

May I, I770, I994, 20I8

"IF YOU WANT TO KNOW SAVANNAH YOU HAVE TO
KNOW HER GHOSTS."

The Time Traveler's Guide to the City of Savannah

*boring title, too
straightforward?*

Adapted from the Field Notes of a Time Traveling
Extraordinaire and Resident of Many Different Georgias of
Many Different Times

Keep this text secret at all costs.

PAYS GONE

IIII IIII

*issues with suspension of disbelief- unrealistic
evolution*
strong manuscript, needs work

Stops:

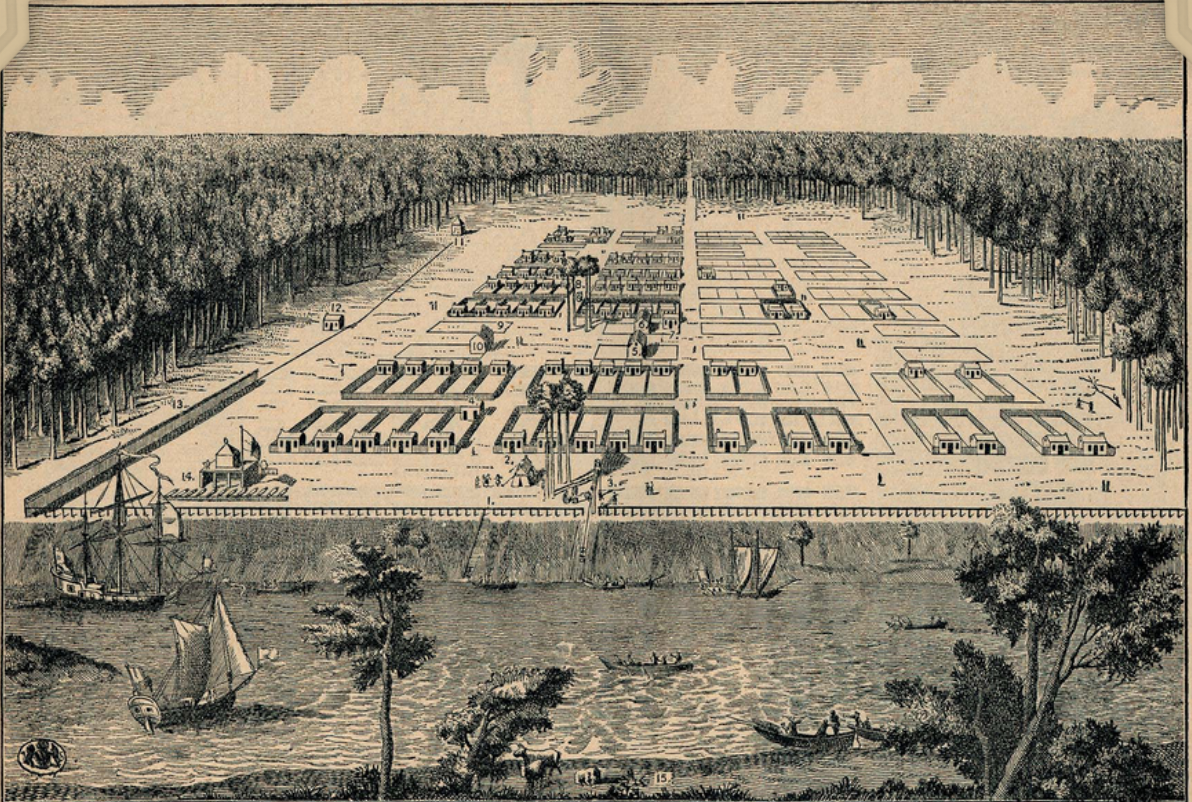
1. Wormsloe Historic Site: 760I Skidaway Road
2. Bonaventure Cemetery: 330 Bonaventure Road, Thunderbolt, GA
3. Calhoun Square: I64 E Gordon Street
4. Mercer-Williams House: 429 Bull Street
5. Sorrel-Weed House: 6 W Harris Street
6. Gribble House: 40I Perry Street W
7. Owens-Thomas House: I24 Abercorn Street
8. The Pirates' House: 20 E Broad Street
9. Otis J. Brock Elementary School: I804 Stratford Street

1st May, A. D. 1770

Hello, Traveler!

Welcome to Savannah!

View of Savannah, as it stood the 29th March, A. D. 1734.



1. The Stairs going up.
2. Mr. Oglethorpe's Tent.
3. The Crane and Well.
4. The Tabernacle and Court House.
5. The Public Mill.
6. The House for Strangers.
7. The Public Oven.
8. The Stone Well.

To the Hon. the Trustees for establishing the Colony of Georgia in America.
This View of the Town of Savannah is humbly dedicated by their Loyal Servants

Obliged and most Obedient Servant,

VUE de Savannah dans la Georgie.

9. The Lott for the Church.
10. The Public Stores.
11. The Fort.
12. The Parsonage House.
13. The Pallsadoes.
14. The Guard House or Battery of Cannon.
15. Hutchinsons Island.

Peter Gordon

Savannah City Plan, 1734

Hello, traveler! Welcome to the great colony of Georgia. You've arrived at quite an eventful time! Our royal governor, James Wright, is quite the servant to the crown. I'm sure you've heard of this Stamp Act of 1765. Well, it's been causing quite a stir in the colonies, and I've heard that Georgia is the only colony in which stamps have successfully been sold thanks to one Governor Wright himself. God save the King. Georgia has been expanding as well. Several years ago, Wright seized control of a land called Augusta from the Native Americans who called Georgia home long before we arrived. Of course, they didn't call it Georgia. What we have carved out as our colony was once home to almost a dozen different tribes. Here, in Savannah then called Yamacraw Bluff, James Edward Oglethorpe seized control of this land and waterway from the Guale tribe back in 1733 to found our colony. Oglethorpe quickly set about designing the great city of Savannah, modeled loosely after London, built around central squares, with space for public buildings, churches, and settlers' homes. Our city has long championed religious diversity, yet is built on suffering. Our city's economy now relies on slavery and agriculture, specifically on the growth of cotton and rice. We are one of the largest cotton-shipping ports in the world. Ours is a complicated, often violent and profoundly sad history. Yet, it is worth exploring. Come along, traveler. We have much to see.

Welcome to Wormslow Plantation.

Here, we stand on the Isle of Hope, a small peninsula about 10 miles southeast of the city. You're surrounded by sprawling green grass, forests, and acres of marshland. We are here, traveler, on the land of the powerful Noble Jones, one of the original founding colonists of Georgia. This is his grand plantation known as Wormslow. Be on your guard; Jones is very powerful in our colony's military, and he uses this land to defend Savannah against attack from those damn Spaniards. You can likely see some of our colonial marines out and about on the plantation grounds. Jones was recently granted ownership of Wormsloe from His Royal Highness, King George III of England. Since then, Jones has had a small group of enslaved people tending to his land. In my time here, I've extensively observed his agricultural activities. He seems to be cultivating cotton, grains, vegetables, fruits, berries, and mulberry trees. It's been suggested to me that Jones is working on behalf of Georgia's Trustees. You see, silkworms eat the leaves off of mulberry trees, and our dignified Trustees would like our great colony to become a silk supplier. Just between us, I don't think that it will work out. Take a look around. The natural land here is truly breathtaking. Keep in mind the land you walk on. Native Americans once used the bend in the river by our peninsula to forge and catch fish. The crops you see are harvested off of the backs of people violently kidnapped from their homes. The opulence afforded to the Noble family was earned through both grant and exploitation. When you have seen your share, we'll travel to the city. I've procured us two fine horses.



A painting of Wormslow's Marshlands

Run-ins w/ Marine Officers:
||||

Observed Crops:

cotton

grains

rice

vegetables

fruits

berries

grapes

mulberry trees



The Mulberry
(silk?)

Welcome to Bonaventure Plantation.

We're now about three miles south of the Savannah colony. Traveler, that river down below this bluff is St. Augustine Creek. This is English Colonel John Mullyryne's 600-acre plantation, which he began to build a decade ago. He has named it "Bonaventure," meaning good fortune. Colonel Mullyryne does not harvest crops on this land but has planted some grand oak trees. Well, quite frankly Traveler, there's not very much to see here. Let us head towards the city.

We've now reached the Negro Burial Grounds on the outskirts of the city. This is the only place in the city where enslaved people can legally be interred. The city has been burying people here for the last seven years. Currently, they've been keeping records of the locations of the graves. I suspect that that will change. Let's get going. We have much to see.



A drawing of Mullyryne's Oaks at Bonaventure

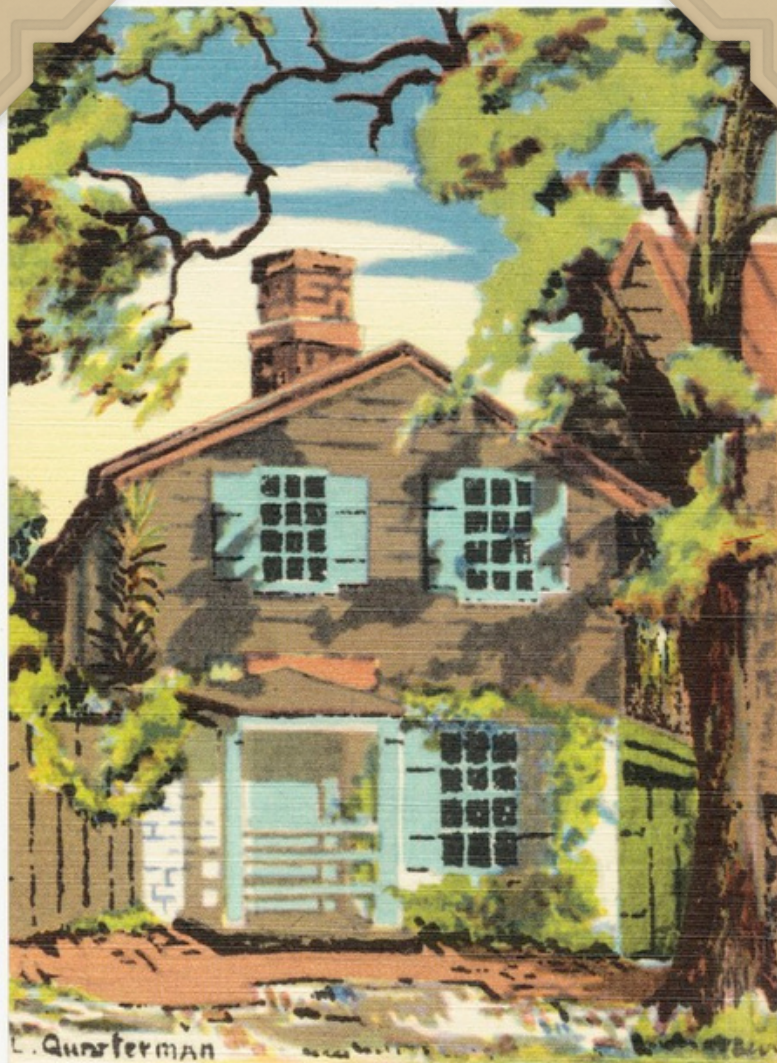
Something tells me that someday a grand mansion will be built upon this land. But for now, it's just more outskirts. Not much to see here, traveler. Let's move along.

I sense that another beautiful mansion shall be built here as well. Well, until then, it seems there's not much to see. However, before that, I believe that British Troops will use this land as a fortress to prepare for something called the 1779 Siege of Savannah. It'll make more sense in the coming years. Let's move along.

Sorry to bore you traveler. We're almost in town, but I fear we still roam around the outskirts. Let's get moving and go see the city.

Ah, we've finally entered the city. Not too shabby if I do say so myself. While no grand mansion sits on this land (yet), this is the perfect opportunity to take in the sites! As I told you earlier, our city was built on a grid system to accommodate housing, commerce, and religious gathering space. Take a look while we're here. Although these settlements will boom in the future, our city is quite robust already. We've lived here for forty years, and are the capital of the colony, after all.

Oh traveler, this is one of my favorite stops on our journey today. Welcome to the Inn & Tavern of the Trustees' Garden. In 1733, a few months after General Oglethorpe landed here, he established The Trustees' Garden, the first public agricultural experimental garden in America, modeled after the Chelsea Botanical Garden in London. Here, botanists experimented with plants from around the world. The following year, they built the Herb House, rumored to be the first standing structure in the colony, in which the Trustees' gardener resided. Quickly, as I've told you, our city became a thriving sea port, and in 1753, this area became residential. With that, they constructed this Inn & Tavern for sailors visiting. We're only a short walk from the river, after all. Do you see that blue color on the door and shutters? That's called haint blue; we believe that it protects you from malevolent spirits. Now, just between you and me, it's important to be on your lookout in these parts. A certain unsavory kind of sailor frequents this establishment. There are rumors that tunnels run under the tavern to the river, and pirates use them to smuggle drunks to their ships, where they pressgang them into service. Best to be careful. If you'd like to get a drink, our next stop is quite far away. We'd best be on our way soon.



Herb House (1734)
No. 26, Trustees' Garden Village
Savannah, Ga.

The Herb House


Traveler, this land is wilderness, but I want you to remember this space. Not too long into the future, one of the most tragic events in the history of our colony will occur on this land.

May 1, 1994


Hello, Traveler!
Welcome back to
Savannah!




River Street in the Morning, 1990




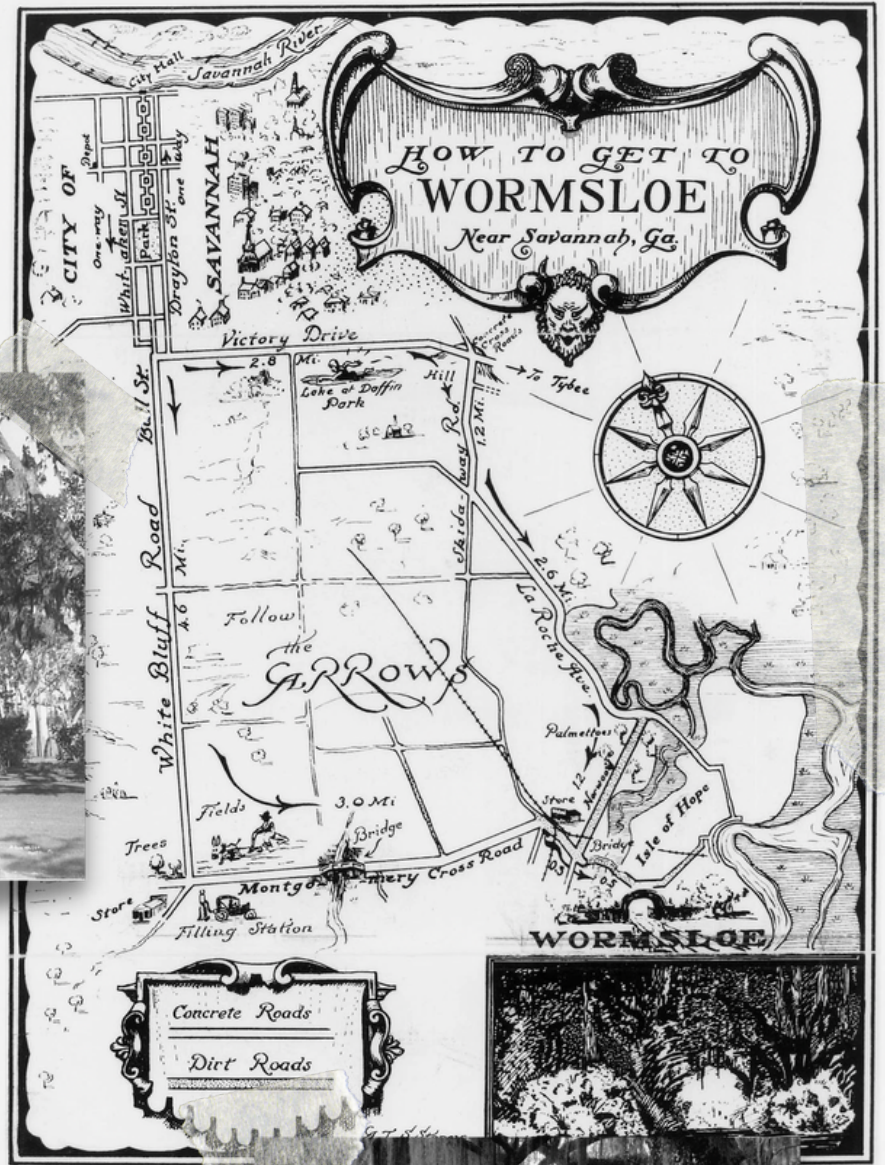
Hello, traveler! Welcome back to the great state of Georgia! It's been a while since I last saw you! A lot has happened since you were here. God, let me think. Well, there was a whole revolution just a couple of years after you were here. You probably know what I'm talking about. Remember James Wright? Big, fat loyalist to the British Crown. The British troops kept him as governor for as long as they could. We were made capital of Georgia a little while after the war! But, then it was Augusta, which I personally think was a very bad decision. We became one of the largest suppliers of cotton in the world before The Civil War. Then, we were struck by horribly destructive fires, hurricanes, and a yellow fever epidemic. They left our city in ruin and killed many of our citizens. Then, during the war, our city was spared in Sherman's March to the Sea; It was presented to President Lincoln as a Christmas present. After emancipation, clear racial lines were drawn in Savannah. Following WWI, our city expanded dramatically into what we call the Streetcar Suburbs. We kept producing cotton until the 1920s, when the boll weevil destroyed all of our crops, so we turned to other methods of profit. Our port became one of the most active Atlantic shipyards, especially during WWII. Beginning in the 1940s, Savannah was very important to the Civil Rights Movement. The Savannah effort was a strategy employing nonviolent protest, which acted as a training ground for leaders within the NAACP. Around this time, we began preserving our historical monuments. And just several months ago, John Berendt published this book called "Midnight in the Garden of Good and Evil." It's supposed to be a very big deal. I've heard that they expect tourism to boom after this. Well, that's what we've been up to. We've been pretty busy! Now, let's go see the city. A lot has changed.



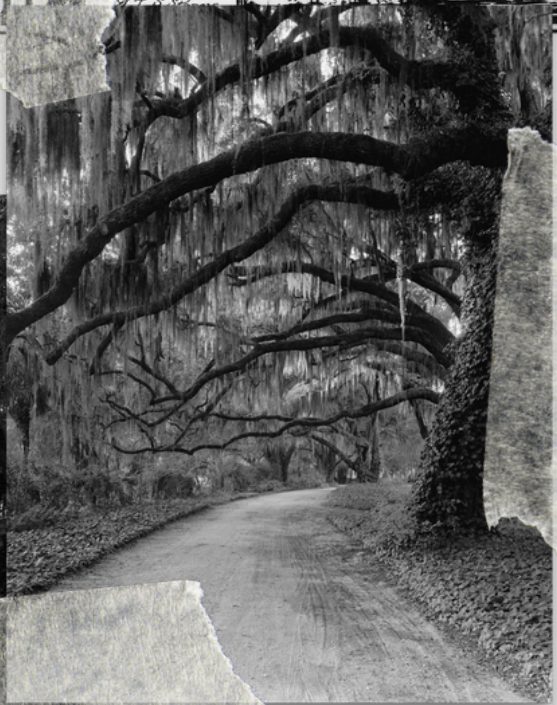


Welcome to Wormsloe Historic Site. Beginning in 1830, soon after you left, the Jones descendants built many different iterations of the Wormsloe House. George Frederick Tilghman Jones changed the spelling to Wormsloe and built the grandest of the Wormsloe houses. Enslaved people harvested Sea Island cotton as a money crop, as well as seafood, poultry, fruits, nuts, and vegetables. The family fled the house during the Civil War and only returned to it as a summer estate away from their mansion in the city. In 1916, the family returned to the house, which they dramatically expanded, along with their gardens. The Jones family almost went broke, prompting them to open the estate to the public as the Wormsloe Gardens, which became a popular tourist attraction. In 1961, the family gifted the estate to the non-profit Wormsloe Foundation, meaning that the 750 acres of land owned by one of the most affluent families in Georgia history, who, unsurprisingly, controlled the foundation, became tax exempt. Typical. In 1970, the Georgia Supreme Court revoked their tax exempt status, so that's something. About 10 years ago, the Nature Conservancy acquired the land and opened the Wormsloe Historic Site. If you see any groups of tourists, act natural. They've started doing walking tours. Oh, that over there is the famous oak-lined path. It leads to the Wormsloe House, where the Jones family still lives. Strictly private property. Take a look around, and then we're headed to the city. No more horseback, we've got a car.





Clockwise from Upper Left:
Wormsloe House, Tourist Map to
Wormsloe (1930), Oak-Lined
Drive, Plantation Entrance

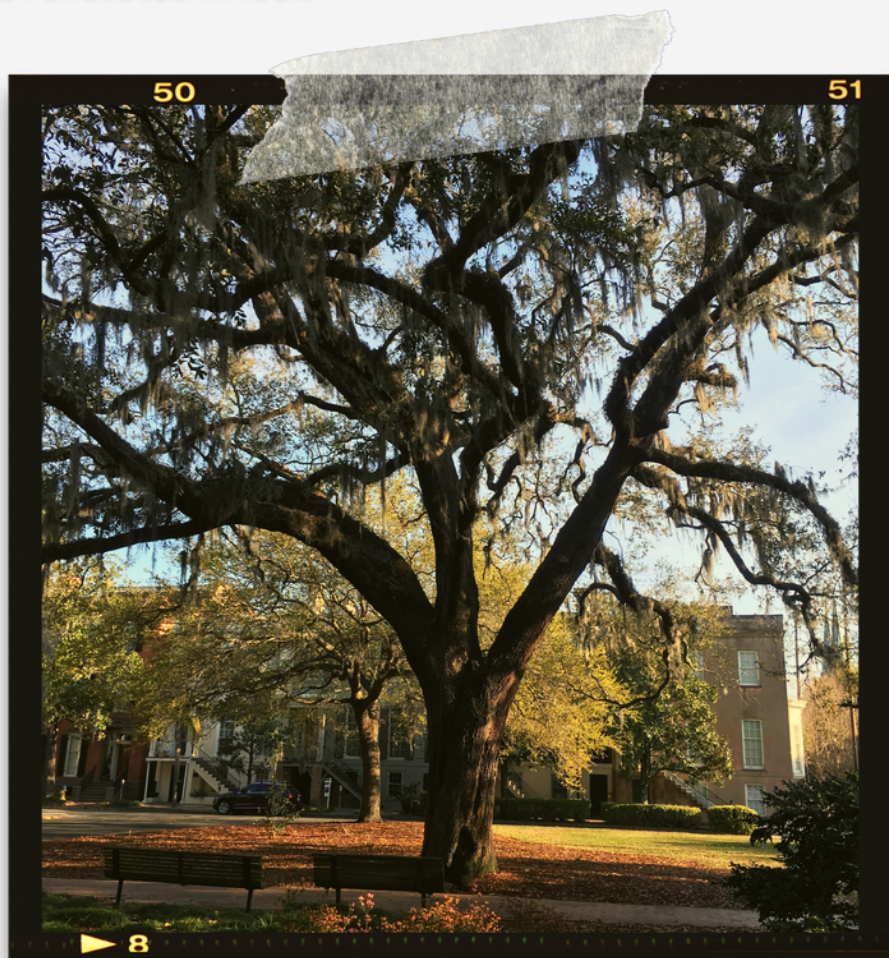


Here, we return to Bonaventure, but you may notice that it looks a little different. For over almost 150 years, Bonaventure has been a cemetery, not a plantation. During the Revolutionary War, the land changed hands many times, but was eventually purchased by the Governor of Georgia, who happened to be Colonel Mullryne's grandson, Josiah Tattnall. The family developed a private cemetery on the grounds and sold it to Peter Wiltberger in 1846, who intended to develop a 70-acre public cemetery called "Evergreen." And boy, that's what he did. The cemetery was purchased by the city in 1907 and renamed to "Bonaventure." At the time, it was a whites-only cemetery. Two years later, Congregation Mickve Israel purchased adjoining land to add a Jewish Burial Section. This year, 1994, the Bonaventure Historical Society was formed to preserve the cemetery. This may be due to the popularity of *Midnight in the Garden*, in which Bonaventure is a key setting. In fact, Sylvia Shaw Judson's iconic sculpture Bird Girl graces the cover of the best-seller. I'll wager people will be coming from all over to see her.

Bonaventure has been a tourist destination for quite a while. (Postcard, date unknown.)



Welcome to Calhoun Square, once the sight of the Negro Burial Grounds. This looks quite different, doesn't it traveler? What was once the rural outskirts of our city has now become the bustling center of our Downtown Historic District. As you saw as we were driving in, the city goes on for a couple miles before we reach this spot. Quite the change, huh? What was once known as the Negro Burial Grounds is now known as Calhoun Square. From 1763 to 1851, the Negro Burial Grounds, as they were then called, was the only place where enslaved people could legally be buried. The city maintained records of the graves until 1855, when they stopped appearing on city plans. The city named the square, under which mass amounts of enslaved people are buried, after John C. Calhoun, a southern politician who led the State's Rights (to own enslaved people) Movement. Trust me, it looks very similar to when it was renovated in 1851.

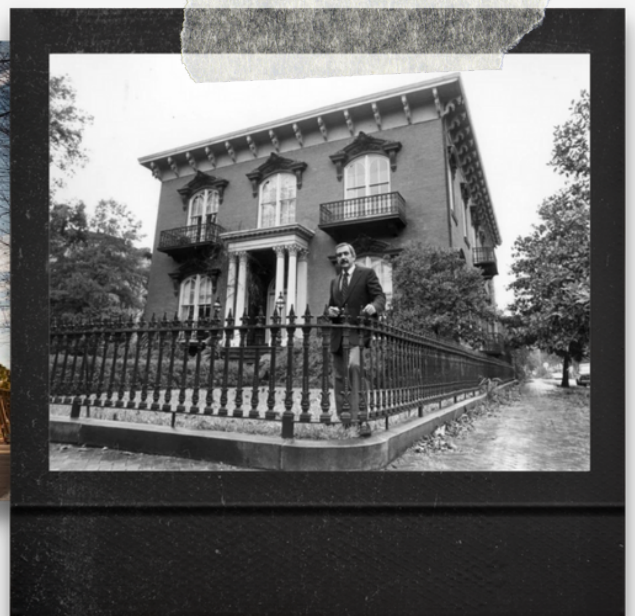


Above: Calhoun Square Live Oak

Traveler, as we approach our next stop, look at that synagogue. That's home to Congregation Mickve Israel. Their congregation was founded in 1733, making them the third oldest Jewish congregation in the United States. They constructed their synagogue in 1820, and it's the oldest in the state. It's said to be very beautiful. Ah, yes. Here's our destination. You see, I was right; a great mansion now stands on these grounds. Welcome to the Mercer-Williams House. The house began construction in 1860, but was interrupted by the Civil War. General Mercer, for whom the house was built, sold the unfinished structure in 1886, meaning that no Mercer actually lived in the Mercer-Williams House. Here in Savannah, however, it is customary for houses to bear the name of both the family they were built for and the most prominent family to live under its roof. The Mercer-Williams House is famous for its architecture, and should you go inside, the house has many of the same fixtures it was built with in 1868. The structure was vacant for a good while, until it was bought by James A. Williams in 1969. Mr. Williams was one of Savannah's greatest preservationists. In his time here, he saved more than 50 buildings in our city, including this beautiful home. Williams and the Mercer-Williams House itself are the real-life inspiration for "Midnight In the Garden of Good and Evil."



Above: Congregation Mickve Israel



Right: James Williams in front of the Mercer-Williams House

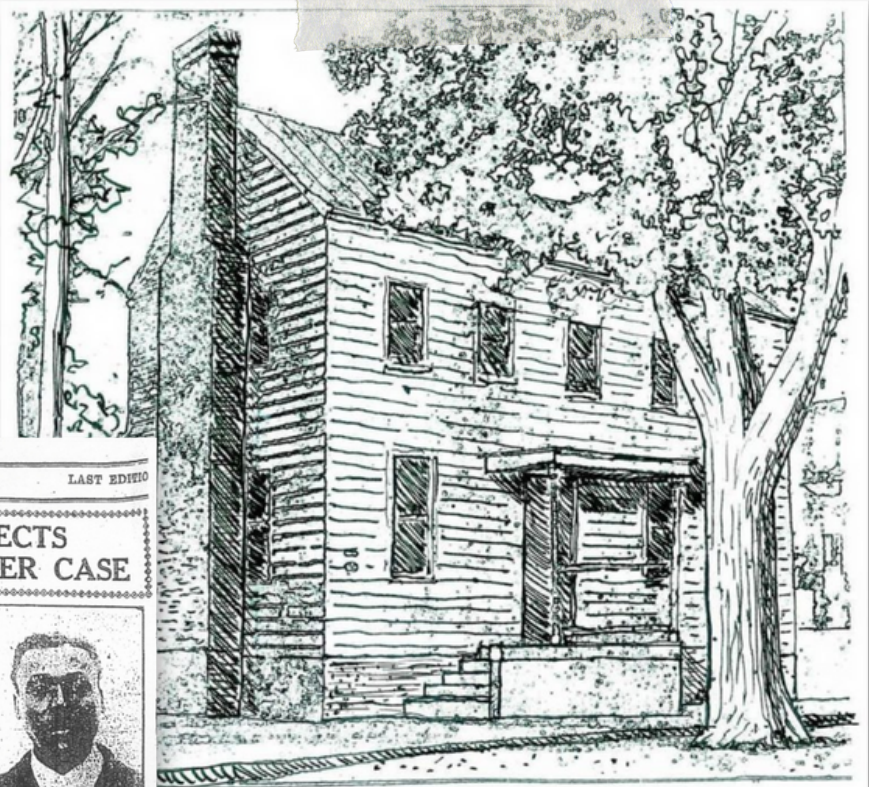
Quite different, isn't it, traveler? Welcome to the famed Sorrel-Weed House. The house was constructed in 1840 for shipping merchant Francis Sorrel, one of the wealthiest men in Savannah. Sorrel was born to a freed black woman and French Colonel in what's now Haiti. His mother died and his father abandoned him when he was only five years old. Sorrel was targeted during revolts intended to kill colonists, but one of his father's enslaved caretakers took pity on him and smuggled him to Port Au Prince. Had it not been for this enslaved individual and their family, young Francis would have died. Despite their kindness, Sorrel still grew up to make his fortune buying and selling enslaved peoples. Eventually, Sorrel moved to Savannah where he opened a successful shipping company, moving a number of goods, most notably, enslaved people. He was wildly successful and commissioned the building of his estate, making sure to include ample space to store the enslaved peoples he traded. Sorrel and his family lived in the house for two decades until they sold it to Henry Weed, a business owner from Connecticut. The Weed family lived in the house until 1914, when it then remained vacant for many years, until it was declared an historic landmark and was opened to the public.



Left: Sorrel-Weed House,
1936

This looks a little strange for what I've been showing you, does it not? A warehouse? Well, this warehouse was once the location of the Gribble House, home of the Gribble family, who were victims of the 1909 Savannah Ax Murders. Three women, Mrs. Eliza Gribble, Ms. Carrie Ohlander, and Mrs. Maggie Hunter were all brutally murdered by an unknown man. Mrs. Ohlander was assaulted as well. The police and city unfoundedly blamed a "Negro man," who they guaranteed to be the likely suspect, and publicized a discription. Vigilantes stormed the city, looking for the black man who had supposedly murdered these women. In reality, on her deathbed, Maggie Hunter told a priest that she and the other two women were attacked by her estranged husband, J. C. Hunter. This crime is known as one of the grizzliest in Savannah history, despite the city's legacy of slavery.

Left: The Gribble House
Below: Reporting of the Axe Murders



Hello, traveler. Remember last time you were here? We were right on the edge of the city. Now we're in the very heart of the historic district. The city spans miles around us. Quite a change, huh? Now this land holds the Owens-Thomas House and Slave Quarters. The house was built in 1816 for shipping merchant and slave-trader Richard Richardson by a team of freed and enslaved men. The family moved in in 1919, but, over the next few years, were struck by tragedy. After much of the family died, Richardson moved to Louisiana, where he had business connections. Richardson had made his fortune transporting enslaved people, mostly children back and forth from New Orleans to Savannah. The home was bought by the bank and was used as a boarding house until 1830, when it was purchased by the mayor of Savannah, George Welshman Owens. Owens moved in with his wife, six children, and nine to fifteen enslaved people. In addition to those he held on this property, he also held 400 men, women, and children in enslavement on his plantations around the city. The family lived in the house until 1951 when Margaret Gray Thomas, descendant of Owens, passed away with no heirs. In her will, she stipulated that the house become a museum, and it's now open to the public.




Right: Owens-Thomas House (1980)


Welcome back to The Pirates' House. Long after you left, in 1945, this whole area was slated for destruction by the Savannah Gas Company. However, Mrs. Mary Hillyer, wife of Savannah Gas Company President Mr. Hansell Hillyer, recognized the historical importance of the area and successfully lobbied the gas company to allow her to restore the neighborhood. The Hillyers moved into this neighborhood to demonstrate their commitment and began to restore a number of buildings, The Pirates' House included. In 1953, Herb Traub and his business partner Jim Casey opened The Pirates' House as a tea room and dining establishment. The two were gifted in marketing, and created a wildly successful business venture. During their leadership, The Pirates' House became so popular that it expanded to 23 different dining rooms. The upstairs is also a jazz club, run by the iconic Ben Tucker and Emma Kelly. Kelly is one of the main characters in that new book I told you about. I heard that the author's mother got the first copy, and she got the second!




Above: The Captain's Room
Left: The Pirates' House
(early 1940s)




Traveler, this land, before it was as it is now, was called Ten Broeck Race Course. On this land, one of the most tragic events in our state's history occurred. This is the site of Weeping Time, the largest slave auction ever to occur in Georgia. The enslaved people sold at this auction belonged to Pierce Mease Butler. He inherited his wealth from his grandfather, Major Pierce Butler, one of the largest slaveholders in the country and author of the Fugitive Slave Clause. After Major Butler's death, Mease Butler inherited two island plantations and 900 slaves. Butler made foolish investments and frequently gambled, causing him to amass substantial debt. In 1859, it was decided that half of all slaves on his plantations would be sold to relieve his debts. The notorious slave trader Joseph Bryan was commissioned for the auction. The auction was going to take place in Johnson Square, but it was determined that the slave pens already built on the square for past auctions wouldn't be big enough. So the location was moved to the Ten Broeck Race Course. Bryan heavily advertised the auction, and people from states as far as Louisiana and Virginia came to participate. It is said that Savannah's bars and hotels were full in the days leading up to the auction. Northern journalist Mortimer Thomson snuck into the event, posing as a buyer, and documented the conditions of the auction.





He writes, “Into these sheds they were huddled pell-mell, without any more attention to their comfort than was necessary to prevent their becoming ill and unsalable... On the faces of all was an expression of heavy grief.” In 20 pages, he graphically describes the injustice of the auction, noting that Mease Butler attended the auction to say goodbye to his “favorite slaves,” giving each a freshly minted one dollar coin, as some sort of consillation. Today, traveler, the Ten Broeck Race Course has been obliterated. Now, there sits a lumber yard. Nothing is here to commemorate one of the most violent and unjust events to have taken place in our state. I told you earlier, this event was called Weeping Time. This was named colloquially by the enslaved people and their descendants. They described how the skies opened and wept for two days during the auction in response to its tragedy.



May 1, 2018

Hello Traveler!
Welcome back
to Savannah!



The New Bustle of Our Old City,
A View from the River

Hello again, traveler! Welcome back once again to the beautiful city of Savannah. It's been a very eventful couple of years since you were last here! Do you remember that book that I told you about? Midnight in the Garden of Good and Evil? Well, it turned out to be a huge deal, and in the 1990s, we had 50 million people visit our city. You may remember that last you were here, we weren't so much of a tourism center. Now, it's our number one industry! Many tourists say that they've come for the history and architecture, et cetera, et cetera. However, there's been an interesting development in tourism in our city, known academically as "Dark Tourism." This is tourism focused around death or tragedy. For reference, a prime example of this would be tours of the London Catacombs. You've probably heard the popular adage in this city, "Savannah is a city built on her dead." And our tourism industry is milking that for all that it's worth. The Travel Channel has sent many a ghost hunting show here, you can stay in haunted hotels, and there are dozens of ghost tours through our city. In fact, many of the spots you'll see today that you've seen in the past have become destinations on these walking tours. Let's get on our way. It's time for you to see how our city has changed.

Welcome back to Wormsloe Historic Site.

A lot of this should look familiar. The physical space has stayed largely the same since you were last here. Miracles of historic preservation. The culture, however, has shifted. Look down the road. Do you see that little yellow blob in the distance? I'd bet you that's a school bus here on a field trip. The kids will respect the area to various degrees, but they're probably too young to understand the magnitude of the history of this place. And over on your right, look at the happy couple. See, since you were here last, there's this new craze of things called Plantation Weddings, for which Wormsloe has become very popular. Wormsloe describes the venue themselves as "intimate" and "rustic." Tripadvisor- it's this crazy thing called an app, you should really look into it- calls the plantation "breathtaking," "magical," and "like a fairy tale." It seems that since you were first here, Wormsloe has been expertly sanitized of its more problematic historical legacies. Feel free to look around. Take it in. See how much and how little this place has changed. Then we should go check out the city.



Top to Bottom:
A Wormsloe Wedding,
The Famous Oak-Lined
Drive, The Plantation
House Today



visited the Great Blasket and fell in love with it.
to build the village as a holiday

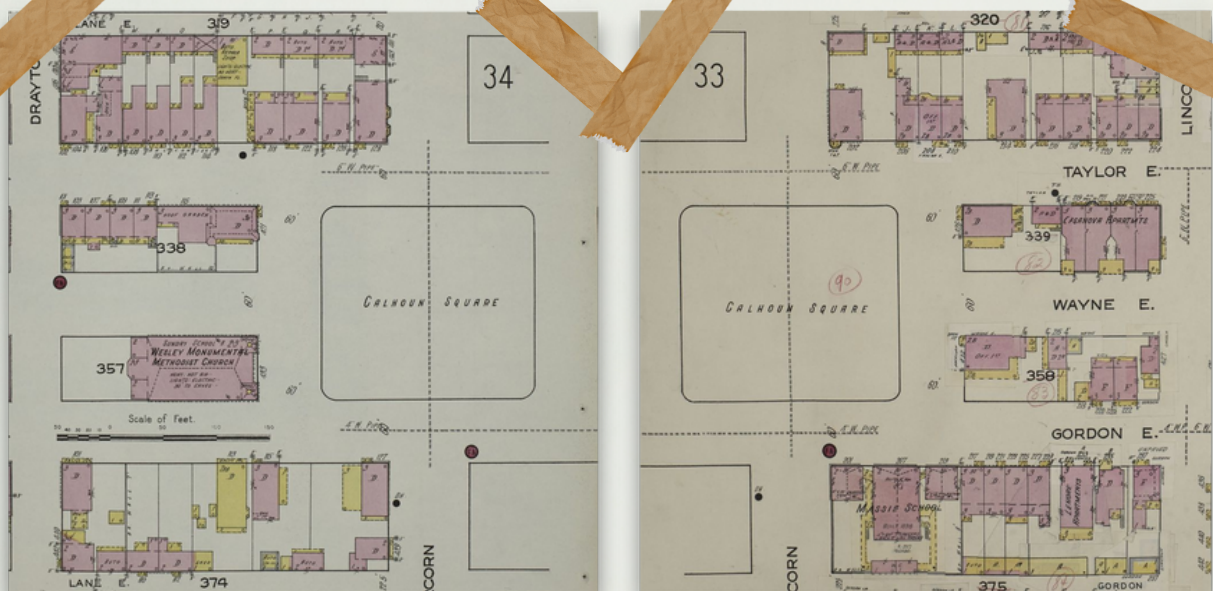
Watch the
day.
something
blackth
ne of yea
in Rat
al w
d out to
altho

Welcome back to Bonaventure Cemetery. Although Bonaventure has always been a popular site, it is now one of the most visited locations in and around Savannah. An estimated 450,000 people come to the cemetery every year, including families of the deceased, although some estimate this number to be much higher. Now, Bonaventure, where people are interred after death, has become quite the notable tourist attraction after the publication of *Midnight*. The cemetery is said to be rife with ghosts, and many come to visit the graves of celebrities buried in the cemetery, wandering past the thousands of graves of those less famous. It's quite peculiar how this final resting place has become an attraction in the same way River Street Sweets has.

Right:
Bonaventure
Cemetery



This looks the same, doesn't it? Calhoun square is very unusual in Savannah in that it is one of the only squares fully surrounded by the structures that were there when it was built. Around Calhoun square, you can see old houses and churches, just as you could in 1994 and in 1851. The square is still, unsurprisingly, named after John C. Calhoun, despite the insultingly ironic nature of who lies beneath the square. Time traveler to time traveler, in several years, I sense that academics will seek to rename Calhoun Square, and it will cause quite a stir in the city. I'm interested in seeing what will happen.



Sanborn Fire Maps of Calhoun Square, 1950

Welcome back to the Mercer-Williams House. This should look quite familiar, not much has changed in appearance. But, boy has it become popular! As I told you last time we were here, *Midnight in the Garden of Good and Evil* is based on the 1981 shooting of Danny Hansford by Williams in the house. However, this is not the only death to occur within the house. In 1969, 11-year-old Tommy Downs fatally fell from the roof of the house. Later, Williams would die in the same room in which he shot Hansford a year after he was acquitted of the murder. The tragedy surrounding the house has caused rumors of ghosts to surround the Mercer-Williams House. Some report seeing the specter of a little boy on one of the balconies. Others say they see Williams throwing one of his famous Christmas parties. The Mercer-Williams house is now described as one of the most haunted houses in the United States and is a regular stop on many ghost tours in the city. The tragedy surrounding this house has been expertly commodified. Come. We still have lots to see.



The Mercer-Williams House



The Sorrel-Weed House

fell in love with it.
village as a holiday

ne of ye
in Rat
al w
alth
out to

Welcome back to the Sorrel-Weed House, dear traveler. Now, I must be honest. Last time we were here, I didn't fully divulge the history of the house, but to explain its modern relevance, I must do just that. The Sorrel-Weed House has become a popular attraction on ghost tours, gaining a reputation as another one of the most haunted homes in the country. The stories behind these supposed apparitions are quite upsetting. Supposedly, the ghosts that haunt this house are a result of the suicide of Frances Sorrel's wife, Matilda. The story goes, in 1859, Matilda caught her husband having an affair with an enslaved girl named Molly, and, out of sadness, threw herself from an upstairs window. Molly was said to have hung herself after the event as well. In reality, Matilda was diagnosed with depression, but this news was kept private as it would have reflected poorly on her family. Her suicide was most likely a result of mental illness. It is disputed who this "Molly" could be.

An enslaved person named Molly worked on the estate until 1857, but was sent to New York two years before the tragedy. Charles Green, who lived next door, also owned an enslaved person named Molly, who the rumor could have been based on. Following Matilda's suicide, the Savannah elites speculated that Francis only slept with a black woman because she was a voodoo vixen who had seduced him and convinced Matilda to commit suicide. In reality, Sorrel most likely raped Molly and many other enslaved women, some of whom, Green and Sorrel would reportedly trade back and forth for their own "use." The house has become a fixture on ghost tours and paranormal investigations. These specters that they attempt to capture are the result of a history of abuse and violence present in this house on which they simultaneously sanitize and capitalize.

This warehouse now headquarters The Gribble House Paranormal Experience. A case of domestic violence, racism at the hands of the police, and a resulting lynch mob has become a tourist destination. I'm uncertain of the extent to which the business discusses any of these elements. If you ever investigate, please make note.

Welcome back to the Owens-Thomas House. Because the house has been opened as a museum, this is one of the few stops we will see that hasn't been taken over by the Dark Tourism industry. Visitors can now see the opulence in which the families who lived in the home enjoyed, contrasted with the desolate conditions of the slave quarters. The Owens family kept many of the same enslaved people as servants following the emancipation proclamation, forcing them to live in the same conditions they were subjected to as enslaved people. The museum recognizes this dichotomy more than many other places you will visit today, traveler.

Welcome back to The Pirates' House! It hasn't changed much since you were last here. It's still a massive full service restaurant, bar, and event space. They now dress their wait staff as pirates, and ghost tours visit the basement of The Pirates' House. The jazz club has since closed, and the upstairs has been dominated by a gift shop. As you remember, this locale was home to some of the grizzliest sailors Savannah saw in her day. Now, one can buy popcorn shrimp from a SCAD student in a pirate costume.



Since you were last here, the city has commemorated Weeping Time, albeit very minimally. The city has designated one fifth of an acre as a city park not far from here and has put up a plaque commemorating the Weeping Time. The land in which the park was built is one of the most economically disadvantaged areas of our city. On March 3, 2008, 149 years after the auction, Mayor Otis Johnson spoke, honoring those that had been violently sold. Nigerian dirt was sprinkled over the ground, and Johnson poured water over it to consecrate the land. There, the ceremony ended, only a few miles from squares and statues honoring violent slave owners. The land is still occupied by a lumber mill. Now, Otis J. Brock Elementary School stands where 438 men, women, and children were sold to settle a debt. I'd wager that Georgia Public Schools aren't teaching about the tragedy that took place on the land they now stand.

The Modern location of
the Ten Broeck Race Track



Well, traveler, our time together has come to an end. You've watched our city grow and change. You saw the virgin land on which some of the greatest tragedies of our country's history occurred. And, not long after, you saw how the city and its business people sanitized and commodified those tragedies. One could argue that these stories wouldn't otherwise be told without the dark tourism industry in our city. But traveler, when our tragedy becomes trivialized for entertainment, those stories are not done justice. Savannah is a beautiful place. It is built, however, on the backs of enslaved people, on women, on immigrants, on Native Americans. Savannah, as you have seen, has a rich, yet complicated history. Our city shouldn't be closed off to the world in penance, but it also shouldn't be reduced to fried foods served behind haint blue doors and spooky specters on drunken trolley tours. Our full history has to be unpacked not as a tourist attraction but a complicated system of exploitation and violence, of non-Abrahamic religion that has been misunderstood and perverted, and of the opulence of generational wealth built on enslavement. People will continue to visit our city, and our city will continue to be dependent on the revenue generated from their tourism. So, now you and I and those conscious of this city's history have a responsibility. We must tell visitors our true, complicated history. And I can only hope, traveler, that they will listen.

