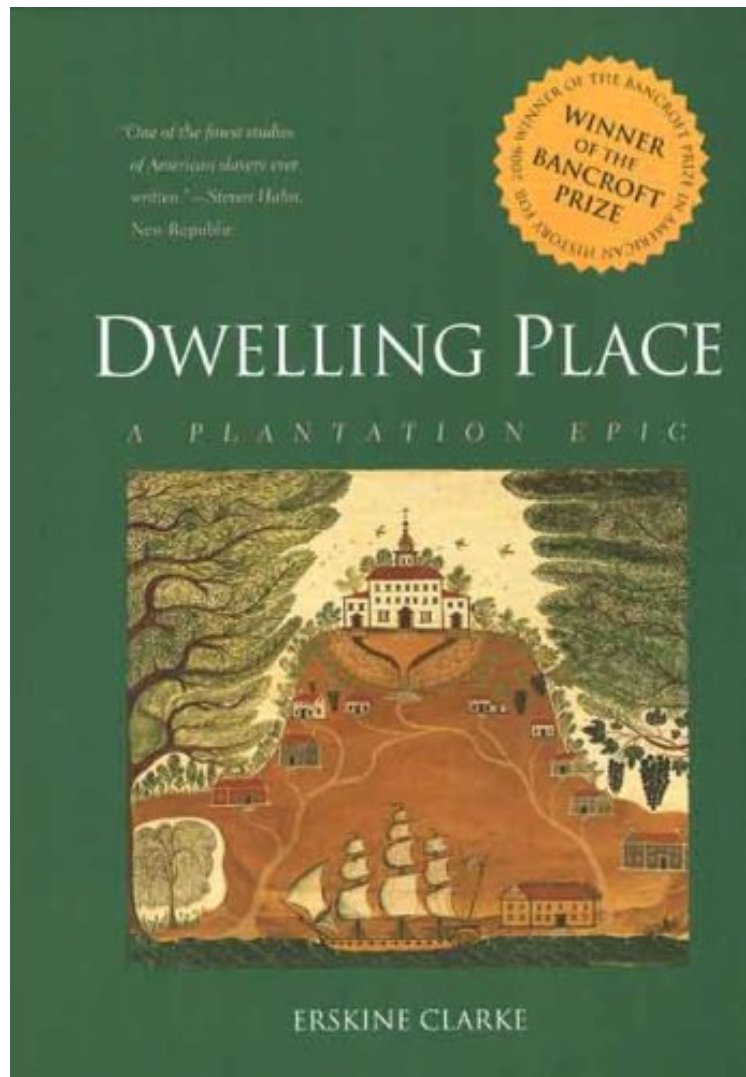


(Free pdf) Dwelling Place: A Plantation Epic

Dwelling Place: A Plantation Epic

Erskine Clarke

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Erskine Clarke : Dwelling Place: A Plantation Epic before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Dwelling Place: A Plantation Epic:

3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. Fully brings to life the Jones family saga, with parallel narrative of the lives families of slaves in coastal Ga.By Richard L HallClarke successfully brings to life the individuals of interlocking families revealed in the huge volume "Children of Pride," which collected letters of the Jones family over many decades of the nineteenth century. There are many details of family here, primarily in keeping track of the inter-relations among coastal plantation families and their slaves. But this work is engaging and as fair as any treatment I have seen of the culture and thought patterns of wealthy whites and first-, second-, and third-generation Africans who

were enslaved to them. Religion dominated the life of Charles C. Jones, and his calling was to bring Christianity to the slaves, yet he and his sizable network of do-gooders could not see the irony of their attempts at encouraging self-control on slaves whom they thoroughly dominated in every way. Clarke's scholarship is complete, and, best of all, it doesn't get in the way of the story. 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Rice plantation evangelism

By Martha M. Case
Our beloved neighbor ... May she be forever blessed ... Lent this amazing book to us . It is a well documented account of the efforts of a family who owned rice plantations south of savannah Georgia to introduce the gospel to the slaves who built and worked on the plantations. The evangelistic and educational efforts were ... Of course ... Illegal under the laws in Georgia at the time. ... The history continues through the end of the civil war ... The characters are real and the midway church still stands on highway 17 ... 40 miles south of savannah ... 11 of 12 people found the following review helpful. Frighteningly relevant for evangelical Christians of our time

By K Watson
This is the most impacting, and disturbing, book I've read in the past year. I found myself identifying strongly with Charles Colcock Jones, an extremely heartfelt evangelical Christian who thought of himself as utterly consecrated in service to God, and who was held in high regard by the evangelical community of the South. Through Clarke's detailed and highly documented narrative, I was able to understand how his understanding of slavery was gradually warped through several factors: 1) compromise with the viewpoints of his peers, 2) cultural difficulties with the slaves, 3) losing sight of the ends by concentrating on the means, and 4) by being a beneficiary of the status quo. It's easy to think of slaveowners as sadistic monsters with no shred of humanity. It's more difficult for people of our time to imagine themselves as slaveowners. *Dwelling Place* accomplished that for me. Charles Colcock Jones was not the typical slaveowner, but he was one that evangelicals might identify with. More than that, he had a spirituality and a heart of service that many evangelicals might ASPIRE to. Contrary to another reviewer, I did appreciate Clarke's attempts to infer the viewpoint of the slaves, though because of their illiteracy there is infinitely less documentation of their thoughts in the historical record. Perhaps some of his inferences are off-target, but to not make an attempt at representing the slaves' point of view would be to leave out an equally important part of the story, and to artificially silence voices as important to the story as the whites. Many of the African-American characters were developed as multi-dimensional compelling actors in the drama. I also appreciated the number of characters described, both white and black, because they comprise the very intricate and dynamic context which produced Jones's mindset, so analagous to the context which Americans find themselves in our time.

Published some thirty years ago, Robert Manson Myers's *Children of Pride: The True Story of Georgia and the Civil War* won the National Book Award in history and went on to become a classic reference on America's slaveholding South. That book presented the letters of the prominent Presbyterian minister and plantation patriarch Charles Colcock Jones (1804–1863), whose family owned more than one hundred slaves. While extensive, these letters can provide only one part of the story of the Jones family plantations in coastal Georgia. In this remarkable new book, the religious historian Erskine Clarke completes the story, offering a narrative history of four generations of the plantations' inhabitants, white and black. Encompassing the years 1805 to 1869, *Dwelling Place: A Plantation Epic* describes the simultaneous but vastly different experiences of slave and slave owner. This "upstairsdownstairs" history reveals in detail how the benevolent impulses of Jones and his family became ideological supports for deep oppression, and how the slave Lizzy Jones and members of her family struggled against that oppression. Through letters, plantation and church records, court documents, slave narratives, archaeological findings, and the memory of the African-American community, Clarke brings to light the long-suppressed history of the slaves of the Jones plantations—a history inseparably bound to that of their white owners.

"In this masterful composite biography, Erskine Clarke—an uncommonly gifted historian—portrays a broad swath of southern history. It is a work of both consummate scholarship and great literary flair. It is long, but one doesn't want it to end. I absolutely loved reading this book."—John Boles, Rice University

"This is a work of grand sweep and great power. In a form that reads like a novel, Erskine Clarke tells the stories of four generations of wealthy white planters and their slaves and the extraordinarily complex ways in which these two communities interacted. It is a multigenerational tale of black and white, told in a grand narrative style."—Dan T. Carter, University of South Carolina -- Dan T. Carter

"Erskine Clarke's narrative of more than three generations of interlocking and enslaving families in Liberty County, Georgia, is epic in its scope and mastery. With extensively detailed research and evocatively restrained writing, *A Dwelling Place* is one of the best books ever on what it meant in day-to-day terms to be slaves and slave masters in the antebellum South."—Mark Noll, Wheaton College, author of *America's God, from Jonathan Edwards to Abraham Lincoln*

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