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GEORGIA'S BARNSELY GARDENS

Preserving a Landscape of the Lost Cause

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ABSTRACT: Barnsley Gardens is a former plantation in Adairsville, Georgia, once the home of English cotton magnate Godfrey Barnsley (1805–73). Barnsley Gardens is historically and regionally significant, modeling the tradition of designer Andrew Jackson Downing. It gained fame through its extravagant art collection, its fabulous gardens, and its many distinguished visitors. Numerous tragedies beset the family and led to the plantation's demise, creating an air of loss and melancholy, leaving the manor a vacant ruin for decades. An increased interest in historic preservation in the late twentieth century led to the revival of Barnsley Gardens and its transformation into an upscale resort, all while purposefully preserving the manor as a ruin. Through a landscape analysis, I argue that Barnsley Gardens was preserved as a ruin to maintain a material connection to the historical and mythical Old South, to tacitly evoke and retain the memory associated with the myth of the Lost Cause.

KEYWORDS: *plantation, material culture, ruins, historical landscape, landscape archaeology, heritage, American South, Lost Cause*

INTRODUCTION

The image of the plantation is one that many commonly associate with the historical American South, and the allure that image evokes propels the popularity of plantations as tourist destinations in the contemporary South. In Adairsville, Georgia, approximately sixty miles northwest of Atlanta, one finds an unusual plantation site combining both the historic and contemporary. Though today it is technically named Barnsley Resort, Barnsley Gardens (formerly Woodlands) is the site of a regionally prominent former cotton plantation begun by English industrialist Godfrey Barnsley in the 1840s. Woodlands was once famous for its collection of hundreds of pieces of art and furniture and, outside the manor house itself, hundreds of rare trees, shrubs,

and plant specimens from all over the world, initially collected in the nineteenth century and meticulously maintained today.¹ Barnsley's estate became an "illustrious dream [that] soon engulfed thousands of acres, to become one of the most flamboyant antebellum estates east of the Mississippi [River]" (BG, 2). Woodlands was created shortly after the removal of the Cherokee from Georgia in the 1830s, withstanding the Civil War, a tornado in 1906, the Great Depression, both world wars, a host of social, economic, and political fluctuations, years of neglect, and numerous family tragedies. As "the generations passed, Barnsley Gardens . . . continued to stand like a bold monument against the ravages of time and the elements," where it is "certainly a place where the past echoes loud and clear" (BG, 3), and despite the destruction and loss the property faced, its historical significance remains intact.²

After decades of neglect and deterioration, Barnsley Gardens was revived and preserved in the 1980s and 1990s to become a resort for tourists, though the manor house was left in a ruinous state to become the main symbol and attraction of the site. In this paper, I explore the symbolic significance of Barnsley Gardens as a once-grand manor that now stands as a ruin. I propose that Barnsley Gardens' major landscape element signifies a material representation of the myth of the Lost Cause, the tradition derived from the defeat of the Confederacy and the legends created afterward by southerners to come to terms with defeat and an end to a way of life—a myth that persists in the South to this day, materially or otherwise.³ I demonstrate that Barnsley Gardens illustrates a compelling and distinct example of how plantation landscapes and their material artifacts influence our understanding(s) of the past, the present, and the mutual ways in which the past and present affect each other. Furthermore, it is necessary to account for both the historical and biographical narratives of a plantation, as this method and form of analysis transcends a traditional historical approach. By examining Barnsley Gardens' development as a heritage site and landscape through its materiality, one develops a fuller understanding and appreciation for its significance through its agency as an artifact in shaping a particular landscape experience or perception. I argue that Barnsley Gardens was preserved as a ruin to maintain a material connection to its historical and mythical past, particularly the Old South, to tacitly evoke and retain the memory associated with the Lost Cause.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Barnsley Gardens

Despite the historical and regional significance of Woodlands/Barnsley Gardens, it has received little scholarly consideration. Landscape architect Catherine M. Howett offers a critical and even-keeled analysis in a paper that distinguishes the fact and fiction surrounding both the history and lore of the site.⁴ Through archival research, landscape architects Bradley M. Nestor and William A. Mann reconstruct the landscape of Woodlands and its changes over time with an emphasis on its gardens and horticultural elements.⁵ As for primary sources, a variety of family papers, photos, and artifacts are distributed at archives across the South. Another principal source includes local historian Clent Coker's book *Barnsley Gardens at Woodlands*.⁶ Coker provides the most comprehensive historical and biographical examination of Barnsley Gardens and the Barnsley family. Coker, a northwestern Georgia native having many personal connections to the site, including knowing some of the Barnsley descendants, has thoroughly researched the family and site. While I do not question his knowledge of these topics, the book is not an academic work. Nevertheless, it remains the best available and most comprehensive source about Barnsley Gardens.

Plantation Geographies

Geographies of plantations have not been a thoroughly explored topic within cultural and historical geography until relatively recently. The geographical literature on slavery and plantations is still fairly limited in its scope, as these topics have received more attention from historians and archaeologists.⁷ The majority of geographical scholarship in this area has focused on the agricultural dimensions of plantations and their role in the interrelated themes of tourism, memory, and heritage studies.⁸

A lesser-researched area of plantation geographies has focused on the role(s) and significance of their landscapes and material culture, especially with respect to their historical development. While many of these studies incorporate elements of landscape, few devote great attention to it, though others have discussed the morphology of plantations.⁹ E. Arnold Modlin Jr.'s examination of material culture

at a series of southern plantation house-museums frames what geographers can add to plantation studies, specifically pointing out how the presentation of material culture needs further geographic inquiry because it greatly influences the sense of place, landscape, and spatiality, allowing geographers to offer a critical reading of a plantation's many narratives, artifacts, and performances.¹⁰ Derek H. Alderman and Rachel M. Campbell similarly examine the politics of tourists' engagement with slave artifacts in a museum context.¹¹

An important theme running through the more recent geographical research on plantations is that of narrative in understanding the experiences of plantation owners, their families, their slaves, and their wider roles in southern and American society. Perry Carter, David Butler, and Derek Alderman demonstrate how plantations are places where "narratives form and flow, recognizing the important role these stories play in the place-making process," and they devote attention to artifacts within those narratives, most often focusing on the plantation owner. "Central to the geographic literature on the racial politics of Southern memory," they state, "is the idea that place and landscape are much more than simply the setting or backdrop for a nostalgic construction of the past." The southern plantation museum is part of a broader narrative that seeks to situate the South as more of an object of imagination than a geographic and social reality, with romanticized "metanarratives" about the South conditioning tourists' expectations about plantations and also prompting museum managers to conform to these narratives.¹² While my study is not ethnographic and does not focus on tourists' experiences at Barnsley Gardens, I draw on historical archaeology approaches to examine the function of landscape and material culture in forming a particular place identity for that site.

Multiple Classifications of Plantation Landscapes

Traditionally, ruins are mostly conceptualized as Old World features and associated with archaeological scholarship, though some geographical studies have examined the significance of contemporary landscape ruins.¹³ This study draws upon several categorizations and perspectives of landscape, which I employ in various capacities, as I found that Barnsley Gardens falls under several subcategories of cultural landscape and serves as a palimpsest that registers concurrent historical and

contemporary dynamics, creating a landscape with multiple, mutable meanings whose artifacts evoke simultaneously past and present with overlapping historical and modern roles.¹⁴

Most broadly, Barnsley Gardens is a *heritage landscape*, one that contains artifacts associated with history.¹⁵ These landscapes confirm the value of artifacts associated with the past, asserting durability, dependability, and traditional values, reaffirming our connection with the past, often offering a sense of history isolated from contemporary time and space, or appearing as if they are from another time. Such a quality also conveys that plantations are *symbolic landscapes*, so called because they evoke emotions closely tied to place, memory, and time, with an emphasis on the symbolic meaning(s) of the place or landscape in question.¹⁶ Geographer Ary J. Lamme III explains, "Landscape messages can be conveyed by artifacts on the land, the material culture of a place. People of the distant past no longer talk to us, but remnant landscapes reveal more of their culture than they might be willing to share, even if they could."¹⁷ Furthermore, landscape analysis should recognize that a structure (or absence of one) may be an anomaly that has survived for myriad reasons, requiring the researcher to consider the reasons for its survival.¹⁸

Symbolic landscapes may survive because they promote ideologies that conjure imaginative and emotional images, evoking a value or ideal that often provides moral messages, recounts mythic histories, or records genealogies.¹⁹ Geographer Donald W. Meinig explains that a landscape's "elements [act] as clues and the whole scene as a symbol of the values, the governing ideas, the underlying philosophies of a culture" with the landscape representing "a translation of [that] philosophy into tangible features."²⁰ Additionally, plantations are *historic landscapes*, which "are widely recognized as places possessing important symbolic images [distinct] from common landscapes of our everyday affairs," or, more specifically, *archaeological landscapes*, which were actively created by humans to shape and symbolize human behavior, allowing scholars to interpret past behaviors from physical and documentary remains.²¹

Though the study of ruins is an interdisciplinary endeavor, it is of somewhat marginal scholarly interest, and it best falls under the rubric of *landscape archaeology*, "the science of material traces of past peoples within the context of their interactions within the wider natural and so-

cial environment they inhabited.”²² Due to its focus on landscape and its attendant artifacts, landscape archaeology differs somewhat from archaeology’s more common interest in smaller artifacts such as pots or tools.²³ Archaeologist Paul A. Shackel notes, “Historical archaeologists’ approaches to landscape range from particularistic concerns that document and reconstruct historic landforms to symbolic and ideological approaches that examine the past and present meanings and uses of the cultural environment.”²⁴ A landscape may be as small as a single household or garden or as large as an empire, but landscape archaeology approaches the landscape as a participant in shaping the past, and not as merely a setting or artifact.²⁵ Still, the archaeological record preserves evidence of everyday landscape use, including the intentional and unintentional effects of its use and alteration, constituting a useful reference in addition to written sources.²⁶ Both artifacts and written sources, argues archaeologist Paul Courtney, “have potential biases and multiple readings but require critical analysis of the specific contexts and processes leading to their creation, survival, and significance.”²⁷ I agree with this rationale, and I explain next how I corroborate material evidence with written records to add greater context and allow for nuanced interpretations.

ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK AND METHODOLOGY

My framework closely follows the work of W. G. Hoskins and his English landscape tradition, stressing the empirical analysis of landscape, viewing it as a complex inquiry involving many phases, and integrating history, geography, and archaeology in an inductive model.²⁸ Geographer Richard H. Schein suggests that interpreting cultural landscapes requires interrogating their role in social and cultural reproduction and within wider social, cultural—and I would add historical—contexts, where landscape is one way that such connections are formulated and maintained.²⁹ More specifically, I follow historian Thomas J. Schlereth’s approach of *above-ground archaeology*, concentrating on landscape artifacts as primary evidence through fieldwork, with the goal of gaining further historical and cultural understanding.³⁰ This method combines historical, geographical, and archaeological research without excavation, with strong reliance on library and archival research. Special

attention to historical integrity, the context of landscape creation, and the motivation to preserve them are crucial factors in interpreting heritage landscapes.³¹

I accomplish this through studying primary and secondary sources on Barnsley Gardens, with a significant emphasis on family history, combined with landscape analysis and interpretation. A ruin's narratives often emerge at the interface between personal and collective memory, and material remains mediate between history and individual experience.³² While plantations become more historically significant over time and their meanings can change, one advantage of studying their material culture and landscapes is that, in most cases, they have not been removed from their spatial contexts, thus creating fruitful opportunities for archaeological and geographical analysis in light of changing social, cultural, and historical contexts.

Frameworks for analyzing material culture within cultural landscape are fewer, though necessary when studying landscape artifacts. Cultural landscape analysis adds a dimension to the study of individual artifacts by exploring the dynamic between humans and artifacts, in order to understand the beliefs, values, and conventions of those who created, maintained, or altered those objects. Central to this understanding is the dynamic and reciprocal relationship between humans and artifacts, where both persons and objects have agency, as each influences and is influenced by the other; artifacts are therefore not simply passive, mute manifestations of humans' cultural patterns.³³ The concept of materiality encompasses the lives of things, acknowledging their influence and agency, and to do so effectively, scholars must embed materiality in place, history, and culture.³⁴

A further method I use to frame this approach is geographer Marwyn S. Samuels's concept of the *biography of landscape*. This involves studying the landscape's authorship, or the *who* behind the geography, underscoring the necessity of understanding the people behind landscapes. One does this by directly "examining what individuals have to say about themselves and their contexts, as well as by examining what others have to say about those individuals." Landscape impressions derive from someone's thoughts and relate to hidden meanings associated with or evoked by a place; these impressions are more about a landscape than in it, and ideas become the contexts for the making of landscape.³⁵ Additionally, attention to the creators of landscapes

and artifacts demonstrates that artifacts are more than just mere objects.³⁶ Agency is crucial for understanding both the landscape and the actors behind landscape change, which requires an understanding and appreciation for temporal change and how these factors affect meaning.³⁷ Plantations are “distinct, complex, historical, and spatial entities that, by their very nature, embody change,” and thus call for a diachronic perspective in their analysis.³⁸

I have visited many southern plantations and one commonality on the property tours is the docents' focus on family history. Thus, I see the biography of landscape approach as appropriate to analyzing Barnsley Gardens. Furthermore, especially regarding plantations, “household succession is an important catalyst of landscape change at domestic sites,” and by linking occupational history with the documentary and archaeological record, a “sequence of landscape events . . . can be better contextualized and more accurately interpreted.”³⁹

THE BARNSELEY FAMILY AND THE HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF BARNSELEY GARDENS

Godfrey Barnsley, His Family, and the Beginnings of His Empire

In this section I provide the historical foundation for understanding the biography of Barnsley Gardens' landscape. This retelling reflects a romanticized history derived from a rather whitewashed—and not strictly factual—account of the Barnsley family and their plantation. The tale begins with the namesake of the property, Godfrey Barnsley, born into a prominent business family in 1805 in Derbyshire, England. An intelligent boy, Barnsley grew up on a farm and took an interest in the cotton industry, where he proved to have an aptitude. By the age of eighteen, it became clear that, as the third child, he would not inherit his father's estate, and, seeing better opportunities for cotton in the United States, he left for Savannah, Georgia, in 1824 (*BG*, 8–9). Barnsley was quickly accepted into Savannah's business, civic, and social circles. In 1827 he began G. Barnsley & Company. Unlike many other Georgia elites of that time, Barnsley was a self-made success, though he did marry Julia Scarborough of Savannah's wealthy Scarborough cotton family in 1828, which whet his material ambitions.⁴⁰ Their daughter Anna was born in 1829, with six more children following, though not all survived (*BG*, 23).

In 1829 President Andrew Jackson appointed Barnsley as vice counsel of the Netherlands and for the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies, and he later became president of Savannah's chamber of commerce, performing these duties for many years. His business and wealth grew quickly, and by 1837 Barnsley amassed an enormous fortune, earning the distinction of being the wealthiest southern cotton factor and sea merchant of his time. A well-respected businessman worldwide, he took pride in his reputation for honesty and integrity (*BG*, 2, 18–19, 23). He also despised slavery and did not want involvement in it, though he did eventually acquire some slaves, inheriting some from Julia's father and receiving others as payments for debts. Coker contends that "they would prove to live within a civilized arrangement," Barnsley requiring them to marry and "maintain a moral lifestyle while rearing their own families, residing in their own separate quarters" (*BG*, 22–23).

Julia was sensitive to the heat of the coastal lowlands and developed a respiratory illness in the 1830s (*BG*, 23). Furthermore, economic problems in 1836–37 greatly affected the cotton market, with many southern planters going bankrupt; Barnsley also lost lots of money, which he recovered, earning an even greater fortune by 1839, and the growing demand for cotton prompted him to open offices in Mobile and New Orleans. Although he originally planned to return to England, Barnsley's growing business meant he had to stay in the US, and he opted to move to the Georgia upcountry (*BG*, 25–27).

The Origins and Early Days of Woodlands

By 1838 President Jackson had expelled the last major group of Cherokee from Georgia, and in 1839 their territory was sold to white settlers in a land lottery. The lottery broadened opportunities to create and acquire plantations, and cotton, Georgia's dominant cash crop, which did not require large amounts of capital, lent itself to slave labor. Barnsley purchased land in northwestern Georgia in Cass (now Bartow) County, and the family left Savannah in 1841 for that remote area. Barnsley contributed to the planning and design of the estate based on styles he saw from his world travels. Godfrey felt their new home would make life easier for Julia due to the cooler, cleaner mountain air, and he named the property Woodlands because of its isolated location.⁴¹ Barnsley was not dependent on the property to generate income; rather, the home

was modeled after a British country estate, which he funded with his extra money.⁴²

It was around this time that the first of several family tragedies occurred, namely, the death of the youngest son, Godfrey Jr., in 1843. This especially affected Julia, whose health had been improving, and which prompted Godfrey Sr. to begin construction for the manor in earnest (*BG*, 49–50). Business obligations required that Barnsley leave for lengthy periods, which was hard on Julia. He returned to Savannah in early 1845 with Julia with the intention to shield her from the upland winter. While making a brief return to Woodlands he left Julia in Savannah, where her condition worsened, and she died in February 1845 at age thirty-five.

Julia's death profoundly affected Barnsley, altering his temperament, and he decided to forego completing Woodlands. Barnsley grieved while traveling between his offices, operating mostly out of Mobile. Godfrey was uninterested in returning to Woodlands, but he worried about his family, as he had not seen them in a long time, and he was also concerned about his many stored belongings still in Savannah. He abruptly left for Woodlands to decide what to do, and he was pleased to find it in good shape (*BG*, 59–63). While there, he claimed to see and communicate with apparitions of Julia, walking and talking with her around his gardens, where she expressed specific instructions on how to complete the estate. Godfrey became obsessed with Julia and spiritualism.⁴³ This newfound "ability" gave him a new zest for life, and construction of the manor resumed, with Barnsley sparing no expense (*BG*, 65).

Woodlands finally began taking shape in the 1850s, based on Barnsley's admiration of pioneering landscape designer Andrew Jackson Downing. Downing was popular in the South at the time, and his style was associated with regional pride in the antebellum period. By following (but not imitating) Downing, Barnsley purposefully pursued an atypical style from the South's prevailing fashions, with Woodlands' design reflecting more of a national style, acting as a showplace that also functioned as a farm.⁴⁴ The "Grand Italian Villa" also featured large brick arches, porticos, terraces, sixteen rooms, and a three-story campanile at the front entrance, with the main portion of the house occupying two stories (*BG*, 72). Barnsley filled the manor with fine furnishings from around the world. The house and grounds also featured bountiful art and plants from many distant locales, including some of the world's

FIG. 1. Completed Barnsley manor, circa 1892. Courtesy of Emory University Libraries.

rarest trees and shrubberies, and an array of animals, orchards, and vineyards (BG, 80, 90). Many parties, weddings, and social events occurred at Woodlands, and Barnsley hosted prominent visitors from all over the world. Barnsley took up residence in 1858; although it was still incomplete, the manor was extensive enough to accommodate his family and servants (BG, 74). Other tragedies occurred around this time, including the death of a daughter and the mysterious disappearance of a son (BG, 94–98). By the end of the 1850s, Woodlands spanned more than four thousand acres (and several thousand more owned through partnerships or options), and many considered it a grand showcase of the South (fig. 1) (BG, 91).

The Civil War and Its Effects on Woodlands

Due to his international business presence and British citizenship, Barnsley was determined to stay neutral during the Civil War (BG, 103), though Jarman describes him as “a strong Confederate sympathizer”

who spent much of his gold for the southern cause.⁴⁵ The war, however, did not avoid Barnsley, and its arrival at Woodlands in 1864 “signified the beginning of the end for Barnsley and Woodlands.”⁴⁶ Indeed, Godfrey could not ignore the war. His sons George and Lucien enlisted in the Confederate military and afterward settled with other southern expatriates in Brazil. Union blockades of southern ports forced Barnsley to close his offices, and he returned to Woodlands for the remainder of the war. Because of the disruption of the cotton trade, Barnsley made money producing alcohol and farming (*BG*, 108, 110–11).

His daughter Julia married Confederate captain James Baltzelle in 1864, and Woodlands was the site of a skirmish in May of that year, as Confederate soldiers took refuge at Woodlands, resulting in a battle with James B. McPherson's division of Sherman's Union army, during which Union soldiers ransacked the property.⁴⁷ Due to the war, much of the manor's interior remained unfinished; Barnsley even unsuccessfully appealed to the US government for reimbursement due to the Union's damage of his property.⁴⁸ Godfrey suffered enormous financial losses from investments in Confederate bonds, though Woodlands remained largely intact and no family members were killed during the war.

Despite changes in the cotton market, Barnsley reopened his New Orleans office in 1866, hoping to recover some of his business. At Woodlands, Baltzelle, Julia, and the employees lived a subsistent life, though they made some money from the high demand of cotton at that time and selling the property's abundant timber. Baltzelle is even credited with saving Woodlands and helping keep the family together, though he died suddenly in a logging accident, leaving behind Julia and their young daughter, Addie (*BG*, 139–41). Julia took on many responsibilities to help rebuild Woodlands. After the war, Godfrey was disenchanted with the state of the South. He visited Woodlands in 1869 to spend the summer repairing the estate, returning to New Orleans that fall, and despite his frustrations with the Reconstruction South, along with his declining health, he carried on (*BG*, 145–46).

Godfrey Barnsley's Death and Further Family Tragedies

The summer of 1871 was Barnsley's last at Woodlands. That fall, he handed his business over to his partner Charles Henry von Schwartz. In 1872 Schwartz visited Woodlands and proposed to Julia, with the

FIG. 2. The manor at Barnsley Gardens, present day. Photo by author.

two of them marrying shortly afterward. Julia, Addie, and Schwartz moved to New Orleans after hiring an overseer to care for Woodlands. Godfrey Barnsley died in New Orleans on June 7, 1873, and was buried at Woodlands, where he rests today. Barnsley was mourned because of his prominent business status, his popularity, and his role in developing northwestern Georgia (*BG*, 156). Many remembered him as being rather generous, helping neighbors and the less fortunate, and funding community projects, where he “proved to be a significant trailblazer in settling the Cherokee country.” Others, however, resented him for buying up so much land and his wide influence, as well as his reportedly humane treatment of slaves (*BG*, 47).

FIG. 3. A side view of the manor house ruins, present day. Photo by author.

The estate was bequeathed to Julia, but her family moved to Saint Louis for three years, returning to Woodlands in 1877. Schwartz died in New Orleans in 1885, and the estate was once again left with Julia. George Barnsley returned to Woodlands from Brazil in 1888 wanting to sell the property, though Julia refused (*BG*, 159–60). In the 1890s Woodlands shifted its focus to mining under the direction of chemist and mineralogist B. F. A. Saylor, who later married Addie. Julia died in 1899, leaving the Saylor family as the overseers.

By the early twentieth century, Woodlands was effectively passed on to Saylor, Addie, and their four children, and renamed Barnsley Gardens. As Addie aged, she became increasingly interested and involved in spiritualism and the occult, claiming to see and hear spirits that dwelled at Woodlands, an interest that would divide the family (*BG*, 172). Other unfortunate events occurred around this time, including a major financial loss for Saylor, the vandalism of Godfrey's grave, and a tornado damaging the manor and tearing off its roof in 1906, which was never replaced. Saylor wanted to rebuild the mansion but lacked the funds, and the manor fell into ruin. Saylor died in 1912, leaving "the final

destiny of the family empire" (BG, 176) in the hands of Godfrey's great-grandson, James (Preston) Saylor.

Meanwhile, Barnsley Gardens continued to deteriorate, and his father's old attorney swindled Addie by taking over the business and embezzling company stocks (BG, 186–87). Animosity between Saylor brothers Harry and Preston escalated, often related to the future of the estate. Preston, who had suffered boxing injuries that impaired his mental abilities, grew paranoid that Harry was trying to take his share of the estate, and one night in 1935, he shot and killed his brother in the house, right in front of their mother. Preston was jailed after trying to evade capture; his lawyers unsuccessfully pled insanity on his behalf, and he received a life sentence in prison.⁴⁹ Even though he also threatened her life, Addie made excuses for Preston and fruitlessly tried to get him pardoned so he could return to help fix and preserve their dilapidated home, and also presumably for company.⁵⁰ She avoided the threat of foreclosure by selling heirlooms, property, and livestock to meet creditors' demands. She had hoped to farm some land to pay off debts, but she was there all alone, left in the "castle-like mansion [that was] in ruins"⁵¹ (figs. 2–3). Addie remained at the roofless house, living in the kitchen, the only habitable portion, along with priceless heirlooms, until her death in 1942.

*The Decline and Neglect of Woodlands and
Its Transformation into the Barnsley Gardens Resort*

After Addie's death, Barnsley Gardens was heavily in debt. The entire property was auctioned off, including personal items like photos and clothing, though the majority of valuable items such as furniture, art, china, gold clocks, marbles, tapestries, bronzes, and statuary were sold at reduced prices and scattered across the Southeast (BG, 200, 203).⁹⁷ The property was sold to the highest bidders in 1942, a couple from Birmingham. By 1954 the estate dwindled, and it was sold to Earl McCloskey of Alpharetta, Georgia. The site was never properly cared for and fell into disrepair. For the next forty years, Barnsley Gardens lay dormant in the woods of northwestern Georgia, almost forgotten even by locals; Coker recalls how, by the mid-1980s, it "had almost fallen into oblivion" (BG, 203–4).

By 1987 McCloskey decided to sell Barnsley Gardens, which was

FIG. 4. An interior shot of the manor. Photo by author.

overgrown, with trees having grown into the mansion, crumbling its walls. Atlanta attorney Carl Cofer worked for the investment company of Prince Hubertus Fugger of Augsburg, Germany, who maintained a great interest in American history and culture, and bought the property sight unseen for \$1.5 million in cash in 1988. That year, they traveled to view the property as a potential land investment and negotiated the final purchase of the estate's remaining 1,154 acres, down from over 5,000 acres. Cleaning the grounds was a major undertaking, including clearing the road to the property, excavating smaller buildings, removing trees from the manor ruins, repairing the house's wells and arches, installing new floors, and renovating the kitchen, which became the site museum (BG, 204, 208–10, 213, 245). Godfrey's grave, which had been

FIG. 5. Another interior view. Photo by author.

lost and neglected, was found by workers with metal detectors, who later erected a gravestone.⁵³

Cofer planned “to *leave* the house a ruin and rebuild the gardens as a tourist attraction.”⁵⁴ The excavation uncovered hundreds of Civil War artifacts, which only enhanced the site’s historical significance (*BG*, 213). Restoration of the gardens began in 1989, and most of the landscaping remained true to the original plans and design. Coker mentions that there was discussion of rebuilding the manor, though it was too expensive and impractical; its walls remain in bad condition and could not support a new roof. Only a small portion of the original estate remains, but Coker was especially adamant about the manor remaining authen-

FIG. 6. Upscale cottages of the Barnsley Resort, present day. Photo by author.

tic, even if it was incomplete, and he ardently points out that the building remains an original (figs. 4–5).⁵⁵

Barnsley Gardens and its museum opened publicly in fall 1991, but renovations continued for years afterward. The site was promoted for its “outstanding historic and horticultural value” and the addition of a restaurant and several other buildings, including other local historic buildings to the property, allowed “a great way of reproducing the original 1800’s Woodlands Village while also preserving more of the colorful history of Northwest Georgia” (*BG*, 234). Tourism grew throughout the 1990s, and other attractions were added, which led to Barnsley Gardens becoming a high-end resort, featuring a pool, spa, cottages, tennis courts, and a golf course. The cottages follow Downing’s landscape concept, as Barnsley would have wanted.⁵⁶ Fugger sold the property to a local family in 2004, and a grand, English-style hotel on the property was completed and opened in spring 2018. Today, Barnsley Resort is popular for weddings, corporate events, hunting, and tourism (fig. 6).

ANALYSIS

Ruinous Landscapes and the Historical Context of the Lost Cause

Though Barnsley clearly did not wish for his mansion to become a ruin, the fact that it was purposefully preserved that way suggests a certain respect for the landscape's original author. While the appearance of Barnsley Gardens' landscape is generally consistent with Barnsley's original plans, the site and its landscape changed over time as it passed through the ownership and influence of Barnsley's descendants and eventually its new "authors," who left their mark by reconceptualizing the site. Americanist Jeremy Korr cautions that artifacts "at any given time are not necessarily representative of corresponding elements at any earlier or later time."⁵⁷ Indeed, all artifacts have "a story[,] and when individuals assume ownership of those items, they often ascribe meanings that might not be the [author's] original intent."⁵⁸ It is therefore pertinent to examine Barnsley Gardens' contemporary significance as a ruin. The connection to a biography of landscape becomes clearer, because "if houses are family history writ small, rural landscapes and the maintenance of ruins within them are family history writ large." Ruins mnemonically express local and regional histories, calling attention to past events and individuals, collapsing the generations between and reinserting ancestors into the ethnographic present.⁵⁹ Because of their accessibility and tangibility, ruins allow visitors to assess and appreciate their historical veracity.⁶⁰ Furthermore, attitudes to ruins and ruination reveal social and cultural values that become evident from ruins' varied narratives, which, in turn, activate memories that can downplay the significance of ruins in the present.⁶¹

Superficially, ruins and ruination suggest loss or destruction and carry a negative connotation, though ruination can also be a mode of disclosure or revelation, which can recover or bring forth new or different memories.⁶² The disarticulation of an artifact may lead to the articulation of new histories and geographies; an approach that understands the artifact as a process rather than a fixed, physical object can possibly address some of the more ambiguous aspects of material presence and disappearance.⁶³ The very process of ruination importantly recalls the mode in which we remember, and also "the very nature of memory itself. That is, by being fragmented, broken and disordered they [ruins] do not shun but commemorate the unique characteristics of all memory, including its incompleteness."⁶⁴ Corrosion, in fact, enhances

the aura, as visible age confers prestige, though the ruin is esteemed in its own right, precious because it portends loss.⁶⁵ Therefore, it is necessary to consider the greater context beyond the Barnsley family history to appreciate this “incomplete” landscape.

As illustrated above, the Civil War was the turning point for the Barnsley family and estate. The 1850s and 1860s were a tumultuous time in Georgia politics, and sectionalism and anti-Yankee bias were evident and commonplace, leading to the state's secession from the Union in January 1861. Georgia's “limited cultural development” only began to emerge in the late antebellum period when there was a rising demand among southerners to culturally differentiate themselves from the North. Yet even amid the confusion of war, Georgians tried to retain as much of their traditional life as possible.⁶⁶ By 1865 Georgia was destroyed. After the war, chaos arose throughout the South, following a feeling that civilization had collapsed.⁶⁷

Conservatism triumphed in Georgia more so than any other state in the lower South, and politically, Georgia was defiant toward Reconstruction, specifically regarding acknowledging the rights of African Americans and freed slaves. Georgia was fully restored to the Union in 1870 and experienced relative economic stability until the Panic of 1873 and its resultant depression; a further economic recovery of the New South in the following years lasted until another depression struck in the 1890s.⁶⁸ Additionally, Georgia faced natural disasters, an enormous loss of capital from slave emancipation, the collapse of the Confederate currency, a debasement of land values, widespread destruction by the North, a bankrupt state government, ruined transportation systems, and famine, with many of these problems persisting until about 1900. Cotton, Georgia's most reliable and profitable cash crop, could not compete with northern industrialism, and its value consequently declined.⁶⁹ An effect of these circumstances resulted in a widespread bitterness from the South's defeat that elicited nostalgia and an appreciation for the pre-war South.⁷⁰ This pervasive sentiment, still evident in the contemporary South, is what scholars call the Lost Cause.

With its origins in the antebellum period, it was a composite of other myths, strengthened by southerners' despair.⁷¹

The Legend of the Lost Cause began as mostly a literary expression of the despair of a bitter, defeated people over a lost identity. It was a landscape dotted with figures drawn mainly out of the past: the

chivalric planter; the magnolia-scented Southern belle; the good, gray Confederate veteran, once a knight of the field and saddle; and obliging old Uncle Remus. All these, while quickly enveloped in a golden haze, became very real to the people of the South, who found the symbols useful in the reconstituting of their shattered civilization. They perpetuated the ideals of the Old South and brought a sense of comfort to the New.⁷²

The Lost Cause myth fostered a heroic image of southern secession, allowing Confederates to salvage at least some of their honor from a decisive defeat; thus, its purpose was to hide southerners' tragic, self-destructive mistake. The Lost Cause is essentially a romantic sentimentality, a rationalization, and a cover-up; it was also revivalistic, seeking to restore a past rather than look toward the future.⁷³ Southerners widely believed themselves to be a chosen, virtuous people and faced the problem of giving meaning to their lives after the defeat and failure of their belief system to find a new sense of belonging. The Lost Cause became a test of southern loyalty and provided a rationale for southerners to maintain a distinct culture within the United States.⁷⁴

Though the Lost Cause had wide appeal, its "longevity and force rested heavily on its function as an ideological defense of the values of small town-plantation elites," who were its most ardent defenders, glorifying the plantation ideal, justifying white supremacy, and supporting social stability. Its supporters sought to "ensure that the old civilization remained on display as a model for proper behavior," and landscape became a key medium for this display.⁷⁵

Landscape and Material Culture of Southern Plantations

The materialization of the Lost Cause is most evident in the hundreds of Confederate monuments and memorials across the South.⁷⁶ I propose that it is also strong in plantation landscapes, with Barnsley Gardens being a prime example. The symbolic representation of class, race, and power in southern plantations is most prominent in their material culture. Planters asserted their influence and control through their plantation's landscape, dominated by the main house.⁷⁷ The primary story of Barnsley Gardens, based on extant literature and the narrative that the site itself wishes to project, is based on the "master narrative" of

Barnsley and his descendants, glorifying their role in regional history. Yet much of the narrative focuses on the tragic side of this history.⁷⁸

Plantations and historic site museums often do not tell the complete stories of the places they represent. Scholars recognize that the authority of historic sites is evident in their material culture, but these sites more often serve to venerate a selective past rather than educate the wider public.⁷⁹ One key example of this contradiction is from Coker's explanations of the status of slaves at Barnsley Gardens, insisting how they were well treated. Barnsley opposed the institution and may not have been as cruel as other slaveholders. But despite his personal stance, the narratives do soften the fact that he owned slaves, which is consistent with much research surrounding plantation narratives.⁸⁰ Doing so controls the public perception of planters, as these sites seek to sell an engaging story to visitors.⁸¹

I propose that much of Lost Cause narrative correlates strongly to the Barnsley family history, and also within Barnsley Gardens' landscape. Such narratives depend on the site's artifacts as key "plot devices" to perhaps create a new narrative, a romanticized story reflective of the Lost Cause.⁸² For example, I did not intend to overemphasize the paranormal in this study, though I submit that it contributes to understanding Barnsley Gardens' landscape and sense of place. Indeed, one of its attractions (and selling points) is its haunted history, with tales of a Cherokee curse on the property, along with several hauntings and macabre tales. Some sources go out of their way to sensationalize the site's woeful atmosphere, which sets a certain tone, if not an expectation.⁸³ Coker is dismissive of these claims and says that the staff often finds them annoying, though they attract some visitors, and I contend that they add another dimension to the landscape's biography by further romanticizing the site's narrative, emphasizing the visual and ambient effects of the ruins.⁸⁴

And while most any southern antebellum plantation contains symbolic elements of the Lost Cause, Barnsley Gardens is different in that while others seemingly glorify the antebellum South, Barnsley Gardens appears, at least superficially, as a landscape of loss, melancholy, and defeat. But in fact, it might be more significant as a ruin when compared to other plantation landscapes because it survives as a remnant of the destruction of the Old South and it is treasured for its ruinous state, rather than being recreated as an idealized plantation landscape. While

Barnsley Gardens was reauthored and recreated, it was not physically rebuilt as a glorified plantation, even after passing through several owners. Rather, the ruin became its own romanticized ideal.

Preserving Decay?

It is important to examine the context of Barnsley Gardens' transition from a former plantation to a prominent regional resort during a time of widespread preservation efforts in Georgia. Historic preservation in Georgia originated in the 1950s, with the goal of promoting education and economic development (i.e., employment and tourism), with a particular focus on antebellum and Civil War history, as "Georgia was among the earliest of state programs to recognize the significance of historic landscapes." The movement, covering an array of historic buildings, districts, structures, sites, and landscapes, peaked in the 1980s and 1990s, at the time of Barnsley Gardens' most significant, modern transformation. Not all efforts were initiated or funded by the state, however, and, much like Barnsley Gardens, "citizen action" was a factor.⁸⁵ Also relevant to Barnsley Gardens and its rural setting is the significance of heritage tourism in Georgia, which accounts for a substantial proportion of the state's tourism industry, and is imperative for towns like Adairsville, with few other sources of economic development.⁸⁶ In fact, the creation of heritage sites is often a direct corollary to their commodification, where once redundant relics became anchors for regional redevelopment and rebranding plans.⁸⁷

Tourism relating to antebellum America and the Civil War is highly popular, and there is significant attention to the site's role in these eras. But unusually, Barnsley Gardens does not exhibit the grandeur of so many other plantations in the contemporary landscape through its principal artifact. The manor is a ruin; though it was not permanently abandoned, it was never fully restored. Rather, the new owners actually *chose* to keep the site in a state of preserved ruin, or "arrested decay," and make that part of the attraction in conjunction with its romantic narrative.⁸⁸ Coker mentions that, in leaving it a ruin, he and Fugger wanted to remain true to the tradition of the plantation, which is important because landscape and its treatment trigger notions of authenticity (BG, 226, 234).⁸⁹

In her study of plantation ruins, archaeologist Julia A. King argues that plantation ruins signify the roles of ancestors in building the coun-

try, while also subtly reinforcing and justifying a way of life that failed both economically and socially for most of the population. Such ruins may have been purposefully maintained because of their symbolic value, a way to materialize the abstract concept of the past.⁹⁰ As an artifact that gains potency and significance through deterioration, a ruin foregrounds the futility of recuperating an exact or official past, and instead celebrates multitemporality and indeterminacy in ruined form. Ruinous sites characterized by multiple temporalities offer opportunities for constructing alternative versions of the past.⁹¹ In accordance with the Lost Cause, Shackel explains: "Decay secures antiquity, and ruins help inspire reflections on institutions that had once been proud or strong. The existence of decaying ruins amplifies their age and grounds their symbolic meanings in a legitimate past."⁹² Imperfections and incompleteness can be culturally and historically significant and worthy of retaining, as actors who restore artifacts are sensitive to their integrity both by being accurate and by validating the material's life experiences.⁹³ Indeed, in the context of plantations, a certain degree of authenticity might be created through decay.⁹⁴ Such authenticity differentiates Barnsley Gardens from many other plantation sites by not appearing as contrived or museumized, even though it is consciously preserved and maintained in its ruinous state. This way, Barnsley Gardens could become a posh resort while maintaining a sense of historical depth by marketing its plantation landscape.

One way it does so is by "freezing" the manor in time. Modlin refers to a "frozen moment," common at plantation museums, which serves to avoid troubling or contested themes associated with the site.⁹⁵ Shackel argues that freezing is a way to silence portions of a landscape's history and emphasize specific narratives, "to make the landscape conform to the plan."⁹⁶ Another example within the context of Georgia's historic preservation movement, and also a prominent symbol of the Lost Cause, is the Stone Mountain Confederate Monument, chiseled in granite as a way to "stop time."⁹⁷ As for Barnsley Gardens, I argue its frozen status is designed to focus on the romantic history of a fallen southern plantation, complete with untimely deaths, a family fortune, lost loves, and ghost stories, creating an echo of the Lost Cause within the cultural landscape.

There is also the question of whether a landscape is falsified due to measures taken to prevent the effects of time, perhaps invalidating its authenticity.⁹⁸ But while landscape artifacts appear to be fixed and un-

changing, they are, in fact, not static, but rather part of the process of landscape change and its attendant histories and meanings.⁹⁹ Landscape interventions reflect conscious decisions, and the ways people choose to alter them (or not) are culturally significant.¹⁰⁰ Conventionally speaking, for an artifact to preserve cultural memory, it must be perpetually maintained in a protected status, and conservation strategies slow or halt decay as interpretive strategies present artifacts as elements of a static, unchanging past. But strategies that arrest decay destroy some cultural traces as they preserve others, allowing different types of recollection and interpretation.¹⁰¹ Ruins' identities are constantly in flux and "ensure that no stabilized meaning can endure unchallenged, as long as the process of ruination continues."¹⁰² This process allows human actors to manipulate artifacts and landscapes as their original functions and meanings erode, allowing people to reinterpret and repurpose them in their transient, transformative status.¹⁰³

In fact, modern efforts to preserve the manor as a ruin may make it more closely tied to the Lost Cause today than it was in the decades immediately following the Civil War. The Lost Cause theme seemed to appear after the resort was opened because Barnsley Gardens took on a new identity after the grounds were preserved and reauthored, and there was a new audience to consume the landscape. It was once forgotten, but new context and new authorship gave it new meaning. The manor adopted a new role as it became a planned ruin as opposed to a remnant of a once grand estate. Through Coker's work and other primary and secondary sources, we can employ the historical context and the Barnsley family history to create a biography of a landscape and gain further understanding of plantation landscapes, which affirm that landscape and its material culture often play an active part in shaping public memory.¹⁰⁴

The memory in question is that of the Lost Cause, which helps sell Barnsley Gardens to the public. "Selling" a heritage landscape refers to how it is presented, often for education and/or entertainment, but heritage landscapes are essentially products that are consumed. The ultimate goal of heritage landscapes is to convey messages about the meaning(s) of the past, and the underlying assumption is that there is something about the landscape worth preserving.¹⁰⁵ Historic preservation is a symbolization process, and by selecting time-bound

objects and transforming them into “timeless” artifacts with significance in the present that carry meaning into the future, “historic preservation enhances the ambiguity and sanctity of such symbols.”¹⁰⁶ The manor was preserved to allow the structure to remain stable, but “frozen” as a ruin to retain a specific identity, heritage, and metaphorical and symbolic quality. Ruins and ruination are the visual, metaphorical elements of the tragic (and marketable) side of the landscape’s biography. By not recreating the manor, Barnsley Gardens displays a retention of older values, keeping it “as it was”—an “authentic” representation—as well as possible. This strategy of authenticity might offer a more genuine connection to the Old South compared to other plantation museums, as it perpetuates a landscape and place symbolic of the Lost Cause in a more “authentic” way. The complex landscape at Barnsley Gardens embodies family tragedies, as well as the effects of war and social, political, and economic change, further illustrating its multiple meanings along with its multiple typologies as a landscape.

CONCLUSION: RUIN AND REMINDER

In his book *Ghosts of the Confederacy*, historian Gaines M. Foster suggests a dissipation of the Lost Cause mentality by the early twentieth century, mentioning that the ghosts that shaped the New South became “too elusive and ephemeral to determine its identity.”¹⁰⁷ Though he devotes some attention to Confederate monuments, Foster does not consider in great depth the lasting effects of material culture on the landscapes of the Lost Cause and the “ghosts” they can evoke. In this case, Barnsley Gardens is haunted by its own past as well as the South’s, both materially in its landscape, and nonmaterially through its history and lore. One cannot overlook artifacts’ effects on landscapes, as they can quell disorder, fill voids, and address contested narratives and memories in the construction and reconstruction of identities, stabilizing them materially, as fragments or as recreations, to serve as symbolic reminders of the permanence and continuity of old values threatened by external change.¹⁰⁸

Rather, the Lost Cause persists and shapes an identity for Barnsley Gardens, though it is important to recognize that plantations are more than standard cultural landscapes. Scholars tend to focus on landscapes

when they were built and in active use, but the afterlife of those landscapes is also important; like seemingly “static” ruins, an abandoned artifact is still part of an active landscape. Furthermore, landscapes are subject to interpretation and reinterpretation, just as inventing and re-writing a tradition also rewrites a landscape, as we see in the multiple authors and stages of Barnsley Gardens.¹⁰⁹ Through ruination, the site retains the past but acquires new meaning, even as it is presented in a semiretrospective context. In effect, the “creation” of a decaying landscape becomes an important part of the memorial process.

Superficially, the manor does not reflect change, as it is frozen in a state of loss and destruction, to keep it static and thwart any organic historical development as a way to deny change that surrounds it. Indeed, the only indications that it is not an abandoned property are the signage and development around it. Nonetheless, both the artifact and the people maintaining it retained agency, and its meaning changed along with changing historical and spatial contexts.¹¹⁰ Geographer Tim Edensor explains,

Over their lives, buildings are used for different purposes, aesthetically appraised according to contemporary tastes, demolished, renovated, amended, and spatially recontextualised by the erection of adjacent structures and planning redesignations. They are cannibalised, extended and reduced, their textures change as they decay and disintegrate, and their meanings transform as understandings about their purpose, design and symbolic qualities are superseded.¹¹¹

While it might *appear* to be a ruin, Barnsley Gardens is certainly no longer neglected given its careful maintenance and repurposing; it is a ruin that no longer functions as a ruin.

Rather than being just another site that caters to antebellum and Civil War tourism, Barnsley Gardens, through its succession of landscape authors, instead rebranded itself to become a highly commercialized resort that created a draw for tourism and development in rural Adairsville by capitalizing on an unusual landscape feature. A reliance on a plantation’s material culture is a common tactic that historic sites use to promote a specific narrative, often conforming to the Lost Cause mentality, which effectively normalizes such myths through the landscape and the site’s artifacts.¹¹² While myths are typically set in previous

ages, they are often associated with features still extant in the contemporary landscape.¹¹³ Maintaining the manor as a ruin allows the resort to be true to the Old South tradition and romantic narrative. Its high-end status, branded as a site of southern heritage, albeit constructed and selective, allows for the continuance of the romance through its success as a resort that capitalizes on an “authentic” plantation landscape created following the blueprint of a regional myth and invented tradition. The commercialization of the Lost Cause cheapened and sanitized its message, and I believe that the historical significance and symbolism of Barnsley Gardens was somewhat diluted, as it was clouded by the modern resort.¹¹⁴ Also important is the spatiality of the site, as the manor is somewhat isolated from and peripheral to the “resort” part of the property, perhaps to separate the melancholy of the ruins from the pleasantness of the resort and its continuing development. This way, the manor retains authenticity and memory, and the two separate spaces do not tarnish or overshadow each other.¹¹⁵

The development of a resort in the style as Barnsley “would have wanted it” suggests that, like the Lost Cause narrative, Barnsley Gardens is trying to legitimize itself by exhibiting an upscale sensibility following Downing’s landscape design. This shows that the tragedies of Barnsley Gardens did not occur in vain. Its current value as a resort and historical attraction helps correct or compensate for the South’s decline along with that of the Barnsley family in the form of an upscale resort by still paying homage to the past through symbolic restoration by the preservation of a ruin, the recreation of its gardens, and the creation of new wealth once lost.

More than a mere ruin, Barnsley Gardens symbolizes broken pride by retaining part of the past through preservation and through the changing contexts that surround it. That the ruins are so popular with visitors also suggests that they reflect a certain expectation about their presentation.¹¹⁶ The Lost Cause and Barnsley family history both fuse fact and myth in their representations of southern heritage. Regionally distinct artifacts such as plantations, Confederate monuments, and Confederate flags act as conduits for history and myth, allowing for a continuous presence and reminder of the Lost Cause in the southern landscape. In the case of Barnsley Gardens, the landscape is enveloped in mythical narratives that are reinforced and made more potent through its preserved but fragmentary ruins, which, unlike most

other plantation sites, suggest an unresolvedness to larger narratives of southern heritage. I submit that, due to the authors' roles in preserving the landscape's principal artifact, they may not want to modify or fully restore it because doing so would also change its narrative(s), and they intend for the Barnsley legend and its role in perpetuating southern heritage to continue. The preservation of the artifact also preserves the narrative, and its continued existence as a "frozen" ruin helps preserve both its material and nonmaterial qualities. This is evident because, consistent with the existential nature of Lost Cause landscapes, artifacts, and symbols, so much of the identity of Barnsley Gardens revolves around the centrality of its ruins, as an icon, a place identifier, and a narrative device. The authors of the landscape clearly want the romance to live on, which it can, more "authentically," in the form of a slowly decaying ruin.

It is important to clarify that I do not wish to carelessly associate the agents behind Barnsley Gardens with the more negative aspects of the Lost Cause (i.e., slavery, racism, rebellion, etc.), as many of the decisions behind those who create and interact with a landscape may not be entirely conscious, revealing more than the original authors intended.¹¹⁷ The insistence on retaining the site's authenticity by preserving, albeit problematically, the remains of the original manor suggests a direct link to maintaining a sense of the Old South at the modern resort, as it attracts tourists and adds to its historical appeal, no matter how one might interpret it.

Barnsley Gardens illustrates an important and underexamined aspect of how specific elements of southern identities express themselves through material culture and landscape. The fact that it is a cultural, symbolic, historic, archaeological, ideological, and heritage landscape shows the multiple dimensions of this identity as people can view it both synchronically and diachronically, and, through this case study, we learn that combining a material and temporal analysis reveals aspects that accompanying secondary and primary sources do not. This approach was enhanced by combining perspectives from geography, history, and archaeology, which I see as a crucial strategy in historical landscape studies, and especially pertinent in the study of multifaceted plantation landscapes, and how they can simultaneously serve as relics, historical sites, and tourist destinations. We must recognize that a plantation is more than a mere construct, but, significantly, that it is a

cultural artifact, and we cannot discount the importance of materiality as a lingering embodiment of the Lost Cause. Material and symbolic elements of the Old South persist and are even maintained in the contemporary southern landscape. As the scholarship on plantations advances, it is prudent to consider not only the histories of plantations, their economic significance, and the cultural and social aspects of that institution, but what plantations, as landscapes and artifacts themselves, can reveal.

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