

Representing Slavery at Plantation-House Museums in the U.S. South: A Dynamic Spatial Process

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In March 2008, the University of Virginia hosted a three-day art exhibition symposium entitled “Landscape of Slavery: The Plantation in American Art.” A number of scholars presented insightful work from the fields of history, African American studies, landscape architecture, English literature, and religious history. Sadly missing on the program were geographers. The absence of geographers, especially historical geographers, is disturbing since repeated references to space, place, landscape and the uniqueness of the “geography of slavery” were common themes in the talks. I am not arguing that geography is the exclusive domain of geographers because geography is “what geographers do,”¹ any more than history and social memory are the exclusive domain of historians. Yet, while attending the conference in Virginia, I began thinking about what unique perspectives geographers could bring to the table in a discussion of slavery in the U.S. South and how it is remembered.

The New World plantation is deeply connected to slavery. In 1860, fifty-three percent of the enslaved individuals in the U.S. South lived on plantations, a proportion that had grown from approximately forty-five percent since the American Revolution.² The antebellum plantation was a business enterprise profiting from the extraction of labor of enslaved individuals compelled to wrestle product from the land. Depending on time, geography, and social factors expressed at various scales, tobacco, indigo, rice, sugar, cotton, peanuts, and other crops served as the primary cash crops at different plantations. While each antebellum plantation was unique due to its location, number of acres farmed, crop(s) raised, slave labor system used, support buildings and draft animals present, and temperament of the master-planter, all plantations needed labor—usually coerced and enslaved—to operate.³ Today, simplified versions of hundreds of former plantations serve as museums. Most of these museums declare their historical uniqueness and importance by emphasizing, if not celebrating, the planter-class individuals who formerly owned the sites.⁴

Remembering plantation-based slavery in the U.S. South is a multi-scaled, dynamic spatial process. The way slavery is represented at many plantation house museums in the southeastern U.S. is influenced by

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the actions of museum staff and tourists, as well as government policy and academic interaction. This photographic essay considers this dynamic spatial process and calls for greater interaction in this process by geographers. Within the South, recalling slavery is spatial at multiple scales including the region itself, the state level, the local sub-region, and the individual site. Each is considered in turn in this essay.

For the region as a whole, the planter-class legacy takes primacy over the legacy of the enslaved. In their seminal study, sociologists Jennifer Eichstedt and Stephen Small note that slavery is marginalized, even ignored at many southern plantation museums.⁵ While these types of museum strategies are apparent at the local level of the individual plantation-house museum, collectively the acts committed at these individual sites contribute to a larger, regional forgetting of the substantial role of slavery and enslaved people in not just the plantation economy, but also in the making of the U.S. South as a whole.

At the state level, Eichstedt and Small observed that each of the southern states seem to have statewide “tropes” to represent the planter-class. In Virginia, “the birthplace of democracy” is repeated as a theme across the sites. In Georgia, many sites reflect ideas of grandeur and hospitality as represented in the popular book and movie, *Gone with the Wind*. Additionally, the U.S. Civil War is frequently mentioned. In Louisiana, Eichstedt and Small find “wealth, grandeur, hospitality, and the tragedy of the Civil War” to be the main motif. The main issue with the use of these tropes is how their use is stressed at the cost of a discussion of slavery.⁶

Before considering how plantation museum sites influence each other within regions of the U.S. South, it is necessary to reflect on the individual site. Eichstedt and Small find a variety of strategies are used on docent-led tours to separate slavery from the plantation at individual museums, including symbolic annihilation, trivialization, and segregation. Plantation-house museums that symbolically annihilate slavery ignore it.⁷ Sites that trivialize slavery minimize its impact upon enslaved individuals, including impacts upon African Americans since the end of slavery, and distort the role planters played in the institution of slavery.⁸ The managers of sites using the strategy of segregation separate the representation of slavery to locations that are not part of the main museum tour, such as the preserved or recreated remains of slave quarters.⁹ These three representational approaches contrast with relative incorporation, a strategy in which slavery is made a meaningful part of the information presented to tourists.¹⁰

Mythic representations of slavery, the enslaved, and the planter-enslaver are used in each of the aforementioned strategies, including relative incorporation.¹¹ The very nature of a docent-led tour prevents tour guides from considering, in depth, every aspect of the history of a site. During a short period of time, around an hour, the tour guide leads the group through a site, which is usually little more than the planter’s former

residence. During a tour, docents actively manipulate the way themes like slavery are represented through the information they share and the way this information is framed.¹² Docents who read and research well beyond a museum's official script may highlight things not considered by other tour guides. Indeed, some docents choose to focus quite intensely on slavery. The recently retired Kitty Wilson-Evans, a former slave interpreter at Historic Brattonsville in McConnells, South Carolina, is one such example of a docent whose very powerful representations of slavery has brought some tourists to tears.¹³

The docent is not the only factor that determines whether slavery is considered on a particular plantation-house tour. The individual, group or organization that owns and manages a museum property often dictates its focus. Geographer David L. Butler notes a correlation between the type of organization that owns a plantation-house museum and whether slavery is mentioned in the marketing brochure.¹⁴ Privately-owned sites are less likely to consider slavery than sites owned by the federal or state government.¹⁵

Material culture displays at a plantation-house museum and the context in which they are set influence how visitors see the past. The presence or absence of material artifacts directly connected to slavery and enslaved individuals is important because of the material-centrism of museums. Structures that formerly housed enslaved families and reconstructed counterparts serve as crucial points for the discussion of slavery at sites where these structures are present and included in the tour narrative. The information about the material culture at most plantation-house museums focus on ownership. Even when the items in the house were not owned by the featured historical proprietors, tourists are reminded that the items are "like" the things owned by the former planter. At some sites such as Hope Plantation in Windsor, North Carolina, it is known that many enslaved individuals formerly lived and worked there, but the locations of their homes are unknown. Such gaps in the knowledge about the slave community are frequently used to legitimize not talking about slavery in meaningful ways.¹⁶ However, administrators and museum staff at some plantation-house museums are using creative ways to get around this representational issue. Museum curators at some sites recognize that where artifact displays are annotated with text, these objects need to connect to people of the past, including the enslaved, in ways beyond mere ownership, to include construction, use, experience and emotion. This type of opening up of conversation about slavery in turn opens up avenues for interpreting slavery inside of the master's "big house," a location from which many museums have banished discussions of the enslaved rather than encompassing the full range of spaces and practices in which they engaged. Some sites, like the previously mentioned Hope Plantation and Destrehan Plantation near New Orleans, Louisiana, use art to express aspects of slavery.

Docents and official tour scripts do not alone shape what is remembered about slavery at plantation-museums. Tourists also influence what is discussed on tours and how these themes of current separation or relative incorporation unfold. Beyond just mentioning other plantation-house museums that they have visited, individual tourists can influence discussions of slavery through the questions and comments they make while touring.¹⁷ These earnest inquiries are often initiated by visitors to hear more about slavery; and are a diagnostic of what is missing within official scripts. Where these exchanges about slavery occur can reshape the entire tour. Visitor questions and comments about slavery early on a tour encourage docents to weave details about the enslaved population throughout the rest of the tour.

Concomitantly, these museums influence each other at a small scale, regional level. Not only do docents tend to tour nearby plantation-house museums, but they often receive tourists who visit a number of these sites in an area. Where there are a number of plantation-house museums in an area, tour guides and visitors often start the tour with conversations about other nearby house museums. Even when this does not happen, visitors draw comparisons between tourism sites, occasionally asking for verification of details heard at previously visited plantation-house museums. Thus, changes at one place socially impact neighboring sites. Conversations with museum staff in Louisiana and North Carolina indicate that Laura Plantation near Vacherie, Louisiana, Somerset Plantation near Creswell, North Carolina, and Latta Plantation near Charlotte, North Carolina have influenced plantation-house museums near their locations. Here is one area where geographers can clearly contribute to ongoing and cross-disciplinary discussions of slavery, memory, and the U.S. South. Methods are needed that will allow geographers to more fully consider the interactions taking place across multiple plantation-house museums and how plantation-house museums that are more socially responsible when representing slavery influence neighboring sites.

Historical geographers have much to offer when it comes to improving the representation of slavery at plantation-house museums. Factors such as museum ownership, the presentation of material culture and visitor interaction, at both individual and multiple sites, need additional geographic inquiry because they get at the concepts of sense of place, landscape, and spatiality. Beyond what these museums can offer in additional insights for geography and academia, plantation-house museums proffer chances for critical engagement. By working with management and staff at plantation-house museums, historical geographers can help formulate approaches that present the plantation as a lived space, not only for the wealthy planter class family, but also the enslaved people whose lives animated, not just the big house, but the plantation itself. While each site

has different needs, most plantation-house museums need representational help when it comes to slavery and the people involved in it – both the enslaved people who struggled under that institution and the enslavers. One possible technique would be to observe tours and then share with museum staff ways to further engage tour groups in conversation in ways that do not marginalize or segregate representations of slavery. Another technique could be to develop and sponsor workshops that bring together staff from multiple plantation-house museums in order to engage in cross-site discussions of how slavery is represented. These workshops can act as network devices to speak to the uniqueness and needs of each museum and develop approaches that allow museums to contribute to regional discussions about slavery. By acknowledging the temporal and spatial dynamics of memory, we will recognize creative ways to engage with others – our academic peers, museum staff, and visitors – while remembering and coming to terms with slavery. These interactions will be messy, at times uncomfortable, but well worth it.

One of the things that geographers can clearly bring to the study of plantation-house museums is the critical reading of the layout of the museum landscape and its many narratives, artifacts, and performances. Doing so often requires one have a keen eye on how the elements of southern plantation-house museum are presented to visitors, a point that influenced me to address the issue through photography.

The photographs presented in this essay are a result of five years of touring and studying plantation museums across the South, especially in North Carolina and Louisiana. My work approaches these sites from the perspective of not simply observing what is said – or often, not said – about slavery, but with the intention of making a critical intervention in that process of remembering the enslaved in more complete and socially equitable ways. This goal of intervention is leading me to work with managers of various plantation sites, learning about how they see the historical interpretation process while also providing them insights from the field of historical geography about the politics of memory and place-making. While bearing in mind the ways that historical geographers can further engage with plantation-house museums, I invite the reader to consider the problems and possibilities of representing and discussing slavery at these sites as reflected in the following images and their captions.

Often the existence of a plantation house is justified through the supposed importance of the past owner. A strong case is made for the importance of the past planter-class residents who owned a site while the enslaved community who lived and worked at the plantation, and might have outnumbered the members of the planter-class family, is marginalized, usually through a discourse of ownership. Historic markers stressing “great people” are frequently located on highways near these sites. Figure 1 is a

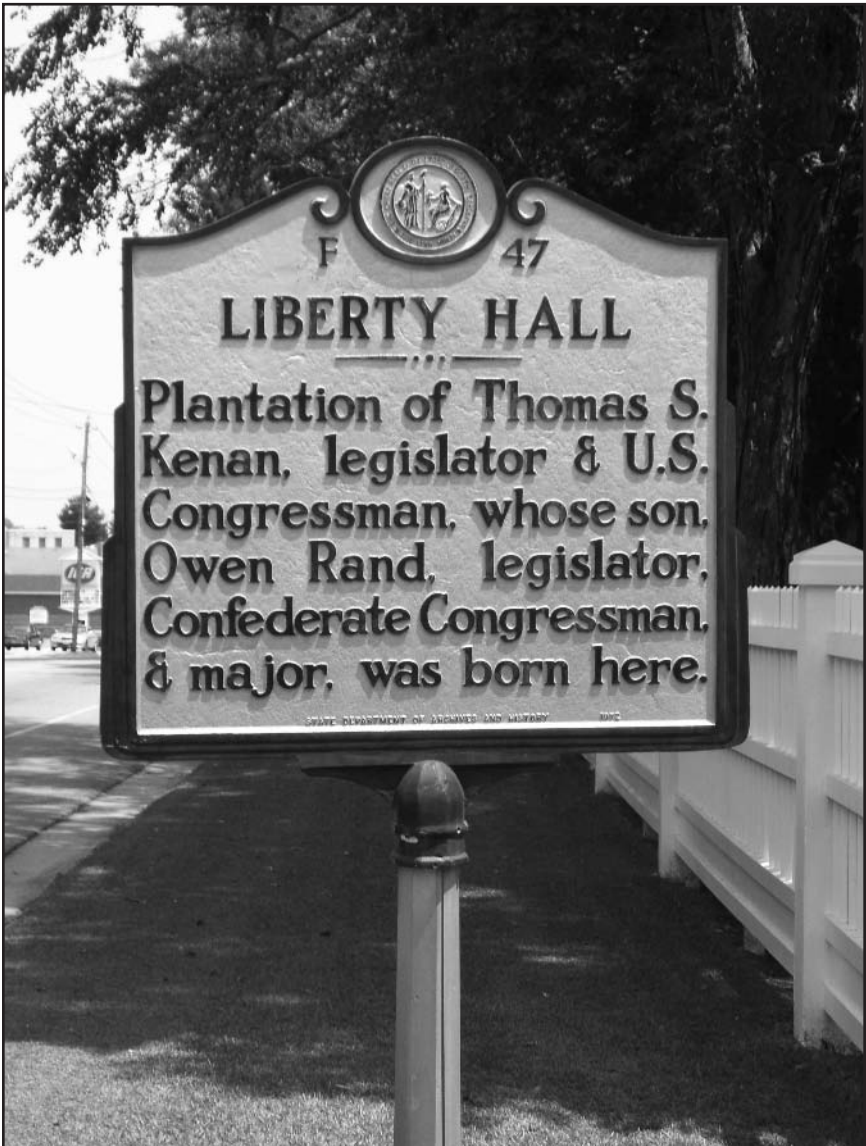


Figure 1. Historic roadside marker in front of the mansion of Liberty Hall plantation in Kenansville, North Carolina. Photograph by author.



Figure 2. Liberty Hall, the Kenansville, North Carolina plantation house formerly owned by Thomas Kenan, after whom the town of Kenansville was named. Photograph by author.

photograph of the historic roadside marker in front of the mansion of Liberty Hall plantation in Kenansville, North Carolina. Built in the early nineteenth century, the name “Liberty Hall” might have been named to commemorate a period of freedom from British rule, yet the enslaved individuals over whom Kenan claimed ownership could only have found the name “Liberty Hall” to be ironic.

The discourse of ownership may start even before entering the plantation “big house,” where the enslaved craftspeople who built the house are rarely acknowledged when the docent tells the tour group the basic details of the house starting with the planter who arranged for the house to be built. Figure 2 is a photograph of Liberty Hall, the Kenansville, North Carolina plantation house formerly owned by Thomas Kenan after whom the town of Kenansville was named. Tended yards surround a crisply painted mansion with well-maintained fences located in a small town; the landscape gives no indication to tourists that this was once the center of a slave-fueled agricultural enterprise.

Homes of the formerly enslaved are less likely to be extant because of the marginal social position enslaved individuals had historically and continue to have in social memory. This devaluing continues at many



Figure 3. Ruins of Rural Hill, a plantation house located near Huntersville, North Carolina, and formerly occupied by Major John Davidson, a Revolutionary War hero. Photograph by author.



Figure 4. Marker indicating location of former slave cabin, Rural Hill Plantation. Photograph by author.



Figure 5. Slave cabin at San Francisco Plantation near Garyville, Louisiana. Photograph by author.

plantations. The difference in value placed on the homes of planters versus slave homes is exemplified at Rural Hill, near Huntersville, North Carolina. The ruins of the plantation house formerly occupied by Major John Davidson, a Revolutionary War hero, are roped off as shown in Figure 3. Figure 4 shows the space attributed as the site of a former slave cabin now encroached upon by the forest. A post with the number "3" marks the location (Figure 4, inset). Visitors need a copy of the visitor guide for Rural Hill to understand that this site marked by the number "3," was once where a slave cabin stood. Davidson owned 29 slaves according to information on display in the museum.

At some museums, real and replica slave cabins located on the premises are not a part of the docent-led tour. This is the case at San Francisco Plantation near Garyville, Louisiana. The management and staff of San Francisco Plantation described the mansion as "the most opulent plantation on River Road." This slave cabin, which was relocated from another area plantation, is open for visitors to enter, but is not part of the house tour. This practice works to segregate slavery from the house tour. By segregating the slave cabin in this way, visitors are told, in effect, that the plantation house is what is important. This spatial and social segregation of slavery from the plantation house indicates to tourists that lives of the

enslaved were simple and self-evident — possibly even boring — when compared to the planter's house, which needs an expert in order for it to be interpreted.

Even though most plantation-house museums spotlight a "great person," docents seek ways to make connections between the planter class individuals who lived in the big house and the tourists who visit it today. Thus certain themes are repeated at various plantations. The most frequent of these themes relates to the bed. Many of these sites have rope-supported mattresses that were filled with economical, locally available material such as Spanish moss or feathers from harvested fowl. Periodically, the rope that the mattress rested upon needed tightening. Additionally, the fill material for the mattress needed to be cleaned of insects before inserting it into the mattress. Docents frequently explain that the adage, "Sleep tight. Don't let the bedbugs bite," originated because of these beds. The bed with the wooden key used to tighten the ropes is from the Sally-Billy House, a plantation house relocated from Scotland Neck to Halifax, North Carolina (Figure 6). Drawing a contrast to this rope bed, docents from the Sally-Billy House plantation-house museum direct visitors' attention to the less-comfortable, wooden slat bed in the corner and inform tourists that it was slept on by an unnamed enslaved woman who stayed in the same room as the children she was charged with watching (Figure 7).

Highlighted almost as frequently as the origin story of the "sleep tight" adage are pieces of furniture that contain chamber pots. Anecdotal observations made at a number of Southern plantations indicate that the fancier a piece of furniture that once held a chamber pot, the more likely it is that the docent will discuss it. The piece of furniture in Figure 8 — holding a chamber pot with a royal seal of England at the bottom of it — is in one of the bedrooms at San Francisco Plantation. Discussions of chamber pot-concealing furniture, in addition to serving as moments of humor, serve as reminders that planter class individuals were like the visitors presently touring their former homes. Pointing out hidden toilets humanizes planters; they excreted too, and they felt a need to conceal the apparatuses associated with certain bodily functions. Chamber pot furniture stories serve to connect tourists with the planter class in yet one more way that is not done with enslaved plantation workers.

A third theme considered at some plantation-house museums relates to bathing. Docents at different plantation-house museums give different lengths for the time between baths for the members of the planter-class family. Tubs like the one at Destrehan Plantation near New Orleans, Louisiana (Figure 9) are often the material foundation used to tell one of the origin stories for the adage, "Don't throw the baby out with the bath water." Docents tell visitors that the planter would bathe first, followed by the planter's wife and then the children, from the oldest to the



Figure 6. Rope bed at Sally-Billy House, a plantation house relocated from Scotland-Neck to Halifax, North Carolina. Photograph by author.



Figure 7. Wooden slat bed used by enslaved woman, Sally-Billy House. Photograph by author.



Figure 8. Chamber pot, San Francisco Plantation. Photograph by author.

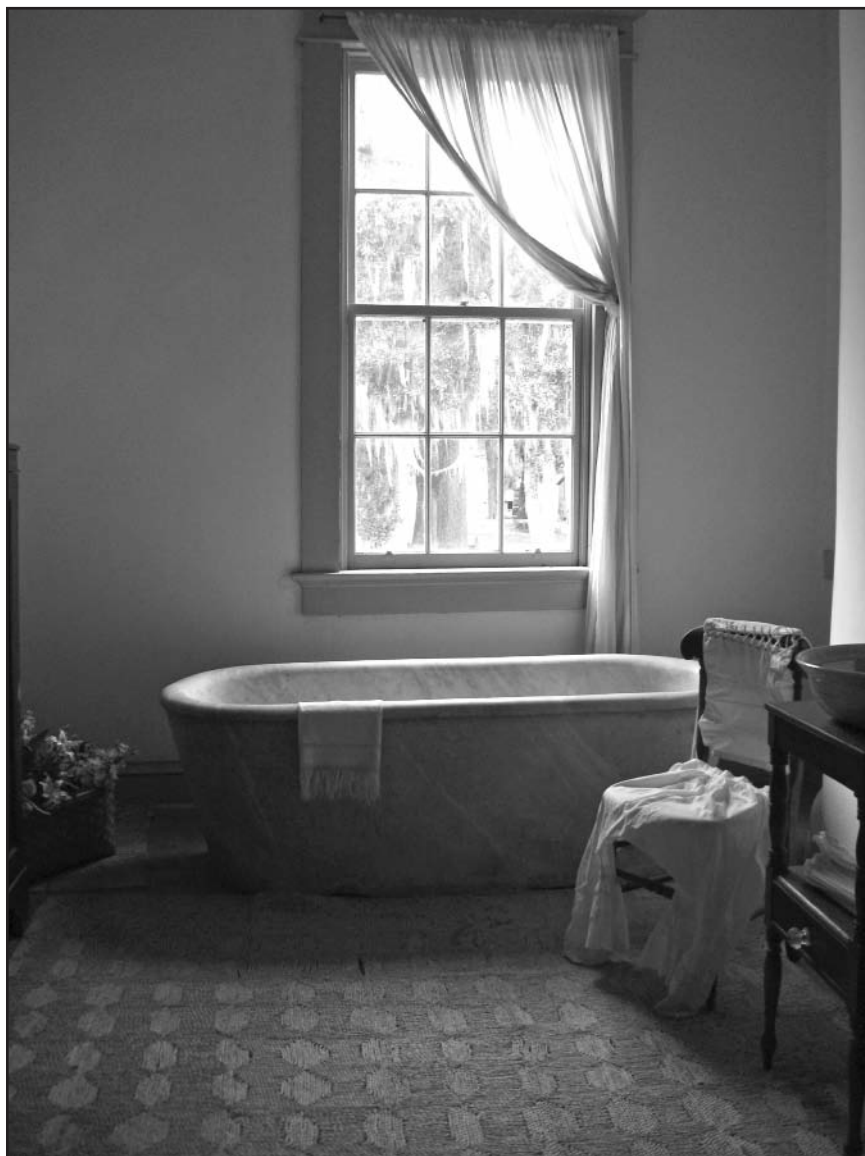


Figure 9. Planter family's bath tub at Destrehan Plantation near New Orleans, Louisiana. Photograph by author.



Figure 10. Showering apparatus, San Francisco Plantation. Photograph by author.



Figure 11. Planter's house at Destrehan Plantation. Photograph by author.

youngest. Because of the difficulty of filling and emptying the tub, the water was supposedly left in the tub between bathers, getting dirtier with each bather until the water was quiet opaque by the time the final bather, the baby of the planter-class family, was washed. Again, even the most trivial of daily activities is the subject of substantial discussion on the plantation tour, all while saying very little about the lives of the enslaved.

Using bathing as a connection between the planter and tourists, Figure 10 shows a unique showering apparatus at San Francisco Plantation. On tour, docents and tourists spend a couple of minutes talking about how the shower works. A hand pump—hidden behind the pipe on the left side of the appliance is operated by an enslaved “servant” to draw the water up a pipe to a reservoir at the top. To release the water, the standing bather pulls the handle—visible between the two pipes on the left. This gadget implies not only the ingenuity of the planter, but also that planter and his family went to greater lengths to maintain their hygiene than individuals in the enslaved community, although in reality visitors are never told about bathing practices within the slave community. Not to consider the bodies of the enslaved contributes further to their dehumanization.

It is commonly asserted by docents—and this is an area where more research is necessary—that most tourists come to see the grand

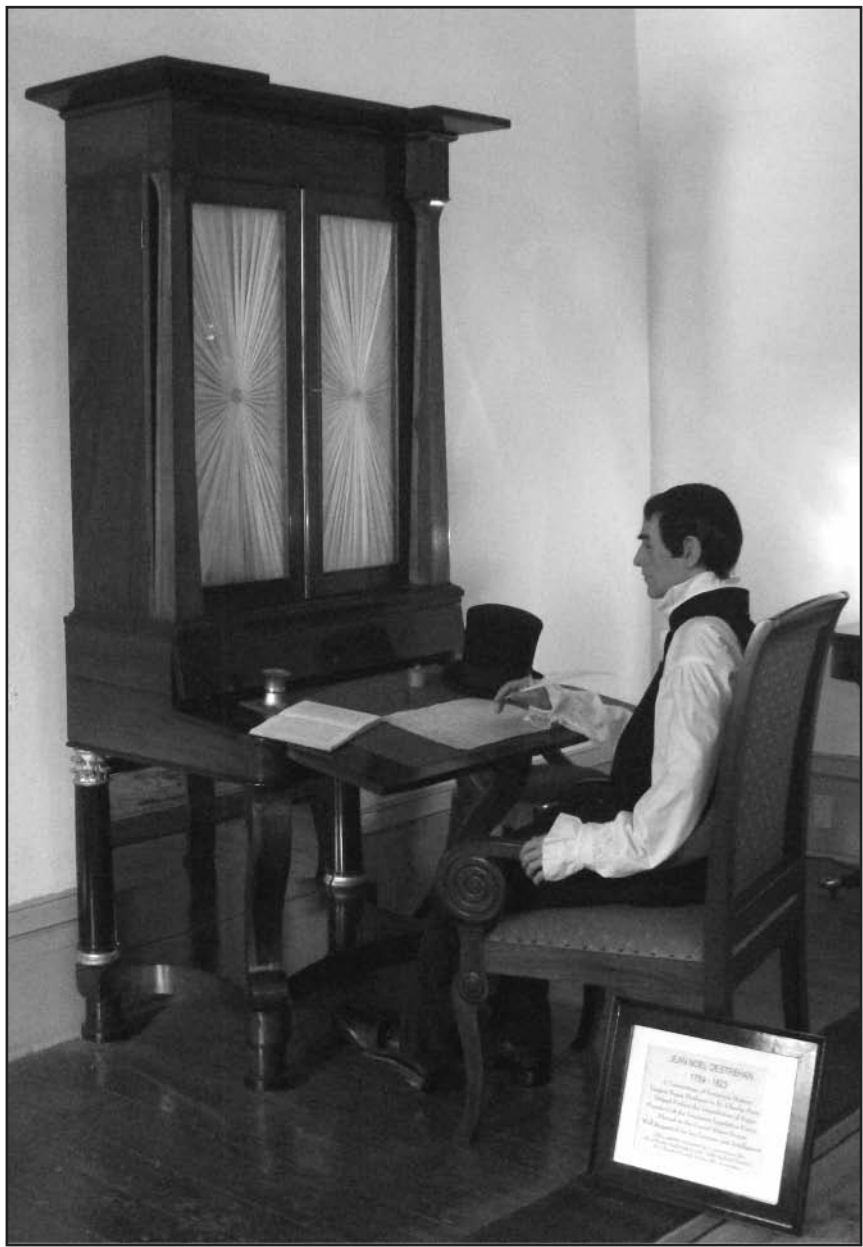


Figure 12. Desk owned by Jean Noel Destrehan of Destrehan Plantation. The desk was built by a local enslaved craftsman. Photograph by author.



Figure 13. Exhibit at Destrehan Plantation with mannequin representing Marguerite, an enslaved woman who cooked and laundered for the Destrehans. Photograph by author.



Figure 14. Representation of the 1811 slave revolt by Lorraine Gendron exhibited at Destrehan Plantation. Photograph by author.

architecture and furnishings owned by the planter-class family rather than stories of slavery. On tour, docents for most houses point to the handful of possessions once owned by the former plantation owner featured on the tour, and often tell tourists at the beginning of a tour that many of the items they will see may not be the original items but similar to the items once owned by the former planter. Curators for many plantation house museums are aware of what possessions the planter owned because of the inventory created at death as part of settling the deceased's estate. This discourse of ownership is only one simplistic way to view the material culture of the plantation. Items like furniture were often created by enslaved craftsmen. Considering the creation, removal, and transformation of plantation objects and landscapes opens up new ways to discuss the enslaved and their lives. At Destrehan Plantation (Figure 11), docents supplement the discourse of ownership by pointing out that the desk in Figure 12—one of the items owned by a former plantation owner, Jean Noel Destrehan—was built by a local enslaved craftsman.

The incomplete connection of material culture to the enslaved community, via the commonly used theme of ownership, has not gone unnoticed or unchallenged by the staff at some plantation sites. One way that Destrehan Plantation attempts to deal with this issue is by displaying in the plantation house a mannequin representing Marguerite, an enslaved



Figure 15. Trough used by members of the Hope Plantation slave community to pickle meat for preservation and later use. Photograph by author.

woman who cooked and laundered for the Destrehans in the early nineteenth century (Figure 13). Interestingly, visitors on tour see the mannequin of Marguerite before seeing the mannequin representing Jean Noel Destrehan, pictured in Figure 12. Another strategy used at Destrehan Plantation is the display of artwork that portrays themes and events related to slavery that otherwise would not have a material presence. This photograph shows some of the work of artist Lorraine Gendron exhibited at Destrehan. Gendron's art represents the 1811 slave revolt, which resulted in the deaths of scores of enslaved individuals (Figure 14).¹⁸ These strategies, though themselves not perfect, demonstrate creative ways to look beyond ownership when considering slavery.

Hope Plantation, the former home of North Carolina Governor David Stone, has joined a few other plantation-house museums in the U.S. South in actively revising the way that slavery is represented at the site. Lacking slave quarters or artifacts formerly owned by individuals of the enslaved community, the administrators and staff at Hope Plantation saw the need to go beyond the theme of ownership. One of the first steps the museum's management took was identifying the trough shown in Figure 15 as an item used by enslaved plantation workers. The trough was carved out of a large tree by enslaved workers and then used by members of the slave community to pickle meat for preservation for later use on the

Slaves from the estate listing of David Stone, dec'd,
1819.

Slaves listed combine both Hope and Restdale Plantations.

Aaron	Charles	Espox	Aaron
Sal	Collin	Mary Ann	Jenny
Arthur	Jack	Ben	Rem
Monah	Jenny	Mike	Kepiah
Emily	Lucy	Harry	Moses
Celea	Nancy	Mary	George
Nelson	Mons	Eliza	Arch
Lib	Harriott	Deek	Jason
Prince	Olphan	Sylvia	Ellen
Finer	Augusta	Deey	Charity
Philas	Phillis	Ellen	Pomp
Kato	Anna	Rhoda	Willis
Bell	Dave	Plato	Hardy
Jacob	Hannah	Mushell	Carson
Dennis	George	Isabell	Luke
Hetty	Patty	Jessee	Delilah
Harrott	Dinah	Lucy	Edy
Ben	Any	Brister	Penny
Nancy	Mollie	Rose	Celia
Washington	Joe	Ben	Lib
Sal	Hasty	Tiner	Emily
Dawson	Matthew	Winnny	George
Jim	Worly	Fanny	Wilmy
Mouring	Amelia	Nelly	Bob
Flo	Betsey	George	Sylvia
Henry	Lewis	Tempey	Tookey
Elisha	Morat	London	Mingo
Ishimel	Jemimea	Washington	Nimrod
Alice	Peter	Reuben	Tom
Giles	Rachael	Celia	Penelope
Hagar	Edy	Harry	Peggy
Abadan	Toney	Austin	Joe
Sophia	Uency	Sylvia	Tom
Baker	Cuba	Bryan	Lucy
Sarah	Briles		

Figure 16. Names of enslaved individuals on Home and Rosedale Plantations, taken from the early nineteenth-century estate listing of David Stone. Photograph by author.

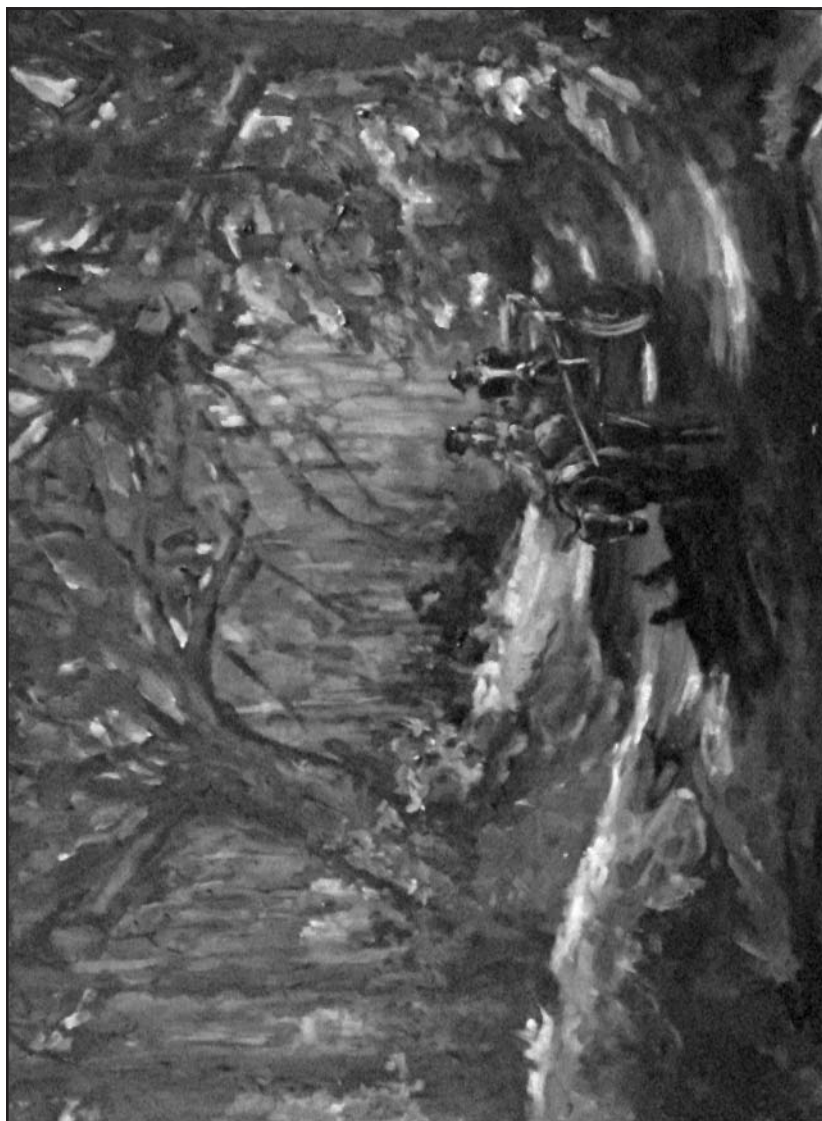


Figure 17. "The Halifax Road," painting by Tracey Bell. Photograph by author.



Figure 18. Display featuring painting, Hope Plantation's visitors center. Photograph by author.



Figure 19. Sign on grounds of Hope Plantation. (Photograph by the author.)

plantation. Below the text that explains that practice, the museum lists, by name, the enslaved individuals who lived and worked at both of Governor Stone's plantations—Hope and Rosedale—when he died (Figure 16).

Through new displays and an additional interpretive room added to the house tour at Hope Plantation, site management and staff have attempted to highlight the multi-racial history of the estate and the surrounding area. One way this was done was by commissioning paintings by local artists, which are displayed in the visitor center where tourists buy tickets for house tours. The first in the series of paintings, entitled, "The Halifax Road" by artist Tracey Bell of Windsor, North Carolina, (Figure 17), connects slavery at Hope Plantation spatially with the region and nation with a caption which says in part, "Slaves seeking freedom also followed this inland path to the Underground Railroad." Of the nine commissioned paintings with captions, seven consider the local African-American and Native American communities.

In addition to displaying paintings in the visitor center (Figure 18), signs have been erected around the Hope Plantation property that reproduce these works of art and repeat the captions as highlighted in the previous photograph (Figure 19). Pictured in both of these images is artist David Brown's painting entitled, "The Mansion." At both locations visitors see variations on the following caption, "Stone supervised the building of his English Manor House on a southern plantation. On all plantations, slave carpenters and similar craftsmen were an important and valued resource. Most were literate, and as their skills improved they were often hired out for top wages. Negotiations between owner and craftsman sometimes left the enslaved worker with as much as 60% of his wages. These artisans were the most likely to be able to purchase their freedom." Representation of the enslaved as skilled craftsmen and recognition of the negotiations that sometimes characterized the master-slave relationship are important counter-narratives to the way in which the enslaved have been portrayed historically in the U. S. South. At the same time, however, it is important for visitors not to be led to believe that plantation slavery was not, at its heart, a system of control. When some plantation-house museums do move toward a more critical discussion of slavery, there is a tendency to represent the enslavement experience at those plantations in more positive and less indicting terms.

In addition to the new exhibits, a room has been converted at Hope Plantation to represent the appearance of the interior of a slave cabin (Figure 20). The room is small and located in the basement of the big house. At first glance, the representation of slave life in the basement might signal the continued marginalization of slavery. However, the converted room is a part of the house tour, and the small basement space with a low ceiling is uncomfortable. The meager, rough furnishings are easily

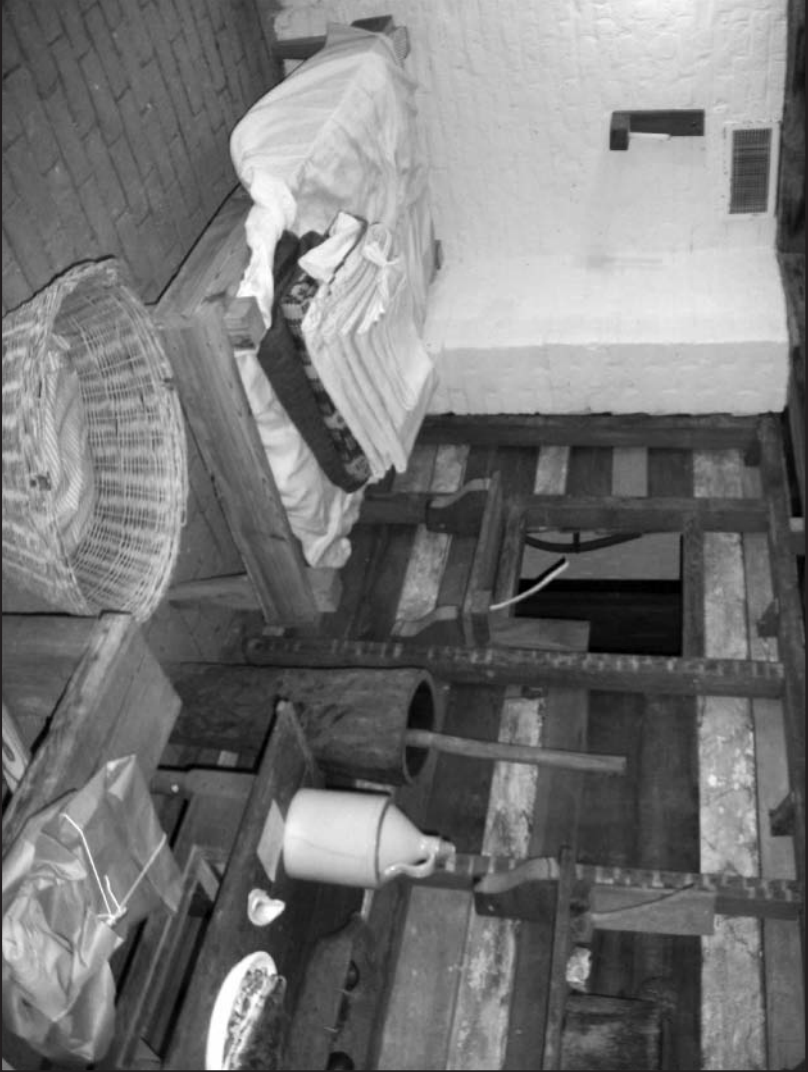


Figure 20. Exhibit at Hope Plantation representing the interior of a slave cabin. Photograph by author.

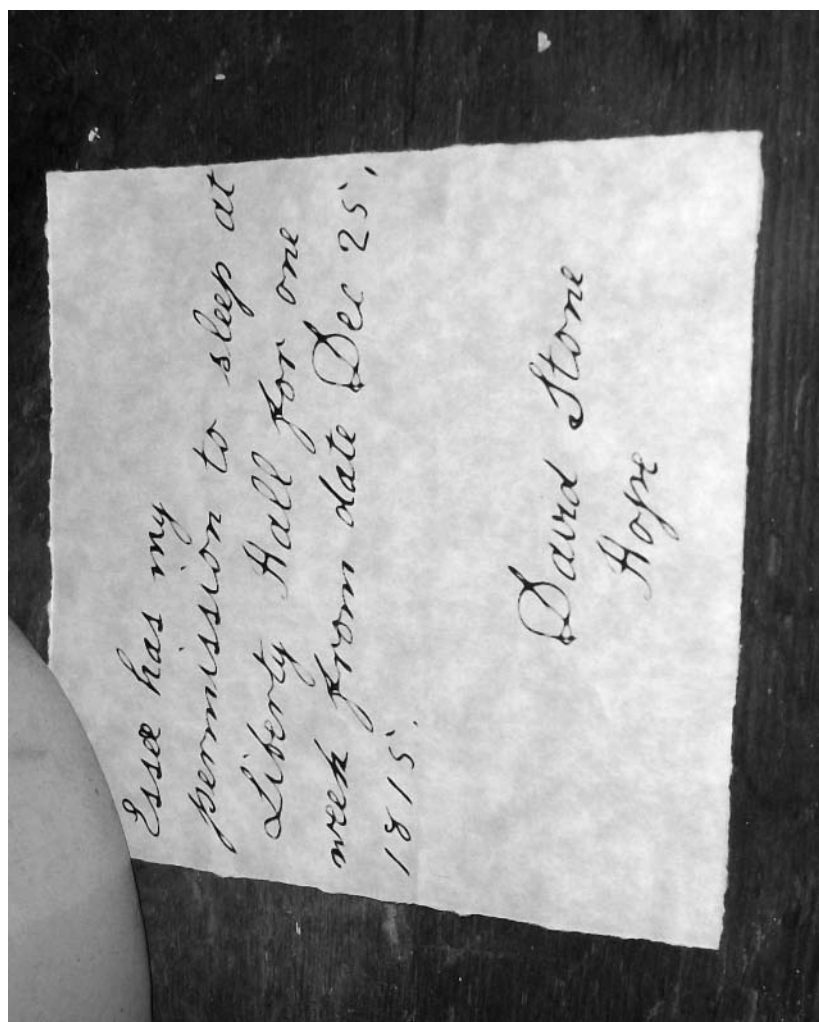


Figure 21. Recreated slave pass, Hope Plantation. Photograph by author.

contrasted with the much nicer furnishings upstairs that tourists see earlier on the house tour.

The recreated slave pass in Figure 21 was set out as part of the Christmas holiday arrangements done at Hope Plantation. Integrating the representation of slavery with the holidays would seem—to this author at least—a difficult process. Yet, Hope Plantation's staff recognizes that many of its visitors come to Hope to see the site decorated for Christmas. The presence of a slave pass reminds visitors that the planter still exerted control over enslaved individuals through the holiday season. The slave pass, like the commissioned artwork at Hope Plantation and Destrehan Plantation, indicates that some museums are seeking to present a more complete, more nuanced representation of slavery. Historical geographers have quite a bit to contribute to this ever-changing spatial process, but we should not forget that we can also learn from others who are creatively engaging slavery.

Notes

1. This statement is created to A. E. Parkins. Russell J. Whitaker, "Almon Ernest Parkins," *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 31:1 (1941): 46-50.
2. Russell R. Menard, "Plantation System," in Randall Miller and John Smith, eds., *Dictionary of Afro-American Slavery* (Westport, CT: Praegar Publishers, 1988), 578-582.
3. *Ibid.* See also Philip D. Morgan, "The Task System and the World of Low-country Blacks, 1700 to 1880," *The William and Mary Quarterly*, third series 39:4 (1982): 564-599; Charles P. Roland, "Gang System," in Randall Miller and John Smith, eds., *Dictionary of Afro-American Slavery* (Westport, CT: Praegar Publishers, 1988), 283-284; Ira Berlin, *Many Thousands Gone: The First Two Centuries of Slavery in North America* (Cambridge, MA: University of Harvard Press, 1998); John M. Vlach, *Back of the Big House: The Architecture of Plantation Slavery* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1993).
4. Jennifer Eichstedt and Stephen Small, *Representations of Slavery: Race and Ideology in Southern Plantation Museums* (Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution Press, 2002); E. Arnold Modlin, Jr. "Tales Told on the Tour: Mythic Representation of Slavery on Docent-Led Tours at North Carolina Plantation Museums," *Southeastern Geographer* 48:3 (2008): 265-287.
5. Eichstedt and Small, *Representations of Slavery: Race and Ideology in Southern Plantation Museums*.
6. *Ibid.*, 6-7.
7. *Ibid.*, 10, 105-146.
8. *Ibid.*, 10, 147-169.
9. *Ibid.*, 10, 170-202.
10. *Ibid.*, 11, 206-232.
11. Modlin, "Tales Told on the Tour: Mythic Representation of Slavery on Docent-Led Tours at North Carolina Plantation Museums."
12. Christine N. Buzinde, "Representational Politics of Plantation Heritage

- Tourism: The Contemporary Plantation as a Social Imaginary," in Cameron McCarthy, Aisha S. Durham, Laura C Engel, Alice A. Filmer, Michael D. Giardina, Miguel A. Malagrec, eds., *Globalizing Cultural Studies: Ethnographic Interventions in Theory, Method & Policy*, (New York, NY: Peter Lang, 2007), 229-252.
13. Karen G. Bates, 2005. "Toll, Rewards of Playing a Slave at Brattonsville". NPR, <http://www.npr.org/templates/transcript/transcript.php?storyId=4992408>. (Accessed: January 15, 2011); Ellen Barry, "A Hard Truth to Portray," *Los Angeles Times*, June 4, 2005: A1.
 14. David L Butler, "Whitewashing Plantations: The Commodification of a Slave-Free Antebellum South," *International Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Administration* 2:3/4 (2001): 163-175.
 15. Websites showed similar correlations between representations of slavery and ownership. See Derek H. Alderman and E. Arnold Modlin, Jr., "(In)visibility of the Enslaved within Online Plantation Tourism Marketing: A textual Analysis of North Carolina Websites," *Journal of Travel and Tourism Marketing* 25:3-4 (2008): 265-281.
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