

Chieftains was placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1971, and was named a National Historic Landmark in 1974.

Chieftains may be reached by turning north off U.S. 27 (Turner McCall Boulevard) at the Civic Center onto Chatillon Road. The museum is about one and three-fourths miles north of U.S. 27.

### **Touring Information**

The museum is open Tuesday through Friday from 11 - 3 and Sundays 1 - 5. Arrangements for groups or special tours may be made by calling 291-9494 or Rome Tourist and Convention Commission at 295-5576. Chieftains is closed on national holidays.

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ROME JUNIOR  
SERVICE LEAGUE  
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# **Chieftains Museum**

**Rome, Georgia**

# History of Chieftains

Chieftains was originally the home of the prominent Cherokee leader Major Ridge and his family. Built as a log cabin in 1794, it was gradually enlarged into a frame plantation house as Ridge's family and wealth expanded. The lives led within its walls represent the struggle of the Cherokees to adapt to the white man's culture while retaining their Indian heritage.

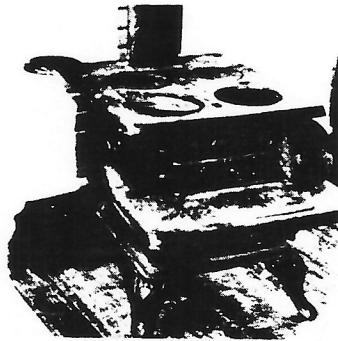
Ridge, or Ca-nung-de-cla-geh, was born in eastern Tennessee, and later moved with his family to Georgia. He grew to become an important leader of the Cherokee nation, serving as sheriff, representative to the General Assembly and ambassador to Washington. It was while fighting alongside General Andrew Jackson against the Creeks that he earned the rank of Major. He later operated a thriving plantation, country store and ferry at Chieftains.

Although he had been taught the traditional skills of hunting and fighting, Ridge was anxious for his children to have a formal education. They were sent to schools run by Moravian missionaries. John Ridge also attended a mission college in Cornwall, Connecticut. While there he caused a great furor by marrying a local white girl. John soon became a spokesman for his people and also joined his father as a lawmaker.

By the 1830's pressure for removal of the Cherokees had become intense. The Chieftains

estate became part of the Georgia Land Lottery of 1832. The state of Georgia claimed the land, allowing illegal settlers to force themselves on the Indians. When the Federal government refused to protect them, the Ridges decided that the only hope for their people's survival was to move west. The majority of the Cherokees, led by John Ross, disagreed. Despite this, the Ridges and their faction

signed the Treaty of New Echota, exchanging land in Georgia for land in Oklahoma. The treaty led directly to the Trail of Tears. Vengeful survivors of the tragedy later murdered Major Ridge and John Ridge.



## Chieftains Today

As the city of Rome grew around Chieftains, the home passed through many owners. In 1969 the Celanese Corporation deeded it to the Junior Service League, which converted it into a museum. A portion of the interior wall was stripped away in order to illustrate details of the unusual log cabin construction. Today the building houses exhibits ranging from early days of Indian civilization to the growth of local industry and cultural institutions.

Displays include artifacts recovered in an archaeological dig on the grounds, antique furniture and costumes, relics of Sherman's march through Rome, and photos of the days when riverboats ruled Rome's three rivers. Prominent Romans such as Martha Berry, Dr. Robert Battey and Ellen Axson Wilson are also featured.

*Entry Rates on the United States*

- 50¢ - 4 Hour Trip
- 25¢ - 2 Hour Trip
- 25¢ - 1 Hour Trip
- 25¢ - On Boat
- 10¢ - Man and Horse
- 6¢ - Each Long Horse
- 3¢ - Each Head of Meat
- 2¢ - Each Head of Stock