

Old Alabama Road

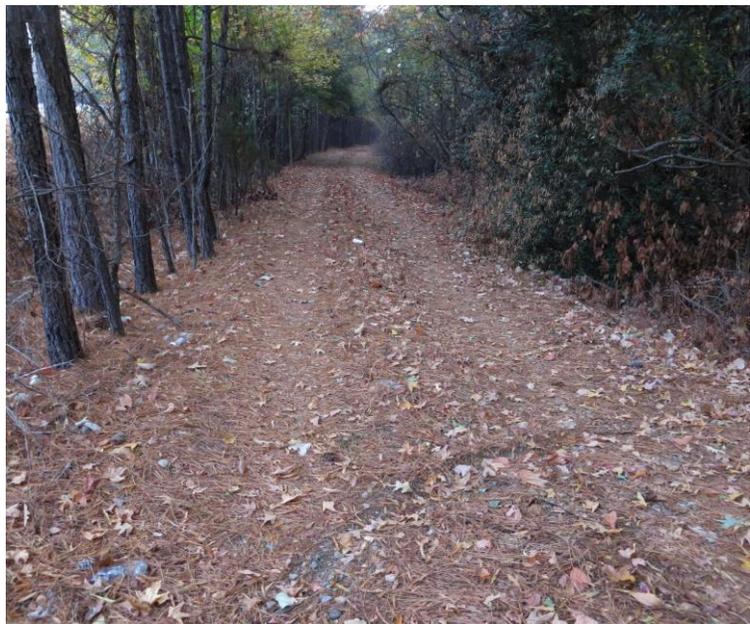
Don & Diane Wells 2016

Diane and I traveled the Old Alabama Road from Columbus GA to I-75 near Indian Springs, GA today, 25 November, 2016. This trail was originally an Indian Trail and later became a major stagecoach route from Augusta, GA to Columbus, GA and beyond.

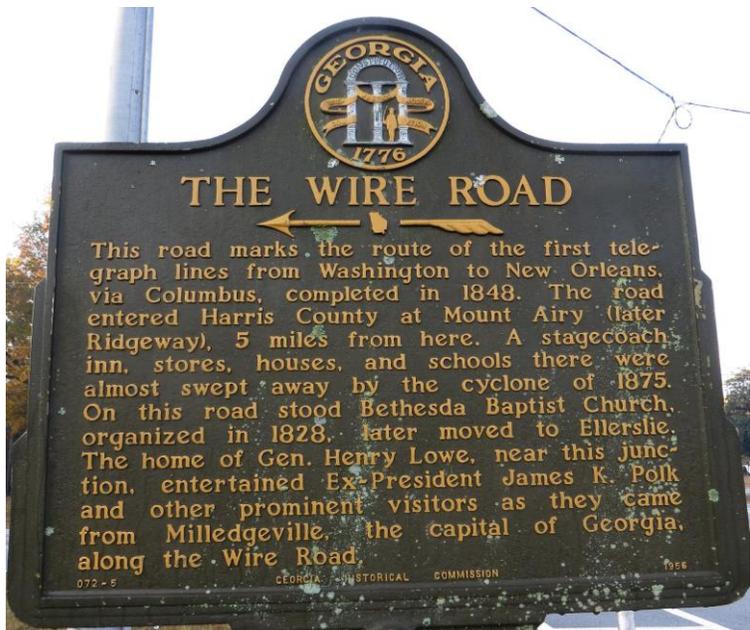
From Columbus, the route follows the Old Warm Springs Road heading NE to Ellerslie, GA. Near Midland, GA, a remnant of the road can be seen on the right side of the Old Warm Springs Road heading away from the road. It is blocked with a gate.

In Ellerslie, at the corner of Old Warm Springs Road, Manchester Highway and Talbotton Road is the Wire Road sign telling about the history of that place. Telegraph lines were first installed along this road from Washington to New Orleans and through Columbus. The sign also confirms this road was the stagecoach road. It fails to mention it was an Indian Trail first.

The trail continues NE from Ellerslie now following Rt. 85 Alt. to the town of Waverly Hall. Waverly Hall was not incorporated as a town until the early 1900's however, the cemetery in Waverly Hall tells a different story. This cemetery has graves dating to the early 1800's and one grave was



Old Alabama Road – Muscogee County



Wire Road Sign

located where the lady was born in 1797. Obviously, there has been some presence of people along the old trail and stagecoach route for many years prior to the town being started officially. The size of the cemetery seems to reflect a presence of a larger community and may have served a large portion of the lower part of Harris County in its early days. Also located in the north end of the cemetery were seven unmarked Indian graves of both men and woman. Many Indians did not leave on the Trail of Tears and remained in the community where they lived.

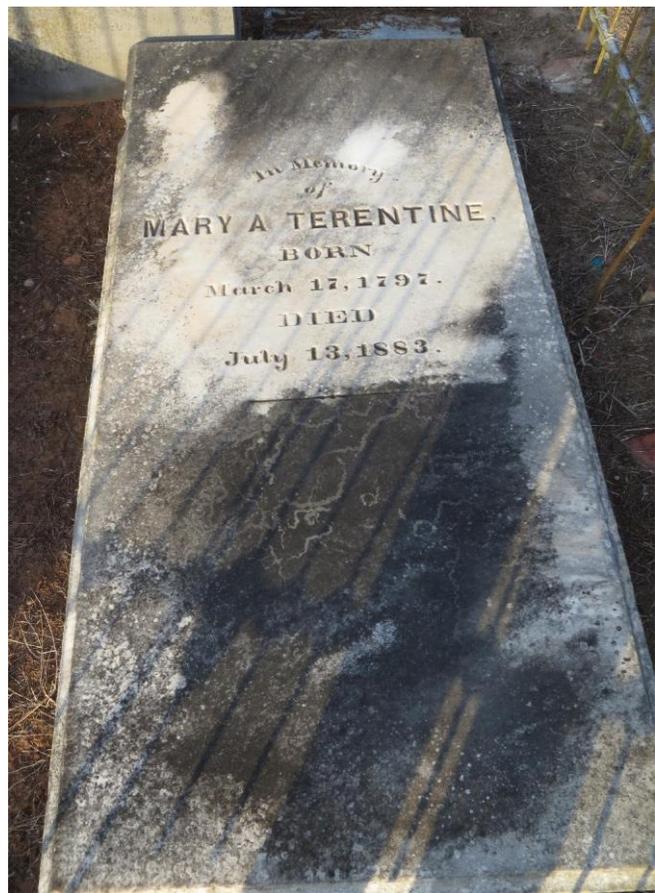
In Waverly Hall, the route junctions with Rt. 208 and begins following it to the east for a short distance and then follows Rt. 36 to the NE. Just south of Woodland GA, the trail junctions with Rt. 41, then heads north a short distance and then turn east on Old Alabama Road. After crossing over Jeff Hendricks Road, the way along Old Alabama Road is closed off with a locked gate. Had we been able to follow the trail, we would have continued to the NE until junctioning again with Rt. 36. However, we had to go east on Jeff Hendricks Road and then pick up Rising Sun Road to get back to Rt. 36 and continue to follow the trail.

As you approach the Flint River on Rt. 36, the Old Alabama Trail turns off on Double Bridges Road and crosses the Flint far upstream from the Rt. 36 crossing point.

After crossing over the Flint River, you turn north on Roland Road and pick up the trail again on the east side of the river where the trail junctions with Roland Road at Earl's Road. It is hard to see the old trail after it crosses Roland Road but it is there continuing to head in a NE direction.

To begin to follow the trail again, one has to continue on Roland to South Old Alabama Road and then head east to the corner of South Old Alabama and Collins School Roads where the trail cuts across that junction and then heads in a more easterly direction.

On that corner is one of the oldest cemeteries in Upson County. The cemetery belongs to Fellowship Baptist Church and was started in 1826. That cemetery has some very unique stack stone graves dating to the early days along the Old Alabama Trail. Within the area of the stone graves, we located several unmarked Indian graves in the cemetery.



Old Grave Waverly Hall Cemetery



Old Alabama Road – Talbot County



Stack Stone Graves – Fellowship Baptist Church - 1826

Just to the east of the cemetery where Old Alabama Trail crosses over Rt. 74 (Crest Highway), there was one of two stagecoach stops on the corner in Upson County. The Upson County Historical Society stated that, “Two stage coach stops in Upson County John Castlen's at the junction of Old Alabama Road and Crest Highway, and Abner McCoy's near Flint River.”

From the stagecoach stop on the corner of Old Alabama and Crest Highway, the route crosses Upson County to the NE passing by the old Hannah Mill site on Jeff Davis Highway then junctions with Rt. 3 north of Thomaston, GA. On that corner and again north on the corner of McCorkle Curve Road and Jugtown Road are elaborate stone signs installed by the DAR marking this as the Old Alabama Trail and later the stagecoach route.



Old Alabama Trail Sign

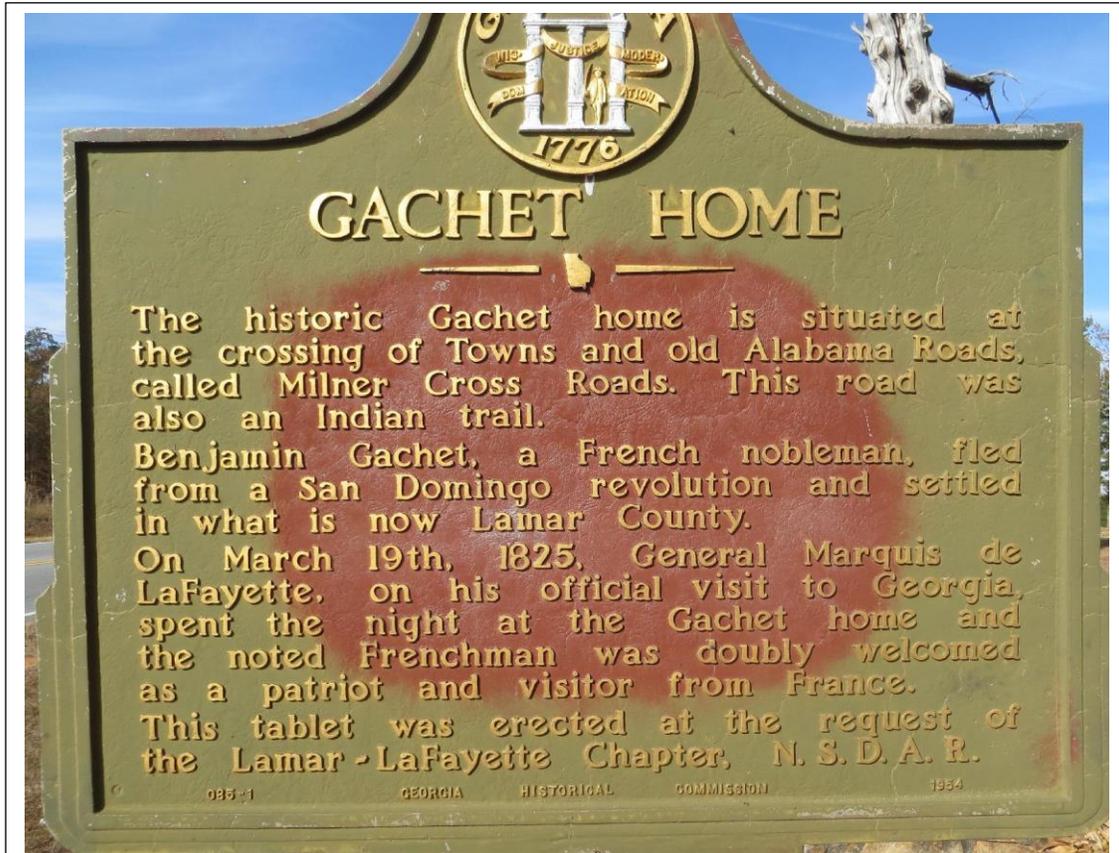
The Upson Historical Society stated that the area of Jugtown Road, “In the northeastern section of Upson and on the Alabama Road, was a village called Jug Town, famous a century for its fine pottery made from clay found near Potato Creek.” The trail along Jugtown Road switches names from Jugtown, to Ruffner, to Piedmont. Shortly after joining Piedmont, we found the trail again on the right side of the road easily seen. This part of the trail was in Lamar County.



Old Alabama Trail – Lamar County

Piedmont Road junctions with Rt.18 and Five Points Road at the old home site of the Gachet Home. The road sign for the home on the next page tells the story of the home owned by a French Nobleman who bought the site in 1825. It became a stagecoach stop and was the junction of the Old Alabama Road and the Town Road, also an Indian Trail that headed more easterly toward Barnesville, GA and beyond.

From the Gachet House, the Old Alabama Trail crosses through Old Milner Town and then heads east to Indian Springs and to Augusta GA where the trail is now known as the Seven Island Trail. The trail joins briefly with the Upper Creek Trail near Indian Springs.



Gachet House, Lamar County, GA