

HS NO 4777

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE:	Mississippi	
COUNTY:	Noxubee	
FOR NPS USE ONLY		
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE	
APR 3	1973	

1. NAME

COMMON: Dancing Rabbit Creek Treaty Site

AND/OR HISTORIC: [REDACTED]

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER: [REDACTED]

CITY OR TOWN: [REDACTED]

STATE: [REDACTED] CODE: [REDACTED] COUNTY: [REDACTED] CODE: [REDACTED]

3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input type="checkbox"/> Building	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Public	<input type="checkbox"/> Occupied	Yes: <input type="checkbox"/> Restricted
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Structure	<input type="checkbox"/> Private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted
<input type="checkbox"/> Object	<input type="checkbox"/> Both	<input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> No

PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural	<input type="checkbox"/> Government	<input type="checkbox"/> Park	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation	<input type="checkbox"/> Comments
<input type="checkbox"/> Commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> Industrial	<input type="checkbox"/> Private Residence	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify)	
<input type="checkbox"/> Educational	<input type="checkbox"/> Military	<input type="checkbox"/> Religious	Some recent	
<input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input type="checkbox"/> Scientific	Choctaw burials	

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME: State of Mississippi - Mississippi Park System

STREET AND NUMBER: Robert E. Lee Building, Lamar Street

CITY OR TOWN: Jackson STATE: Mississippi CODE: 39205 28

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.: Noxubee County Courthouse

STREET AND NUMBER: [REDACTED]

CITY OR TOWN: Macon STATE: Mississippi CODE: 39341 28

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY: [REDACTED]

DATE OF SURVEY: [REDACTED] Federal State County Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS: [REDACTED]

STREET AND NUMBER: [REDACTED]

CITY OR TOWN: [REDACTED] STATE: [REDACTED] CODE: [REDACTED]

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7 DESCRIPTION	
CONDITION	(Check One)
	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Good <input type="checkbox"/> Fair <input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated <input type="checkbox"/> Ruins <input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed
	(Check One)
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Altered <input type="checkbox"/> Unaltered <input type="checkbox"/> Moved <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site
DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE	
<p>The treaty site was originally largely covered with pine and oak trees. It was said to have an abundance of grass, water, and cane. These assets plus the fact that a number of trails converged nearby, made the area a logical camp site.</p> <p>Structures on or near the site at the time of the treaty negotiations were a council house, beef pens and supply depot. The council house was located on the treaty site, but the beef pens and supply depot were situated [REDACTED]. A cabin was supposedly built in 1849 on the spot where the treaty was signed. None of its remains have been located to date.</p> <p>Today the site is largely covered by pine forest. The D.A.R. marker, mentioned in the statement of significance, is [REDACTED]. Surrounding the marker are recent Choctaw Indian graves. [REDACTED] the remains of an old cabin. Further investigation will be necessary to determine the date of this structure, its significance, and relation, if any, to the treaty.</p>	
	

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

6. SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- | | | | |
|--|---------------------------------------|--|---------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pre-Columbian | <input type="checkbox"/> 16th Century | <input type="checkbox"/> 18th Century | <input type="checkbox"/> 20th Century |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 15th Century | <input type="checkbox"/> 17th Century | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 19th Century | |

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known) **September 27, 1830**

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- | | | | |
|--|---|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal | <input type="checkbox"/> Education | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Political | <input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric | <input type="checkbox"/> Engineering | <input type="checkbox"/> Religion/Philosophy | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Historic | <input type="checkbox"/> Industry | <input type="checkbox"/> Science | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture | <input type="checkbox"/> Invention | <input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Social/Humanitarian | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Art | <input type="checkbox"/> Literature | <input type="checkbox"/> Theater | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Commerce | <input type="checkbox"/> Military | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications | <input type="checkbox"/> Music | | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation | | | _____ |

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

This site was the scene of an event of major significance in the history of Mississippi and the nation, the signing of the Treaty of Dancing Rabbit Creek on September 27, 1830. This treaty was the most important of the numerous pacts between the United States and the Choctaw Indians and certainly initiated one of the most drastic changes in the history of the Choctaw tribe. It had been the policy of national leaders since the American Revolution to move the Indians farther west with the expansion of white civilization, and the Treaty of Dancing Rabbit Creek was a continuation of that policy. After the treaty was ratified, the Choctaws were no longer a major influence in Mississippi.

The United States Government was represented at the treaty negotiations by Commissioners John H. Eaton and John Coffee. Approximately 3,000 Choctaws were present including the three main chiefs, Greenwood Leflore, Mushulatubbee and Nittakechi. Some other notables present were another prominent Choctaw, Hopaii Iskitini, ("Little Leader"), Major Pitchlynn the interpreter, and General George S. Gaines, a respected friend of the Choctaws, who was contracted by the government to furnish provisions for those engaged in the making of the treaty.

As was the case with most treaties between the Indians and the United States Government, this one was to be broken by the government, resulting in the Choctaws being uprooted from their homes and causing much untold suffering and death.

No truer friends of the United States were to be found among the American Indians than the Choctaws. They had been a firm ally in time of war and were making considerable progress in becoming "civilized," as they were gradually accepting the white man's mores. There were successful farmers among them, some of whom owned slaves. Many of their leaders were educated several at the college level. Nevertheless it was determined that it would be in the best interest of both Indians and whites for the Indians to be removed to what is now Oklahoma, where there would be no possibility of conflict with white civilization.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

De Rosier, Arthur H. Jr.
 "Thomas Jefferson and the Removal of the Choctaw Indians."
The Southern Historical Quarterly, vol. 1 (1962), 52-62.

Dilliard, Anthony Winston
 "The Treaty of Dancing Rabbit Creek between the United
 States and the Choctaw Indians in 1830." Alabama Department
 of Archives and History, Historical and Patriotic Series
 no. 10 (1928), 25-31.

Halbert, H.S.
 "Story of the Treaty of Dancing Rabbit Creek." Publications

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			O R	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES		
CORNER	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE		LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	
NW	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds
NE			0			0
SE						
SW						

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: **25 acres**

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE:
Samuel O. McGahey, Archaeologist

ORGANIZATION: **Mississippi Department of Archives and History** DATE: **Nov. 14, 1972**

STREET AND NUMBER:
P. O. Box 571

CITY OR TOWN: **Jackson** STATE: **Mississippi 39205** CODE: **28**

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION

As the designated State Liaison Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National State Local

Name: *R. A. McLenore*
R. A. McLenore
 Title: Director, Mississippi Dept. of Archives and History

Date: November 14, 1972

NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.

Robert W. Utley
 Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date: 4/3/73

ATTEST:
H. G. Woodford
 Keeper of The National Register

Date: 3/72/73

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8.

Although negotiations concerning the treaty were carried out with the federal government, the State of Mississippi occupied a prominent position in the issue, providing an excuse for federal pressure on the Indians. The Mississippi Legislature passed an act on January 11, 1830, to extend the legal control of Mississippi over that portion of the state then occupied by the Chickasaws and the Choctaws.

This, of course, resulted in a definite hardship on many of the tribesmen who had evolved their own systems of law and moral codes; and, who were terrified of white control. This spectre was given prominent display by the United States Commissioners in the treaty negotiations that began on September 15, 1830. It was said that the Federal government could not protect the Choctaws against the Mississippi whites. Supposedly what the government really wanted was not the Indians' land but their happiness which presumably could not be secured in Mississippi.

As fearful as they were of the prospect of white rule, the Choctaws loved their land and refused to be swayed by these assertions, as well as the exaggerated claims made about the new land to the west. During negotiations on the proposed treaty, it was pointed out by the Choctaws that an earlier treaty had promised the continuing integrity of their land. This was another case of the Federal government failing to adhere to its Indian policy as expressed in previous treaties. The Choctaws had thought themselves secure there and were overwhelmingly against removal.

On September 27, 1830, most of the Indians, having declared their intentions not to accept the terms of the treaty, left the treaty grounds and headed for home. Accounts vary as to what happened next. Most of the chiefs and warriors had departed while Greenwood Leflore, one of the principal chiefs, and his followers who had remained, signed the treaty after the addition of article fourteen, which gave the Choctaws an option of remaining as citizens of the United States and owning land as individuals rather than collectively as in the tribal system. News of this act reached those Indians who had started for home, and they returned in a violent mood calling Leflore and his followers traitors. They were convinced to sign, however, when the terms of article fourteen were adequately explained to them. Another account given by General George Gaines simply states that the principal chiefs and a few of the inferior chiefs were prevailed upon by Major John Eaton, one of the commissioners, to stay, while the main force of Indians left for home. Somehow they were persuaded to sign. General Gaines felt that they were probably corrupted with various bribes, including special considerations in land allotments.

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At any rate, the treaty was finally signed by a majority of the Indians present, although this was accomplished through trickery, bribery and threats. Few would have signed but for the inclusion of article fourteen, which clearly gave them the right to remain if they so chose. If the terms of the treaty had been honored, the racial composition of much of Mississippi would have varied considerably from what it is today. This was not to be, however, since the agent assigned the task of legally recording the names of those who desired to stay, Colonel William Ward, was unsympathetic, negligent and a drunkard. In many cases, he simply refused to register the applicants. In other instances, he would loan the book, containing the signatures of those he did allow to register, to those known to be hostile to the provisions of article fourteen. As a result of his outrageous behavior, only sixty-nine names were submitted of the thousands who wanted to stay. Many of those who did stay were soon homeless, driven from their homes by land-hungry white settlers.

Those who elected to emigrate experienced similar hardships and disappointments. Another major article of the treaty, article sixteen, promising, in effect, a safe and pleasant journey, was not much better adhered to than article fourteen, although in this case at least part of the problem was simple inefficiency and lack of planning. The government had had no previous experience in such large scale removals.

The major emigration occurred in 1831-32 and 1833. The emigrants experienced one of the worst winters in the history of the area in 1831-32 when many suffered and died from cold and hunger. The situation had been further darkened in the summer of 1831 by an epidemic of cholera which returned each summer until 1836

---setting up a belt of death that halted most traffic but through which the armies of Indian exiles had to be moved, the federal government and the states concerned being inflexibly opposed to any delays.

(The American Heritage Book of Indians,
p. 223, narrated by William Brandon)

Some idea of the total effect of this removal may be gained from the fact that the Choctaw population had decreased from around 20,000 in 1831 before the removal began to 12,690 in 1843.

A forty square foot plot on the treaty site was purchased by the Bernard Romans Chapter of the D.A.R. of Columbus, Mississippi, in 1916. The chapter erected a commemorative marker there in 1928. The entire treaty site was purchased by the Nanih Waiya Park Development Association in September 1958 and conveyed to the Mississippi Park System in July of 1959.

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9.

of the Mississippi Historical Society, vol. 6 (1902),
373-401.

Hays, Andrew

[Memorial to the U.S. Congress on behalf of the Choctaw
Indians] Washington, D.C. 1836.

Josephy, Alvin M. Jr. (ed.)

The American Heritage Book of Indians. New York: The
American Heritage Publishing Company. (1961)

U.S. Department of War

Indian Treaties and Laws and Regulations relating to
Indian Affairs, to which is attached an appendix
containing the Proceedings of the Old Congress, and
other important State Papers in relation to Indian
Affairs. Washington, D.C., Way and Gideon Publishers,
(1826).

