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The following paper was prepared under the direction of Dr. Jennifer Dickey at Kennesaw State University for an Introduction to Public History course.

The Mable House is located at 5239 Floyd Street, 30126, Mableton, in Cobb County, Georgia. The historic house, listed on the National Register of Historic Places, is a plantation home named in honor of the Mable family, who also inspired the naming of the town itself. An arts center has been erected in the name of the historic house, which has been made complete with its own amphitheater. In 1954 a historical marker was erected at the Mable House. The text of the historical marker describes the property as the residence of Robert Mable. As the marker reads,

2 P.M. Gresham's 4th div., 17th A.C., moved with 15th A.C. troops to points S. of the Mitchell house (below Mableton), to threaten river crossings at left-rear of Johnston's Smyrna line [CS]. At dark, Gresham's troops withdrew N. to the Mable plantation, which afforded an ample supply of water, & camped here for the night. Walter Q. Gresham was Secretary of State in President Cleveland's Cabinet, 1893-1895.ⁱ

The marker references Walter Gresham, Secretary of State under President Grover Cleveland, and US General during the Civil War, marching his troops to the Mable House. Funk and Wagnalls *New World Encyclopedia* states, "From 1893 until his death, Gresham served as Cleveland's secretary of state."ⁱⁱ According to mablehouse.org, the house was used as a hospital during the Civil War."ⁱⁱⁱ Essentially, the Mable House provided sufficient housing for Gresham's troops.

Before this, Robert Mable, a Scottish immigrant for whom the structure is named, owned eleven slaves who helped him build the house and worked the land. Robert and his first wife Pheriby, had six children. After Pheriby's death, Robert married her first cousin Almeda and had three more children, all of whom occupied the house.

Originally, the plantation included over 400 acres of land. However, the house today sits on sixteen acres. The Mable House is a two-story residence surrounded by multiple buildings which were used to maintain the original farm. These buildings include the farm's well, kitchen house, corn crib, blacksmith shop, sweet potato house, smokehouse, and cemetery. Moreover, each building has been marked with a description of its historical significance regarding the way in which it was used by the members of the Mable family.

For example, the Mable plantation's well- provided water for the Mable farm. Properly functioning wells are essential for the maintenance of a prosperous farm. As the marker of the well says "it is thought that supply of good fresh water was one of the reasons that a division of the Union Army camped here in July of 1864."^{iv} The Mable House well was known for its high-quality running water. Another Mable farm feature is the Kitchen House. In an effort to prevent fires inside the home, kitchen houses were common during the 1900s. The Mable Kitchen House's marker reads "food was cooked in cast iron pots and pans in the fireplace and later, on a cast iron wood burning stove."^v Additionally, the Mable family used a kitchen house to store essential food crops.

A corn crib is also featured in the display of the historic house. Typically, corn cribs were used to house corn as one of the essential crops of the 1800s. According to the historic house's corn crib marker "corn bread cooked in an iron skillet was a staple for all of the people on the Mable farm."^{vi} The corn crib featured on the historic Mable House site is a replicated example of one that would have been used during the 1800s.

The Mable House also features a blacksmith shop. According to the marker of the Mable House blacksmith shop "in addition to making tools, cookware, weapons, farm implements, and building materials, the blacksmith was also called upon to repair many critical farm and

household items.”^{vii} The Mable House blacksmith shop is modeled after the original Danielle Blacksmith house that was originally built by A.E. Danielle on Mableton’s own Front Street.

The sweet potato house is another Mable House farm feature. Sweet potatoes were stored in sweet potato houses, where they were preserved until they were ready to be sold. The marker for the Mable House Sweet Potato House states that “according to the 1850 and 1860 Agricultural Censuses, Robert Mable grew between 60 and 100 bushels of sweet potatoes each year.”^{viii} Additionally, the Mable House farm features a smokehouse. This smokehouse was important because it was used to process and preserve pork for the Mable family. As the Mable farms’ smokehouse marker says “in the fall, 60 to 80 hogs were killed and the meat was preserved for use later in the winter or it was sold.”^{ix} Therefore, the Mable family’s smokehouse was necessary for the subsistence of their farm and overall livelihoods.

Finally, the Mable family cemetery is an important part of the historic house’s property. According to the Mable family cemetery marker “the Mable Family Cemetery is the final resting place for both the Mable family and some of their slaves”^x Also, the Mable Family cemetery marker shows an image of the Mable Family Bible, which contains the birthdays of some of those slaves.

Knowledge of the Mable House marker and its history is generally limited prior to research. This lack of knowledge has encouraged an interest to learn more about the significance of the historic Mable House and the way in which it remains relevant today. While the house marker itself provides some information about the houses’ original owner, Robert Mable, its markers give an informative depiction of the overall history of the house.

Bibliography

- ⁱ “The Mable House,” Georgia Historical Society. Last modified 2014, https://georgiahistory.com/ghmi_marker_updated/the-mable-house/
- ⁱⁱ “Cleveland Grover” *Funk and Wagnalls New World Encyclopedia*. Chicago: World Book Inc., 2017.
- ⁱⁱⁱ “Historic House” Mable House. <https://mablehouse.org/index.php/arts-center/historic-house>
- ^{iv} “Well,” Marker on the grounds at Mable House Historic site. Mableton, Georgia. November 19, 2018.
- ^v “Kitchen House,” Marker on the grounds at Mable Historic site. Mableton, Georgia. November 19, 2018.
- ^{vi} “Corn Crib,” Marker on the grounds at Mable Historic site. Mableton, Georgia. November 19, 2018.
- ^{vii} “Blacksmith Shop,” Marker on the grounds at Mable Historic site. Mableton, Georgia. November 19, 2018
- ^{viii} “Sweet Potato House” Marker on the grounds at Mable Historic site. Mableton, Georgia. November 19, 2018.
- ^{ix} “Smokehouse” Marker on the grounds at Mable Historic site. Mableton, Georgia. November 19, 2018.
- ^x “Cemetery” Marker on the grounds at Mable Historic site. Mableton, Georgia. November 19, 2018.



