Alexander Plantation Home to be Restored... probably old.

Historic Claiborne is Facing Restoration.

By Bill Ebarb
Times Ruston Bureau

HOMER — The old Alexander Plantation house, possibly the oldest building still standing in Claiborne Parish, is being moved, according to George M. Camp of Minden.

Camp said he obtained permission from his aunt, who owns the house, to take the old home down, transport it to Webster Parish and reassemble it near his smokehouse restaurant in Minden.

According to Camp, the old house was apparently built around a log cabin that may have been erected in the late 1700's or early 1800's. Camp said that, according to records, he has studied in tracing the genealogy of his family, the log cabin core of the old house could be the oldest existing structure in Claiborne Parish.

The frame house is a two-story structure which was apparently built with great care to detail. The chimney of the house, for instance, is built of hand-hewn rocks which were placed on top of each other in a narrowing stack. A type of clay mud, native to the Homer area, was placed in the cracks of the chimney to form a cement like bond.

A similar process was done on the rock supports of the house which raise it several feet off the ground in the front.

Hand-hewn logs, a foot square and 20-23 feet long, are scattered throughout the base structure of the old home place of the Alexanders.

On several walls, the logs are more than eight feet above the ground and, considering the lack of machinery in the early 1800's, the huge logs were apparently placed by hand, possibly using some beast of burden to provide the impetus to lift the logs.

The outside of the home, unlike many of the other old home places in the area, is not filled with the clay mud. Cracks between logs were once filled by the clay mud to prevent drafts and to retain the heat of the fireplace, according to Camp, who has researched the structures of such places.

But the old Alexander Plantation Home is different. Instead of the usual clay mud filling, the logs were covered on the outside by weather board, much like modern day siding on frame homes.

The roof of the old house is tin, and has been eaten away by the weather of more than two centuries.

The porch and front area of the house is one of the more interesting details, according to Camp.

French lattice work once adorned the six oak windows on the porch, but Camp said he doesn't know if plain glass was once in the frame, or if a carved or stained glass once adorned the front door area. He said when he rebuilds the house, he will replace the glass, but the type of glass hasn't been decided on yet.

Around the door are spaces where glass once framed the French - type solid door. Camp said he doesn't know if plain glass was once in the frame, or if a carved or stained glass once adorned the front door area. He said when he rebuilds the house, he will replace the glass, but the type of glass hasn't been decided on yet.

The first story of the house contains three main rooms, split by an enclosed breezeway from the front door to the back of the house. The living room area was apparently on the left, and
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On the right are areas which could have been used for sleeping quarters, and a dining room. Camp said the kitchen was usually apart from the houses in the early 1800's.

Two stairways lead to the second floor where two bedroom areas are noticeable.

A single wall apparently separated the bedrooms and Camp said that might be one alteration he might make in the structure when he rebuilds the house. He said by leaving that wall out, he will make an area large enough for banquet parties.

According to Camp, the Alexander family graveyard is located behind the old plantation home, along with a well that was also built with hand-hewn rock.

Camp said the well served as a centerpiece for a bit of recent history around the old plantation home.

Camp said there were for many years rumors that George Washington Alexander, the founder of the Alexander Plantation, had hidden much of his wealth in gold coins and such on the grounds of the plantation home.

Camp said an old black man, who he called Grant, had lived on the plantation as a child around the time that Alexander supposedly hid the gold.

According to Camp, treasure hunters looking for the gold from time to time came to the house and asked Grant where the gold was hidden. Camp said that Grant always told them "in the well, he hid the gold in the well."