

BARNSELY, GODFREY, 1805-1873.

Godfrey Barnsley papers, 1822-1980

Emory University
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Descriptive Summary

Creator: Barnsley, Godfrey, 1805-1873.
Title: Godfrey Barnsley papers, 1822-1980
Call Number: Manuscript Collection No. 13
Extent: 5.25 linear feet (7 boxes), 2 bound volumes (BV), and 1 oversized papers boxes and 1 oversized paper folder (OP) ; 1 microfilm reel (MF)
Abstract: Papers of Georgia cotton merchant Godfrey Barnsley including correspondence, financial records, legal and estate papers, writings, and photographs.
Language: Materials entirely in English.

Administrative Information

Restrictions on Access

Unrestricted access.

Terms Governing Use and Reproduction

All requests subject to limitations noted in departmental policies on reproduction.

Related Materials in Other Repositories

Other Barnsley papers can be found in the Barnsley (Godfrey) & Co., Savannah, Ga., Records at the Georgia Historical Society in Savannah; the Barnsley-Saylor papers at the University of Georgia Library; the Barnsley family papers at the Tennessee State Library and Archives; the Barnsley family papers at the Duke University Library; and the Barnsley family papers in the Southern Historical Collection of the University of North Carolina in Chapel Hill.

Related Materials in This Repository

William Henry Stiles papers, a close friend of Barnsley's, and the Robert Battey papers, which contain the papers of another Bartow County family of the same time period.

Source

Purchase, 1938, with subsequent additions.

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Citation

[after identification of item(s)], Godfrey Barnsley papers, Stuart A. Rose Manuscript, Archives, and Rare Book Library, Emory University.

Processing

Processed by Lee Sayrs, Associate Processing Archivist, 1987.

Collection Description**Biographical Note**

Georgia cotton merchant Godfrey Barnsley (August 26, 1805 -June 7, 1873) was born in Derbyshire, England, of an English cotton mill owner, George Barnsley, and his wife, Anna (Hannah) Godwin Barnsley. Godfrey had at least one sibling, an older brother named Joshua. Little is known of Barnsley's early life and education but his biographer, Nelson M. Hoffman, Jr., determined that he was well educated and trained to be an office clerk.

Barnsley began his association with the cotton business by working in his uncle Godfrey Barnsley's importing establishment in Liverpool. At the age of eighteen he emigrated to Savannah, Georgia, and soon established himself there as a cotton factor and merchant. Family connections and business partnerships played major roles in Barnsley's financial success. He dealt regularly with his uncle and later his cousin George Barnsley in Liverpool. In 1826 he became a partner in Samuel Wright and Company (1826-1828). Other business partners included Horace Sistare (1831-1837), John Day (1840-1845) and John R. Gardner, Edmund M. Sager and James Sager in the years following 1845.

Working in Savannah and later in Mobile, Alabama, and New Orleans, Louisiana, Barnsley amassed a sizeable fortune. The panics of 1837 and 1857 brought substantial losses, but in each case he recovered within a year or two. However, he never recouped the final loss brought on by the Civil War. During the war and its aftermath he attempted to make his plantation in north Georgia and his cotton business in New Orleans support him and his family, but he died impoverished and land poor.

Retaining his British citizenship, Barnsley did not involve himself in politics, but he maintained a keen interest in political affairs at home and abroad. He did, however, become one of Savannah's most respected men and served as president of the Chamber of Commerce there for several years prior to 1845. He also held the Port of Savannah posts of vice consul ad interim of the Netherlands and vice consul for the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies. Another interesting aspect of Barnsley's life was his involvement in the occult and in spiritualism.

On December 24, 1828, Barnsley married Julia Henrietta Scarborough (April 20, 1810 - February 16, 1845). The marriage took place in Savannah. Born in that city, Julia was the daughter of William Scarborough II (1776-1838) and Julia Bernard Scarborough who both belonged to wealthy and important southern families. Scarborough was himself a planter and businessman with wide ranging interests and land holdings, although much of the family's wealth had dissipated prior to Barnsley's marriage.

Godfrey and Julia Barnsley had eight children: Anna Godwin (b. 1829), Reginald (1831-1833), Harold (b. 1832), Adelaide (1834-1858), Julia (b. 1836), George Scarborough (1837-1918),

Lucien (1840-1892), and Godfrey, Jr. (1842-1843). Reginald and Godfrey, Jr., died in their infancy. The oldest daughter, Anna, married Thomas Course Gilmour [d. 1865] in 1850 and moved to England; they had two children Murray Barnsley (b. 1850) and Julia Eliza (b. 1852). Another daughter, Adelaide, married John K. Reid in 1857 and died shortly after childbirth that same year; her son Godfrey Forrest Reid survived and grew up with his Aunt Julia on the family's north Georgia estate. Harold, Barnsley's oldest surviving son, became an adventurer and disappeared in the Far East sometime after 1858.

Julia Barnsley first married James Peter Baltzelle in 1864. Their only daughter Adelaide (1864-1942) married B.F.A. Saylor (1859-1905), who often used the name B.F. Arrington. Adelaide and B.F.A. Saylor had five children, Blanche L. (b. 1885), B. Frank, Preston (b. 1898), Julia (b. 1900), and Harry (1902-1935). Blanche and Frank may not have survived childhood; the only reference to them occurs in a list of births in a family Bible which is located in the collection. Baltzelle was killed in 1868, and in 1872 Julia married Charles Henry von Schwartz (d. 1885). Godfrey Barnsley's two remaining sons, George and Lucien, after serving in the Confederate Army during the Civil War, joined other confederates who emigrated to South America. They remained in Brazil for the rest of their lives although George brought his family to the family estate from 1890 to 1896. George married Mary Lamira Emerson in 1869 and Lucien married Martha H. Grady in 1871.

From the time Barnsley arrived in Savannah in 1824, he planned to return to England after he had made his fortune. He changed his mind after the panic of 1837 brought heavy financial losses. When economic conditions had improved, two friends, Charles Wallace Howard (1811-1876), and William Henry Stiles (1809-1865), convinced him to join them in developing land in Cass County (now Bartow County). The Howard estate was named Spring Bank; Stiles called his plantation Etowah Cliffs; and Barnsley settled on the name Woodlands for his own north Georgia property which later became known as Barnsley Gardens. Having erected a crude cabin on one of his lots, Barnsley took his family there in June 1841. Thereafter, Barnsley regarded Woodlands as his permanent residence, although business called him away for several months each year. He planned to put the plantation into full production and to build an elaborate manor house with extensive English gardens. These remained dreams of his for the rest of his life although the house and gardens were never completed. The pressures of business, the death of his wife in 1845, and the Civil War with its aftermath presented insurmountable obstacles.

During the years after the Civil War, Barnsley moved back and forth between New Orleans and Woodlands in vain attempts to regain financial security. The depressed southern economy and poor health ultimately defeated him. Godfrey Barnsley died in New Orleans on June 7, 1873. His daughter and son-in-law, Julia and Charles von Schwartz, brought his body back to Woodlands where he was buried in the family cemetery.

While Godfrey Barnsley worked to rebuild his cotton business after the Civil War, daughter Julia remained at Woodlands. With the help of her two husbands, James Peter Baltzelle and Charles Henry von Schwartz, she tried to make the plantation produce at least enough to maintain the family.

Two of Barnsley's sons, Lucien and particularly George, kept in touch with their Georgia relatives and took an interest in the disposition of the Barnsley estate. In fact, questions about the disposition of the estate brought dissension within the family. The Barnsley family, particularly

Julia Barnsley von Schwartz and her daughter, Adelaide Baltzelle Saylor, held onto Woodlands against fierce pressure to sell. The family finally lost control of the property when Adelaide died in 1942. Biographical source: Nelson M. Hoffman, Jr., "Godfrey Barnsley, 1805-1873: British Cotton Factor in the South," (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Kansas, 1964) and from materials in the collection. Additional information can be found in *A Plan for Barnsley Gardens* prepared by the Rome Area Heritage Foundation in 1979.

Scope and Content Note

The Godfrey Barnsley papers, dating from 1822 to 1980 but falling mostly in the period 1826-1873, include correspondence, financial records, legal and estate papers, writings, photographs, and collected materials that document the business career and family life of a Savannah cotton merchant. The earliest and latest dates for material in the collection are accounted for by the publication dates of a book and of newspaper clippings, both located in Series VI. The collection provides information about the economics of cotton in the Old South and about the impact of the Civil War and Reconstruction on southern families.

Series 1, Correspondence, 1826-1955, contains letters received by Godfrey Barnsley and by members of his family as well as a few items received by non-family members who were associated with Barnsley Gardens, the family estate in Bartow County. Holograph copies of some letters written by Godfrey Barnsley are located in the series. Most of the letters have to do with Barnsley's business as a cotton factor in Savannah, Mobile, and New Orleans. In the years 1845-1873 a good deal of the correspondence originates in New Orleans. Of particular note are the letters dating 1830-1837 that relate to suits and counter suits between Barnsley and two business associates. Other material concerning these court cases can be found in Series 2, Financial Records, and Series 3, Legal and Estate Papers. The series also contains valuable information about the Confederate side of the Civil War and Reconstruction particularly concerning George and Lucien Barnsley's service with the Eighth Regiment of the Georgia Volunteer Infantry. George Barnsley wrote extensively about his field experiences as well as about his work as a hospital steward. The series contains a few letters relating to the institution of slavery and to spiritualism.

Series 2, Financial Records (1829-1937), holds material that deals primarily with Barnsley's business as a cotton factor although there are some items relating to his estate in north Georgia. Series 3, Legal and Estate Papers (1828-1954), contains legal records and court documents that relate both to the cotton market and to the family estate. Also included are mineral surveys and other land records for Woodlands (Barnsley Gardens). Series 4 (1868-1915) contains an unidentified diary, a manuscript sheet of music, and a few miscellaneous writings. Identified and unidentified photographs of persons, as well as a few of Barnsley Gardens, appear in Series 5 (undated). Clippings dated 1904-1980 are the most valuable items found in Series 6 (1822-1980) which also includes sketches and other items from the Barnsley children when they were young.

Series 7, Additions, includes those materials that have been added since the original processing. Clippings about the present day Barnsley Gardens, purchased ca. 1988 by German prince Hubertus Fugger and turned into a tourist site, are contained in this series.

The following individuals are prominently represented in the collection: George Barnsley (cousin), George Scarborough Barnsley (son), Godfrey Barnsley (uncle), Julia Scarborough Barnsley (wife), C.V. Berrien, John Day, William D. Duncan, Henry S. Gilmour, Charles

Wallace Howard, John MacLellan, Adelaide Baltzelle Saylor, Julia Barnsley Baltzelle von Schwartz (daughter), and William Henry Stiles.

Arrangement Note

Organized into seven series: (1) Correspondence, (2) Financial records, (3) Legal and estate papers, (4) Writings, (5) Photographs, (6) Collected materials and (7) Additions.

Description of Series

[Series 1: Correspondence, 1826-1955](#)

[Series 2: Financial records, 1829-1937](#)

[Series 3: Legal and estate papers, 1828-1954](#)

[Series 4: Writings, 1868-1915](#)

[Series 5: Photographs](#)

[Series 6: Collected materials, 1822-1980](#)

[Series 7: Additions, 1827, 1989-1996](#)

Series 1
Correspondence, 1826-1955
Boxes 1-2; OP 1; MF1

Scope and Content Note

Series 1, Correspondence, contains letters received by Godfrey Barnsley and members of his family. The letters received by Barnsley himself date from 1826, two years after he arrived in Savannah, and continue until his death in 1873. The remainder of the letters in the series were addressed to his daughter, Julia Barnsley Baltzelle von Schwartz, and granddaughter, Adelaide Baltzelle Saylor, who both continued to live at the Barnsley estate until their deaths.

The letters document many aspects of Godfrey Barnsley's business affairs and family life. During his first years in the United States, Barnsley corresponded regularly with family members still in England who were also business associates. These letters provide information about how cotton merchants conducted their affairs. Particularly valuable are letters concerning legal disputes with two British associates during the 1830s. Among these papers are holograph copies of letters written by Barnsley to merchants John MacLellan and James Oswald. Not until 1837 do letters from American businessmen and acquaintances appear. Barnsley's 1841 move away from Savannah to Cass County accounts, in part, for an increased correspondence with Georgia friends and associates.

Because Barnsley had business relations with his uncle and cousin in Liverpool, those letters contain both business negotiations and family news. More information about family affairs is contained in letters Barnsley received from his children as they matured. The letters from Barnsley's son George during the Civil War, when he served as a hospital steward with the Eighth Regiment of the Georgia Volunteer Infantry are particularly valuable. George Barnsley's letters to his father and sister after the Civil War offer information about those confederates who emigrated to Brazil. The series also contains items that both illuminate other aspects of the Reconstruction period and provide information about slavery in the antebellum period.

Included in the series are letters that document Barnsley's interest in spiritualism. An undated letter, written shortly after the death of Barnsley's wife in 1845, is alleged to be a spirit communication from Barnsley's father-in-law, William Scarborough, who had been deceased for several years. Other letters, particularly those of C.V. Berrien in the 1860s, contain additional information about this interest.

Letters received by members of Barnsley's family after his death appear in this series. These papers document the struggle the family faced in trying to retain possession of Barnsley's extensive land holdings and manor house at a time when they were financially stricken. The estate caused discord among the heirs as well as with various agents and adventurers who hoped to profit from the sale of Woodlands.

All letters on microfilm have been duplicated and paper copies have been interfiled in the correspondence by date. Information about how the family fared after the turn of the century when the correspondence decreases is located in the clippings contained in Series 6, Collected Material.

Arrangement Note

Arranged in chronological order.

Box	Folder	Content
1	1	1826-1835
1	2	1836-1837
OP1	1	Barnsley v. MacLellan, 1837
OP1	2	1839
1	3	1838-1843
1	4	1844
1	5	1845
1	6	1857-1860
1	7	1861 March-May
1	8	1861 June
1	9	1861 July
1	10	1861 August
1	11	1861 September-October
1	12	1861 November-December
1	13	1862 January-February
1	14	1862 March
1	15	1862 April-May
1	16	1862 June-July
1	17	1862 August-September
1	18	1862 October
1	19	1862 November
1	20	1862 December and 1862 undated
2	1	1863-1864
2	2	1865
2	3	1866
2	4	1867-1869
2	5	1877-1886
2	6	1887-1889
2	7	1890
2	8	1891
2	9	1892
2	10	1893-1895
2	11	1896-1899
2	12	1900-1901
2	13	1902-1908
2	14	1909-1921

2 15 1922-1955

2 16 Undated

MF1 Letters loaned for filming by Mrs. A. Waldo Jones (NOTE: Paper reproductions made and interfiled into Series 1)

Series 2
Financial records, 1829-1937
Box 3; BV1

Scope and Content Note

Series 2, Financial Records, contains bills, receipts, and account books that relate primarily to Barnsley's cotton business although some records have to do with the operation of the Barnsley estate, Woodlands. Financial records for the period after his death in 1873 relate solely to the family's affairs at Woodlands. A great deal of financial information is contained in the correspondence series, and other related material can be located in Series 3, Legal and Estate Papers.

Arrangement Note

The series is arranged chronologically with account books following loose material.

Box	Folder	Content
3	1	Financial records, 1829-1837
3	2	Financial records, 1838-1861
3	3	Financial records, 1862-1868
3	4	Financial records, 1870-1888
3	5	Financial records, 1889-1893
3	6	Financial records, 1894-1919
3	7	Financial records, undated
3	8	Commissary account of J.L. Kitchens, 1890-1897
3	9	Account book, 1845-1892
3	10	Account book, 1868-1872
BV1		Account book, 1898
3	11	Account book, 1905-1911
3	12	Account book, 1935-1937

Series 3**Legal and estate papers, 1828-1954****Box 4: folders 1-8; OP 1 and 2****Scope and Content Note**

This series contains legal papers that relate to Barnsley's business affairs and to his property in Cass County. These papers include photocopies of his marriage license and various indentures and agreements. Also included are holograph copies of depositions taken in two of the court cases arising from Barnsley's business affairs. Other information about these cases can be found in Series 1, Correspondence. The remainder of the series contains records relating to Woodlands including land plats, mineral surveys, architectural sketches (perhaps of details of the manor house), and a visitor registration book that also contains lists of books distributed to Barnsley's heirs. These latter materials document the family's attempt to settle the estate while retaining possession of the land and house.

Arrangement Note

The items in this series are sorted by type of document and then arranged chronologically.

Box	Folder	Content
4	1	Marriage license and will (incomplete), 1828, 1857
4	2	Agreements and indentures, 1837-1941
4	3	Court documents, Oswald v. Barnsley, 1837
4	4	Court documents, Barnsley v. MacLellan, 1838
OP1	3	Court documents, Barnsley v. MacLellan, 1838
OP1	4	Plats, maps, and surveys, Bartow County, Georgia
OP1	4	Barnsley Gardens, 1942 (2)
OP1	4	Ore drilling, 1951
4	5	Mineral survey, 1954 and limestone analysis, 1959
4	6	Bauxite report, undated
4	7	Horticultural record, undated
4	8	Woodlands visitor register, 1875-1884 [contains lists of books distributed to heirs, 1890]
OP2	-	Plats, maps, and surveys, Bartow County, Georgia
OP2	-	Survey for loan: Harry Saylor Land in Bartow County, 5 December 1933
OP2	-	Survey for auction: Nan L. Phillips Land in Bartow County, 21 August 1977
OP2	-	Etowah Iron Company, n.d. (Bartow County)
OP2	-	Minerals, n.d. (Bartow County)
OP2	-	Land use (finished), n.d. (Bartow County)
OP2	-	Land use (draft), n.d. (Bartow County)
OP2	-	Land lot, SW quadrant, Bartow County, n.d.
OP2	-	Land lot, NW quadrant, Bartow County, n.d.

Series 4
Writings, 1868-1915
Box 4: folders 9-10; OP1

Scope and Content Note

This series contains a diary for the year 1868. The diarist is not identified, but the small volume contains brief notes on weather and daily activities for most of the year. Some lists and expenses are entered on the back pages and there are astrological notes on the included almanac and on some pages. A poem and a translated article about Brazil are included as well as a manuscript sheet of music.

Box	Folder	Content
4	9	Diary, unidentified, 1868
4	10	Miscellaneous, 1915 and undated
OP1	5	Manuscript sheet music, undated

Series 5
Photographs
Box 5: folders 1-4; OP1

Scope and Content Note

The few photographs contained in the collection are located in Series 5. Most of the persons photographed are unidentified; the others include individual pictures of Adelaide Baltzelle Saylor, Wilma Massy Dawson, Lydia Barnsley and Olga Barnsley. There are also snapshots of Woodlands, later known as Barnsley Gardens. The shots of the house and grounds complete the series. See Series 1, Correspondence, for information about some of the individuals pictured and Series 3, Legal and Estate Papers, for information about Woodlands. The clippings in Series 6 contain information about the estate and the history of the family.

Arrangement Note

Photographs of individuals are arranged first, followed by images of groups and of unidentified persons.

Box	Folder	Content
5	1	Individuals, identified and undated
5	2	Individuals, unidentified and undated
5	3	Groups, unidentified and undated
5	4	Barnsley Gardens and environs, undated
OP1	6	Groups, identified and unidentified, and undated

Series 6
Collected materials, 1822-1980
Box 5: folders 5-10 - Box 6; OP 1; BV 2

Scope and Content Note

The series contains a variety of materials that arrived at the library with the Barnsley papers. The materials include clippings about the estate and the family as well as about Americans who settled in Brazil after the Civil War. Also in the series are an 1881 sketch entitled "In the Cloister at Bonn" and inscribed to "my dear Addie"; another sketch dated 1913 and signed by Addie Wright, Jr., of what appears to be the manor house at Woodlands; and several books and a family Bible which once belonged to various members of the Barnsley family.

Arrangement Note

The series is arranged by type of document and then sorted chronologically.

Box	Folder	Content
5	5	Clippings, 1904-1980 and undated
5	6	Clippings, Brazil, 1965-1972
5	7	"Farewell, O Savannah" copied 1824, with correspondence, Lilla M. Hawes to Bell Wiley, 1956
5	8	Student exercise book, 1850
5	9	Sketches, 1881, 1913, undated
5	10	Miscellaneous, 1864-1922 [contains slave pass, 29 August 1864]
5	11	Miscellaneous, undated
OP1	7	Drawings: Architectural details, etc.
OP1	8	German traveling papers, 1871
OP1	9	Broadside, undated
OP1	10	Maps of South Carolina and Savannah, 1825, 1855
BV2		Family Bible, 1851 [contains some genealogical information]

Books, 1822-1849

6	1	<i>A Guide to the French Language</i> , 1822
6	2	<i>A Vindication of "The Religion of the Land,"</i> 1830
6	3	<i>Interesting Narrations in French</i> , 1846
6	4	<i>Dr. Butler's Atlas of Ancient Geography</i> , 1849

Series 7
Additions, 1827, 1989-1996
Box 7

Scope and Content Note

Series 7 consists of clippings about the present day Barnsley Gardens owned by the German prince Hubertus Fugger. These clippings describe the history of Barnsley Gardens and how it has been developed as a tourist site.

Box	Folder	Content
7	1	Clippings, 1989-1990, 1993-1994, 1996
7	2	Barnsley, Godfrey, certificate from the General Consul of the King of Sicily, 1827 July 23
