

was again heavy resistance from the 9th South Carolina. With no reinforcements, the 79th New York also retreated.

When these two regiments were forced to retreat, they left a significant percentage of their men who were killed, wounded or captured. Most of the Federal casualties occurred in this initial assault.

As the first Federal wave collapsed and retreated, they hampered the second wave from attacking. While the main assault was taking place, the 3rd New Hampshire was attempting a flanking maneuver but they could not make a full assault due to the impassable marsh and pluff mud.

5 (CONTINUE ALONG PATH — STOP IN AREA NEAR DRY MOAT.)

In the area behind you, are the remains of the dry moat — the excavated area formed when the earthworks were built. The 8-inch columbiad, which Colonel Lamar used to fire the second shot, was also in this area.

[C]

Ahead is the probable location of a mass Federal grave. [D]

PLEASE RETRACE YOUR STEPS TO THE PARKING LOT

Fort Lamar Road runs parallel to the right flank of the original fort.

6 (WALK INTO THE AREA WEST OF THE PARKING LOT.)

This section of the battery held Lt. Bellinger's and an unmanned 18-pound gun. [E] The 7th Connecticut and 28th Massachusetts advanced toward this part of the battery but were held off primarily by an 8-inch columbiad commanded by Lt. Humbert.

A 24-pound gun that was located on what is now Fort Lamar Road also provided further support.

The battle began at approximately 4 o'clock in the morning and was over within three hours. There were 3500 Federal troops involved in the assault. The troops at Fort Lamar numbered approximately 1400. Federal casualties included 487 wounded, 107 killed and 89 missing. The Confederates suffered 204 casualties — 144 wounded, 52 killed and 8 missing.

There is a more human side to the Battle of Secessionville. Among the troops in the battle were two brothers James and Alexander Campbell. Born in Scotland, the two had emigrated to America in the 1850's and had settled in Charleston and New York City respectively. After the war began, each had enlisted to serve his adopted homeland,

and in June 1862, they found themselves in opposing armies on James Island.

James Campbell was 2nd Lieutenant of Company F, 1st South Carolina Battalion, the Charleston Battalion. His older brother Alexander was Sergeant and color bearer of the 79th New York. Each brother fought on the Secessionville earthwork without meeting the other. An unarmed James Campbell jumped to the parapet on this side of the fort and rolled a log down onto a group of charging Federals. He then captured an enemy rifle and continued fighting. Alexander Campbell planted the colors on the earthwork and kept them there until his regiment was forced to withdraw.

It was only after the battle that the Campbell brothers learned how close they had been to each other at Secessionville. Both brothers survived the war.

The Confederates had one African American noncombatant killed in the battle, Daniel Bellinger. When he discovered that his master, Lt. John Bellinger, had forgotten his pistol, he rushed forward with it. He fell shot and died about one week later.

If there was a predominant Confederate hero of the battle it was Thomas Lamar. Though Lamar and others at Secessionville received the official thanks of the Confederate Congress, that gesture came in February 1864, long after Thomas Gresham Lamar's death from malaria on October 18, 1862.

The battery that he defended that June day was finally completed in the spring of 1864 and was named Fort Lamar in his memory. Colonel Lamar is buried in his hometown of Edgefield, South Carolina.

The fortifications that were completed following the battle of Secessionville served as a major deterrent to further assault by the Federals. Fort Lamar saw no significant action during the remainder of the war.

7 (EARTHWORK MANAGEMENT AND PROTECTION)

Today, hundreds of linear miles of battle earthworks survive in landscapes east of the Mississippi River, although they are often only a fraction of their original size and extent. The protection and interpretation of the earthworks at Fort Lamar are of major concern to Archaeologist and Managers with SCDNR and with the Fort Lamar Stewardship Committee. While management strategies have evolved through the years, the basic threats to earthworks have remained constant. The effects of natural processes, primarily erosion, have been overlain by the consequences of human activity, which ranges from the indirect results of urbanization in the vicinity of earthworks

to the direct impacts of interpretive, recreational, and landscape maintenance activities. These threats place many earthworks in danger of loss over time. They are magnified by an uncertain future of financial, material, and human resources required that are to adequately preserve these fragile structures.

Fort Lamar is now part of the South Carolina Heritage Trust. The clearing of the land and maintenance of the area is done by the volunteer Fort Lamar Stewardship Committee.

The anniversary of the Battle of Secessionville is observed at Fort Lamar on the Saturday nearest to June 16.

Please feel free to walk around the area. We do ask that you remain on the path and not climb on the earthworks or disturb any of the remains of the structures. The area on the other side of the parking lot is private property.

Fort Lamar is open for self guided tours from dawn to dusk everyday. Please come back and visit again.

For information on joining the Fort Lamar Stewardship Committee please call 803-734-3893 or visit the SCDNR website at dnr.sc.gov

Thank you for coming.



DNR
South Carolina
Department of Natural Resources
Habitat Protection Section
803-734-3893
dnr.sc.gov

THE SOUTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES
PROHIBITS DISCRIMINATION ON THE BASIS OF GENDER, RACE, COLOR,
NATIONAL ORIGIN, DISABILITY, RELIGION OR AGE. DIRECT ALL
INQUIRIES TO THE OFFICE OF HUMAN RESOURCES, P.O. BOX 167, COLUMBIA,
SC 29202

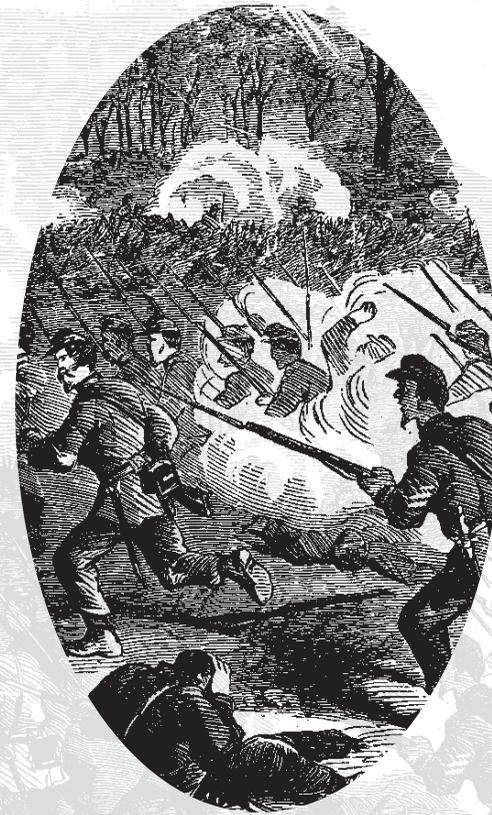


Printed on Recycled Paper

08HT6074

Fort Lamar

Self-Guided Tour



Life's
Better
OUTDOORS
South Carolina Department of Natural Resources
dnr.sc.gov

Heritage Trust Program

Fort Lamar Self-Guided Tour

1 (INTERPRETIVE SHELTER)

Charleston! Strategically the Confederacy's largest seaport after the fall of New Orleans and a major base for ships running the Federal blockade. As a key target for Federal occupancy, the partial occupation of the South Carolina coast began in November 1861 with the occupation of Port Royal. The Confederates in the area, commanded by recently arrived General Robert E. Lee, initially intended to contest all enemy movements by fortifying the barrier islands along the coast. But the fall of Port Royal proved the overwhelming strength of the Federal Navy. Lee adopted a strategy of inland defense in an attempt to lure the Northerners away from their powerful naval guns.

The Confederates realized a Federal attempt to take James Island, and by extension Charleston, was imminent. However, they had no definite information on the probable timing, location or strength.

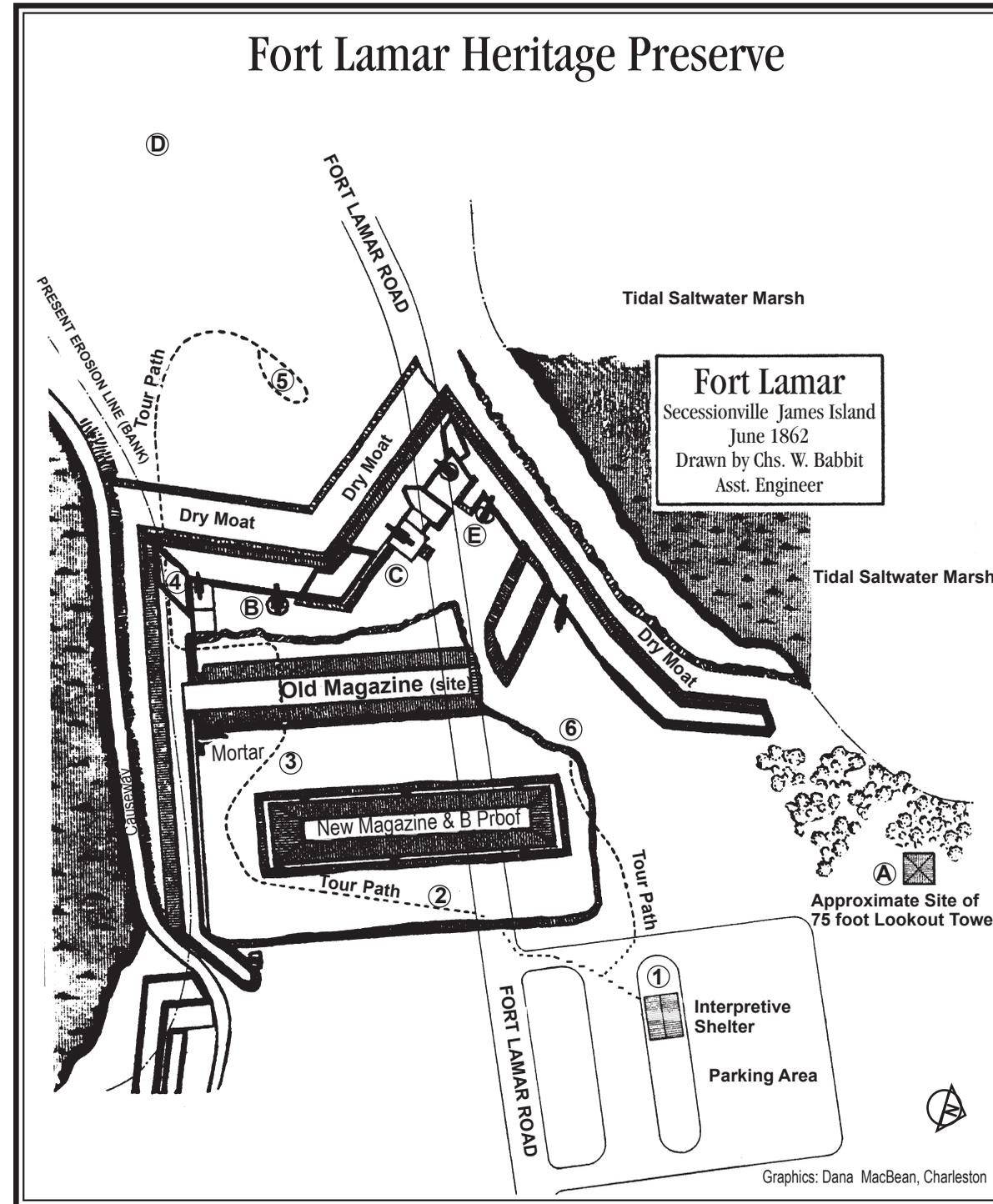
The plan to attack Charleston from James Island was not new. A similar plan was used by the British during the Revolutionary War with the focus of that attack centered at Fort Johnson.

The James Island defenses were new and relatively weak. Most of them had been constructed since January 1862 and were still unfinished. The interior defenses were anchored at each end by large earthworks. Fort Pemberton, at the northwest end of the island and overlooking the Stono River, was the larger of the two major works. The other earthwork, near the center of the island and the planters' summer village at Secessionville, was a less strategic position than Fort Pemberton and was a lower priority. It was still uncompleted and unnamed.

The Secessionville earthwork was advantageously located on a small peninsula with tidal creeks and marshes to the northwest, southeast, and northeast. Construction had begun in January 1862 under the direction of Colonel Lewis M. Hatch, whose regiment, the 23rd South Carolina Infantry, was virtually the only Confederate force on James Island.

Hatch's regiment constructed the small earthwork, built a causeway to connect the peninsula with the main body of the island, and erected an observation tower.

The earthwork was a simple, roughly "M" shaped, field fortification with its face running northwest to southeast, from marsh to marsh, with its flank walls parallel with the marshes. The fort became known as Tower Battery



by virtue of the 75-foot reconnaissance platform built behind it. [A]

Tower Battery was manned and being completed by the 1st South Carolina Artillery commanded by Colonel Thomas G. Lamar.

2 (CROSS THE ROAD-STOP AT THE BEGINNING OF THE TRAIL - STAY ON TRAIL)

You are now walking parallel to the New Magazine or Bombproof. Constructed in 1863, the Bombproof used earth and timber from the original magazine which was constructed in 1862. Both structures extended across what is now Fort Lamar Road. The original structure was approximately 175 feet long, 50 feet deep and stood 15 feet high.

3 (CONTINUE WALKING ALONG THE TRAIL - STOP IN THE AREA BETWEEN THE ORIGINAL MAGAZINE AND THE NEW MAGAZINE)

Ahead of you are the remnants of the original 1862 magazine. This area also provides probably the best view of the mass of the 1863 bombproof - the new magazine. Unfortunately the area also shows signs of looting. When this area was cleared in January 1997, the vegetation was left in place to help with erosion control. At the time of the magazine's construction, there were few, if any significant trees in this area.

4 (CONTINUE WALKING - STOP IN AREA NEAR THE SHED.)

We are now in the general vicinity of the left leg of the M-shaped fort. In 1862 a causeway ran along this side of the peninsula. It was this causeway that allowed the Federals their only relatively easy access to the fort.

In the pre-dawn hours of June 16, 1862, the first shot of the battle was fired by Confederate Sergeant Baggott from a 24-pound gun located in this general area.

[B]. Sergeant Baggott was immediately killed. Captain Samuel Reed took over and within minutes he was dead also. The 24-pound gun was temporarily silent. Captain Ryan and his Irish Volunteers took over the firing of the gun for the remainder of the battle.

The second shot, fired by Colonel Lamar, split the 8th Michigan battalion. Advancing in the darkness, the troops had to negotiate two hedgerows and open cotton fields with two-foot wide trenches and knee-high weeds. One segment of the 8th Michigan reached this section of the earthwork. Heavy hand-to-hand combat occurred. The Confederates were successful in making the Federals fall back. A few minutes later, the 79th New York Highlanders mounted the wall. There