

ABSTRACT

Title of Thesis: PRESERVING AND INTERPRETING
HISTORIC ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND
ARCHITECTURAL RUINS
WITHIN PRIVATE DEVELOPMENTS

Degree Candidate: Connie Marie Huddleston

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Thesis directed by: Dr. Dale A. Gyure
Welch Center for Graduate and Professional Studies
Goucher College

This study examines the preservation and interpretation of historic archaeological and architectural ruins within private developments. Additionally, it presents a criteria-based rating system to evaluate the long-term preservation and economic potential of ruins. The criteria are: 1) visual image and setting; 2) history; 3) purpose; 4) interpretation; and 5) legal protection. This rating system can be used to identify a preserved ruin's values and limitations. Also, the system can be used to evaluate the preservation and economic potential of ruins yet to be preserved. Applying the rating system to either type of ruin may grant those interested in ruin preservation with strategies to energize and strengthen their plans.

This study presents an historic overview of ruin preservation beginning with the Sublime and Picturesque movements of the late eighteenth century. It continues with

reasons for preserving ruins, targeting on particular audiences such as the public, archaeologists, architects, architectural historians, and artists. The economic benefits and values of ruin preservation discussed include ways that ruin preservation can benefit a locale by providing a sense of history and community pride.

Using the criteria-based rating system, this study evaluates eleven preserved ruins for their long-term preservation and economic potential. Besides a basic description of each ruin, the narrative rates each and makes recommendations for improvements to gain additional economic benefits and to ensure long-term preservation.

Finally, the principles of ruin preservation and interpretation are applied to a special case study, the Wilson House Ruin, Palmetto Bluff, South Carolina. Preservation and interpretive plans for this ruin are presented, and opportunities for economic gains from the ruin are discussed.

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Connie Marie Huddleston

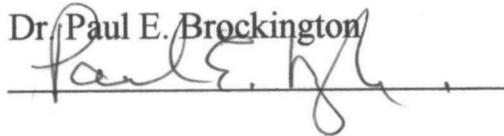
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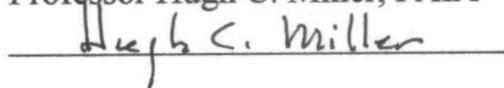
Dr. Dale A. Gyure, Chair



Dr. Paul E. Brockington



Professor Hugh C. Miller, FAIA



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This thesis is dedicated to
the memory of
Thomas Kenneth Aldridge, my father.
His life and love of history have always
and will always inspire me to learn.

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CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION

Beginning in the early eighteenth century, Europeans discovered their historical consciousness and the historical sublime experience that ruins evoked. This began a tradition of ruins being celebrated, venerated, and interpreted for the public. In the United States, state and national agencies occasionally strive to preserve and interpret historic archaeological and architectural ruins for the public, allowing their unique qualities of time and place to create a historical identity for their locale and beyond; however, this is seldom the case outside of government lands and projects. In the private sector, economic issues weigh especially heavily upon each decision. This situation certainly exists when presenting a plan to preserve and interpret privately-owned ruins.

Understanding the limitations of adaptive use for ruins leads to an important question—can historic ruins be preserved and interpreted successfully within a private development, providing not only historic but also economic value to the property? In attempting to answer this question, this study first explores the history of ruin preservation. In particular, Chapter II presents an overview of the Picturesque movement and Sublime concept of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries as they applied to European ruins. These two intellectual convictions heightened interest in heritage tourism and led to the preservation of many ruins across Britain and Europe.

In contrast, little ruin preservation has occurred in the United States. Chapter II examines reasons for this paradox.

As a matter of practice, preservation demands an audience. Audiences for ruins, particularly those uncovered during archaeological excavations, often exhibit quite dissimilar interests than the audience for more traditional historic sites. This area of concern prompts a discussion in Chapter III of why and for whom archaeological ruins should be preserved. Suggested potential audiences include historians, archaeologists, and preservationists along with the general public. In developing the idea of ruin audiences, the chapter presents and considers different stimuli for preservation. Appropriately, Chapter III's conclusion investigates the idea that ruins can create a specific time and place of historic consciousness if properly presented and interpreted.

Chapter IV delves into the economic costs and benefits associated with ruin preservation. This study includes data on preservation costs associated with active and passive preservation methods and available tax credits and incentives. The chapter also investigates ways to use ruins as marketing tools to reap economic benefits.

While the public sector exhibits successful examples of the preservation and interpretation of historic building ruins, private developments only rarely preserve ruins. The few private sector businesses which do successfully employ ruins as symbols or marketing brands, including Barboursville Vineyards, Virginia, and Barnsley Gardens, Georgia, find strong benefits. Chapter V presents several case studies for ruins in the southeastern United States and investigates the potential for economic benefit to the

private development and to the community. The chapter details a set of criteria to predict successful long-term ruin preservation.

As support for the thesis that archaeological ruins can and should be preserved and interpreted both for specialized audiences and the public, the Wilson House ruins, Palmetto Bluff, South Carolina, serve here as a special case study. Chapter VI uses the criteria for success presented in Chapter V to prove the economic benefits of a plan to preserve, interpret, and maintain these privately-owned ruins. Chapter VI provides an overview of the Wilson house's history along with information on its architectural design and the archaeological investigations conducted at the site. The chapter concludes with suggested preservation and interpretive plans.

Chapter VII offers historic preservation professionals, architectural historians, developers, and others inspiration to preserve and interpret significant archaeological ruins, both private and public. The conclusion demonstrates that by working together, the preservation community and archaeologists can actively protect a wider range of historic sites and retain more of our rich past for future generations.

The Random House Dictionary of the English Language defines a ruin as “the remains of a building, city, etc., that has been destroyed or is decaying.”¹ M.W. Thompson in his treatise, *Ruins: Their Preservation and Display*, defined a ruin as a roofless shell. Thompson stated “The shell may stand to roof height or exist only as a foundation (or even merely as an archaeological fossil in the subsoil), but it is clearly sharply distinguished from a roofed structure which provides shelter and is in some sense usable.”² While this study closely mirrors Thompson's definition of ruins, it also

acknowledges visible ruins as well as those identified after archaeological investigations at an historic site.

Across our nation, many ruins stand unnoticed or lie buried awaiting discovery, investigation, and protection. Ruins represent our past, present, and future. Ruins remain as intriguing reminders of a past, giving us a sense of a history that we may no longer remember. Ruins supply us a bit of our story; they give us “personal dialogues with ghosts.”³ In the present, ruins exist to pique our curiosity and stimulate our imaginations. As for the future, ruins symbolize each person’s desire to leave proof of their existence here on earth. The following provides the criteria, ways, and means of ruin preservation.

CHAPTER II TRADITIONS OF PRESERVING RUINS

I met a traveller from an antique land,
Who said: Two vast and trunkless legs of stone
Stand in the desert. . . .Near them, on the sand,
Half sunk, a shattered visage lies, whose frown,
And wrinkled lip, and sneer of cold command,
Tell that its sculptor well those passions read
Which yet survive, stamped on these life less things,
The hand that mocked them, and the heart that fed:
And on the pedestal these words appear:
'My name is Ozymandias, king of kings:
Look on my works ye Mighty, and despair!'
Nothing beside remains. Round the decay
Of that colossal wreck, boundless and bare
The lone and level sands stretch far away.

Percy Bysshe Shelley, *Ozymandias*

While Europe maintains a tradition of preserving ruins, the United States possess no such tradition. The preservation movement in each locale developed around different themes and for dissimilar reasons. In Europe, early preservation movements focused on the ruins of antiquity. In the United States, a country with a relatively short history, early accomplishments centered on buildings associated with our presidents and the early Colonial period. American interest surrounding the preservation of prehistoric Native American ruins did not carry over to historic ruins.

This chapter introduces the tradition of preserving ruins as it occurred in Europe with the Sublime intellectual constructs and the Picturesque Movement. The ideals and

actions of these two intertwined sentiments are defined, identified, and discussed.

Additionally, their influence on the preservation of ruins is presented. Then preservation movements on each continent are reviewed, and their traditions toward preserving ruins are examined. Also presented are the influences of nationalist movements on ruin preservation.

The Sublime and The Picturesque Movement

“Sublime” commonly means exalted, noble, or impressing the mind with a sense of grandeur, power, and beauty. An alternate meaning is to convert into a heat or vapor.⁴ A combination of these definitions expresses the intellectual ideals of the Sublime, popular from the middle eighteenth century into the nineteenth century. To experience the Sublime, a difficult feeling to express to others, one discovered and embraced, in a fleeting or vaporizing moment, an artwork or historic place’s beauty or grandeur, along with its aspects of terror and awe.

Eighteenth century philosophers and writers Edmund Burke and Immanuel Kant presented the ideals of the Sublime to their public. Edmund Burke’s 1756 essay, *A Philosophical Inquiry into the Origin of Our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful*, described the Sublime as:

The passions which belong to self-preservation, turn on pain and danger: they are simply painful when their causes immediately affect us: they are delightful when we have an idea of pain and danger, without being actually in such circumstances: this delight I have not called pleasure, because it turns on pain, and because it is different enough from any idea of positive pleasure. Whatever excites this delight, I call sublime.⁵

Burke's poetry came to be considered the ultimate example of the Sublime, and his ideas contributed to the development of the Romantic Movement.⁶

The ideas of the Sublime affected not only those interested in history but also poets, writers, sculptors, painters, and landscape architects. Among the objects believed to evoke the Sublime were ruins. Writers like Johann Wolfgang von Goethe felt that ruins influenced the feelings associated with Sublime or romantic inspiration. These feelings included loneliness and seclusion.⁷ Romantics reveled in the sad, desecrated, remote appearance of ruins and rarely enjoyed them for aesthetic reasons.⁸ Poets of the period wrote of the Sublime in nature, as they gathered inspiration from verdant-covered ruins in addition to mountains and oceans. Sculptors and architects copied statuary and arches from medieval ruins, often creating the impression of ruin within new works. Artists painted and drew these ruins as they stood, often buried under vines and surrounded by pastoral scenes. Landscape architects used ruins to stimulate the Sublime or romantic feelings within their garden, often going as far as "building" ruins where none existed.⁹

While the Sublime experience was difficult to recreate, artists strove to demonstrate it within their works. From these efforts and other sources came the associated idea of the Picturesque. In his recent work, *In Ruins*, Christopher Woodward wrote: "No one 'invented' the Picturesque. In retrospect, it can be understood as a confluence of philosophers, poets, and painters whose ideas flowed in the same direction."¹⁰ Yet, some modern scholars think one writer was the protagonist of the Picturesque Movement. English author, artist, and teacher, the Reverend William Gilpin

(1724-1804) published his *Remarks on Forest Scenery* in 1791 where he described his preference for untamed nature over formal gardens and the picturesque appeal of overhanging, winding, and twisting trees with exposed roots set among natural or irregular land forms.¹¹ This work led to others where the picturesque garden or scene was more definitively described. For example, in his 1794 seminal work *On Picturesque Beauty*, Gilpin wrote that the attributes of picturesque beauty are “not only the form, and the *composition* of the objects of landscape, which the picturesque eye examines, it connects them with the atmosphere, and seeks for all those various effects, which are produced from that vast, and wonderful storehouse of nature.”¹² This work, along with the other two essays, *On Picturesque Travel* and *On Sketching Landscape*, formed the basis of the Picturesque Movement that was to influence all of the arts for more than fifty years.

In part, the inclusion of ruins as a focal element within the Picturesque arose from William Gilpin’s *On Picturesque Beauty*, where he wrote:

But among all the objects of art, the picturesque eye is perhaps most inquisitive after the elegant relics of ancient architecture; the ruined tower, the Gothic arch, the remains of castles, and abbeys. These are the richest legacies of art. They are consecrated by time; and almost deserve the veneration we pay to works of nature itself.

Thus universal are the objects of picturesque travel. We pursue beauty in every shape; through nature, through art; and all its various arrangements in form, and colour; admiring it in the grandest objects, and not rejecting it in the humblest.¹³

Even Gilpin’s sketches of ideal picturesque gardens often involved ruins surrounded by the excesses of nature. Many of these were incorporated into his guidebooks of the

English countryside. These guidebooks inspired “a British equivalent of the European grand tour with tourists rushing into the countryside, sketchbook in hand, eager to experience and capture this picturesque beauty.”¹⁴

So as the Picturesque Movement developed, during the last part of the eighteenth century, the long deserted, now partially buried ruins of England’s abbeys and castles captured the imagination of educated and rhapsodistic individuals. Artists of all kinds presented the movement’s ideas to the public. Artists embraced pastoral scenes, long deserted abbeys, ruined castles, and simple cottages, presenting their images in paintings, engravings, poetry, and even on the transfer-printed ceramics of the early nineteenth century.¹⁵ Ruins of medieval castles, churches, abbeys, and Roman-period remains began to appear in landscape designs.

Poets, in particular, adopted the Picturesque’s language and images. Shelley’s sonnet *Ozymandias*, written in response to the arrival of the statue’s head at the British Museum in March 1818, celebrated Picturesque antiquities.¹⁶ In 1819, Shelley allowed the ruins of Rome, especially the Baths of Caracalla, to influence his composition of *Prometheus Unbound*. In the preface, he wrote

This Poem was chiefly written upon the mountainous ruins of the Baths of Caracalla, among the flowery glades, and the thickets of odiferous blossoming trees, which were extended in ever winding labyrinths upon its immense platforms and dizzy arches suspended in the air. The bright blue sky of Rome, and the effect of the vigorous awakening spring in that divinest climate, and the new life with which it drenches the spirits even to intoxication, were the inspiration of this drama.¹⁷

Shelley’s poetry, widely read and appreciated, assuredly created in its readers the desire to see these picturesque, yet foreign, places and to experience the Sublime.

Ruins also served as popular travel destinations especially if on a promontory or associated with scenic views. Local residents recognized these landmarks for their connection with history and their ability to inspire. In the eighteenth century, upper-class travelers mainly expressed this affection for structures of the past — in particular ruins. This interest spread to the middle classes by the nineteenth century.¹⁸ Beginning with the public's recognition of the Picturesque Movement, the first preservation movements occurred.

Britain's Nationalist Movement

In England, Scotland, Ireland, and Wales, the nineteenth century began with a realization of their common history as well as those of each individual country. Pride in their “Britishness” resulted in the glorification, protection, and preservation of their national works of art, buildings, and ruins. Anne Janowitz defined how ruin preservation began within this movement in her work, *England's Ruins: Poetic Purpose and the National Landscape*. She wrote of the seventeenth century parliamentary orders to destroy the remaining castles to prevent their use in future civil wars:

When the revolutionary process was halted by the Restoration, many of what M.W. Thompson calls these “stricken” castles were abandoned. Nature took on the project of the reclamation of the stones. The physical situation of cultural ruins within the countryside linked the rhetoric of ruin to that of land. This turned out to be fortunate in the creation of British nationalism: as assimilated into the later eighteenth-century aesthetic of the picturesque, ruins were admired as blending into the countryside, while the sense of ‘country’ as rural terrain and ‘country’ as nation also began to melt one into the other. In such seemingly self-evident and therefore “unimagined” coincidence between country and country - the “naturalizing” of the nation - was born the myth of rural England, as well as the myth of the homogeneous coherence of the nation. Such a rhetoric

naturalizes as well the violence of nation-making, which evacuates from cultural artifacts the labor that made them, the human events that took place in them, and the cost to both ancient and local defeated communities, whose worlds provided the ruins upon which arises the structure of British nationalism.¹⁹

Just as Britain's interest in ruins grew, so did their emerging nation-state with its budding global empire.²⁰ In eighteenth-century Britain, the ruin, a figure of decay, symbolized their nationalism. Anne Janowitz explains this paradox:

Though the spectacle of ruins in the landscape offers evidence of a nation possessed of a long history, the materials that ruinists draw on to make figures may produce different meanings within some other groups's imagination. The detritus of a Scottish castle may remind the Scottish viewer most powerfully of a defeat suffered, while Martello towers assert to the Irish the continuous and material presence of English domination. So, too, the evidence of ruined castles may remind those in opposition to central government that there has been a time when government was neither central nor uncontested. . . . But at the same time, ruin imagery cannot help asserting the visible evidence of historical and imperial impermanence, for the ruin has been traditionally associated with human and cultural transience.²¹

Britain's nationalist movement continued to grow as interests in Gothic architecture took hold. M.W. Thompson suggested the Gothic Revival originated from "an infusion of piety into the Romantic experience."²² During the nineteenth century's Gothic Revival, this religious piety created a reverence for the virtues of Gothic architecture. In 1858, Gilbert Scott, in *Remarks on Secular and Domestic Architecture, Present and Future*, wrote ". . . I boldly assert, that no style of architecture which the world has ever produced has shown a tittle of this elasticity in adapting itself to every circumstance, position and material."²³ Britain's love of Gothic architecture and their

nationalist desire to preserve elements of their history brought about some of Great Britain's first ruin preservation projects.

While Britain's nationalist movement resulted in great strides in ruin and Gothic architecture restoration, other European nations began similar programs after recognizing their own national identity. For example, Susan Crane in *Collecting and Historical Consciousness in Early Nineteenth-Century Germany*, wrote "Nationalism, in this context, can be understood as the expression of an historical consciousness seeking to preserve itself in public." To express Germany's growing interest in their own history and cultural identity, Crane quotes an early nineteenth-century visitor to the ruins of the Palace of Friedrich Barbarossa at Burg zu Gelnhausen. This visitor, Bernard Hundeshagen recorded in his journal the following:

One hurries toward the gate, and it is as if one is awakened from a deep sleep: stopping in wonder that the feet are still on firm ground, as one sees the Rome and Greece so long dreamed of . . . Such a work of architecture must have, in its time, awakened the greatest admiration of the honor of Germany, an awe of the whole German essence, and awakened in the soul of the art-loving or artistic observer the courage and strength to create similar forms.²⁴

The ideals of nationalism spread to other European countries and to the United States by the late nineteenth century. In the United States, this new sense of nationalism is embodied in the Colonial Revival architectural style.

Influences of the Sublime, the Picturesque, and Nationalism on Preservation

The Sublime and the Picturesque inspired early preservationists to collect and protect the objects and settings that created these feelings. Nationalistic movements in

many European nations, especially Great Britain and Germany, drew upon a desire to create a unique cultural identity and style. In Britain, Gothic ruins served as a symbol of England's past. These beginning preservation activities included the creation of museums, often by individuals who felt compelled to preserve historical objects and to provide preservation for *in situ* objects — in particular, ruins. This section provides an overview of historic preservation movements in Great Britain and Germany as they relate to ruins. It ends with a discussion of the effects of the Sublime and Picturesque on Americans and a summary of nineteenth-and-twentieth century American preservation actions related to ruins.

A Brief Overview of Ruin Preservation in Britain and Germany

In the early fifteenth century, Ciriaco of Ancona, an Italian antiquary, traveled throughout Italy and across other locales bringing back countless inscriptions and sketches of buildings, ruins, and monuments. When asked why, he replied “To wake the dead.”²⁵ This awakening of the dead typifies early Renaissance ideas. Scholars began to study all forms of classical art. Architects measured ancient buildings to learn proportion and symmetry, so as to apply these lessons to their designs. It was the search for classical architecture that led to the first preservation movements in the ancient cities and the first archaeological excavations. By the early nineteenth century, visitors could view many of Rome's antiquities, especially the Roman ruins. In the eighteenth century, Lord Byron, thrilled by the Roman Coliseum, called it “A noble wreck in ruinous perfection.”²⁶

Influenced by the ideals of the Sublime and the Picturesque, ruins became sacred not only to architects and antiquarians but also to the public. Medieval ruins already served pivotal roles in landscape gardens; however, ruin preservation focused on protecting this historic “statuary” for its Sublime and picturesque beauty. These were not complete acts of preservation, for viewers expected the ruins to be surrounded by picturesque nature. This included trees and shrubs growing between and on the walls and ivy climbing over columns and arches. William Gilpin, in describing his visit to Tintern Abbey after the restoration of its interior, wrote:

More picturesque it certainly would have been if the area, unadorned, had been left with its rough fragments scattered round; and bold was the hand that removed them; yet as the outside of the ruin, which is the chief object of picturesque curiosity, is still left in all its wild and native rudeness; we excuse—the neatness that is introduced within.²⁷

Ruins were expected to be in a state of disarray and neglect, full of fallen walls and columns, desolate and abandoned. Gilpin even suggested the use of a mallet to improve Tintern Abbey by restoring its Picturesque nature. It is unknown how many ruins were “improved” in this manner.²⁸

Perhaps the first move to protect a medieval structure from demolition was in 1709 when John Vanburgh, the architect of Blenheim Palace for the Duke and Duchess of Marlborough, sought to preserve the Woodstock Manor ruins within the parkland. However, the Duchess saw the ruin as an eyesore and assumed it would be removed. Vanburgh presented two arguments for restoration; first, he pointed out that the manor house had been the meeting place of Henry II and Rosamund Clifford, venerated in the

ballad “Fair Rosamund.” His second argument centered on the image it would project within the landscape plantings of the garden, saying “it would make one of the most agreeable objects that the best of Landskip (sic) painters can invent.”²⁹ The Duchess was not swayed and ordered the demolition of Woodstock Manor.

The failure to preserve Woodstock Manor occurred after sixteenth-and seventeenth-century actions to organize and investigate original sources including documents and sketches of historical places and objects. However, attempts were not made to form a historical society or preservation group until the early years of the eighteenth century.³⁰ In 1707, the Society of Antiquaries of London was founded, coincidentally, just as the objects of antiquity were beginning a period of notable decline.³¹ Also, in the early to middle eighteenth century, archaeological excavations and discoveries uncovered more of the world’s ancient past.

Next came the phenomenon of the Gothic Revival, a combination of Victorian piety and Romantic notions. During this nineteenth-century period (1840-1880), the focus was on restoration, for many churches suffered from lack of care and needed immediate attention to prevent their falling into ruin.³² The writings and works of Gilbert Scott, Emmanuel Viollet-le-Duc, and William Burges fall into this period. None of these individuals concerned themselves with the preservation of ruins, only with their restoration.

In opposition to restoration, John Ruskin, the nineteenth-century English architectural critic and social reformer, believed that “It’s as impossible to raise the dead

as to restore a building.”³³ Ruskin’s friend, William Morris, an English craftsman, painter, and designer, also subscribed to Ruskin’s “let-it-alone” ideas. Morris wrote: “restoration is generally speaking a modern euphemism for wholesale destruction and the worst desecration.”³⁴ In 1877, William Morris founded the Society for the Preservation of Ancient Buildings. Morris’s views on preservation focused on changing social conditions that made it impossible, even if desirable, to restore a building faithfully to its original appearance. Part of the Society’s manifesto — written by Morris — included the dictum “put Protection in the place of Restoration.”³⁵

The Society was established five years before the passage of Britain’s first Ancient Monuments Act in 1882. Before 1882, Britain was heavily populated and ruins often served as quarries for local populations. In addition, the British Isle’s climate and vegetation are hostile to ruins. After passage of the Ancient Monuments Act, local societies, mainly in rural districts, began to form and bring together interested individuals to discuss preservation.³⁶ M.W. Thompson stressed that the Ancient Monuments Act “severely curtailed, by prohibitory laws” the destruction of Britain’s ruins.³⁷ However, it was not until passage of the revised act in 1913 that approximately 20,000 monuments, mostly ruins or earthworks in England, Scotland, and Wales, were protected. The government now began to play a larger role in the preservation of ruins.³⁸

In Penelope Lively’s *Treasures of Time*, a historian explains to Japanese tourists the English fondness of ruins with the line “partly because we’ve got so many, we’ve had to make the best of them.”³⁹ Britain’s ruins encompass many time frames, but, the Acts of 1536 and 1539 that terminated the monastic way of life in England and Wales created

a rapid rise in the number of medieval ruins. Churches, abbeys, and monasteries were stripped of their wealth and left to the ravages of man and time. Their roofs were removed for the lead, and their stones carried off for local building projects.

Additionally, after the Reformation and the Civil War, hundreds of castles were abandoned and many destroyed.⁴⁰ Yet, many of these spectacular castles and abbeys lay undisturbed for centuries, perhaps because they were notable and familiar pieces of the local rural landscape.

By 1981 in Great Britain, when M.W. Thompson wrote *Ruins: Their Preservation and Display*, the Crown protected some 900 monuments, mainly ruins. Thompson believes that it is in Britain that ruins are probably more “solicitously cared for and elaborately displayed than anywhere else in the world.”⁴¹ Since World War II, in Britain, a ruin can be cared for by the state under a deed of guardianship, while the owner retains his rights of ownership. However, the state possesses all responsibility for maintenance and management.⁴²

Ruins in Great Britain are protected, not restored or reconstructed. Thompson wrote that in “the Inspector’s Report for 1913 restoration was regarded as the most heinous offence making a foreman liable to ‘instant dismissal’. It remains at the core of all thinking on this subject.”⁴³ Britain’s preservation doctrine centers on preserving ruins with an “an awareness of the value of the remains as evidence. The ruin is regarded as a document which can tell us a great deal about its history if we have eyes to see and understand.”⁴⁴ Britain’s display and interpretation of ruins focuses on making the ruin intelligible to the public.

Examples and photographs of preserved ruins in Britain fill the pages of many books. Yet, a few ruins that illustrate Britain's preservation doctrine must be mentioned. At Bury St. Edmunds Abbey, Suffolk, the archaeological excavations revealed the buried crypt and crossing after removal of several meters of overburden. A virgin ruin in 1919, archaeological excavations at Rievaulx Abbey, North Yorkshire, exposed over one-third of the once buried, early eastern arm of the church and the frater. The nave, once covered by many meters of fill, now can be explored and enjoyed by visitors. At Heddon-on-the-Wall, archaeological retrieval revealed the relentless course of Hadrian's Wall; in other areas it has exposed the Roman forts and towns situated along the Wall. In contrast to these examples, excavations at Kenilworth Castle, England, and Caerphilly Castle, South Wales, uncovered so many stages of rebuilding and restoration that discovery of the authentic remains became impossible. At those sites, interpretation deals with the issues of preserving ruins to "the period to which they purport to belong."⁴⁵

In Germany's precursor states, the Sublime appeared to take hold in the late eighteenth century. The Grimm brothers began recording the legends of their country, while others like A.W. Schlegel, Caroline Schlegel, and their friends visited the Dresden art galleries to view and discuss the Sublime and historic theme paintings that inspired them. The Schlegels printed these conversations in their 1799 story entitled, "The Paintings."⁴⁶ Goethe wrote of the historic consciousness or sensations he experienced while viewing the many objects and the art collected in the Dresden gallery. Paintings such as Carl Blechen's *Gothic Church in Ruins* (1826) were inspired by their writings.⁴⁷

Soon other enlightened Germans realized that *Denkmal*, historic monuments, objects, or ruins representative of memory, could influence others to recognize and enjoy the Sublime. They began to argue for and privately preserve objects and ruins. While museums held objects that created the Sublime experience, settings or places had to be preserved *in situ*.⁴⁸ In this manner, the Sublime could be experienced in ruins from their imperfect or damaged condition and could communicate a sense of history if one were “attuned to their ‘particular clarity’.”⁴⁹

Before unification in 1871, many autonomous German kingdoms, duchies, or states adopted historic preservation ordinances and began historic building inventories.⁵⁰ Prussian architect, Karl Friedrich Schinkel, the “father of public preservation” in Germany, initiated historic conservation work in 1815 and called for government protection of monuments.⁵¹ Government ordinances soon followed. In 1826, Bavaria passed an ordinance calling for the preservation of town fortifications. Prussia followed suit in 1830 with a decree that prevented towns from demolishing city towers, gates, or walls.⁵²

As these independent states passed protective ordinances and the Picturesque Movement brought tourists to the Germanic lands, public and private attitudes about historic buildings and ruins formed the impetus for preservation and reconstruction. Another factor in this growing awareness of the need for historic preservation was the feelings of nationalism that took hold, especially after the Napoleonic wars.⁵³ Some of the first buildings to benefit were Germany’s many castle ruins that became a symbol of national pride. Nineteenth-century restoration of castles along the Rhine was undertaken

mainly to provide destinations for the new tourist industry centered around the search for picturesque ruins. Local interest strengthened and associations for the preservation and restoration of castles were formed.⁵⁴

Robert Taylor in his work, *The Castles of the Rhine: Recreating the Middle Ages in Modern Germany*, argues that castle mania and castle restoration and preservation began in the early nineteenth century and reflected a growing current of nostalgia, conservatism, and national pride. Taylor points out that Germany's castles' "symbolism had always been political. The medieval castle spoke for the political power of the noble landowner whether knight, archbishop or emperor."⁵⁵ Later during the period of castle reconstruction, castles reflected the influence of the King of Prussia and the glories of the new German *Reich*.⁵⁶

Taylor shows that the Romantic writers and painters emphasized the emotional appeal of castle ruins, their histories and legends and their lasting contribution to Germany's glorious past. One notable example is Count Charles de Graimberg's efforts to protect the Heidelberg Castle beginning in 1800. Lightning struck the castle in 1764; this began several decades of decline caused by local citizens mining the ruin for stones for their new houses. Heidelberg Castle is now a World Heritage site visited by millions of tourists each year.⁵⁷

Restoration and purification, after the works of Viollet-le-Duc in France and Sir George Gilbert Scott in England, directed historic preservation efforts in nineteenth-century Germany. Purification revolved around attempts to recapture the original design

of a building, as interpreted by the restorer.⁵⁸ It was not until the beginning of the twentieth century that professional architects and advocates supporting preservation without restoration became the majority. “Conservation instead of restoration” arose as Germany’s preservation motto.⁵⁹

In the late twentieth century, Germany’s preservation laws grew stronger. Also, government funding and tax credits for protection and preservation of buildings and archaeological sites came into being. Privately-owned ruins are protected by the government and may be inspected by the authorities. However, owners may also receive subsidies and loans to stabilize and protect these historic resources. Public advisory boards consisting of experts in conservation, architecture, history, and archaeology along with representatives of special interest groups are available to consult with public and private owners of ruins and other historic properties.⁶⁰

Ruin Preservation in the United States

Preservation professionals can reach for three excellent books if they wish to read the history of the preservation movement in the United States. Both volumes of Charles Hosmer’s detailed work, *Presence of the Past: A History of the Preservation Movement in the United States Before Williamsburg* and *Preservation Comes of Age: From Williamsburg to the National Trust, 1926-1949* and William J. Murtagh’s *Keeping Time: The History and Theory of Preservation* admirably document this country’s preservation beginnings, its growing pains, and current level of activism.⁶¹ Yet none of these books

has the word “ruin” in the index, and a detailed reading of the three reveals little tradition for preserving ruins in the United States.

Early historic preservation efforts illustrate two similarities. First, America’s preservation movement began with small groups or individuals, and more often than not, women led early the efforts. Secondly, these historic preservation activists’ actions centered on efforts to preserve buildings associated with our Colonial period, the early presidents, or our Founding Fathers. In 1824, the neglect and possible destruction of Independence Hall captured the interest of Philadelphians and led to its preservation. In the mid-nineteenth century, a push to preserve many of the sites associated with George Washington prompted Albany lawmakers to purchase one of Washington’s headquarters buildings in Newburgh, New York. Beginning in 1853, Ann Pamela Cunningham of South Carolina led the way for the preservation of Mount Vernon, President Washington’s Virginia home, with her establishment of the Mount Vernon Ladies’ Association. Her leadership style and organizational methods became models for other preservation groups, particularly across the South.⁶²

Like Europe, Americans in the early nineteenth century felt the influences of the Sublime, the Picturesque Movement, and a nationalistic or patriotic fervor. In particular, Americans’ patriotic tendencies substantially led to the preservation of the early presidents’ homes, battlefields, and governmental buildings like Independence Hall.⁶³ By the end of the 1800s, Americans expressed their patriotic feelings by recognizing the importance of their own architectural style and embracing this colonial revival

movement. Not only did Americans adopt the style for their new homes, they also built government buildings and businesses in this style.⁶⁴

Americans more often reflected the ideals of the Sublime and the Picturesque in landscape paintings illustrating the wild and romantic frontier of their emerging nation. In 1835, natural wonders created more interest for Americans than did historic sites or ruins. Washington Irving in *A Tour on the Prairies* insisted, as did other native authors, that his own country contained scenes of nature that were superior to any of Europe's man-made wonders. Irving wrote:

. . . overshadowed by lofty trees, with straight, smooth trunks, like stately columns; and as the glancing rays of the sun shone through the transparent leaves, tinted with the many-colored hues of autumn, I was reminded of the effect of sunshine among the stained windows and clustering columns of a Gothic cathedral. Indeed there is a grandeur and solemnity in our spacious forests of the West, that awakens in me the same feeling I have experienced in those vast and venerable piles, and the sound of the wind sweeping through them supplies occasionally the deep breathings of the organ.⁶⁵

That same year, Thomas Cole recognized the Sublime in America's painted landscapes. Cole described his feelings saying: "he who stands on the mounds of the West, the most venerable remains of American antiquity, may experience the emotion of the Sublime, but it is the sublimity of a shoreless ocean un-islanded by the recorded deeds of man."⁶⁶ Paintings such as Asher B. Durand's *Progress* (1853) captured the American ideas of the Sublime and Picturesque with dark trees and lurking Indians in the foreground overlooking a deep craggy valley emerging from a haze. The painting became so popular that many artists copied its theme.⁶⁷

John Ruskin's *The Seven Lamps of Architecture* and other works garnered much acclaim in the United States. His influence on Americans, along with that of William Morris, strengthened Americans' beliefs in the need to preserve the ways and objects of the past. Americans began to consider their values and to discuss quality of life issues. Heritage preservation and environmental issues came to the forefront of enlightened conversation.⁶⁸

United States preservation history shows that some early attempts to preserve ruins existed. In 1816, William Ferris Pell, a New York businessman, became interested in preserving the ruins of Fort Ticonderoga. Two years later, Pell rented the fort and raised a fence to stop others from removing building materials (mainly stone) from the fort. Pell's actions prevented further damage. The fort remained in the Pell family until it was restored in the early twentieth century.⁶⁹

One of the South's first preservation groups came into existence over concern for the remainder of Virginia's antiquities after an old brick ruin known as "Powhatan's Chimney" collapsed. Mary J. Galt and her mother read about the collapse in the local newspaper and founded the Association for the Preservation of Virginia Antiquities (APVA) in the spring of 1888. This group was unique in that it was not limited to men or women (although the membership rolls showed more women than men) and heritage played no role in membership.⁷⁰

The APVA is the oldest statewide preservation organization in the nation. Soon after its beginning, the APVA began working to rescue Jamestown Island from decay.

The APVA bought and acquired properties all over the state. Today, according to its website, the APVA maintains thirty-four historic properties. Jamestown contains the only ruins, including James Fort and the Statehouse site.⁷¹

America's ruins multiplied rapidly during the Civil War. Their images, captured by the newly developed photographic process, became quickly available to the public. George N. Barnard's album, *Photographic Views of Sherman's Campaign* captured ruins in Charleston, South Carolina, presenting them in much the same light as other photographers did the archaeological ruins of Europe and the Middle East.⁷² In the South, these ruins became a symbol for their lost cause, while in the North, war ruins stood for the sacrifices needed to retain the Union.⁷³ However, in both the North and the South, most Civil War ruins were destroyed, and factories and houses rebuilt.

In the nineteenth century, American authors like Washington Irving had frequently captured the spirit of historic American settings for their novels. Yet, Nathaniel Hawthorne voiced concern for America's lack of antiquity and settings that could create a sense of mystery.⁷⁴ Another nineteenth-century author, Mark Twain scoffed at sentimental rhapsodizing over Europe's ruins by his fellow travelers in *The Innocents Abroad*. Yet he himself expressed rapture over the ruin of Rome's Coliseum stating:

Weeds and flowers spring from its massy arches and its circling seats, vines hang their fringes from its lofty walls. An impressive silence broods over the monstrous structure where such multitudes of men and women were wont to assemble in other days. . . . More vividly than all the written histories, the Coliseum tells the story of Rome's grandeur and Rome's decay. It is the worthiest type of both that exists.⁷⁵

Only a few years later in *A Tramp Abroad*, Twain wrote about Germany's Heidelberg Castle. In Appendix B to this work, Twain stated:

A ruin must be rightly situated, to be effective. This one could not have been better placed. It stands upon a commanding elevation, it is buried in green woods, there is no level ground about it, but, on the contrary, there are wooded terraces upon terraces, and one looks down through shining leaves into profound chasms and abysses where twilight reigns and the sun cannot intrude. Nature knows how to garnish a ruin to get the best effect. One of these old towers is split down the middle, and one half has tumbled aside. It tumbled in such a way as to establish itself in a picturesque attitude. Then all it lacked was a fitting drapery, and Nature has furnished that; she has robed the rugged mass in flowers and verdure, and made it a charm to the eye. The standing half exposes its arched and cavernous rooms to you, like open, toothless mouths; there, too, the vines and flowers have done their work of grace. The rear portion of the tower has not been neglected, either, but is clothed with a clinging garment of polished ivy which hides the wounds and stains of time. Even the top is not left bare, but is crowned with a flourishing group of trees and shrubs. Misfortune has done for this old tower what it has done for the human character sometimes--improved it.⁷⁶

Both Twain's *The Innocents Abroad* and *A Tramp Abroad* first appeared as serial installments in American newspapers. Readers flocked to Europe for the grand tour of Picturesque and Sublime ruins, yet the preservation of ruins never took hold in America.

At the end of the nineteenth century, Dr. Andrew Green, president of The American Scenic and Historic Preservation Society, and Edward Hagaman Hall, a newspaper man and secretary of the society, both wrote lengthy articles concerning the connection between historic preservation and scenery.⁷⁷ Green and Hall asserted that public interest historic preservation and scenic surroundings would "teach patriotism and thus make preservation a civic obligation rather than luxury."⁷⁸ Hall encouraged historic

preservation of private sites as well as public ones, for he felt that these sites stirred the imagination of the viewer.⁷⁹

Beginning with Congressional activities and later the National Park Service (NPS), the ruins of several Native American dwellings including Casa Grande in 1892 have been preserved. Protection followed for other early Native American ruin sites including Montezuma Castle and Mesa Verde in 1906; Tonto and Chaco Canyon in 1907; Bandelier in 1916; Aztec Ruins in 1923, and Wupatki in 1924. At each park, the National Park Service preserved, protected, stabilized, and interpreted the ruins. These actions resulted from the 1906 passage of the Antiquities Act and Theodore Roosevelt's establishment of the National Park Service in 1916.⁸⁰

The National Park Service only occasionally preserved historic ruins. One early example, Tumacácori, Arizona, was declared a National Monument in 1908. Tumacácori National Historical Park (established 1990) contains the remains of three Spanish colonial missions. President Franklin D. Roosevelt officially proclaimed Fort Laramie a national site on July 16, 1938. Today, this National Historic Site contains many restored buildings and several foundation ruins. In the 1961, the western Texas fort, Fort Davis, was authorized. Pecos National Historical Park came into being in 1990; however, the Pecos National Monument was established in 1965. This park now contains the ruins of an ancient pueblo and two Spanish Colonial Missions, along with a Civil War battlefield at Glorieta Pass.⁸¹

However at many historic sites, the NPS often chooses to reconstruct buildings rather than preserve the ruin. For example, soon after the reconstruction had begun at Williamsburg, the NPS took interest in the Appomattox Court House National Historical Monument. At that site, the foundation ruin of the McLean House led to heated debates over whether to preserve or reconstruct the house. Ronald Lee, NPS Historian, and Thomas Vint, NPS Chief of Planning, wrote a memorandum stating “We believe the best solution of the McLean House problem is to protect the foundations insofar as they now remain, using drawings, photographs, other materials, and possibly a model of the building exhibited in a museum on the area. We feel this would be a better job than attempting a replica.”⁸² Later Lee met with NPS officials for the “second defeat of Lee at Appomattox” and finally had to support reconstruction based on wishes and hard work of others.⁸³

At this same time, historical archaeology in the United States was only beginning to be accepted as a discipline that could make viable contributions. Archaeologists overall believed that America’s history was much too young and recent to benefit from excavations at historic sites. Only after viewing the contributions made by archaeologists at Williamsburg and Jamestown did perceptions begin to change. Jean Harrington, regarded as “the father of historical archaeology,” recognized these misconceptions early in his career and worked to gain recognition for the interpretative contributions historic archaeologists can provide.⁸⁴

Subsequent to Colonial Williamsburg, NPS standards for historic properties stated that “restoration had to be part of a larger interpretive process” and that the public

should “see each area as it appeared at the moment of its greatest historical importance.”⁸⁵ This policy indicated NPS reluctance to recognize the American public’s abilities to interpret or to enjoy historic ruins. More recently, the NPS has begun to protect more historic ruins. Examples of ruin preservation can be seen at places like Harpers Ferry National Historical Park, West Virginia; Cumberland Island National Seashore, Georgia; and Point Reyes National Seashore, California, among many others.

Today’s historic preservation movement often follows the lead of the NPS. A general search of state park web sites for the southern United States yielded only a small number of preserved historic ruins. Virginia’s historic state parks contain some ruins but none is the focus. Georgia State Parks protect ruins at Sweetwater Creek, Ft. Morris, Magnolia Springs, and Crooked River. Some of these are Colonial era forts and early industrial mills; others are Civil War sites.

In North Carolina, Fort Anderson, a Civil War fort, and Brunswick’s St. Philip’s Anglican Church, and Russellborough, an old sea captain’s house that was used by two royal governors, are ruins protected by state and local agencies. In South Carolina, Landsford Canal, the Broxton Bridge Plantation’s Breastworks, Castle Pinckney, Charleston Harbor’s Forgotten Fort, and Old Dorchester all contain archaeological and architectural ruins. However, these examples represent only a small fraction of the historic sites in state and local parks across the South.

Nonprofit foundations and private citizens also protect a few ruins in the southeastern United States. In Virginia, Rosewell and Menokin are excellent examples.

In Kentucky, Harlan's Station, also known as the James Harlan Stone House Ruin, is protected by a private landowner. Harlan's Station once stood as one of Kentucky's frontier forts. In Mississippi, the Ozymandian columns of Windsor Plantation, built in 1859-1861, are preserved on Canemount Plantation, a resort inn. Also, in Virginia, Washington and Lee University preserved the Liberty Hall Ruins on their grounds. Liberty Hall was the original name of this Scots-Irish founded university.

Conclusions

Beginning with the first movements toward historical interest and preservation in Europe, ruins captured the imagination of the populace. While artist, poets, and authors rhapsodized about ruins, architects, archaeologists, and landscapers studied or exploited ruins to enhance their professions and fields of study. Edmund Burke accorded the world a Sublime view of ruins, while William Gilpin asserted that ruins were an integral part of the picturesque scene. Seeking the Sublime and the Picturesque, travelers sought out ruins all over the European landscape. Nationalistic movements across Europe reinforced Europeans' desire to learn about and to protect their own histories. The new age of tourism led to the preservation and protection of many ruins, particularly in Italy, Greece, Germany, France, and Great Britain.

By the beginning of the nineteenth century, many Americans also sought to preserve their heritage as nationalism swept across the nation. Nevertheless, their preservation actions seldom involved the protection and preservation of historical ruins.

More often ruins in the United States were the basis for reconstruction. By 2003, ruin preservation has become more common in the United States. However, ruin preservation on private lands continues to be rare.

CHAPTER III JUSTIFICATIONS FOR PRESERVING RUINS

Like a dream,
Fitful and fair, yet clouded with a haze,
As if of doubt, to memory awakes
The bright heart-stirring past, when human life
Was half-romance; and were it not that yet,
In stream, and crag, and isle, and crumbling wall
Of keep and castle, still remain to us
Physical proof, that History is no mere
Hallucination, oftentimes the mind -
So different is the present from the past -
Would dem the pageant an illusion all.

Lines Written at Kelburne Castle, Ayrshire⁸⁶

Deep in Germany's Black Forest, in the lovely Allerheiligen Valley stands a lonely thirteenth-century Gothic ruin. The remaining stone transept walls of the church rise silhouetted against the green forest backdrop. Visitors wonder how the ruin has remained; they marvel that it has been preserved for these many centuries. They enjoy its timelessness.

Like Allerheiligen, all ruins deserve an audience. Justifications for preserving ruins often center on the individuals and groups that take pleasure in viewing ruins or use ruins for their own pursuits. Suggested audiences include the public, architects, and architectural historians, archaeologists, and artists. The following discusses for whom ruins are preserved and how historic preservationists must approach ruin preservation.

Preserving Ruins for the Public

It is doubtful that the average tourist or traveler ever considers why or how any historic site was preserved. Curiosity runs more toward the question of its creation, not its salvation. Citizens expect sites to be saved because of their historical contribution, their significance. The same may be said for ruins. Preserved ruins lend a sense of history and an awareness of time. Ruins add dimension to our landscape. Ruins stir our imagination. Ruins exist as a unique part of our heritage and improve our quality of life. Ruins afford an appreciation of community and local nostalgia.

Historic ruins furnish our contemporary environment with connections to its history. Although ruins may be altered by nature over time, they are often unaltered by man once they reach the ruined state. In *The Past is a Foreign Country*, David Lowenthal wrote:

When we know that hoary documents are regularly forged, old paintings imitated, relics contrived, ancient building modernized and new ones antiquated, the identity of everything around us becomes dubious. When a past we depend on for heritage and continuity turns out to be a complex of original and altered remains enlarged by subsequent thoughts and deeds, if not an outright sham, we lose faith in our own perceptions.⁸⁷

Reconstructions often give viewers an extremely accurate view of how a building looked and how people used the building. Nevertheless, reconstructions are not of the past. Historic buildings adapted for new uses present pictures of the past but do not impart an unaltered historic image. Ruins, on the other hand, are remnants of a moment in the past.

Even if a ruin's abandonment occurred centuries after its conception as a building, nature's forces often remove or obscure all traces of alteration that occurred to the original building. Nature and time make changes to ruins but they also allow ruins to retain their temporal integrity. In rural areas, nature often prevents the intrusions of time by discouraging alterations or destruction by man.

In their abandoned and decaying state ruins also reflect the passing of time. David Lowenthal expressed this as, "Decay heightened temporal awareness generally, inducing nostalgic and other reflections on time's changes."⁸⁸ The decay of ruins emphasizes the process of returning to the earth and the viewer's gratification at having survived. This emotional pleasure increases the viewer's awareness of the flow of time.⁸⁹

Ruins attest to the presence of man and add dimension to nature's landscape. Within a landscape, ruins grant nature with a sense of place and the passing of time. Artists and poets illustrate the effects that ruins surrounded by nature's handiwork impose upon their audiences. Shelley's image of vine-covered ruins is described in a letter to his friend Thomas Love Peacock. Speaking of the Baths of Caracalla, Shelley wrote:

Never was any desolation more sublime and lovely. The perpendicular wall of ruin is cloven into steep ravines filled with flowering shrubs whose thick twisted roots are knotted in the rifts of the stones . . . the thick entangled wilderness of myrtle & bay & the flowering laurustinus . . . & the wild fig & a thousand nameless plants sown by the wandering winds [forming a] landscape like mountain hills intersected by paths like sheep tracks.⁹⁰

Landscape architects and gardeners began using ruins in gardens and other landscapes to capture this Sublime and Picturesque contrast between man's constructions and nature. Moreover, ruins in a landscape give us pleasure simply in their viewing.

Yet, scenic usefulness may only be recognized by a very small number of people who "consciously realized the vital part played by one small unit in a landscape or an architectural ensemble from which they consciously derive pleasure."⁹¹ Thus, a ruin preserved within the landscape contributes an aesthetic that cannot be easily added. Ruins within a landscape not only grant pleasure, they also add historic interest, complexity, and significance to the scene.⁹² Kevin Lynch in *What Time is This Place?* envisioned a greater role for ruins in a landscape when he wrote:

The contrast of old and new, the accumulated concentration of the most significant elements of the various periods gone by, even if they are only fragmentary remainders of them, will in time produce a landscape whose depth no one period can equal. . . . The esthetic aim is to heighten contrast and complexity, to make visible the process of change.⁹³

If historic preservationists and garden designers can preserve ruins in this manner, the public audience for ruins will increase as individuals recognize their impact in such settings.

Ruins are incomplete; consequently not everyone shares an appreciation for or the ability to understand ruins. Interpretation of a ruin often requires some architectural knowledge and a sense of its time. More importantly, ruins demand imagination. David Lowenthal stated that "few have the taste or the training to appreciate the past simply from fragmentary remains. Heaps of fallen stones convey nothing to the ordinary

spectator; only reconstruction makes them coherent and evocative.”⁹⁴ Susan Crane in *Collecting and Historical Consciousness in Early Nineteenth-Century Germany* recognized that some individuals can enjoy ruins and stated that “both structural incompleteness and structural damage could inspire a sense of history in the viewer who was attuned to their ‘particular clarity’.”⁹⁵ Christopher Woodward speculated in his recent work on ruins that “each spectator is forced to supply the missing pieces from his or her own imagination and a ruin therefore appears different to everyone.”⁹⁶ Many people are drawn to ruins, and it may be this imaginative sense surrounding ruins that allows them to appeal to a broader audience than Lowenthal anticipated. Just as a child can imagine a wooden fort surrounded by hostile Indians from inside his sheet-covered table, so may many visitors envision the past among the fallen stones of a historic ruin.

Ruins may also grant a sense of place or identity to a local or ethnic community. Ruins of meaningful local landmarks such as churches or early industrial centers give communities remembrances of whom they are and how they came to be. Ethnic communities may recall their contributions to local history in the remains of an abbey or mission from their particular religion. Kevin Lynch, author of *What Time Is This Place?*, emphasized:

Many symbolic and historic locations in a city are rarely visited by its inhabitants, however they may be sought out by tourists. But a threat to destroy these places will evoke a strong reaction, even from those who have never seen, and perhaps, never will see them. The survival of these unvisited, hearsay settings conveys a sense of security and continuity.⁹⁷

Pride in local history and landmarks ensures that ruins are looked upon not only as picturesque but also as heritage sites within the community. Ruins, no matter how deteriorated, often achieve exceptional status within the hearts of community members.

Ruin preservation grants the public an opportunity to view and interpret a unique part of history. In our landscape, ruins give us pleasure and a sense of time. Ruins may be romantic or picturesque or puzzling, but each type quickens our imagination. Although by their very nature they are incomplete, ruins complete our environment.

Preserving Ruins for Architects

When we contemplate ruins, we contemplate our own future. To statesmen, ruins predict the fall of Empires, and to philosophers the futility of mortal man's aspirations. To a poet, the decay of a monument represents the dissolution of the individual ego in the flow of Time; to a painter or *architect*, the fragments of a stupendous antiquity call into question the purpose of their art. Why struggle with a brush or chisel to create the beauty of wholeness when far greater works have been destroyed by Time?

Christopher Woodward, *In Ruins*⁹⁸

Throughout the history of architecture, architects have studied the past's monumental buildings and ruins and applied these lessons to their own works. They learned from the classical buildings of ancient Greece, Rome, and Egypt, applying elements of those styles of their contemporary constructions. Today's preservation of significant works of architecture will no doubt supply future architects with great works to embrace.

Yet what of the vernacular, the common home or building, not designed by a great architect? How will that part of our architectural history be realized in coming years? Perhaps by the preservation of archaeological and architectural ruins? Kevin Lynch wrote that “since we cannot be certain what will be most relevant in the future, we have an obligation to save some characteristic evidence of every major period — to establish an environmental archive.”⁹⁹ While Lynch is speaking of preserving extant buildings, his logic should also be applied to the preservation of ruins. Preserving historic ruins of singular structures may one day provide architects with comparisons and idiosyncrasies across regions and temporal periods.

Ruins also present architects with exposed examples of construction techniques used during a previous time. Their destruction reveals their foundations and builder trenches. Ruins may also betray the mistakes or follies of their construction.

Practicing architects recognize that an area’s architecture is a sum of many parts.¹⁰⁰ Each building adds to the landscape an actual piece of time. Ruins contribute contrasts between the historic buildings (being used either for its original purpose or adaptively), nature’s landscape, and today’s architecture. Used as landscape features, ruins lock the past and present together like pieces of a puzzle, providing a connection between the old and the new. Their scenic and timely nature may be reason enough for architects to preserve ruins.

Whether the object of study or a focal point in a picturesque garden, architects should reflect upon the importance of ruins to their profession. While studying ruins

during a grand tour of Europe may be overshadowed by today's easily available images of the world's architecture, preservation of American ruins may one day form the basis of knowledge for the early American architecture.

Preserving Ruins for Archaeologists

Archaeology, while presently engaging the interest of the public, is often seen as a transcendental and subjective science. This point is illustrated by an excerpt from Sir Walter Scott's *The Antiquary*. In this passage, the Antiquary, Mr. Jonathan Oldbuck of Monkbarns, has taken young Mr. Lovel through one or two pasture meadows to an open heath or common, and so to the top of a gentle eminence.

'Here' he said, 'Mr. Lovel, is a truly remarkable spot.'

'It commands a fine view' said his companion, looking around him.

'True, but it is not for the prospect I brought you hither; so you see nothing else remarkable? - nothing on the surface of the ground?'

'Why, yes; I do see something like a ditch, indistinctly marked.'

'Indistinctly! - pardon me, sir, but the indistinctness must be in your powers of vision - nothing can be more plainly traced - a proper *agger* or *vallum*, with its corresponding ditch or *fossa*. Indistinctly! why Heaven help you . . .'¹⁰¹

Just as young Mr. Lovel could not appreciate, or even distinguish, the archaeological treasure so apparent to the Antiquary, so are many archaeological sites oblivious to the untrained public eye. The preservation of ruins for archaeologists might therefore fulfill

two goals. Preserving an archaeological ruin and interpreting it for the public may allow visitors to enjoy the experience and to envision the value of archaeological sites.

Only eleven years ago, Hester A. Davis prophesied about the future of archaeology when she stated “Ironic though it may be for an archeologist to predict the future, here is one sure bet: the practice of archeology in the next 25 years is going to be markedly different from what it has been at any time in the past. Even now, recent events are rapidly reshaping the field.”¹⁰² Davis’s words referenced the rapid technological advances taking place in the field of archaeology and the effects of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 and the Archaeological and Historic Preservation Act of 1974. These two acts paved the way for the protection, preservation, and excavation of archaeological sites that would have otherwise been destroyed by public works.

Davis’s ideas about the techniques of future archaeologists have come to fruition. For example, remote sensing or ground penetrating radar, has revolutionized the way archaeologists view a site. Under ideal conditions, remote sensing technology can accurately expose buried features without ground-disturbing activities. One day this technology may be employed at all types of archaeological sites.

Rapid advances in technological archaeological applications proclaim significant changes in excavation strategies for both historic and prehistoric sites. New excavation strategies furnish archaeologists with arguments for the preservation of particularly significant sites. Preserved significant sites may one day be studied by archaeologists

without destruction of the resource. While archaeologists are necessarily interested in excavating sites, many archaeologists realize that some sites must be preserved for future generations.

An extension of the preservation, protection, and interpretation of archaeological sites is public education about the goals and processes of archaeologists. Since the last decade of the twentieth century, the Society for Historical Archaeology and the Society for American Archaeology have emphasized the importance of public awareness and public education.

In 1990, Jean M. Auel wrote *Romancing the Public*, a speech to the Society for American Archaeology. Auel discussed why the public is not interested in preserving archaeological sites. Her answer partly involved the public's lack of knowledge about "the importance of undisturbed sites, or even of archaeology itself."¹⁰³ Jean Auel stated that some archaeologists realize the importance of clearly and concisely explaining why archaeology is important and the public benefits derived from archaeological investigations.¹⁰⁴ If these questions are applied to ruin preservation, then archaeologists can stress how scientific excavations at a ruin site provide interpretive data and reveal buried sections of a ruin.

Ruin preservation can help archaeologists reach their goals concerning public education of their research. After ruins are excavated, the public can better visualize the effects of archaeology through the now exposed features. Informative and innovative ruin interpretation can link the visible and any remaining buried features of an

archaeological site for visitors. Ruins can “romance” the public. Ruins can demonstrate the public benefits of archaeology and initiate future archaeologists.

Preserving Ruins as Historic Preservationists

Professional historic preservationists preserve ruins not for themselves but for mankind, for historic architects, for archaeologists, for historians, for artists, for photographers, and others interested in the value of ruins to their profession. Nevertheless, it is the passion of historic preservationists, both professional and avocational, that often influences individuals, governments, and concerned entities to preserve ruins.

For the professional historic preservationist, the act of preserving a building, historic landscape, or archaeological site is often based on its significance. Determining significance relies on a predetermined set of criteria put forth by the National Register of Historic Places and developed by the National Park Service. In addition, historic preservationists must necessarily deal with the economic issues of their actions. Without a positive economic perspective, little can be done within the private sector to protect even the most significant properties. Finding an economical way to preserve and adaptively use a building is often a difficult but possible outcome. Historic landscapes and archaeological sites may be protected as open spaces that are usable for many purposes. Occasionally, a public entity, such as a nonprofit organization or a governmental agency, can provide funds for the purchase and protection of these assets.

Ruins, however, present their own enigma to preservationists. Costs associated with ruin preservation, stabilization, and upkeep may be unlimited, and their potential for adaptive use is marginal. Most private enterprises are not aware of the economic benefits that may be obtained from preservation of a historic ruin. Although a ruin may meet National Register of Historic Places criteria for significance, preservationists are faced with formidable tasks when challenged to present ideas and strategies for preserving architectural and archaeological ruins.

In 1992, W. Brown Morton III wrote that historic preservationists “must exercise extraordinary vision and fearless leadership at this very moment or be overcome by asphalt, ignorance, and greed.”¹⁰⁵ Since that time, historic preservationists have emphasized the economic benefits of saving building and historic and cultural landscapes, as witnessed by numerous articles in *Preservation Forum* and *Dollars and Sense of Historic Preservation*. Both are publications of the National Trust for Historic Preservation. However, a review of these preservation mediums reveals little discussion of preserving architectural and archaeological ruins. Morton challenged preservationists to save sites for their “social and environmental significance” and not some elusive and expensive listing on the National Register of Historic Places.¹⁰⁶ In *Personal Dialogues with Ghosts*, Peter Neill argues “that preservation has *earned* public indifference by its own history of exclusionary complacency and failed imagination.”¹⁰⁷ Both obstacles in ruin preservation might be overcome by imaginative uses for ruins that would provide their owners with economic benefits.

Other reasons for historic preservationists to preserve ruins exist. First ruins are unique in many landscapes. Interesting or picturesque ruins are a finite part of our historic fabric. Some areas of the United States possess no historic ruins, while other contain several outstanding specimens. While fake ruins have been constructed, historic ruins cannot be rebuilt without risk of looking contrived or fabricated. Allowing a worthwhile ruin to be destroyed by development or by reconstruction removes it from an audience that recognizes its exceptional nature.

Second, saving a ruin helps preserve quality of life within a community by emphasizing its historic character. Still, saving a ruin requires vision to blend the old with the new. Ruin preservation needs to retain a sense of character and to provide the community with a sense of pride about whom and what they are.¹⁰⁸ In a recent article on the impacts of historic preservation, Donovan Rypkema wrote:

Quality of life is fragile. Those things that make up a given community's quality of life need to be identified, enhanced and protected, and that's where historic preservation comes in. . . . If quality of life is the most significant variable for economic development, and if the physical environment is a major element to the quality of life criteria, then there is no greater threat to sustainable economic growth than the elimination of those community-based enactments whose sole purpose is the protection of that physical environment, whether it is built or natural.¹⁰⁹

While Rypkema referred to historic sites in particular, the idea that quality of life is sustainable by the preservation of such places within a community can and should be applied to interesting architectural and archaeological ruins as well. No doubt a diversity of historic sites, both buildings and ruins, cultural landscapes, and scenic views can provide a multidimensional environment for both residents and visitors alike.

Many challenges remain to the preservation of ruins. Yet, the benefits such as providing a sense of time, place, and historical identity to our communities give us reason to overcome these obstacles. Historic preservationists must find ways to preserve ruins. Architects should incorporate ruins into landscapes, and archaeologists must learn how to interpret ruins for the public. Historic sites, especially ruins, are “not so much irreplaceable as rarely replaced.”¹¹⁰ Therefore, since we have audiences for ruins, their preservation must become a priority.

CHAPTER IV
ECONOMIC ISSUES REGARDING
THE PRESERVATION OF RUINS

Splendid is the masonry — the fates destroyed it
the strong buildings crashed, the work of giants moulders away
the roofs have fallen, the towers are in ruins,
the barred gate is broken. There is frost on the lime,
the gaping roofs are shattered and decayed,
and sapped by old age. The clutch of the grave
the strong grip of the earth, holds the master builders . . .

Early English Poem¹¹

This early English poem, perhaps the first ever written about a ruin, speaks to the image of moldering buildings held by the strong grip of the earth. The ruin gripped the interest of the writer and inspired him to put pen to paper to immortalize the splendid masonry. In today's world, while poets, painters, and photographers immortalize ruins in their own medium, others recognize the economic benefits that may be obtained by capitalizing on the picturesque qualities and mysteries that surround ruins.

This chapter discusses the economic costs and issues surrounding the preservation of ruins and presents economic benefits that may be obtained by their preservation.

Understanding the economic costs and benefits of preserving ruins fits with the concepts presented by Philip Kotler's *Marketing Places*:

Current approaches . . . emphasize . . . ways to resurrect the older character and history of places. Such thinking also requires vision, blending old with new, and an appreciation that place character is a valuable asset in retaining firms and people as well as in attracting new investments and businesses . . . Places lose much when they neglect or destroy their historical landmarks.¹¹²

This idea of preserving “place character” may depend on the protection of historic buildings, ethnic populations and qualities, landscapes, scenic views, archaeological sites, and ruins.

Nevertheless, archaeological sites, even those with historic ruins, are rarely preserved when threatened by development. More often they are partially excavated only if appropriate federal or state laws or local ordinances apply. At that point, most private development destroys the remainder of the site, along with any historic ruins and archaeological features, then new construction begins.

Destruction of these ruins and archaeological deposits often gives the developer one important economic benefit — the availability for sale and development of a prime tract of land. For it has long been recognized that each successive group of people chooses the most advantageous piece of property for their home or business. Prime building locations may have the most scenic view, the most direct source for transportation, or access to the best farming or hunting land. Often something as simple as the most constant breezes draws one generation after another to the same piece of ground.

Where federal, state, or local historic preservation ordinances involve areas of new development, landowners are faced with the realities of dealing with significant cultural resources, including ruins, on their property. After an initial survey to identify any cultural resources, historians or archaeologists may recommend further studies based on criteria

developed for the National Register of Historic Places.¹¹³ If an historic resource or archaeological site is determined to be significant and eligible for the National Register, some type of mitigation may be necessary if the site cannot be preserved.¹¹⁴

Where ruins are present, archaeologists, working with the appropriate state historic preservation office and any involved federal agencies, develop a mitigation strategy. Most often, this strategy involves archaeological excavation of the site followed by a full archaeological report of the findings. Occasionally, the mitigation strategy involves some type of public information about the excavations. This public education initiative often results in an exhibit or a brochure available to the public. With the completion of these mitigation measures, clearance is given for destruction of the site.

However, the developer may recognize, often with the help of background information provided by cultural resource management consultants, the significance of an archaeological ruin and its potential to provide economic and aesthetic benefits to any new development. Now the developer is faced with many decisions as to the preservation, care, and interpretation of the ruins. Two avenues of action present themselves in this situation. The first is “passive preservation,” and the second is “active preservation.”

Economic Issues Surrounding Passive Preservation

With passive preservation of an archaeological ruin, the developer simply decides to preserve the site, as is, without further studies or impact to the site. In this case, the land is set aside and protected from any adverse effects. Several measures can be taken to assure

protection of the site. One of the most common is the creation of a preservation or conservation easement.

Preservation and conservation easements are legal agreements by property owners, usually with private nonprofit or government organizations, to restrict development and other activities on the landowners' property. Easements can be tailored to protect only the resource designated by the landowner and the trustee or grantee. The organization that holds the easement is the "grantee" and is responsible for monitoring to ensure compliance. If the easement is violated, the grantee may bring action in a civil court. Both historic preservation easements and open space or scenic easements are commonly used to protect archaeological sites, although some states permit easements specifically to protect archaeological sites.

Easements can be established in four different ways: purchase, donation, regulation, and creation and retention during fee-simple transactions.¹¹⁵ Benefits to the landowner may include lowered property taxes due to decreased value of the property and a federal, state, or local income tax deduction for the charitable contribution. If the easement is purchased, the landowner would also have the benefit of the added income. Often estate taxes are also lowered by the donation of conservation or preservation easements. Easements do not remove the property from the tax rolls, although property value, for tax purposes, will be diminished.

Another option for passive preservation is "set aside funding." Set aside funding to purchase directly and preserve open spaces containing an archaeological site(s) exists in many different forms. Most often this funding is provided by nonprofit organizations such as

the Nature Conservancy or the Archaeological Conservancy; however, some governmental agencies, states, cities, and counties also have funds set aside for such purposes. Outright acquisition of the property to be protected by a public or nonprofit organization also requires the purchaser to include stewardship of the land in the costs of acquisition and retention of the property. Sometimes, the original property owner may take advantage of tax credits or deductions by making a donation of some or all of the property.

A variation on set-aside funding is the use of revolving funds by various organizations to purchase properties to be protected and then resell the property to like-minded individuals that are willing to protect the land. Often these properties are encumbered by conservation easements that provide additional protection for the open space or historic sites the nonprofit wished to preserve.

One variation of a direct property purchase is the life estate and leaseback. With a life estate, the property owner retains full ownership and rights to the property until his or her death when the property automatically transfers to the new owners such as a governmental organization or to a private nonprofit group. A life estate may be used with a conservation easement to provide the new owner with more control over the property before they gain ownership and to give the donor tax incentives during his lifetime. The sale and leaseback technique conveys the property directly to the new owner who then leases the property back to the donor for the remainder of their lifetime or for the term of the lease. A leaseback works like a conservation easement in giving the new owner more control over the property and may provide the donor with tax credits during their lifetime or during the term

of the lease. Property donations reduce the value of the donor's estate thereby reducing estate taxes.¹¹⁶

Another avenue for applying the federal tax deduction to a property transfer is for the owner to sell the land to a private nonprofit or governmental agency for conservation at a bargain or reduced price. Federal rules currently require a difference of at least twenty percent of the appraised value before the deduction is allowed.¹¹⁷

In summary, easements, direct purchase either with set aside funding or revolving funds, life estates, and property transfers are the most commonly exercised passive preservation options. Any of these methods will allow the owner to reap some economic benefits from preservation of the site and will assure its protection. A lawyer familiar with estate planning, implementing easement, and tax law should always be consulted before entering into such agreements.

On the other hand, the owner may wish to retain all rights to the property and privately fund all protective measures and procedures. This option allows the landowner to pursue site development at a later date if so desired. However, any federal or state laws or local ordinances would still apply, and the owner would be responsible for any measures required to lessen impact to the site or to compensate for destruction of the site.

Economic Issues Surrounding Active Preservation

“Active preservation” of ruins occurs when and if the landowner wishes to use the ruins directly. Contingencies exist where both economic and aesthetic benefits may be

gained from ruin preservation. First, the developer may wish to use the ruins as a marketing brand or symbol allowing their unique qualities of time and place to create a historical identity for the new community. Ruins may also be used as marketing brands on labels or advertising. The owner may preserve the ruins as a focal point for an adaptive use such as a garden or events setting (i.e., weddings, receptions, dances, or business parties). Once this decision has been made, the owner is faced with a set of economic decisions concerning the presentation, preservation, and interpretation of the site.

M.W. Thompson, in his essay on the preservation of ruins, listed two basic objectives of the preserver. The first objective is the preservation and security of the ruin. The second objective is to make the ruin intelligible on some level to any visitor.¹¹⁸ Thompson believes that “intelligibility is the foundation of the whole operation of preservation and display.”¹¹⁹ Therefore, the owner may first be faced with archaeological excavation of the site to reveal and understand buried foundations and other features. Even where standing ruins are present, it is likely that some or most of the foundation and features of the ruin will be buried.

The cost of archaeological excavations often represents only a small portion of overall monies spent for new development. Review of data from Brockington and Associates, Inc., a private cultural resource management and archaeological consulting firm, shows that mitigation or data recovery excavations generally range from thirty thousand to two hundred thousand dollars per site. In excavations where portions of the site, including all exposed ruins, will be preserved *in situ*, cost may be significantly lower, particularly if

portions of the site are left unexcavated. This amount represents only a small fraction of the overall cost of large-scale developments.

Benefits of such archaeological excavations include a full historical context and history of the site, disclosure of the ground plan, and the basis for any interpretive plan. Thompson states that revealing the ground plan is extremely important in the ruin interpretation. “Removal archaeological excavations” commonly preclude excavation below the last period of active use of the building or the period to which the building will be interpreted.¹²⁰

The base of the walls in any ruin is normally buried to considerable depth in accumulated debris, the purpose of removing which is twofold: the masonry must be treated to its original base: secondly not only is a very substantial (and often better-preserved) part of the ruin invisible under the ground until it is removed, but also the ground-plan cannot be determined until this has been achieved.¹²¹

In additional, decisions may need to be made concerning the retention or demolition of adaptations and additions to the original structure made after the original construction of the building. These weighty matters will no doubt result in a great deal of discussion with experts in historic preservation, interpretation, and architectural history.¹²²

Today’s historic archaeologist is naturally accompanied by a host of other disciplines, including historians, architectural historians, photographers, material culture specialists, and graphic artists. Before and during the archaeological excavations, each of these disciplines comes into play in the interpretation of the ruins, thereby giving all interested parties a more thorough and accurate view of the excavated ruins and their history. This interaction of

disciplines also creates a more diverse view of the possibilities for marketing or using the ruin in some adaptive sense.

These specialists provide a wealth of informational materials allowing the owner to develop a complete interpretive plan. Artifacts may be conserved or reconstructed for display. Maps, photographs, and drawings created during the archaeological process are often used to bring life to the interpretation. Additionally, background research may provide personal tidbits about the former inhabitants of a structure that will allow visitors to relate on a more personal nature to the ruin.

Following exploration of the ruin by archaeological excavation, decisions must be made regarding details of presentation and preservation of the now exposed ruin. Recommendations by interpretive specialists and architectural historians concerning the ruin may be made to the owner. Working with the owner, these specialists must make significant choices about whether or not portions of the ruin should be reconstructed or restored. Reconstruction and restoration are usually undertaken only when such actions are structurally necessary or will greatly aid in interpretation.¹²³ Thompson states that:

The objectives of the work in preservation are to arrest decay and freeze the masonry—as it were—in the condition in which it was found, and secondly to remove an accretion of structures or fallen debris or growing vegetation that conceals the stonework and is a deterrent to its preservation or the understanding of its original construction.¹²⁴

In Britain, national policy generally prohibits both restoration and reconstruction. The United States has no such national policy and makes decisions on a case-by-case basis.

However, with privately-owned ruins, the decision may depend on how the ruin is to be used. Safety issues may also influence a decision to restore part of a ruin.

Despite modern policy to limit preservation to these two objectives, safety and interpretation, the cost to preserve a ruin may still be high. Experts in masonry or materials preservation may need to be consulted, and any needed treatment can be costly. While many preservation costs pertain to the initial saving of the ruin, others may arise due to exposure to the elements over time.

Preservation of the ruin will also necessitate the removal of unrestricted growth such as vines and other plants. This may include the removal of trees where their roots may impact and damage any surrounding walls. Other trees may be left in place since their appearance may enhance the aesthetic appeal of the ruin.

Since the ruin will be used for a particular purpose, preparation of the ground surface and approaches will be essential. In England, ruins are often planted in grass and approaches are built of wood to contrast with the original structure. Both avenues have proven successful, but they demand constant upkeep.¹²⁵ However, the cost of mowing a lawn is much lower than many alternatives, especially if using the Scottish approach of allowing sheep to roam free over the site. In heavy traffic areas, paths may be created with gravel or other artificial surfaces to allow ease of admission for disabled visitors.

Any maintenance to the ruins and their general surroundings must also be considered and calculated into the long-term costs of the preservation plan. These may be offset by

admission fees, user fees, or donations. Generally, the areas surrounding the ruin must also be considered in any preservation and maintenance plan.

Finally, any initial costs for preservation of a ruin might include cost to interpret the ruin for visitors, especially if the ruin will be marketed as an attraction rather than a venue within the development. Interpretative plans generally follow two main avenues. First there is a limited approach as is often seen in Europe, and in particular, Great Britain. The second is the educational approach favored by the National Park Service.

The limited approach, as a rule, interprets the ruin only to the extent that the common visitor may recognize the important landmarks or features within a ruin and from there perceive the secondary points of construction. This plan, however, depends upon the visitor being able to recognize easily the ground-plan of the original structure. Writing about the British approach to ruin interpretation, M.W. Thompson in *Ruins: Their Preservation and Display* stated:

The increased understanding of a ruin arising from exposure of the ground-plan will allow much more intelligent preservation; for this reason and because it is necessary for display, fuller understanding of the ruin is a constant objective at all times. The main obstacles to this understanding are frequent changes that the structure has undergone both as a living building when it served its original purpose and since then up to the present day. The decisions that will have to be taken on retention during preservation will be some of the most difficult and controversial to arise.¹²⁶

To aid understanding, some ground-plans may be marked by small signs or illustrated in available site maps or brochures. Along with a visible ground-plan, interpretation may be limited to a brochure explaining the history of the site, for those interested in such matters.

In practice, this limited approach allows the visitor's imagination and intellect to interpret the ruins. This approach, according to Thompson, aids the visitor but does not hinder or limit his ability to interpret the ruin for himself. Thompson explains that the "pleasure of a ruin is to stimulate our imagination and reconstruct in our mind's eye the structure in its original state. The better we understand the ruin (common sense or, if necessary, archaeology), the better the imagination reconstruction."¹²⁷

In opposition to the limited approach is the educational approach favored by the NPS. This plan uses diagrams, plans, models, documents, photographs, audio-visual media, brochures, and on-site interpreters or docents to educate visitors about various aspects of the site. Usually a visitor's center is the first stop, which is followed by a guided or self-guided tour of the site. Especially where self-guided tours are employed, various portions of the ruin are labeled. Informational panels are often positioned at significant points.

The benefits of either preservation plan are apparent; therefore, the purpose and mission of preserving the ruin will suggest whether a limited or active plan is needed. For example, a more active plan with an educational interpretive plan may be necessary if the site is to be used for heritage tourism programs or if internal spaces are to be used for any active purpose. However, if the ruin is only to be used for an event facility, then the more passive, limited interpretative plan may be employed. Of course, a ruin may be preserved with limited archaeological investigations and a more educational interpretive plan. On the other hand, after complete archaeological investigations at the site, a more limited interpretive plan may be indicated. As each ruin is different, a comprehensive plan of

preservation, conservation, and interpretation should be designed by knowledgeable consultants.

Economic costs related to the limited approach should be considerably less than that of the educational approach. The limited approach eliminates the need for extensive on site staffing, docents, guided tours, and interactive signage. However, in the United States, visitors have come to expect a more elaborate approach to interpretation. Therefore, employment of the limited interpretive approach may result in fewer visitors to the ruin.

In conclusion, when choosing an interpretive plan, the mission or purpose of the ruin will mostly likely dictate which route is taken. Most often heritage tourism programs will dictate more active and educational interpretative approaches based on a variety of media and programs. In opposition, ruins used as gardens or backdrops for events are often only minimally interpreted and used instead for their picturesque qualities and contributions to the landscape. In either case, supplemental interpretive materials should be made available for more inquisitive visitors.

Benefits of Ruin Preservation

The first part of this chapter discusses the economic costs associated with ruin preservation. This portion explores the benefits that may be realized from such preservation actions, as ruins can provide economic values to their owners and to the surrounding community.

Economic benefits come as monetary return on the dollars invested to preserve, interpret, and use the site. These benefits may include increased land values, preservation tax credits, admission or user fees, marketing fees, and increased business for the surrounding community. Each of these benefits depends upon how the site is interpreted and used.

Several recent studies show that historic sites draw more visitors than amusement parks, golf courses, stadiums, and other attractions.¹²⁸ Donovan Rypkema, a prominent real estate consultant and historic preservationist, stressed that it is the unique nature of historic sites that cannot be duplicated anywhere else that attracts many visitors. Rypkema wrote that it is this factor that makes heritage tourism the “strongest growing component of the travel market and constitutes the most sustainable investment in a tourism-based economic development strategy.”¹²⁹ *Marketing Places*, a book on attracting investment, industry, and tourism, emphasizes the potential of cities that use their historic resources to attract visitors and industry.¹³⁰

Additionally, historic site visitors stay in an area longer than the average tourist and spend more money, an additional benefit to the local community.¹³¹ While entrance fees often do not cover the cost of upkeep for many heritage tourism sites, the income they draw to the local community proves their value as a money making resource. Increased business also gives local community members discretionary funds that may be given as donations to support the historic resource, especially historic resources owned and managed by nonprofit foundations. Communities that rely on historic attractions to draw tourists often have very active and successful nonprofit societies that help support their local heritage.

If a ruin is developed as part of an event facility, its economic return may be greatly increased. Historic houses and their grounds, gardens, and other heritage sites are explicitly sought by many wishing to hold such events as weddings and social and corporate functions. These facilities are often booked months, even years, in advance. Historic event facilities secure high booking and user fees and often support related businesses such as caterers and florists. These facilities create jobs within the community.

Recently, movie makers have sought sites outside the Hollywood studios and backlots for feature film production. Heritage sites are often sought after locations for period films as they reduce overhead costs and allow for more realistic venues. North Carolina, South Carolina, and Georgia have all recently seen a tremendous increase in the number of films shot on both historic and scenic locations within their states.¹³²

Nevertheless, it may be the longer term returns on the investment — those often difficult to qualify — that result in the most value added for the owner. Recent studies published by *Dollars & Sense of Historic Preservation* and similar publications have demonstrated the economic impact of historic preservation is “significant, complex, and widespread.”¹³³ Many of these impacts may be applied to the preservation and presentation of ruins within a new development.

For example, ruins confer a sense of architectural quality and character that may be absent from other structures within the community. They create a sense of time and place that modern buildings can only copy. Ruins may protect or contribute to scenic views and reward the community with a sense of pride in its heritage. In addition, if the ruin is

interpreted, it will bestow an educational benefit on the community, especially for local schools. School children who visit heritage sites on class trips learn the value of history, historic preservation, archaeology, architecture, conservation, and museums. These children often retain an individual sense of pride in their community and mature to be more responsible citizens.

If the ruin is used as a marketing brand or symbol for the development, the original investment in its preservation may be substantial. Often, developers search for something about a piece of property that sets it apart from others within the general community, to attract the attention of potential investors. It is this uniqueness that gives the developer a marketing tool. With a historic ruin, its uniqueness cannot be duplicated, and if marketed correctly may provide just the right tool to draw new homeowners and visitors to the property.

Currently, open space is a marketing tool for many new residential communities as developers recognize its importance to quality of life. Open space also increases the value of surrounding land.¹³⁴ Ruin preservation usually creates open space within a community. Space surrounding the ruin, containing the portions of the associated archaeological site, is often left undeveloped. This is an effective way of protecting an archaeological site by simply covering it with fill dirt and grass or other noninvasive ground covers. A preserved ruin, open to the public, furnishes its community with a tranquil place for enjoying nature. An example of ruin preservation that also provides open space to a residential community is available at Parkers Islands, South Carolina, where the ruins of an early nineteenth-century brick kiln are incorporated into a neighborhood park.

If ruin preservation also includes designating the ruin as a local historic landmark or listing it on the National Register of Historic Places, additional economic impacts can be expected. Studies in North Carolina have shown that such designation “consistently encourages reinvestment” within a community and raises surrounding land values.¹³⁵

Conclusions

Owners can take two different approaches to ruin preservation. The first, passive preservation, requires few economic costs for the owner; however, passive preservation may grant an owner economic benefits. Owners may receive tax credits and savings on estate taxes by creating preservation easements for the ruin. Also, the easement may be purchased by a governmental agency or nonprofit foundation for a direct fee.

Active preservation is an option that is particularly beneficial to private developments. Active preservation often involves an adaptive use for the ruin. Ruins are often used as heritage sites, event facilities, and marketing brands or symbols. Costs associated with active preservation include security, archaeological and historical investigations, conservation, restoration, and maintenance. However, the benefits from active ruin preservation can be advantageous. Historic ruins used as event facilities or focal points in commercial gardens provide direct economic benefits, such as admission and user fees for their owners. Additionally, they support local business, raise property values, and create jobs.

Ruins used as marketing brands or symbols draw additional visitors to the area. Like ruins used as heritage sites, they create a sense of community and provide scenic views and open space. Ruins used as heritage sites also raise property values and create jobs, not only at the ruin, but also in the local community. Preserved ruins provide an educational benefit to the community.

Both types of ruin preservation, passive and active, afford owners with economic benefits. These benefits often overshadow any outlay of funds for archaeological investigation, interpretation, preservation, and security. Ruins can be used adaptively. Adaptive uses such as event facilities and marketing tools can garner substantial returns for private owners and private developments.

CHAPTER V ANALYSIS OF PRESERVED RUINS

Whereas the previous chapter abstractly discussed the economic impacts and benefits of ruin preservation, this chapter examines ruins currently preserved or in the process of being preserved by private developments in the southeastern United States. Details about each ruin are presented including its setting, appearance, history, ownership, and interpretation. Photographs of these ruins are provided where possible.

During the research phase of this study, it became apparent to this author that five factors influence successful ruin preservation. Perhaps the most important attributes concern the ruin's qualities and its setting that contribute to its appearance (Criterion 1). A ruin must be picturesque or visually pleasing. Its setting should enhance its appearance. Specifically, the ruin must be clear of excessive vegetation, freely accessible, exposed enough to be easily interpreted by visitors, and embraced by its surroundings. Visitors must be able to view the unobstructed ruin and enjoy the experience.

The second factor is history (Criterion 2). A ruin with a "romantic" and intriguing history attracts more visitors. If the ruin's history is exciting or dramatic, visitors will stay longer and be more likely to spend money on interpretive materials and

tours, where available. Ruins associated with important or influential persons also seem to attract more visitors.

A successful ruin needs a purpose, the third important factor in ruin preservation (Criterion 3). The ruin's purpose may be entirely static; it may stand as a backdrop or enhancement to its surroundings. In contrast, the ruin may achieve an active purpose as a heritage site or marketing brand or symbol. Either use — static or active — results in a body of stewards who serve to preserve and protect the ruin. They provide monetary support either from commercial funds, entrance or usage fees, grants, or donations.

The fourth factor is interpretation (Criterion 4). Successful ruin preservation depends on proper interpretive efforts. Interpretation should be respectful of the ruin's footprint so as not to intrude upon its visual impact. However, any interpretation needs to provide sufficient information to allow visitors to learn the ruin's layout, its scale, its age, and its history. Suggested interpretive plans include signs, original structure photographs, drawings, models or floor plans, and maps of the site's various features. At complex ruin sites, the interpretive plan may require a video or other media to establish its place in history, to illustrate its architecture, or to explore any related archaeological site.

Finally, ruins need legal protection (Criterion 5). Protective legal measures may include easements, financial trusts, and agreements with governmental agencies such as state preservation offices. Professional services should be arranged to monitor the ruin

annually for needed stabilization and maintenance. A long-term preservation plan should be prepared and implemented.

Three distinct sets of ruins are described in this chapter. The first ruins discussed are those where preservation is passive and interpretation is limited. Most of these ruins have few visitors, often because they exist within gated communities. Examples include the Parkers Island Brick Kiln Park, South Carolina; Kingsmill Plantation, Virginia; Old Sheldon Church and Biggin Church, South Carolina; and a group of tabby ruins along South Carolina's coast. The second preservation group consists of three ruins that are actively preserved. Two of these, Barboursville Vineyards, Virginia, and Barnsley Gardens, Georgia, serve an adaptive purpose and are used as marketing symbols by their owners. The third ruin, Rosewell, Virginia, is owned by a private, nonprofit foundation and is preserved as a heritage site. A third set of ruins contains two privately-owned ruins for which preservation is still an option. These ruins are Wheatland, Virginia, and Nesbitt/Union Chapel, Georgia.

After an initial discussion of each ruin, its success or possibility for success is addressed based on the five criteria presented here. The ruins are rated based on the strength of each criterion of success. The rating scale is from one to fifteen. Each criterion is judged as poor (one point), good (two points) or excellent (three points). Also direct economic impacts or benefits for the owners are discussed, and where possible, suggestions are presented that may lead to increased economic benefits. Each section ends with suggestions for owner-based initiatives that may be taken to protect or to interpret the ruin.

Parkers Island Brick Kiln Park

In the very early 1800s, settlers along the Wando River established the brickyard at Parkers Island, Charleston County, South Carolina. From this early enterprise came many bricks for the plantation houses and churches in this Lowcountry area just north of Charleston.¹³⁶ Currently, an upscale housing development, called “the Pointe,” rises in the area surrounding the brick kiln. Seeing the potential of using Parkers Island’s rich history as part of the development and needing to fulfill South Carolina Department of Archives and History preservation requirements, the developers decided to create a very unusual park on the brick kiln site. Two additional factors figured into this decision. First, this small property could not be sold as a residential lot due to a lack of vehicle access. Second, it provided the residential community’s only deep water access.¹³⁷

The park is available to the development’s residents and to school tours. The park includes a picnic table, a large swing, and two interpretive signs along the path to the community dock (Figure 1). One small brick kiln ruin and part of another have been stabilized and preserved (Figure 2). While the small kilns are often difficult to find within the surrounding vegetation, interpretive signs give visitors basic information about the kilns’ purpose and importance in the early nineteenth century. The park provides protection for unexcavated sections of the archaeological deposits surrounding the kilns.

Initially, the developers wished to pursue the limited economic benefits available in developing the archaeological park. In particular, they wanted to reap tax credits by donating the land to the newly-created homeowners’ association and by applying a



Figure 1: Entrance to Parkers Island Brick Kiln Park (photograph by C. Poplin).



Figure 2: Brick kiln during archaeological excavations (photograph courtesy of Brockington and Associates, Inc.)

conservation easement to protect the archaeological site. These efforts failed when archaeological investigations determined the site to be ineligible for the National Register of Historic Places or the state listing of significant archaeological sites. Nevertheless, the park's creation and site preservation fostered goodwill for the developers with both the South Carolina Department of Archives and History and the Town of Mount Pleasant.¹³⁸ Additionally, this preservation effort created an open space park within the community that should increase surrounding land values.¹³⁹

The Parkers Island Brick Kiln ruins site serves as an example of passive preservation with limited interpretation. Parkers Island ruins are rated as good for Criterion 1, appearance and setting. Most viewers would not consider the ruins either spectacular or picturesque; nevertheless, the ruins are well kept and their surroundings are pleasing to view. The site is easily accessible along the paths. The community homeowners' association retains responsibility for the park's upkeep, but, maintenance costs should be minimal. The low-lying ruins require little maintenance, and should require practically no stabilization. Upkeep will generally consist of invasive plant removal and vandalism prevention. The park's position within an upscale community should assure that vandalism protection for the site is not a major problem. Paths consist of gravel with lined edges. No grassy areas require mowing, and only a few areas contain native plants that will need to be trimmed or removed regularly.

These brick kiln ruins represent an early, important economic enterprise in rural South Carolina. The history of these ruins and how they fit into the economic background of the area is extremely important; their history is also rated as good.

The Parkers Island Brick kiln ruins cannot be used solely as a heritage park because they hold limited interest for the public and its location is not suitable. The ruins do not contribute economically to the neighborhood association. For Criterion 3, purpose, they are rated as poor. The park would continue to be functional without the ruins. Interpretation remains limited to two low key signs along the walkway. Several area sources have available additional information on brick kilns for inquisitive visitors. Parkers Island developers designed the interpretive signs to withstand the local high humidity and heat, and they require little maintenance. Interpretation is rated as poor although it fits the needs of the park

Criterion 5, legal protection, is rated as poor. The site is not listed on the National Register of Historic Places and will therefore not receive any overview by the South Carolina Department of Archives and History. It is owned by the homeowners association; however, they have no legal obligation to preserve or protect the ruins.

Overall, this analysis shows that the Parkers Island Brick Kiln ruins rate only seven and one-half points on a scale of fifteen. However, several certain economic impacts must be taken into consideration when rating these ruins' chance for successful long-term preservation. First, although the developers failed to secure direct economic benefits from their preservation actions, land and houses in coastal South Carolina with open water access sell for more than those in landlocked communities. The park serves the surrounding development in several ways. Its benefits include open space, a community park with recreation and leisure activity areas, and access to a community dock. Additionally, the Parkers Island Brick Kiln ruins provide Pointe residents with a

sense of history for their new homes. The many bricks evident during low tides along the river's edge add to the sense that the land had a history long before the current residents' arrival. If these benefits are recognized by the homeowners' association they may influence the future preservation of these ruins.

In retrospect, the Parkers Island developers' decision to preserve the brick kiln ruins demonstrates their desire to protect and emphasize a bit of local history within their residential development. After limited archaeological testing, and South Carolina Department of Archives and History clearance, the developers could have chosen to destroy the ruins and the remaining archaeological site. This action would have ultimately saved them the cost of erecting interpretive signs and ruin protection during nearby construction. However, by leaving the ruins *in situ* and providing limited interpretation, the residents and the local community retained a reminder of their rich antebellum tradition.

Two actions might ensure long-term success for these ruins. First, additional interpretive signs should be added, and the site should be considered for inclusion in Mt. Pleasant's local tourist brochures. Second, to provide additional protection, the homeowners' association should pursue an archaeological easement that would provide for professional review and assessment annually.

Kingsmill Plantation Ruins

In October 1971, a local night watchman led Dr. William Kelso to a nearby rural Virginia archaeological site known to Kelso only from local rumors. Soon, Kelso began to seek funding from Busch Properties, Inc., to excavate and analyze the archaeological remains of the Colonial Kingsmill Plantation, Littletown Plantation, and many other archaeological sites on the land adjacent to Colonial Williamsburg.¹⁴⁰ Kelso's volume on the Kingsmill Plantation excavations became one of North America's seminal works for historic archaeologists. Likewise, the archaeological studies and preservation activities funded by Anheuser-Busch set standards for many other corporations to follow.

Today, the Kingsmill Plantation ruins and archaeological sites lie preserved within the Arnold Palmer-designed Plantation golf course. The sites are listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Interpretive signs identify the structures and present small glimpses of their history.¹⁴¹ The ruins' location within the gated community provides excellent site protection. It also severely limits the ruins' usefulness as a heritage tourism site. Kingsmill Plantation proudly advertises the results of the historical and archaeological investigations as part of their community, exhibiting archaeological artifacts in their Kingsmill Conference Center and naming streets after the colonists that first settled the land.¹⁴² However, Kingsmill Plantation's web page fails to mention the ruins, and they do not appear in the marketing scheme. Therefore, the Kingsmill ruins must be considered as passive preservation with limited interpretation. The sites are not readily available to the public, other than golfers.

Kingsmill Plantation ruins are rated at ten out of fifteen points for chances of successful long-term preservation. The low-lying ruins are rated good for appearance and setting. The ruins consist of low-lying foundations and are not considered picturesque or dramatic. Kingsmill Plantation has a rich and varied history that begins in the early years of colonial Virginia and emphasizes the economic beginnings of the New World. Its history receives an excellent rating. The Kingsmill Plantation ruins serve very little purpose and have limited interpretation. They are not accessible to the general public and are not used as either a heritage asset or marketing symbol. For both Criteria 3 and 4, these ruins are rated as poor. Kingsmill Plantation ruins are rated excellent for legal protection. The ruins are listed on the National Register which makes them better known, and they are preserved under an agreement with the Virginia State Historic Preservation Office. Additionally, they are within a development that has shown a commitment and willingness to pursue scientific studies and preservation actions related to their cultural resources. Anheuser-Busch's actions also clearly show a desire to protect and interpret these sites.

Although the Kingsmill Plantation ruins possess an excellent chance for long-term preservation, a way of making the ruins more economically viable should be considered. Anheuser-Busch minimally uses the ruins for marketing. Considering the sites' importance in historical archaeology, the company should explore marketing heritage and archaeological tours during golf's "off season." These tours would draw additional visitors to their facility and increase profits during the off season.

Old Sheldon Church Ruin

In rural, coastal, Beaufort County, South Carolina, stands a picturesque ruin known as Old Sheldon Church. After his emigration to the new colony of South Carolina, Englishman William Bull, owner of Sheldon Plantation, helped establish the Prince William Parish Church by providing much of the monetary support.¹⁴³ The first church built between 1745 and 1755 had towering walls and massive arches, all of locally made brick. A statue of William Bull on horseback once stood in front of the church.¹⁴⁴

In 1775, William's patriot son, Colonel Stephen Bull, stored the colonial militia's gun powder in the church before shipping some of it to Philadelphia as requested by the Continental Army. Burned by the British Army in 1779, local families rebuilt the church in 1826, only to see it torched by Sherman's Army in 1865.¹⁴⁵

Today, the Old Sheldon Church ruin lies within the pine forest just off US Route 21 (Figure 3). All four brick walls and the four columns still stand. Some original plaster can be seen on the interior (Figure 4). St. Helena's Episcopal Church owns and protects the site, which is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. A board of parishioners retains responsibility for its care. The grounds also contain an active cemetery.

St. Helena's Episcopal Church holds services at the ruin only once a year, the second Sunday after Easter. Couples frequently marry within the ruin after gaining the St. Helena's board of parishioners' permission.¹⁴⁶



Figure 3: Old Sheldon Church Ruin (photograph by author).

Old Sheldon Church ruin is well known in South Carolina. Many residents consider it an important landmark. On the ruin, one stone marker gives its name and important dates in its history. Placed at the site in 1937 by the Columbia Committee, South Carolina Society Colonial Dames of America, the plaque duplicates much of the information on the roadside historical marker. The nearby Lowcountry Visitors Center recommends Old Sheldon Church highly to those interested in heritage sites. Although very limited interpretive information is available at the site, this does not seem to deter visitors nor does it appear to diminish their appreciation of the site. Facts concerning the church's history can be found on internet sites such as CharmingTowns.com and pictures of the church can be found on several web sites dedicated to photography.¹⁴⁷



Figure 4: Looking into Sheldon Church (photograph by author).

St. Helena's preserves the ruin within their cemetery and allows open visitation. Parishioners seldom use the ruin as a church nor is it maintained as a heritage tourism site. Yet, the ruin draws visitors daily, along with young couples seeking a romantic,

picturesque place to celebrate one of the most important events in their lives — their wedding.

The Old Sheldon Church ruin represents passive ruin preservation. This ruin rates as excellent for Criteria 1, 2, and 5. The ruin is impressive, grand in scale, and picturesque. Its setting of live oaks and Spanish moss within the quiet cemetery, greatly enhances its beauty. It is easily accessible, viewable from all four sides, and a lovely place to photograph. Old Sheldon Church has a rich romantic history for those willing to seek it out. It is a story of patriots, of gentlemen and women, of gunpowder, fire and destruction and of willingness and hopes. Old Sheldon Church is supported by the local Episcopal church which is dedicated to its support. It is listed on the National Register of Historic Places, is well-known, and loved by its surrounding community.

As a passive ruin, Old Sheldon Church ruin serves three purposes. It is used once a year as a church, occasionally as a wedding chapel, and constantly as a heritage site. Old Sheldon Church ruin provides no economic benefits for St. Helena's Episcopal Church. A small fee charged to wedding parties pays only some upkeep of the grounds. These purposes however do not contribute significantly to its maintenance. Criterion 3, purpose, is rated as good.

Interpretation at Old Sheldon Church is extremely limited. The truly inquisitive must seek other sources to learn more about its rich history and its architecture. Therefore, it is rated poor for interpretation.

The “burned church,” as it is known to the local African-American community, retains its significance as one of the Lowcountry’s most beloved sites. The ruin provides beauty, history, and solitude to its visitors, drawing many to the ruin repeatedly. As a ruin and a historic site, it is a success. This success is shown by its rating of twelve of fifteen points. However, the success of Old Sheldon Church ruin is based almost solely on the beauty of the ruin and its surroundings.

Enhancing the experience of visiting Old Sheldon Church promises to be a difficult task as the ruin is already one of the most picturesque and significant sights in the Lowcountry. However, the placement of additional historic information at the entrance of the grounds would provide some visitors with a more enjoyable experience. Yet, most visitors will no doubt continue to seek and receive pleasure at the ruin without any changes.

Biggin Church Ruin

A trip on rural SC Route 402 just north of Moncks Corner, South Carolina, presents travelers with the lovely scene of two remnant brick walls belonging to Biggin Church (Figure 5). Amid the blooming azaleas, crape myrtle, and gravestones, the ruin provides a dramatic backdrop for the surrounding cemetery, where at least one grave dates to the late eighteenth century. Many graves date to the early and middle nineteenth century, while others are more recent.



Figure 5: Biggin Church Ruin (photograph by author).

Established by the Parish of St. John's Berkeley, Biggin Church received its name from Biggin Hill, Kent, England. The Anglican parish completed Biggin Church in 1712. They rebuilt the church in 1761 after its first destruction by forest fire in 1756. The church was restored after it was burned by the British Army's Colonel Coates during his July of 1781 retreat from Charles Town. The church remained in use until the end of the Civil War. Struck again by forest fire in 1886, the building became a source of brick

for local residents.¹⁴⁸ The two walls and foundations visible today probably represent the 1761 structure.

Currently, the Biggin Church Ruin and Cemetery are owned by the South Carolina Episcopal Diocese; a committee of parishioners from several local Episcopal churches oversees the care of the ruin and cemetery. Trinity Episcopal Church of nearby Pinopolis, South Carolina, is the closest active Episcopal congregation and often takes the lead in the ruin's care.¹⁴⁹

Interpretation consists only of a roadside historical marker, as the site is not used for heritage tourism. Like Old Sheldon Church ruin, Biggin Church ruin is preserved within a cemetery. It requires little maintenance as the two remaining brick walls are stable and invasive growth is removed immediately. Its importance remains high for the parishioners and local residents. No archaeological excavations have been conducted around the ruin, and recent assessment by local architects of its stability were extremely positive.¹⁵⁰

Although ruin preservation at Biggin Church remains passive, it has been very successful. The local churches and Diocese consider the site to be extremely important to their heritage. Additionally, the ruin gives the cemetery an interesting and visually stimulating focal point. Biggin Church is rated as ten and one-half points out of a total of fifteen. It received excellent ratings for appearance and setting and legal protection. Biggin Church ruin has a remarkable history of rising again after two fires only to burn again. Although it was not rebuilt, it is so cherished that local parishioners have

protected it within their cemetery. Its history is rated as good to excellent (two and one-half points). Biggin Church ruin has no purpose other than as a focal point for the cemetery and its interpretation is extremely limited. Therefore, it is rated as poor for Criteria 3 and 4.

South Carolina and Georgia's Coastal Tabby Ruins

Clusters of tabby ruins dot the coasts of South Carolina and Georgia, due mainly to the interest and preservation efforts of some concerned citizens and the goodwill of a few large private development firms. Following a brief overview of the tabby process, this section presents a basic description of four tabby ruins. Analysis of the preservation efforts undertaken to protect and interpret these ruins for the public follows.

Tabby, a mixture of oyster shell, sand, and shell lime, creates an unusual building material that served as a substitute for brick and stone on Georgia and South Carolina's sea islands and coastal mainland. Abundant oyster shell along the coast made tabby production possible. Tabby had been used by the Spanish for centuries, and probably began before 1735 along America's southern coast. It became more popular after the Revolutionary War and continued to be used until the Civil War. Tabby can be formed for walls by pouring into wooden boxes, poured to produce floors, or poured into molds to make tabby bricks. Once the tabby mixture dried, workers removed the molds.¹⁵¹ Internal plaster and external stucco finishes sealed the tabby from the weather.

Tabby structures most often failed due to fire, strong winds, or loss of their roofs and plaster coatings. However, loss of the structural timbers seems to have been the cause of many failures. Larger structures, especially those with two or more stories, failed more often, but the process of deterioration could be quite lengthy.¹⁵² Many remaining tabby ruins are still weathering, but, with the current rapid rate of coastal region development, these ruins often face demolition rather than deterioration.

Edwards House Ruins, Spring Island

On Spring Island, South Carolina, the Edwards House once stood as three separate buildings connected by porches, all made of tabby. About 1770, George Barksdale built the center section; it was two stories high with end chimneys. Later, around 1810-1820, his grandson, George Edwards, added two symmetrical wings.¹⁵³

Today, within the private Spring Island residential development, little of the central house still stands (Figure 6). Only heavily eroded fragments of the two end walls and three porch piers remain. The wing structures are more complete. An almost intact (although roofless) kitchen and slave house, built circa 1820 is nearby (Figure 7). Colin Brooker, one of South Carolina's leading architectural historians and an expert on tabby construction, notes that none of these buildings have their internal plaster or external two-coat stucco finishes. Loss of these external and internal finishes speeds the rate of weathering.¹⁵⁴



Figure 6: Edwards House Tabby Ruins (photograph by author).



Figure 7: Edwards Kitchen and Slave House Ruin (photograph by author).

The Edwards House ruins, near a green on the Arnold Palmer-designed Old Tabby Links Golf Course, continue to be protected by the Spring Island Trust. A one and one-half percent tax on the sale and one percent tax on the resale of property and houses on the island funds the Trust, a nonprofit foundation. Owners and developers, Jim and Betsy Chaffin, hired Bruce Lampright, now Spring Island Trust's senior naturalist, as their first employee. Since the development's earliest stage, the Chaffin's stated goal was to build "a park with a community in it as opposed to a community with a park in it."¹⁵⁵ Today, the Spring Island Trust and Spring Island Property Owners' Association work together to preserve the natural and historical environment of the island. Recently, the property owners' association purchased ninety of the remaining unsold lots for open space preservation under the care of the Trust.¹⁵⁶

Although the Trust does not employ a cultural resource or historic preservation professional, they often hire local architectural historians, such as Colin Brooker, to assist their efforts. Private cultural resource management firms provide archaeological services when needed.¹⁵⁷

In the early 1990s, preservation treatments at the ruins included removing all invasive vegetation, the capping of each wall, and the restoration of wood window frames and door surrounds. Colin Brooker's discovery of a carbonized window frame and one lintel within the ruins allowed for accurate reproduction of the replacement pieces.¹⁵⁸ Currently, the Spring Island Trust removes invasive growth, monitors deterioration, and maintains an interpretive display.¹⁵⁹ The display, near the ruins,

consists of two double-sided explanatory panels and a model of the original buildings. Visitors can arrive at the ruins by way of the golf course, by driving along the original live oak allee (an unpaved lane), or by walking across the lawn from the nearby country club. Much of the surrounding area is natural, and the ruins stand with a clear view of Port Royal Sound.

While the Edwards House ruins must be considered passive preservation, the Trust encourages Spring Island's residents to enjoy the picturesque qualities of the site. Visiting artists use the grounds for sketching, painting, and photography lessons. Frequent visitors include local garden and nature clubs. The ruins are surrounded by period plantings. An occasional wedding or picnic occurs on the grounds; however, visitors are discouraged from climbing the ruins and intruding on interior spaces. Interpretation remains limited, although the Trust fulfills information requests from the residents.¹⁶⁰

The Edwards House ruins are rated excellent for Criterion 1, appearance and setting, and Criterion 5, legal protection. All other ratings are good, for a total of twelve points. The Edwards House is an excellent candidate for successful long-term preservation.

Callawassie Island Sugar Mill Ruins

Next to Spring Island lies Callawassie Island with its circa 1815 tabby-made sugar mill ruins. Although not as spectacular as the Edwards House, the sugar mill ruins



Figure 8: Callawassie Sugar Mill Ruins (photograph by author).

remain as a reminder of the antebellum industrial period of this coastal area (Figure 8). Research on the mill suggests it may have been built by someone familiar with Thomas Spalding's 1805 revival of tabby construction on nearby Sapelo Island, Georgia.¹⁶¹

The mill ruins are owned and protected by the Callawassie Island Property Owners' Association. Representatives of the South Carolina State Historic Preservation Office oversee its maintenance and recommend stabilization when needed. Stabilization efforts have occurred several times during the last twenty years, with recent efforts focusing on repair of the tabby where damaged by woodpeckers.

Callawassie's sugar mill ruins lie along the marsh edge and are approachable by way of a path from Sugar Mill Drive between two houses. A single interpretive panel at the path's beginning provides an overview of the site and says that the ruins' garden

setting is maintained by the Callawassie Garden Club. The interpretive sign calls the site “mysterious” since early historic documentation failed to reveal a purpose or owner for the enterprise.

One nearby homeowner said that she purchased their property because of “the enchanting ruins” in the backyard. She shared high quality photographs of the ruin that she and her husband had commissioned with this author. She also pointed out the best vantage spots for photographs. Pieces of the tabby “rescued” from the marsh during low tides provided decoration to several surrounding homes’ landscapes.¹⁶²

Rating the Callawassie Sugar Mill ruins proved difficult. First, although the mill ruins are scenic and quite charming, their accessibility is limited due to the surrounding homes. Second, little is truly known about the ruins’ history. Although sugar mills played an important role in the local antebellum economy, this does not make for a dramatic or particularly interesting history. One reason may be that little is known about the history of this sugar mill. Criteria 1 and 2 are both rated as good. Criteria 3 and 4 are both rated as poor. The ruins have no particular purpose other than very limited tourism since they are within a gated residential community. They provide no appreciable economic benefits to the community. The ruins’ interpretation is limited to one sign at the pathway’s entrance. Yet, these ruins have garnered significant legal protection. They are protected both by the community property owner’s association and the State Historic Preservation Office. The community made a commitment to protect and maintain the site. The Callawassie Garden Club maintains the grounds. Overall, the Callawassie

Sugar Mill ruins receive a rating of nine points, suggesting a very good possibility of long-term preservation.

B.B. Sams House Ruins

The B.B. Sams House, Dataw Island, was the first extensive tabby building complex to undergo archaeological investigations in South Carolina (Figure 9). This work began during the 1980s. Despite problems encountered during the excavations, including the lack of an on-site architectural historian familiar with tabby construction, the project contributed a great deal of information about early tabby construction techniques and the late eighteenth-early nineteenth-century period on South Carolina's coast.¹⁶³ A report on the archaeological excavations, historical documentation, and tabby construction techniques also contains an overview of many regional tabby structures. This portion of the report was based on a study by Colin Brooker financed through a postdoctoral grant.¹⁶⁴ This work has become a landmark treatise of tabby ruins. ALCOA, Inc., funded ten years of archaeological and structural studies of the Sams House under an agreement with the South Carolina State Historic Preservation Office. ALCOA, Inc. listed the Sams Complex ruins and archaeological site on the National Register of Historic Places.

The ruins required extensive stabilization including enclosing the two-story end wall of the house within an armature fabricated from heavy timber uprights and cross members. These are bolted through the tabby wall using the original holes left after



Figure 9: Sams Complex Main House Ruins (photograph by author).

form-work ties were removed. High tensile steel guy wires counteract gravity and other forces leading to structural movement. Other work consolidated walls and patched friable vertical surfaces.¹⁶⁵ Low wood rail fences protect the ruins by keeping visitors away from the footprint of the house's ruin. Visitors may approach the dairy and other outlying ruins more closely.

Today the stabilized ruins of the Sams House stand within a private residential community on Dataw Island. Large live oaks surround the structures; nearby are tennis courts, a paved road, golf cart lanes, and several buildings. Two interpretive panels provide limited information, including a ground plan, short history, and drawing of the original structure.

The Sams Complex ruins are rated overall at eight and one-half points. The ruins are rated as excellent for protection as they are monitored by the state historic preservation office under agreement with ALCOA, Inc. ALCOA has agreed to protect the ruins and their associated archaeological site. Nevertheless, the ruins are not situated so as to be exciting or picturesque and received a rating of one and one-half points for Criterion 1. The ruins are rated as good for history although they are the remains of a farming complex. This “good” rating is based on their research contribution and potential. Both purpose and interpretation are rated as poor. Interpretation is too limited for visitors to comprehend fully the layout of the site. Also, there is a wealth of historical data available about the site, none of which is presented to the public. Sams Complex ruins have limited value for heritage tourism based upon their location within a gated residential community.

St. Helena’s Chapel of Ease Ruin

Visitors driving along Lands End Road on St. Helena Island pass a small tabby ruin standing among the live oaks and Spanish moss (Figure 10). The ruin is St. Helena’s Chapel of Ease, which served as a remote chapel for the island’s Episcopal church. The chapel was built circa 1740. Its churchyard contains the mausoleum for the Fripp family among several nineteenth-century graves. A forest fire consumed the chapel on 22 February 1886.



Figure 10: St. Helena's Chapel of Ease Ruin (photograph by author).

Still owned by St. Helena's Episcopal Church, the ruin provides an interesting stopping point for visitors to the area. A roadside historical marker provides the only interpretation of the ruin. Another tabby foundation is north of the church. No explanation is given at the site for this structure.

Ruin stabilization efforts are ongoing on the front wall of the chapel ruin. The grounds are unkept, and the cemetery currently appears abandoned. The current appearance of the ruin and the cemetery detract from what might be a quite scenic spot if properly maintained.

For Criteria 2, and 3, the Chapel of Ease ruin is rated as good. Its history is interesting and dramatic, and the site's cemetery contains the graves of several well-

known South Carolina families and patriots. The Chapel of Ease ruin is used as a passive heritage site. It is open to all at no charge. The ruins provide St. Helena's with no economic benefits. For Criterion 5, protection, the ruin is rated excellent. The Chapel of Ease ruin is listed on the National Register of Historic Places and is maintained by St. Helena's Episcopal Church. While the National Register listing provides no real protection, St. Helena's currently protects two listed sites and plans to maintain each permanently. Criterion 1, appearance and setting, is rated as poor to good. This rating could be improved if the site were cleaned of debris. Also the ruin is currently undergoing stabilization that detracts from its scenic nature. Interpretation at the site is very poor and rated at only one-half point.

These four tabby ruins represent a larger group along the coast of both South Carolina and Georgia. Other tabby ruins in South Carolina include the Stoney-Baynard ruins, Hilton Head Island; an Indigo vat complex, Port Royal Island; and Whitehall Plantation, near Ridgeland. All are on private property. Within private developments in Georgia can be found the John McIntosh Sugar Mill ruin, Camden County; Retreat Plantation's slave hospital ruin, and the John Couper ruin, both on St. Simons Island. These ruins are currently protected, receive stabilization as needed, and have some type of public interpretation. An exception is the Indigo vat complex discovered only recently.

Only the Edwards House and the Callawassie Sugar Mill stand out as picturesque, each surrounded by open space and period plantings. The Chapel of Ease and the Sams Complex both stand among romantic and picturesque live oaks covered in Spanish Moss;

nevertheless, the setting of each prohibits full enjoyment of the ruins. At the Chapel of Ease, a lack of site maintenance diminishes the view of the ruins. Tennis courts, a road, golf paths, and several buildings tightly encircle the Sams Complex, lessening visitors' pleasure and understanding of the site.

As a group, these tabby ruins provide a collective view of the wealth of tabby construction along America's southeastern coast. Yet, one major drawback to private preservation is the lack of public access. At this time only the Chapel of Ease and Stoney-Baynard Plantation are accessible to the public.¹⁶⁶ Despite this limitation, preservation of such sites within private properties must be encouraged since the alternative is often their total destruction. Preservation within communities provides a sense of historical setting, scenic interest, and often open space.

Economically, little advantage is available for ruin preservation within private developments and communities, unless the property owners' association applies for a conservation easement and receives either state or federal tax credits. Often ruin sites are not listed on the National Register of Historic Places. For example, both the Edwards House at Spring Island and the Callawassie Sugar Mill are not listed, although this action has been considered for both sites.¹⁶⁷ Restoration and upkeep for these ruins are often controlled by the property owners' association. Currently, the four tabby ruins discussed here are being carefully protected and maintained; however, economic pressures may not ensure that such actions continue. In response to this possibility, state historic preservation offices should encourage and aid private owners to donate conservation

easements to responsible nonprofit foundations to ensure the long-term care of these resources.

Barbour Ruins

The *Virginia Landmarks Register* listed the Barbour Ruins in their 1999 edition. Designed by Thomas Jefferson and completed circa 1822, the James Barbour mansion burned on Christmas Day 1884. Today it is the centerpiece and marketing brand of the Barboursville Vineyards, one of Virginia's first large-scale wineries.

Thomas Jefferson's architectural drawings illustrate a home that in many ways resembled his Monticello, with a recessed portico on the north front and a three-part bay sheltered by a portico on the south front. While Jefferson's drawings featured a dome, it was never built. James Barbour (1775-1842), the original owner, was a statesman, governor of Virginia, secretary of war, and minister to Great Britain. Today the stabilized ruins sit in a carefully planned landscape (some of the landscape is historic) and promotes a romantic image for the vineyard (Figure 11).

Established in the mid-1970s, the Barboursville Vineyard uses the carefully preserved and stabilized ruins as a marketing brand on their wine labels. The winery produces several types of wine and has an acclaimed Palladio Restaurant serving authentic Northern Italian cuisine. Yearly, a Shakespearian festival held at the ruins features performances by the local theater group, the Four County Players. Additionally,



Figure 11: Barbour Ruins (photograph courtesy of Arthur Kevin McGrath).

the romantic ruins draw many weddings each year. A self-guided tour of the ruins is available all year with a brief history of the ruins presented in the winery's brochure.¹⁶⁸

The Barboursville Vineyard has taken full advantage of the historic ruins on the farmland originally purchased for a winery. Not only are the ruins featured on the vineyard's labels, it is a prominent part of its web site and all advertising. The vineyard is named for the local community and the Barbour family, the original occupants of the home. The ruins sit about 100 yards from the vineyard's main building and are open to visitors. Information on the ruins is available to sightseers.

Barbour Ruins represent the most active type of ruin preservation. The ruins make money for its owners by providing a marketing brand that is widely recognized. Its presence on the site draws visitors who not only enjoy the ruins, but also spend money at the winery and restaurant. Additionally, the Friends of Barboursville work to preserve the ruins' historic setting. This nonprofit corporation was "founded to educate the public about the importance of Barboursville and to preserve this community as one of our state's valuable historic and environmental treasures."¹⁶⁹

Barbour Ruins draws protection from several organizations: the Barboursville Vineyard, the town of Barboursville, and the Friends of Barboursville. Further protection is garnered by its listing on the National Register of Historic Places and the Virginia Landmarks Register. Because of its presence on these two lists, the ruins are better known, and they attract attention from state and national preservation groups. The ruins benefit their owner; therefore, maintenance and any needed stabilization are carried out immediately. The ruins stand amid a beautiful setting creating a picturesque view that attracts photographers and artists. These ruins present a model for the preservation of other ruins by private companies seeking a recognizable marketing brand or logo. The Barbour ruins are rated at fourteen of fifteen possible points. Interpretation is only rated as good due to a lack of available information at the ruins. If the Barboursville Vineyard added more interpretive panels at the site, visitors would learn more about its history and its architectural design.

Barnsley Gardens Ruins

In the early 1840s, Godfrey Barnsley purchased 4,000 acres in northwest Georgia near the present day city of Adairsville. Godfrey immediately began construction of a home for his wife Julia and their six children. Following Julia's death soon after the construction began, he abandoned his plan for a year. Legend tells that upon Godfrey's return, the vision of Julia appeared to him in the formal garden's fountain urging him to complete their dream. Godfrey finished the impressive, fourteen room, Italian-style villa based on Andrew Jackson Downing's architectural designs and named it "Woodlands."¹⁷⁰

Although Barnsley lost most of his fortune during the Civil War, the house remained in the family until the twentieth century. In 1906, a tornado caused extensive damage to the house, forcing the family to take up residence in the kitchen wing. Godfrey and Julia's descendants auctioned the house in 1942. The house and the gardens then fell into disrepair.¹⁷¹

In 1988, Prince Hubertus Fugger of Bavaria, Germany, purchased the estate and 1,300 acres of surrounding property. He and his wife, Princess Alexandra, restored the gardens and stabilized the ruins, opening Barnsley Gardens to the public in 1992 (Figure 12). Today, the site also contains a nineteenth-century style English pedestrian-only village with thirty-three country cottages, a spa, a golf course, a restaurant, a Bavarian beer garden, and a tea room.¹⁷²

Approximately one hundred and fifty rose varieties adorn the property. The estate features the largest private conifer collection in the Southeast, with eighty-eight

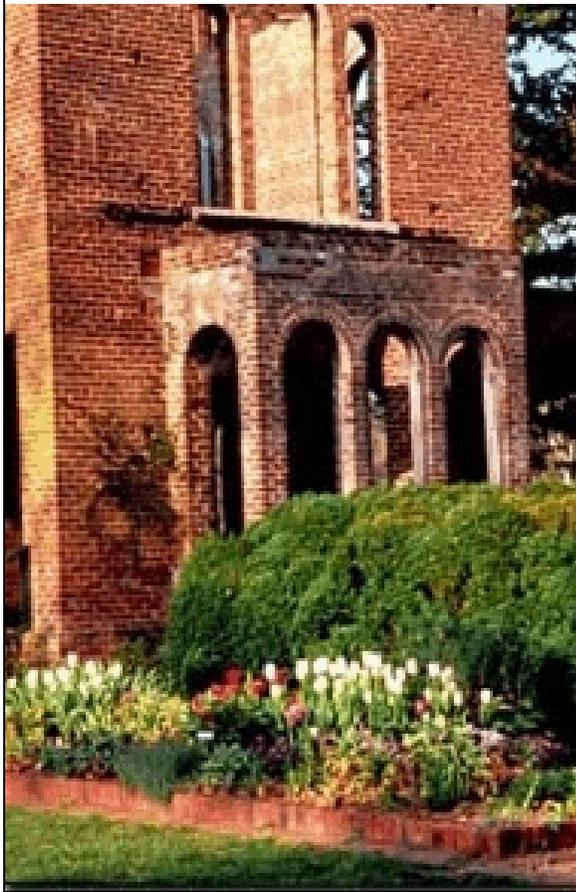


Figure 12: Barnsley Gardens Ruins (from RoadsideGeorgia.com).

different evergreen species, some dating to the 1850s. The estate also grows hundreds of rhododendron and contains an amazing daffodil and camellia collection. A bog pond and an Oriental pond are located behind the ruins. Robert Stoney, a horticulturist who specializes in historical gardens, now oversees the property's gardens.¹⁷³

Barnsley Gardens uses its ruins and their romantic history as a marketing tool. The manor house ruins and formal garden appear prominently on their website and serve as a focal point for some advertising. The ruins frequently serve as a backdrop for weddings and other social events. Prince Fugger completed stabilization of the ruins

during the first years of his development of the property. Economic issues related to the ruins maintenance remain minor considering their importance to the resort.

Barnsley Gardens functions as an excellent example of active preservation. These ruins serve a purpose and are protected by its owners. Barnsley Gardens caters to an exclusive clientele. Tours of the site are available to visitors to the Gardens. However, the ruins are visited by a limited number of people each year due mainly to the expense of using the resort and event facility. Also, Barnsley Gardens is not a convenient place to visit unless the visitor is staying at the inn. Unlike the Barbour ruins, visitors may find it difficult to visit the site strictly to view the ruins.

The Barnsley Gardens ruins are rated at thirteen and one-half points for long-term preservation. For Criterion 1, appearance and setting, the ruins are rated as good to excellent. Accessibility is limited. These ruins are rated as excellent for history, purpose, and legal protection. The Barnsley Garden ruins are rated good for interpretation, since information on the ruins is readily available at the site and is included in tours.

Rosewell Ruins

On the bank of the York River in Gloucester County, Virginia, visitors can view the ruins said to have inspired poets and architects since the time of Thomas Jefferson. This brick mansion, home to the Page family for more than 100 years, sprang to life in 1725. Throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, Rosewell with its Great Hall

stood as the community's premier home. Slightly modified by a later owner, it continued as a family home until it burned in 1916. The house's brick shell remains, along with its high chimneys and wine cellar. On the east wall, visitors see the original-carved keystone.¹⁷⁴ Its spectacular scale, grand setting, and unique architecture create imposing ruins (Figure 12).

The last family to own Rosewell donated the site to the Gloucester Historical Society in 1979. Currently, the nonprofit Rosewell Foundation is responsible for preserving and studying the ruins and their surrounding archaeological site. This foundation supports heritage tourism at the ruins and provides a wide range of activities for foundation members and the public.¹⁷⁵

The Rosewell Foundation took charge of the ruins in 1995. Since then, they have been actively involved in its care and interpretation. In 2002, the foundation received several grants, totaling about \$75,000, for stabilization efforts.¹⁷⁶

In early 2003, the Rosewell Foundation announced receipt of a \$15,000 grant from the Thomas F. Jeffress Memorial. This money is designated for a ruin preservation study. Their "Blueprint for Preservation" project will assess both the ruins' present condition and their historical appearance. Hilarie M. Hicks, Executive Director, said the study would include "a new engineering study, a masonry study, a photogrammetric survey, and a review of all past preservation work."¹⁷⁷ Ms. Hicks suggested that the completed study's results will provide "a new, long-term stabilization plan to preserve Rosewell for years to come."¹⁷⁸



Figure 13: Rosewell Ruins (photograph by Anice Hoachlander, courtesy of the Rosewell Foundation).

Other recent events at the ruins include the opening of a new visitor's center exhibit prepared by professional exhibit designers and funded from a private Richmond foundation and matching contributions. The site receives 2,500 to 3,000 visitors per year. A small admission charge of two dollars for adults and one dollar for students will be raised on Memorial Day, 2003, to four dollars for adults and two dollars for children twelve years of age and younger. School groups and tour buses are frequent visitors to the site.¹⁷⁹ Many activities occur at the site including historic-theme picnics, barbeques, visiting speakers, archaeological excavations, and native plant workshops. The Rosewell Foundation succeeds in obtaining several grants each year for preservation and stabilization of the ruins, but relies on visitors' fees and membership contributions as well as donated time.¹⁸⁰

Rosewell Ruins, under the care of the Rosewell Foundation, currently enjoys success as a heritage tourism site. After years of struggle under the management of several different groups, the ruins are now secure. The Rosewell Foundation has successfully taken charge and has built an active group of volunteers, along with a small paid staff, that cares for the site and interprets it for visitors. Their ongoing and successful grants program provides additional funds for maintenance and stabilization. Rosewell Ruins presents a model for ruin preservation by nonprofit foundations.

Rosewell ruins are the only ones in this study to rate at a perfect fifteen points. Rosewell ruins have all of the attributes needed for successful long-term preservation. Unlike the Barbour and Barnsley Garden ruins, Rosewell ruins are fully interpreted.

Wheatland Ruin

Sometime before 1750, in James City County, a one-and-one-half story home of Flemish bond brick rose in the new colony of Virginia. Thomas T. Waterman documented Wheatland, also known as Skiff's Creek House, for the Historic American Buildings Survey in 1941. Today, the walls and chimney of Wheatland stand as a ruin between Williamsburg and Newport News.¹⁸¹

Wheatland ruin is privately owned. The Wheatland Foundation, Inc., a 501(c)(3) nonprofit tax-deductible corporation, raises money to protect and to investigate the ruin and surrounding archaeological site. The property also contains several outbuildings, a probable slave cemetery, and many other features.¹⁸² In early 2003, the foundation estimated costs associated with ruin preservation and stabilization, archaeological investigations, historical and architectural documentation, and interpretation to reach nearly \$235,000. The foundation's board contains three prominent members, who are activists in the community. It is the foundation's hope that these three members can influence the owners and created enough community pressure to ensure Wheatland's preservation.¹⁸³

Under the auspices of the Wheatland Foundation and local archaeological professionals, the students of Christopher Newport University conducted archaeological excavations at the site. However, the owners have declined to permit any additional work, such as stabilization of the ruin or dissemination of any archaeological reports or studies.¹⁸⁴

Wheatland's owners, who wish to remain anonymous, have given limited permission to the Wheatland Foundation to continue to raise money to save the site; however, the property is zoned for heavy industrial and commercial development. Already a large WalMart distribution center has been built in sight of the ruin.¹⁸⁵

Analysis of Wheatland's preservation potential demonstrates several obstacles. First, the property is owned by a consortium and only one member is interested in preserving the site. Next, Wheatland is surrounded by commercial development. While the Wheatland Foundation is seeking an adaptive use, as a heritage tourism site or an archeological and historical research site, the owners are not interested. The foundation is also considering conservation easements for the site but have been unable to persuade the owners to consider this plan.¹⁸⁶ Due to the high cost of obtaining the land (unless the land is given to the foundation) and the costs associated with its preservation, it is improbable the ruin can be preserved. If ownership stays with the current consortium, the ruin is unlikely to provide the owners with the monetary rewards they need from this property. If the ruin were located in another setting, such as rural farmland or a residential area, more options would be available for adaptive use. Also, the ruin would have a better chance of succeeding as a heritage tourism site.

Since Wheatland ruin is not currently preserved, it is not rated. If the ruin were to be preserved, it could possibly achieve a rating of twelve points. It would be rated excellent for interpretation and legal protection; however the ruin is not particularly impressive nor is its setting exceptional. Accessibility would always be a problem. An additional problem is its common place history; it was a farmhouse. Finally, as a

heritage/research site, Wheatland would never be able to support itself. Grants and other outside funding would be necessary to maintain the site and support any research goals.

Nesbitt/Union Chapel Ruins

In Cobb County, Georgia, the Friends of Nesbitt/Union Chapel are working with the Cobb Land Trust to save the 116-year-old church ruins (Figure 14). The group frequently worships at the site during good weather and wants to preserve the ruins on the one acre site. By working with the Cobb Land Trust, they can accept tax-deductible donations and receive free counsel in developing a strategy for preserving and protecting the ruins.¹⁸⁷ The Friends are working to obtain 501(c)(3) status.¹⁸⁸

Standing in a wooded lot on Powder Springs Road, surrounded by commercial businesses, the ruins are hidden from the view of most passers-by. The chapel has been in ruins for more than fifty years, and the two side walls fell within the last ten years. Nevertheless, the Friends of Nesbitt/Union Chapel recently stabilized the front wall of the chapel and are working with an architect and historic preservation consultant toward restoring the original front wall arch. In 2002, the Friends removed invasive plants and trees from the ruins. In early 2003, they made plans to hire a professional preservation-oriented stone mason to seal the top edges of the ruins' walls.¹⁸⁹

The land is currently in legal limbo. The only valid deed, dated 1886, established a trust to care for the church and grounds. The trust requested the site be used for worship, education, or an agricultural society. More recently, a local landowner claimed

the property and is trying to have the land re-zoned for commercial use. The Friends are fighting this action and have obtained legal services and expects the case to go before the court for settlement sometime in 2003.¹⁹⁰



Figure 14: Nesbitt / Union Chapel Ruins (photograph by author).

Meanwhile, the Friends continue to use and protect the property. Recently using donated services from several professionals including architects, stone masons, and

preservation consultants, they began planning. After obtaining legal ownership, the Friends wish to continue the desperately-needed stabilization of the ruins. They are considering archaeological excavations to expose the buried portions of the foundations. Additionally, they plan to establish a meditation bench and clear the site of invasive growth. They hope to work with a local master gardener to restore the grounds. The addition of interpretive signage is a long-term goal. Another measure under consideration is a National Register of Historic Places nomination for the ruins. Already group members are working to prepare a site history.¹⁹¹

Due to the dedicated concern of a group of local residents, Nesbitt/Union Chapel ruins stand an excellent opportunity of being saved. The Friends of Nesbitt/Union Chapel seek every opportunity to further their legal claim, and to plan for the future once that hurdle is overcome. Long-term preservation depends on a continuation of actions by either the Friends of Nesbitt/Union Chapel or a foundation created to manage the ruins. While the setting is an unlikely one for long-term ruin preservation, proper use of fencing and landscape elements may generate a useful and picturesque site.

The Friends of Nesbitt/Union Chapel may successfully preserve and protect this ruin. They have excellent plans for the site. If their plans are completed the ruin could rate eleven and one-half points out of fifteen. Nesbitt/Union Chapel could rate as good for history, purpose, and interpretation. It would rate as excellent for legal protection if a conservation or archaeological easement is obtained. Finally, the site needs to be cleaned of debris and undergrowth; yet, it is apparent this could be a scenic ruin if stabilization takes place before the heavily cracked back wall falls.

Conclusions

Successful ruin preservation depends on five variables; appearance and setting, history, purpose, interpretation, and legal protection. This chapter illustrates a variety of ruins preserved in the southeastern United States by private enterprises, individuals, or groups. Each ruin is unique not only in its appearance and history but also in its use. The methods taken to preserve these ruins are individual in design, yet in most cases they are currently successful.

The criteria-based rating system created in this study can be used to indicate a ruin's possibility of successful long-term preservation. Table 1 presents an overview of the ratings presented for these thirteen ruins. In Table 1, the ruins are presented in order of ratings from lowest to highest. By reviewing the data in this format, the ruins can be compared. It is evident that some of these ruins are successful based on one or two strong points while other ruins are strong in all of the measurable criteria. Successful long-term preservation need not be based on the same criteria at each ruin.

Ruins that rate below ten points may well fail at long-term preservation. However, this portion of this study is limited to currently preserved ruins. No analysis was made of ruins that were preserved and failed to determine the reasons for their failure.

Another purpose for the rating system is its usefulness in increasing a ruin's potential for long-term preservation. After a ruin is rated, preservation professionals can

Ruin	Criterion 1 Appearance	Criterion 2 History	Criterion 3 Purpose	Criterion 4 Interpretation	Criterion 5 Legal Protection	Score
Parker Island	2	2	1	1	1.5	7.5
Sams Complex	1.5	2	1	1	3	8.5
Sugar Mill	2	2	1	1	3	9
Chapel of Ease	1.5	2	2	0.5	3	9
Kingsmill	2	3	1	1	3	10
Biggin	3	2.5	1	1	3	10.5
Nesbitt/Union (as planned)	2.5	2	2	2	3	11.5
Sheldon	3	3	2	1	3	12
Edwards	3	2	2	2	3	12
Wheatland (as planned)	2	2	2	3	3	12
Barnsley	2.5	3	3	2	3	13.5
Barbour	3	3	3	2	3	14
Rosewell	3	3	3	3	3	15

Table 1: Ratings for the Ruins Presented in Chapter V.

use the rating system to determine a ruin's values and limitations. Then strategies to energize or strengthen its preservation plan can be developed and implemented.

Chapter VI applies the ruin preservation and interpretive principles and criteria for successful ruin preservation to a plan for the Wilson House ruin, Palmetto Bluff, South Carolina. Plans for the Wilson House developed from this chapter's study of preserved ruins.

CHAPTER VI

PRESERVING THE WILSON HOUSE RUIN

What a sight! In place of a palace there was nothing but a fast decaying ruin. . . . The baths, once such as favourite place of resort, and always filled with such as merry throng, had lost their roofs. . . . There I stood gazing with burning eyes at the neglect and desolation around with the recollection of former and happier days filling my heart with a painful mockery of all things earthly and human. . . .

Princess Salme,
from *Memoirs of an Arabian Princess from Zanzibar*¹⁹²

On Palmetto Bluff overlooking rural South Carolina's May River stands a ruin. Three partial columns rise near the bluff while piers, steps, and foundations lie partially visible in the sandy soil beyond. A fountain pool between the house's former facade and the river's bluff holds green water, its statuary gone. If you look closely, you may see bits of statuary here and there among the debris, the overgrowth, and the cedars growing within the walls. Here lies what remains of the Wilson's Palmetto Bluff mansion.

This chapter first presents a background history of the Wilson family and their Palmetto Bluff home. A brief description of the site's archaeological excavations and preservation plans for the ruin follows the history. The preservation plans proposed by Palmetto Bluff, LLC are analyzed based on the criteria for successful ruin preservation presented in Chapter V. Chapter VI concludes with an alternative preservation and

interpretive plan for the Wilson House ruin based on the ideas of ruin preservation presented in this complete study.

The Wilson Family

According to family stories, Richard Thornton Wilson, Sr., made his fortune during the Civil War while serving in an official capacity for the Confederate States of America's commissary department. His official duties included selling Confederate bonds, and obtaining loans for the Confederate States government in London.¹⁹³ After the war, Wilson moved to New York City where he became an investment banker and a builder of railroads. The saga of the Wilson House begins with Richard Thornton Wilson, Sr.

Richard Thornton Wilson began life in rural Hall County, Georgia, in 1829. A 1923 biographical story printed in the *Atlanta Journal Magazine*, stated that Richard started life as one of seven children of a Protestant Scottish tanner, Billy Wilson, and was born in a log cabin. He left home at age twenty-two with only forty dollars. After leaving home, Richard became a traveling salesman of small articles in exchange for cotton. He met his wife, Melissa Clementine Johnston, at her father's plantation in Loudon, Tennessee. The oldest of ten children, many considered Melissa a beautiful woman.¹⁹⁴ Several accounts described Richard as about six foot five inches tall, with "an ambition that matched his size."¹⁹⁵ Not only did Richard convince Melissa's father,

Ebenezer Johnston, to allow their marriage, Richard also convinced his future father-in-law to finance him in business. The couple married in 1849.

By this early 1860s, Richard and Melissa had three children: Mary “May” Rita (or Reta, 1854-1929), Marshall Orme (1860-1926), and Leila Belle (1864-1923). This young family had lost three other children: William Johnston (1853-1853), Hannah Retta (1856-1857), and Anna Clementine (1859-1862).¹⁹⁶ During the Civil War, Richard served as Commissary General for the Confederate Army. In 1864, Wilson’s wartime duties required his move to London, England. Taking his family along, he ran the Union blockade from Wilmington, North Carolina, to London. Cornelius Vanderbilt, IV, his future grandson, retold the story of young Orme Wilson peering from the portholes “to look for enemy ships.”¹⁹⁷

Apparently, Wilson’s position in London allowed him to buy Southern railroad bonds at a discount and to sell them at a profit to English investors. Melissa’s father ostensibly bankrolled the entire operation. Cornelius Vanderbilt, IV, later described one of these transactions:

This is the business part of Mr. Wilson’s letter. He says: “Have sent (Melissa’s) father’s bonds to Richmond, have not heard from them yet. Have purchased for father a \$10,000 bond on the East Tennessee and Virginia Rail Road for \$1,000 . . . I have reliable information of the sale in Europe of the bonds of the \$100,000,000 loan at 30 cents on the dollar. I think you had better try them. If sent by mail I will take the risk of their loss on the way. The matter is well worth the experiment, and if they bring the price we can try again. You can purchase them in at a 90% discount E. Tenn. without difficulty.”¹⁹⁸

Wilson's strategy exploited the British failure to consider war destruction of the Southern railways by Union forces during the later stages of the Civil War.

Wilson returned to the United States a wealthy man, with approximately \$500,000 to invest. Further information of Wilson's fortune came from letters of Melissa's sister to her husband. She wrote of Wilson buying a \$150,000 plantation on the Alabama River near Selma and a \$25,000 house in Atlanta.¹⁹⁹ In 1866, Wilson, pardoned for his Confederate service, lived in Atlanta where son Richard Thornton, Jr., was born that same year. Wilson moved the family to New York City in 1870, where he purchased a brownstone at 812 Fifth Avenue, New York City, for his growing family. Melissa gave birth to their fifth and last child, Grace, that same year.

Wilson continued to be involved with railroads and organized a firm to rebuild the East Tennessee, Virginia & Georgia Railway. His work to rebuild the South's railways continued with the Macon and Brunswick Railroad among others in his home state of Georgia.²⁰⁰ Wilson invested in other industries as well, including chemical firms and streetcar systems in several cities. However, his main interest continued to be railroads and banking.

Wilson's investments soon made him an extremely wealthy man. Richard bought houses on Fifth Avenue and in Newport, Rhode Island; his house at 511 Fifth Avenue was the former home of William March "Boss" Tweed.²⁰¹ Wilson's friends included many of America's wealthiest men including Andrew Carnegie, Cornelius Vanderbilt,

and Theodore Roosevelt, Sr. Wilson previously served with Roosevelt's brother-in-law, Admiral James Bulloch, in London.²⁰²

According to the book, *To Marry An English Lord*, New York's highest social circles refused to accept the Wilsons.²⁰³ However, after Melissa arranged the marriage of May to Ogden Goelet, in 1877, they became known as the "marrying Wilsons." The Goelets were Old New York denizens whose income derived from their vast real estate holdings. Richard gave Ogden and May \$75,000 to start their life together; however, Peter Goelet died soon afterwards and left his nephew approximately twenty-five million dollars. May and Ogden's daughter, also named May, later married and became the Duchess of Roxburg.

Now accepted into the highest New York social circles, Melissa arranged prominent marriages for all of her children except Grace. Daughter Leila Belle married Sir Michael Henry Herbert, later the British ambassador to the United States. Son Marshall Orme married Caroline Astor of the famous Astor fur dynasty.²⁰⁴ Richard T., Jr., married Marion Steedman Mason, in 1902. Marion descended from several old South Carolina families including the Steedmans and the Blakes of St. James Parish, along with the Serres and the Jeannerretts. All these families were early settlers in the Charleston region.²⁰⁵

Grace Wilson, however, made her own choice. Against the wishes of his family, she married Cornelius "Neily" Vanderbilt, Jr. Grace became the social icon of New

York and American society.²⁰⁶ Her son, Cornelius wrote several books that document the family history including Grace and Neily's turbulent courtship.²⁰⁷

During the late nineteenth century, many wealthy Northern families followed a trend of buying property in the South for winter homes. Several tycoons established the colony on Jekyll Island, Georgia, including J.P. Morgan, William Rockefeller, Joseph Pulitzer, and Marshall Field. The Jekyll Island Club, whose membership possessed nearly one-sixth of the world's wealth, built a grand clubhouse and a colony of mansion-size cottages.

Around 1902, at the age of seventy-two, Colonel Richard T. Wilson, Sr., purchased Palmetto Bluff Plantation on the May River in rural South Carolina and several additional adjoining tracts of land. The total estate of between 18,000 and 26,000 acres included approximately 8,000 acres under cultivation, mostly in cotton and produce.²⁰⁸ The purchase price was around two dollars per acre. Wilson built a lodge on the property where he and his wife, Melissa, entertained family and friends. This lodge survived until 1937, when it was consumed by fire.

Wilson's choice of Palmetto Bluff may have been influenced by easy access to the property from the Atlantic Coast Line Railroad's North-South line. Also, luxury steamships of the Savannah Line sailed between Savannah and New York every two days.²⁰⁹ No doubt, the family's southern connections factored in their decision to own a home in the region.

Richard Wilson, Sr. died on 26 November 1910, only two years after Melissa. He left five well-married and very wealthy children and many grandchildren. Richard, Thornton Wilson, Jr., inherited the land at Palmetto Bluff.

Richard Wilson, Jr., and the Wilson House

Richard, Jr., and Marion quickly planned a grand home for the Palmetto Bluff property, wishing to entertain friends and family. Family records state that Marion sought her favorite architects, who were then living in Italy. Together, they designed a large mansion that would include plenty of room for guests and a ballroom.²¹⁰ Most grand mansions of the time contained a ballroom. This was especially true for families with children seeking suitable mates; Richard, Jr., and Marion had two daughters, Marion and Louisa.

While the architect's identity is unknown, there is an indication that the house may have been designed by the New York firm Hoppin and Koen.²¹¹ In 1903, Hoppin and Koen designed a town home for the Wilsons at 15 East Fifty-seventh Street, New York City. A contemporary critic called the townhouse "the English Louis XVI"; he also reported that Hoppin had journeyed to London to study the Adam Brothers' style and had designed the townhouse's entire interior in this manner.²¹² The article, "Some Country and City Residences" submitted by Hoppin & Koen, Architects, says the firm was also known for its country homes.²¹³ Hoppin participated in the design of Edith Wharton's "The Mount," designing the house, outbuildings, gate, and gardens. In a master's thesis

on the Mount, Kay Davis stated that Hoppin and Koen were known for designing rectangular houses in the Adam and Georgian styles.²¹⁴

Built between 1913 and 1914, the house at Palmetto Bluff became the largest, most palatial home in rural Beaufort County. Often called “Palmetto Lodge,” Edith Inglesby, a local historian, described it as an “imposing residence of forty rooms and a ballroom” (Figure 15).²¹⁵ However, other sources indicate the house had 72 rooms and 21 bathrooms.²¹⁶ Neither figure has been substantiated.

Some details of the interior are known from extant photographs (Figures 16 and 17) and firsthand accounts. One former visitor to the property remembered that his great-uncle J.E. Varn said the ballroom was on the top floor.²¹⁷ It was probably on the third floor, as photographs show an opening to a balcony and a two-story ceiling (Figures 18 and 19).

Gerhard Spieler, in his unpublished history of the Palmetto Bluff tract, states that the complex included “an electric plant, water towers, refrigeration house, laundry, a school for employees’ children . . . even a post office. And a doctor to look after them all.”²¹⁸ According to another unpublished history by Charles E. Fraser, the complex also included a sawmill and carpentry and paint shops. Fraser describes the electric plant as a wood-fired steam plant that provided power to the house in unelectrified rural Beaufort County.²¹⁹

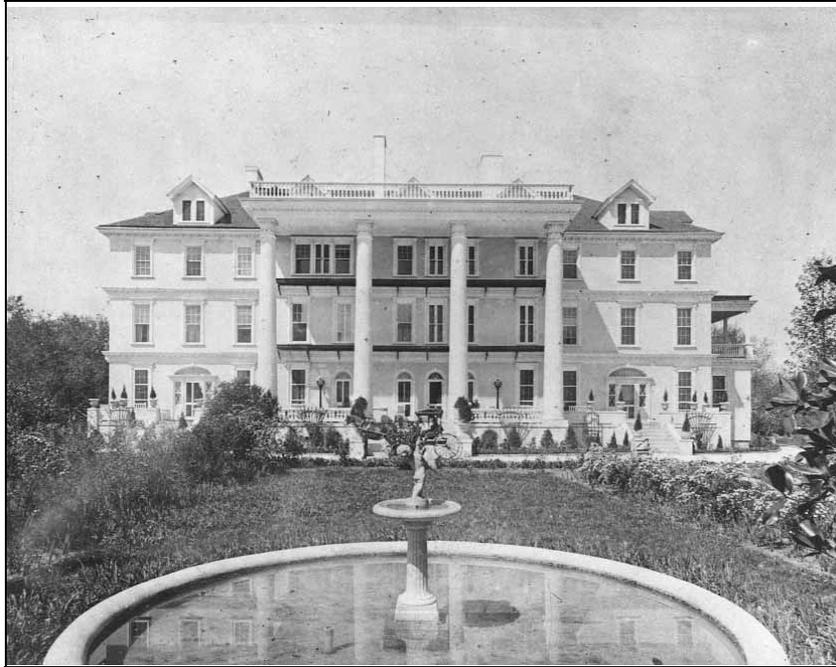


Figure 15: Wilson House, circa 1920 (photograph courtesy of Palmetto Bluff, LLC).



Figure 16: Front hall, Wilson House, circa 1920 (photograph courtesy of Palmetto Bluff, LLC).



Figure 17: Library of Wilson House (photograph courtesy of Palmetto Bluff, LLC).



Figure 18: Interior of ballroom (photograph courtesy of Palmetto Bluff, LLC).



Figure 19: Ballroom showing bandstand (photograph courtesy of Palmetto Bluff, LLC).

Harvey Beach built the extensive garden known as “Lover’s Lane.” It contained flowers, shrubs, and arbors that provided private seating on hidden benches. Young people attending the dances and parties often roamed the gardens to escape the ballroom.²²⁰ Lover’s Lane surrounded the fountain still present on the property.

The extensive grounds also produced food for the family and staff. In addition to a very large vegetable garden were pens for terrapin, chickens, pigeons, and other livestock. A substantial dairy herd kept the estate supplied with milk and other related products, and a refrigerated game house provided storage for meats.

The house and grounds commanded a magnificent view of the May River, just as May River travelers proclaimed delight at the mansion’s appearance from the river (Figure 20). In his book *The Living Past of America*, Cornelius Vanderbilt, Jr., wrote:

I know it [Savannah] well, and since the days of my childhood I have always been fond of the old city. My uncle, the late Richard T. Wilson, had a plantation up the May River, across from Bluffton. Here he raised Egyptian cotton, which was weighed, sorted and inspected at the famous place called Factor's Row, on the waterfront of Savannah. I used to go there often.²²¹

The young Cornelius Vanderbilt tells of traveling to Palmetto Bluff by taking "Father's private railroad car" to Savannah. There they would meet "Uncle Dick" and continue the journey by an old stern-wheeled river boat.²²²



Figure 20: Wilson House from the May River (photograph courtesy of Palmetto Bluff, LLC).

Local Beaufort County residents, in particular those employed by the Wilsons, assumed that Richard, Jr., made all of his money through horse racing and betting on races.²²³ Richard, Jr., heavily involved with racing at Saratoga, owned a racing stable in Lexington, Kentucky. He also took a scientific interest in improving all types of horse breeds. Similarly, Richard "advocated restrictions on the exportation of high class brood

mares” during World War I.²²⁴ Wilson served as president of the Saratoga Racing Association from 1909 until his death, and greatly enhanced racing at that institution. He was also director of the Westchester Racing Association, which owned Belmont Park.²²⁵

Wilson’s stables produced several Saratoga stakes’ winners including Sunfire in Saratoga’s Ballston Handicap (1928), and Flying Phantom, also a winner at Saratoga that year. His most prestigious year happened in 1916, when his stables led all others with winnings of \$61,495. His two-year-old, Campfire, earned \$50,035 of that sum. Campfire came from Wilson’s long association with National Museum of Racing Hall of Fame trainer, Thomas J. Healey. Healey also trained Wilson’s two Preakness winners, The Parader (1901) and Pillory (1922); both horses were bred by Wilson’s Kentucky horse farm. Wilson’s success as a breeder and owner of several stakes’ winners and his association with Healey led to his recognition as one of America’s premier horsemen during the early twentieth century.²²⁶

Richard’s fortune stemmed mostly from two sources: his inheritance and continuing his father’s businesses. Richard graduated from Columbia University in 1887 and immediately began working in his father’s banking business. He served as commissioner of municipal statistics in 1898, and took over the business upon his father’s death.²²⁷

The Palmetto Bluff house served many purposes for the Wilsons. For Richard, it functioned as an escape. He often arrived with Harlem G. Rubert, his constant companion and private secretary. For Marion, the mansion satisfied her need for a winter

home and social center. She filled the house with guests and held many elaborate parties. Guests often stayed for days, as transportation required at least an overnight stay. Some guests arrived by private yacht, which also provided them with sleeping quarters. Grace and Neily Vanderbilt used the original “Lodge” built by Wilson, Sr. Thus this house became known as the “Vanderbilt Cottage.” Richard was known to escape to the “Office Building,” a small cottage near the mansion, when events at the house became overwhelming.²²⁸

On 2 March 1926, approximately twelve years after the house was completed, fire consumed the structure. Charles Fraser reports that “a substantial amount of art and personal effects” were saved from the house, and that Rubert, Wilson’s personal secretary, twice forced him from the burning house.²²⁹ The local *Beaufort Gazette* reported on 4 March:

DISASTROUS FIRE
AT BLUFFTON

Home of R.T. Wilson at Palmetto Bluff Destroyed
Estimated Loss Half Million

Hardeeville, S.C., March 2.—The most disastrous fire ever to visit this section totally destroyed the home of R.T. Wilson at Palmetto Bluff, just across the May river from Bluffton Tuesday afternoon. The entire residence, which was regarded as the most palatial in the lower part of South Carolina, was destroyed together with practically all the furnishings, paintings and furniture, priceless in their value, were lost. The damage is estimated at more than half a million dollars. How much insurance carried has not yet been learned.²³⁰

The next day, the *Savannah Morning News* reported:

R.T. WILSON HOME
DESTROYED BY FIRE

Palatial Dwelling is Reported a Total Loss

OCCUPANTS ESCAPE

Little Insurance Carried on Valuable Property

R.T. Wilson's handsome country home at Palmetto Bluff opposite Bluffton has been completely destroyed by fire, according to reports reaching Savannah yesterday.

The fire broke out about 2 o'clock Wednesday afternoon but due to the high wind from the west the smoke did not rise very high and people in Bluffton who saw it thought it was from forest fires. It was only yesterday that Savannah people visiting Bluffton learned that the disaster had occurred.

Some of the family were in the house at the time. It was burned to the ground and their personal effects as well as the handsome furnishings and articles of value which have been accumulated during the last fifteen or twenty years were said to be a total loss. Members of the household took refuge in the keeper's house and as far as could be learned last night were still being cared for there.

Mr. Wilson bought Palmetto Bluff from the late J. H. Estill about sixteen or seventeen years ago. He was one of the first Northerners to select a site on the salts near Savannah for his winter home and as a hunting and game preserve, coming here from New York. The property embraces about 18,000 acres. It is situated on a neck of land between May river and New river, facing toward Calibogue Sound. The house, a frame structure four stories high was built on a palatial scale, with forty rooms and a ballroom. It was valued at \$200,000 approximately exclusive of the value of the furnishings. Very little insurance was carried. It was currently reported that the loss was estimated at \$1,500,000, which is probably an exaggeration. Only the dwelling and its contents were destroyed. The other buildings on the property are understood not to have suffered any damage from the fire.²³¹

Only a few months later, Richard sold the land, 20,222 acres, and all improvements to J.E. Varn, Jr., for \$550,000. The only items excluded from the sale were personal items salvaged from the house at the time of the fire.²³²

Richard, Jr., died less than three years after the fire. A *New York Times* article, dated 24 November 1926, told readers that “Richard T. Wilson, president of the Saratoga Racing Association, has been seriously ill for a week with influenza.”²³³ On 30 December 1929, the *New York Times* headline proclaimed: “Richard T. Wilson, Turf Leader, Dead/Brother of Mrs. Cornelius Vanderbilt Succumbs to Pneumonia in 63d Year/Had Headed Banking Firm/President of Association to Improve Breed of Horses-Won Many Victories on Track.”²³⁴

Richard’s obituary reported that Mrs. Wilson, daughter Marion M., and secretary H.G. Rubert were present when he died. The *New York Herald Times* of the same date reported that his other daughter, Mrs. David A. Turnure (Louisa), was “passing the winter in the South because of illness.”²³⁵ More than 1,000 mourners attended his funeral on 31 December 1929. Wilson was buried in the family mausoleum at Woodlawn Cemetery.²³⁶

Richard left the bulk of his \$10,000,000 estate to his widow. The will stated that his two daughters had already been provided for adequately. Richard’s secretary, Harlem G. Rubert, received \$7,500 along with the “cancellation of any unpaid note of which Mr. Wilson was an endorser.”²³⁷ An article in the *New York Times* stated that Wilson’s “racing and breeding properties, his Newport estate and realty and securities make up the bulk of his property.”²³⁸

Marion Wilson spent most her remaining life at her “Indian House Studio” near Middletown, Rhode Island, overlooking the Sakonnet River. Previously, Richard and Marion owned the Newport mansion “Shady Lawn” designed by Richard Upjohn. Marion Wilson died on July of 1947 at age seventy-two. She was buried at Mt. Auburn Cemetery, Cambridge, Massachusetts.²³⁹

The Wilson House at Palmetto Bluff stood for only twelve years before becoming a ruin. Yet its burning did not erase its memory as one of the grandest residences ever built in rural Beaufort County. Instead it created a number of local legends and stories about the Wilsons and the “old Wilson ruin.”

Investigations at the Wilson House Archaeological Site

In 2001, Brockington and Associates, Inc., an archaeological and cultural resources management firm, first reported on the archaeological site 38BU1804.²⁴⁰ Dr. Eric C. Poplin presented data on the survey or phase I level archaeological study conducted at the site, while Jeffrey W. Gardner presented additional information about the site after phase II testing. Before the testing phase, a Memorandum of Agreement between the State Historic Preservation Officer, the South Carolina Office of Ocean and Coastal Resource Management, and Palmetto Bluff, LLC, was signed. Gardner recommended the site as eligible for the National Register of Historic Places and recommended preservation or mitigation. Areas of significance included Criterion A (important events), Criterion C (preserved distinctive structural elements), and

Criterion D (archaeological research potential) at local levels of significance.²⁴¹ The site also contains four additional structures, two towers, and two slabs, all believed to be associated with the early twentieth century Wilson House. In addition, there is a small pet cemetery originally believed to be associated with the Wilson family.²⁴²

Site owners, Palmetto Bluff, LLC, of Bluffton, South Carolina, initially felt that preservation of the ruin and archaeological site would restrict construction plans; however, by early 2002, they decided to preserve the ruins.²⁴³ Brockington and Associates prepared an archaeological excavation and study plan approved by the South Carolina State Department of Archives and History. The designed study plan would provide additional information for interpretive purposes.²⁴⁴ Joshua Fletcher conducted archaeological excavations at 38BU1804 during the summer of 2002 and prepared a management summary that cleared the site for development.²⁴⁵ A full archaeological and historical report was completed in the summer of 2003.

The Wilson House site (38BU1804) is 430 by 375 meters and is on the eastern edge of Palmetto Bluff overlooking the May River (Figure 21). It is bordered on the south by a small lake. During survey and testing at the site, archaeologists encountered extensive surface and subsurface artifact scatters; surface artifacts include numerous architectural elements readily visible. These included portions of the four front columns, six sets of steps, and portions of the front wall (Figure 22).²⁴⁶

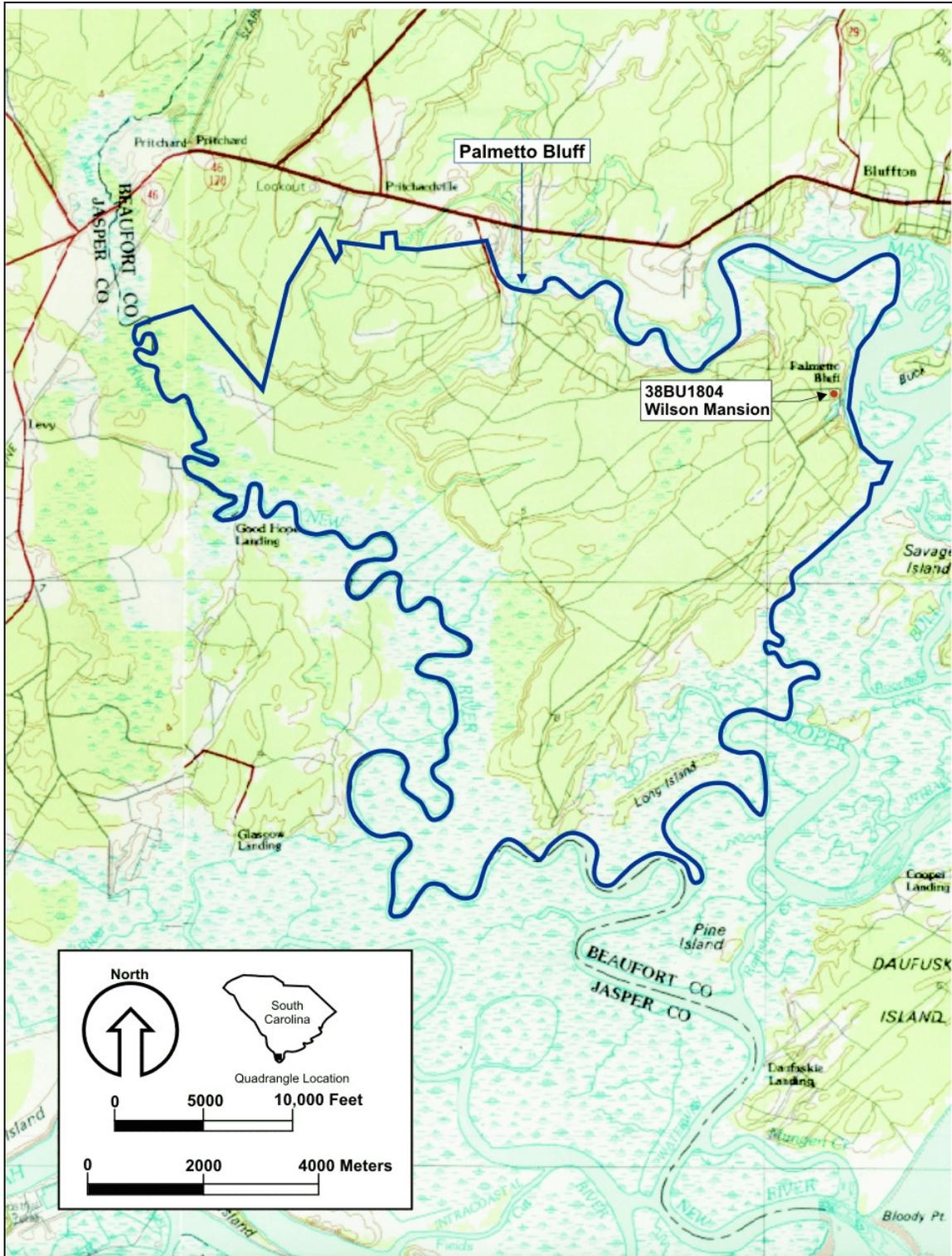


Figure 21: Location map showing Wilson Mansion site, 38BU1804, and the Palmetto Bluff property (USGS 1978 *Beaufort* and 1981 *Savannah* 1:100,000 quadrangles).



Figure 22: Wilson House ruin before archaeological excavations (photograph by Dr. Paul E. Brockington, Jr.).

Archaeological data recovery at 38BU1804 focused on exposing architectural features, elements, and, in particular, foundations. Investigators began excavations using a smooth-bladed backhoe operated by Dr. Poplin of Brockington and Associates. Archaeological technicians monitored the mechanical excavations and removed soil and rubble around exposed architectural features using flat shovels, trowels, and brooms. These activities exposed foundations, builder's trenches, and other features within the structure foundation. Hand excavation consisted of fifty by fifty centimeter units at five meter intervals across the site including fourteen within the foundation boundaries of the

Wilson House. Additionally, archaeologists excavated twelve one by two meter units within the foundation of the house. They screened all soil from the fifty by fifty centimeter and one by two meter units through one-quarter inch hardware cloth.²⁴⁷

Extensive mapping reestablished a site grid originally used during survey and testing investigations. Technicians used a laser theodolite and metric tape to establish a grid aligned to magnetic north. A map created from these data illustrates the exterior foundation walls and thirty-nine interior architectural features (Figure 23). Small architectural features and fragments and all artifacts were transported to the firm's Atlanta laboratory for cataloging, analysis, and photographic documentation.²⁴⁸

During data recovery excavations, Colin Brooker, a Beaufort County architect specializing in architectural restoration, visited the site to consult with the archaeologists. Although traditional accounts of the house had attributed the construction to day laborers without a formal architectural plan, Brooker dismissed these accounts. Brooker felt the house was similar to early twentieth-century, large architect-designed houses in Atlanta, Georgia, and Saratoga Springs, New York. Brooker also insisted that the workmanship in some areas was reminiscent of local laborer work from that era on Cumberland and Jekyll Islands, but that New York craftsmen most likely completed much of the fine detail work. Brooker commented on the extensive use of shell concrete or neo-tabby in the house's construction as well as extensive use of fine-grained limestone and marble architectural elements.²⁴⁹

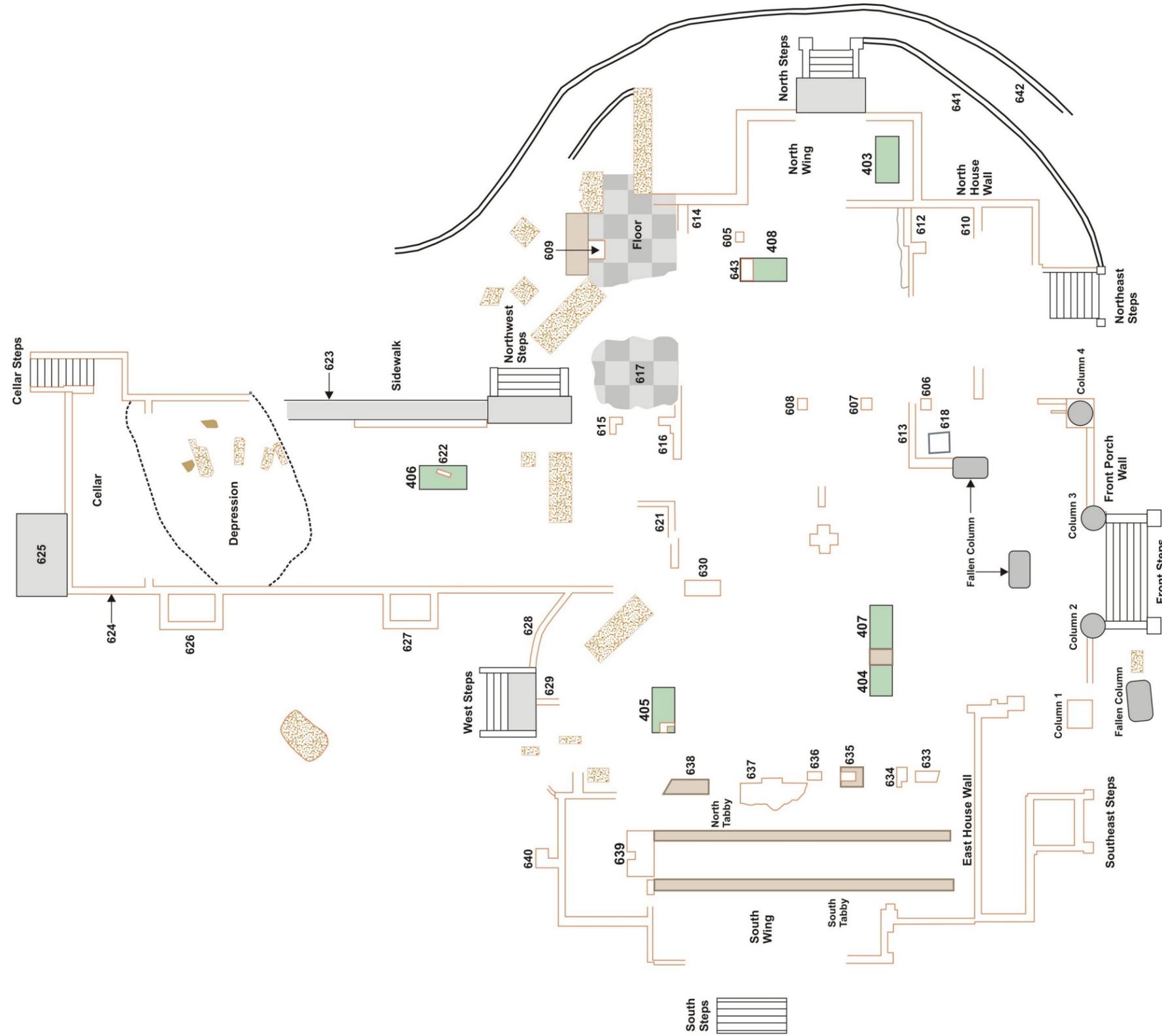


Figure 23: Archaeological site plan after data recovery excavations (Graphic produced by Carol J. Poplin).

The Wilson House site artifacts consist of architectural elements, ceramics, glass, and personal items. The majority are burned and in poor condition. Artifacts recovered from the Wilson Dump Site (38BU1788) near the Wilson House contributed significantly to interpretation of the Wilson's lifestyle during their Palmetto Bluff tenure. The dump site excavations revealed whole food, liquor, and miscellaneous bottles, broken ceramics, and a few personal items including fragments of several porcelain dolls. Brockington and Associates plans to combine data and conclusions from both sites in the archaeological report for the Wilson House.²⁵⁰

Palmetto Bluff's Preservation Plan for the Wilson House Ruin

Taking a notable approach to conservation and preservation within a planned private development, Palmetto Bluff, LLC, plans to form a nonprofit foundation to protect and manage approximately 5,000 acres of undeveloped marshlands, pine forest, and wetlands, along with numerous archaeological and cultural sites within their approximately 20,600 acre property. Long-term goals call for funding the foundation with a percentage of purchase fees from private home sites and businesses. The proposed foundation would develop a museum and an educational program not only for the residents of the development, but also for the surrounding community and visitors.²⁵¹

Palmetto Bluff, LLC, works closely with historians, archaeologists, and cultural resource managers to preserve and retain many of the property's cultural and historic sites. Their master plan states that all cemeteries on the property and several historic and

pre-contact archaeological sites will be preserved. In particular, the Wilson House ruin is to be preserved as the centerpiece of a formal garden on the grounds of an exclusive, luxury inn. The inn is near a planned, pedestrian village consisting of stores, town homes and apartments, and a small chapel.²⁵²

Patricia Richards, Palmetto Bluff's Environmental Services Manager, stresses that the Wilson ruin is very important to the development for a couple of reasons. For example, she stated that "it's a very special piece of history for the property and the area. So much attention is focused on the Civil War and little on the 'Gilded Age'."²⁵³ Additionally, the ruin stands as an excellent reminder of coastal South Carolina's role as a winter haven for our country's wealthiest citizens. This trend began during the antebellum period and continued after the Civil War. The Jekyll Island Club and Henry Ford's residence at Richmond Hill, Georgia, are prime examples. Finally, the ruin retains enough architectural integrity to illustrate its palatial status as one of the South's most significant period houses.²⁵⁴

Palmetto Bluff, LLC, took several steps to ensure preservation of the ruin and its related archaeological site. First, they reached an agreement with the South Carolina Department of Archives and History to conduct historical background documentation and archaeological investigations. Second, the developers decided to incorporate the ruin into their plans for the immediate area. Next, they obtained guidance from preservation architect Samuel Y. Harris (S. Harris & Co. of Philadelphia). Mr. Harris visited the ruin in late 2002 to assess the feasibility of retaining one of the ruin's standing columns. The column is leaning approximately ten degrees off plumb. Mr. Harris presented four plans

for supporting the leaning column and one for an internal support that would restore the column to its original upright position.²⁵⁵ Mr. Harris also designed a preservation plan for the ruin.

Palmetto Bluff, LLC, reviewed options for the ruin's preservation and has committed to a plan of action. This plan involves partial destruction of two important portions of the ruin along with other intrusive measures. The following section describes their plans for the ruin footprint and analyzes their preservation decisions.

Palmetto Bluff's preservation plan calls for developing the ruin footprint into a lawn with sections of the ruin preserved *in situ*. Exposed elements that are currently below grade will be reburied and those close to the selected ground plane will be leveled and will not be evident once the ruin is graded and the lawn planted. Architectural elements that are above grade will be repaired only to the extent necessary for safety issues.²⁵⁶

Construction of the inn's circular drive will impact the ruin's southern edge, including two parallel neo-tabby foundations. After discussing their options in this regard, the developers and builders of the inn decided that their plans could not be changed to avoid this intrusion on the ruin footprint. To install the drive, the parallel foundations will be graded and paved over.²⁵⁷

The second major destructive action involves the tallest of the columns. Although presented with several options for retaining the column, the developers decided

these options presented too high a cost. Instead, they plan to remove the upper sections of the column very carefully and arrange them “as if it [the column] fell naturally.”²⁵⁸

Finally, the plan calls for planting the lawn in two manners. First, the area outside the foundation will be managed as a “fairway” while the interior of the footprint will be managed as a “green.” Only limited access to the ruin’s interior is planned. The plans calls for the addition of subdued lighting consisting of “in-ground wall washers against the backs of the foundation walls and some additional low voltage ground lights to wash the ‘green’ . . . no tree mount spots, nothing above two feet.”²⁵⁹ Interpretive panels have been discussed, but no decision has been made as to their inclusion.²⁶⁰ A brochure on the ruin may be placed in the nearby inn and restaurant for interested visitors.²⁶¹

Palmetto Bluff’s preservation plan for the Wilson House ruin is a good example of positive passive ruin preservation. First, their plan provides for some protection of the remaining undisturbed portions of the archaeological site within the ruin footprint; although, any archaeological features outside the foundation walls will be destroyed. Second, portions of the ruin’s foundation will be preserved *in situ*. The addition of interior lighting will make the ruin more dramatic, especially on summer evenings when visitors may wish to take advantage of cooler temperatures. Limitations to Palmetto Bluff’s preservation plan include the removal of many of the ruin’s interior elements, which will hinder the public’s ability to visualize the various parts of the original house. The second is the lack of interpretive panels at the site. Without proper interpretation, many visitors will no doubt envision the house as antebellum as so few elements will be

visible to help determine its age. While the dismantling of the column is a serious impact, this option may be necessary to avoid liability issues.

Palmetto Bluff's plan to form a nonprofit foundation dedicated to preserving and protecting their cultural and historic sites and conservation is noteworthy. To promote their preservation and conservation plans, Palmetto Bluff, LLC, hired a dedicated conservationist (Ms. Patricia Richards) to oversee their planning and preservation activities along with their conservation lands protection program. Ms. Richards gives Palmetto Bluff a knowledgeable and talented spokesperson who can discuss conservation and preservation with all interested parties.

Finally, the Wilson House ruin may exist for many years. However, without the protection of a preservation easement, it is possible the future will see its complete destruction. Although the ruin's preservation has been highly publicized, the developers do not plan to use the ruin for marketing or heritage tourism; therefore, the Wilson House ruin will be a financial liability.

The Wilson House Ruin Alternative Preservation Plan

Reaching adulthood in America's Gilded Age high society, R.T. Wilson, Jr., inherited ostentatious wealth and relentlessly pursued capitalism to increase his own worth. Having lived and partied in the mansions of New York's Fifth Avenue, Newport, and Saratoga Springs, Wilson and his wife, Marion, built their Palmetto Bluff mansion in this same extravagant style. The Wilsons desired a southern winter home that reflected

their status, interests, and wealth. Photographs of the house's interior and gardens illustrate the lavish setting they created for family and visitors. Using this sense of time, place, and setting are essential to an accurate interpretive plan for the Wilson House ruin.

The previous section discussed the Wilson House ruin preservation plan as designed by Palmetto Bluff, LLC. This section presents an alternate preservation plan based on the ideals of ruin interpretation presented in this study's previous chapters. The alternate interpretive plan demonstrates the immense capabilities for heritage preservation and economic benefits possible from the Wilson House ruin. The Wilson House ruin stands as an unusual historic preservation opportunity; for, not only is the ruin a significant historical resource, it also displays the perfect combination of circumstances to become an exceptional ruin. The Wilson House ruin has the potential for perfect scores in all five criteria of ruin preservation. A plan to maximize the Wilson House ruin so that it can achieve this potential follows.

Development of this study's preservation plan for the Wilson House ruin commenced with several overlapping areas of information gathering based upon the principles of ruin preservation presented in the beginning of this study. The historic and archaeological investigations compiled information about the former house's construction, size, materials, and image. In the absence of formal architectural plans, the archaeological investigations provided a footprint of the house and insight into its interior floor plan. Historic photographs added to the floor plan's interpretation, while images of the property revealed the surrounding garden's design and detail. Finally, discussions with Palmetto Bluff, LLC, revealed their desire to use the ruin as an

interpretive historic focal point for a formal garden on an exclusive inn's grounds. Their chosen adaptive use must be considered in any interpretive plan.

Information gathering provided several principles for the interpretive plan. First, the Wilson House ruin represents an early twentieth century, upper-class house. Any added elements, such as ground's lighting or interpretive panels, should reflect that era's styles. Added elements may also feature the surrounding garden and any plants or vegetation placed within the ruin footprint. Second, a sense of place should be established. The ruin should reflect its builder's choice of location and scenic view. Third, any interpretation must not impact the archaeological site's intact portions and should provide measures to protect those areas and the ruin itself. This includes little or no modification to the foundation walls and intact architectural elements, except where necessary to preserve the ruin's individual elements. Finally, the site should be relatively accessible to all individuals regardless of their physical ability.

M.W. Thompson wrote that Britain's fundamental point of ruin interpretation is "that during this finite life we are making use of the ruin by rendering it intelligible to the visitor, both for pleasure and instruction."²⁶² Pleasure in viewing a ruin should encompass the enjoyment of realizing the ruin's time and place. The visitor should sense the location's history and the original building's role in that history. Visitors may receive instruction or education on several different aspects of the ruin. One may learn about history, architecture, archaeology, or culture. The interpretive plan should provide individual visitors a measure of freedom in how they view the ruin. Therefore, the

interpretive plan should provide information in a way that will allow each visitor to choose what he or she wants from the experience.²⁶³

The basic principles of ruin display and interpretation fall into two distinct categories. One category meets the visitor's physical needs, while the other category satisfies his intellectual desires.²⁶⁴ In addressing the visitor's physical needs, the interpreter must recognize the requirements of protecting the ruin itself. Visitors, including those with limited physical abilities, must have ease of access to view the entire ruin.

At the Wilson House ruin, several steps must be taken to meet the visitor's physical needs. First, the ruin has been impacted by archaeological studies. All excavation units must be backfilled. Second, all invasive plant growth should be removed; that is all trees, shrubs, and other plant materials not part of the original landscape design, should be removed from within the former house's foundation and within ten feet on the exterior. Since the ruin's entire foundation and many foundation elements are exposed, the interior and exterior perimeter (afterwards referred to as the ruin footprint) should be carefully prepared to avoid damaging exposed ruin elements. In some areas, this may include adding additional topsoil, or removing additional overburden to create a level surface. Much of this work will necessarily need to be accomplished by manual labor. This process should be monitored by archaeologists familiar with the ruin. During this process, it may be necessary to map and remove small architectural elements so that they can be documented and replaced later.

To prepare the ruin for visitors, the ruin footprint should be planted in grass. Grass provides a protective measure for the archaeological site and is easy to maintain, especially with Palmetto Bluff's access to professional landscape management teams. To provide access to disabled visitors, a walkway should be established diagonally from the ruin's southwest corner to its northeast corner. While this walkway may seem artificial, it will provide many disabled visitors access to the ruin's interior. The walkway should be prepared to resemble the diagonal brick paving found in several areas of the ruin.

Several of the six sets of steps no longer occupy their original position and are precariously positioned due to invasive plant growth and other disturbances. Care should be taken to stabilize these architectural units, so that visitors may climb or sit upon them without risk of personal injury. This work should be accomplished in an unobtrusive manner that would not affect the ruin's visual image. Finally, after these activities are completed, some previously removed architectural elements need to be replaced exactly as mapped, so that the ruin does not appear constructed or contrived. Other small architectural elements necessarily removed during archaeological investigations should be replaced or used in interpretive panels or signs.

Preservation activities should be performed at this time under the direction of a conservation professional or architectural historian. These activities may include stabilization of the leaning column and sealing of any other ruin elements already impacted by climatic conditions. Information on safe, nondestructive lawn chemicals should be collected and detailed within a preservation plan. Detailed photographic and

written documentation should be made of each architectural element illustrating its condition and location. A rigid schedule of assessment and maintenance activities should be established to include a yearly review by archaeologists and conservation professionals familiar with the ruin and its archaeological component.

To make the ruin visitor-friendly, steps should be taken to provide adequate walkways to the ruin both from the inn and restaurant and the local pedestrian village. Plans should call for measures to reduce the area's large number of mosquitoes and other biting insects. Considering the local climate, lighting should be placed so that the ruin is visible and enjoyable in the evening. Lights should be placed at ground level and, if possible, should be solar powered. This would eliminate the need for underground wiring that could impact the site's archaeological integrity. *Son et lumière*, the floodlighting of ruins for dramatic purposes, would greatly enhance the ruin and make it accessible during in the summer's cooler evenings.²⁶⁵ However, extreme caution should be taken to ensure that archaeological and architectural features of the site are not disturbed or destroyed.

The previously defined plan adds protection to the ruin and the archaeological site while making the ruin accessible to visitors. This plan also maximizes the ruin's appearance and setting (Criterion 1). The Wilson House ruin contains many distinctive and dramatic features, making its appearance both striking and picturesque. The ruin can easily become a compelling focal point for the surrounding community.

This plan's components grant visitors ease of entry, and a pleasant surrounding to view the ruin. A sense of contrast between the foundation walls, steps, columns, and other architectural elements and the grass lawn enhances the ruin's visual impact. This contrast also gives the visitor a sense of the original structure's scale and allows the interpretation of its individual elements. Floodlighting intensifies its picturesque qualities. The recreated garden showcases the ruin and returns it to its original landscape setting. All of these plan elements will create a well-defined historic and spectacular ruin that will draw visitors and benefit the community.

The Wilson House ruin has an exceptionally dramatic history (Criterion 2). It is a fairytale of romance, of war, of poverty to wealth, of South and North, of fire and destruction, and of loss. Beginning with Richard T. Wilson, Sr., the son of a poor tanner, the story incorporates all of the elements of an excellent drama embedded with romance and adventure. There are fabulous marriages and sordid scandals. Yet, it all ends tragically, with fire destroying their lovely uninsured Southern mansion. Both Richard and Marion left Palmetto Bluff, heartbroken, selling the land at a loss. Richard died soon afterward. Marion never returned to the area.

Few ruins in the United States possess such theatrical histories with the potential for drawing visitors from all walks of life. The Wilson House ruins should appeal to several different constituencies. First, the local community will be attracted to the chance to see what remains of a house they had heard and read about for years. The property has been in private hands since the Wilson's tenure. It may be that some of their parents and grandparents were employed on the Wilson's large farm. This group

will include many from the local African-American community. Second, the Wilson's story should attract Southerners and Northerners alike. Southerners will relish how a poor boy made good, moved to New York City to make more money, and then returned to his Southern roots. Northerners will be attracted by the connections to their history, such as the Wilson's connections to Newport and Saratoga. Although not discussed in this study's historical overview, the Wilson's household servants included recent immigrants from England, Sweden, and Ireland. A third group attracted to the ruins might be descendants of America's late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century immigrants. Finally, the well-to-do patrons of the inn at Palmetto Bluff will enjoy seeing how the rich and famous of another age lived and partied.

A significant feature of the Wilson House ruin is its remarkable potential for providing Palmetto Bluff with a recognizable marketing symbol, an important heritage tourism site, and an event facility (Criterion 3). While many ruins have one purpose, the Wilson House ruin can successfully fulfill three roles. First, a likeness of the ruin (logo) should be used in a variety of ways not only by the inn and restaurant, but also by the nearby village. If used effectively, this image would distinguish Palmetto Bluff from other resort communities, making its name recognizable across the South and perhaps the nation. Used in this manner, the ruin would draw additional visitors to the community, especially those interested in heritage sites.

Second, the ruin should be listed on the National Register of Historic Places and marketed as a heritage tourism site. National Register listed sites draw more visitors than other historic sites as this listing provides an element of prestige. A National

Register listing for the site would also increase property values for the area and would provide a significant draw for the inn. While a self-guided tour would always be available, special tours should be designed for groups. These tours should emphasize the ruin's history, its archaeology, its architecture, and even its landscape. Using the ruin as a heritage site would attract visitors for a variety of reasons. For example, re-creation of the historic garden would attract garden clubs and individuals interested in heritage garden design. A special tour could be designed for that group. The archaeological investigations might draw groups interested in historic preservation and archaeology. A tour for these groups might also include some of Palmetto Bluff's other significant archaeological sites.

A third use for the ruin would be as an event facility. As discussed previously in this study, historic event facilities are in tremendous demand across the nation. Palmetto Bluff has an exceptional opportunity to use the ruin as a backdrop for such events as weddings and corporate parties. To lessen impact on the ruin, the nearby inn and restaurant could be used for receptions and dining, and Palmetto Bluff could charge a substantial fee. For example, a bride and groom might hold their ceremony within the ruin and then proceed to the inn for the reception. Given the spectacular setting of the ruin, the facility will probably be in great demand.

The economic implications of using the Wilson House ruin for any of these options are tremendous. While heritage tourism entrance fees rarely support an historic site, the money attracted to the community is often significant. Any group that visits the Wilson House ruin will most likely visit and spend money within the nearby pedestrian-

only village. Research has shown that heritage tourists stay longer and spend more money than those visiting an area for any other reason, including sporting events.²⁶⁶ The Wilson House ruin is a perfect example of a ruin that can be used for a variety of purposes. Also, its potential for bringing economic benefits to the community is substantial. Other economic benefits may involve using the ruin as a film or movie location or for artists workshops. Ruins typically attract photographers and artists.

The Wilson family story and that of the Wilson House should be made available in the local village. Items with a likeness of the ruin could be sold as souvenirs in local shops. Visitors to the inn might receive small pins or other items with this logo. This reminder of their stay might encourage them to revisit the area or to tell friends about the ruin. This type of free marketing is extremely successful.

The Wilson House ruin demands an impressive interpretive plan (Criterion 4). An interpretive plan seeks to instruct the visitor, while still allowing the visitor to use his or her imagination to interpret the ruin. A well-designed interpretive plan for the Wilson House ruin should contain several items. These items include interpretive panels at the site, a written brochure or history available within the community and at the inn, and two museum displays containing artifacts and photographs.

First, interpretive panels should be placed in various areas of the ruin to give the visiting public information about the ruin and its history. Panel design could incorporate some small architectural elements removed during the archaeological study and should be unobtrusive. Five panels are suggested. The first should be near the front steps and

should provide information about the house and its architectural design. This panel should include a map of the house identifying various features and historical photographs of the house's exterior and interior. The second panel, located within the ruin, should tell the Wilson family's story. These two panels would provide a sense of historical time and place to the ruin, which some visitors may not otherwise be able to discern.

The third panel, near a feature uncovered during the archaeological investigations, should educate the public about archaeology's role at ruins and some of the investigation's discoveries. This panel would, along with the fourth panel, provide information not necessarily desired by all the ruin's visitors, but available to those seeking additional information. The fourth panel should be outside the foundation wall to the west. It would give visitors information about ruin preservation and the context in which the house existed. For example, this panel should provide information about the Palmetto Bluff plantation and its many facilities during the Wilson's tenure.

The fifth panel should be placed within a recreated version of the house's original Lover's Lane garden, located to the east of the house. In his work on ruin restoration in Britain, Thompson stated "the restoration of a garden adjoining a ruin is therefore something to be undertaken in special circumstances only and is fairly rare."²⁶⁷ However, to interpret the Wilson House's setting properly, it is important to recreate the original early twentieth-century garden. The garden provides the ruin a crucial sense of place and setting, as well as enhancing its picturesque qualities. Furthermore, its restoration would compliment the ruin by providing a contrast between nature and the built environment.

Historic photographs of portions of the garden are available and should be used as a guide for restoration.²⁶⁸ In addition, some of the garden's foundations and the fountain are present to aid in restoration. *Landscapes and Gardens for Historic Buildings*, by Rudy J. Favretti and Joy Putman Favretti, discusses plants and trends relative to historic period gardens and provides many suggestions for approaching such restoration.²⁶⁹ The garden's interpretive panel should discuss its significance to the original house and information about its plants and restoration. Restoration of the garden benches could provide seating that would enable visitors to enjoy the ruin for extended periods of time.

The second part of the interpretive plan is a well-written history of the Wilson family and the Wilson House. This history need not be long, and should include many photographs. It might also include sections on the house's architecture, the archaeological investigations, and how the ruins were preserved. This history should be available within the local village and at the inn. A third set of interpretive items would be the placement of several museum-quality displays within the community and the nearby inn and restaurant. There are many artifacts from the Wilson House and the associated dump site that can be used in these exhibits. The exhibits should also include historic photographs of the house and the Wilson family. Palmetto Bluff's staff has already actively sought oral histories and photographs that can be used for this purpose.

A well-developed interpretive plan will also give the local community an outstanding educational resource. The ruin and its related archaeological site will help local educators teach history, science (archaeology and biology, in particular), and

architecture. Additionally, the ruin should become part of the proposed foundation's teaching tools.

Archaeological and historical studies suggested the Wilson House ruin was locally significant due to its association with important events and people, its preserved distinctive structural elements, and its archaeological research potential. The South Carolina State Historic Preservation Office determined it eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under Criteria A, C, and D. The ruin's eligibility for the National Register should be used as the basis for establishing long-term legal protection of this resource (Criterion 5).

As noted previously, the Wilson House ruin should be listed on the National Register of Historic Places and a preservation easement should be established to protect the ruin. A National Register listing would allow Palmetto Bluff to receive tax credits for any archaeological or historic preservation easements established to protect the site. Also, a National Register listing generally increases the value of surrounding lands and draws more visitors to heritage sites. Next, instead of the generic memorandum of agreement (MOA) covering all of the development's archaeological sites, a specific MOA for the Wilson House should be developed to provide protection to the ruin and its related archaeological components. Such an MOA would require the owners and the easement holder to consult with an established committee that should include an architectural historian, a preservation architect, an archaeologist, and an interpretative specialist for any decisions regarding the ruin. These decisions would include any changes in its maintenance plan, any stabilization needs, and desired changes in the

interpretive plan. This committee would also inspect the ruin semiannually to determine any addition needs.

Finally, Palmetto Bluff has already developed the perfect management plan for the Wilson House ruin — their proposed conservation/preservation foundation. The MOA should specify that this foundation take over management of the Wilson House ruin as soon as possible. The foundation could also benefit financially by receiving any funds for use of the ruin as an event facility and or heritage site. This type of legal protection would ensure the Wilson House ruin of successful long-term preservation.

Conclusion

Although Palmetto Bluff, LLC has already chosen a preservation and interpretive plan for the Wilson House ruin, the alternate preservation and interpretive plan presented here addresses all of the criteria for successful ruin preservation. Using the rating system employed in Chapter V, this ruin could rate at fifteen of fifteen points if this alternate plan were carried out. The plan provides guidance on preparing the ruin for visitors, monitoring its condition, designing informational panels to enhance visitors' understanding, and providing legal protection to the ruin. These alternative actions would preserve additional portions of the ruin and its related archaeological site. Consequentially, the Wilson House has the potential to provide Palmetto Bluff with substantial economic profits, to become a nationally-known heritage site, and to develop a sense of pride within this historic local community.

CHAPTER VII CONCLUSIONS

“Leaving aside the impermanence of ruins,
this essay has been concerned with their retrieval and
display, in effect putting them to use rather than leaving them as
picturesque but disintegrating masonry.”

— M.W. Thompson²⁷⁰

In the United States, and in particular in its southern region, preserved and protected ruins exist as an unusual commodity. America’s preservation efforts center on intact buildings, cultural and historic landscapes, battlefields, and cemeteries. State and national parks preserve some ruins within their boundaries; however, the establishment of today’s new parks rarely focuses on ruins. Until recently, the National Park Service more often sought to reconstruct a building rather than to preserve its ruin.

Nevertheless, ruins remain very powerful. Ruins capture the imagination and interest of America’s heritage tourists. Seeking connections to their personal and community past, these visitors tour antebellum church ruins, tabby houses, and brick mansions across the rural South. Ruins of historic textile and grist mills, especially those associated with the Civil War, attract visitors in several Southern states. Ruins of antebellum homes provide focal points for gardens and for specialized event facilities. This interest, this demand creates a market for ruin preservation.

Preservationists need to recognize this uncommon resource and learn to promote ruin preservation on private property. Although adaptive uses for ruins may appear to be limited, this study proves the marketability of ruins. Ruins serve as particularly effective marketing brands, giving their owners a direct economic benefit from their preservation. Historic ruins draw visitors to commercial areas, enticing them to spend money. They serve as dramatic, picturesque settings for weddings and other social events. In residential areas, they create focal points for parks and open space, enticing residents with a small slice of local history and creating community connections and pride.

The preservation community, however, must also learn how to preserve and interpret ruins. Proper preservation and interpretation often use archaeologists, historians, and material preservation professionals. Archaeologists, historians and architectural historians must learn how to write strong National Register of Historic Places' significance statements to allow owners to reap tax credits and other economic benefits for ruin preservation.

This study investigated eleven preserved ruins to determine the attributes contributing to their successful protection. Five sets of criteria emerged as significant: 1) visual image and setting; 2) history; 3) purpose; 4) interpretation; and 5) legal protection. All five attributes play a role in successful ruin preservation; however, for each ruin, one or more may possess more influence than the others. For example, where purpose and interpretation are lacking, the ruin's visual image and setting might trigger the imagination of visitors. Or a ruin's history and connection to a community may inspire its preservation. These five criteria supply architectural historians, archaeologists, and

historic resources consultants with the means to measure a ruin's potential for successful preservation. Additionally, these criteria can be used to develop and improve plans for successful ruin preservation and economic gain.

The alternative preservation plan presented in this study applied ruin preservation principals to the Wilson House Ruin, Palmetto Bluff, South Carolina, exploring the economic benefits associated with this early twentieth-century ruin's protection and interpretation. Properly preserved and interpreted, the Wilson House Ruin could provide the nearby commercial village and the adjacent exclusive inn and restaurant with a sense of time and place that emphasizes the historic setting in which they exist. A recreated Lover's Lane garden could enhance the picturesque qualities of the ruin and provide a contrast between the built environment and the natural setting. Floodlighting the ruin and garden could give visitors a way to enjoy the ruin and garden during the summer's cooler evening hours. Given coastal South Carolina's mild climate, visitors could enjoy the Wilson House ruin and garden all year. Used as a heritage tourism site, an event facility, and marketing brand, the Wilson House ruin could provide Palmetto Bluff with significant economic gain.

This study examines only eleven privately preserved ruins in Virginia, South Carolina, and Georgia. Additionally studies in other states to enlarge the data set should be considered. Such analysis may provided further information on uses and economic benefits to be gained from ruin preservation. A handbook of ruin preservation issues, emphasizing the criteria-based rating system, needs to be developed for historic preservation professionals. Ruin interpretation can and should be approached by

utilizing methods that best suit the purpose of the ruin. The handbook on ruin preservation should also provide basic guidance and reference materials on this subject. Finally, this study is limited to ruins within private developments. Future studies should evaluate the practicality of applying the rating system to government-owned and preserved ruins.

Robert Louis Stevenson once wrote of the connection between the built environment and nature in Victorian-era Edinburgh, Scotland:

But nature is a more indiscriminate patronist than we imagined and in no way frightened of a strong effect. The birds roost as willingly among the Corinthian capitals as in the crannies of the crag. The same atmosphere and daylight clothe the eternal rock and yesterday's portico. And as the soft northern sunshine throws out everything into a glorified distinctness or early mists coming up with the blue evening fuse all of these incongruous features into one. And the lamps begin to glitter along the street and faint lights burn in the high windows across the valley.

The feeling grows upon you that this is also a piece of nature in the most intimate sense. And this profusion of eccentricities, this dream of masonry and living rock is not a drop scene in the theater but a city in the world of everyday reality.²⁷¹

Stevenson recognized the impact of man upon the landscape, but sensed that “nature” included the built environment as well as the natural earthly forces. In his world, the buildings and cities of man combined with nature’s design to create the “world of everyday reality.” Stevenson saw in the vestiges of the past, all of the buildings and the ruins along with the changes in the natural habitat, as incorporated into our present reality. Ruin preservation ensures a future with “vestiges of the past” that stimulate our imagination, give us a sense of history, and adorn our surroundings.

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271. Robert Louis Stevenson, *Edinburgh: Picturesque Notes*, (London, 1879), as quoted in David McCullough, "A Sense of Time and Place," in *Past Meets Future: Saving America's Historic Environments*, (Washington, D.C.: The Preservation Press, 1992), 29.