

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets the National Register criteria. () See continuation sheet.

Mark R. Edwards 3/13/97
Signature of certifying official Date

Mark R. Edwards
State Historic Preservation Officer

In my opinion, the property () meets () does not meet the National Register criteria. () See continuation sheet.

Signature of commenting or other official Date

State or Federal agency or bureau

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register Self R. Rucker 4/18/97
- () determined eligible for the National Register _____
- () determined not eligible for the National Register _____
- () removed from the National Register _____
- () other, explain: _____
- () see continuation sheet

h _____
Keeper of the National Register Date

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions:

DOMESTIC: single dwelling

Current Functions:

DOMESTIC: single dwelling

7. Description

Architectural Classification:

OTHER: hall-parlor type

Materials:

foundation stone, concrete block
walls wood: log, weatherboard
roof wood: shingle
other

Description of present and historic physical appearance:

The Rucker Log House is a recently restored c.1833 log house with modern additions. It is located in north Fulton County (formerly Milton County), Georgia, approximately five miles north of Roswell and two miles east of Alpharetta, just south of the small historic crossroads community of Crabapple, in the northern metropolitan Atlanta area. This area, traditionally rural, has undergone rapid suburbanization over the past two decades. The Rucker house stands on the remaining 3.3 acres of land historically associated with the house at the intersections of Old Rucker Road, Rucker Road, and Broadwell Road.

The original log house is one-and-one-half stories high, measures 30 feet by 20 feet in plan, and has a side-gabled roof and two exterior end chimneys. The original logs used to construct the house are massive and square-hewn; the corner joints are square notched. The logs apparently were never chinked but rather sheathed in weatherboards; on the exterior, the original weatherboards still cover the north (front) and east (side) of the house while duplicate siding has replaced severely deteriorated siding on the west wall (much of the south wall has been incorporated into the modern rear addition). The house rests on a foundation of fieldstone piers infilled with modern concrete block. The partially reconstructed single-shouldered chimneys have stone bases and hand-made-brick shafts capped by simple brick corbeling. The roof is covered with new wood shingles similar to the historic shingles. Windows are modern multi-pane replacements patterned in size and configuration after the originals. A one-story braced-frame addition, incorporating two small end rooms and a center recessed porch under a full-width shed roof, was added to the front of the house sometime in the 19th century; recently the porch portion was partially enclosed for security reasons with a recessed wall and doorway.

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The interior of the log house is arranged in the hall-parlor plan with two unequally sized main rooms. Interior walls are sheathed with original wide hand-planed vertical boards, virtually all of which are original, with the exception of the center interior wall and a portion of the former rear wall which now feature exposed historic structural logs and modern chinking. Floors are thick planks patterned after a small surviving portion of the original floor. Ceilings consist of exposed joists and the undersides of the upstairs floorboards. Fireplaces in each of the downstairs rooms feature original paneled Georgian-style mantels. Several interior doorways have been widened. A modern open-riser stairway rises along the central wall in the larger of the two rooms through an opening in the ceiling which was cut for a previous replacement stairway. Upstairs are two bedrooms separated by a new stairhall and bathroom. The upstairs rooms, recently refinished, feature exposed log half-height walls. The two small ground-floor rooms and recessed porch added to the front of the house in the 19th century are finished with historic narrow horizontal wood boards. A wide transom plank over the doorway from the porch/foyer to the northeast room bears the inscription: "John Rucker, August 3d, 1864."

Attached to the rear of the log house is a large modern addition, one story in height, complex in plan. The new kitchen is a gabled ell with side porch extending from the southeast rear corner of the log house; it conforms to the dimensions of an unsalvageable 1890s kitchen addition. Off the southwest rear corner of the log house is a one-story front-gabled master bedroom and office suite. Between the two, along the rear (south) wall of the log house, is a wide sunporch.

The front yard facing Old Rucker Road features lawn, large shade trees, modern foundation plantings, a partial wood privacy fence in front of the master bedroom-home office addition, and a rock retaining wall along the road reportedly built in the 1930s by W.P.A. workers. The immediate side and rear yards are landscaped in a contemporary fashion. The rear yard is delineated by a modern picket fence. In the rear yard are a modern garage, a well, and a historic log structure, reputedly a smokehouse, now used for storage. The rear yard area also contains the known locations of former outbuildings including a cook's house/kitchen, a wash house, and a canning house; presumably a privy was present as well. The sole surviving historic outbuilding is rectangular in plan, one story high, with a gable roof and offset entrance, built low to the ground. The logs are half-hewn and joined at the corners with half-dovetail notching. The remainder of the acreage is rural in character, now surrounded by suburban development.

The Rucker Log House was restored and enlarged during the early 1980s. The work was done according to plans drawn by W. Lane Greene, a noted preservation architect in the state and a former member of the Georgia National Register Review Board. The completed work won an award from the Georgia Trust for Historic Preservation in 1984. At the 1986 Rucker family reunion, family members resolved: "The descendants of Simeon Bluford and Jane Barnwell Rucker, in annual session, desire to express their appreciation for the restoration of the two-story log house built by

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their revered ancestors soon after their arrival in 1832. Because of your careful study of each detail in construction and the meticulous use of all original materials, the pioneer home in which two [generations of] large Rucker families were born and reared has been authentically preserved.”

8. Statement of Significance

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

nationally statewide locally

Applicable National Register Criteria:

A B C D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions): N/A

A B C D E F G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions):

Architecture, Exploration and Settlement

Period of Significance:

c.1833-1918

Significant Dates:

c.1833 (construction of house)

Significant Person(s):

not applicable

Cultural Affiliation:

not applicable

Architect(s)/Builder(s):

Simeon Rucker (builder)

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Section 8--Statement of Significance

Narrative statement of significance (areas of significance)

Architecture

The Simeon and Jane Rucker Log House is significant in terms of architecture for its log construction, its vernacular form and plan, and its age.

The Rucker Log House is an excellent intact example of early 19th-century log house construction in north Georgia. Characteristic architectural features include massive hewn logs, square notching, and weatherboard siding rather than chinking. Hewn logs like those in the Rucker House are typically found in log houses in the northern areas of Georgia; round-log construction predominates in south Georgia. Square notching like that in the Rucker house is less common than half-dovetail notching like that found in the Rucker smokehouse. Many log houses, especially in north Georgia, were historically weatherboarded rather than chinked. Stone-and-brick chimneys are indigenous to north Georgia where surface rock is more plentiful.

Log houses like the Rucker house once were quite common in this area but now are extremely rare. Indeed, less than a dozen log houses in Georgia are currently individually listed in the National Register, and none of these is in the metropolitan Atlanta area. Only four predate the Rucker house, the oldest by less than ten years (several have estimated dates of construction and may not in fact predate this house).

The historic smokehouse in the rear yard also is significant architecturally for its log construction which features half-hewn logs and the more common (in north Georgia) half-dovetail corner notching.

The Rucker Log House also is architecturally significant as an excellent example of the relatively common hall-parlor type of vernacular house in Georgia. This house type features a rectangular plan with two unequal rooms and no hallway and a side-gabled roof with exterior end chimneys. Most houses of this type are one story high, although one-and-a-half story variants are not uncommon. Most are wood-framed rather than log. The added front shed rooms and porch typify the way in which hall-parlor and other types of houses were enlarged historically.

Given the fact that the Rucker Log House has been continuously occupied for more than a century and a half, it retains a remarkable degree of historic architectural integrity. The principal architectural components of the house--its log construction and hall-parlor plan-form--remain virtually unchanged. Most architectural elements which had to be replaced due to deterioration, such as the windows, some of the siding, and the roofing, were replaced in kind. Although the modern addition is large, it stands to the rear of the historic house and replicates at least part of an earlier addition; it

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also accommodates modern conveniences like bathrooms and the kitchen so that the historic portion of the house could be more authentically restored.

Exploration and Settlement

The Rucker Log House is significant in terms of exploration and settlement for its direct historical associations with the first wave of Euro-American settlement in this part of the state. This region was opened to white settlement after 1832 when the State of Georgia with Federal assistance seized Cherokee Indian lands (by 1831) and distributed them to white settlers through a land lottery (1832). Following a typical westward migration pattern, Simeon and Jane Rucker moved to this location from further east in Georgia (possibly after a short sojourn in Alabama) and built this log house for themselves and their family, probably as early as 1833 according to deed records, but certainly by 1835 when other records indicate that they were purchasing domestic provisions and agricultural supplies at a nearby country store. John Rucker, like many pioneers, was a farmer, growing cash crops like cotton and practicing subsistence farming. Over the years he acquired extensive landholdings in the Crabapple area. John and Jane's children became locally prominent in agriculture, agri-business, newspaper publishing, and politics. Their son John narrowly escaped capture by Union troops during the Civil War by hiding out on his father's property; fearing capture, he inscribed his name and the date August 3, 1864, on a wooden plank in the house (still present) so that his family and friends might know when he was last in the house. John later inherited the family homplace after his father died in 1881 and owned it until his death in 1918. His daughter owned the property until 1941.

Log houses and hall-parlor houses like the Rucker's were common on the early 19th-century Georgia frontier. They represent the kind of houses most frequently built by pioneering settlers. Yet relatively few frontier-era houses like the Rucker's have survived, especially in the Atlanta metropolitan area. Less than 1% of all the extant surveyed historic houses in Georgia date from this frontier era (1830s) or earlier. Also contributing to the value of this property as an expression of 19th-century frontier life are the extant smokehouse and the known locations of several former domestic outbuildings associated with the house.

National Register Criteria

This property meets National Register Criterion A for its direct associations with the earliest Euro-American settlement of this region of Georgia. It meets National Register Criterion C for its architectural significance in terms of its log construction and vernacular plan-form.

Criteria Considerations (if applicable)

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Section 8--Statement of Significance

Not Applicable.

Period of significance (justification)

The period of significance--c. 1833-1918--extends from the construction of the house in c. 1833 by Simeon Rucker through his ownership and that of his son John Rucker. Simeon and John Rucker were the principal historic figures associated with the property.

Contributing/Noncontributing Resources (explanation, if necessary)

The contributing buildings are the historic log house and log smokehouse. The modern addition to the log house is a noncontributing part of the house. The contributing structure is the well. The noncontributing building is the modern garage.

9. Major Bibliographic References

The principal source of information for this nomination is a "Historic Property Information Form" for the "Rucker House" prepared by Ella Merritt in 1989, with additional information provided in 1993; on file at the Historic Preservation Division, Georgia Department of Natural Resources. Sources of information used in the preparation of this form include:

Dillman, Caroline M. Days Gone By in Alpharetta and Roswell, Georgia (Roswell, Georgia: Chattahoochee Press, 1992).

Martin, Clarece. The History of Bulloch Hall and Roswell, Georgia (1973).

Walsh, Darlene M. Roswell: A Pictorial History (Dallas, Texas: Taylor Publishing Company, 1985, for the Roswell Historical Society, Inc.).

Interviews (all interviews conducted by Ella Merritt):

Dorcus Rucker David, great-grandaughter of Simeon Rucker, at her home on Mimosa Boulevard in Roswell, 1983.

Mr. and Mrs. Troy Rucker, grandson of Simeon Rucker, at their home in Crabapple, 1982.

Previous documentation on file (NPS): (X) N/A

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested**
- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been issued**
date issued:
- previously listed in the National Register**
- previously determined eligible by the National Register**
- designated a National Historic Landmark**
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey #**
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record #**

Primary location of additional data:

- State historic preservation office**
- Other State Agency**
- Federal agency**
- Local government**
- University**
- Other, Specify Repository:**

Georgia Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned):

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 3.3 acres

UTM References

A) Zone 16 Easting 745480 Northing 3773880

Verbal Boundary Description

The nominated property is described by a heavy black line on the attached "boundary map." This line coincides with the current legal description of the property.

Boundary Justification

The nominated property consists of the surviving intact acreage historically associated with the house at the intersections of Old Rucker Road, Rucker Road, and Broadwell Road. Much of the former historic acreage has been sold off during the 20th century for development. The remaining acreage is now surrounded by suburban development.

11. Form Prepared By

State Historic Preservation Office

name/title Richard Cloues, Survey and Register Unit Manager, Deputy SHPO
organization Historic Preservation Division, Georgia Department of Natural Resources
street & number 500 The Healey Building, 57 Forsyth Street
city or town Atlanta **state** Georgia **zip code** 30303
telephone (404) 656-2840 **date** March 13, 1997

Consulting Services/Technical Assistance (if applicable)

name/title
organization
street and number
city or town state zip code
telephone

(HPD form version 02-20-97)

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**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Photographs

Name of Property: Simeon and Jane Rucker Log House
City or Vicinity: Alpharetta vicinity
County: Fulton
State: Georgia
Photographer: James R. Lockhart
Negative Filed: Georgia Department of Natural Resources
Date Photographed: March 1996

Description of Photograph(s):

- 1 of 11. Front (north) and side (east) of house; also showing front yard with 1930s stone retaining wall and modern garage (left background); photographer facing southwest.
- 2 of 11. Front (north) and side (west) of house; also showing front yard with 1930s stone retaining wall and modern master bedroom-home office suite addition (right); photographer facing southeast.
- 3 of 11. Side (west) and rear (south) of house; also showing rear yard with modern picket fence and garage; photographer facing northeast.
- 4 of 11. Side (east) and rear (south) of house; also showing modern kitchen ell addition (foreground); photographer facing northwest.
- 5 of 11. Rear (south) of house, showing modern rear addition; photographer facing north.
- 6 of 11. Smokehouse located in rear yard southeast of house; photographer facing southeast.
- 7 of 11. Interior of house, front foyer, looking into "weaving" room (front northeast room); photographer facing northeast.
- 8 of 11. Interior of log house, "living" room (east room); photographer facing southeast.
- 9 of 11. Interior of log house, "dining" room (west room); photographer facing northwest.
- 10 of 11. Interior of house, sunporch, looking at original rear wall of log house; photographer facing northwest.

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Photographs

11 of 11. Upstairs (loft) of log house, east room; photographer facing southwest.

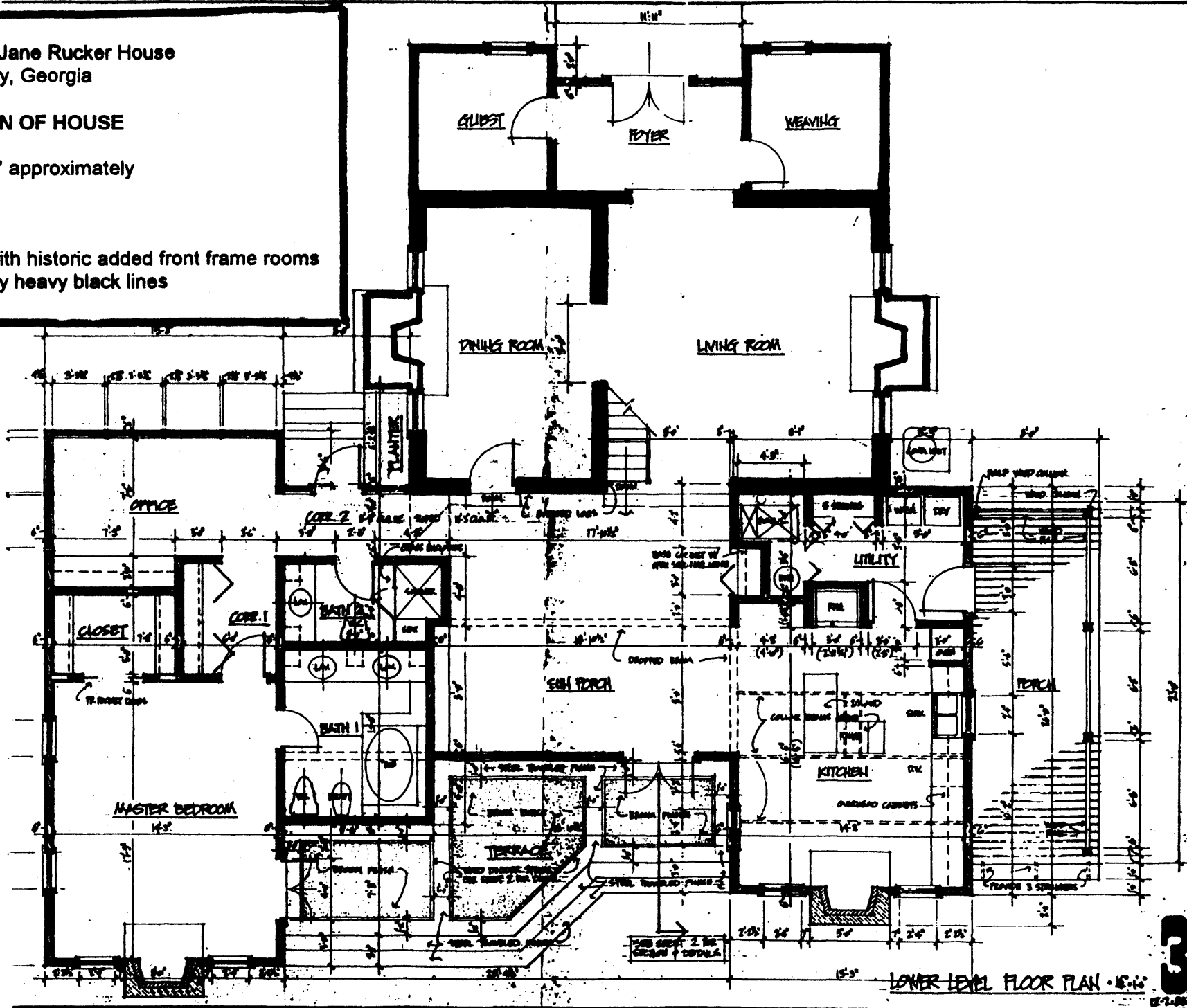
Simeon and Jane Rucker House
Fulton County, Georgia

FLOOR PLAN OF HOUSE

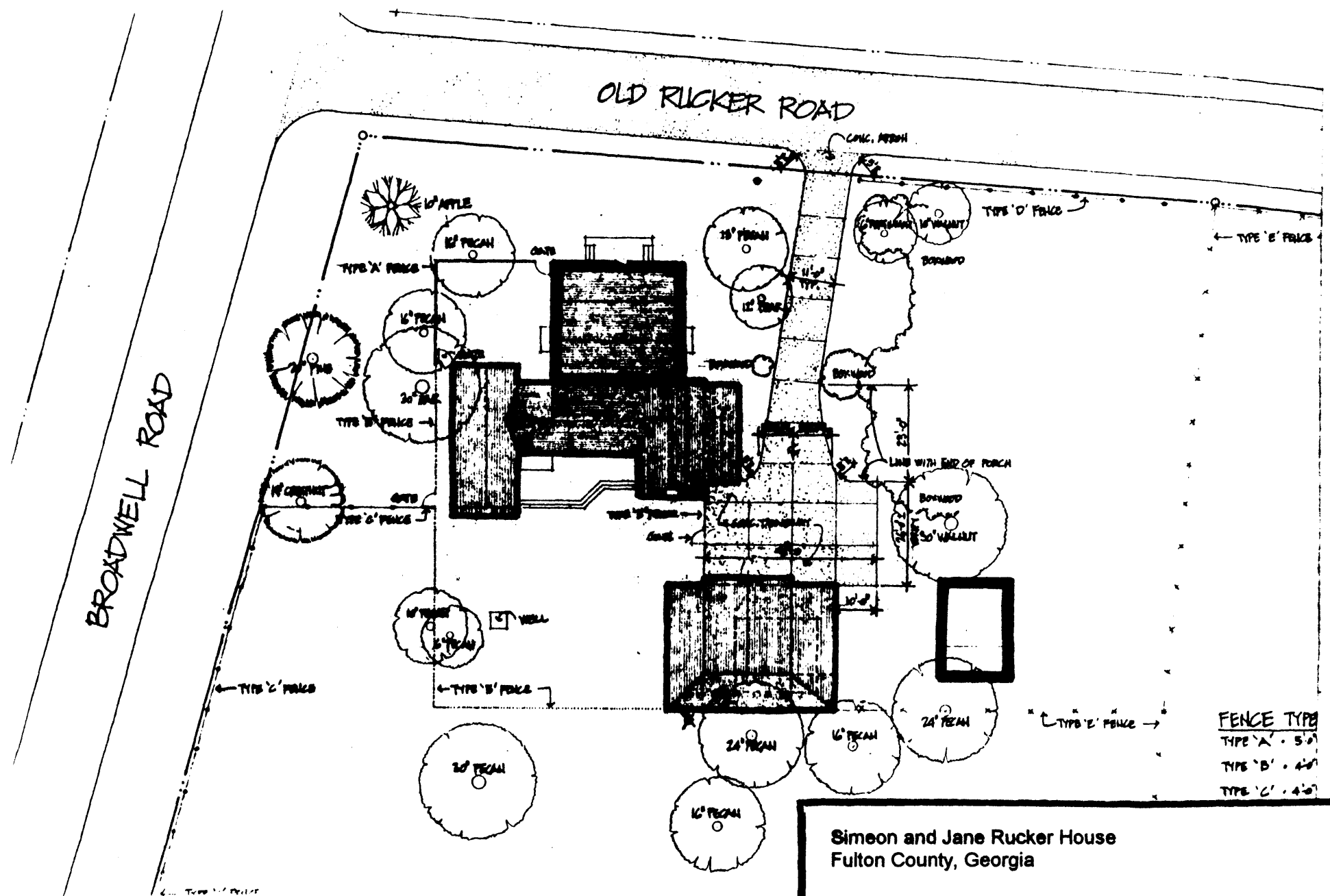
Scale: 1" = 8' approximately

North: ↑

Log house with historic added front frame rooms highlighted by heavy black lines



LOWER LEVEL FLOOR PLAN - 18.10



FENCE TYPE
 TYPE 'A' - 5'0"
 TYPE 'B' - 4'0"
 TYPE 'C' - 4'0"

Simeon and Jane Rucker House
 Fulton County, Georgia

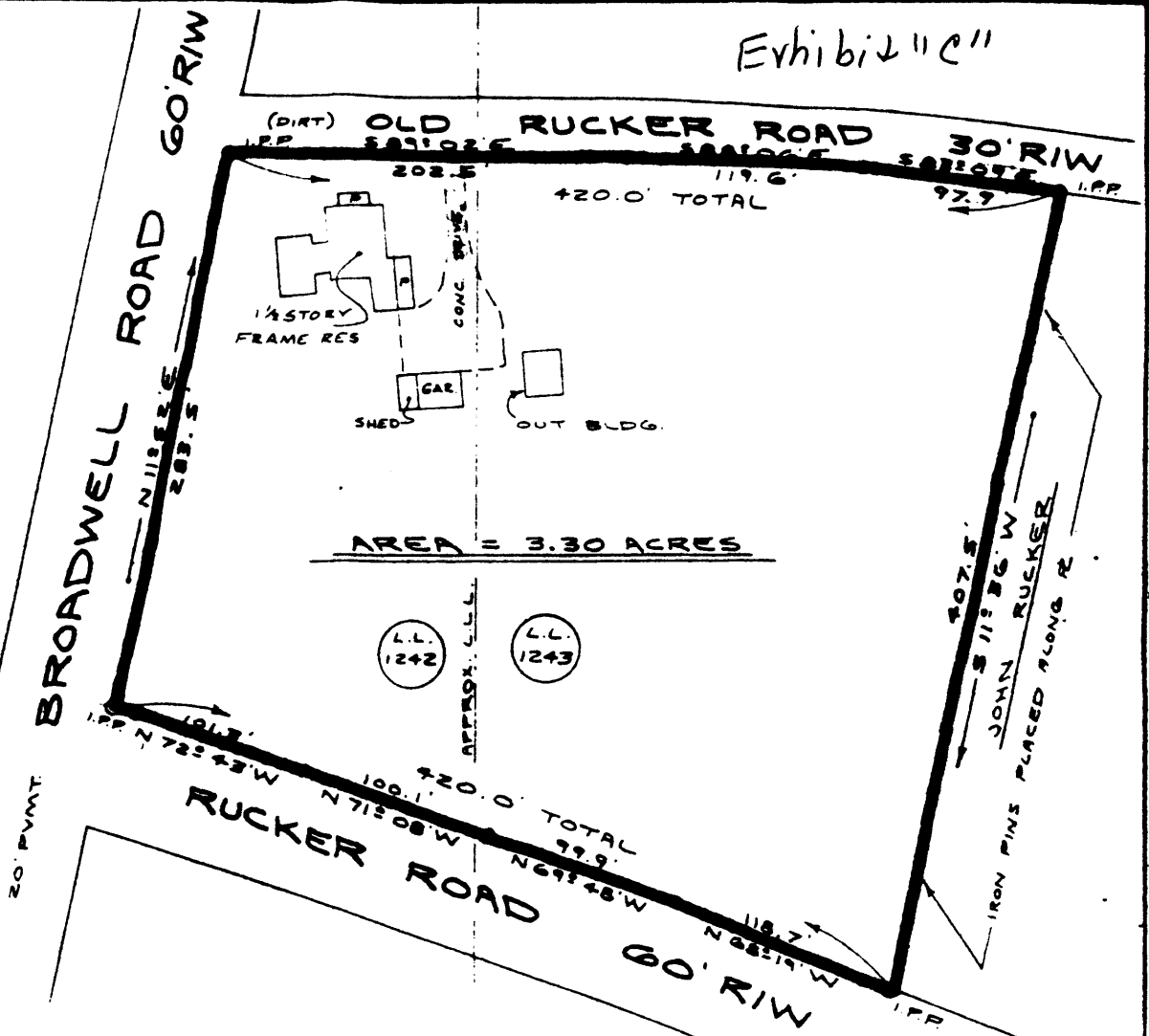
SKETCH MAP OF HOUSE AND YARD

Scale: 1" = 30' approximately

North: ↑

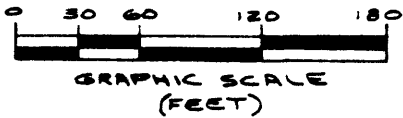
Log house and log outbuilding highlighted by heavy black lines

Exhibit "c"



NOTES :

- 1) THE FIELD DATA UPON WHICH THIS PLAT IS BASED HAS AN ANGULAR ERROR OF 1.6" PER ANGLE POINT AND WAS ADJUSTED USING COMPASS RULE.
- 2) THIS PLAT HAS BEEN CALCULATED FOR CLOSURE AND IS FOUND TO BE ACCURATE WITHIN ONE FOOT IN 23,500 ± FEET.
- 3) EQUIPMENT USED :
 ANGULAR : DKM 2-AE
 LINEAR : D.M. 501



Simeon and Jane Rucker House
 Fulton County, Georgia

PROPERTY MAP

Scale: as shown (1" = 100' approximately)
 North: as shown
 Boundary of nominated property: ██████████