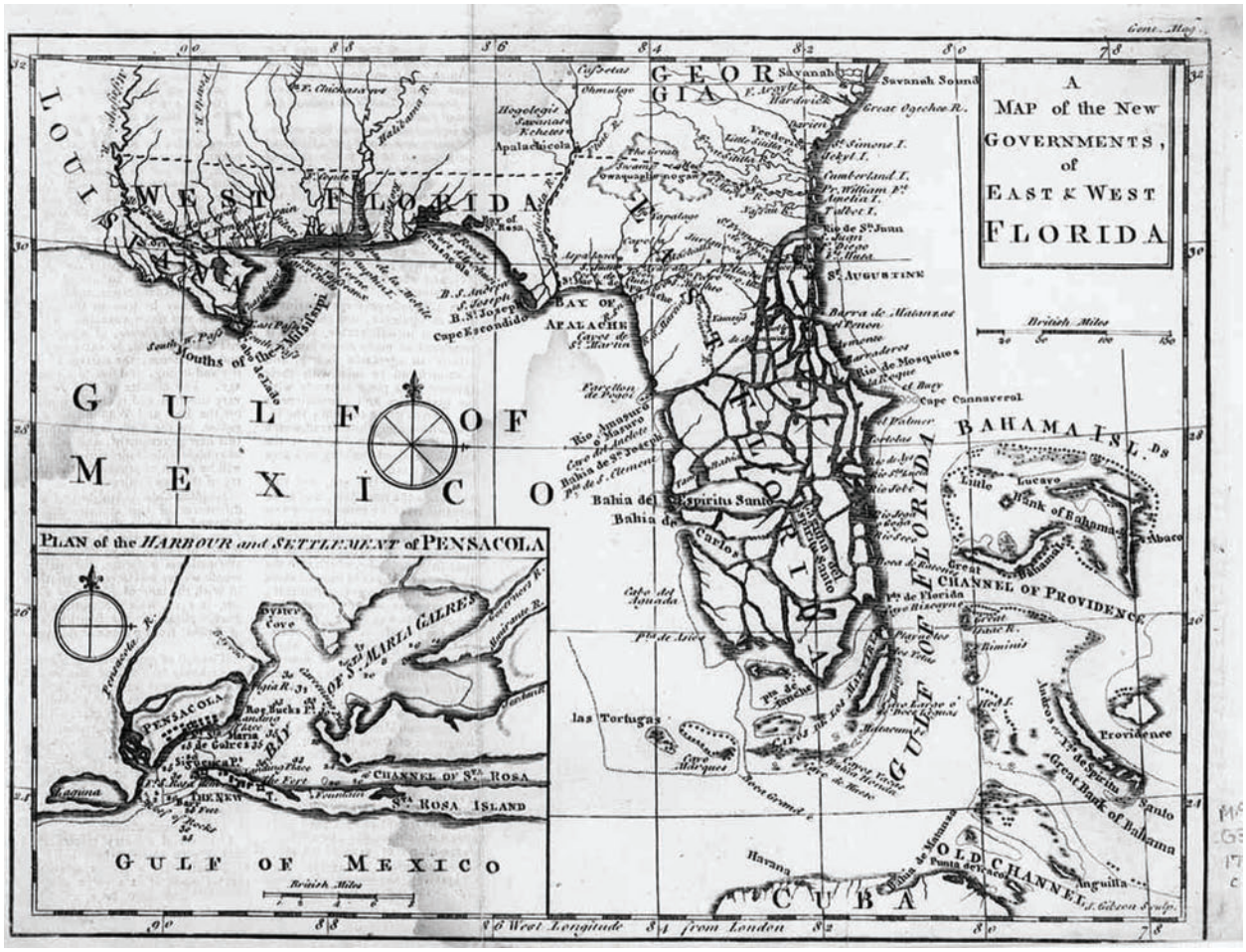



**FIGURE 6.** Map of East and West Florida by Gibson, 1760. (Courtesy Hargrett Rare Book and Manuscript Library/University of Georgia Libraries)

boundary of West Florida to a line running due east of the mouth of the Yazoo River.[6]

Thus, Natchez became a part of the British colony of West Florida in 1764. Large land grants were made to veterans of the French and Indian War, and many settlers sought the richly fertile land of the Mississippi River flood plain in the Old Natchez District— a narrow strip of land along the east bank of the Mississippi extending from Vicksburg to the 31st parallel (Figure 7). One such area was Coles Creek, north of Natchez, where a large group settled. By 1778, the population of the Natchez District had reached more than 2,600. Most settlers living near the city had less than 10 acres in cultivation, although a few had up to 100. Tobacco was the principal export crop.[7]

Britain lost control of the area when Spain captured Baton Rouge and peacefully occupied Natchez in 1779. In 1784, Governor Miro issued the first Spanish order for the survey of lands in the Natchez District. The Spanish did not relinquish control of the area until 1798, when Spain reluctantly accepted treaty obligations with the United States. Although Spain made little attempt to alter social or economic activities and English-speaking settlers continued to move into the region, the Spanish did bring in Irish clergymen to convert the citizens to Catholicism.[8]

The Mississippi Territory was established in 1798, with Natchez as its capital. Before the United States expanded beyond the Mississippi River, the land that would become Mississippi, Alabama, and Tennessee was known as the Old Southwest. Soon after the formation of the Mississippi Territory, the first two counties, Adams and Pickering, were formed from the Old Natchez District. By 1800, nearly every plantation within the Natchez District had its own cotton gin. Cotton quickly became the

6. Myers, 43.
7. Bureman, 42.
8. Ibid., 34; Myers, 53.

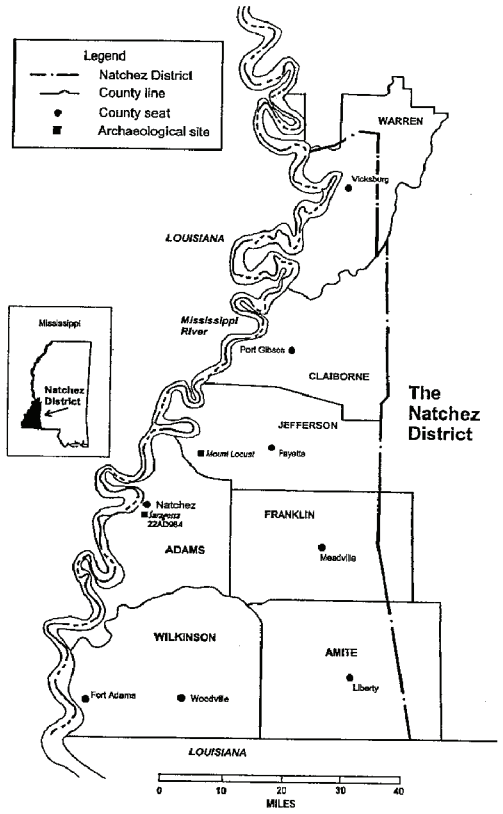



**FIGURE 7.** Old Natchez District. (NPS image)

District's primary cash crop, and with it came a large enslaved labor force.[9]

Before 1810, Siamese or Creole cotton was the standard variety grown, but it had the disadvantage of a large seed and tiny bolls and was subject to insect damage. In 1806, Walter Burling of Natchez brought back seeds from Mexico, which he found ripened earlier and had larger bolls. A new variety was later developed by crossing this Mexican cotton with Georgia upland green seed cotton. An 1808 account mentioned that besides "immense quantities" of high quality cotton, the Natchez planters raised corn, tobacco, rice, hemp, and flax.[10]

In 1810, the Mississippi Territory had a total white and slave population of 30,053. The Old Natchez District was divided into Adams, Jefferson (former Pickering, name changed in 1802), Claiborne (formed in 1802), Wilkinson (1802), Warren (1809), Franklin (1809), and Amite (1809) counties.[11]

By the 1820s, Burling's Mexican cotton had rapidly replaced the older varieties in the Natchez region, and its use was spreading to other areas because its large bolls were easy to pick and because of its resistance to boll rot. Some planters in western Jefferson and Claiborne counties developed a new variety called "Petit Gulf." By 1830, the best agricultural land in the Old Natchez District had all been occupied. Cotton farming was extremely exhaustive of soil nutrients, however, and soil erosion was common.

Beginning in the 1820s, some farmers planted cow peas between their rows of corn. After the corn had been harvested and the peas had ripened, livestock was turned into the field. Thus cowpeas provided food for stock and gave some protection to the soil from erosion. Most importantly, however, the cowpea improved the fertility of the soil by extracting nitrogen from the air and adding it back into the composition of the soil.[12]

The financial panic of 1837 was followed by twelve years of declining cotton prices. Although some diversification to other crops occurred, in many cases the average planter tried to recover by growing more cotton or improving the quality of the yield. In the 1840s, a new type of Mexican cotton, called Mastodon, was developed by Richard Abbey, although Colonel Henry Vick was the most successful breeder of new varieties.

Corn continued to be the major food and feed crop, supplemented by sweet potatoes and cow peas. Other experimental crops with were turnips, peanuts, upland rice, wheat, clover, and various northern grasses. Bermuda remained one of the chief pasture grasses. Thomas Affleck established one of the first commercial nurseries in the region at Washington, Mississippi. His *Southern Rural Almanac and Plantation and Garden Calendar*, in which he advocated scientific agriculture to his fellow plantation owners, was widely read.

As cotton prices improved in the 1850s, fortunes were made in the Old Natchez District. Prior to the outbreak of the Civil War, many large mansions were built in Natchez as a symbol of this new wealth. As cotton fields became depleted, it was quite common to move on to new lands and establish new

9. Myers, 60.
10. Ibid., 108.
11. Ibid., 99.
12. Ibid., 163; Moore, 59-60.

plantations further west in Louisiana and Texas. Prior to the Civil War, Natchez had the most millionaires per capita of any city in the United States. A large number of planters owned land across the Mississippi River but resided in Natchez, making it arguably the wealthiest city in the nation at the time.[13] Journalist Edward King visited Natchez in 1873:

> There were, before the war, great numbers of planters' residences in the suburbs,--beautiful houses, with colonnades and verandahs, with rich drawing and dining-rooms, furnished in heavy antique style, and garden modeled after the finest in Europe. Many of these homes have been destroyed. We visited one or two whose owners have been fortunate enough to keep them. The lawns and gardens are luxurious. The Mississippian wealth of roses is inconceivable to him who has not visited such gardens as Brown's, in Natchez-under-the-Hill, and that of Mr. Shields, in the suburbs of the upper town. I remember no palace garden in Europe which impressed me so powerfully with the sense of richness and exquisite profusion of costly and delicate blooms as Brown's, at Natchez, which a wealthy Scotchman cultivated for a quarter of a century, and handed down to his family with injunctions to maintain its splendor.[14]

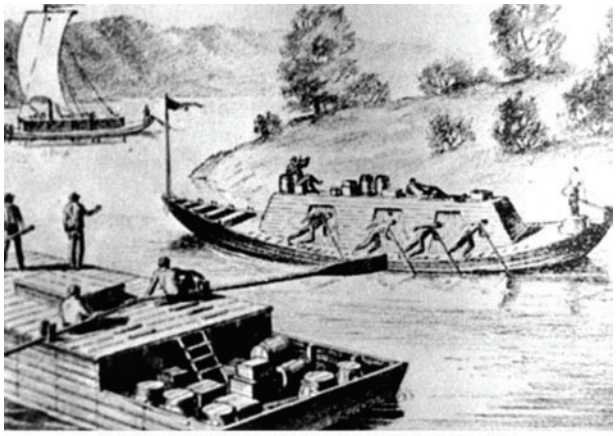
## Origins of the Natchez Trace

In the eighteenth century, the merchants of Natchez, and later Nashville, recognized the economic importance of establishing regular trade with the Choctaw and the Chickasaw. Between Natchez and the settlement at Nashville lay 450 miles of wilderness, connected by a network of ancient Indian trails. Because the area lacked convenient waterways to serve as trade routes, merchants had to depend on the Indian trails.

One such trail was the Chickasaw Trace, which ran from Nashville to the Chickasaw Nation near Tupelo, Mississippi. There it intersected another trail that connected the Choctaw and the Natchez tribes. The southern part of this trail appeared on French maps as early as 1733 as the "Path to the Choctaw Nation." Joining these major through trails were many cross trails.[15]

Explorers and traders who used these trails spread the information that overland travel between Nashville and Natchez was possible. Settlers in the Ohio Valley regions of Pennsylvania, Ohio, and Kentucky began using the old Indian trails soon after the American Revolution. Unable to transport their bulky products over the Allegheny Mountains, they floated their freight down the rivers to markets in Natchez and New Orleans. The boatmen—called "Kaintucks" no matter where they came from—could not return against the river current and sold both cargo and boats when they reached their destination. Some bought horses and rode, but most walked the Natchez Trace back to Nashville. In 1797, Joseph Bullen, the missionary to the Chickasaw, reported that a thousand boatmen were passing through the Chickasaw Nation every year from Natchez to their homes in the North.[16]

During the years prior to Spain's withdrawal from Natchez in 1798, few people other than returning boatmen made the trip over the Natchez Trace. By 1800, regularly scheduled mail service had been initiated between Natchez and Nashville. The slow passage of the mail and the strategic importance of the Old Natchez District in case of a war with Spain forced the United States government to act. In 1801, the President heeded the requests of the Secretary of State and the Postmaster General and instructed the army to clear out a road between Nashville and



Center for Louisiana Studies, http://cls.louisiana.edu

**FIGURE 8.** Flat boat on the Mississippi River. (Courtesy of Center for Louisiana Studies)

13. Myers, 223.
14. Edward King, *The Great South; a Record of Journeys in Louisana, Texas, the Indian Territory, Missouri, Arkansas, Mississippi, Alabama, Georgia, Florida, South Carolina, North Carolina, Kentucky, Tennessee, Virginia, West Virginia, and Maryland* (Hartford, CT: American Publishing Company, 1875), 293.
15. Bureman, 41.
16. Dawson Phelps, "Mount Locust: A Restudy of Its History" (Natchez Trace Parkway, 1955, photocopy), 11-15.

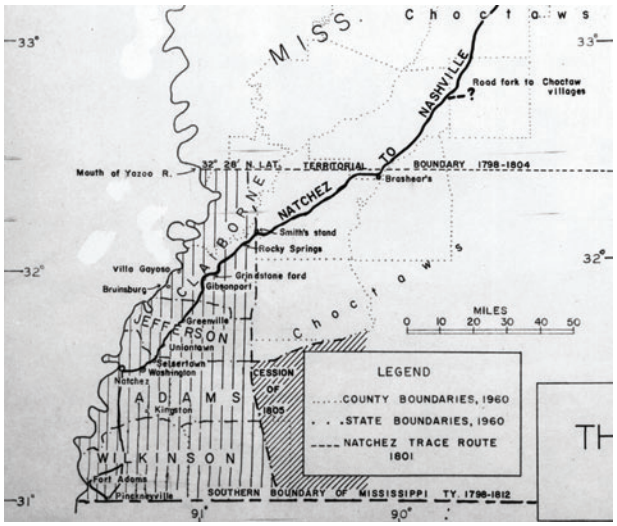



**FIGURE 9.** 1805 map of Natchez Trace. (NPS image)

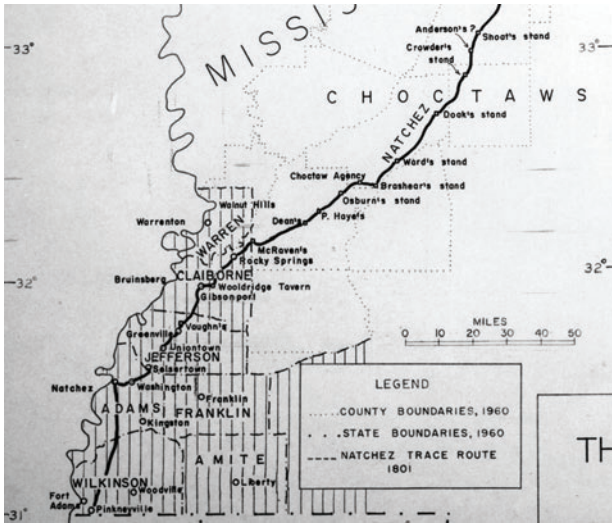



**FIGURE 10.** 1815 map of Natchez Trace. (NPS image)

Natchez. General James Wilkinson, the commander of all the American forces in the West, was in charge of the work. After gaining consent from the Chickasaw and the Choctaw for a wagon road through their land, he ordered a survey of the proposed route.

The establishment of temporary bases or cantonments occurred on Duck River Ridge and Duck River in Tennessee, the Tennessee River in Alabama, and Grindstone Ford in Mississippi. The road stretched from the Davidson County line, a few miles south of Nashville, to Bayou Pierre, fifty miles north of Natchez. Ferries provided transport over the Duck and Tennessee Rivers.[17]

The Chickasaw and Choctaw did not originally consent to accommodations being built along the road. After treaty negotiations in 1805, the tribes permitted the establishment of inns or "stands," which were often quite primitive. Eventually, the road lost some of its wilderness character, and the crude stands of the early days gave way to better equipped establishments. Most of the stands were located on farms or plantations where food for both men and horses was available.

In 1806, $6,000 was appropriated to improve the condition and alignment of the road, although only $3,000 was spent. A new alignment cut some fifty miles off the previous route. Since no funds were appropriated for maintenance and upkeep, however, these improvements were of a temporary nature. The Governor of Tennessee described the road in an 1811 address:

> The road leading from West Tennessee to Natchez, which was regularly stipulated for by the general government, and designed for the use and convenience of travelers, is in very bad order; it requires much work to put it in repair, and to keep it up for the convenience of those who travel it to and from market.[18]

The large numbers of boatmen and others using the Natchez Trace during it apex continued to erode the integrity of the road. By 1810, it was reported that 8,000-10,000 boatmen walked or rode the Natchez Trace annually. Matters came to a head during the War of 1812, when the British invaded Louisiana in 1814. A special congressional committee recommended a direct appropriation for repair and maintenance of the road, but Andrew Jackson's victory at New Orleans ended the war before Congress could take any formal action.

No further money was spent on the road until 1817, when a $4,000 appropriation was made to cut a road from Reynoldsburg, Tennessee, through the Chickasaw Nation to intercept the Natchez road below the Chickasaw villages. Although other routes opened up in the Old Southwest between 1810 and 1820, for most of that time the Natchez Trace remained the official designated postal route

17. Bureman, 56-60; Dawson Phelps, "The Natchez Trace--Indian Trail to Parkway," *Tennessee HistoricaL Quarterly* 21 (September 1962), 206.

18. Dawson Phelps, "The Natchez Trace—Indian Trail to Parkway," *Tennessee Historical Quarterly* 21 (September 1962), 5.

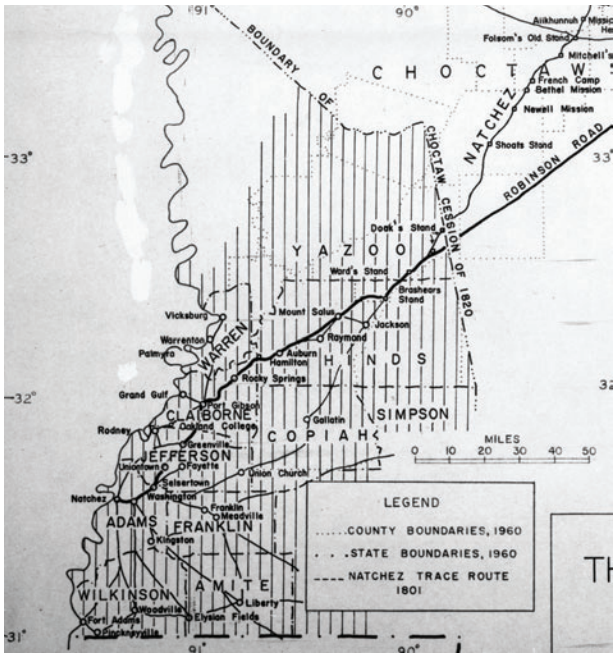



**FIGURE 11.** 1825 map of Natchez Trace. (NPS image)

between Nashville and Natchez and ultimately, Washington, D.C. and New Orleans.[19]

After 1820, urban development in northwestern Alabama, some distance east of the Natchez Trace crossing of the Tennessee River, was partly responsible for a major change in the postal route from Nashville to Natchez. Andrew Jackson wanted a Military Road from Columbia, Tennessee, to New Orleans by way of Madisonville, Louisiana. An entirely new road was built and opened in 1820. It replaced the Natchez Trace as the designated postal route from Columbia, Tennessee, to Florence, Alabama, returning to the Trace at Colbert's Stand below Florence. The Natchez Trace retained its designation as a Post Road until 1834. During this time, efforts continued to locate a more timely route to ensure the best possible communications between Washington, D.C., and New Orleans. Changes in the Nashville-Natchez mail route, however, did not involve a change in the location of the Natchez Trace.[20]

The most dramatic decline in the use of the Natchez Trace was a result of the rise of steamboat traffic after 1811 on the Mississippi, Ohio, and Tennessee Rivers. The ability of the steamboat to move upriver with considerable ease made the trip from New Orleans/Natchez to Nashville and beyond much faster than travel over the Natchez Trace, and steamboats eventually carried most of the boatmen back to the Ohio River Valley.[21]

By the mid-1820s, as new roads were built, the Natchez Trace had lost its importance as a trunk highway. Its decline as a major link between the lower Mississippi River valley and Nashville continued as population and economic growth, particularly within the former Indian lands, led to an increased demand for a better local and regional transportation and communication network aligned on an east/west axis. The Natchez Trace, as a general north-south route, ran counter to the transportation needs of the day—access to the river and the capital in Jackson.[22]

Railroads in the area, such as the West Feliciana and the Vicksburg and Clinton Railroads, began to be incorporated in 1831. One in the Natchez Trace area was the Mississippi and Pearl River Railroad Company, which was incorporated in 1836 to build track from Natchez to some point in the northern part of the state. By the 1840s, the Natchez Trace was no longer used as a through road from Nashville to Natchez, but sections were still being used for local transportation.[23]

During the first twenty years of the nineteenth century, the Natchez Trace was a significant national road. At its peak, the Natchez Trace was the only improved and direct road between the Cumberland District in Tennessee and the Lower South. This ancient north/south transportation corridor eventually declined into a series of local roads and byways.[24]

## Commemoration of the Natchez Trace (1905-1933)

In 1905, Mrs. Egbert Jones and the Mississippi Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR) began a grassroots effort to place granite markers in every county through which the historic Natchez Trace ran. Little was done until 1908, when the marker program became an official project of the society. In 1909, they erected a stone monument in

19. Ibid., 207-8.; Bureman, 63-68.; Myers, 147.
20. Ibid., 214.;Bureman, 68, 83-87; Myers, 137. Phelps, "The Natchez Trace-Indian Trail to Parkway," 214.
21. Ibid., 87.
22. Ibid., 89.
23. Myers, 202.
24. Phelps, "The Natchez Trace—Indian Trail to Parkway," 204-205.

Natchez overlooking the Mississippi River. Over the next twenty-five years, similar monuments were placed in almost every county through which the Natchez Trace passed in Mississippi, Alabama, and Tennessee. This effort generated widespread interest in the historic Natchez Trace.[25]

A regional Good Roads movement, championed by the Natchez Chamber of Commerce in 1916, continued the effort of the Mississippi DAR to commemorate the historic Natchez Trace as a highway for modern automobile use. The new organization was stymied by State Highway Commissions, which were not convinced that a road should be improved just to commemorate its history when there was not enough money to build trunk highways. Moreover, America's eventual entry into World War I and the economic depression that followed the war delayed any funding for such a venture.[26]

In 1933, Mississippi Congressman Jeff Busby began a campaign to gather support for legislation to survey and pave the historic Natchez Trace. The Natchez Trace Military Highway Association, later reorganized as the Natchez Trace Association, was created in 1934 as an advocacy group for the memorialization of the Natchez Trace and the construction of a parkway along its route.

In February 1934, assured of popular support from Alabama and Tennessee, Congressman Busby introduced two bills regarding the Natchez Trace: one for a survey of the Old Trace and the second an appropriation for its subsequent construction. Similar legislation was introduced into the Senate by Senator Hubert D. Stephens of Mississippi.[27]

## Creation of the Natchez Trace Parkway (1934-Present)

The vision to commemorate the historic Natchez Trace through a national parkway began in 1934, when Congress appropriated $50,000 for a survey. Secretary of the Interior Harold Ickes, however, reported the measure to be "not in accord" with



**FIGURE 12.** Old Trace, Jefferson County, 1930s. (NATR archives)

President Roosevelt's program and recommended a veto. After discussions with the congressional delegations from Mississippi, Alabama, and Tennessee, the president agreed to withhold his veto and directed the survey be financed by an allotment from the 1935 National Park Service (NPS) Roads and Trails appropriation. Under this authority, the old road was located and flagged in its entire length, in as near as practicable to its original route. Two reports were prepared and submitted to Washington, one covering the history of the road and the methods followed in locating the Old Trace and the other discussing the possible route of the parkway and preliminary cost estimates.[28]

The most useful information in locating the Old Trace came from original township maps based on surveys made by the General Land Office from 1810 to 1834 in Alabama and Mississippi. Supplemented by field notes, these maps provided sufficient data to show a road extending from Natchez through Mississippi and Alabama to the southern Tennessee line. No such maps existed in Tennessee, so the location from the Tennessee line to Nashville was largely based on oral tradition. Early research turned up a map of the Natchez Trace prepared by

25. Dawson Phelps, "Administrative History of the Natchez Trace Parkway" (Natchez Trace Parkway, 1965-76, photocopy), II-1.
26. Phelps, "The Natchez Trace--Indian Trail to Parkway," 204-205.
27. Ibid., III-1-3.; HAER No. MS-15, "Natchez Trace Parkway," 20-23.
28. Ibid., III-3-4; V-1.

General Wilkinson, but it proved impossible to identify the road and its meandering course over a distance of 450 miles using this map.[29]

In the Old Natchez District, where "metes and bounds" surveys were used before township lines were surveyed, a road or series of roads was identified and then checked on the ground. Where township plats were available, it was possible to identify local roads as part of the Old Trace. In some cases, abandoned road traces were used to identify the route. Where all evidence had disappeared, a determination was made of the most likely route.[30]

The survey revealed that it was impossible to identify a definitive old Natchez Trace, as there were at least three old trails, each of which with some validity might be regarded as the correct road. Nonetheless, after an immense amount of information had been assembled, Bureau of Public Roads (BPR) engineers, advised by NPS historians, flagged the approximate route and entered the results onto a map.[31]

On March 14, 1935, a group of experts inspected the project and recommended a policy on location and development if construction of the parkway should be authorized. The planners included Hillory O. Tolson, Thomas C. Vint, Verne E. Chatelain, Edward S. Zimmer, Olaf T. Hagen, and Randall B. Truett of the NPS, Harold J. Spellman and Frank L. Brownell of the Bureau of Public Roads (BPR), and Harvard professor and city planner John Nolen. The major goal was not to preserve or restore the historic Natchez Trace but to memorialize it with a new parkway.[32]

In 1935, a Public Works Administration project with a $1.5 million budget was set up to initiate the construction of the parkway in Mississippi. The funding included a survey and the establishment of a rough grade and minor drainage structures on a limited section of the route. The parkway was divided into more than fifty construction sections. Sections situated in Tennessee were designated on official maps with the number "1," in Alabama with the number "2," and in Mississippi with the number "3."

29. Ibid., V-1, VII-2.
30. Ibid., V-1, VII-2.
31. Ibid., V-2.
32. Ibid., V-2.



FIGURE 13. Natchez Trace Parkway, Section 30,1947. (NATR archives)

In 1937, Congress appropriated another $1.5 million for the Natchez Trace Parkway and the Blue Ridge Parkway. In 1938, Public Law 75-530 established the Natchez Trace Parkway and assigned its administration to the NPS with a direct appropriation of $1.5 million. Further appropriations were made in 1939, 1940, and 1941 totaling $3,550,000. Land was acquired by the Highway Departments of the three cooperating states (Mississippi, Alabama, and Tennessee), and title was then transferred to the Federal Government. In Mississippi, the funds were concentrated between Jackson and Tupelo, with the exception of the twelve miles of section 3-W near Natchez.[33]

Construction of the parkway road by private contract, under supervision of the NPS and the BPR, began in the summer of 1937, and in the four years through 1941, 105 miles were graded. Construction was halted by World War II in 1941 and resumed in the fall of 1947. During the interim, a change in the basic design of the road occurred. Originally, it was planned to construct grade separations at railroads and major highways only, with minor roads crossing at grade. The new plan called for eventual grade separation of all public road crossings.[34]

Construction through 1952 consisted of grading, drainage, gravel base, bridges, and bituminous paving. Maintenance of paved sections was assumed

33. 1938 Annual Narrative, NATR archives; Malcolm Gardner, "Natchez Trace Parkway, Current Information," June 7, 1957, NATR archives; Phelps, "Administrative History," IX-3.
34. Phelps, "Administrative History," IX-3.

by the NPS. In the period 1935-53, approximately $17.2 million had been appropriated for surveys and construction. An official BPR report in 1956 conceded that funding interruptions plagued parkway progress from the beginning. Of the 450 miles included in the project, only 144 miles were fully completed, including 80 miles in Mississippi, 6 miles in Alabama, and 28 miles in Tennessee. A number of other sections were in various stages of completion, but the rights-of-ways had not even been acquired for some sections. This rather bleak situation reflected a larger NPS dilemma nationwide, for which Director Conrad Wirth proposed a monumental ten-year effort called Mission 66.

An ambitious Mission 66 program called for recreational and park related facilities, as well as continued progress in completing the Parkway. By the end of 1966, a total of 269 miles of paved Parkway was complete at a total cost of $77 million, including numerous picnic areas, comfort stations, campgrounds, roadside exhibits, and administrative/service buildings. Mount Locust was opened to the public in 1957, and the Tupelo Visitor Center opened in 1962. Another major accomplishment was the completion of the mile-long Tennessee River Bridge in 1962.[35]

After 1966, the pace of construction slowed down considerably. By the end of 1975, 319 miles of parkway had been completed at an approximate cost of $86 million. $30 million was appropriated in 1977 for new construction and overlay of any existing parkway road in need of resurfacing, the largest paving project ever undertaken by the NPS. In 1979, Congress appropriated $19 million for construction and planning in FY 1979 with an additional $24 million funded for FY 1980. By 1987, the Parkway was complete except for the two terminus sections into Natchez and Nashville.[36] In May 2005, a 15-mile section in Jackson and an 8-mile southern terminus section in Natchez completed the Natchez Trace Parkway.

## Mount Locust

**Prehistoric Cultural Occupation (600-1200).** The only prehistoric cultural occupation identified in the area is the Coles Creek period, dating from 600 to 1200 A.D. It was during this period that construction of flat-topped ceremonial and residential mounds began. Most of the mound sites are situated at the interface of the Mississippi River floodplain and the uplands, but the general population was dispersed in hamlets and small villages scattered along the tributary creeks. The Chamberlain Family Cemetery site was the apparent location of one such small Coles Creek hamlet.[37]

**Historic Cultural Occupation (1779-Present).** The tract of land on which Mount Locust stands is half of a British land grant of 650 arpents made to Thomas Harmon in 1779.[38] At some point prior to 1781, Harmon's tract was transferred to John Blommart, who led an unsuccessful attempt to take Natchez from Spanish control in 1781. He was jailed and all his property confiscated. Silas Crane acquired the Blommart tract from the Spanish government in 1782. In 1784, half of the Blommart tract was acquired by William Ferguson. The first survey, which occurred in 1785, included the notation "Mr. Wm Ferguson's dwelling house." The Ferguson family retained title to Mount Locust until its acquisition by the NPS in 1937.

**John Blommart Era (1765-1781).** John Blommart served as a warrant officer in the British Royal Navy before coming to West Florida with a group of Swiss Protestant colonists around 1765. He later moved to Natchez where he became a merchant, fur trader, land speculator, and planter. By 1781, he was one of the wealthiest men in the Old Natchez District. When he acquired the Mount Locust tract from Thomas Harmon is unknown.

Natchez, however, was rife with turmoil. In 1781, Pensacola's British commandant urged Blommart to lead a revolt in Natchez against the Spanish while British regulars moved on Mobile and Baton Rouge. Although Blommart's forces captured the Natchez fortification, Spanish troops took Pensacola. Blommart was forced to surrender the fort, and in the aftermath, he was jailed and all his property, including the Mount Locust tract, was confiscated. He was later exiled by Spain to the British West Indies. Silas Crane acquired Blommart's confiscated land from the Spanish government in March 1782.[39]

35. Ibid., IX-4-6.
36. Ibid., IX-6-8.
37. James R. Atkinson, *The Chamberlain Cemetery Investigations, Mount Locust, Natchez Trace Parkway, Jefferson County, Mississippi* (Tallahassee, FL: Southeast Archeological Center, 1996), 5.
38. 1 arpent = 0.84628 acre.

**William Ferguson Era (1774-1801).** No document indicating the birthplace of William Ferguson has been found, but he apparently came to the Natchez District from Essex County, Virginia, with a group of families who migrated to Natchez from Virginia about 1774. Ferguson was living in the Natchez area around 1776 and served as a garrison clerk of the British fort at Natchez in 1778.

In 1777, Silas Crane made a bond to deliver 300 arpents of land to William Ferguson and William Williams. During the years 1781 to 1784, Ferguson continued to live in the Natchez area. In 1782, he was living on St. Catherine's Creek (a tributary of Coles Creek) near the Natchez fort, where he lived until he sold the land in 1784.[40]

In 1782, he applied to the Spanish government to compel Silas Crane to deliver the deed for half of the Blommart tract acquired by Crane from the Spanish government. Crane conveyed the land in 1784, and Ferguson secured title in 1785.[41]

William Ferguson married Paulina Burch in 1783 and probably moved to Mount Locust in 1784 after he acquired the land from Silas Crane. Receiving a grant in 1789 that increased his holdings to 1,215 acres, Ferguson devoted most of his time to the affairs of a planter. He had enough area under cultivation to hire Noel Pittman as overseer for the season in 1785. William and Paulina Ferguson had seven children—six sons and one daughter.

The original Mount Locust structure was a one-room house. It was probably built by William Ferguson between 1782, when he applied to the Spanish government for half of the Blommart tract, and 1785, when it was first described in the Vousdan survey. The text of the act of confiscation, dated October 21, 1781, specifically stated that there was "no settlement" on the Blommart tract.[42]

Although it is contrary to the description of "no settlement" on the tract, Mount Locust may have been built by Thomas Harmon or John Blommart prior to 1781 in compliance with the 1779 land grant. One condition on which the West Florida government granted land in the Natchez District was that the grantee agreed to work at least three acres of each fifty "accounted plantable," or erect "one good Dwelling House to contain at least twenty feet in length, sixteen feet in Breadth." The framing of the original house revealed it was one large room, sixteen by twenty feet.[43]

It has been stated that a Spanish blockhouse surrounded by a moat and stockade stood on the land. Its purpose would have been to defend the Natchez area against raids by the Choctaw Indians. Local tradition indicated that some of the timber used to build the house came from the stockade, and that the remainder of the lumber came from flatboats carrying produce down the Mississippi River to Natchez. After the cargo was unloaded, the boats were broken up and the lumber sold on the open market. There is no evidence to support this claim, since the first flatboats arrived in Natchez in 1785. Archeology conducted in 1941 found no evidence of a Spanish stockade.[44]

Family tradition maintains that the house was used as a stand or inn after 1785, when the Natchez Trace was heavily traveled by flatboat crews returning north after bringing their goods down the Mississippi to Natchez or New Orleans. Mount Locust's location twenty miles north of Natchez would have been an ideal place for such accommodations. The house first appears on a 1785 survey of the property by William Vousdan, Deputy Surveyor of the Spanish Government of Natchez.[45]

An indication of Ferguson's position was his appointment in 1797 by the Spanish governor as "Alcalde" of the District of Coles Creek, and in 1798, he was appointed Sheriff of Pickering County. In 1799, Ferguson was involved in a plan to establish the town of Union on his property east of Mount Locust. Although the town appeared on Mississippi maps for many years, it never expanded much beyond the planning stages, before Ferguson's death in 1801.[46]

39. Phelps, "Mount Locust: A Restudy of Its History," (Tupelo, MS: Natchez Trace Parkway, 1955), 3-11.
40. Ibid., 12-13; Worth Bailey, "Mount Locust Furnishings Plan" (Tupelo, MS: Natchez Trace Parkway, 1956), 2.
41. Silas Crane made a bond of 500 pounds with William Ferguson in 1777 to deliver 300 arpents of land; Dawson Phelps, "The Ferguson House" (Natchez Trace Parkway, photocopy, 1947), 3; Phelps, "Mount Locust: A Restudy of Its History," 2, 10.
42. Phelps, "The Ferguson House," 3; personal communication, Sally Reeves, former Head Archivist, The Notarial Archives.
43. Phelps, "Mount Locust : A Restudy of Its History," 5.
44. Dawson Phelps, "Mound Plantation, A Historical and Archeological Report" (Tupelo, Ms: Natchez Trace Parkway, 1941), 1-12; Phelps, "Mount Locust: A Restudy of Its History, 5; Sam Kaye, *Historic Structure Report: Mount Locust House Natchez Trace Parkway Jefferson County, Mississippi* (Tupelo, MS: Natchez Trace Parkway, 1998), 6.
45. Kaye, 3; Phelps, "Mound Plantation," 6.

**Paulina Burch Ferguson Era (1801-1849).** According to an inventory of William Ferguson's estate, the farm known as Mount Locust consisted of 713 acres. The estate was divided among the heirs in 1826. That part of the tract on which Mount Locust sits became the property of Ferguson's widow, Paulina.[47]

Paulina Ferguson married James Chamberlain in 1806. They had four children. According to family tradition, Paulina divorced Chamberlain in 1816 and operated Mount Locust as a stand until around 1842. From 1800 to 1820, traffic along the Natchez Trace was at its peak. The opening of the Military Road from Florence, Alabama, to Columbus, Mississippi, in 1820 and the Robinson Road from Columbus to Jackson in 1834 diverted mail traffic from the upper Trace and left the Jackson-to-Natchez segment as the only remaining portion of the Trace in official use.

After 1825, when the Jefferson County seat was moved from Greenville to Fayette, that part of the Old Trace near Mount Locust became merely another road from Natchez to Jackson. As such, Mount Locust no longer catered to travelers along the Natchez Trace but rather to Natchezeans who sought the solitude of a more rural setting. The 1838 Gwin and Daugherty map of Mississippi lists "Mrs. Ferguson's" as a stopping place on the Trace, verifying that the Ferguson house was used as a stand. No mention of Mount Locust has been found in any journals, diaries, or books of the preachers, circuit riders, or travelers in this area in the nineteenth century, nor was it advertised in any local extant newspapers from 1810 to 1830. Like other stands of the period, however, weary travelers simply came to the door and asked for accommodation.[48]

In 1832, Paulina Ferguson, who chose to go back to the Ferguson surname after her marriage to Chamberlain ended, purchased ninety-three acres of the plantation to the west of Mount Locust from the Laughman estate. Within the next decade, Paulina Ferguson and her sons erected a cotton gin on the new property. Like other plantations in the South, Mount Locust became increasingly dependent on the production of cotton as it quickly became the cash crop of Mississippi. This dependence on cotton was reflected in the number of slaves she owned. The 1820 census lists twenty-six slaves in Mrs. Ferguson's household. By 1830, the number had increased to forty-two, placing her in the planter class. According to her 1849 estate appraisal, she owned fifty-three slaves, who were divided among her three surviving children after her death.[49]

**Thomas Jefferson Chamberlain Era (1849-1854).** Thomas Jefferson Chamberlain inherited Mount Locust from his mother, Paulina Ferguson, in 1849. Even before her death, Thomas Jefferson Chamberlain lived at Mount Locust year-round and managed it and Liverpool Plantation, an adjacent property that he owned. Apparently, at this time Mount Locust was called Waterloo. In 1834, Chamberlain wrote his brother Louis: "My cotton crop has turned out badly making 42 bales at Natchez and we might have 6 or 8 more." Thomas Jefferson and Louis sold land on credit and often had a hard time collecting the money in a timely manner. Thomas Jefferson wrote to Louis in 1838 that Mr. McMurty "says he wants to pay that note of yours very much and will pay it the first money he gets. He has not yet paid us one cent for his land, nor has Mr. Laughman either . . . times are Very Hard money Hard to get, Provisions high, Flour is $11 . . . Pork $30 per Barrell." His complaint followed the Panic of 1837 and the depression that followed. Cotton prices, which reached an all-time high for the antebellum period from 1835-37, plummeted and did not recover until the mid-1850s. Especially hard hit were newcomers to the region who had bought land on credit.[50]

Thomas Jefferson Chamberlain married Maybella Jane Duncan in 1844. They had three children, Pauline Chamberlain, Duncan Holt Chamberlain, and Thomas Jefferson Chamberlain II.[51]

At the time of his death in 1854, Thomas Jefferson Chamberlain's estate was substantial. The main house contained five bedrooms and a parlor. The remainder of the estate included a kitchen and milk

46. Phelps, "Mount Locust: A Restudy of Its History," 13-16; Phelps, "The Ferguson House," 3.
47. Division of Real Estate of Wm. Ferguson Sr. deceased, April 3, 1826, Probate Record Book B of Inventories of Jefferson County, page 85.
48. Kaye, 3; Phelps, "Mound Plantation," 3; Phelps, "The Ferguson House," 4.
49. Kelly Obernuefemann and Lynnell Thomas, *Travel, Trade, and Travail: Slavery on the Old Natchez Trace* (Tupelo, MS: Natchez Trace Parkway, 1999), 29-38; Marius M. Carriere, "Grounds Report on Mount Locust Plantation" (Tupelo, MS: Natchez Trace Parkway, 1980), 13.
50. Obernaufemann, 31, 44.
51. Maybella married Dr. Walter Wade after Thomas Jefferson Chamberlain's death in 1854. Maybella is mentioned in a plant list that her granddaughter sent to Superintendent Malcolm Gardner in 1957.

house; two ox wagons and a horse cart; iron, coal, and blacksmith tools; plows; a buggy and carriage; 48 head of sheep, 39 horses, 60 head of hogs, 12 yoke of oxen, 100 head of cattle, 31 mules; 98 slaves; and various house furnishings. In 1853 and 1854, Chamberlain hired H. C. Lindsay as overseer "on my home place (Waterloo)."[52]

Despite the size of the estate, Mount Locust remained a vernacular dwelling compared to the elegant town houses in nearby Natchez. In his travels through the frontier areas of the Old Southwest in the 1830s, John Holt Ingraham described such a lack of adornment as the norm:

> The original mode of life of most of the occupants, who, though now opulent, have arisen, with but few exceptions, from comparative obscurity in the world of dollars. Originally occupying log huts in the wilderness, their whole time and attention were engaged in the culture of cotton; and embellishment, either of their cabins or grounds, was wholly disregarded.[53]

**Thomas Jefferson Chamberlain II Era (1854-1929).** The estate of Thomas Jefferson Chamberlain contracted with J. F. Porter in 1856 "to oversee and work on the Liverpool plantation of said deceased and all the negroes thereon for that year to take good care of all the stock thereon as well as said negroes in sickness and in health."[54]

A one-third interest in Mount Locust was left to each of the three children, Thomas Jefferson II, Duncan Holt, and Pauline Chamberlain.

The 1860 slave census for Jefferson County shows Chamberlain with 72 slaves. The census also indicates that there were 16 slave houses.[55]

Thomas Jefferson Chamberlain II was married to Johnnie Chamberlain (1868-1951). They had eight children.

In 1903, Pauline Chamberlain was placed in a mental hospital where she remained until her death



FIGURE 14. Mrs. Johnnie Chamberlain. (Courtesy of Eric Chamberlain)

in 1925. At this time, Thomas Jefferson Chamberlain II and his wife Johnnie C. Chamberlain took title to the property, which they were occupying as their homestead. Mrs. Johnnie Chamberlain and her children continued to live at Mount Locust after the death of Thomas Jefferson Chamberlain in 1929. In 1934, all the surviving children executed a deed conveying all of the interest in the property to their mother, who continued to reside at Mount Locust until its acquisition by the NPS in 1937.[56]

**National Park Service Era (1937-Present).** In 1937, the NPS acquired the Mount Locust property. The NPS hoped to use the house, the sole surviving structure that existed during the peak years of travel on the Natchez Trace, as an interpretive feature of the Parkway. At the time of its acquisition, the house was occupied by Mrs. Johnnie Chamberlain and some of her children.

Preliminary development plans were submitted to Washington in 1938. In order to protect the property pending development, Mrs. Chamberlain's youngest son, Bill, was employed as a caretaker and later became the first park ranger in

52. Obernufemann, 46.
53. Joseph Holt Ingraham, *The South-West by a Yankee*, 2 vols. (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1835), 101.
54. Charles H. Peterson to Superintendent, Natchez Trace Parkway, February 21, 1956, NATR archives.
55. Amy L. Young, *Archaeological Reconnaissance of Mount Locust Slave Quarters and Cemetery, Natchez Trace Parkway, Jefferson County, Mississippi* (Tupelo, MS: Natchez Trace Parkway, 1999), 5.
56. Ferguson Family, Wills and Estate Documents, NATR archives.



FIGURE 15. Mount Locust, 1938. (NPS image)

the Natchez District. An archeological survey was needed to determine the exact location of all the original plantation buildings. Final development plans would not be drawn up until the archeology was completed.[57]

Archeological studies began in 1940, confirming the location of some of the outbuildings and disproving legends that a Spanish fort once stood on the site or that the house stood on an Indian mound. These investigations, however, failed to reveal any specific architectural information about any of the buildings. The United States' entry into World War II in 1941 put further efforts on the back burner.[58]

Bill Chamberlain continued to occupy the house until 1944. Although occupied, the house had been sadly neglected for many years. The NPS decided that a temporary stabilization treatment was needed until a decision was made about the structure's ultimate treatment. A coat of tar paper was attached to the exterior and essential repairs were made to keep the structure from falling down. A decision as to whether the structure should be rehabilitated was not expected until the end of World War II.[59]

After the war, major changes occurred in the proposed interpretive program of the Natchez Trace Parkway and a new Master Plan was developed. The history of Mount Locust was revisited at this time. When a draft of the new Master Plan was ready in 1947, however, it did not include Mount Locust. Measured drawings of the house were completed in 1947.[60]

Further development of the site as a house museum was delayed until 1954, when Charles E. Peterson, Supervising Architect of the Eastern Office of Design and Construction (EODC) was assigned to oversee the stabilization project, with architect Henry A. Judd providing day-to-day supervision. At this time, elements of the house were completely disassembled in order to trace the evolution of the house from original one-room structure to rambling nine-room structure. These investigations showed that certain additions had been made to the original structure very early and that it had been radically changed and enlarged around 1820 and again in the 1840s.[61]

On March 8, 1955, Peterson presented the findings at a meeting held in Philadelphia to representatives from the Director's Office, the Eastern Office of Design and Construction, and the Region 1 Regional Office. A decision was reached at this meeting to restore Mount Locust to its condition in 1820, a date that corresponded with the height of

57. 1938 Annual Narrative, NATR archives.
58. 1941 Annual Narrative, NATR archives.
59. August 1944 Monthly Narrative Report; Completion Report, December 1958, NATR archives (also found in Kaye Section J).
60. 1946 Annual Narrative; Melvin C. Josephson to Superintendent, Natchez Trace Parkway, June 25, 1947; October 1953 Monthly Narrative, NATR archives.
61. 1958 Completion Report, 2.



**FIGURE 16.** Mount Locust, 1956. (NPS image)

travel on the Natchez Trace. The house restoration was completed in April 1956. The dedication of Mount Locust occurred on February 15, 1957.[62]

Consultant Worth Bailey completed a furnishings plan for the house in November 1956. A local cabinet maker reproduced many of the larger items. Smaller items were donated or acquired from a number of people in Natchez.[63]

An exhibit shelter with comfort station was completed in 1957. Facilities constructed related to park maintenance and administration included a shop and equipment storage building, pump house, employee residence, and oil and paint storage building.

In the early 1970s, living-history demonstrations were included in the interpretive program at Mount Locust. Four living-history interpreters— two blacksmiths and a couple portraying the Mount Locust innkeepers— carried out activities typical of daily life on the Natchez Trace in 1815. Living history was discontinued at some point in the 1980s.



**FIGURE 17.** Dedication, 1957. (NATR archives)

The addition of a handicapped restroom occurred in 1990, and the enclosure of the exhibit shelter as a visitor contact station occurred in 1993. A trail accessibility plan was implemented in 2002.

62. Ibid., 3; May 1955 Monthly Narrative, NATR archives.
63. Completion Report, 5.



**FIGURE 18.** Living history at Mount Locust, 1978. (NATR archives)



**FIGURE 19.** Blacksmith Ned Weathersby, 1973. (NATR archives)



**FIGURE 20.** View of Old Trace in front of house. (NATR archives)

# Landscape Characteristics

# Spatial Organization

## Natchez Trace

Determining the exact location of the Natchez Trace near Mount Locust proved to be problematic. A segment of the Natchez Trace that had been flagged when the area was surveyed for Parkway construction did not coincide with the location of the "path" shown on the 1785 plat. Since the alignment of the Old Trace was known to have shifted over the years, it was suggested that the road may have changed at some point after 1785 to accommodate travelers, particularly if Mount Locust was used as an inn.[64]

The location of the Natchez Trace nearest the house was identified as running closely parallel to it, about eighty-eight feet southwest of the front porch. This portion of the Old Trace was restored for use as a pedestrian trail. It was determined that other portions of the Old Trace in the area were

64. Claude A. Wagner, Jr. to Robert E. Smith, March 2, 1940, NATR archives.

obliterated during construction of the parkway road.[65]

## Natchez Trace Parkway

The Natchez Trace Parkway is a linear park with a modern roadway that follows the general route of the historic Natchez Trace from Nashville to Natchez, a distance of 444 miles. Right-of-way averages 825 feet along its entire length, ranging from 400 to 1,000 feet. Wider areas occur at locations of historical, scientific, or recreational value. The land or rights-of-way were acquired and conveyed to the United States by the three states through which it passes. 316 miles are in Mississippi, 33 in Alabama, and 101 in Tennessee.

At points of interest along the Parkway, parking areas or overlooks are provided. Where possible, vestiges of the Old Trace have been preserved along the parkway route and made available to the visitor via trails from nearby parking areas. The principles of limited access, grade separations for cross roads, long curves and easy grades, minimum sight distances of 1,200 feet, lower speed limits, and no commercial traffic are all features of the Parkway.

## Mount Locust (1782-1937)

The identification of the land deeded by Silas Crane to William Ferguson as being part of the Blommart tract was certified by William Vousdan, Surveyor of the Spanish Government of Natchez, in 1785 (Figure 21).[66] This plat includes a building identified as "Mr. Wm Fergusons dwelling house." The "Path" from which there is an access trail to Mount Locust may refer to the "Path to the Choctaw Nation," which later became part of the Natchez Trace. William Ferguson secured title to another tract on March 5, 1789 (Figure 22). The General Land Office surveyed both tracts after Ferguson's death, and they appeared on the plat of Township No. 8, Range No. 1, Land District West of Pearl River as Sections 65 and 66 (Figure 23).

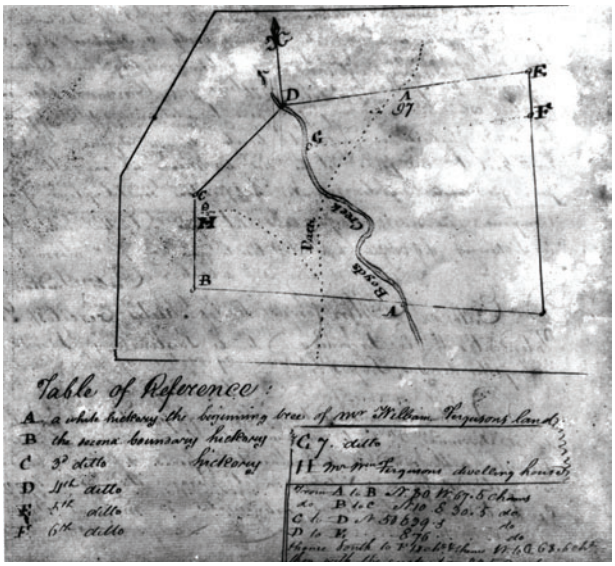



**FIGURE 21.** 1785 Vousdan survey. (NATR archives)

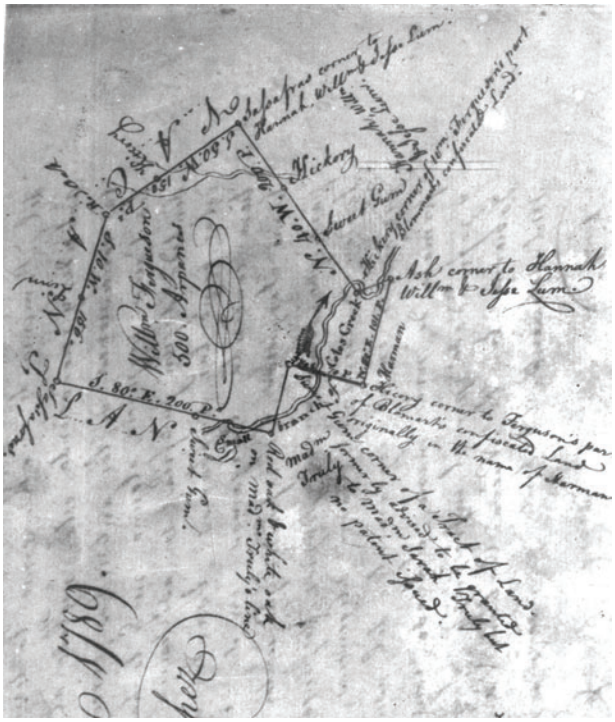


**FIGURE 22.** 1789 survey. (NATR archives)




**FIGURE 23.** 1810 survey. (NATR archives)

65. Dawson Phelps, "Outline of Interpretive Development," Natchez Trace Parkway, 1955, photocopy; Malcom Gardner to Chief, EODC, April 26, 1955, NATR archives; Resource Management Plan, 7.
66. Phelps, "Mound Plantation," 7; Phelps, "Mount Locust: A Restudy of Its History," 15; "Historical Data Relating to Sites in the Vicinity of Mound Locust," Natchez Trace Parkway, n.d., photocopy, NATR archives.

**Plantation Layout.** There is no written documentation as to the spatial organization of the Mount Locust site. Chamberlain family descendants described a two-story, four-room log house called Sleepy Hollow located directly behind the house, which was used as a guest house. An archeological report from 1941 showed that a building once stood at this location, but it was not possible to trace the foundation lines.[67] Mrs. Johnnie Chamberlain, who lived at Mount Locust from 1887 to 1937, also described the arrangement of the site as having a detached kitchen, a nursery for the children of slaves working in the fields, an overseer's house, slave cabins, and barns and storehouses.

An undated note, probably part of an overseer's contract, called for the building of "eight negroe quarters, overseers house and nigger nursery." It also called for "making and repairing all necessary fences whether they intersect the plantation or are to be built on the dividing lines between the Liverpool and Waterloo places together and adjoining plantations."[68]

A site plan generated from Mrs. Johnnie Chamberlain's description of the property shows a layout that would have been typical for a plantation of this size (Figure 24). A work yard with a detached kitchen, guest house, slave nursery, and overseer's cabin was in back of the dwelling house. The slave cabins and other outbuildings were located farther away from the house. The family also maintained that a system of brick walks and a brick retaining wall were built during the 1830s and 1840s.[69]

A landscape of work was one of the earliest and most basic forms of historic residential landscape architecture in the South. It functioned primarily to accommodate the essential activities of rural living: gardening, slaughtering, cooking and other kinds of food processing, washing and laundering, storage, etc.[70]

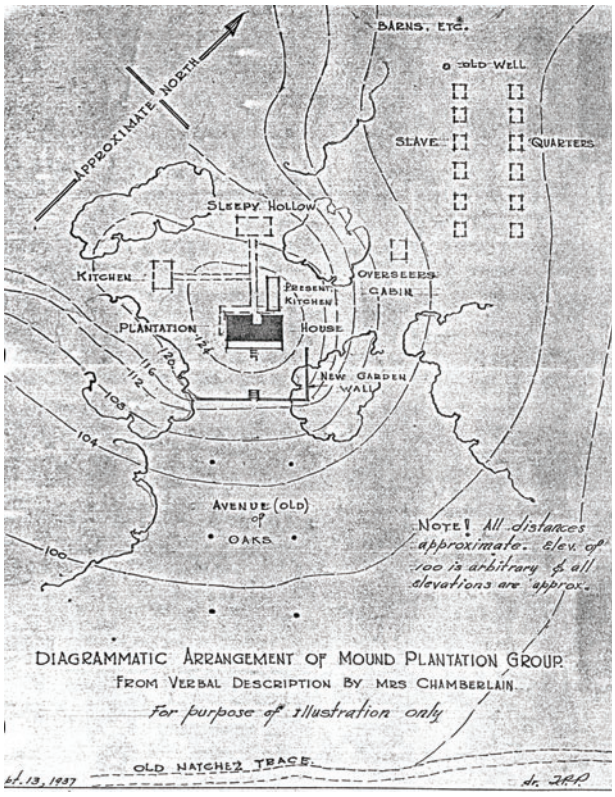



**FIGURE 24.** Site plan, 1937. (NATR archives)

Major components included the main house, outbuildings, outdoor activity areas, a well, a small kitchen garden in a side or rear yard, slave quarters, agricultural fields and woodlots, and sometimes a small orchard. These components were typically clustered and linked by a network of paths, fences, and functional site lines arranged according to a simple but not always rigid geometry of straight lines and rectangles. Such a geometric layout helped bring a sense of order to a landscape surrounded by wilderness.

The spatial organization often included a straight path from the road through the front yard to the front door, which extended through the central hallway of the house to a rear porch and the back yard. Porches, both front and rear, and trees in the front and back yards provided shade for the house and outdoor activities.[71]

**Archeology.** Archeology conducted at Mount Locust in 1941 found the presumed remains of the kitchen about seventy feet west of the main house. A few feet to the northwest of the kitchen, a well-preserved brick floor was found. Although not mentioned by family members, it has been

67. Phelps, "Mound Plantation," 29.
68. Obernufemann, 89.
69. Phelps, "Ferguson House," 2; personal communication Rick Chamberlain.
70. Historic Preservation Division (HPD), *Georgia's Living Places: Historic Houses in Their Landscaped Settings* (Atlanta: Georgia Department of Natural Resources, 1991), I-39.
71. HPD, I-39.

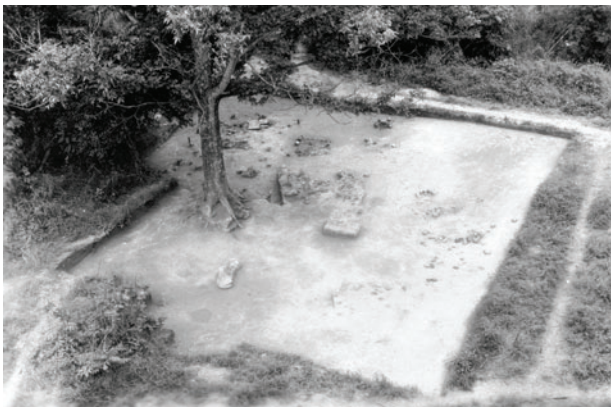


FIGURE 25. Overseer's house excavation, 1941. (NATR archives)



FIGURE 26. Northwest cistern, 1941. (NATR archives)

suggested that this was a patio or outdoor workroom for summer use. Archeology conducted in 2002 also found the remains of the brick floor, although it seems that it's identification in 1941 as part of the kitchen was based more on oral tradition, and apparently no hearth or chimney was identified at that time.[72]

Another rubble pile was located immediately beneath the sod at the presumed location of the Guest House, northwest of the main house. The Guest House was known as Sleepy Hollow and was used for travelers seeking lodging along the Natchez Trace.[73]

Several scattered fragments of brick and an L-shaped section of brick that could have been the base of a corner pier of the Overseer's House were located about 170 feet north of the main house.[74]

No remains of the nursery, a building where the children of slaves were kept while the parents were at work in the fields, were found. It was concluded that either the location was incorrect or that the building was of a nature that all remains had disappeared.[75]

Very scant architectural data, not even floor plans or chimney locations, could be determined from the archeology conducted in 1941. It was possible to draw one important architectural conclusion from the material uncovered. The frequency with which piers were observed indicated that the farmstead

72. Phelps, "Mound Plantation," 38; Charles F. Lawson to Director, Southeast Archeological Center, October 24, 2002.
73. Phelps, "Mound Plantation," 39.
74. Ibid., 41.
75. Ibid., 45.



FIGURE 27. Brick kiln excavation, 1941. (NATR archives)

buildings were made of cut or hewn timber, were raised on piers, and were floored. Also, a great abundance of brick rubble pointed to brick chimneys rather than stick and mud for some of the outbuildings.[76]

Two cisterns were part of the Mount Locust landscape. One was located on the northeast side of the house, and the other was located on the northwest side of the house(Figure 26).

A brick kiln was located about 540 feet south-southwest of the main house. The site appeared as a mound on a topographic map. A brick floor was found immediately below the grass on top of the mound.[77]

No evidence was found of the sixteen slave cabins recorded in the 1860 slave census and described by family members as located to the north and northwest of the main house. The entire area had been deeply plowed, which may account for the

76. "Buried Facts" (Natchez Trace Parkway, photocopy, n.d.), 6.
77. Phelps, "Mound Plantation," 45.

failure to find any remains. Family members described the buildings as wood with wood floors.[78]

In 1998, archeologist Amy Young compared the maps showing the location of the trenches excavated in 1941 and the locations as recalled by Johnnie Chamberlain. Young concluded that the trenches were placed too far west. Archeology conducted by Young discovered clusters of artifacts northwest of the main house that may relate to the slave quarters but failed to uncover undisturbed deposits.[79]

Remains that may be associated with a blacksmith shop were also found north of the main house. Concentrations of domestic debris discovered west of the main house could be the location of the Guest House or original kitchen.[80]

A line of oaks is said to have stretched eastward from the house, suggesting that they were planted to frame a view of the house from the road.[81]

**Nineteenth-century Field Patterns.** According to William Ferguson's estate inventory in 1801, the farm known as Mount Locust consisted of 713 acres. By 1826, the property had increased to 879 acres. In this early period before cotton prices began to rise in 1824, it is possible that more corn than cotton was planted. No crops other than cotton, corn, cowpeas, sweet potatoes, wheat, and rice were raised in Mississippi commercially before 1837.[82]

The agricultural schedules of the 1850 census records that Thomas Jefferson Chamberlain owned 350 acres of improved land and 250 acres of unimproved land. The Mount Locust property was valued at $6,000, with farm machinery valued at $250 and livestock valued at $3,600. The plantation produced 2,600 bushels of Indian corn, 75 bales of cotton, 300 pounds of wool, 1,500 bushels of peas and beans, 100 bushels of Irish potatoes, 500 bushels of sweet potatoes, and 1,000 pounds of butter. There were thirty-five slaves.[83]

78. Ibid., 47.
79. Young, 39.
80. Ibid., 40.
81. Claude A. Wagner to Robert E. Smith, March 2, 1940; 8051, Traditional Layout Mound Plantation Group, October 31, 1941.
82. Moore, 61.
83. Obernaufemann, 30-38.



**FIGURE 28.** Paulina Ferguson gravestone. (NATR archives)

Cotton and corn would have been planted as close to the house as possible, leaving little room for ornamentals. Joseph Holt Ingraham's travel accounts into antebellum Mississippi in the 1830s relate a common neglect of the grounds around dwelling houses. He commented that "the grounds and scenery about it, with the exception of a paling enclosing a green yard, are suffered to remain in their pristine rudeness." One Mississippi planter responded to his suggestion that more landscaping was needed by pointing out that "these few acres yield me annually from ten to twelve bales of cotton; this would be too great a sacrifice for the mere gratification of the eye."[84]

**Cemeteries.** Paulina Ferguson directed her son to "keep well and properly enclosed our family grave yard near my residence, and also to wall up the grave in which I shall be buried with brick, and also to place a head and foot stone to all the graves of my family in said grave yard." The Chamberlain Family Cemetery's location was in a wooded area west of the main house (Figure 28).[85]

The slave cemetery's location was on a ridge in a wooded area northwest of the main house.

**Twentieth-century Spatial Patterns.** Historic photographs from the 1920s show some of the landscape features that have been lost. Brick-edged beds flanked a herringbone-patterned front walk and paling fences enclosed the northeast side of the garden. A brick retaining wall with decorative urns was located at the foot of the steps leading up to the

84. Carriere, 3.
85. Ferguson Family Wills and Estate Papers, NATR Archives.



**FIGURE 29.** Front walk flanked with brick-edged beds, 1925. (Courtesy of Eric Chamberlain)

front porch (Figure 29). Portions of the brick wall were covered in ivy, and vines grew on the front porch. A frame garage was located halfway between the present visitor contact station and the house (Figure 32). In 1950, when the house was boarded up and covered in tar paper, one family member described Mount Locust as the "secret garden," writing on the back of a photograph that she had to climb over a locked gate to get in (Figure 31).

Rick Chamberlain remembered that the field southwest of the dwelling house was fenced and used to graze horses during his father's time. He knew of a stable and chicken house in the field at



**FIGURE 30.** Mrs. Johnnie Chamberlain in front of the brick retaining wall with decorative urns, 1928. (Courtesy of Eric Chamberlain)



**FIGURE 31.** Overgrown front garden, 1950. (Courtesy of Eric Chamberlain)

different times, and his grandmother kept a small vegetable garden there.[86]

## National Park Service Administration (1937- Present)

**Site Development.** Mrs. Johnnie Chamberlain provided the information for the 1941 site plan of

86. Charles F. Lawson to Director, Southeast Archeological Center, June 27, 2003; Rick Chamberlain is the son of Bill Chamberlain, caretaker of Mount Locust in the 1930s.



FIGURE 32. Garage, 1936. (Courtesy of Eric Chamberlain)

Mount Locust. It was typical of the cluster arrangement that would have been found for a plantation of this size, including detached kitchen, overseer's cabin, slave cabins, barns, fields, etc.

An early Development Plan from 1943 shows the house and outbuilding locations connected by pathways as described by Mrs. Chamberlain and verified by archeology in 1941 (Figure 31).The Chamberlain Family Cemetery is shown enclosed by a fence. The site would be accessed by car from the Natchez Trace Parkway. This preliminary plan included a parking area southeast of the old Natchez Trace and a concession area adjacent to the Natchez Trace Parkway.[87]

A General Development Plan prepared in 1954 moved the parking area further east and added a maintenance facility and employee residence. Working drawings from 1956 show several landscape features that were later eliminated. An herb garden enclosed by a paling fence was proposed at the south end of the formal garden. A grape arbor and another paling fence were originally planned for the east side of the house. One possible reason for the placement of an herb garden in this area is that it coincides with the description given by Mrs. Chamberlain's daughter of the location of Paulina Chamberlain's "own special herb and flower garden."[88]

87. 604/2281, Development Plan, Mound Plantation, April 1943, Natchez Trace archives.
88. 604/3000, Development Plan, Ferguson Place, December 1954, Technical Information Center (TIC); 604/2786, Garden & Walks Development Plan, Natchez Trace archives.



FIGURE 33. Grape arbor and brick seat wall, 1958. (NATR archives)



FIGURE 34. Chamberlain Family Cemetery, 1960. (Courtesy of Eric Chamberlain)

The final version of the plan was approved in 1957 and included a formal garden space on the west side of the main house enclosed by a post-and-rail fence and trails out to the Chamberlain Family Cemetery and brick kiln. A 1958 Planting, Walks, and Development Plan finalized the layout of these spaces, with the formal garden design replaced by a grape arbor and brick seat wall (Figure 33). Access to the Chamberlain Family Cemetery was not permitted, but a loop trail to the brick kiln was included in the final scheme. At this time, the Chamberlain Family Cemetery was completely overgrown.

Visitor and administrative services remained southeast of the old Natchez Trace and included a thirty-car parking area, visitor contact station, maintenance facility, and employee residence. Virginia rail fencing enclosed the perimeter areas of the site. An area south of the parking lot would be leased for row crops and hay (Figure 37).[89]

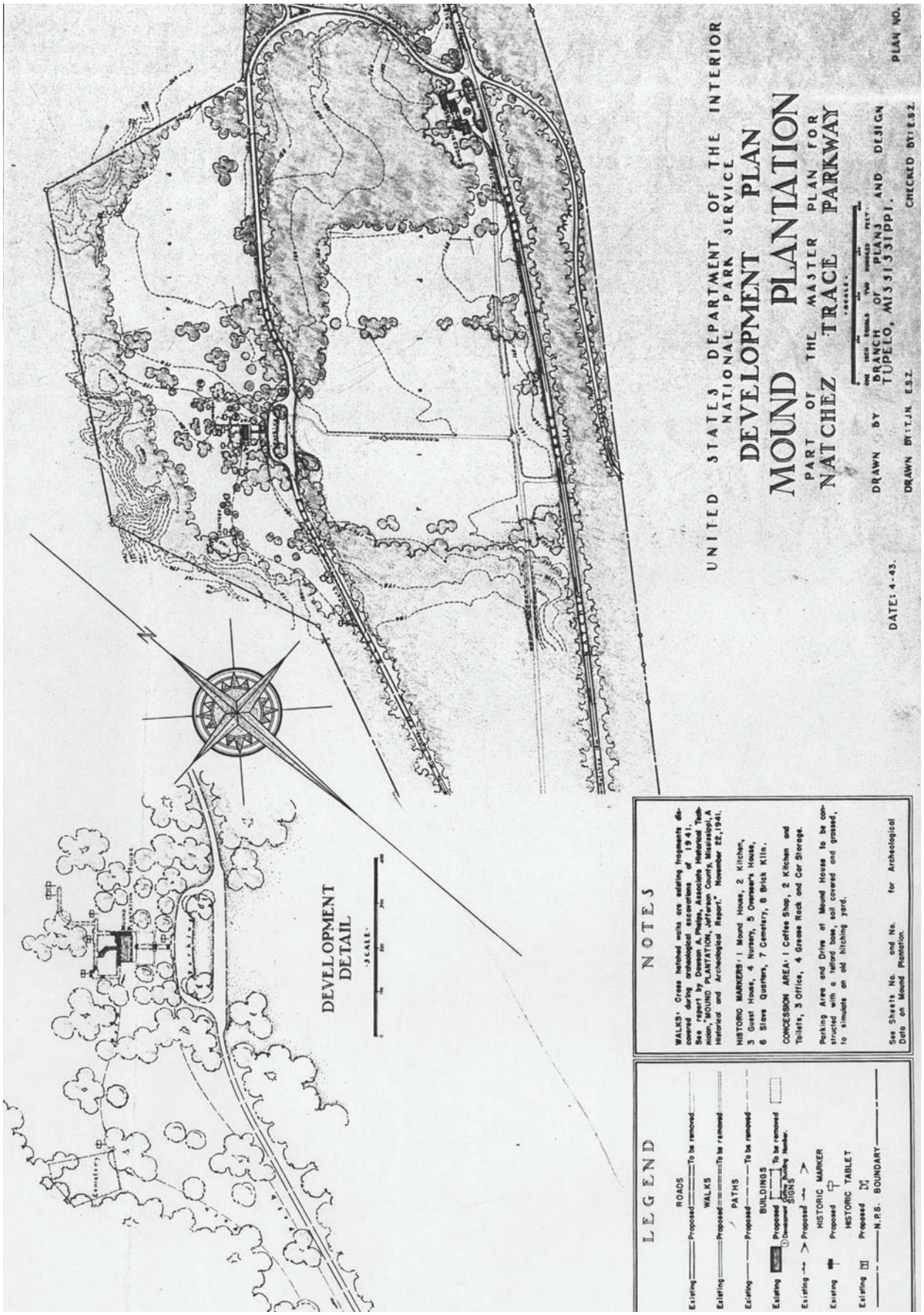



**FIGURE 35.** Development Plan, 604/2281, Mound Plantation, 1943. (NATR archives)

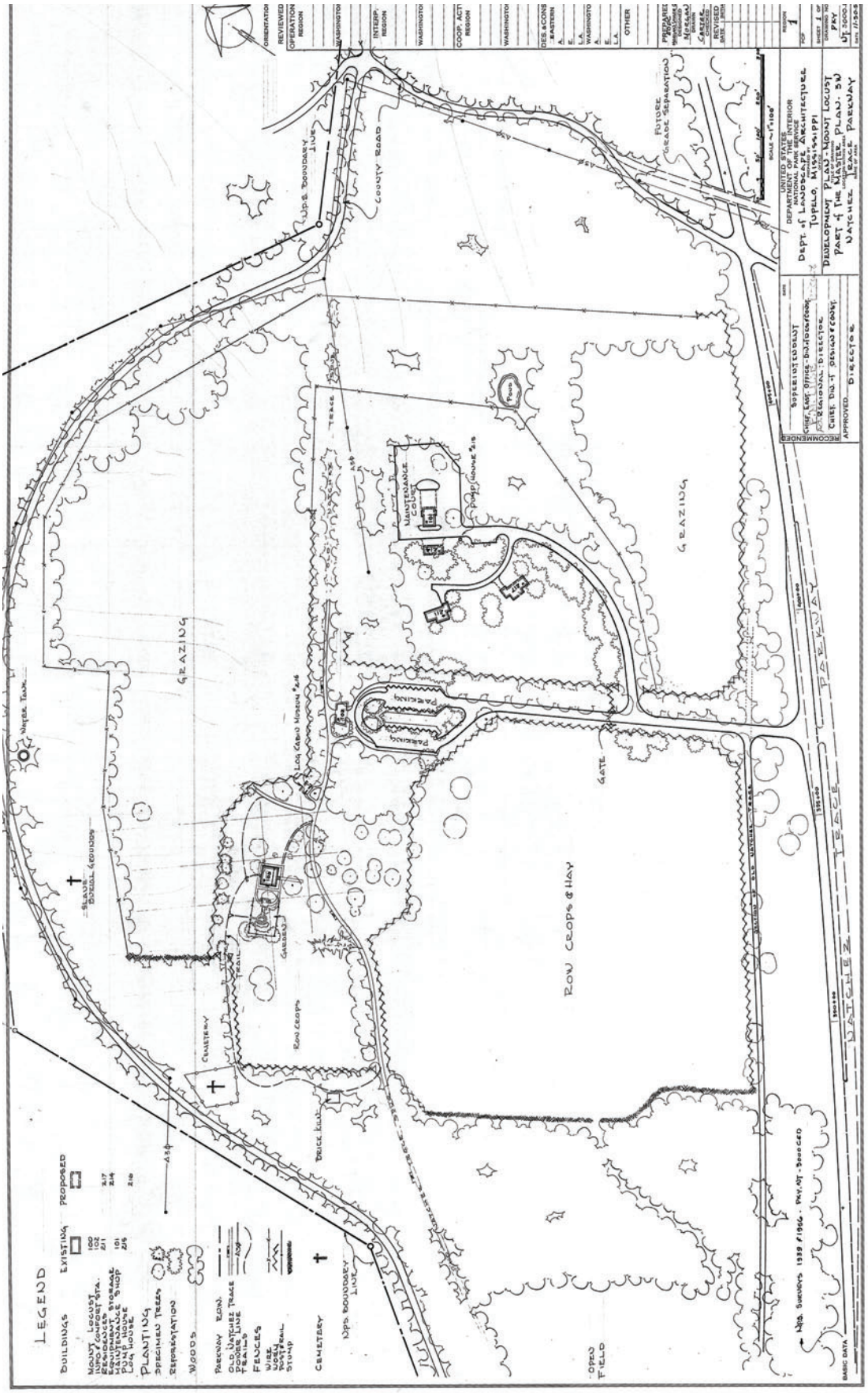



**FIGURE 36.** Development Plan 604/3000E, Mount Locust, 1957. (NATR archives)



FIGURE 37. View of the rail fence, entrance feature, and house, 1958. (NATR archives)

A restoration plan for the house was approved in 1955. Completion of the work, including the brick walks around the house, occurred in March 1956. Other site work included clearing a portion of the Natchez Trace near the property for an asphalt stabilized trail and leveling the terracing in front of the house (Figure 36).[90]

The staking of the sewerage system and approach road and the installation of the well occurred in December 1955. In March 1956, plans for an interpretive shelter with comfort station, shop and equipment storage building, pump house, and employee residence were approved, and studies were underway on fencing layout. By March 1957, the maintenance area, employee residence, and interpretive shelter were completed. A chain link fence enclosed the maintenance area.[91]

The installation of 6,465 feet of rail fence occurred in 1957-58. Plans were completed for an entrance gate and garden fencing. A plan was also prepared for a walk three to four feet wide leading up a gentle grade from the Natchez Trace to the front steps of the main house.[92]

**Additions.** Additions to the maintenance area occurred in 1960 (oil and paint storage building) and in 1985 (equipment storage building). In 1974, a blacksmith shop was constructed near the grape arbor. It was taken down at some point before 1980 when blacksmithing was no longer included in the living history demonstrations.[93]

The restoration of the historic approach to Mount Locust occurred in 1978. Originally, brick steps were part of a retaining wall that was taken out in the 1950s.[94] In 1990, a unisex handicapped accessible bathroom was added to the comfort station. In 1993, the interpretive shelter was enclosed as an information station and bookstore.

**Cemeteries.** Mapping of the Chamberlain Family Cemetery took place in 1996 during archeological investigations of the site, which indicated that the cemetery mound is not of Native American origin but rather was another of the natural erosional remnants so common in the Natchez Bluffs region.[95]

Mapping of the slave cemetery occurred during a 1998 archeology fieldwork session, which discovered at least thirty-five depressions that may represent sunken graves and a single limestone marker. The Southeast Archeological Center (SEAC) then conducted resistivity and magnetometer surveys, but the results were ambiguous. The topography and vegetation were not conducive to accurate results for resistivity. The magnetometer may have detected a few graves with surviving metal, but since slaves may have been buried without coffins, it was felt that results of this survey may not be accurate. Archeologist Patrick H. Garrow was consulted. He located and mapped forty-two regularly shaped depressions. It appears that the burials were arranged by families.[96]

## Uniontown

William Ferguson and four of his neighbors—George Cochran, John Girault, William Moss, and James Truly— recorded a deed for 75½ acres and a plat of Uniontown on September 14, 1799. Since the town site, except for 9 acres, was located on Ferguson's land, it would seem that he was the chief promoter.[97]

89. 604/3000E, Development Plan – Mount Locust, January 1957; 604/2888, Planting, Walks & Dev. Plan, February 1958, DSC-TIC.
90. 604/3003A, Mount Locust Restoration, May 1955, DSC-TIC; Kaye, Section J.
91. Monthly Superintendent's Narratives, NATR archives.
92. 604/2889, Mount Locust Steps and Ramps, February 1958, TIC; March and December 1956 Monthly Narratives, March 1957 and June 1957 Progress Reports, NATR archives.
93. Completion Report, December 9, 1960; Chief of Maintenance to Superintendent, February 6, 1985; Engineer's Files NATR; personal communication Rick Chamberlain.
94. Administrative History, X-4 (7).
95. Atkinson, 29.
96. Young, 35-37; Amy L. Young to Arthur L. Jackson, December 21, 1998, NATR archives.
97. Jefferson County Deed Book, A-1, 15-17.

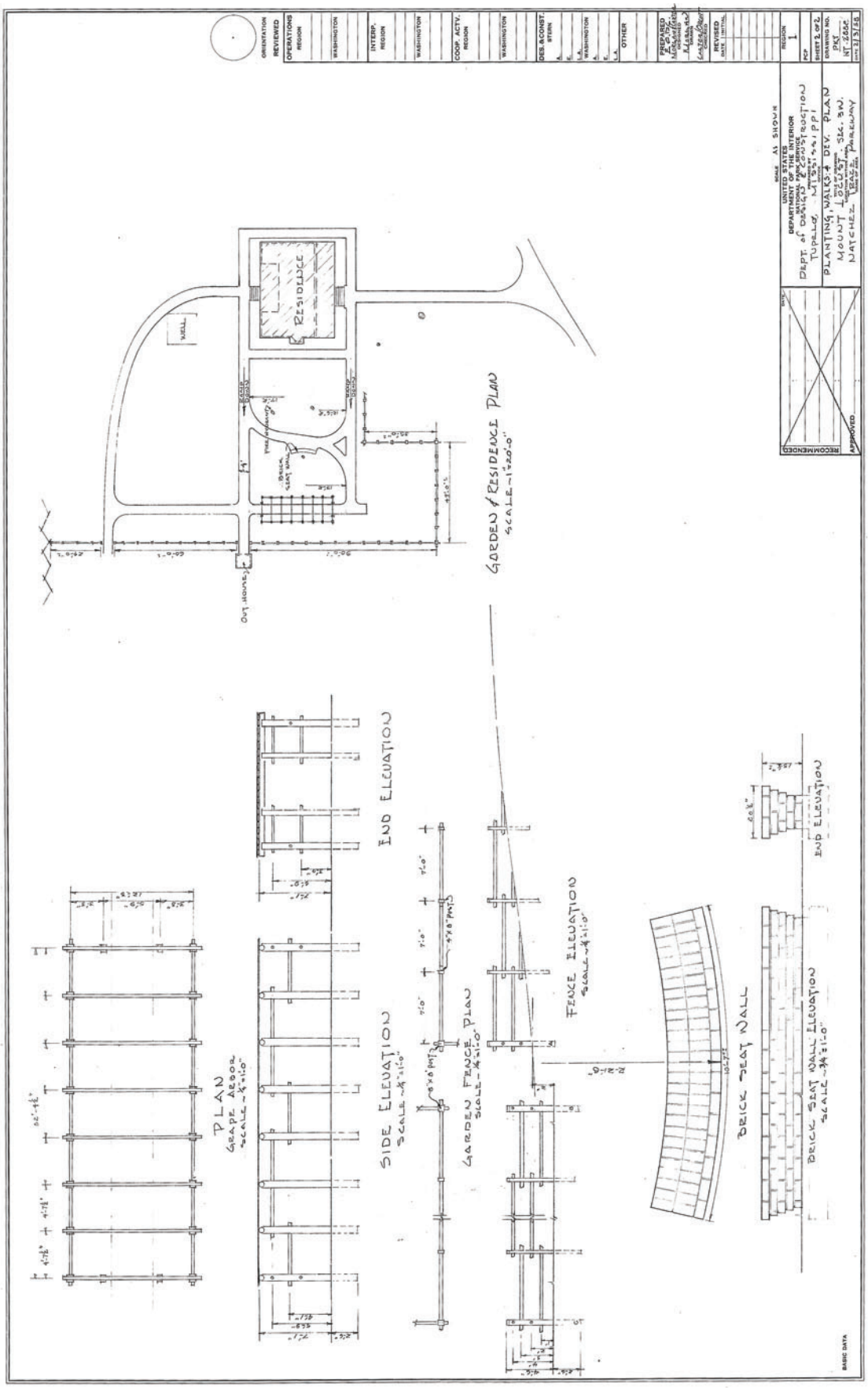



**FIGURE 38.** 604/2888-2 Planting, Walks, and Development Plan, 1958. (NATR archives)

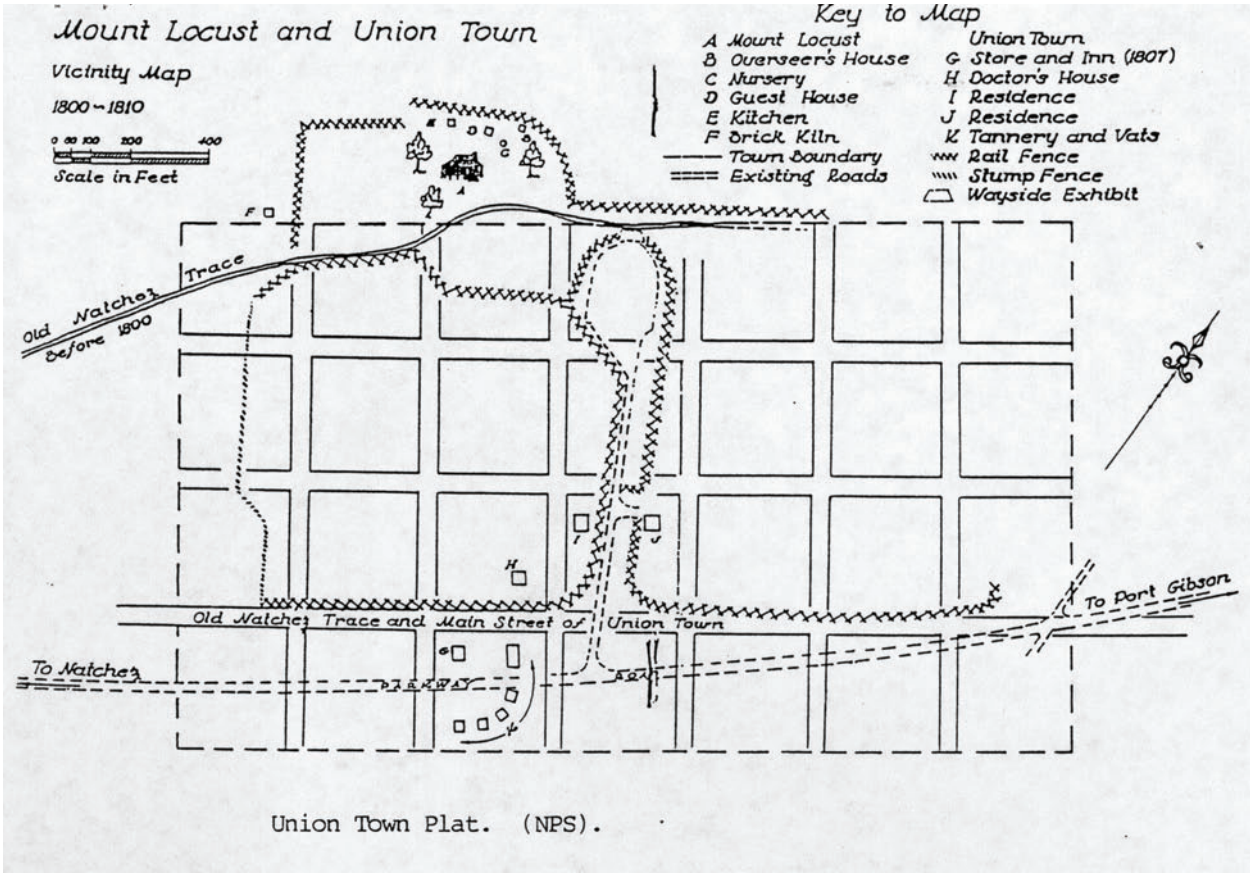



**FIGURE 39.** Map of Uniontown. (NPS image)

In 1901, Franklin L. Riley wrote:

> It [Uniontown] was a place of some importance, being laid out in streets and extending over a large area. Here early in the century, Jackson Warren and Thomas Shackleford started a tanyard and a shoe shop. In writing of the business enterprises of Old Uniontown the late Col. John A. Watkins of New Orleans says: "Farley made all the hats. . . . Jake Warner made shoes at Uniontown, Pintard was cabinet maker, McMurchy made wagons, ploughs, etc. Greenleaf, about 1797, established a cotton-gin factory."[98]

Although this may be true, land records of Jefferson County show that other than the tanyard lots, only a few other lots were sold. Contemporary travelers left descriptions of the nearby towns of Washington, Selsertown, and Greenville but failed to mention Uniontown despite the fact that it appeared on most Mississippi maps published during the years 1800-1830. The explanation seems to be that William Ferguson died in 1801, and the town never really got past the planning stages. The Federal Census of 1800 enumerated forty-one people. It was described in 1808 as "a small village of three or four houses in decay."[99]

**Shackleford Spring.** The Chamberlain family says that the spring furnished water for a tanyard operated by Shackleford and that his house stood nearby. When the town site plat is superimposed on a 1952 aerial map, using the spring as the point of departure, the town site occupies most of the open field directly in front of Mount Locust. At a much later period, a steam cotton gin, owned by Thomas Jefferson Chamberlain II, perhaps during the period of 1900 to 1910, was located on the site.[100]

A note on the plat reads "'Will' Ferguson's 141 feet the length of the Town next his house." This is interpreted to mean that Mount Locust is 141 feet from the upper (northwestern) side of town. This distance coincides on the southwest with an existing tree line, marking the open field in front of Mount Locust. That part of the old Trace directly in

98. "Historical Data Relating to Sites in the Vicinity of Mound Locust," Natchez Trace Parkway, n.d., photocopy, NATR archives.

99. Malcolm Gardner to Chief, EODC, 1956, NATR archives; Myers, 62, 101.

100. Malcom Gardner to Chief, EODC, April 26, 1955, NATR archives.

front of Mount Locust, at one time a county road, approximately coincides with the northwest side of the town site.[101]

# Topography

## The Natchez Trace

The Natchez Trace was an outgrowth of a series of ancient Indian trails, which clung to the ridges wherever possible. These trails followed watershed divides over the highest ground, avoiding stream crossings and swamps where possible. From Natchez, a trail followed the Pontotoc Ridge and the ridge dividing the watersheds of the Big Black and Pearl Rivers to the villages of the Chickasaw. They continued across the Tennessee River into the limestone hills, dipping occasionally to ford streams. They crossed the Duck River and the Duck River ridge portion of the Highland Rim of Tennessee—the watershed between the Duck River and the Cumberland River drainage. Their final destination was the villages of the Cumberland.[102]

The initial alignment of the Natchez Trace, being primarily a ridge road, was not conducive to large-scale settlement and development along major portions of its corridor. Changes in alignment were necessary to meet the needs of towns that were established several miles away and eventually needed regular mail service. North of the Duck River, the Trace followed the infertile ridges of the Highland Rim, but settlers preferred the better limestone soils and undulating topography of the Central Basin.[103]

## Mount Locust

The land is located on the banks of the south fork of Cole's Creek and has been described as "rolling creek bottoms watered by numerous springs." As its name implies, the house is sited on a natural elevation. Tradition suggests that Ferguson built his house here because the site offered better protection than adjacent locations, such as the Choctaw Flat north of Mount Locust.[104]



**FIGURE 40.** Original topography of the site with brick retaining wall, c. 1939. (NATR archives)



**FIGURE 41.** Terraced topography, 1956. (NATR archives)

Apparently, Mount Locust's location offered some protection against yellow fever. Thomas Jefferson Chamberlain wrote in 1837 that two women from Natchez had "runaway from the yellow fever" to Mount Locust. Louis Chamberlain and his family often stayed there for months to improve their health. In his journal Louis wrote: "I left home with my family the latter part of June [1838] and sought highlands of Mississippi. I arrived at mother's … where I soon began to improve my health and by Fall I was heavier than I had been for several years (weighing 136#)."[105]

Agricultural practices, particularly cotton farming, depleted the soil and caused widespread erosion. In fact, owners of many plantations in the Old Southwest had abandoned their exhausted lands further east and replaced them with virgin fields in Alabama, Mississippi, and Louisiana. As these fields wore out, planters moved on to East Texas. Those advocating scientific farming, like Edmund Ruffin,

101. Ibid.
102. Dawson Phelps and Edward Hunter Ross, "The Natchez Trace: Indian Trail to Parkway," *Tennessee Historical Quarterly* (21) September 1962; Bureman, 41; Myers, 91.
103. Bureman, 69; Myers, 121
104. Phelps, "Mound Plantation," 1, 36; Obernufemann, 12.
105. Obernufemann, 152.



**FIGURE 42.** Topography after slope softened, 1956. (NATR archives)

editor of the *Farmer's Register*, were largely ignored by southern planters. Travelers to the area were appalled at the site of abandoned plantations, tumbledown houses, and roads unfit to travel. The face of the southern landscape was a troubling condition that some, like Frederick Law Olmsted, attributed to objectionable land use practices and the institution of slavery.[106]

Long term landholders like the Chamberlains understood the problem. Thomas Jefferson Chamberlain's will refers to the condition of the soil at both Mount Locust and Liverpool plantations:

> As I have commenced a system of restoring and improving the Exhausted lands of my said "Home Place" and Liverpool Places, by the use of Guano as a Manure and other Means and appliances it is my will and desire that said system be continued.[107]

Archeology conducted in 1941 indicated that the mound on which the house stood was not built of artificially deposited earth and therefore was not constructed by Native Americans but was of natural origin, as is suggested by its shape. The NPS altered the original topography of the site when the slope of the hill where a brick retaining wall once stood was softened in the 1950s (Figure 40, 41, 42).

# Vegetation

Little is known about the cultural vegetation at Mount Locust during the period up to 1860. Travel accounts indicate that ornamentation took a back seat to farming. Joseph Holt Ingraham noted that Mississippi planters "have little room for much else than cotton and corn, and the latter is barely tolerated."[108]

He further observed:

> There are many private residences, in the vicinity of Natchez . . . whose elegant interiors, contrasting with the neglected grounds about them, suggest the idea of a handsome city residence, accidentally dropped upon a bleak hill, or into the midst of a partially cleared forest, and there remaining, with its noble roof grasped by the arm of an oak, and its windows and columns festooned by the drooping moss, heavily waving in the wind. Thus are situated many of the planters' dwellings, separated from the adjacent forest by a rude, white-washed picket, enclosing around the house an unornamented green, or grazing lot, for the saddle and carriage horses, which can regale their eyes at pleasure, by walking up to the parlour windows and gazing in upon handsome carpets, elegant furniture, costly mantel ornaments, and side-boards loaded with massive plate; . . . Very few of the planters' villas, even within a few miles of Natchez, are adorned with surrounding ornamental shrubbery walks, or any other artificial auxiliaries to the natural scenery, except a few shade trees and a narrow, graveled avenue from the gate to the house.[109]

In a letter to the editor of the Natchez *Daily Courier*, Thomas Affleck, who opened Southern Nurseries in Washington, Mississippi, in 1848, described the lack of variety in ornamental plantings:

> As your "City of the Bluffs" seems to have become greatly alive to improvement, of late years, and many neat and home-like houses have been erected in and around the city, a few hints on planting ornamental trees and shrubs, with short descriptions of some of the less common and rarer sorts, may be apropos and useful.
>
> We lack *variety*, as a general thing, in this class of trees and plants. In a climate in which a greater number of rare and extremely beautiful evergreens are perfectly hardy, than in any other I know of, unless perhaps the Isle of Wight, off the south coast of England – and doubtful if even

106. John Stilgoe, *Common Landscape of America* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1982), 75-77.
107. Ferguson Family, Wills and Estate Papers, NATR Archives.
108. Carriere, 6.
109. Ingraham, 100.

> there – we confine ourselves to some half-dozen kinds. Nothing can be more beautiful than the Laurier Amandier, (Cerarsus Caroliniensis) [sic], Cape Jessamine, Arbor Vitae, some of the Viburnums, Pittosporums, Euonymous, and Myrtles; yet, there is a sameness in our lawns and door-yards, from the general and almost exclusive use of these, that might readily be relieved by the addition of some of the many others which are some instances, more beautiful.
>
> So with our shade trees. The perpetually recurring Pride of China tree, beautiful though it be, to the exclusion of the scores of magnificent trees, native and introduced is, to say the least of it, in very bad taste. It is a filthy tree, too, about the yard, when compared with many others. [110]

## Hedges

By the end of the eighteenth century, the Cherokee rose (*Rosa laevigata*) had become so widely naturalized in several of the southern states that French botanist Andre Michaux identified it as an American native. Thomas Affleck wrote about the local use of the Cherokee rose as a substitute for traditional wooden fences, conserving timber and reducing maintenance costs. In the days before barbed wire (introduced in 1880), a properly planted and maintained hedge of this nature was considerably less expensive than a worm or zigzag fence. Joseph Holt Ingraham made a plea for such hedges:

> In a country where the "chickasaw rose," which is a beautiful hedge thorn, grows so luxuriantly, it is worthy of remark that the culture of the hedge, so ornamental and useful as a field-fence, is altogether neglected. Planters would certainly find it eventually for their interest, and if generally adopted, the scenery of this state would rival the loveliest sections of rural England.[111]

Frederick Law Olmsted also commented favorably on the use of the Cherokee rose as a hedgerow plant in southwest Mississippi. Another contemporary horticulturist in southwest Mississippi commented that a Cherokee rose hedge was so dense it "would shutout completely the view into the adjoining fields." In 1856, the executors of the estate of Thomas Jefferson Chamberlain directed the overseer at Liverpool to plant "a hedge of the Cherokee rose."[112]

## Avenues and Groves

Johnnie Chamberlain, who lived at Mount Locust until 1937, described an avenue of old oaks leading up to Mount Locust. In the period up to 1860, this kind of ornamentation would have been unusual in southwest Mississippi. Joseph Holt Ingraham described the scene:

> A long avenue of trees, ornamenting and sheltering the approach to a dwelling, is a rare sight in this state [Mississippi], though very frequently seen in Louisiana, yet, in no region of the south can fine avenues of beautiful trees be made with such facility. . . . No state surpasses this in the beauty, variety, and rapid growth of its ornamental shade trees; the laurel, sycamore, locust, oak, elm, and white bay with the "pride of China,"—the universal shade tree in the southwest—arrive here at the most perfect maturity and beauty. Every plantation residence is approached by a drive, often nearly a mile in length; yet so little attention is paid to this species of ornament and comfort, in a climate where shade is a synonym for luxury, that scarcely one of them is shaded, except where . . . nature has flung the broad arms of majestic trees across the path.[113]

In the period up to 1860, groves of trees were more common. Unlike the carefully planted ornamental groves in English landscape gardens, those found in the antebellum South more likely consisted of existing stands of indigenous trees—poplars, oaks, cedars, hickories, magnolias, beeches, catalpas, maples, and pines. One visitor to the area commented:

> The country around Natchez is broken, and the soil, like all lands of the kind in the South, very rich, and covered with the finest forest trees. We have traveled through some of these beautiful specimens of Nature's handy-work, before the axe had made a single waste, and we were struck with the great beauty of the groves of trees which met our eye everywhere, and we could not help expecting the palace of some wealthy landholder would suddenly peep out among the trees of the distant landscape. Around Natchez, though one

110. George Stritikus and Melanie Johns, "A Nurseryman Evaluates Southern Gardens of the 1850s," *Magnolia* 12, no. 4 (Fall 1996): 2-8.
111. Ingraham, 108-109.
112. Ferguson Family, Wills and Estate Papers, NATR Archives; Carriere, 5; Cothran, 72; Pam Puryear, "Affleck on Hedging," *Magnolia* 7, no. 4 (Spring 1991): 11.
113. Ingraham, 100-101.

> of the oldest settled countries in the Union, these beautiful natural groves have been spared.[114]

Frederick Law Olmsted also described tree shaded lanes:

> From the Homochitto to the suburbs of Natchez, a good half day's ride, I found the country beautiful; fewer hills than before, the soil very rich, and the land almost all inclosed in plantations, the roadside boundaries of which are old rose-hedges. The road is well constructed; often, in passing through the hills, with high banks on each side, coped with thick and dark, but free and sportive hedges, out of which avenues of trees growing carelessly and bending angel-like over the traveler, the sentiment of the most charming Herefordshire lanes is reproduced. There are also frequent woods, of a park-like character in their openness; the trees chiefly oak, and of great height.[115]

## Local Herbariums

John Carmichael Jenkins was a medical doctor who moved to Natchez in 1833. He was also interested in botany and put this interest to use when he inherited two plantations in Wilkinson County in 1837. He eventually became an expert in fruit culture for the South and wrote articles on scientific farming. Jenkins married the granddaughter of William Dunbar of Forest Plantation south of Natchez, who developed an arboretum that included many varieties of trees.

In the 1830s, Jenkins created a six-volume herbarium of Louisiana and Mississippi, concentrating on native herbaceous material. Although almost half of the specimens are not identified, the volumes provide valuable information about the native and naturalized plants in the area. Examples found in the herbarium include southern sugar maple (*Acer barbatum*), dogwood (*Cornus florida*), honey locust (*Gledidsia triacanthos*), Chinaberry (*Melia azedarach*), mimosa (*Albizia julibrissin*), water oak (*Quercus nigra*), mossy cup oak (*Quercus macrocarpa*), sycamore (*Platanus occidentalis*), sassafras (*Sassafras albidum*), silky camellia (*Stewartia malacodendron*), Carolina cherry laurel (*Prunus caroliniana*), Cherokee rose, spicebush (*Lindera benzoin*), hearts-a-burstin'(*Euonymous americanus*), and Louisiana iris. It is interesting to note that several of these were either mentioned in travel accounts of the area or listed by Johnnie Irene Chamberlain as growing at Mount Locust (see below). None of the exotics that became synonymous with southern gardens would typically have been included in a herbarium.

A later herbarium from 1861 that included exotics as well as natives was that of Sarah Frances Jenkins in Livingston, Alabama, just across the state line. Her specimens included bridalwreath spiraea (*Spiraea prunifolia*), gardenia (*Gardenia jasminoides*), button bush (*Cephalantus occidentalis*), sweet shrub (*Calycanthus floridus*), fringe tree (*Chionantus virginicus*), Carolina yellow jessamine (*Gelsemium sempervirens*), Persian lilac (*Syringa* × *persica*), mock orange (*Philadelphus coronarius*), snowball viburnum (*Viburnum opulus* 'Sterile'), oakleaf hydrangea (*Hydrangea quercifolia*), black locust (*Rhobinia pseudoacacia*), sweetbay magnolia (*Magnolia virginiana*), Virginia sweetspire (*Itea virginica*), hawthorn (*Crataegus* sp.), Lady Banks' rose (*Rosa banksiae*), and Harrison's yellow rose (*Rosa* × *harisonii*) [116].

## Nurserymen

As mentioned earlier, Thomas Affleck opened one of the first large-scale fruit tree and ornamental nurseries in the South— Southern Nurseries in Washington, Mississippi. His first catalogue included 230 pears, 177 apples, 63 peaches, 16 cherries, 15 figs, 13 plums, and 11 nectarines, among others. Planters throughout the lower south were planting orchards to provide some amount of variety in their diets and the diets of their enslaved workers.

Affleck also carried ornamentals. In 1851, he advertised 162 varieties of roses. He felt that southerners should not order nursery stock from northern nurseries, as the plants were not acclimated to the South. He felt that the Natchez area was ripe for a nursery, noting that "Natchez and New Orleans were settled communities where wealth and cultured citizens took pride in gardens, lawns, and orchards."

From 1847 to 1861, he published *Affleck's Southern Rural Almanac and Plantation and Garden*

114. James R. Cothran, *Gardens and Historic Plants of the Antebellum South* (Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 2003), 31.
115. Olmsted, 192.
116. Henry P. Orr, "Decorative Plants Around Historic Alabama Homes," *Alabama Review* 11, no. 1 (January 1958): 7; George R. Stritikus, "A partial listing of the plants in the Sarah Frances Jenkins 1861 Herbarium from Livingston, Alabama," December 1991, photocopy.

*Calendar*. He also published the "Plantation Record Book" and the "Plantation Account Book" for sugar and cotton plantations. Affleck hoped to introduce systematic business methods and scientific land management into southern farming.[117]

Affleck's garden calendar is a valuable resource for determining appropriate antebellum plantings for the Natchez area. Affleck first describes the planting of the major cash crop, cotton or sugar. Next he describes the "Plantation Garden," which was the area that provided food for the field workers. Next, he provides information about the "Kitchen Garden," the area of the plantation landscape that provided food for the inhabitants of the main dwelling house and the house servants. Only after the economic and practical demands of the plantation are addressed does he describe the "Flower Garden and Shrubbery" and lastly the "Fruit Garden and Orchard."[118]

In the larger plantation garden, he included potatoes, mustard, turnips, cabbage, beets, peppers, tomatoes, shallots, garlic, horseradish, sage, okra, beans, peas, corn, squash, sweet potatoes, and pumpkins. For the kitchen garden he recommended planting cauliflower, cabbage, lettuce, onions, artichokes, potatoes, horseradish, peas, radishes, parsnips, beets, carrots, turnips, salsify, spinach, parsley, corn, melons, squash, cucumbers, snap beans, lima beans, okra, peppers, eggplant, kidney beans, celery, turnips, rutabaga, endive, broccoli, leeks, shallots, tomatoes, asparagus, sweet herbs, and chrysanthemums.

His recommendations for the shrubbery and flower garden included "Syringas, Roses, Altheas, Honeysuckles, Jasmines, Myrtles, etc." For border plantings, he recommended lynchnises, campanulas, sweet Williams, columbines, sunflowers, foxgloves, larkspurs, dahlias, tulips, hyacinths, gladioli, chrysanthemums, and peonies.[119]

Another nursery was C. B. Swazey's Mississippi Nurseries of Yazoo City, Mississippi. The 1854 *American Cotton Planter* recommended Affleck's Southern Nurseries and Swazey's Mississippi Nurseries as two of the best fruit tree nurseries in the South.[120]

117. Welch and Puryear, 6; Craig Colten and John B. Welch, *Special Cultural Landscape Study: The Thomas Affleck Papers* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University, 2006), 5-9.
118. Colten and Welch, *Special*, 9.
119. Colten, 9-41.

## Frederick Law Olmsted

Frederick Law Olmsted visited the Natchez area in May 1854. He observed that "the country is entirely occupied by houses and grounds of a villa character; the grounds usually paltry with miniature terraces, and trees and shrubs planted and trimmed with no regard to architectural or landscape considerations. There is, however, an abundance of good trees, much beautiful shrubbery, and the best hedges and screens of evergreen shrubs that I have seen in America. The houses are not remarkable."[121]

## Mount Locust (1782-1937)

In a 1957 letter to Malcolm Gardner, Johnnie Irene Chamberlain, daughter of Johnnie C. Chamberlain, described many of the ornamental and medicinal plants grown at Mount Locust:

> You spoke of my mention of sweet olive trees. There were two, perhaps three, on the lawn, planted apparently as specimens. Mother said that when she came down to the Mound to teach about 1887 there were still fine trees, of unusual height growing there.
>
> South of the house where the ground begins to level off, a beautiful flowering pomegranate, planted by Great-grandma Polly herself, was still growing as far back as I can remember. It grew in a straight column about ten or fifteen feet high and flowers bloomed all through the very thick branches. This tree marked the boundary of her own special herb and flower garden. She had a fruiting pomegranate also and this grew in a low, sprawling bushy about halfway between Sleepy Hollow and the main house. A fragrant, white flowered clematis, called Sweet Autumn was a great favorite in our grandmother's garden and the beloved, intensely sweet vine with white, star-like blooms called the Confederate Jasmine. Yellow Jasmine will be a lovely, and fragrant addition to the vines from the woods, and after I read your letter I went into our woodland and dug up several good, strong vines and set them in cold water to give Bill for Mount Locust. They must be planted during the blooming season or they will not thrive. Let him know where you wish them, and by next Spring I know they will bloom beautifully. They will grow best in very acid soil.

120. George Stritikus, "*The American Cotton Planter* – 1853-1861: a monthly magazine published in Montgomery, Alabama," March 1990, photocopy, 6.
121. Frederick Law Olmsted, *The Slave States*, ed. Harvey Wish (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1959), 192.

There is another excellent woods vine known as wild clematis, and is covered with white feathery blooms in late summer. The Maderia [sic] on Mount Locust was planted by Grandma Polly for medicinal purposes, and the raw roots, crushed were said to be a splendid poultice for burns. Antigonon, or Rose Montana was planted in the old gardens of Natchez and said to be an import by the Spanish colonists, so in all probability was also at Mount Locust. A pretty green vine, from the woods, you are doubtless familiar with, is the Smilax. . . . It is an evergreen. Another vine with odd, small, green fruit like tiny watermelons is the wild vine known by the Indian name Monaquemenot, or Chuck-a-luck. Choke grape does well in the woods here, and has a delicious perfume.

Old-fashioned purple lilacs, pink Crepe [*sic*] Myrtle, and Cape Jasmine were all in the old gardens at Mount Locust. The latter was used in hedge form, to keep the ever present servants from intruding on guests by staring, the shrub growing very thick and always green.

Mock orange was used in clumps as specimen plantings. So also was the Snowball bushes. These were the common Snowball, so called now by the Nursery catalogs, and not the Japanese, a new variety. Bridal Wreath was a great favorite at the Mound. Blooms are round clusters of tiny, white blossoms on long sprays, (the Van Houtte). There were great clumps of Caster Beans, or Ricinus, in the back yard at Mount Locust, just east of the old brick blacksmith shop next to the kitchen (and under the same roof). These were planted by Grandma Polly, for, of course, the medicinal value.

They were the green variety. Other shrubs: the Cydonia Japonica, or Flowering Quince, Magnolia Fuscata, Deutzias, Flowering Almond, and Winter-Sweet were regarded as very dependable shrubs in the very old gardens in this part of the South. They were at the Mound too, and the shrub known as Grancy Grey Beard. The botanical name is Chionanthus, and it is sometimes called White Fringe Tree. The very old cemeteries used it often. There was a lovely one in Christ Church cemetery at Church Hill until a few years ago, when excessively dry summers killed it. The flowers were in the form of long silky fringe. One sees it advertised rarely in the nursery catalogs but I often come across it offered for sale in the Louisiana Market Bulletin.

A charming wild shrub is the Hens and Chickens. Long deep green stems are hung with clusters of three-lobed, scarlet, seed-pods which turn from light green to the brightest red in August and September. These split, showing three coral seeds. The Tennessee folk have a delicious name for it, namely, "Hearts just abustin' with love." We have been quite successful in growing it here. The first Button Willow bush I ever saw was down at the lawn gate at the old place. If you are not already familiar with it, it is a stocky shrub growing in moist places, with fragrant button flowers about as large as a quarter, colored a soft creamy white. It blooms all summer. We always thought Grandmother Belle must have had it planted there.

You may hear adverse comment regarding the planting of some of the widely used berry shrubs, as being too modern. Well, we know that the holly was used, and the beloved English hawthorn was all over the Mound, there was a hedge of it below where Grandma Polly's garden was, and a long planting of it, at the edge of the front field, near the Trace. And another large clump at Ferguson's brick kiln. An elderly relative recently told me that a long hedge of it was between the Negro cemetery and the small field back of Mount Locust. There was still a long group there when I as a small child. When we moved to Woodwinds I dug up several roots to transplant, and now have a very large bush, and will be happy to let Bill have several off-shoot shrubs of it, to plant at Mount Locust.

There was a most satisfactory and dramatically beautiful shrub the Spaniards were said to have brought to this country, the Yucca, or Candelabra del Dios, which was used as a hedge at Mount Locust, dividing the back yard from the front at the North end of the house. They made a very practical hedge, evergreen, sturdy, sharp leafed, and growing taller and thicker year by year. Mother told us when she was a little girl, the Yucca hedges were still around most of the old servant's quarters—their gardens and cabins—and made a solid fence which kept out the stray cattle and hogs.[122]

Johnnie Irene Chamberlain's account is a comprehensive list of many well-known southern heirloom plants. Many of these appear over and over on lists of plants people remember growing in

122. Johnnie Irene Chamberlain to Malcolm Gardner, March 30, 1957.

"grandmother's garden." It is noteworthy that many of the plants that are associated with heirloom southern gardens are not native to the South but originated from China and Japan and were part of an explosion of plants brought back to England by the "plant hunters" like Robert Fortune in the nineteenth century. These soon found their way to American gardens. Since growing conditions were similar in the South, many of these, like gardenia, tea olive, camellia, and crape myrtle, became synonymous with nineteenth-century southern gardens.

Except for a few of Miss Chamberlain's notations that something was planted by "Great-grandma Polly" or her grandmother Maybella Chamberlain Wade, it is not known when any of the ornamentals or medicinal herbs were planted. Introduction dates can be used as a guide as to which plants would have been available before 1860. Thomas Affleck's letter to the *Natchez Courier* in 1848 also lists many of these plants as available at his nursery, including yaupon holly, euonymous, tea olive, gardenia, fringe tree, deutzia, crape myrtle, pomegranate, lilac, snowball viburnum, and mock orange.

The following is a list of introduction dates for America.

*Osmanthus fragrans* – tea olive (sweet olive) - first offered for sale in 1810

*Philadelphus coronarius* – mock orange – first offered for sale in 1771

*Spiraea prunifolia plena* – bridal wreath spiraea – first offered in 1848

*Syringa laciniata* – cut-leaf lilac – first offered in 1811

*Chaenomeles speciosa* – flowering quince – first offered in 1814

*Chionanthus virginicus* – fringe tree – native but first offered in 1783

*Viburnum opulus* 'Sterile' – snowball bush – first offered in 1771

*Clematis virginiana* – virgin's bower – native but first offered in 1783

*Deutzia scabra* – fuzzy deutzia - first offered in 1841

*Gardenia jasminoides* – gardenia (cape jasmine) – first offered in 1807

*Gelsemium sempervirens* – Carolina yellow jessamine – native but first offered in 1783

*Ilex opaca* – American holly – first offered in 1783

*Lagerstroemia indica* - crape myrtle – first offered in 1807

*Michelia figo* – banana shrub – first offered in 1811

*Chimonanthus praecox* – wintersweet –first offered in 1811

*Trachelospermum jasminoides* - Confederate jasmine – first offered in 1855

*Smilax lanceolata* – southern smilax – native but first offered in 1804

*Clematis terniflora* - sweet autumn clematis –available by 1894

*Cephalanthus occidentalis* - button shrub – first offered in 1783

*Punica granatum* – pomegranate –first offered in 1792

*Antigonon leptopus* - coral vine – available by 1895

*Prunus grandulosa* - flowering almond – first offered in 1844

*Euonymous americanus* – hearts-a-burstin' – native but first offered in 1783

*Crataegus laevigata* - English hawthorn – first offered in 1790

*Anredera cordifolia* – Madeira vine – available by 1846

Also, the exact location of Paulina Ferguson's "own special herb and flower garden" is unknown, but it was probably near the present day grape arbor. Family photographs from the 1930s show the castor bean described growing along the back fence and vines growing on the front porch.



FIGURE 43. Castor bean along back fence, 1936. (Courtesy of Rick Chamberlain)

## National Park Service Administration (1937-Present)

A planting plan and plant list were prepared for Mount Locust in 1958, and plantings around the house were completed based on the plan. According to the Completion Report, the plan was prepared substantially in accordance with suggestions made by Worth Bailey, who prepared the Furnishings Plan for the house. Annual bedding plants were eliminated because of the high cost of maintenance.[123]

It appears from a comparison of photographs of the site that the NPS removed most of the existing vegetation, with the exception of large specimen trees and a group of crape myrtles before replanting (Figure 44, 45, 46) Family members recall roses, camellias (*Camellia japonica*), and azaleas (*Azalea indica*) growing on the flat area near the front of the house. Numerous hardy orange shrubs (*Poncirus trifoliata*) and Carolina cherry laurels growing along the path to the Chamberlain Family Cemetery predate the 1958 planting plan.[124]

A conflict arose between the plants described by Johnnie Irene Chamberlain and the NPS philosophy at the time of a more native plant palette. According to the Completion Report, "shrubs, plants, and trees planted were of the native type, some of nursery type, but mostly gathered from areas along the parkway which required thinning." As mentioned above, the majority of the plants described as growing at Mount Locust were not native to the South. This probably explains why

123. Completion Report, Landscape Development and Barriers, Ferguson Place, February 26, 1959, Engineer's Files NATR.

124. 604/2888, February 1958; Progress Report, March 1957 and March 1958, Superintendent's Annual Reports, NATR Archives; personal communication Eric Chamberlain.



FIGURE 44. Site before planting, 1956. (NATR archives)



FIGURE 45. Site after planting, 1959. (NATR archives)



FIGURE 46. Site after planting, 1959. (NATR archives)

many of the plants described by Johnnie Irene Chamberlain were not included in the planting plan. In her letter to Malcolm Gardener, she stated: "I feel you are showing splendid judgment in deciding to use native shrubs and vines." A few exotics like gardenia, crape myrtle, mimosa, snowball bush, and pomegranate were included. In other cases, a native form of an exotic mentioned was used, as in the case of oneseed hawthorn instead of English hawthorn.

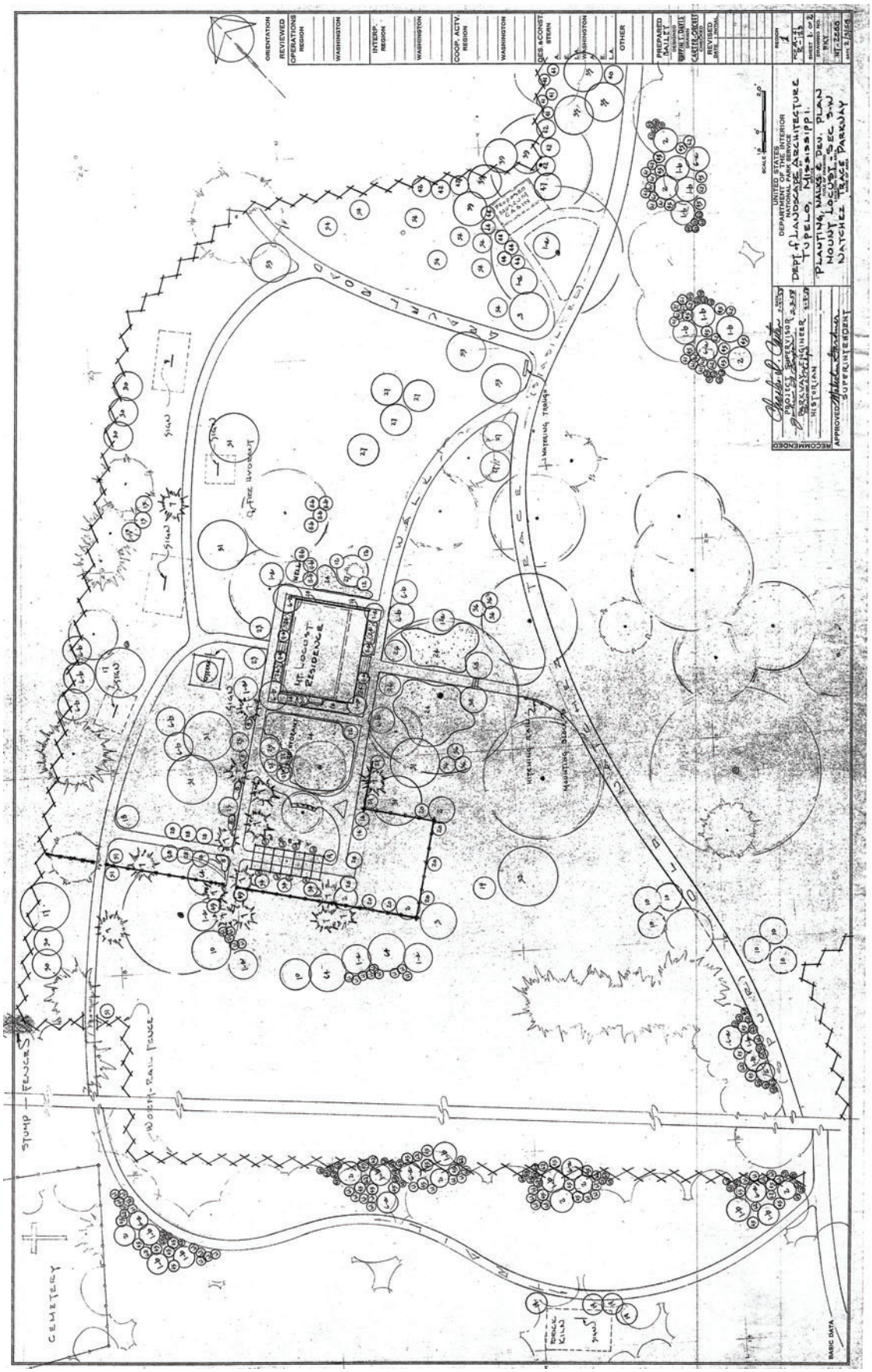



**FIGURE 47.** 604/2888-1 Planting, Walks, and Development Plan, 1958. (NATR archives)

**Plants Included in the Planting Plan**

*Cornus florida* – flowering dogwood

**Chionanthus virginicus* – fringe tree

**Ilex opaca* – American holly

*Cercis canadensis* – eastern redbud

**Juniperus virginiana* – eastern redcedar

*Halesia diptera* – two-wing silverbell

*Magnolia virginiana* – sweetbay magnolia

**Yucca gloriosa* – moundlily yucca

*Calycanthus floridus* – sweetshrub

**Punica granatum* – pomegranate

**Punica granatum* plena – flowering pomegranate

*Catalpa bignonioides* – southern catalpa

*Ficus carica* – fig

**Crataegus monogyna* – oneseed hawthorn

**Osmanthus fragrans* – tea olive

**Hydrangea quercifolia* – oakleaf hydrangea

**Lagerstroemia indica* - crape myrtle

**Syringa vulgaris* – common lilac

*Prunus caroliniana* – Carolina cherry laurel

*Albizzia julibrissin* – mimosa

*Magnolia grandiflora* – southern magnolia

**Chaenomeles speciosa* – flowering quince

*Sassafras albidum* – sassafras

**Philadelphus coronarius* – mockorange

*Ilex verticillata* – winterberry

*Diospyros virginiana* – persimmon

*Lonicera tatarica* – bush honeysuckle

*Rhus canadensis* – fragrant sumac

*Rhus typhina* – staghorn sumac

**Lonicera sempervirens* – coral honeysuckle

*Hibiscus syriacus* – althea

*Wisteria frutescens* – American wisteria

*Callicarpa americana* – beautyberry

*Robinia pseudoacacia* – black locust

*Malus augustifolia* – southern crabapple

*Vitis labrusca* – fox grape

*Gelsemium sempervirens* – Carolina jessamine

*Gleditsia triacanthos* – honey locust

*Buddleia davidii* – butterflybush

**Gardenia jasminoides* – cape jasmine

**Viburnum opulus* 'Sterile' – snowball bush

*Vinca minor* – periwinkle

*Mentioned by Johnnie Irene Chamberlain or other family members.

In 1989, a severe ice storm damaged area trees, which were cut or pruned along the length of the Parkway.[125] In 1995, black locusts were planted throughout the site to replace the honey locusts for which Mount Locust was named. Park maintenance decided against replanting honey locusts because of the fiercely hard, large thorns on the tree's trunk. In 1997, park ranger Eric Chamberlain prepared a tree and shrub inventory for the plantings around the house. He updated the survey in 2002.[126]

**Chamberlain Family Cemetery.** Plantings at the Chamberlain Family Cemetery within the fence include gardenia, spiraea, dogwood, and crape myrtle planted before 1995, and red tip (*Photinia glabra*), azalea, ligustrum, and tea olive planted by Eric Chamberlain. Mrs. Johnnie Chamberlain

125. Superintendent's Annual Report, 1989, NATR Archives.
126. Personal communication, Eric Chamberlain.




**FIGURE 48.** Chamberlain Family Cemetery, 1988. (Courtesy of Eric Chamberlain)

planted numerous clumps of iris around the cemetery. Eric Chamberlain planted azaleas and daffodils in front of the cemetery. Numerous drifts of native wildflowers are growing in the wooded areas around the cemetery. Iris can be seen growing next to Paulina Ferguson's grave marker in an old photograph (see Fig. 34).[127]

# Buildings and Structures

## Mount Locust (1782-1937)

It appears that the house was built between 1782 and 1785. When the land was confiscated in October 1781, the appraisers of Blommart's property reported that "there is no settlement." It was first noted that a house stood on the tract on the 1785 Vousdan survey.[128] According to family tradition, the original house consisted of one room. No written documentation has been found confirming this belief, but it seems likely that this was the case. Charles E. Peterson described what they found when they examined the framing of the house:

> The framing reveals clearly that the original house consisted basically of a large room, 16 feet by 20 feet, and three galleries, the south portions of which were enclosed to form some small rooms. There are French Creole, British and American influences in the general mass and layout, as well as in construction details.
>
> Creole influence is evident in the galleries—front and rear—with the enclosed portions under the hipped lean-to forming *cabinets* typical of the oldest houses along the Mississippi. An unexpected but characteristic bit of carpentry coming from the same people are the augur holes in a section of the old framework meant for placing cross-sticks to reinforce a filling of *bouzillage*, a mixture of clay and Spanish moss. While the original type of chimney (preceding the present brick stack) is not known, our findings in the later framework what appears to be a reused corner post of an old mud chimney, suggests that the first one was of the earthen type generally used . . . in the Creole house.
>
> British influence seems to be reflected in the size of the frame. . . . the Pensacola government grants in West Florida (which then included Natchez) required the prospective settler to build "a substantial house at least 16' x 20' in size." Mount Locust is a frame house—and therefore more substantial than the log cabin typical of the American frontier and remarkably enough, the size of the original frame unit happens to be 16 feet by 20 feet. This probably means that it is a survival from the British period (before 1783) or that it was influenced indirectly by the Pensacola regulation.
>
> American influence is found in the use of materials locally available, mostly upland forest lumber which could be cut on the property. Very little lime mortar or plaster was used, there being no limestone or shell deposits in the region from which it could be made. The Mount Locust brick were, by tradition, burned on the place, probably over a hardwood fire in an old-fashioned updraft kiln. The technique is still known and has been used in recent years to supply restoration work with handmade brick of the right color, texture, and hardness to match the old.[129]

In 1799, William Ferguson made extensive repairs or alterations to the original structure or built a new house, as evidenced by two bills for materials purchased in 1799 and presented to the executor of his estate after his death in 1801. The bills seem to indicate a considerable improvement and led architect V. C. Sloane to believe that the bill was for building the northeast and southwest front rooms and perhaps a portico on the southwest end. It was impossible, however, to state exactly what improvements were made at that time, as no documentation had been found, and materials used in these changes were in part used lumber or

127. Ibid.
128. Phelps, "Mound Plantation," 12; Phelps, "The Ferguson House," 3.
129. Charles E. Peterson, "Architectural Notes on Mount Locust," Natchez Trace Parkway, 1955, photocopy.

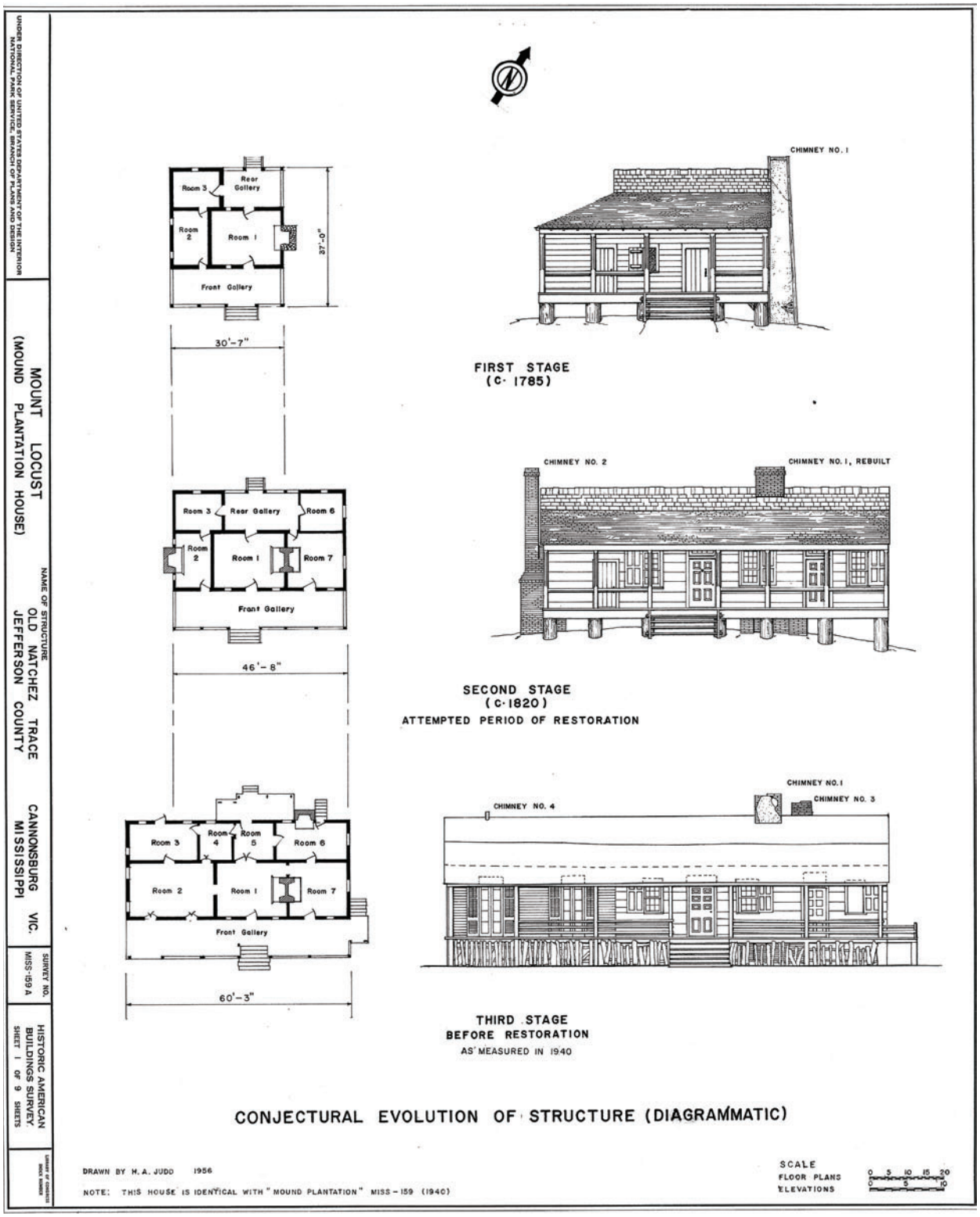



**FIGURE 49.** Evolution of the house. (NPS image)

timbers, making it difficult to establish any sequence in which the work was done.[130]

A detailed architectural evaluation of the house in 1954 revealed that certain additions had been made to the original structure very early—possibly prior to 1800—and that it had been significantly changed and enlarged around 1820 and again during the 1840s (Figure 49).The 1840s addition consisted of a 12-foot-extension of the two eastern rooms (2 and 3), enclosure of the rear gallery to form rooms 4 and 5, enlargement of room 6, and the addition of a rear shed porch. This was the last major structural change to the house.[131]

## National Park Service Administration (1937-Present)

The National Park Service acquired Mount Locust in 1937, at which time it was in very bad condition. HABS documentation occurred in 1940. In 1944, in an attempt to halt further deterioration of the structure, the rotted front porch floor was removed to eliminate a hazard and allow better access to the foundation at the front of the building. The rear porch, not original, was also removed for safety reasons. Walls were jacked up and new sills and piers added to correct settlement of exterior wall sills. Windows, doors, and siding were so badly deteriorated that the structure was covered with roll-roofing. The existing corrugated, galvanized iron roofing was found to be satisfactory.[132] In 1946, measured drawings were completed for Mount Locust.[133]

After a decision was made to return the house to its c. 1820 configuration, a restoration was begun in January 1955 under the supervision of NPS architects Charles Peterson and Henry Judd. It appeared to be impractical to prepare detailed architectural plans for the job, and it was decided that plans would be improvised, step by step, by Peterson and Judd. Gordon Whittington, a Natchez carpenter with considerable experience in restoration work, was hired. Only a small crew could be used, as it was necessary to prepare plans as needed. The completion of the restoration occurred in 1956, at which time another set of HABS drawings was prepared.[134]

130. Kaye, 6; Phelps, "Mound Plantation, 15-17; Phelps, "The Ferguson House," 9.
131. Phelps, "The Ferguson House," 3; Kaye, 3-6.
132. Kaye, Section G.
133. Melvin Josephson to Malcolm Gardner, June 25, 1947, NATR archives.
134. Completion Report Ferguson House Stabilization, December 16, 1958, Engineer's Files NATR; Kaye, 4.

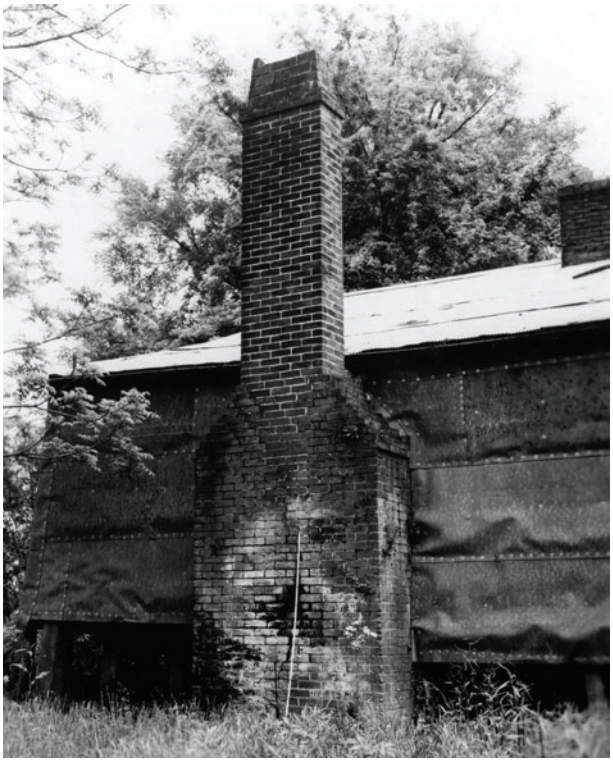


**FIGURE 50.** Mount Locust covered in roll-roofing, 1947. (NATR archives)

Natchez Trace Parkway historian Dawson Phelps described the project:

> The most difficult aspect of the job was the acquisition of materials. The house had been built at the time when a wide variety of woods was available for lumber. During the past 150 years many of these woods had disappeared from the market and it was necessary to locate sources of supply, frequently at small and obscure mills, some of which were 75 to 100 miles distant. Much of the lumber had to be produced by special order to duplicate that used in the original building. By improvisation, modern nails were remade to duplicate old nails. I kept fairly close touch with Mr. Judd during this period and recall that frequently he was discouraged by many of the difficulties met. However, I believe that he had a lot of fun doing the job. It was impossible to buy lumber with 18th century trim. Tools to finish lumber for reproducing 18th century trim had to be improvised and the work was done by the laborers on the job.[135]

The restoration in 1956 reduced the length of rooms 3 and 4 to their documented earlier lengths and built an exterior fireplace at the location of

135. Completion Report, 3.



FIGURE 51. Gordie Whittington working on the restoration, 1956. (NATR archives)

impression marks that were discovered under room 2. The interior wall boards of rooms 3 and 4 were replaced with new material. Wall boards in rooms 1, 6, and 7 were reworked to accommodate relocation of doors. All flooring was replaced, except in room 2, where relocated wood was used.[136]

Most of the exterior siding needed replacing, except for the front gallery. New shutters were installed, based on the design of the surviving shutters. Most of the windows received new sash. Doors were relocated to their earlier locations and some new doors were constructed. Since none of the original hardware survived, it was necessary to determine the types used and find replacements. Local antique shops were of little help. A few items were salvaged from old houses in the vicinity, but most were reproduced by a local blacksmith.

136. Kaye, 6.



FIGURE 52. HABS documentation, 1972. (NPS image)



FIGURE 53. HABS documentation, 1972. (NPS image)



FIGURE 54. Johnnie Chamberlain, 1957 dedication. (NATR archives)

A corrugated, galvanized iron roof over wooden lath was removed. The roof structure was repaired with new rafters where needed, new roof lathing constructed, and new wood shingles applied. The dedication of the restored house occurred in February 1957. In 1976, replacement of the shingle roof occurred.[137]



FIGURE 55. View of both cisterns, 1961. (NPS image)



FIGURE 56. Chamberlain Family Cemetery, 1993. (NPS image)

In 1984, repairs to the front and back steps occurred. In 1989, a new wood shingle roof was placed on the house. In 1992, the replacement of the wood piers and the front porch occurred. In 1995, the front porch flooring was replaced.[138]

**Cisterns.** Two historic cisterns were documented in the 1941 archeological survey. The northwest cistern was surrounded by a 12-foot-square of bricks.

**Chamberlain Family Cemetery.** Fifteen head and foot stones, including two large obelisks, date to 1825. A number of other structures remain only as foundations or below-ground resources.

**Kitchen.** Archeology conducted in 1941 found the assumed location of the kitchen west of the main house but supplied little information about the architecture.

137. Kaye, 7; Completion Report, 3-5; For drawings of framing plan, see HABS report for Mount Locust.
138. Kaye, 4-7. Superintendent's Annual Narrative, 1976, NATR archives.



FIGURE 57. Guest House location, 1941. (NATR archives)



FIGURE 58. Overseer's House foundation, 1941. (NATR archives)



FIGURE 59. Brick kiln foundation, 1941. (NATR archives)

**The Guest House.** Concentrated rubble marked the assumed location of the Guest House in 1941, but no other information was noted.

**The Nursery.** No remains of the nursery were found in 1941.

**The Overseer's House.** Archeology conducted in 1941 found the building's location north of the main house. One L-shaped section of brick may have been the base of a corner pier.



FIGURE 60. Interpretive shelter, 1957. (NATR archives)



FIGURE 61. Employee residence, 1957. (NATR archives)

**Brick Kiln.** The foundation of the brick kiln was located southwest of the main house in 1941 (Figure 59).

**Slave Quarters.** No remains were found to the north and northwest of the main house in 1941. In 1998, clusters of artifacts that may relate to slave quarters were discovered in the same area, but no undisturbed deposits were found.[139]

**New Construction.** New construction at Mount Locust began in 1956 and included an interpretive shelter with a comfort station, a shop and equipment storage building, an employee residence, and a pump house. In 1960, an oil and paint storage building was added.

The construction of a frame blacksmith shop occurred in 1974 as part of a living history exhibit.[140] It was taken down at some point before 1980 when a blacksmith was no longer included in the living history demonstrations.



FIGURE 62. Shop and equipment storage, 1957. (NATR archives)



FIGURE 63. Oil and paint storage, 1960. (NATR archives)



FIGURE 64. Blacksmith shop, 1970. (Courtesy of Eric Chamberlain)

Between 1979 and 1980, A-frame roofs were added to the residence, maintenance shop, and oil and paint house. In 1987, storm windows were added to the employee residence. A newly constructed office in the maintenance shop became the duty station for the South District Interpreter.[141]

139. Phelps, "Mound Plantation," 33-48; Young, 39.
140. Lamar Satchfield, "Mount Locust Comes Alive," *Natchez Democrat*, March 21, 1974.
141. Superintendent's Annual Narrative, 1980, 1987, NATR archives.



FIGURE 65. Visitor contact station, 1993. (NATR archives)

The addition of a unisex, handicapped-accessible bathroom to the comfort station occurred in 1990. In 1993, the interpretive shelter was enclosed as an information station and bookstore. Modifications to the residence for use as office space for the rangers in 1998 included enclosing the screen porch.[142] In 2003, the information station was re-roofed.

## Circulation

The remains of an extensive nineteenth-century walk system around the house and work yard was uncovered during archeological investigations in 1941. These walks were in various stages of repair. In some cases the condition was so good that, after cleaning, the walk was visible as originally built. In other cases, the brick had shifted to such an extent that only a slight alignment could be discerned between outbuildings. One of the best preserved led around the west and north sides of the house to an abandoned cistern. A walk that had been covered over connected the current cistern to the house.[143]

By June 1957, 230 feet of brick walks and 1,340 feet of asphalt stabilized walks had been constructed. Development Plan 3000E (Figure 36) included a pedestrian walk from the Old Trace trail northeast of the house connecting with the brick path in front of the house and another path intersecting a gravel service road and circling back around the house, cemetery, and brick kiln. Also included in the circulation plan was a network of unpaved paths that led to the arbor and brick seat wall. A final



FIGURE 66. Northeast walk, 1941. (NATR archives)



FIGURE 67. Unpaved path to grape arbor, 1990. (NATR archives)



FIGURE 68. Walkway up to house, 1958. (NATR archives)

sketch of the site, eliminating a portion of the path that led to the Chamberlain Family Cemetery, provided access to the brick kiln by a separate loop from the Old Trace trail (Figure 72).

The Old Trace trail leading west from the parking area and interpretive shelter to the brick kiln was stabilized with gravel and asphalt. A new asphalt walkway led from the Old Trace trail to the brick walkway in front of the house. Matching old brick of the period was used to reconstruct the walkways around the house. All other paths were surfaced

142. Superintendent's Annual Narrative, 1990, 1993, NATR archives.
143. Phelps, "Mound Plantation," 42; "Buried Facts," 4.



FIGURE 69. Reconstructed brick walkways, 1956. (NATR archives)



FIGURE 70. Approach before restoration, 1974. (NATR archives)

with gravel.[144] A parking area adjacent to the interpretive shelter accommodated thirty cars.

The historic approach from the trace to Mount Locust was restored in 1978. This brick walk was on axis with the front door of the house, ascending from the trace up a series of steps (Figure 69, 70, 71). A concrete trail installed from the rear of the structure in 1994 turned southeast to reach the grape arbor and connected with the Old Trace trail.

The completion of a trail-accessibility project occurred in 2003. The accessible trail replaced the existing concrete trail installed in 1994 and a portion of the Old Trace trail. During removal of the concrete walk, three areas were identified containing cultural features. Since construction of the concrete walkway in 1994 damaged the northeast corner of one brick structure, a portion of the trail had to be shifted two feet to avoid further contact. Other features of the plan included trail

144. Completion Report, Walks and Trails, Ferguson Place, Engineer's Files NATR; Monthly Progress Report, June 1957, NATR Archives.



FIGURE 71. Approach after restoration, 1979. (NATR archives)

interface at the information station, extension of the walkway to the gravel path leading to the Chamberlain Family Cemetery, construction of an information kiosk, and retrofitting the existing section of Old Trace trail to ADA standards (Figure 73).[145]

## Views and Vistas

Because of its location on high ground, the views from Mount Locust out into the surrounding countryside have always been spectacular. The house looks out over the old Natchez Trace and into the fields beyond. The views would have been relatively open from an early time, since the town of Union, just south of the Trace, was laid out in 1799. Also, views north over the Choctaw Flat were probably cleared for planting.

During and after World War II, due to a shortage of funds, various areas along Section 3-W of the Natchez Trace Parkway that normally would have been kept open by mowing were allowed to grow up in forest undergrowth. Beginning in September 1957 and ending in June 1958, certain areas were cleared of small trees and undergrowth to open views. Top soil to correct erosion was placed where needed and the area seeded and fertilized.[146]

145. Charles F. Lawson to Director, Southeast Archeological Center, October 24, 2002; Superintendent's Annual Narrative, 2002-03, NATR archives.

146. Project Completion Report, January 1959, NATR archives.

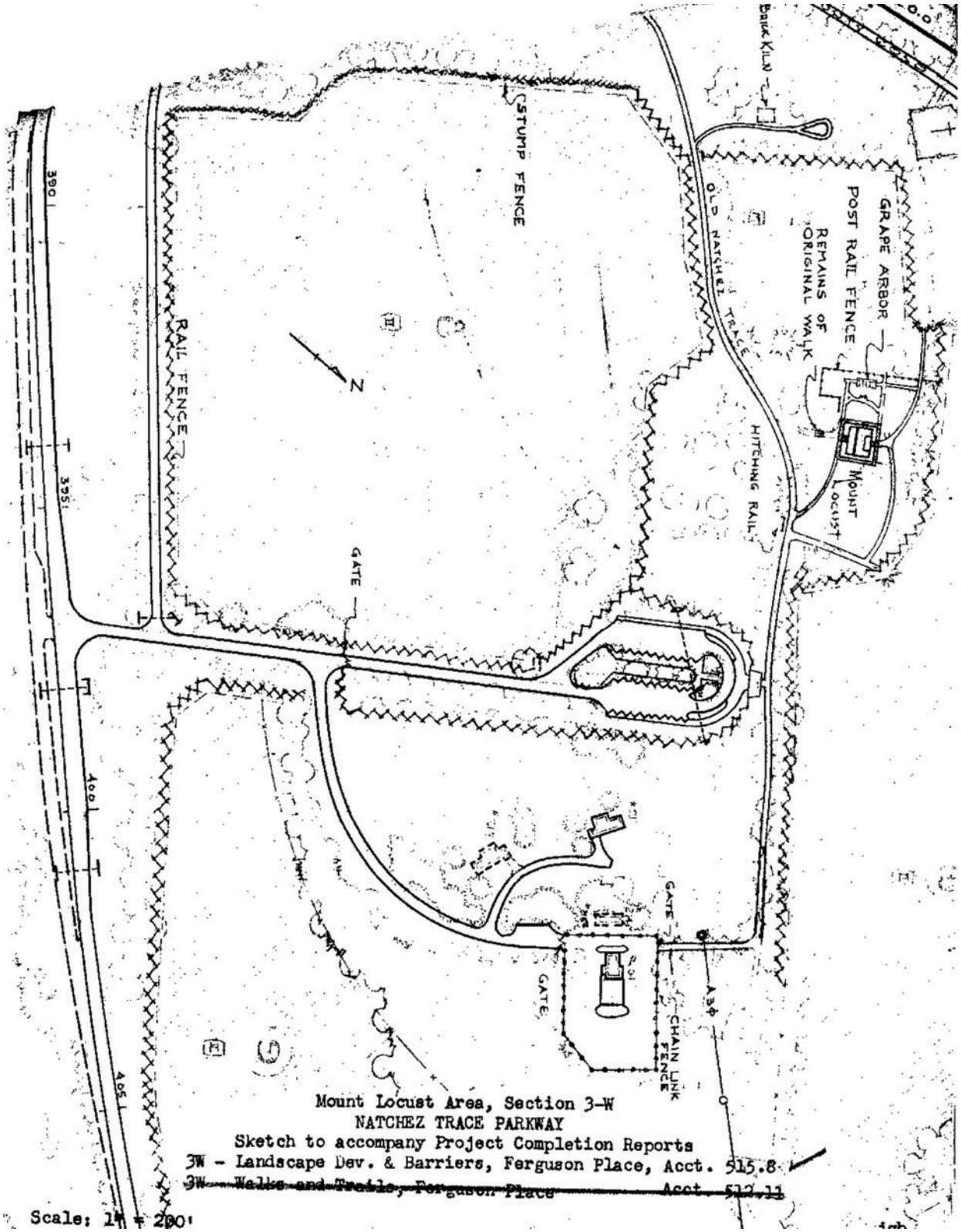



FIGURE 72. Sketch from Completion Report. (NPS image)

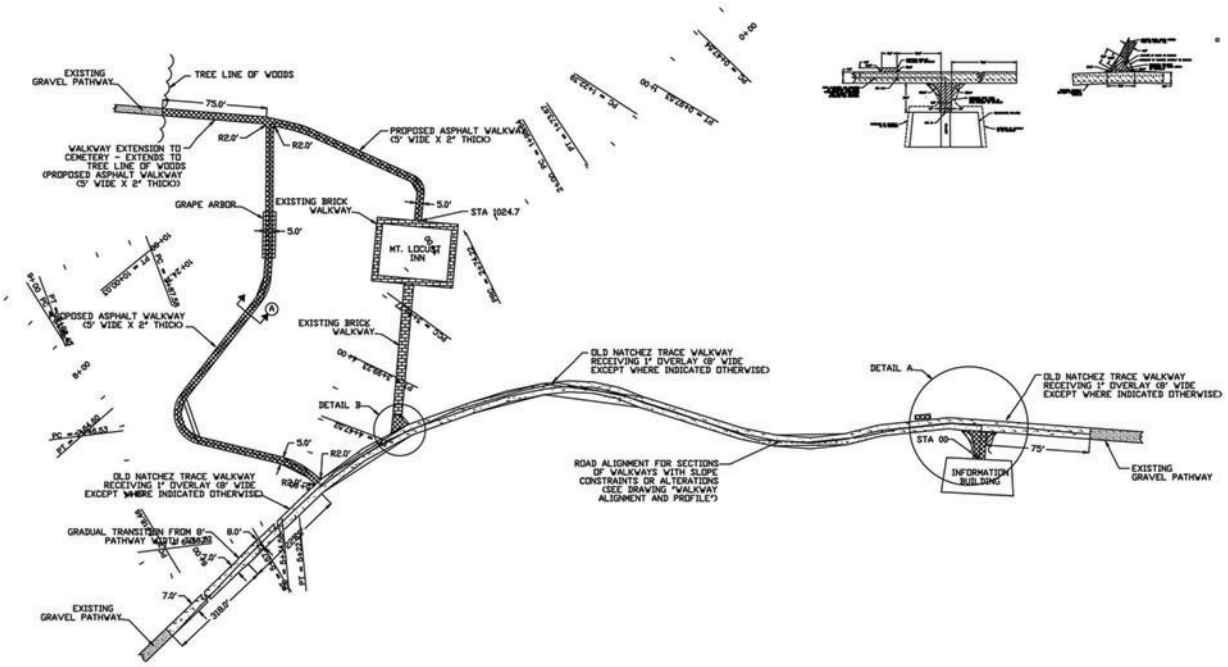



**FIGURE 73.** ADA trail project, 2002. (NPS image)



**FIGURE 74.** View out over Choctaw flat, 1957. (NATR archives)



**FIGURE 75.** View across the Old Trace, 1918. (Courtesy of Eric Chamberlain)

## Small-scale Features

**Fences.** Fences were a common landscape form in antebellum southern plantations. They would have been used to enclose gardens, screen work yards, protect crops and orchards, confine livestock, and define property lines. With free ranging livestock the rule, southerners constructed fences that were "hog tight and head high."

Because of soil exhaustion and the need to find virgin land, most farmers erected Virginia or worm fences, a zigzag line of split rails laid on top of one another. Worm fences were easy to build and easy to dismantle, load on a wagon, and reassemble elsewhere. These fences were perfectly suited to a land rich in timber and open space. They required no joinery or nailing, no elaborate shaping of the rails, and no digging of postholes. Most worm

fences were simple stacks of eight or nine rails and stood four-and-one-half or five feet high, but some carried additional stakes and riders (eight-foot-long stakes wedged into the ground and locked over the topmost horizontal rail) and stood as high as six feet. They were greatly favored for extensive fencing projects, such as enclosing cultivated fields and defining property boundaries.[147]

Though not as common as the fence just described, there were two other types of rail fences. The first type is commonly called the stake-and-rider fence, which had one high rail supported on stakes above the other rails. This fence was built in the same fashion as the common rail fence, but it would be stacked only four or five rails high. When the entire fence was built to this height, the farmer would then drive two poles, or stakes, into the ground, one on each side of the corner joint between each panel. The stakes would be of sufficient length to be sturdy when driven into the ground yet tall enough to be two or three feet above the last rail. A small block nailed between the two posts a few inches below the top gave support for another rail to complete each panel. The fence would then contain a space of about two feet between the top, or the rider, and the four or five bottom rails. By building the fence in this manner, the farmer used fewer rails to have a fence high enough to keep the livestock from jumping it.[148]

Rails, stakes, and riders were split from durable woods such as cedar and chestnut, as well as locust, oak, and heart pine, and the fence was left unpainted. The strength and stability of the Virginia rail fence was derived from the angle at which each section or panel met the next—the sharper the angle, the stronger the fence. The principal disadvantage was its tremendous consumption of land and timber. A ten-rail stake-and-rider fence occupied a corridor ten feet wide and required more than five thousand rails per mile. However, ease of construction and flexibility outweighed these drawbacks.[149]

Another common fence type was the post-and-rail, which used the same split rails as the Virginia rail fence, but set into split or mortised posts that were sunk into the ground to form a continuous, ladder-like barrier. It required more hours to erect than worm fencing but wasted less space. Its main disadvantage was rot, as the posts set into the ground decayed within five to ten years if softwood like pine was used. In 1860, a writer in the *Southern Cultivator* noted that locust rails lasted about fifty years but that second growth pine rotted within three or four years. Although more open than Virginia rail fences, the post-and-rail fence successfully protected domestic yards, cultivated fields, pastures, orchards, and, to a lesser extent, churchyards, courthouse grounds, town lots, and gardens. Posts of decay-resistant locust, cedar, or chestnut with rails of resilient oak, poplar, or heart pine made for fences of considerable strength and durability. Post-and-rail fences were seldom painted but were allowed to age naturally, thus reducing upkeep and maintenance.[150]

The paled fence was essentially a post-and-rail fence with vertically positioned boards nailed along one face of its length. This type of fence was both practical and decorative. It was the best choice short of a masonry wall for protecting and dignifying gardens, workyards, town lots, grave sites, and the surroundings of public buildings. A less functional version of the paled fence, the picket fence, using thinner, more elaborately cut uprights, came into fashion toward the end of the eighteenth century. Pickets and pales were not synonymous in the eighteenth century, but by the mid-nineteenth century, picket had become a generic term for all fences with vertical components affixed to a post-and-rail framework.[151]

A hierarchy of fencing was common, with more decorative picket fencing used near the house and more utilitarian zigzag or board fencing used for fields, orchards, and livestock. Decorative fencing, located in front or to the side of the house, enclosed simple plantings of flowers, trees, and shrubs. More utilitarian areas within the work yard relied on the use of crude board fences to protect the kitchen garden and to enclose an assortment of outbuildings.

Fence laws had been enacted in most southern states by 1860. Mississippi defined a lawful fence as one that was "strong and sound, five feet high, well staked . . . sufficiently locked, and close enough to prevent animals from creeping in." By 1860, wire fences were being advertised in southern agricultural journals for both farm and residential

147. Stilgoe, 190.
148. Todd Waterman, "Rail Fences: Their History and Construction," *Bittersweet* 9, no. 1 (Fall 1981): 9-10.
149. Vanessa E. Patrick, "Partitioning the Landscape: Fences in Colonial Virginia," *The Magazine Antiques*, July 1998, 100.
150. Stilgoe, 191-92; Patrick, 100; Cothran, 68.
151. Patrick, 101.

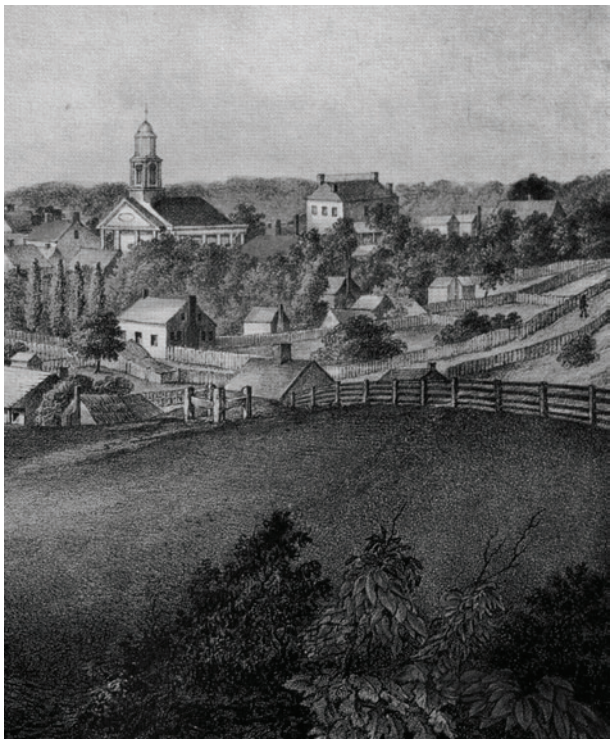


FIGURE 76. Note hierarchy of fences in image of *Natchez on the Hill.* (Courtesy of Natchez Historical Society)

use. The condition of a planter's fences was often used as a measure of his worth as a farmer. A writer for *Soil of the South* noted that "nothing fixes our estimate of a planter sooner than the character of his enclosures."[152]

After the Civil War, the cost of materials and revised concepts of private property and agricultural efficiency hastened a serious revision in the philosophy of fencing in the South. Gradually, more and more animals were fenced in, and new materials like wire appeared as alternatives to wood. Traditional wood fences did not disappear but were retained and adapted. Although built of modern milled lumber, the paled fence continued to be used for the same purposes, and the post-and-rail fence found a new role in enclosing vast fields of cattle. Even the Virginia rail fence, that great consumer of land and timber, did not completely fade from view.[153]

## Mount Locust

Joseph Holt Ingraham described the lack of fencing in cultivated areas around Natchez:

> The absence of fences is a peculiarity of southern farms. As their proprietors cultivate but one article as a staple, there is no necessity of intersecting their lands by fences, as at the north, where every farm is cut up into many portions, appropriated to a variety of productions. To a northern eye, a large extent of cultivated country, without a fence, or scarcely a dwelling, would present a singular appearance; but a short residence in the south will soon render one familiar with such scenery where no other meets the eye. The few fences, however, that exist on plantations, for defining boundaries, confining public roads, and fencing in the pasture lands—which, instead of broad green fields as in New-England, are the woods and cane-brakes—are of the most unsightly kind. With a gently undulating surface and a diversity of vale and wood scenery unrivalled, the natural loveliness of this state is disfigured by zigzag, or Virginia fences, which stretch along the sides of the most charming roads, surround the loveliest cottages, or rudely encroach upon the snowy palings that enclose them, and intersect the finest eminences and fairest campaigns.[154]



FIGURE 77. Side gate, 1929. (Courtesy of Eric Chamberlain)

Prior to Ingraham's arrival in the 1830s, plantation and farm sale advertisements described other types of fences, such as the sassafras rail and stake-and-rider fences. Family tradition recalls that Mount Locust had a split rail fence made of red oak and sassafras.[155]

No documentation has been found of the fences in place during the nineteenth century. Historic photographs from the 1930s show a combination of crude paling, post-and-rail, and wire fences (Figures 77, 78, 79). The front gate was of a picket construction and painted white (Figure 80). Another early landscape element was a brick

152. Stilgoe, 191; Cothran, 69.
153. Patrick, 103.
154. Ingraham, 107-108.
155. Carriere, 5.



FIGURE 78. Board fences, 1939. (NATR archives)



FIGURE 79. Wire fences, 1940. (NATR archives)



FIGURE 80. Front gate, 1929. (Courtesy of Eric Chamberlain)

retaining wall with piers on either side of the front steps leading up to the house. This is said by family members to date to the 1840s. It was removed by the NPS when the site was restored to its condition in 1820, as were the wire and board fences (Figure 79).

The NPS built a fence around the main house in 1944 as a protective measure against fire and vandalism. The area within the fence was cleaned of



FIGURE 81. Brick retaining wall and steps. (Courtesy of Eric Chamberlain)

tall grass, weeds, and debris after the structure was stabilized.[156]

The 1941 archeological survey identified a brick and mortar drain or conduit that led rain water from the edge of the house to the cistern that was still currently in use at the time of the survey. By 1944, the brick drain had been bypassed by a modern drainpipe from the eave downspout to the cistern.[157]

In 1958, a Garden and Residence Plan was prepared that included a post-and-rail garden fence. Prior to the dedication of Mount Locust in 1957, Virginia fencing was installed around the perimeter of the property. Also part of the 1958 Garden and Residence Plan was a grape arbor and brick seat wall.[158] It is not known when the post-and-rail fence and brick seat wall were removed, but both can be seen in photographs from the 1980s.

156. Kaye, Section G.
157. "Buried Facts," 4.
158. 604/2888, Planting, Walks, & Dev. Plan, February 1958.



**FIGURE 82.** Drainpipe, 1944. (NATR archives)



**FIGURE 83.** Garden fence, 1970s. (Courtesy of Eric Chamberlain)



**FIGURE 84.** Grape arbor, 1959. (NATR archives)



**FIGURE 85.** New wrought iron fence, 2007. (NPS image)

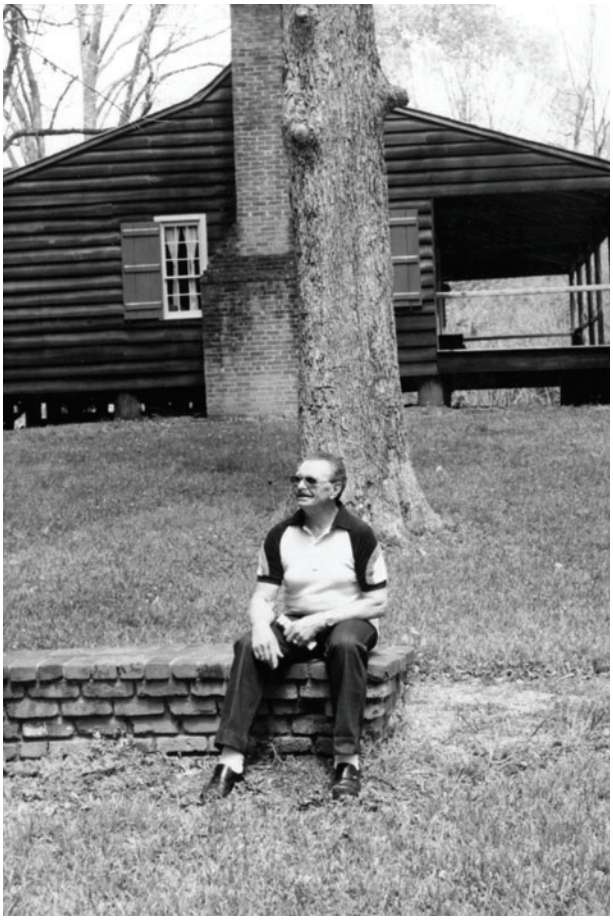


**FIGURE 86.** Brick wall seat, 1986. (Courtesy of Eric Chamberlain)

A new wrought iron fence erected around the Chamberlain Family Cemetery in 1995 allows visitors to view the cemetery from outside the fence. A chain link fence had previously surrounded the cemetery, with no visitor access.[159]

A DAR marker dedicated at Mount Locust in 2004 is located near the visitor contact station.

# Natural Systems and Features

The Mississippi Delta is a deep valley eroded by the Mississippi River during the Pleistocene, when the sea level was 200 feet below its present stand. After the Ice Age, as the sea level rose, the river filled this old valley with alluvium. At the time of settlement, the Delta was an area of alluvial soils occupying a valley between higher terraces to the east and west. The soils were subject to the annual overflow of the Mississippi River and its many tributaries. Mount

159. Superintendent's Annual Report, 1995, NATR archives; personal communication, Eric Chamberlain.

Locust's location along Coles Creek, a small lower Mississippi River tributary, made it prime agricultural land.[160]

Across western Mississippi and elsewhere, loess bluffs were formed when wind transported and deposited silts from massive dust storms that occurred at the close of the Pleistocene (Ice Age). These steep bluffs are highest on the western edges (90-100 feet or more) and become gradually lower traveling eastward away from the bluffs. Highly erodible, the loess region is characterized by a steep and deeply dissected topography and is typical of the local topography at Mount Locust.[161]

## Land Use

From 1779 until its acquisition by the NPS in 1937, land use at Mount Locust was primarily agricultural, burial, and other residential uses. Land uses since 1937 have been primarily recreation, interpretation, and other park uses.

## Archeological Resources

Archeological investigations were conducted at Mount Locust in 1941, 1975, 1996, 1998, 2002, and 2003. The 1941 study identified the location of the kitchen, guest house, and overseer's house but failed to locate the nursery or the slave quarters. The 1941 study found no evidence of a stockade, Indian mound, or any previous dwelling house.

In 1975, SEAC performed archeological testing to gather information on the brick walkway in front of the dwelling house. An excavation trench perpendicular to the long access of the existing path exposed a 30-foot section of bricks laid in a herringbone pattern. Examination of the bricks from both walks did not yield enough information to say whether the excavated walk predated the existing walk.[162]

Archeology conducted at the Chamberlain Family Cemetery in 1996 indicated that prehistoric cultural occupation was limited to the early Coles Creek period, between 600-800 A.D. The recovery of pottery sherds in association with substantial quantities of fired clay, fire-cracked chert, and charred wood indicated extended, sedentary use of the site. Whether the occupation was permanent or semi-permanent on an annual basis is unknown, but houses appear to have been present, animals hunted, and natural products collected, as indicated by the numerous nutshell fragments and seed of the fall-maturing persimmon fruit.

The excavations indicated that the Chamberlain Family Cemetery mound was not of Native American origin but rather was due to the natural erosion so common to the Natchez Bluffs physiographic region.[163]

Archeology conducted in 1998 mapped the slave cemetery, identifying forty-two regularly shaped depressions. Archeological reconnaissance behind the main house discovered clusters of artifacts that may relate to slave quarters but failed to uncover undisturbed deposits.[164]

During construction of a handicapped accessible trail in 2002, a number of archeological features were identified. The remains of two historic brick structures were uncovered behind the dwelling house. Both of these structures were excavated and identified during the archeology conducted in the 1940s. One was a brick wall footer surrounding the extant cistern northwest of the house, and the other was a brick floor identified in the early excavation as a kitchen. There was no definitive evidence collected in 2002 that determined the structure was a kitchen. Six postholes associated with at least two prehistoric Native American structures were identified. All of the features identified were documented and mitigated so that trail construction could proceed.[165]

A geophysical survey and subsequent archeological investigation in 2003 of the field located southwest of the dwelling house identified what is apparently a Native American village site. Based on the results of the GPR survey and previous investigation in 2002, the site contains at least seven Native American

160. *Lower Mississippi Delta Region*, 45.
161. Samuel P. Faulkner, "Physiognomy of Mississippi: Natural Vegetation," http://www.marshdoc.com/physiognomy/physiognomy.html.
162. Chief, Southeast Archeological Center to Associate Regional Director, April 17, 1975.
163. James R. Atkinson, "The Chamberlain Cemetery Investigations, Mount Locust, Natchez Trace Parkway, Jefferson County, Mississippi" (Tallahassee, FL: Southeast Archeological Center, 1996), 29.
164. Young, 40.
165. Charles F. Lawson to Director, Southeast Archeological Center, October 24, 2002.

structures. Five of these are circular in shape and arranged linearly in a northeastern direction across the back half of the center of the field. It is probable that this line continues across the entire field and meets the location where postholes were identified in 2002.

Historic components identified included a buried two-track road or trail in the northernmost section of the field, a large pit feature in the southeast part of the field near the entrance to the Chamberlain Family Cemetery, and a construction trench or foundation of a structure in the center of the field. Maintenance workers remembered driving in the vicinity of the buried road when a blacksmith shop was located there in the 1970s. The feature found in the center of the field could represent the stable or chicken house recalled by Eric Chamberlain.[166]

## Ethnography

The Old Southwest's cultural traditions are rich and diverse. This is a region with a unique complexity and density of history, prehistory, and converging cultural expression. Over the centuries, Native Americans, French, Spanish, English, Scotch/Irish, and African peoples have established and maintained their distinctive ethnic identities. Often these cultures intermingled to form discreet, new cultural elements.[167]

The emergence of the cotton gin in 1793 revolutionized the production of cotton, further solidifying the institution of slavery in the South. "King Cotton" came to dominate the southern economy, as cotton production rose from approximately 13,000 bales in 1792 to more than 5 million bales by 1860. Increased cotton production necessitated an increase in slaves to work the fields, where men and women often toiled side-by-side, and the African-American population in the South also rose from approximately 700,000 in 1790 to nearly 4 million by 1860. By the mid-nineteenth century, the majority of the nation's cotton was raised in Mississippi, Alabama, and Louisiana, and nowhere in the antebellum South was the cotton economy more dominant than Natchez, which was said to be the wealthiest town per capita in the United States on the eve of the Civil War.[168]

166. Charles F. Lawson to Director, Southeast Archeological Center, June 27, 2003.
167. *Lower Mississippi Delta Region*, 3.
168. Ibid., 22.

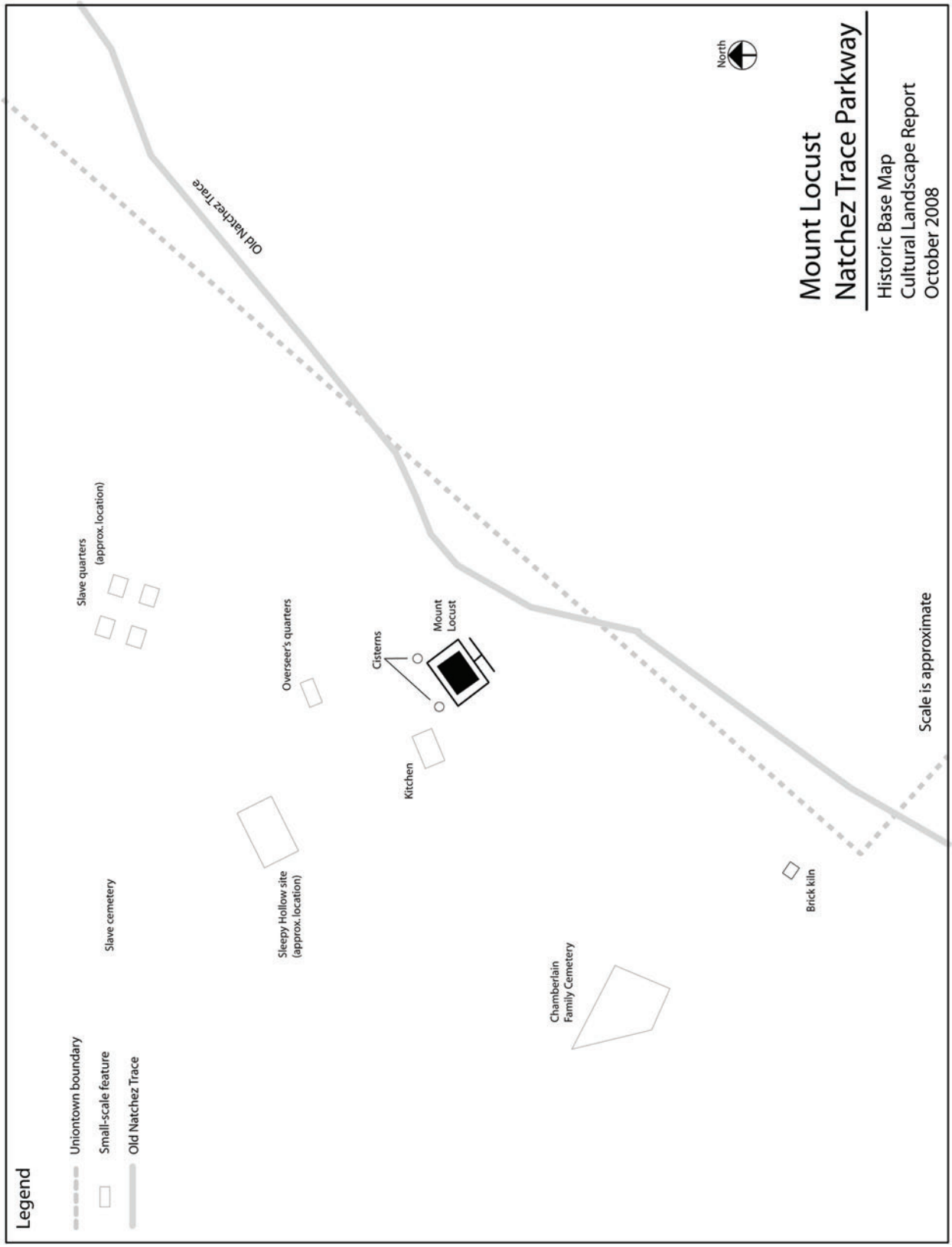



**FIGURE 87.** Mount Locust Historic Base Map.

# Existing Conditions

## Location

Mount Locust is located in Jefferson County, Mississippi, at Milepost 15.5 on the Natchez Trace Parkway, 6 miles north of U.S. 61 and about 17 miles northeast of Natchez. The 34.7-acre site is the location of the oldest extant dwelling along the Natchez Trace.

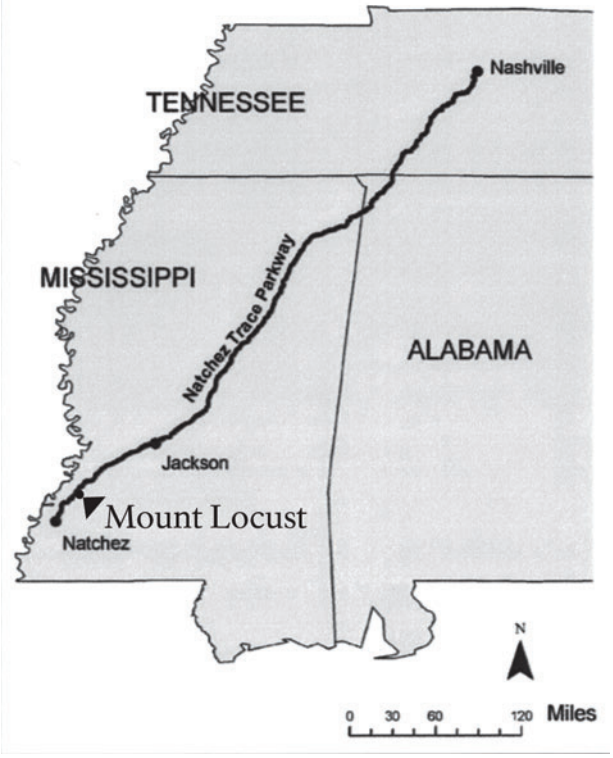



**FIGURE 88.** Location map. (NPS image)

## Spatial Organization

The Mount Locust site is accessed from the Natchez Trace Parkway by an entrance drive that leads to a thirty-car parking area and visitor contact station. A service road east of the entrance drive leads to the maintenance area and ranger's office. From the visitor contact station and parking area, a pedestrian trail along the Old Natchez Trace leads west to the house and grounds.



**FIGURE 89.** Entrance road, 2007. (NPS image)



**FIGURE 90.** Visitor contact station and parking area, 2007. (NPS image)



**FIGURE 91.** Mount Locust dwelling house, 2007. (NPS image)

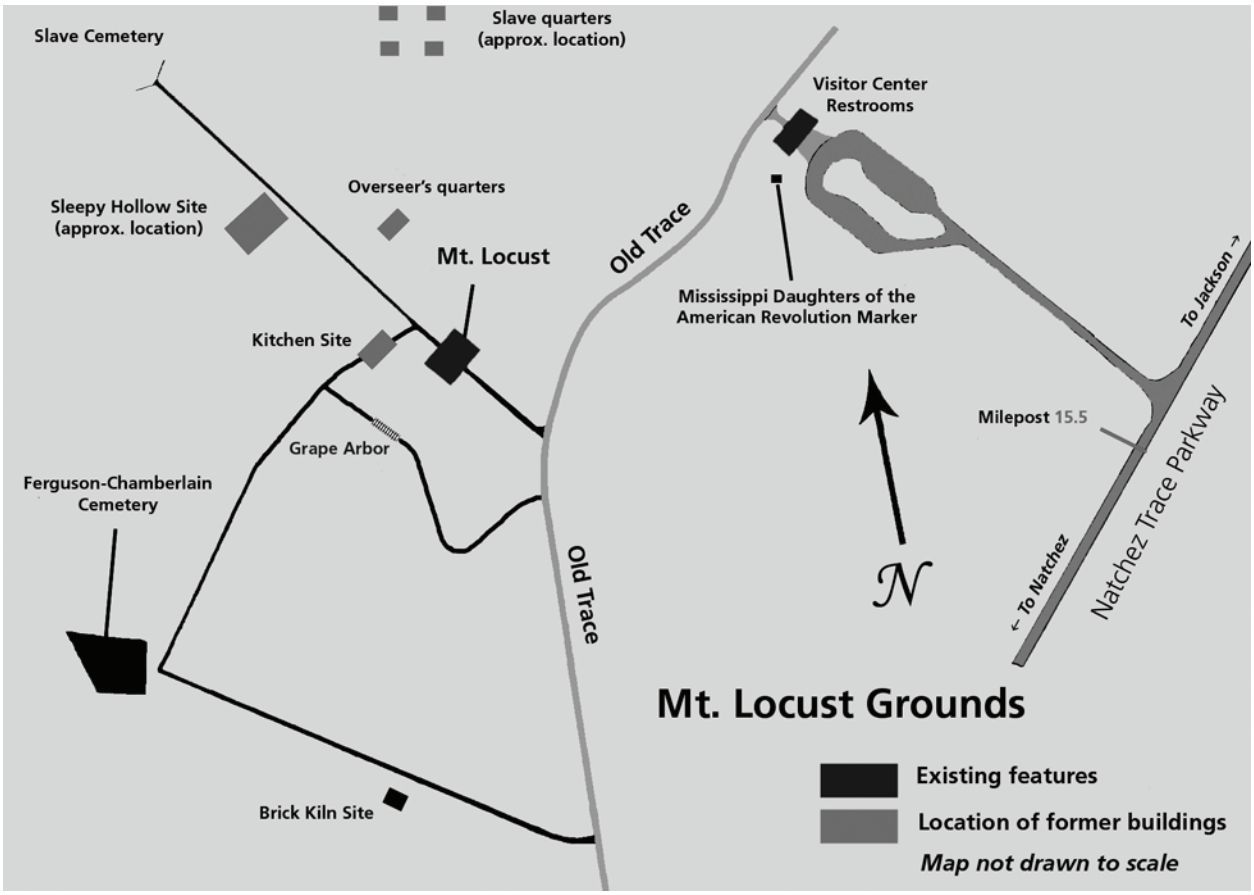



**FIGURE 92.** Site plan, 2002. (NPS image)



**FIGURE 93.** Pedestrian paths from the rear work yard, 2007. (NPS image)



**FIGURE 94.** Slave cemetery, 2007. (NPS image)

The dwelling house is the centerpiece of the Mount Locust landscape. Except for two cisterns, it is the only extant above-ground structure that survives from the eighteenth century. A series of pedestrian paths connects the rear work yard with two cemeteries, the grape arbor, and the brick kiln foundation.

The locations of a number of outbuildings described by family members as clustered north and northwest of the house were identified by archeology in 1941. These include a kitchen, overseer's house, guest house, and brick kiln.[1]

1. Archeology conducted in 2002 found no definitive evidence that a foundation excavated was the kitchen.

## Topography

The state of Mississippi lies almost entirely within what is known as the Gulf Coastal Plain, which is continuous to the east with the Atlantic Coastal Plain. The Gulf Coastal Plain is subdivided along the Mississippi River into the East Gulf Coastal Plain and the West Gulf Coastal Plain. The Mississippi River Alluvial Plain is to the northwest. It consists of level and nearly level floodplains that extend to the foothills of the loess bluffs, which form a crescent at the region's eastern edge, known as the "Delta".

The coastal plain comprises a large portion of the state's land surface. Coastal plain landscapes are relatively low-lying areas of water-deposited sediments bordering oceans. The mostly hilly Upper East Gulf Coastal Plain, also called the Upper or Inner Coastal Plain, is delineated by the loess bluffs on its western edge. The Lower East Gulf Coastal Plain or the Lower or Outer Coastal Plain, is the mostly hilly region that comprises the roughly lower third of Mississippi's land mass. A recent notion of using the terms "Upper East" and "East Gulf" coastal plains, from a botanical standpoint, is reasonably supported by the distinctive lower coastal plain flora.

Mount Locust is located in the loess bluffs physiographic region. The geology is characterized by sand, clays, and gravels overlain by up to 90-100 feet of loess—wind-blown late Pleistocene silts. The area's topography is one of steep-sided ravines and narrow ridges. Soils are mostly alfisols in bluffs and entisols in bottoms and drainages.

The house is located on high ground about 200 yards northwest of the old Natchez Trace. The Chamberlain Family Cemetery is also located on high ground. Both are natural, erosional remnants so common to the Loess Bluffs physiographic region.[2] North of the house, the Choctaw Flat stretches for some distance.



**FIGURE 95.** Topography surrounding the Mount Locust dwelling house, 2007. (NPS image)

## Vegetation

The cultural vegetation at the site derives mainly from the 1958 planting plan. Several large specimen trees predate these planting, including oaks, black walnuts, southern magnolias, and an alleé of red cedars leading to the Chamberlain Family Cemetery. Only one of the many honey locusts for which the site was named survives west of the grape arbor. In 1997, a tree and shrub inventory was completed that updated the 1958 planting plan. This inventory was revisited in 2002. Hurricane Katrina took down several large trees in 2005, including a black walnut near the back porch and an oak adjacent to the Old Trace trail.

Current maintenance procedures have damaged several of the smaller trees planted at Mount Locust, including dogwood and sassafras. String trimmers operated too close to the trunks damaged the trees.



**FIGURE 96.** Large trees adjacent to the old Trace trail, 2007. (NPS image)

2. James R. Atkinson, "The Chamberlain Cemetery Investigations, Mount Locust, Natchez Trace Parkway, Jefferson County, Mississippi" (Tallahassee, FL: Southeast Archeological Center, 1996), 29.

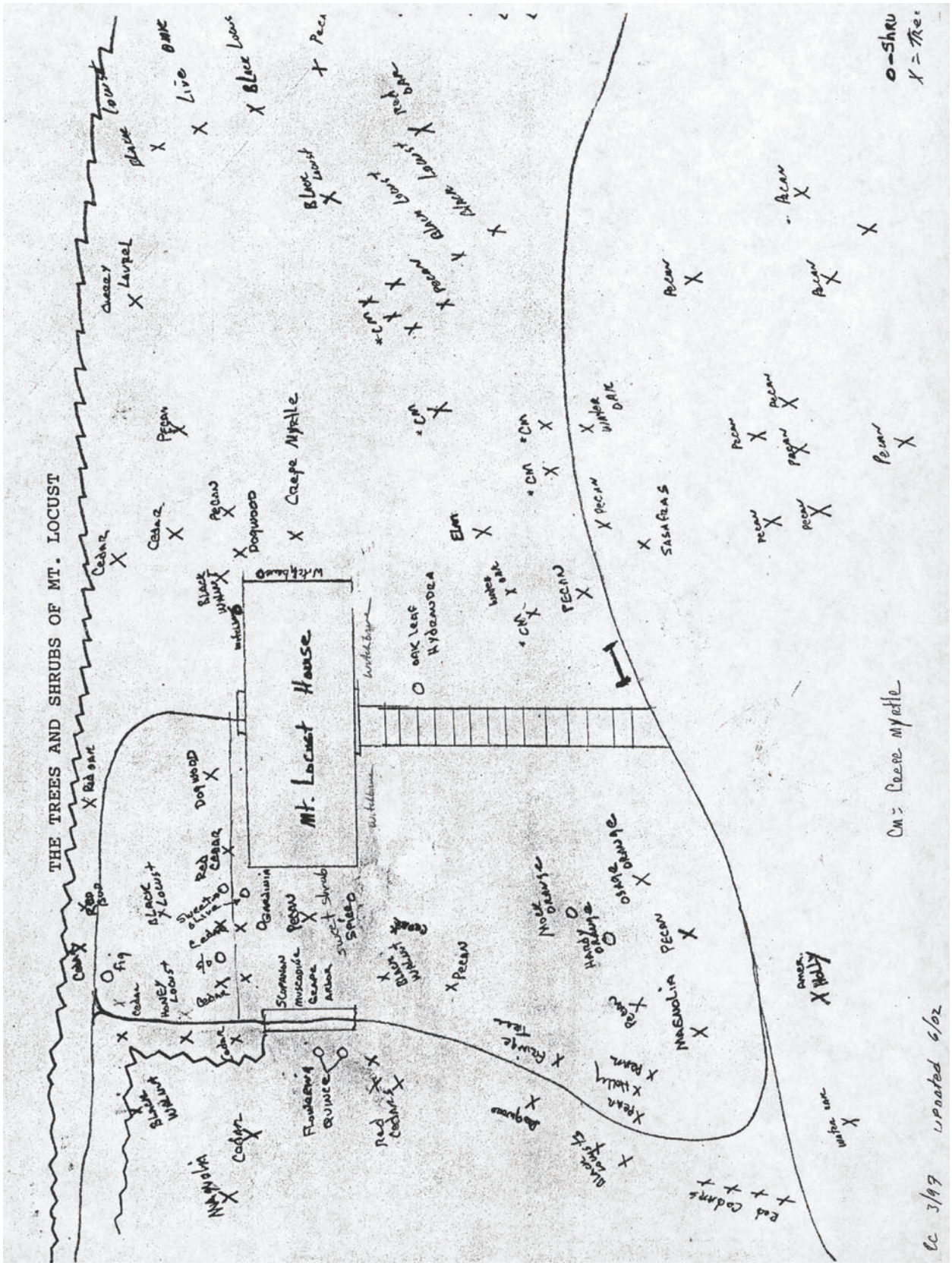



**FIGURE 97.** Tree and shrub inventory, 2002. (NPS image)



FIGURE 98. Surviving honey locust near grape arbor, 2007. (NPS image)



FIGURE 100. Cedar allée leading to Chamberlain Family Cemetery, 2007. (NPS image)



FIGURE 99. Vegetable garden, 1997. (Courtesy of Eric Chamberlain)

In 2007, poison ivy was removed from the grape arbor. Also at this time, a dogwood near the back porch and a snowball viburnum were replaced in kind.

Spring and fall vegetable gardens are planted seasonally at Mount Locust just beyond the rail fencing that delimits the rear of the property.

## Buildings and Structures

The majority of the original cladding of the Mount Locust structure has been replaced in kind. Original siding is present on the front gallery. Ceiling boards in Rooms 1, 6, and 7 are original. Exposed ceiling beams in Room 3 are original sassafras. Most roof rafters are original. The roof was damaged by Hurricane Katrina in August 2005 and was replaced in 2007. In 2009, three windows were replaced that suffered water damage after Hurricane Katrina.[3]

The northwest cistern is brick partially covered in stucco with a wooden lid, founded on a mounded brick base laid with mortar and at one time stuccoed. Brickwork on the foundation and cistern wall is failing and stucco is deteriorated. The east elevation of the foundation is missing several courses, the mortar joints on the cistern cylinder are failing, and brick faces are spalling.

3. See Kaye, p. 9 for additional construction materials.



**FIGURE 101.** Mount Locust, front façade, 1998. (NPS image)



**FIGURE 102.** Mount Locust, rear façade, 1998. (NPS image)



**FIGURE 103.** Northwest cistern, 2010. (NPS image)

The northeast cistern is brick with a cement stucco finish and a wooden lid, with a mounded brick foundation that has been compromised by vegetation and erosion. In 2009, as a temporary stopgap measure, a post and rope treatment was used to prevent public access to the two cisterns.



**FIGURE 104.** Northeast cistern, 2009. (NPS image)



**FIGURE 105.** Chamberlain Family Cemetery, 2010. (NPS image)

The northwest cistern, in particular, is leaning to the side.

The Chamberlain Family Cemetery contains fifteen head and foot stones. Two large obelisks demarcate the oldest section of the cemetery.[4]

The brick kiln survives as a foundation only (Figure 106).

## New Construction

The rangers' office (formerly the residence) is frame construction with brick veneer and vinyl siding and end-gabled roof. Originally built as an employee residence, a rehabilitation of the structure enclosed a screened porch around 1998.

The oil and paint storage building is constructed of cement block and scratched-face brick, with part of the exterior wall clad in vinyl siding.

4. List of Classified Structures, 1998.



**FIGURE 106.** Brick kiln foundation, 2007. (NPS image)



**FIGURE 109.** Oil and paint storage shed, 2007. (NPS image)



**FIGURE 107.** Ranger office, 2007. (NPS image)



**FIGURE 110.** Equipment storage shed, 2007. (NPS image)



**FIGURE 108.** Maintenance shop, 2007. (NPS image)



**FIGURE 111.** Visitor contact station, 2007. (NPS image)

The maintenance shop is steel construction with brick veneer and vinyl siding and an A-frame roof. The addition of the current A-frame roof in 1979 significantly changed the appearance of the building. Further changes occurred in 1985, when the storage area was enclosed and a separate equipment storage shed was constructed. The equipment storage shed is steel-framed construction with vinyl siding. The pump house is masonry construction using bricks to match the other maintenance buildings.

The visitor contact station is frame construction with wood siding. Originally built as an exhibit shelter and comfort station, it was enclosed in 1993.



FIGURE 112. ADA path along Old Trace trail, 2007. (NPS image)

## Circulation

In 2003, the Old Trace trail from the visitor contact station was retrofitted to meet accessibility standards. In front of the house, a brick walkway leads up the slope to the front porch, where it connects with reconstructed brick walkways that encircle the dwelling. From the back porch, a new asphalt trail that meets accessibility standards leads west to an old fig tree, where it turns south and travels by the grape arbor and reconnects with the Old Trace trail. A portion of the trail continues west to the edge of the woods, where it transitions to a gravel trail leading out to the Chamberlain Family Cemetery and brick kiln and circles back to the Old Trace trail. A trail with chip seal surfacing northwest of the house leads to the slave cemetery.

The 1958 circulation plan included a network of pedestrian paths that led from the brick walkways on the west side of the house to the arbor and brick seat wall. It is not known when these paths were taken out, but the path to the grape arbor was still being maintained in 1990. Only its trace remains today. Also taken out at some point were two paths from the 1958 plan that provided access to the house from the Old Trace trail. One was a curvilinear asphalt path leading to the brick walkway south of the house and the other was a gravel road that led to the back of the property.



FIGURE 113. Front steps, 2007. (NPS image)



FIGURE 114. Reconstructed front walk 2007. (NPS image)



FIGURE 115. ADA path to grape arbor, 2007. (NPS image)



FIGURE 116. Transition of ADA path to gravel path leading to cemetery, 2007. (NPS image)



FIGURE 117. Brick kiln walk, 2007. (NPS image)

## Views and Vistas

Views southeast from the front gallery of the house look out across the Old Natchez Trace to the open space that was once the town of Union. Views north from the back gallery of the house look out over the Choctaw Flat.



FIGURE 118. Trace of 1958 path down to grape arbor, 2007. (NPS image)



FIGURE 119. View from the front gallery, 2007. (NPS image)



FIGURE 120. View across the Choctaw flat, 2007. (NPS image)

## Small-scale Features

Virginia rail fencing installed in the 1950s delimits the house and work yard from the larger historic landscape that was once planted in crops. The NPS removed all of the wire and board fences that can be seen in historic photographs from the 1930s.



**FIGURE 121.** Virginia rail fencing, 2010. (NPS image)



**FIGURE 122.** Reproduction dinner bell, 2010. (NPS image)

A grape arbor is the only surviving landscape feature from the 1958 Walks and Development Plan.A reproduction dinner bell stands near the asphalt path that leads to the Chamberlain Family Cemetery. A small pump house sits north of the house.

An information kiosk and a DAR marker are located near the visitor contact station.

# Natural Systems and Features

Mixed mesophytic hardwood forests are found mainly on the loess bluffs and on slopes and ravines of areas highly dissected by streams and erosion. The soils are typically fertile and evenly moist. The



**FIGURE 123.** Information kiosk, 2007. (NPS image)

vegetation is characterized by beech (*Fagus grandiflora*), sycamore (*Platanus occidentalis*), southern magnolia (*Magnolia grandiflora*), cucumber tree (*Magnolia acuminata*), big-leaf magnolia (*Magnolia macrophylla*), pyramid magnolia (*Magnolia pyramidata*), tulip poplar (*Liriodendron tulipifera*), white oak (*Quercus alba*), white ash (*Fraxinus americana*), and mockernut hickory (*Carya tomentosa*). The understory may include flowering dogwood (*Cornus florida*), redbud (*Cercis canadensis*), American holly (*Ilex opaca*), and eastern hophornbeam (*Ostrya virginiana*).

Hardwood slope forests are mixed hardwood communities that may also include occasional pines. These communities are found along ridges and slopes above bottomlands intersecting pinelands. These areas are not as diverse as mixed mesophytic forests. Dominant trees include beech, southern magnolia, water oak (*Quercus nigra*), cherrybark oak (*Quercus falcata* var. *padodifolia*), tulip poplar, and sweetgum (*Liquidamber styraciflua*). Typical pines might include spruce pine (*Pinus glabra*), loblolly pine (*Pinus taeda*), and slash pine (*Pinus elliotii*).

Oak-hickory forests are found in dry to moderately moist uplands. The most abundant tree species include mockernut hickory, post oak (*Quercus stellata*), white oak, southern red oak (*Quercus falcata*), and black oak (*Quercus velutina*).[5]

Fauna vary with the age and stocking of timber stands, percent of deciduous trees, proximity to openings, and presence of bottomland forest types.

5. Samuel P. Faulkner, "Physiognomy of Mississippi: Natural Vegetation," http://www.marshdoc.com/physiognomy/physiognomy.html.

White-tailed deer and cottontail rabbits are widespread. The fox squirrel is common among deciduous trees on uplands. Gray squirrels live along intersecting drainages. Raccoon and fox inhabit the whole region and are hunted in many areas. Among mammals frequently encountered in the western part of this province is the nine-banded armadillo.

The eastern wild turkey, bobwhite, and mourning dove are widespread. Of the twenty-odd bird species in mature forests, the most common are the pine warbler, cardinal, summer tanager, Carolina wren, ruby-throated hummingbird, blue jay, hooded warbler, eastern towhee, and tufted titmouse. The red-cockaded woodpecker is an endangered species.

Snakes include cottonmouth moccasin, copperhead, rough green snake, rat snake, coachwhip, and speckled kingsnake. French and glass lizards are also found, as is the slimy salamander.[6]

Coles Creek is a small lower Mississippi River tributary, 80 km. in length, just to the north of the Homochitto River.

6. *Lower Mississippi Delta Region,* 50.

# Land Use

Current land uses at Mount Locust include agriculture, recreation, administration, interpretation, maintenance, burial, and law enforcement.

# Archeological Resources

The 1998 archeological reconnaissance behind the main house discovered clusters of artifacts that may relate to slave quarters but failed to uncover undisturbed deposits. Such a small area was tested that there is a possibility of finding more deposits in the future. Mapping of the slave cemetery also occurred at this time, identifying forty-two regularly-shaped depressions.

Monitoring of the ground-disturbing portion of trail construction in 2002 successfully avoided loss of archeological information at the site. The locations of two historic brick structures were recorded and modifications to the trail construction plans were made to ensure that these features would not be adversely affected by the construction of the trail.

Geophysical survey and subsequent subsurface archeological investigation of the field southwest of the dwelling house in 2003 identified what is apparently a Native American village site. From the limited excavations that occurred, the site appears to be in excellent condition and has been subjected to very little disturbance since its original deposition.

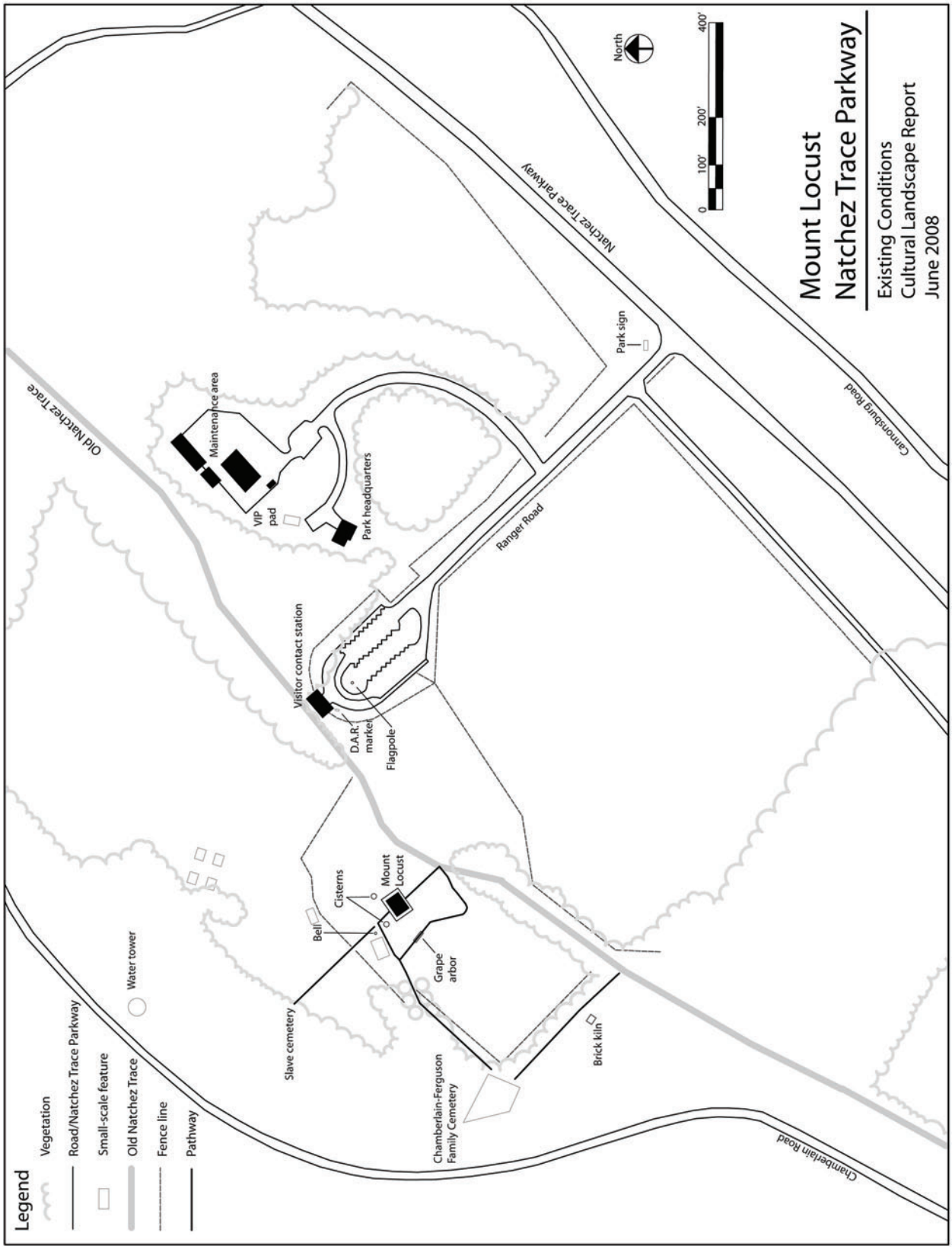



**FIGURE 124.** Mount Locust Existing Conditions Map.

# Analysis and Evaluation

## Analysis of Landscape Characteristics

In order to better understand the relationship between the existing Mount Locust landscape and its character historically, this chapter includes a comparative analysis of historic and existing conditions. The focus of this section is to identify the broad patterns and specific features associated with the historic periods and to evaluate to what extent they survive today.

## Spatial Organization

The Vousdan Survey of 1785 is the first to show the dwelling house standing on the property. The "Path" from which there is an access trail to Mount Locust may refer to the "Path to the Choctaw Nation," which later became part of the Natchez Trace.[1] Its location adjacent to the Natchez Trace brought travelers to Mount Locust seeking shelter and is a character-defining feature of the historic landscape.

The historic spatial order of the Mount Locust landscape was based on a clustering pattern of work spaces and outbuildings enclosed by a variety of fence types. A kitchen, guest house, slave nursery, two cisterns, and overseer's house were clustered near the dwelling house. Another group north of the work yard included barns and other farm buildings and the slave quarters. A brick kiln operated southwest of the house. A system of brick walks around the house and a garden retaining wall are thought to date to the antebellum period. The clustering arrangement of the outbuildings is a character-defining feature of the historic landscape.[2]

1. Phelps, "Mound Plantation," 7; Phelps, "Mt. Locust—A Restudy of Its History," 15; "Historical Data Relating to Sites in the Vicinity of Mound Locust," Natchez Trace Parkway, n.d., photocopy, NATR Archives.
2. Phelps, "Ferguson House," 2; personal communication Rick Chamberlain.

Historic field patterns are unknown but during the 1820s it is likely that crops like cotton and corn were planted right up to the house. In this early period before cotton prices began to rise in 1824, it is possible that more corn than cotton was planted. No crops other than cotton, corn, cowpeas, sweet potatoes, wheat, and rice were raised in Mississippi commercially before 1837. The open character of the fields around the house is a character-defining feature of the historic landscape.

A large vegetable garden would have been needed to feed the enslaved field hands. A smaller kitchen garden would typically be located closer to the house and would have included herbs and some ornamentals. It is likely that the original vegetable garden was located near the present day vegetable garden. Johnnie Irene Chamberlain described Paulina Chamberlain's "own special herb and flower garden" as being south of the dwelling house.

## Topography

As its name implies, Mount Locust is sited on a mound that is a natural, erosional remnant common to the Loess Bluffs physiographic region. The land is located on the banks of the south fork of Cole's Creek and has been described as "rolling creek bottoms watered by numerous springs." The NPS



**FIGURE 125.** Topography of the site after retaining wall removed, 1956. (NATR archives)

leveled out the mound on which the house sits in the 1950s when the brick retaining wall was removed.

## Vegetation

Little is known about the historic cultural vegetation at Mount Locust. The best source of documentation is a letter written by Johnnie Irene Chamberlain in 1957 describing some of the plant material present at Mount Locust during the time of Paulina Ferguson and Maybella Chamberlain Wade in the nineteenth century. Many heirloom southern plants were listed, including gardenia, tea olive, flowering pomegranate, crape myrtle, flowering quince, snowball bush, banana shrub, mock orange, flowering almond, deutzia, chionanthus, and wintersweet. It appears that Miss Chamberlain's letter was consulted for the 1958 planting plan.

The planting at the Chamberlain Family Cemetery contains many southern heirlooms and is the best surviving example of what might have been present in the historic landscape at Mount Locust during the nineteenth century.

## Buildings and Structures

The original Mount Locust dwelling house consisted of one large room, 16 feet by 20 feet, and three galleries. It is noted for the first time on the 1785 Vousdan survey. It may have been built prior to 1781 by John Blommart or John Harmon in compliance with the 1779 land grant. One condition on which the West Florida government granted land in the Natchez District was that the grantee agreed to work at least three acres of each fifty "accounted plantable," or erect "one good Dwelling House to contain at least twenty feet in length, sixteen feet in Breadth." However, since the 1781 confiscation document described the tract as having "no settlement," it seems likely that the house was built by William Ferguson between 1782-1785. A detailed architectural evaluation of the house in 1954 supported this date and revealed that certain additions had been made to the original structure very early—possibly prior to 1800—and that it had been significantly changed and enlarged around 1820 and again during the 1840s.

A clustering of outbuildings near the dwelling house included a kitchen, guest house, slave nursery, and overseer's cottage. The slave quarters and farm outbuildings were located farther away. No above-ground remains of any of these outbuildings survive today, although the foundations of the kitchen, guest house, overseer's cottage, and brick kiln were located by archeology in 1941. Two brick cisterns survive, but are in need of stabilization.

## Circulation

A system of brick walkways encircled the house and linked the house to the outbuildings nearby. A path led to the Chamberlain Family Cemetery and brick kiln. Other pathways and farm roads would have been present in the 1820s, but documentation of their locations was not found.

## Views and Vistas

The location of Mount Locust on a high spot gave the house a commanding view out over the Natchez Trace and the town of Union to the south and the Choctaw Flat to the north. A lack of visual intrusion is a character-defining feature.

## Small-scale Features

A hierarchy of fencing would have been present at Mount Locust during the antebellum period. Most likely, Virginia fences delimited the perimeter of the property. Post-and-rail, stake-and-rider, and paling fences would have been used to enclose smaller garden spaces and separate the work yard from the larger agricultural landscape.

## National Register Status

A National Register nomination is currently being compiled for the entire Natchez Trace Parkway. Mount Locust lacks an individual National Register nomination.

# Period of Significance

The period of significance for the Mount Locust cultural landscape is 1779-1820. This period corresponds with the possible construction dates of the house and the major landscape features at Mount Locust that still have integrity, including the outbuilding foundations, two cisterns, a system of brick walkways, and two cemeteries.

The dwelling house has been restored to a period of 1820 to reflect the height of travel along the historic Natchez Trace when the house was used as an inn. Mount Locust is the only surviving inn of the more than fifty that stood along the Natchez Trace from the late 1700s through the mid-1820s. Mount Locust is also one of the oldest surviving structures in the state of Mississippi and predates many of the antebellum homes in nearby Natchez.

# Assessment of Integrity

The effort to determine a landscape's significance according to National Register criteria focuses on seven aspects of integrity: location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. The persistence of these qualities as they apply to the landscape determines whether the landscape retains enough of its important features to convey its historically significant appearance or associations.

**Location: the place where the historic event occurred.** The location of Mount Locust adjacent to the historic Natchez Trace has remained constant and is a character-defining feature of the historic landscape.

**Setting: the physical environment of a historic property.** Because the house was restored to a period of 1820, the NPS removed the garden retaining wall that dated to the 1840s and flattened out the hill on which the house sits. Altering the topography of the site for which Mount Locust was named reduced integrity of setting.

The Chamberlain Family Cemetery and the slave cemetery retain integrity of setting.

The site overall retains integrity of setting. All views and vistas have been preserved, which is a character-defining feature of the historic landscape.



FIGURE 126. Vista from the front gallery, 1978. (NPS image)



FIGURE 127. Vista from the front gallery, 2007. (NPS image)

**Design: the combination of elements that create the form, plan, space, structure, and style of a property.** Great care was taken to return the house to its 1820 configuration, preserving integrity of design. The rectilinear system of brick walkways encircling the house was also restored. Two brick cisterns remain as the only other above-ground structures.

What has been lost is the spatial arrangement of the outbuildings around the dwelling house. The removal of the garden retaining wall in the 1950s further reduced integrity of design.



FIGURE 128. House before restoration, 1940s. (NATR archives)



FIGURE 129. House after restoration, 1956. (NATR archives)

The design of the grape arbor west of the house dates to 1958, as does that of the planting plan.

**Materials: the physical elements that were used to construct the features of the landscape.** The Mount Locust cultural landscape retains a high degree of material integrity. When the house was restored in 1956, the NPS found that mostly upland forest lumber, such as yellow poplar, pine, cedar, oak, sassafras, and pecan, made up a large part of the old framework. Materials were replaced in kind as needed. Care was taken to find lumber that matched the original materials. The brick walkways were restored using old bricks of the period. The post-and-rail and Virginia fences and the grape arbor were constructed of oak and pine.

Several large specimen trees survive from the nineteenth century, including oaks, black walnuts, southern magnolias, and one honey locust. The 1958 planting plan used trees and shrubs that family members recalled, as well as native plants that were favorites in the southern landscape. Many of the small trees and shrubs planted in 1958 have not survived or are in poor condition.

**Workmanship: the qualities of the ways in which landscape features have been fashioned and constructed for both functional and decorative purposes.** Mount Locust is a frame house and therefore more substantial than the log cabin typical of the American frontier. The loss of work dating from the 1840s affects integrity of workmanship. When the house was restored in 1956, a decision was made to remove additions made after 1820, the end of the period of significance. These efforts also claimed the garden retaining wall.

The NPS hired Gordon Whittington, a Natchez carpenter with considerable experience in restoration work. A local blacksmith reproduced most of the missing hardware. Supervising the project were two men who eventually became synonymous with historic architecture within the NPS: Charles E. Peterson and Henry A. Judd.

**Feeling: a property's expression of the aesthetic or historic sense of a particular period of time.** The Mount Locust cultural landscape retains a high degree of feeling. The dwelling house has been carefully restored to a period of c. 1820. The open character of the surrounding fields and the lack of visual intrusion also contribute to integrity of feeling. Large specimen trees throughout the landscape may date to the nineteenth century.



**FIGURE 130.** Bill Chamberlain, 1958. (Courtesy of Eric Chamberlain)

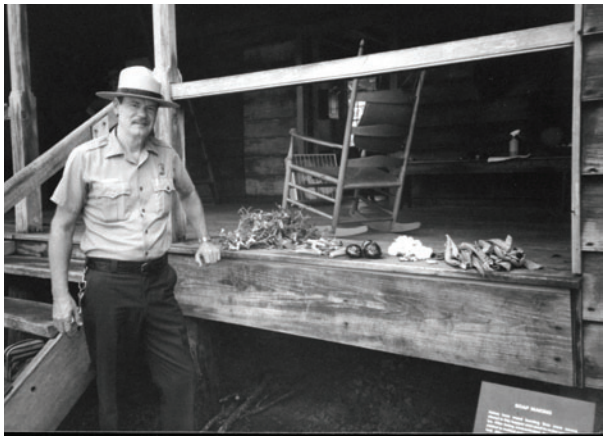


**FIGURE 131.** Eric Chamberlain, 1995. (Courtesy of Eric Chamberlain)

**Association: the direct link between an important historic event or person and a historic property.** The Mount Locust cultural landscape retains a high degree of association. Its location along the Natchez Trace during the height of travel in the 1820s has been preserved as part of the Natchez Trace Parkway.

Mount Locust's association with the Ferguson-Chamberlain family, the only owners of the property prior to its acquisition by the NPS, is preserved in the dwelling house and the Chamberlain Family Cemetery. NPS ranger Rick Chamberlain provides a vital link with the Chamberlain family history.

Mount Locust's association with the enslaved workers on the plantation is preserved in the African-American cemetery, where slaves appear to be buried as families.

## Summary

The dwelling house is the centerpiece of the Mount Locust cultural landscape. It is the only surviving building of the property known as Mount Locust, which at one time operated both as a small plantation and as an inn for travelers along the Natchez Trace. The house has been restored to a period of c. 1820, which corresponds to the peak of travel along the historic Natchez Trace. The house retains integrity of location, design, materials, feeling, and association.

The Mount Locust cultural landscape retains integrity of location, materials, feeling, and association. Even with the loss of the spatial relationships of the house and the outbuildings, Mount Locust has not lost its sense of time and place along the historic Natchez Trace.

# Treatment Recommendations

The Mount Locust cultural landscape is typical of a frontier plantation of the lower South. Major components often included the main house, outbuildings, outdoor activity areas, a well, a small kitchen garden in a side or rear yard, slave quarters, agricultural fields and woodlots, and sometimes a small orchard. These components were typically clustered and linked by a network of paths, fences, and functional site lines arranged according to a simple but not always rigid geometry of straight lines and rectangles. Such a geometric layout helped bring a sense of order to a landscape surrounded by wilderness.

A site plan generated from Mrs. Johnnie Chamberlain's description of the property shows a layout that would have been typical for a plantation of this size. A work yard with a detached kitchen, guest house, slave nursery, and overseer's cabin was in back of the dwelling house. An arrangement of slave cabins and other outbuildings was located farther away from the house. The family also maintained that a system of brick walks and a brick retaining wall date to the 1830s and 1840s.[1]

The Mount Locust dwelling house is the only surviving inn of the more than fifty that stood along the Natchez Trace from the late 1700s through the mid-1820s. Its presentation should be a priority for NATR. The overarching treatment associated with the historic landscape is preservation of all identified historic resources.

## Spatial Organization

- Preserve Mount Locust's spatial relationship to the Natchez Trace. Its location adjacent to the Natchez Trace brought travelers to Mount Locust seeking shelter and is a character-defining feature of the historic landscape.

- Preserve the historic spatial organization of the Mount Locust landscape, which was based on a pattern of work spaces and outbuildings connected by a system of brick walks. A kitchen, guest house, slave nursery, cisterns, and overseer's house were clustered near the dwelling house. Barns and other farm buildings and the slave quarters were sited north of the work yard. A brick kiln operated southwest of the house. The clustering arrangement of the outbuildings is a character-defining feature of the historic landscape.

- A recently developed site bulletin should help orient the visitor to the spatial arrangement of the landscape. Consider posting the site bulletin map on a wayside panel.

- Preserve the Chamberlain Family Cemetery and the slave cemetery.

- Preserve the historic setting of the Mount Locust landscape. The current location of visitor services, ranger offices, and maintenance facilities out of the view shed of the dwelling house contributes to its historic setting along the Natchez Trace.



**FIGURE 132.** HAER image, 1999. (NPS image)

1. Phelps, "Ferguson House," 2; personal communication Eric Chamberlain.



**FIGURE 133.** Chamberlain Family Cemetery, 2007. (NPS image)



**FIGURE 134.** Mount Locust, 2010. (NPS image)

## Vegetation

- Maintain the open character of the surrounding landscape, which is a character-defining feature.
- Have certified arborist assess the condition of trees and develop a preservation plan for their long-term care. With the exception of large specimen trees, most of the trees were planted in 1958, and many are in poor condition.
- Only one honey locust tree, for which the site was named, survives. It should be replaced with thornless common honeylocust (*Gleditsia triacanthos var. inermis*) when it dies. A cultivar like 'Shademaster' or 'Moraine' could be used.
- Remove euonymous planted near the foundation of the dwelling house. Foundation plantings were not common in the 1820s. In most cases, the house dominated the landscape.
- Avoid wounds to the trunk of trees, especially common when using mowers and string weed trimmers. Several small trees have been damaged or lost due to improper maintenance practices.
- Fox grape (*Vitis labrusca*) growing on the arbor needs rehabilitative pruning and has become shaded out by large specimen trees. Do not replace trees shading the arbor as they decline or use small (10-15 ft.) trees. At the time of the arbor's construction in 1958, the area was completely unshaded.
- Replace missing oakleaf hydrangea in front of house.
- Preserve the historic vegetation at the Chamberlain Family Cemetery, some of which dates to the nineteenth century. Proper pruning techniques should be used at all times. Care must be taken to preserve historic herbaceous material, such as bulbs and other perennials. String trimmers should not be used.
- Continue to allow wild flowers to die back each spring before mowing.

## Buildings and Structures

- Preserve the Mount Locust dwelling house, which is the only surviving above-ground building at the site. It was one of the oldest structures still standing along the historic Natchez Trace and its preservation and interpretation should be a priority.
- Repairs should be made in a timely manner. For example, windows damaged as a result of leaking water during Hurricane Katrina were not replaced until 2009. The roof was replaced in 2007.
- Preserve the northeast and northwest cisterns. The cisterns are presently roped off as a safety precaution. Steps toward repair and stabilization should begin with archeological investigation of the interior. Then repoint the brickwork and parge inside and out with a lime-based pargin material, not Portland cement, as the spalling suggests that the bricks are not



FIGURE 135. Northeast cistern, 2009. (NPS image)



FIGURE 136. Northwest cistern, 2010. (NPS image)

hard-fired. Consider filling the repaired cisterns with sand or water to provide the internal pressure needed to keep them from collapsing. Finally, re-establish the appropriate grade around the cisterns.

- Preserve the below-ground resources associated with the kitchen, overseer's cabin, guesthouse, and brick kiln.

- Keep poison ivy out of grape arbor.

## Circulation

- Preserve the brick walkways encircling the house.

## Views and Vistas

- Preserve the vista looking out over the historic Natchez Trace and beyond to the site of the town of Union.

- Preserve the vista looking north over the Choctaw Flat.

## Archeological Resources

Archeology carried out by Dr. Amy Young in 1998 behind the main house discovered artifacts that may relate to the slave quarters. Although the one-by-one meter units failed to uncover undisturbed deposits, such a small area was tested that the possibility of such deposits must still be considered. Even if further work fails to identify undisturbed foundations, clusters of artifacts associated with particular houses (and families) are still likely.[2]

Concentrations identified for further work should be investigated with hand-excavated one-by-one meter units or as specified in the 1999 archeological reconnaissance report written by Dr. Amy Young.

Archeology conducted in 2002 located two historic brick structures. Although both structures were identified in 1941, it appears that the identification of the brick floor as being associated with the kitchen was based more on oral tradition and that no hearth or chimney was found. It is apparent substantial historic features exist around the dwelling house, and it would be important to the historic spatial organization to know their locations.

- Conduct geophysical and traditional survey on the grounds surrounding the dwelling house.

Geophysical and subsequent archeological investigation of the field southwest of the dwelling house identified what is apparently a Native American village site. Very few village sites have been located in the Natchez area and even fewer have been excavated. There are still a number of questions that could be answered about the village site and other historic components.

2. Young, 39-40.

- Carry out more extensive excavations in the southwest field as a follow up to archeology conducted in 2003.

## Ethnography

- Conduct oral interviews of Chamberlain family descendants.

- Conduct oral interviews of descendants of slaves buried in the African-American cemetery.

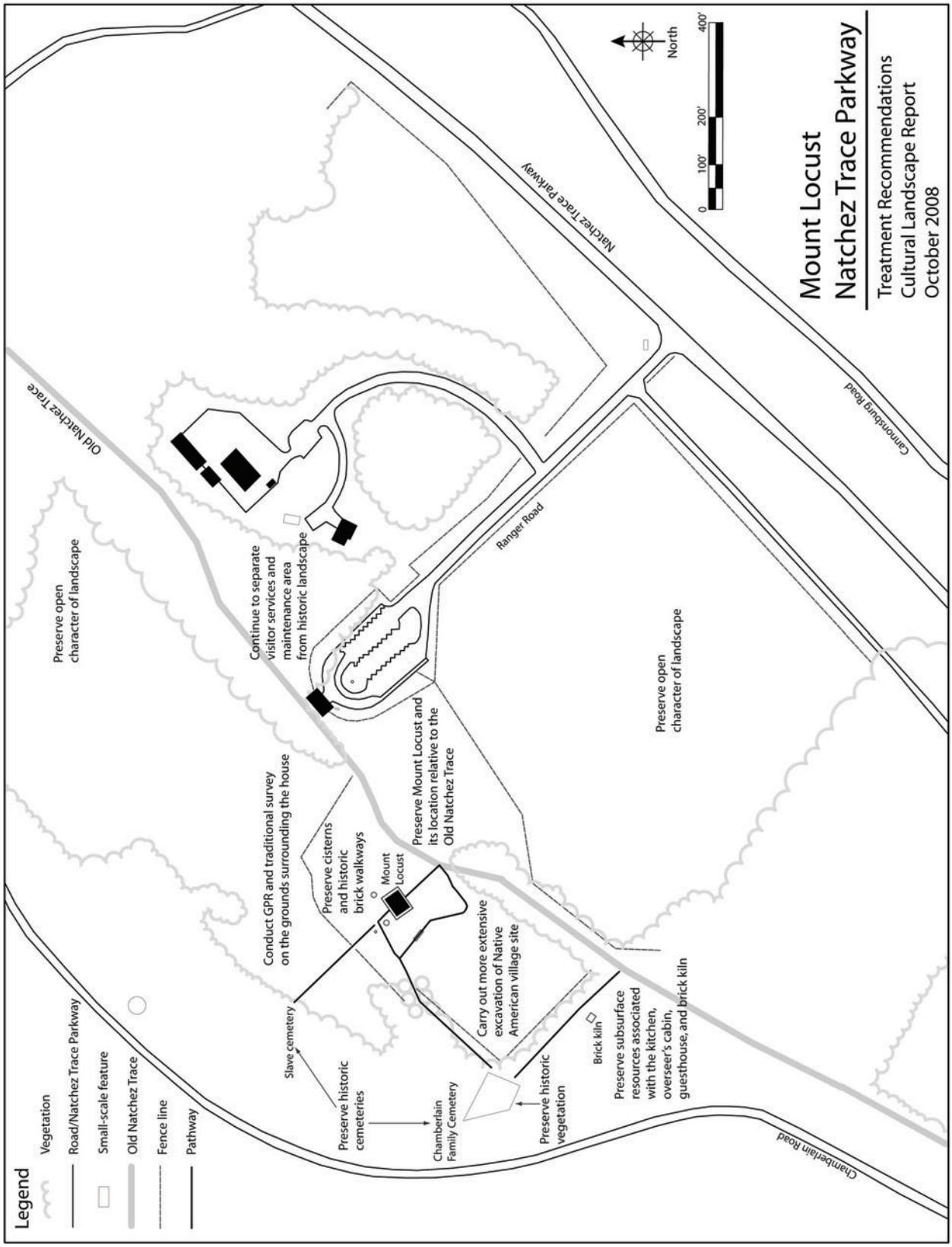



**FIGURE 137.** Mount Locust Treatment Recommendations Map.

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# Appendix A

## Timeline

1779: Conquest of the Natchez District by Spain, possible construction date by Harmon or Blommart

1781: Confiscation of Blommart property by Spanish government

1782: Silas Crane acquires Blommart property

1782-85: Probable construction date by William Ferguson

1783: William Ferguson marries Paulina Burch

1784: William Ferguson acquires one-half of Blommart property from Crane

1785: House appears on 1785 Vousdan survey

1799: Ferguson involved in a plan to establish the town of Union on his property east of Mount Locust

1801: William Ferguson dies and Paulina Ferguson inherits Mount Locust

1806: Paulina Ferguson marries James Chamberlain

1812 or 1816: Paulina divorces James Chamberlain and operates the property as a stand until c. 1842

1832: Paulina Ferguson purchases 93 acres of Liverpool plantation

1849: Paulina Ferguson dies and Thomas Jefferson Chamberlain inherits Mount Locust

1854: Thomas Jefferson Chamberlain dies and property left to three children

1926: Thomas Jefferson Chamberlain II takes deed to Mount Locust

1937: Mount Locust acquired by the NPS

1937-44: Bill Chamberlain continues to live in the house

1944: House enclosed in tar paper

1955-56: Restoration of house to c. 1820 configuration

1957-59: Site development

1993: Interpretive shelter enclosed

1994: Dedication of DAR monument

# Appendix B

## Planting Plan

Mount Locust, Natchez Trace Parkway: From the Completion Report of the Construction Report R-195 *Rights of Ways Improvements Section 3W* January 12, 1959

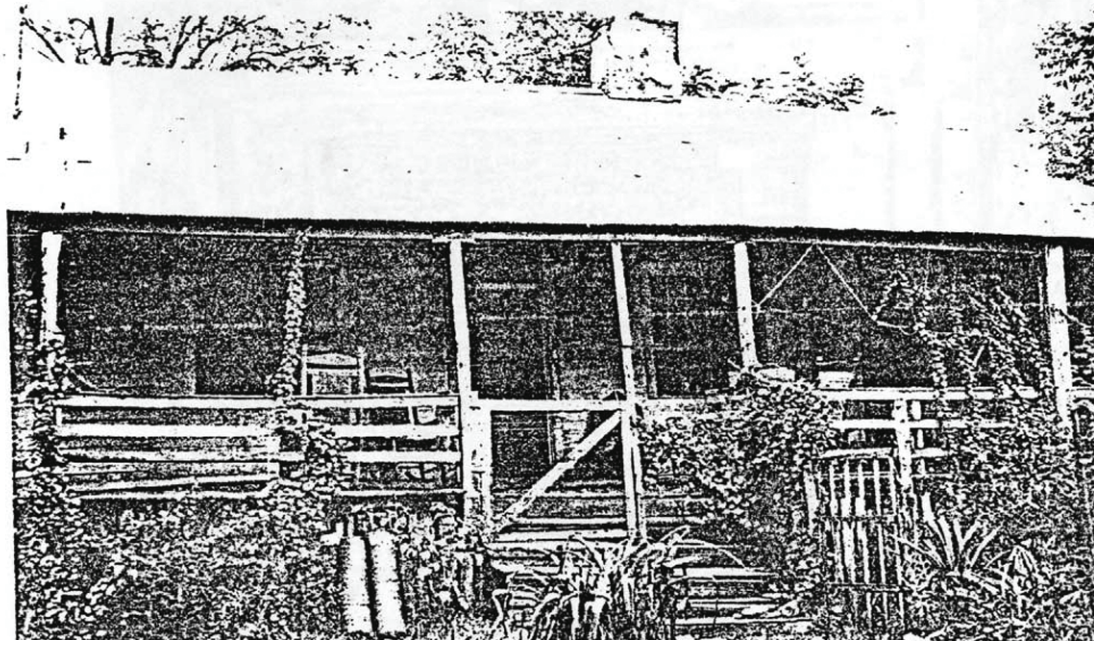
| Key | Plant Name | Size | Quantity |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1a | Dogwood (*Cornus florida*) | 8'-10'- | 11 |
| 1b | " " " | 4'-6'- | 16 |
| 2 | White fringetree (*Chionanthus virginicus*) | 6'-8'- | 9 |
| 3 | American holly (*Ilex opaca*) | 3'-4'- | 2 |
| 6a | Red bud (*Cercis canadensis*) | 4'-5'- | 8 |
| 6b | " " " | 8'-10'- | 10 |
| 7 | Red cedar (*Juniperus virginiana*) | 10'-20'- | 16 |
| 9 | Silverbell (*Halesia diptera*) | 4'-5'- | 1 |
| 10 | Sweetbay magnolia (*Magnolia virginiana*) | 10'-12'- | 8 |
| 11b | Yucca (*Yucca gloriosa*) | 2'-3'- | 7 |
| 12 | Sweet shrub (*Calycanthus floridus*) | 2'-3'- | 4 |
| 14 | Pomegranate (*Punica granatum*) | 2'-3'- | 2 |
| 15 | Flowering pomegranate (*Punica granatum plena*) | 2'-3'- | 3 |
| 17 | Southern catalpa (*Catalpa bignonioides*) | 14'-16'- | 2 |
| 18 | Fig (*Ficus carica*) | 5'-6'- | 1 |
| 19 | Hawthorne (*Crataegus monogyna*) | 8'-10'- | 5 |
| 20 | Butterfly bush (*Buddleia dividii*) | 5'-6'- | 6 |
| 21 | Cape jasmine (*Gardenia jasminoides*) | 3'-4'- | 5 |
| 23 | Snowball (*Virburnum opulus*) | 6'-8'- | 2 |
| 24 | Periwinkle – sprigs – collected (*Vinca minor*) | | 250 |
| 25 | Sweet olive (*Osmanthus fragans*) | 4'-5'- | 3 |
| 26 | Oakleaf hydrangea (*Hydrangea quercifolia*) | 3'-4'- | 2 |
| 27 | Crape myrtle (*Lagerstroemia indica*) | 6'-8'- | 7 |
| 28 | Lilac (*Syringa vulgaris*) | 4'-5'- | 8 |
| 30 | Cherry laurel (*Prunus caroliniana*) | 4'-5'- | 5 |
| 31 | Mimosa (*Albizia julibrissin*) | 8'-10'- | 6 |
| 32 | Southern magnolia (*Magnolia grandiflora*) | 10'-15'- | 1 |
| 34 | Flowering quince (*Chaenomales lagenaria*) | 3'-4'- | 3 |
| 35 | Sassafras (*Sassafras albidum*) | 6'-8'- | 3 |
| 36 | Mockorange (*Philadelphus coronarius*) | 3'-4'- | 6 |
| 38 | Winterberry (*Ilex verticillata*) | 5'-6'- | 2 |
| 39 | Persimmon (*Diospyros virginiana*) | 6'-8'- | 4 |
| 40 | Bush Honeysuckle (*Lonicera tatarica*) | 4'-5'- | 1 |
| 41 | Fragrant Sumac (*Rhus canadensis*) | 2'-3'- | 5 |
| 44 | Staghorn sumac (*Rhus typhina*) | 2'-3'- | 6 |
| 45 | Coral Honeysuckle (*Lonicera sempervirens*) | 2 yr. | 40 |
| 49 | Althea (*Hibiscus syriacus*) | 4'-5'- | 2 |
| 50 | American wisteria (*Wisteria frutescens*) | 2 yrs. #1- | 1 |
| 51 | Beautyberry (*Callicarpa americana*) | 2'-3'- | 3 |
| 53 | Black locust (*Robinia pseudo-acacia*) | 8'-10'- | 3 |
| 54 | Southern crabapple (*Malus angustifolia*) | 3'-4'- | 8 |
| 60 | Fox or Opossum grape (*Vitis labrusca*) | 2 yr. | 8 |
| 62 | Carolina jessamine (*Gelsemium sempervirens*) | 2 yr. | 20 |

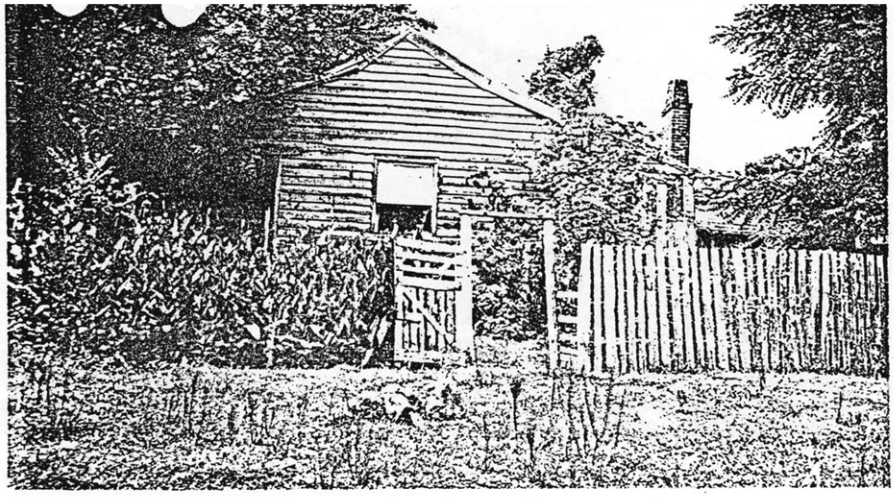
| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 64 | Honey Locust (*Gleditisia triacanthos*) | 10’-12’- | 3 |

# Appendix C

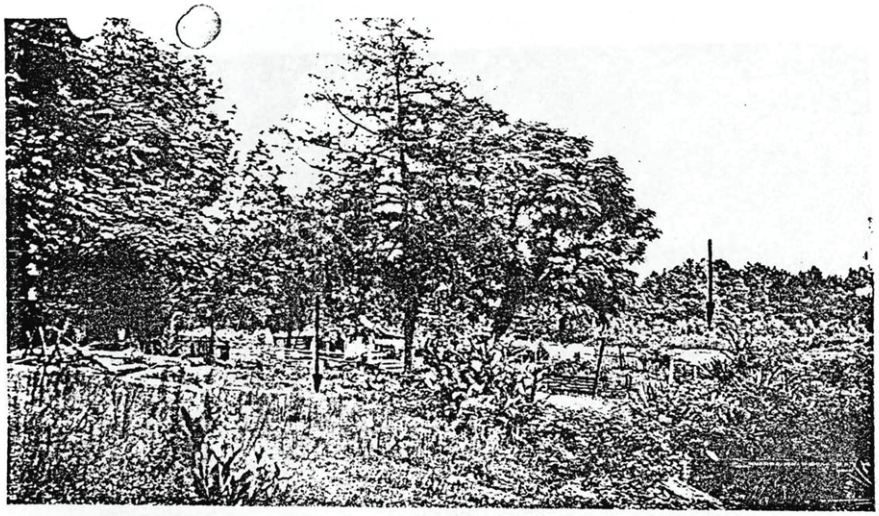
## Photographs

*Mount Locust: A Restudy of Its History*, by Dawson A. Phelps. Natchez Trace Parkway, May 17, 1955.

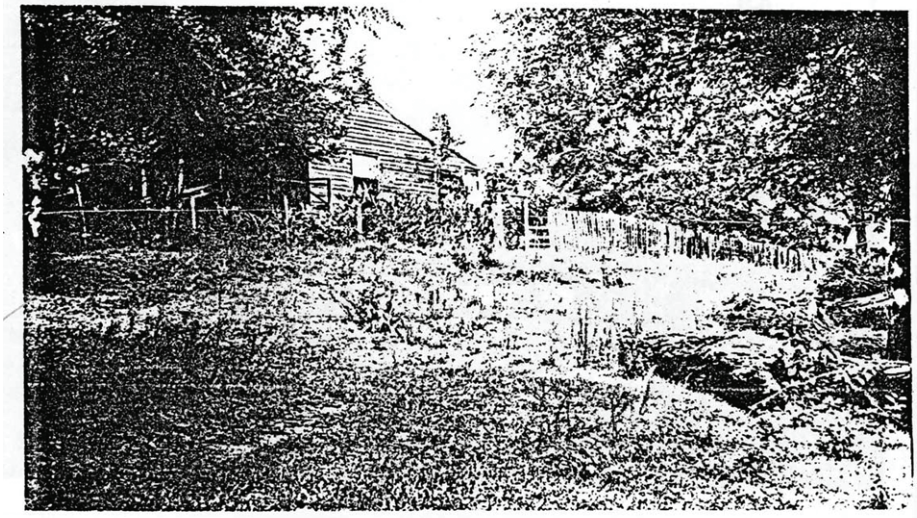




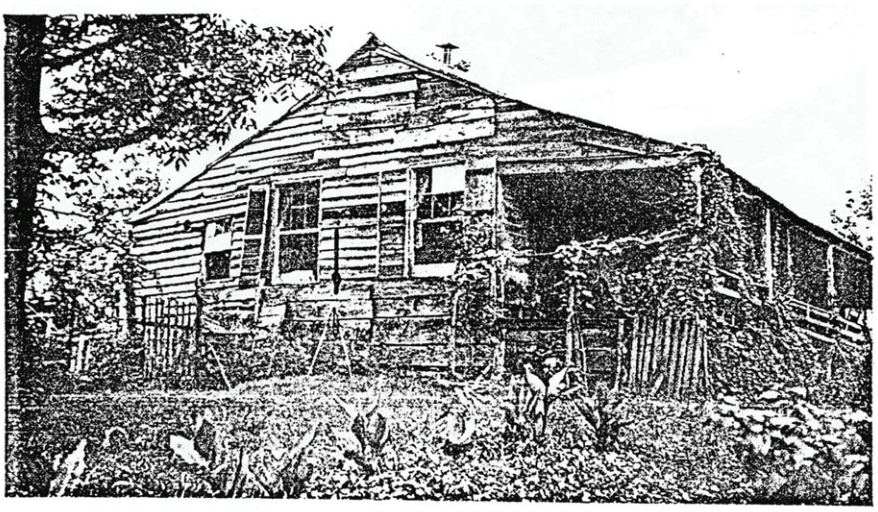
Northeast end of house



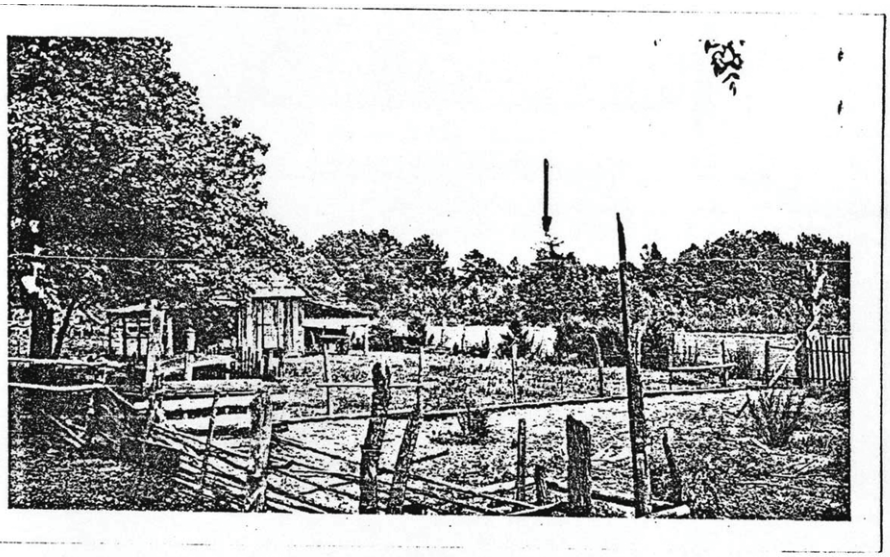
View showing approximately where caretaker's house (arrow to left) may have stood and flat ground to right where slave quarters were located. View looking north from northeast end of house.



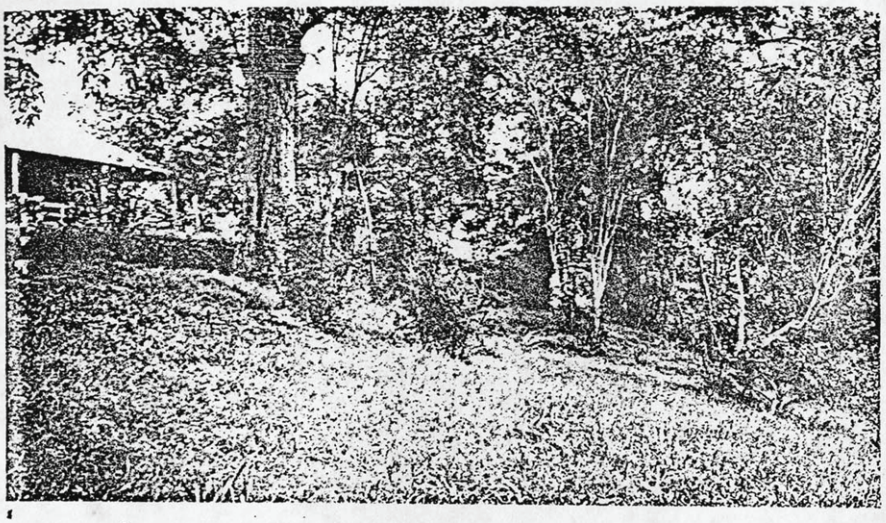
Northeast end of the house from about the base of the mound. View looking northwest. Note that mound is comparatively flat and could be a natural formation.



Southwest end of house--note arrow and camera tripod indicating where scattered broken bricks were found. May possibly be location of end chimney.



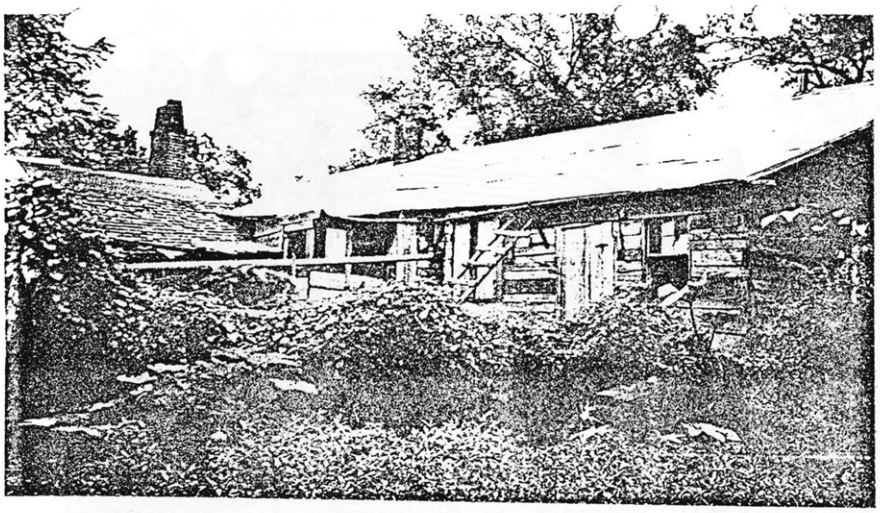
View showing location of slave quarters. View from about the location of caretaker's house.



View of garden wall and base of mound. View looking north. Note that so called mound has very gradual slope.



View looking south--arrow and camera tripod indicates possible location of guest house. Rear of present kitchen is partially visible to the left.



View looking east--from probable location of old kitchen. Present kitchen is partially covered with wood shingles.



View looking northeast. Arrow indicates possible location of old kitchen. See sketch map.







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NPS 604/100165, July 2009

National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

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