

1957

Mount Locust

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Mount Locust

on the
NATCHEZ TRACE PARKWAY



IN MISSISSIPPI



Mount Locust

This simple pioneer house was an inn on the Natchez Trace, and also, for 150 years, a family home.

THE HOUSE

Mount Locust probably was built in 1780 by John Blommart, a former British naval officer who had settled in Natchez during the 1760's. In 1781 he led an unsuccessful revolt against Spain, and as a consequence all his property was confiscated, and he was sent into exile.

Two years later the property was bought by William Ferguson who occupied it until his death in 1801. At some time during this period, Ferguson enlarged the house, probably adding the room to the right of the main entrance to accommodate his growing family.

His widow, Paulina, later married James Chamberlain, but continued to occupy the house. Twice she had the house enlarged and extensive improvements made. During the 1820's the hip roof of the first structure was eliminated and the room to the left of the main entrance was enlarged.

In the early 1840's, just prior to the marriage of Paulina's son, the room to the left of the main entrance was enlarged, and a back room was added. Thereafter, no

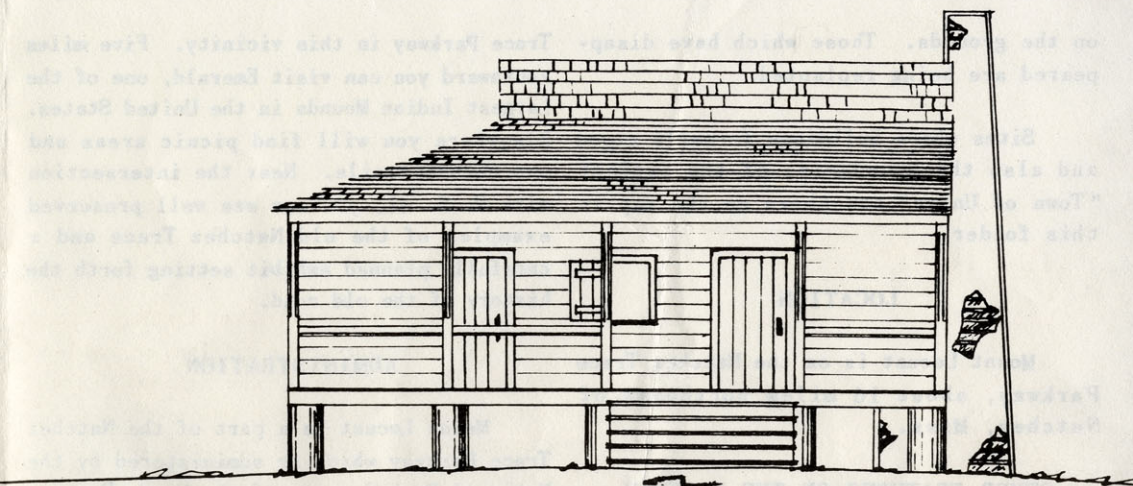
major changes were made, and after the Civil War the house was no longer well-maintained. Acquired by the National Park Service in 1937, it was restored in 1956, as nearly as possible to its condition and appearance during the 1820's.

WILLIAM FERGUSON

Just before the American Revolution, William Ferguson, a Virginian, migrated to Natchez. He kept a store for a time and later tried farming. In 1783 he purchased the Mount Locust tract and soon thereafter with his bride, Paulina Burch, settled there as a farmer. During the late 1780's he noted a great increase in traffic on the "Path to the Choctaw Nation." He began to operate an inn, and erected a building, called Sleepy Hollow, just back of his residence to provide sleeping quarters for his patrons. The inn prospered and became a well known landmark to those who traveled the Natchez Trace.

Ferguson achieved such local prominence that the Spanish Governor of Natchez named him to be the local magistrate in the Coles Creek region. After Mississippi became a Territory of the United States,

The National Park System, of which Natchez Trace Parkway is a unit, is dedicated to conserving the scenic, scientific, and historic heritage of the United States for the benefit and enjoyment of its people.



Above: The original Mount Locust

Gov. Winthrop Sargent on 1799 appointed him as the first sheriff of Pickering (later Jefferson) County.

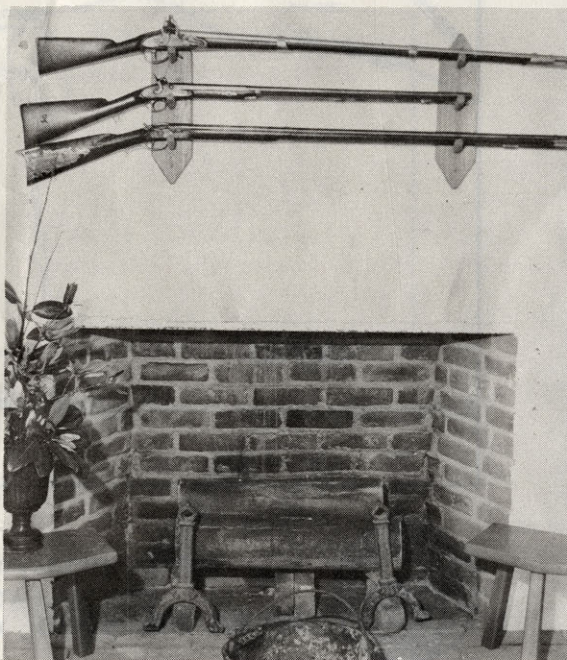
UNIONTOWN

In 1799 Ferguson joined four of his neighbors to establish the "Town of Union." The new town was surveyed and laid out into lots. For a short distance the route of the Natchez Trace was changed and the new location became the main street of Uniontown. Ferguson himself established a store, his son-in-law a tannery, and a physician opened an office. The town, however, failed to grow, and soon disappeared. Except as a name on contemporary maps, it was almost completely forgotten.

THE SETTING

Except for the fact that the dependent structures necessary for the operation of an inn and a small plantation have long since been removed, Mount Locust looks today much as it did during the 1820's. The original locust trees which gave the place its name have disappeared; but many of the trees, shrubs, and flowers, which formerly grew here, are still to be found

Below: Fireplace, gentlemen's bedroom



on the grounds. Those which have disappeared are being replanted.

Sites where buildings formerly stood and also the boundaries of the extinct "Town of Union" are shown on the map in this folder.

LOCATION

Mount Locust is on the Natchez Trace Parkway, about 16 miles northeast of Natchez, Miss.

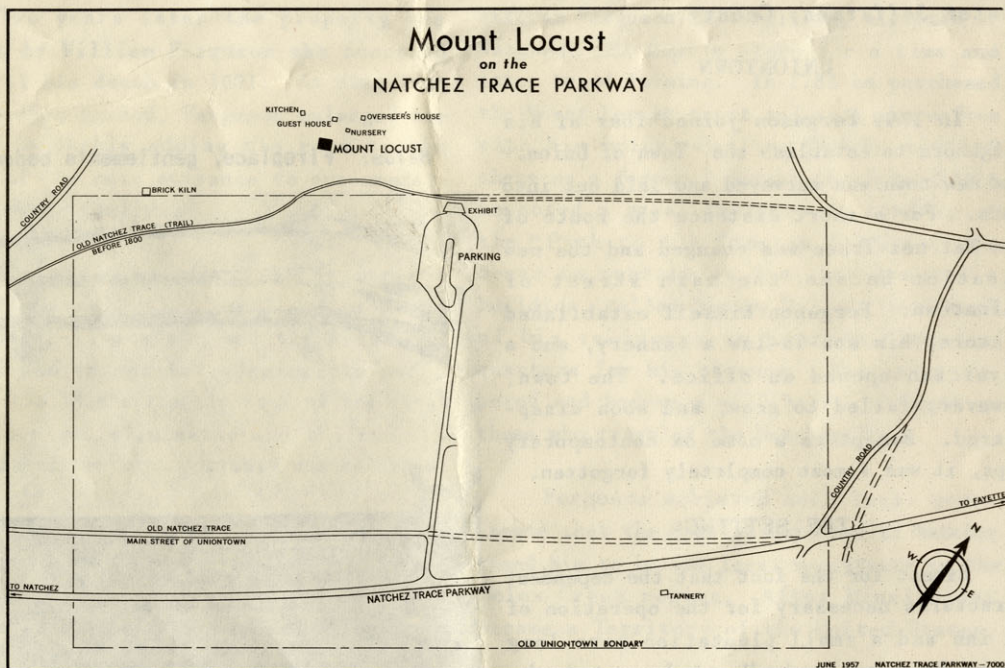
OTHER FEATURES ON THE PARKWAY

Mount Locust is only one of the features which are a part of the Natchez

Trace Parkway in this vicinity. Five miles southward you can visit Emerald, one of the Largest Indian Mounds in the United States. Elsewhere you will find picnic areas and two nature trails. Near the intersection with U. S. 61, you can see well preserved examples of the old Natchez Trace and a carefully planned exhibit setting forth the history of the old road.

ADMINISTRATION

Mount Locust is a part of the Natchez Trace Parkway which is administered by the National Park Service of the U. S. Department of the Interior. The Superintendent, Natchez Trace Parkway, Tupelo, Miss., is in immediate charge of the area.



United States Department of the Interior
FRED A. SEATON, *Secretary*
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE, CONRAD L. WIRTH, *Director*



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Cover: Mount Locust as restored