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special history study
the defense of new orleans, 1718–1900

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JEAN LAFITTE

NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK / LOUISIANA

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SPECIAL HISTORY STUDY

THE DEFENSE OF NEW ORLEANS, 1718-1900

JEAN LAFITTE NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK

LOUISIANA

by

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INTRODUCTION: THE DELTA AND ITS DEFENSE

For almost two hundred years, from the founding of New Orleans in 1718 to the beginning of the twentieth century, the security of that settlement and city remained of paramount importance to the successive powers that governed it. Situated in the wet lowlands of southern Louisiana along a sharp bend of the Mississippi River some ninety miles from its mouth, New Orleans was ideally located for fulfilling its destiny as a major agricultural, commercial, and cosmopolitan center. Yet the very geography contributing to its rise throughout the years of French, Spanish, and United States suzerainty also determined the urgency for protecting the city, and in consequence, the whole southern frontier, against the military advances of covetous foreign rivals. Thus, for much of the city's existence, New Orleans' mercantile success has closely coincided with the evolution of a strong defensive system designed, with varying emphases over time, to protect that prosperity, to insure its perpetuation, and, in a national sense, to prevent enemy access into the interior of the continent.

A. Avenues of Approach

1. The Lakes

By virtue of its location on land surrounded by watery approaches, New Orleans has always been more or less vulnerable to attack by enemy vessels arriving from the Gulf of Mexico. Of principal concern to defensive strategists have been those avenues of approach across Lakes Borgne and Pontchartrain north and east of the city, up the Mississippi River from its mouth (both of these were popular routes for transporting goods to the city), and via Barataria Bay south of New Orleans. In addition, the entire country connecting these routes is criss-crossed by canals and bayous, some of navigable depth, which historically increased the potential for access by a determined adversary.

Although the route from the east by the lakes passed through some very shallow water, there were channels through which a capable navigator might pass easily. A pilot entering Lake Borgne from Mississippi Sound could find a navigable depth by passing between St.

Joseph's Island and Grand Island. Lake Borgne itself was only about nine feet deep, its shores cut by numerous bayous and inlets, with those along its southwest shore being of particular appeal to an enterprising foe. Principal features in this area of Lake Borgne included Proctor's Point, jutting from the southwest shore and fairly dividing the west portion of the lake; Bayou Dupre, west of Proctor's Point, and whose course ran within two miles of the Mississippi River, ten miles below New Orleans; Bayou Bienvenue which wound through cypress swamps to come within five miles of the city; and Bayous Mazant and Jumonville, both tributaries of Bayou Bienvenue, and which joined near the mouth of the former. Historically, the water depth of these passes varied between four and six feet.

Adjoining Lake Borgne on the northwest is Lake Pontchartrain. The two bodies of water are connected by a pair of crooked channels called the Rigolets. One, itself termed "The Rigolets," is northernmost and runs nine miles between the lakes. The other, or southern, channel is termed the Chef Menteur Pass and runs eight miles between Lake Borgne and Lake Pontchartrain. On Lake Borgne the two channels are ten miles apart; on Lake Pontchartrain they are but five miles from each other. Lake Pontchartrain, a broad, shallow lake measuring about eighty miles around, is immediately above New Orleans. Historically, the city had access to the lake by means of Bayou St. John, adjoining the south shore and extending inland some three and one-half miles to near the west side of the town. The juxtaposition of all these lakes, bayous, and connecting channels over the years posed a major threat to the security of New Orleans and thus an incentive for its defense.

2. The River

The second primary route to New Orleans lay up the Mississippi River, the principal transportation channel for goods reaching and leaving the city. The river was wide and deep, but prospective navigators had first to get by the sand bars and strong currents at the mouth. Important passes led into the Mississippi proper: Pass a l'Outre, Northeast Pass, Southeast Pass, South Pass, and Southwest Pass. The last-named, almost a mile wide at the mouth and between fifteen and

eighteen feet deep, was historically the pass most often used by incoming and departing vessels. From its mouth the Mississippi ascended through low, marshy land on either side thirty-six miles to Plaquemine Turn, a sharp bend of obvious defensive character possessing the first soil of permanent stability encountered along the river. The earth there, while cultivable, has frequently been exposed to floods generated by hurricanes, a factor somewhat mitigating its otherwise significant features for defense considerations. Above Plaquemine Turn, another forty miles is English Turn, a radical bend in the stream and another important defensive position to forestall an attack on New Orleans by this route. In times past both the Mississippi River route and that via Lakes Borgne and Pontchartrain have been attempted with partial success by military expeditions seeking to capture the city.

3. Barataria

West of the Mississippi lies Barataria Bay with its plethora of islands, bayous, and assorted swamplands through which a persevering enemy might attempt a "back door" approach to New Orleans. The main channel leading into Barataria Bay is through Grande, or Barataria, Pass, situated between Grand Terre Island on the east and Grand Isle on the west. This pass is one-third of a mile wide, while Barataria Bay runs approximately eleven miles north to south and four miles east to west. Despite its potential as an avenue of approach to New Orleans, the Barataria Bay route was shallow and remote and went largely untested by forces seeking to capture the city.[1]

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1. The foregoing summary of the geography of the lower Mississippi as respecting its defensive characteristics is drawn essentially from Samuel H. Lockett, Louisiana as It Is: A Geographical Topographical Description of the State. Ed. by Lauren C. Post (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1969), pp. 125-30; Margaret Fisher Dalrymple (ed.), The Merchant of Manchac: The Letterbooks of John Fitzpatrick, 1768-1790 (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1978), p. 6; and Captain James Gadsden to Brigadier General Joseph G. Swift, November 10, 1817. National Archives (NA) Record Group (RG) 77. Records of the Office of the Chief of Engineers. Entry 221, "Reports of the Corps of Engineers, 1812-1823."

B. Fortification

1. The Influence of Vauban

The unique geography composing the delta country dictated the adoption of appropriate defensive measures to insure the security of New Orleans and the entire region. As the city evolved into a prime commercial center its defenses grew, reflecting ongoing advances in fortification theory and technology. Virtually all colonial and later fortifications erected in the delta country adhered in one way or another to the formal engineering trends promulgated by the celebrated seventeenth century French military genius, Sebastien le Pietre de Vauban. During his lifetime (1633-1707) Vauban devised and perfected several systems of fortifying towns using symmetrically designed works with bastions, curtains, tenailles, and their component features, many of which had been developed by his European predecessors. Termed "regular" works because of their geometrical symmetry, fortifications based on Vauban's principles also acknowledged differences in the terrain that would produce a need for "irregular," or non-symmetrical structures. While primarily used for the defense of large European cities, Vauban's designs, usually on a more limited scale, found ready application in the New World. Vauban's influence can be seen in virtually all of the fortifications erected in the delta country between 1700 and 1900. His ideas permeated thought on military architecture on both sides of the Atlantic Ocean and have had an enduring impact on the development of defense theory in the United States.[2]

The basic feature of Vauban's defense system was the so-called star fort, essentially a wall of simple geometrical design, such as a square, supported by a number of bastions, pentagonal works projecting from its

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2. Willard B. Robinson, American Forts: Architectural Form and Function (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1977), pp. 11, 12; Samuel Wilson, Jr., "Colonial Fortifications and Military Architecture in the Mississippi Valley," in John Francis McDermott (ed.), The French in the Mississippi Valley (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1965), p. 104.

corners. Gunfire directed from the bastions could usually cover the surrounding approaches during an enemy assault. The main wall of the work running between the bastions was known as the curtain. This tall embankment was topped by a parapet, a breastwork strong enough to enable troops to assume position behind it. Immediately below the curtain, outside the fort, was the ditch, or moat, consisting of inner and outer walls termed, respectively, the scarp and counterscarp. Beyond the ditch was the glacis, a stretch of ground gently sloping away from the work and kept clear of all obstructions that might hinder fire from the parapet. Often there were outworks in the form of ravelins, tenailles, and redans--smaller detached earthworks erected to support the fort and located a short distance beyond the ditch. Cannon placed on the rampart either fired en barbette, i.e., directly across the top of the parapet, or through embrasures, openings cut through the parapet to receive the muzzles of heavy ordnance.[3]

2. Seacoast Defense

Innovation in the art of military fortification occurred in the area of seacoast defense, whose purpose was to secure seaports from aggression by hostile navies, to insure harbors of refuge for domestic and friendly fleets, and to keep fortified positions available to aid in the expulsion of a landed hostile force.[4] But the development of sophisticated seacost defenses was a complex, gradual process in which concerned technologies strove to keep abreast of one another. Such factors as the strength and durability of fort building materials constantly had to be weighed against such strides made in the field of weaponry as changes in the calibre of

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3. This basic terminology is from Quentin Hughes, Military Architecture (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1974), pp. 237, 241, 242.

4. G. J. Fiebeger, Permanent Fortification (West Point, New York: Henry Charnowitz, 1900), p. 60.

cannon, new types of propellants, and new designs of projectiles.[5] Although the earliest fortifications erected in the delta by the colonial powers coped to some degree with such changes, it was only with the advent of American control and the decision by the United States government to fortify the lower Mississippi with large, permanent works that technology-inspired change became evident in an obvious way.

a. The First American System

Fears of conflict between the United States and France in the 1790s inspired the first major program for seacoast defense in this country. On March 20, 1794, Congress authorized the construction of relatively inexpensive coastal fortifications that by their design came to be designated the First American System. These rather simple projects were placed in the hands of available local engineers. Consequently, they lacked much uniformity of design. Basically they were low, open earthworks built to form a parapet over which cannon mounted inside might fire. Occasionally the works were revetted with sod, timber, or stone, and sometimes they were supplemented by a blockhouse or a redoubt mounting light guns. The coastal armaments of the period consisted of a wide array of iron and brass cannon left over from the Revolutionary War that had been manufactured in France, Great Britain, and the United States. Most of the weapons were 24-pounders, capable of delivering that weight of projectile, although a few heavy 42-pounder cannon existed. There were a smattering of lighter calibre guns, and in the 1794 legislation production of iron 24- and 32-pounders was authorized. Even with newly manufactured weapons, however, the works of the First System soon fell into disrepair, the result of infrequently and irregularly authorized maintenance funds. In 1798 Congress approved $250,000 to repair and finish building the works, and in later years further appropriations were made. Yet the First System works remained

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5. Emanual Raymond Lewis, Seacoast Fortifications of the United States: An Introductory History (Washington: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1970).

small and were considered to be but temporary structures, a fact reflecting official belief that France's naval power had weakened.[6]

b. The Second American System

Renewed threats of war, this time with Great Britain shortly after 1800, prompted more defensive efforts involving new architectural concepts that came to be known as the Second System. Between 1807 and 1812 more than three million dollars were appropriated to implement this program so that by 1812 when war finally erupted, construction of the new defenses was far along. Works of the Second System, construction of which was continued until about 1816, consisted of three general types. There were low, open batteries which were of limited use, usually as supporting outworks to a fort. More substantial were the masonry-faced elliptical or circular works that characterized the latter years of the Second System. These forts, now rarely seen, had curved or semicircular faces and round bastions most of which were demolished or substantially modified in later years. Finally, there were high-walled masonry multiple-tiered forts from which cannon mounted in embrasured casemates might direct many rounds across exposed channels of water. Two of these forts facing each other on opposite sides of a channel might unleash so heavy a volume of fire as to effectively prevent enemy passage. The casemate system allowed for multiple levels of firepower from within the fortification rather than a single level coming from guns placed on the terreplein, barbette fashion.[7] Few strides were made in the field of armaments during this period, so that heavy ordnance generally reflected the diversity of earlier years. Some movement toward standardization took place, however, with the introduction around 1800 of new literature about artillery, and later with the production of some 42- and 50-pounder cannon suitable for mounting in Second System forts.[8]

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6. Lewis, Seacoast Fortifications, pp. 21-22, 25.

7. Ibid., pp. 25, 26, 31; Hughes, Military Architecture, p. 178.

8. Lewis, Seacoast Fortifications, p. 32.

c. The Third American System

By the conclusion of the War of 1812 most seaports in the United States were well defended with the works recently erected.[9] Yet with the immediate potential for conflict passed, these fortifications were soon superseded by larger, more durable, and more leisurely constructed ones built of masonry--brick and stone--and known as permanent works of the Third System. These works were the product of an engineering fortifications board organized in 1816 and headed by Brigadier General Simon Bernard, whose French background influenced construction of the new works in the United States. Members of the board made careful and lengthy evaluations of coastal defense needs; from their deliberation and recommendations the defensive character of the country over the next several decades was established. Forts constructed under the Third System took polygonal, usually hexagonal, shapes, generally measured several hundred yards in their perimeters, and contained several tiers with enough casemates for a hundred or more guns directed on a single target. Built of brick or stone, the thick walls of third system forts measured five or more feet. Although the basic forms of the system remained intact, there occurred important modifications reflective of changes in the armaments industry between 1817 and 1865, the years roughly delimiting the period of the Third System's functions. Major changes affecting the size and explosive capabilities of smoothbore projectiles took place, and all ordnance for the seacoast forts began to be produced in the United States. One change in response to such advances was the innovation in the 1850s of Chief Army Engineer Colonel Joseph Totten, an original member of the Bernard Board, of lining and shuttering the embrasures of masonry works with sheet iron. Another and most notable advance was the introduction during the Civil War of rifled cannon with increased muzzle velocity. These weapons ultimately brought the decline of "permanent" masonry forts, now proved susceptible

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9. Ibid., pp. 33-36.

to the shattering impact afforded by the new, superior weapons.[10] Classic seacost defenses of the Third System included Forts Sumter, Pickens, and Monroe, all of which incorporated the qualities of strength and concentrated firepower which characterized the system.

3. Permanent Works in the Delta

The Deep South, and in particular the Louisiana bayou country, offered certain unique problems to the building of fortifications there. One was the propensity of the soft soil to give way under the massive weight of the works and allow their subsidence. Another was the remote location of some of the southern outposts. This led to the erection of masonry citadels equipped with loopholes within the walls of a fort, so that an overrun garrison might take refuge there and make a last defense.[11] The Third System forts constructed below New Orleans were considered to be first class structures; they were among those designed to secure important cities from enemy assault, as opposed to second class forts designed to protect cities of secondary significance. Works relegated to third class status were to be deferred until all the others had been readied.[12] To augment the forts to be built around New Orleans it was proposed that floating batteries be stationed to secure the different passes into the Mississippi. Though recommended several times by

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10. Ibid., pp. 37-38, 44, 45, 52, 53, 67. 11. Ibid., p. 53; "This is the Tale of Fts. Pike, Macomb," Headquarters Heliogram (Council of Abandoned Military Posts, No. 114 July, 1979), p. 8.

12. Robinson, American Forts, p. 88.

Colonel Totten and others, establishment of the floating batteries was apparently never accomplished.[13]

4. Post-Civil War Changes

a. Brick versus Earth

The conclusion of the Civil War marked the beginning of a sudden shift away from the use of masonry in the construction of seacoast fortifications. Even during that conflict adherents of masonry construction could not help but see the devastating impact with which a rifled projectile splintered and tore into a brick curtain. Proponents of earthen defensive works arose to the fore. Editorialized The Army and Navy Journal:

> Their much greater cheapness; the greater ease of erecting them, earth being always at hand, when stone and brick are difficult to obtain; the little loss, comparatively, in abandoning them, when . . . new and unforseen circumstances render them useless. But beyond all these there is an incalculable benefit in the facility they offer for repairing damages. When a stone or brick wall is breached . . . the crumbling cannot be arrested under the enemy's fire, while, on the other hand, with barrows and sand bags, an earth-work assumes very soon its original form.[14]

Consequently, postwar defense efforts embraced the raising of numerous batteries, each capable of mounting several guns to fire in a

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13. See U.S. Congress. House. Revised Report of the Board of Engineers on the Defence of the Seaboard, March 24, 1826. H. Ex. Doc. 153, 19th Cong., 1st Sess., 1826. (Reproduced in U.S. Congress. House. Permanent Fortifications and Sea-Coast Defenses. April 23, 1682. H. Rept. 86 37 Cong., 2 sess., 1862.) Edmund P. Gaines, "General Gaines' Letter to the Chamber of Commerce." Headquarters, Western Division, near New-Orleans, La., January 22d, 1839; Joseph G. Totten, Report of General J. A. Totten, Chief Engineer, on the Subject of National Defenses (Washington, A. Boyd Hamilton, 1851. Reprint, New York: Arno Press, 1979), p. 74.

14. September 5, 1863.

manner similar to the barbette systems of old. Large earthen brick-reveted batteries, sometimes widely dispersed as tactical works on the flanks of the old masonry forts, came to be regarded as central defensive components rather than as the auxiliaries they had previously been considered. Such structures continued to be used through the 1870s and into the 1880s. Poorly funded, however, American coastal defenses gradually languished. Armament advances occurred but slowly and most cannon placed in the earthen batteries were of the old smoothbore pattern but converted into rifles. By the 1890s many of the masonry forts were ungarrisoned and in the charge of caretakers. Thus, work on the outlying earthen batteries was discontinued and in time the structures deteriorated.[15]

b. The Endicott Period and After

The concept of multiple batteries arrayed with cannon trained on important harbors and sea channels persisted despite their physical decline in the 1870s and 1880s. Their resurgent popularity resulted from the significant development of smokeless gunpowder during the latter decade, along with the evolution of breechloading cannon whose carriages could be raised and lowered for firing and reloading. These "disappearing guns," no longer revealing themselves with telltale puffs of gray smoke, proved ideal for use in batteries built of reinforced concrete fronted with earth and situated at tactically suitable seacoast positions. Such batteries came to be called "Endicott Batteries" after Secretary of War William C. Endicott who headed the 1885 board responsible for their adoption. The years of active development of this dispersed battery system, from the late 1880s until approximately 1904, became known as the Endicott period of American fortification.

Principal armament of the Endicott period consisted of guns of 8-, 10-, and 12-inch calibre, most of them of the disappearing variety. On recoil, these flat-trajectory weapons would lower automatically to positions

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15. Lewis, Seacoast Fortifications, pp. 69-70.

behind the thick battery walls where they could be serviced and reloaded prior to being raised to fire again. Many smaller calibered rapid-fire guns, complete with iron shields, were also positioned on barbette carriages for use against torpedo boats and destroyers. Besides cannon, the Endicott period saw frequent use of 12-inch mortars, clustered eight or sixteen strong in groups of fours in pit-like batteries. The stubby weapons could deliver projectiles weighing several hundred pounds apiece onto enemy ships, arching their missiles high to fall with deadly impact. And mines, in use since the Civil War, could be detonated by an electrical charge, thereby providing means to differentiate hostile from friendly shipping in a channel or harbor. Moreover, the fire of an entire complex of batteries at a particular site could be coordinated by electronic signals and by telephone from centralized observation stations.[16]

The Endicott program was expressly designed to forestall foreign naval blockades and attacks on American ports during a period of international turbulence and European adventurism in the western hemisphere, part of which culminated in the Spanish-American War. After 1898 the European threat diminished rapidly and the urgency with which the Endicott program had been pursued declined. Thereafter efforts were geared to meet the needs of expanding American naval power. Although the immediate years after 1898 represented more of a consolidation of Endicott features and a concern with the development of accessory equipment, the period nonetheless exerted a powerful impetus behind the development of ongoing twentieth century coastal defense technology.[17]

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16. Ibid., pp. 70, 77, 79, 83, 89; Hughes, Military Architecture, pp. 205, 206; Rowena A. Reed, "The Endicott Board--Vision and Reality," Periodical, XI (Summer, 1979), pp. 9, 10, 12.

17. Lewis, Seacoast Fortification, p. 89; Reed, "The Endicott Board," pp. 15, 16.

CHAPTER I: FRENCH COLONIAL DEFENSES

A. Arrival of the French

The first fortifications erected in the Louisiana delta were those established by the French early in the eighteenth century. In 1682 France claimed all the lands drained by the Mississippi and its tributaries by virtue of Robert Cavelier LaSalle's explorations. Named Louisiana to honor French King Louis XIV, the vast new country lay mostly unpenetrated until the late 1690s, when a Canadian officer, Pierre LeMoyne d'Iberville, was sent to consolidate French control in the area. On March 2, 1699, Iberville sailed into the mouth of the Mississippi, marking the beginning of an era of fortification in the region that would last through the next two centuries.[1]

Following 1700 a series of wars involving France disrupted the colonial venture. Then, in 1714, the Treaty of Utrecht brought peace, and in the next year Phillippe Duc d'Orleans became regent. Louisiana now drew attention for its potential commercial contributions to the Empire, a promise that led to the creation of what was eventually designated the Company of the Indies. In 1717 the Company determined to found a settlement some "thirty leagues" above the mouth of the Mississippi to be named New Orleans. Jean-Baptiste Le Moyne de Bienville, younger brother of Iberville, ascended the stream and chose the site for the city at the river terminus of an ancient Indian Trail near where a number of French traders had earlier settled. New Orleans was to be a central trading post for the Company of the Indies, which would grant land cessions as part of its promotional appeal. The plan over the next few years drew many immigrants from France, Germany, and other European countries, and in 1720 the first four military engineers arrived. Their early fortification designs were later incorporated into the defensive

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1. Samuel Wilson, Jr., Bienville's New Orleans: A French Colonial Capital, 1718-1768 (New Orleans: The Friends of the Cabildo, 1968), n.p.

plan for New Orleans. Although the success of the Company was not as great as anticipated, the establishment of New Orleans provided the major incentive for all future efforts at fortification in that region.[2]

B. The First Fortifications

Long before New Orleans was founded the French explorers had erected rude fortifications for protection from Indians and to indicate their determination to hold the region. The first fort was begun by Iberville in April, 1699, on the northeastern shore of Biloxi Bay. This was Fort Maurepas, named after the Count de Maurepas who served as France's Minister of the Marine.[3] The fort was described by Iberville as being constructed

> of wood with four bastions. Two are laid up of one and a half foot timbers, one foot high, decked like a ship, on which is the cannon, with a parapet four feet high; the two other of good palisades, well doubled, in which there are fourteen pieces of cannon and sufficient provisions.[4]

1. Fort du Mississippi (Fort de la Boulaye)

Fort Maurepas did not last long. In 1700 Iberville, alarmed at hearing of English ships on the Mississippi, decided he must reassert France's claims to the territory. Ascending the river, Bienville chose a solid site for a fort along the east bank fifty-four miles above its mouth and shortly he and Iberville began construction.[5] The structure,

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2. Ibid.

3. Ibid.

4. Quoted in ibid. The post was also named Fort Iberville, after its builder. Alcee Fortier, Louisiana (2 vols. Atlanta: Southern Historical Association, 1909), I, 441.

5. Wrote Iberville on February 26, 1700, to the Minister of the Marine: "I believe . . . that it will be a propos, to take possession of the Mississippi by means of a small establishment for fear that if we do not do so, the English will make one. . . ." Quoted in Maurice Ries, "The Mississippi Fort, called Fort de la Boulaye," The Louisiana Historical Quarterly, XIX (October, 1936), p. 17. See also Wilson, Bienville's New Orleans, n.p.; Fortier, Louisiana, I, 441-42; Wilson, "Colonial Fortifications," p. 109; Charles Gayarre, Romance of the History of Louisiana. A Series of Lectures (New York: D. Appleton and Company, 1848), p. 104.

located on the east bank eighteen miles below the present English Turn, was called Fort de la Boulaye (sometimes La Boulaix), perhaps for Louis-Hyacinthe Plomier, Sieur de la Boulaye, Inspector General of the Marine, a friend of Iberville then serving in the West Indies.[6] It was known more commonly as Fort du Mississippi, or Mississippi Fort. As designed by Iberville, the post was of simple construction. Work started in February, 1700, and Iberville reported in his journal that

> on the 6th and 7th I continued the work of clearing and squaring logs with which to build the house and have been working on a powder magazine 8 feet square, raised 5 feet above the ground, made of wood and covered and surrounded with 1-1/2 feet of mud plaster.[7]

Later, Iberville gave more details about the construction of Fort Mississippi. It was built of oak, elm, ash, and poplar trees growing adjacent to the site. "I have set to work to cut down these trees and square them," he wrote, "in order that we may build a square house twenty-eight feet on each face, two stories with machicolations, with four four-pound and two eighteen-pound cannons, with a moat twelve feet across."[8] The work was aided by the arrival of some Frenchmen from New France (Canada), who along with the officers and sailors helped with the readying of the site. On February 8 Iberville returned from a boat trip after large timbers with which to form beams for the fort. He found the blockhouse already erected. Wrote an observer:

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6. Jay Higginbotham, Old Mobile: Fort Lewis de la Louisiane, 1702-1711 (Mobile: Museum of the City of Mobile, 1977), p. 17n; H. Mortimer Favrot, "Colonial Forts of Louisiana," Louisiana Historical Quarterly, XXVI (1943), p. 726. Marcel Giraud suggests that the post was named for Pierre La Boulaye, a soldier of the garrison. A History of French Louisiana. 4 vols. Volume I trans. by Joseph C. Lambert (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1974), p. 40fn. At least one source, the Jesuit Pere Paul du Ru, called the post the fort of the Bayogoula, supposedly after an Indian who aided Bienville in choosing the site. See Ries, "Mississippi Fort," p. 24. Furthermore, "Boulaie" is a French term meaning birchplot or wood. Ibid., p. 37.

7. Quoted in Wilson, "Colonial Fortifications," pp. 109-10. See also the entries from Iberville's journal reproduced in Ries, "Mississippi Fort," p. 18.

8. Quoted in Wilson, "Colonial Fortifications," p. 110. See also Ries, "Mississippi Fort," pp. 17, 22, 23.

> The roof is made of palms [palmettos] whose leaves are flat and arranged like a fan. All this is well tied together and firmly supported. The building, which is about twenty feet square, is intended to serve as a magazine [warehouse] until there is a better one. . . .[9]

Next day a powder magazine was nearly finished. It was built two stories high to keep moisture from reaching the gunpowder. There was also an altar, and a site was selected for a cemetery.[10] Late in March the first domesticated livestock arrived by boat, consisting of a bull, a calf, and five cows, a dozen pigs and some chickens.[11]

To insure against further English incursions, Iberville erected a large cross in front of Fort de la Boulaye, at the foot of which was buried a lead plate bearing the inscription: "D.O.M. The French first came here from Canada under M. de Tonti, in 1685. From the sea coast under M. d'Iberville, in 1700, and planted this cross Feb. 14, 1700."[12]

Departing in April, Iberville placed his brother Bienville in charge of a garrison of twenty-five soldiers. (Earlier temporary commanders had been Sieur de Maltot and Denis de la Ronde.) In February, 1701, a year after it had been built, Father James Gravier, a Jesuit missionary from the Illinois country, visited the outpost and described it thusly:

> This first establishment is on the south [east] side of the river, eighteen leagues from its mouth. There is no fort nor bastion, entrenchment or redoubt; all consists of a battery of six guns, six and eight pounders, planked on the brow of the bluff, and of five or six cabins separate from each other and covered with palm leaves. The commandant Mr. de Bienville

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9. Quoted in ibid., p. 110.

10. Ibid.; Giraud, History of French Louisiana pp. 39-40.

11. D'Iberville's journal, in Ries, "Mississippi Fort," p. 19.

12. Fortier, Louisiana, I, 442. A more lengthy translation appears in Ries, "Mississippi Fort," p. 25.

> has quite a nice little house here. I perceived on arriving that they began to cry Famine, and that the bread stuffs began to run out, which obliged me to take to Indian food so as to be a burthen to none, . . . If the Mississipi [sic] is settled they will transfer the fort, . . . for the high waters overflow so furiously here that they have been four months in the water often knee deep outside of their cabins, although the Indians had assured them that this place was never inundated. The wheat which had been planted here was already quite high when the inundations caused by a furious swell of the sea in the mouth of August swept it away. The garden was hardly more successful. . . .[13]

The frequent flooding of the fort, together with its generally unhealthy position and inability to sustain itself, caused Bienville to reassess its importance. Moreover, fears of Indian unrest lessened after many of the natives succumbed to disease around 1700. More Indian groups had evacuated the country as the result of warfare with neighboring tribes. Finally, within a few years of its establishment Fort du Mississippi was abandoned and its garrison withdrawn to the new post of Mobile.[14] What remained of Fort de la Boulaye was probably destroyed in the great flood that hit the lower Mississippi in 1719.[15]

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13. Father James Gravier to Father de Lamberville, February 16, 1701, in John Gilmary Shea (ed.), Early Voyages Up and Down the Mississippi by Cavelier, St. Cosme, LeSeur, Grovier, and Guignos (Albany: Joel Munsell, 1861), pp. 152-53.

14. Ibid., p. 162; Giraud, History of French Louisiana, I, 78. Some sources state that the post was vacated later, in 1705 or 1707. See Fortier, Louisiana, I, 442; Favrot, "Colonial Fortifications," p. 726; and Marc de Villiers du Terrage, "A History of the Foundation of New Orleans (1717-1722)." Trans. by Warrington Dawson. The Louisiana Historical Quarterly, III (April, 1920), p. 166. Ries stated that the fort was unofficially garrisoned after 1707 and was used as a troop assembly point as late as 1715. "Mississippi Fort," p. 31.

15. Ernest Adam Landry, "The History of Forts Jackson and St. Philip with Special Emphasis on the Civil War Period" (unpublished master's thesis dated 1938, Louisiana State University and Agricultural and Mechanical College), p. 4. The site of Fort de la Boulaye was discovered in 1936 about one mile inland from Phoenix, Louisiana. Four young men from New Orleans found the vestiges of the moat along with a cannonball at the site. Years earlier (1923), a resident had unearthed ninety-two hand-hewn cypress logs, further evidence of the existence of the fort of that location. The Times-Picayune New Orleans, October 17, 1937. A detailed account of the discovery of the site is in Ries, "Mississippi Fort," passim.

2. Bayou St. John

Meantime, settlement occurred near the point where Bayou St. John entered Lake Pontchartrain, some twenty-five miles north of Fort du Mississippi near the later site of New Orleans. French officers had urged that a fortification be raised here as early as 1702 where it might double as a warehouse for commercial ventures to the north up the Mississippi.[16] Six years later a small group of settlers resided on the spot.[17] Through the very early years the community at Bayou St. John attracted much interest, partly because its high situation prevented flooding and partly because of its accessibility, via the Lake Pontchartrain route, to the open sea and the other French settlements around Mobile Bay.

C. New Orleans

In 1718 Bienville selected an adjacent tract bordering a great turn in the Mississippi for the site of New Orleans, headquarters for the Company of the Indies. Sieur Étienne Boucher Perrier de Salvert was appointed Chief Engineer of Louisiana responsible for laying out the town. When he arrived, one of Perrier's first duties after determining the boundaries would be to enclose a selected area with a stockade to protect any buildings the Company planned to erect. Once this was accomplished, the engineer was to outline the town limits and apportion the size of individual lots. Perrier was also instructed to expedite the construction of a brick factory so that permanent facilities might be built. In drafting plans of fortifications for the town, Perrier seems to have been influenced by Vauban--a pentagonal fortress he envisioned was exact in design to one formulated by the French master.[18]

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16. Terrage, "History of the Foundation of New Orleans," p. 166.

17. Giraud, History of French Louisiana, I, 190. In 1708 Chevalier de Remonville urged that works be raised at Bayou St. John. A fort with four buildings constructed of "big trees, turf, and palisades," and armed with artillery should be erected, he stated. Quoted in Terrage, "History of the Foundation of New Orleans," p. 166.

18. Terrage, "History of the Foundation of New Orleans," p. 185; Wilson, "Colonial Fortifications," pp. 111-12.

1. The Earliest Construction

Perrier died before he reached Louisiana. His successor as Chief Engineer was Pierre Blond de la Tour, who in 1721 carried out the task of sectioning the New Orleans tract into lots. De la Tour's assistant, Sieur Adrian de Pauger, established a place d' arms near the eastern river levee recently constructed to prevent the Mississippi's overflow. Actual sectioning of the tract became the responsibility of De Pauger, who traced a typical gridiron ultimately measuring eleven blocks long and six wide, each block containing twelve lots.[19] De la Tour's plans for buildings in New Orleans had them raised on heavy timber sills placed on the ground. They had strong frames of wood covered with wide planks. After De Pauger succeeded to the position of Chief Engineer in 1723 following De la Tour's death, he began the construction of public buildings using domestically-produced bricks. Notably, De Pauger undertook the design and construction of the church of St. Louis, predecessor to the present St. Louis Cathedral. When he died in 1726 the building was unfinished.[20] The stockade initially planned for New Orleans was not built for several years. Instead, the French placated the Indians with gifts; trouble from the Spanish and British seemed remote for the present.[21]

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19. Bureau of Governmental Research, Plan and Program for the Preservation of the Vieux Carre (New Orleans, 1968), pp. 9, 11; Robinson, American Forts, p. 43; Douglas W. Marshal, The City in the New World: The Military Contribution (Ann Arbor: William L. Clements Library, 1973), pp. 18-19.

20. Wilson, Bienville's New Orleans, n.p.

21. Wilson, "Colonial Fortifications," p. 115; Howard J. Nelson, "Walled Cities of the United States," Annals of the Association of American Geographers, LI (March, 1961), p. 16. Early plans of New Orleans prepared by Le Blond de la Tour, particularly that of April 23, 1722, show the city tract surrounded by rather idealized Vaubanesque fortifications, to include bastions at each corner. This original plan, in the collections of the Service Hydrographique de la Marine in Paris, is reproduced in Wilson, Bienville's New Orleans, n.p. Other plats show contemplated palisade fortifications along the river, although they did not exist at this early date. See Bureau of Governmental Research, Preservation of the Vieux Carre, pp. 15, 17-18.

2. Need for Defenses

Urgent incentive for preparing some type of fortifications came in November, 1729, following the massacre by Natchez Indians at Fort Rosalie to the north. Spurred on by fears for the safety of the community, Pierre Baron, the Chief Engineer, directed that a palisade be erected around the town with bastions at the corners. But this fortification never progressed beyond the forming of the ditches, for as peace returned apprehensions faded.[22] Barracks for the quartering of French troops were eventually built, however. These had been contemplated for a location at the edge of the city tract, at a point compatible with Vauban's thinking. Yet a central position seemed more appropriate to Bienville, especially since the palisade formerly proposed had never been completed. Late in 1733, on approval of his superiors, Bienville's latest Chief Engineer, Ignace Francois Broutin, began work erecting a barracks on either side of the place d'arms--present Jackson Square.[23]

3. The Barracks and Magazine

As conceived by Broutin, the barracks each stood two stories high and measured 300 feet in length. They possessed hip roofs and had attics with dormer windows. Fireplaces heated the soldiers' rooms and the windows were all surrounded by ornamental stucco. No windows were located in the rear wall of the structure, a factor that prevented any form of cross-ventilation. The officers' quarters were situated in end pavilions placed at right angles as wings to the main part of the structure and facing the river. Despite irregular funding, the first

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22. Wilson, "Colonial Fortifications," pp. 115, 116; Robinson, American Forts, p. 43; John Smith Kendall, History of New Orleans (2 vols. Chicago and New York: The Lewis Company, 1922), I, 10; Nelson, "Walled Cities," p. 16; Favrot, "Colonial Forts of Louisiana," p. 730; Bureau of Governmental Research, Preservation of the Vieux Carre, pp. 9, 11.

23. Wilson, "Colonial Fortifications," pp, 116-17; Samuel Wilson, Jr., "Ignace Francois Broutin," in John Francis McDermott (ed.), Frenchmen and French Ways in the Mississippi Valley (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1969) pp. 245, 263.

barracks building was completed by May, 1738; work on the other went on until after 1739.[24] Finished, the two structures formed a monumental symmetrical enframement of the place d'arms, a feature that had been desired by its earliest architects. Yet, despite their beauty, the barracks proved to be poorly constructed. By 1750--just a decade after their completion--they were in urgent need of repair. Funds for their maintenance were not forthcoming, and to avoid their collapse with possible tragic consequences the local government ordered them demolished.[25]

Another project started by Broutin at the time he began work on the barracks was construction of a plastered brick enclosure for the powder magazine, south of the city. After replacing the rotting wooden palisade about the magazine, Broutin decided to rebuild it entirely. "Everyday risk is run that it might be burned," reported a lieutenant, "the sentinels having perceived Indians and Negroes at different times roving around with fire."[26] When completed, the new plastered brick magazine sported elaborate sentry boxes and gate posts artistically topped with cannon balls. Ornamental ironwork graced the entrance. Finished in February, 1736, Broutin's powder magazine continued in use until 1794 when it was destroyed by fire.[27]

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24. Wilson, "Broutin," pp. 245, 259, 261, 262, 263, 265; Wilson, "Colonial Fortifications," pp. 116, 117.

25. Wilson, "Broutin," p. 292; Wilson, "Colonial Fortifications," p. 117. Today the Pontalba Buildings, erected in 1850 by Broutin's great-granddaughter, Micaela, Baroness de Pontalba, occupy the site of the barracks. Wilson, "Colonial Fortifications," p. 263.

26. Quoted in Wilson, "Broutin," p. 267.

27. Ibid., pp. 267, 270; Wilson, "Colonial Fortifications," p. 117.

D. French Defenses--Another Attempt

1. The Works at New Orleans

With France at peace, New Orleans contented itself with the security found in its new barracks and powder magazine and in the rudimentary line of fortifications prepared in 1729-30 in response to the Natchez massacre. But in the late 1750s security consciousness again surfaced with the outbreak of war between France and Great Britain. Following the French withdrawal from Fort Duquesne (Pennsylvania) in 1758, Louisiana Governor Louis Billhouart, Chevalier de Kerlerec, started upgrading the old line of defenses around New Orleans.[28] After Quebec fell in September, 1759, Kerlerec convened a council of war and proposed that a palisade be immediately erected around the city. Bernard Deverges, who had succeeded Broutin as Chief Engineer, drew the plans for the defenses--a ditch and a palisade with bastions and platforms for artillery emplacement.[29] By August, 1760, the moat was finished and the palisade partly done. In December, on completion of the palisade, Governor Kerlerec requested of his government enough guns, troops, and ammunition to render the works efficient. But before final disposition of the fortifications could be made, Kerlerec was recalled and dismissed as governor, effectively terminating French attempts to secure New Orleans. Soon after, in 1762, Louisiana west of the Mississippi was ceded to Spain.[30] A British officer traveling in Louisiana during the 1760s described this final defensive effort of the French:

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28. Favrot, "Colonial Forts," p. 730; George W. Cable, The Creoles of Louisiana (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1884), p. 87.

29. Wilson, "Colonial Fortifications," pp. 118, 119, 120.

30. Ibid., pp. 121, 122; Samuel Wilson, Jr., The Vieux Carre, New Orleans. Its Plan, Its Growth, Its Architecture (New Orleans: Bureau of Governmental Research, 1968); Charles Gayarre, Louisiana: Its History as a French Colony (New York: John Wiley, 1852), pp. 87-88; Nelson, "Walled Cities," pp. 16-17.

> The fortifications are only an enceinte of stockades, with a banquette within and a very trifling ditch without; these can answer no end but against Indians, or negroes, in case of an insurrection, and keep the slaves of the town and country from having any communication in the night.[31]

Meantime, at the "back door" to New Orleans--at the mouth of Bayou St. John on Lake Pontchartrain--the French erected another post, a small battery of six guns to protect the city from attack by the lake route. Fort St. John was a new post at the time of the transfer of Louisiana to Spanish control and appears to have been improved after its occupation by Spanish troops.[32]

2. The French Balize

Concurrent with the early development of New Orleans was the construction of another French outpost at the mouth of the Mississippi River. Designed to replace Fort du Mississippi which was considered to be too far north, as well as to assist vessels ascending the river in avoiding sandbars, this station, begun in 1722, was situated on the southeast pass of the stream on a small island then called Toulouse by the French. Known as The Balize, for the French word, "beacon," the post was erected on piles and consisted of a water battery of cannons arranged en barbette to fire across the channel, some warehouses, a chapel, and a powder magazine, all garrisoned by about fifty French soldiers.

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31. Philip Pittman, The Present State of the European Settlements on the Mississippi. (Orig. pub. 1770; reprint, Gainesville: University of Florida Press, 1973), p. 12. See Pittman's "Plan of New Orleans" in ibid., and for more detail of the French fortifications, see "A Plan of New Orleans," 1769 (based on Pittman's plan). Copy in the Map Division, Library of Congress.

32. Pittman, Present State of the European Settlements on the Mississippi, p. 10; "Report on the Forts of North America, December 18, 1765." Thomas Gage Papers. William L. Clements Library, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor.

Designed by LeBlond de la Tour and De Pauger, The Balize post was constructed under the supervision of Deverges, who considered it the key to Louisiana.[33]

a. Defenses at Balize

Plans called for the erection of two small batteries below The Balize. As of December, 1722, the plan was to fortify The Balize "to prevent [enemy] ships from entering the river." According to De la Tour's map of 1722, and another of 1731, the fort was to have bastions.[34] The main structure was to consist of an earthen epaulement raised in the traditional manner but on piles driven deep into the soil so as to support heavy cannon. Buildings scheduled to be erected nearby included a warehouse, two barracks (one each for soldiers and laborers), a chapel, a quarters for the chaplain, a commanding officer's quarters, and quarters for the warehouseman, pilot, and sailors. Also, a bakery, brickyard, and powder magazine were to be built.[35] The buildings were raised on brick

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33. Dunbar Rowland and Albert Godfrey Sanders (comps., eds., trans.), Mississippi Provincial Archives, 1701-1729 (3 vols,; Jackson: Press of the Mississippi Department of Archives and History, 1927-1932), II, 254; Fortier, Louisiana, I, 438; Landry, "History of Forts Jackson and St. Philip," p. 4; Wilson, "Colonial Fortifications," p. 118. The historical location of the Balize can be seen in "Carte de l'Embouchure du Fleuve St. Louis et du Fort de la Balise." 1731. Copy in the Map Division, Library of Congress.

34. Rowland and Sanders, Mississippi Provincial Archives, II, 255, 256; Favrot, "Colonial Forts," p. 730. A plan of the Balize dated 1720 shows a rough outline of the post, and includes the location of a cemetery. See "The East Mouth of the Mississippi, with the Plan of Fort Balise which defends the Entrance and Channel of that River," 1720 (engraving made in 1759) accompanying Thomas Jefferys, The Natural and Civil History of the French Dominions in North and South America (London: Printed for Thomas Jefferys at Charing-Cross, 1760).

35. "Plan of the Works Proposed to Be Built at the Island of LaBalise, with the Necessary Lodgings. . . ." September 1, 1723. Paris, Ministere des Colonies, No. 105. Reproduced in Wilson, "Colonial Fortifications."

foundations which rested on footings built of large, heavy timbers.[36] Opposite The Balize a small earthwork, complete with palisades, and lighthouse were to be erected. These structures, too, were to be raised upon deeply driven piles and timber footings.[37] Work went on for several years and appears to have consisted more of an ongoing maintenance effort. One complaint registered against De Pauger in May, 1725, was that he "wishes to begin everything and to finish nothing." Another maintained that he

> was using the piles [delivered previously by ship] to build a pigeon-house and other works, [and] that he was amusing himself with have [sic] a guard-house built large enough to lodge four companies instead of pressing diligently his embankments and pile-work in order to protect his works against the sea.[38]

b. Life at Balize

Isolated in the extreme, life at The Balize during the first decade of its existence must have been tortuous. Even visitors found its qualities wanting. One, writing a few years after its establishment, noted discouragingly that

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36. See, "Plan Elevation, and Section of One of the Two Barracks Buildings. . . ." July, 1731. Paris, Ministere des Colonies, No. 11. Reproduced in Wilson, "Colonial Fortifications"; "Plan, Section, and Elevation of a Guardhouse and Prison, Proposed to Be Built of the Post of La Balise." February 28, 1734. Paris, Archives Nationales. Reproduced in Wilson, "Colonial Fortifications"; "Plan of a Powder Magazine Proposed to Be Built at the Post of La Balise." February 24, 1734. Paris, Archives Nationales. Reproduced in Wilson, "Colonial Fortifications"; "Plan and Section of a Cistern Proposed to Be Built at the Post of La Balise. . . ." March 2, 1734. Paris, Archives Nationales. Reproduced in Wilson, "Colonial Fortifications."

37. "Plan, Section, and Elevation of the Battery Proposed to Be Built of Earth, on the Outermost Island at the Mouth of the St. Louis River." May 29, 1724. Paris, Ministere des Colonies, No. 34. Reproduced in Wilson, "Colonial Fortifications."

38. Rowland and Sanders, Mississippi Provincial Archives, II, 464. A 1731 map shows the occupied area at The Balize with six buildings arranged along the northeast edge. P. Buache. "Carte de l'embouchure du fleuve St. Louis et du Fort de la Balise." Copy in the Map Division, Library of Congress.

> this post lacks in general everything that is necessary for life and to get it is necessary to buy it three or four times more dearly than elsewhere, except what is drawn from the warehouse. The island does not produce one plant except a few reeds. It is so narrow that there is no room to cultivate a garden, and even if there were any, the ground is covered with salt from the sea which would burn everything up. It is inhabited only by some soldiers, a few workmen and some negroes. . . .[39]

In September, 1727, a shipload of black slaves arrived at The Balize enroute to New Orleans to serve the Company of the Indies. At The Balize they contracted a severe disease that left most of them either with bloody dysentery or blinded in one eye. Some were auctioned off in this condition, while others were distributed among local "well-to-do-inhabitants."[40]

Apparently the high humidity at The Balize had a telling effect on the wooden post buildings. In 1738 the store at that place was said to be rapidly deteriorating and was ordered demolished and a new one built. At the same time a brick guard house with tile roof was erected and the store and bakery roofed with shingles.[41] More urgent measures were needed in the 1740s after the outbreak of the War of Austrian Succession in Europe, involving both France and Great Britain as mutual antagonists. In Louisiana French concerns increased over possible foreign invasion and the navigation of the Mississippi by British warships, producing measures geared toward improving the defenses at the Balize. Called upon to inspect the mouth of the river for his government, the Marquis De Vaudreuil remarked in 1746 that the dearth of solid ground precluded the

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39. Rowland and Sanders, Mississippi Provincial Archives, II, 518.

40. Ibid., 546. As of 1745 there were thirty blacks residing at the Balize. Gayarre, Louisiana, p. 28.

41. Heloise H. Cruzat (comp.), "Records of the Superior Council of Louisiana, XXXIII," Louisiana Historical Quarterly, X (January, 1927), pp. 116, 117.

erection of works below The Balize. "It is only necessary to preserve the fort which already exists . . . ," he wrote, both for its defensive capability and "because it serves as a place of depot for our commerce with [our allies,] the Spaniards."[42] An attempt was made to fortify a small channel that had formed near The Balize, but problems arose in the recruitment of local planters to help in the construction.[43] In May, 1747, De Vaudreuil decided to remove part of the armament at The Balize. Anticipating that the British would enter the Mississippi by another, deeper, channel, he left one 8-pounder and two 4-pounders at The Balize in the charge of a greatly diminished garrison and took the balance of the ordnance and men with him upstream, determined to establish new fortifications from which to counter enemy vessels.[44]

c. Decline of the French Balize

Thereafter The Balize declined as a prime focus of French defense. In September, 1754, Governor Kerlerec enumerated the then problems of the site:

> The land . . . is so deficient in substance and solidity, that it is not possible, without considerable expenses, to establish thereon a settlement or durable fortifications. The fortifications which the India Company had caused to be erected there, and which were extensive, are destroyed. There are remaining but few vestiges of them, which are daily sinking into the mud, and are always under water when the tide rises, notwithstanding the repairs made to them in 1741 and 1742.[45]

Kerlerec suggested, moreover, that the changing flow of the river increasingly tended to isolate The Balize post and that what was needed was a kind of floating battery:

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42. Quoted in Gayarre, Louisiana, p. 31.

43. Ibid., pp. 34-35.

44. Ibid., pp. 38-39.

45. Ibid., pp. 77-78.

> A fifty gun ship, with a solid bottom, a well caulked waist, and the rablets from stern to stem, up and down, starboard and larboard, lined with a sheet of lead, four inches wide, sheathed with nails and red cypress wood to preserve it from the worms, would last at least thirty years in the river. It would be the best substitute for a fort, which the nature of the soil renders impossible.[46]

Kerlerec instead sent an old frigate and three smaller ships to secure the passes. By the mid-1760s The Balize under France had deteriorated to the extent that an observer reported seeing only the barracks and three or four cannons en barbette at the site.[47]

3. English Turn

With the waning of enthusiasm for repairing The Balize, French engineers began to rely for defense on natural sites farther up the Mississippi, notably at English Turn and Plaquemine Turn. English Turn lay only eighteen miles below New Orleans at a bend of the river so profoundly radical that ascending ships found it difficult to adjust their sails to compensate for the charge in direction. Vessels would consequently pause in their ascent, thereby providing easy targets for the cross fire of artillery placed along both shores. English Turn got its name in 1699 when Bienville was returning downriver from having selected the site of Fort du Mississippi. At the bend he encountered an English ship of sixteen guns. Somehow Bienville persuaded the English officer either that France's claim to the region was secure or that he had erroneously identified the stream as the Mississippi. The English ship departed, and the site of the verbal exchange was thereafter called English Turn.[48]

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46. Ibid., p. 78.

47. Pittman, Present State of the European Settlements on the Mississippi, p. 2.

48. Gayarre, Romance of the History of Louisiana, pp. 92-93; Joseph Wallace, The History of Illinois and Louisiana under the French Rule (Cincinnati: The Robert Clarke Company, 1899), p. 220.

a. Fort St. Leon and Fort St. Mary

Its strategic importance early recognized, in 1722, only four years after the founding of New Orleans, directives were issued to erect a warehouse and three artillery batteries at English Turn, likely the first works built there.[49] Because of the unique navigational features of English Turn, the solidity of its soil, and because the heavily wooded countryside would impede an enemy making a land assault there, De Vaudreuil in 1746 proposed to build on each side of the river at that spot "a fort made up of mud and fascines, with epaulments, the shelving sides of which are to be fenced and secured with hurdles. . . ."[50] To construct the fort, De Vaudreuil ordered the inhabitants of New Orleans and the surrounding countryside to donate the services of one-fifth of their slaves for a period of six weeks. In ten days' time, he planned, "there will be a battery of ten eighteen-pounders in each fort."

> It would be proper to send sixteen twenty-four-pounders with their balls, and fourteen eighteen-pounders, to fill up all the embrasures which overlook the river. The entrenchments on the land side would be sufficiently fortified with the four ten-pounders we have at New Orleans.[51]

Overall supervision of the work was the responsibility of Bernard de Verges, who departed somewhat from the familiar Vauban pattern used in the early fortifications around New Orleans. Progress went slowly and the forts were not completed until after 1749; the earthwork on the west

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49. Rowland and Sanders, Mississippi Provincial Archives, II, 256.

50. Quoted in Gayarre, Louisiana, pp. 32-33. See also ibid., p. 39.

51. Ibid., p. 33. Elaborate designs were prepared for the forts at English Turn. These plans, never fulfilled, called for the establishment of a star-like redoubt containing a large, multi-gun battery on each side of the Mississippi. See "Carte de la Partie du Fleuve St. Louis nommee le Detour aux Anglois, avec les Plans de deux Batteries de Canons." Undated (c. 1746). Louisiana State Museum Library, New Orleans.

bank, Fort St. Leon, was garrisoned by about seventy soldiers in 1754.[52] That situated on the east bank a short distance south was known as Fort St. Mary after an adjacent plantation.[53] The larger post, Fort St. Leon, was built of earth supported by fascines in the design of a bastioned square. The wall, built of pointed palisades each six inches square by twelve feet long, contained 187 loopholes for musket defense.[54] In 1755 impending conflict with Great Britain spurred the French effort at English Turn and Governor Kerlerec ordered more works raised below the bend. Two years later preparations were complete to resist an invasion of British troops. Apprehensions remained high into the spring of 1759; instructions were given directing slaves to fell trees as an abatis before Fort St. Leon and Fort St. Mary. If the redoubts were captured the cannon were to be immediately spiked.[55] But conflict did not arrive in that section. Tensions relaxed. Fort St. Leon was occupied intermittently by the French until the colony was turned over to Spain in 1763. The site at English Turn, however, continued to be of strategic value for decades to come.[56]

4. Fort Plaquemine and Fort Bourbon

Soon after initiating work at the forts at English Turn, Governor De Vaudreuil authorized similar defenses at Plaquemine Turn, forty miles

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52. Wilson, "Colonial Fortifications," pp. 118, 119; Joseph Zarza, "Fort St. Leon" (unpublished manuscript dated April, 1963, in the Louisiana Collection, Howard-Tilton Library, Tulane University), p. 2.

53. Ibid., pp. 1-2.

54. Ibid., pp. 2-3.

55. Marc de Villiers du Terrage, Les Dernières Années de la Louisiane Francaise (Paris: Librarie Orientale and Americaine, 1904), pp. 69, 76, 91.

56. The exact site of Fort St. Leon was discovered in 1963. A cannon ball was found by workmen near the site of Fort St. Mary. Bricks recovered at Fort St. Leon were most likely relics of the American battery built on the site in 1809. Ibid., p. 7; New Orleans States-Item, February 28, 1963.

to the south. Here another sharp bend in the Mississippi presented similar defensive possibilities. De Vaudreuil at first resisted the plans of his engineers for a fort at Plaquemine Turn, believing that the ground there was too weak to support a major work and that it was so low as to be prone to flooding.[57] Furthermore, the bend did not so impede traffic as at English Turn. "Availing themselves of a fresh breeze," he wrote, "the [enemy] ships would have but one discharge to stand, and would be out of reach of our guns before they could be fired a second time."[58] The solution overcoming this opposition lay in the erection of a second battery on the west bank of the river to provide cross fire against hostile vessels.[59] Little is known of these works, but both batteries, Fort Plaquemine on the east and Fort Bourbon on the west side of the river, evidently proved of marginal importance to French defense strategy and served more in a supplemental capacity to the works erected at English Turn. Both structures designed by Bernard De Verges appear to have been built of earth bolstered with stakes and fascines. More elaborate fortifications at Plaquemine Turn were prepared following the conclusion of the Seven Years War (French and Indian War) and the advent of Spain in the former French colony of Louisiana.

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57. Wilson, "Broutin," p. 285; Gayarre, Louisiana, p. 39.

58. Quoted in Gayarre, Louisiana, p. 32.

59. Ibid.; Betsy Swanson, "Keep Sheet--Louisiana Forts" (published by The Friends of the Cabildo, n.d.).

60. Swanson, "Keep Sheet."

CHAPTER II: SPANISH COLONIAL DEFENSES

In the Treaty of Paris of 1763 following the Seven Years War, the territory of Louisiana east of the Mississippi River was given over to Great Britain. Under a previous agreement, most of French Louisiana, including New Orleans and the lands below, went to Spain. Spanish control did not ensue until early 1766 with the arrival of the first Spanish governor, Don Antonio de Ulloa. French inhabitants of the colony tried unsuccessfully to revolt against Ulloa's rule, and only after the arrival of Don Alexandro O'Reilly, Louisiana's second Spanish governor, was Spain's control firmly established.

A. Spanish Improvements

Spanish defensive improvements during the first years of its occupation were minimal and consisted mostly of stabilizing former works and consolidating previous French-held positions. Some small works were built, such as Fort Real Catolica, erected by Ulloa on a tiny island near The Balize, but this post was abandoned soon after O'Reilly's arrival. Only relatively late in Spain's tenure did external threats suffice to instigate what could be termed an original building program by Spain in Louisiana.[1]

1. The Spanish Balize

a. A New Location

One defensive site abandoned by the French and reestablished by the Spanish was that at The Balize. By the late 1760s the old French post had deteriorated badly, and, because of the immense sedimentary deposit of the Mississippi, the site had, in effect, moved inland by some

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1. Favrot, "Colonial Forts," pp. 739-40; Edwin Adams Davis, Louisiana: A Narrative History (Baton Rouge: Claitor's Publishing Division, 1971), pp. 97, 100.

two miles. Governor Ulloa's engineers selected an adjacent site on an island he called San Carlos and caused some barracks to be built for the primary use of river pilots. The new Balize was up Southeast Pass from the old site, just above its confluence with Northeast Pass. The remaining buildings at Old Balize continued to serve as a landmark for vessels entering the river.[2] At the new post, a battery of three or four guns arranged to fire en barbette emulated that at Old Balize and was in the charge of a junior ranking Spanish officer and a command of twenty soldiers. Buildings at the new post, besides the barracks erected for the soldiers, included houses for a pilot and a chaplain.[3] Like its predecessor, the New Balize offered little in the way of defense to the colony; that was reserved for the works built farther upstream. Instead, commented an observer, it seems "to have been established only for the purposes of assisting vessels coming into the river, and forwarding intelligence or dispatches to New Orleans."[4]

b. Action at The Balize

Despite its innocuous position, The Balize was occasionally subjected to attacks, or threats of them. During the winter of 1793 a party of French marines captured the post and held it for a few months until a

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2. Pittman, Present State of the European Settlements on the Mississippi, p. 5; Fortier, Louisiana, I, 438; Benjamin Henry Latrobe, Impressions Respecting New Orleans. Ed. by Samuel Wilson, Jr. (New York: Columbia University Press, 1951), p. 12n; Francois-Xavier Martin, The History of Louisiana, from the Earliest Period (orig. pub. 1827); reprint, Gretna, Louisiana: Pelican Publishing Company, 1975), p. 8.

3. Pittman, Present State of the European Settlements on the Mississippi, p. 5; Martin, History of Louisiana, p. 8; M. Le Page DuPratz, The History of Louisiana, or of the Western Ports of Virginia and Carolina (London: T. Becket, 1774; reprint, New Orleans: Pelican Press, n.d.), pp. 47, 116.

4. Thomas Hutchins, An historical narrative and topographical description of Louisiana and West Florida (Philadelphia, 1784), quoted in James Alexander Robertson, Louisiana under the Rule of Spain, France, and the United States 1785-1807 (2 vols.; Cleveland: Arthur H. Clark Company, 1911), p.159.

company of Spanish troops came down from New Orleans, stormed the place driving the Frenchmen away, and retook it without a casualty.[5] Probably this incident inspired Spanish Governor Francisco Luis Hector, Baron de Carondelet to order a blockhouse constructed at The Balize "to avoid night surprises." The blockhouse also served as a residence for pilots and some of the soldiers stationed there. Two cannons were placed in this structure, complete with closing embrasures. The Balize, wrote Carondelet, henceforth "can not be taken without artillery."[6]

One of the last descriptions of The Balize during its days under European jurisdiction was given by Pierre Clement de Laussat, French Prefect at the time of the transfer of Louisiana to the United States in 1803. By terms of the secret Treaty of San Ildefonso (1800) Spain had agreed to return the colony to France, which ultimately ceded it to the United States. On his arrival in March, 1803, to negotiate the transfer, Laussat stopped and explored The Balize:

> [The post] contained [chief pilot Juan] Ronquillo's houses; quarters for sixteen student pilots; the customs house; barracks for the soldiers and officers; and a guardhouse. There was a tower constructed of grating and latticework to cut out the wind, about forty-five feet above the ground and approximately fifty feet above the highest level of the river, with a spire in the form of a steeple, atop which a flag was raised. . . . The view from this tower embraced the sea, some of the smaller islands, the bar, some breakers to the right and left, large spans of water (bayous), tall reeds submerged in marshes, and to the southwest, the old French fort, of which

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5. Historical Sketch Book and Guide to New Orleans and Environs (New York: Will H. Coleman, 1885), p. 172.

6. "Military Report on Louisiana and West Florida. By Baron de Carondelet, Governor of Louisiana. New Orleans, November 24, 1794." Reproduced in Robertson, Louisiana under th Rule of Spain, France, and the United States, p. 32. See also, "Extract of the matters . . . which summarily manifests the condition of the cities, forts, and posts of the province of Louisiana." Book XI, p. 298. Bundle 2354, No. 3. Works Projects Administration (comp.), "Despatches of the Spanish Governors of Louisiana--Carondelet" (unpublished typescript dated 1939 in the Louisiana State Museum Library, New Orleans).

there still remained orange groves, orchards, and the ruins of the arsenal [magazine?].[7]

The French military engineer Joseph Vinache noted that the location of the post was useless so far as it concerned defense of the river channel.[8] Such was the state of The Balize when it passed from European to American control.

2. Fort St. John

Three other former French works maintained under Spanish occupation were Fort St. John, Fort St. Leon, and Fort St. Mary. Fort St. John, at the mouth of Bayou St. John on Lake Pontchartrain, in 1792 needed repairs to its outer works. The work could mount a complement of eight guns, four of 8-pounder calibre and four of 4-pounder. Only half of these were mounted in 1792.[9]

Two years later Fort St. John was presented in these terms:

> Its precinct, or irregular form, consists of nothing more than boards on the side of the sea, elevated upon strong pillars of lumber on the inside and out, the space between these boards has been filled in with small shells and dirt which forms a parapet about a foot and a half thick; on the land side, its precinct consists of a strong stockade with a corresponding embrasure for a battery. It is sufficiently strong enough to

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7. Pierre Clement de Laussat, Memoirs of My Life. Trans. by Sister Agnes-Josephine Pastiva; ed. by Robert D. Bush (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1978), p. 14. For another, similar description, see letter of Pedro Cavallon, April 12, 1803, quoted in Terrage, Louisiane Francaise, p. 398.

8. Joseph Vinache, "M'emoire, ou Reconnaissance Militaire, Depuis le Poste de la Balise, situe a l'embouchure du Mississippi, Jusqu'a la Nouvelle Orleans." Manuscripts Department, Special Collections Division. Tulane University Library.

9. Works Projects Administration (comp.), "Messages of El Baron de Carondelet, Sixth Spanish Governor of Louisiana." Book 8 (April 20, 1792-July 31, 1793), Bundle 1447, Letter #72, 1792.

> impede, with its artillery, the passage of small boats from the lakes to the river, but it would be easy to disembark above or below and attack it from the rear.[10]

In the late 1790s the fort, commanded by Lieutenant Colonel Manuel Perez, was described as being "very badly constructed, and mounted with five or six cannon."[11] And on the eve of its transfer to the United States, Commissioner Laussat's engineer described Fort St. John as an earthen redoubt dressed with wood but needing repairs. It then contained eight iron cannon. Buildings included one brick and timber barracks, measuring 48 feet long by 20 feet wide and 7 feet by 12 feet and 8 feet high. In the barracks was a fireplace; another fireplace was in the kitchen, probably a separate wooden structure.[12]

3. The Works at English Turn

Fort St. Leon and Fort St. Mary, situated respectively, on the west and east banks of the Mississippi along English Turn, remained of significant strategic importance to the defense of New Orleans through the first years of Spanish rule. Captain Philip Pittman wrote of these defenses during his journey through the area in 1765:

> Although the forts are only enclosures of stockades and a defence against small arms, the batteries on each side, which are of ten twelve-pounders, are more than sufficient to stop the progress of any vessel. . . . The forts are on points of land, which are bounded by the river on one side and by swamps on the other, so that any attacks against them must prove unsuccessful.[13]

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10. "Extract of the matters," Book XI, p. 297. Bundle 2354, No. 3, in "Despatches of the Spanish Governors."

11. Francis Baily, Journal of a Tour in Unsettled Parts of North America in 1796 and 1797. Ed. by Jack D. L. Holmes (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1969), pp. 187, 307n.

12. Favrot, "Colonial Forts," pp. 747-48.

13. Present State of European Settlements on the Mississippi, p. 9. See also the similar description of DuPratz in History of Louisiana, pp. 47-48.

Forts St. Leon and St. Mary were abandoned by Carondelet about 1792. The Governor decided to concentrate his energies on strengthening the defenses of New Orleans and in erecting, twenty miles below these forts at Plaquemines Turn, two other works that he believed would more capably secure approaches to the city.[14] Nevertheless, the positions remained of importance. In 1794, Carondelet recommended that the sites be reoccupied by artillery and that temporary redoubts be erected should New Orleans be threatened by invasion.[15]

B. Strengthening New Orleans

1. Early Spanish Efforts

The most extensive works raised during the period of Spanish occupation of Louisiana were those designed to strengthen the defenses of the city of New Orleans. By the time of Spain's advent the old French works lay in disrepair. In 1767 the enceinte was described as "a stockade which is continually deteriorating on account of the moisture of the soil."[16] A report made two years later stated that the palisade was decaying.[17] Yet the first Spanish officials were more concerned with establishing administrative authority in the colony. Governor O'Reilly built a cabildo from which to govern Louisiana on the town square next to the old parish church and adjacent to the sites of the former French barracks. During the 1780s Governor Bernardo de Galvez believed any attempt to resurrect the French works would be a wasteful expense and instead proposed the construction of light armed river craft to ply the Mississippi for the protection of the city. Cognizant of the military activities of the warring British and American patriots to the north,

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14. Victor Collot, A Journey in North America (2 vols.; Paris, 1826), II, 99-100; Zarza, "Fort St. Leon," p. 4.

15. "Military Report on Louisiana," in Robertson, Louisiana under the Rule of Spain, France, and the United States, pp. 325-27.

16. Quoted in Nelson, "Walled Cities," p. 17.

17. Ibid.

Galvez did cause watch towers to be erected at varying distances from New Orleans by which means an advancing foe might be spotted.[18] Under Galvez, too, a barracks for housing Spanish troops was completed, extending from the rear of the old Ursalines Convent over to Barracks Street. Begun earlier and occupied by the French, these new barracks ran nearly one and one-half blocks long. They were brick coated with lime, two stories high, and had galleries supported by pillars in front and rear.[19] During the disastrous conflagration that swept through New Orleans on March 21, 1788, the barracks, along with nearly all other principal structures in the city, was destroyed.[20]

2. Carondelet's Defense Program

New Orleans recovered from the fire. As the city rebuilt, a sense of its vulnerability increased and more attention was paid to improving its security. Remarked Governor Carondelet, who was responsible for the first major Spanish defense program there:

> Since New Orleans . . . is the center whence are distributed the forces, ammunition, provisions, and all things needful for the defense of the posts, forts, and fortified places, as well as the center for the commerce of the whole province, it has the greatest influence over its defense, and for the same reasons any hostile power will always direct its efforts against it.[21]

New Orleans, said Carondelet, was open to attack by hostile forces approaching by way of Lakes Borgne and Pontchartrain and through

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18. Bureau of Governmental Research, Plan and Program for the Preservation of the Vieux Carre, p. 110; Favrot, "Colonial Forts," pp. 740-41.

19. Henry C. Castellanos, New Orleans as It Was: Episodes of Louisiana Life (New Orleans: L. Graham and Son, Ltd., Printers, 1895; reprint, Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1978), pp. 319-20.

20. Bureau of Governmental Research, Plan and Program for the Preservation of the Vieux Carre, p. 12.

21. "Military Report on Louisiana," in Robertson, Louisiana under the Rule of Spain, France, and the United States, p. 319.

Barataria Bay.[22] Specifically, the Governor reacted to rumors of an anticipated American attack on his province. On March 22, 1792, he outlined his intentions to

> surround this city with a ditch, the dirt thrown on the side towards the city forming a kind of terrace (plataforma), which, at the same time, will serve as a parapet; I will also raise about five bastions which I will build in the district with their good parapets, in order to defend the curtains. In the ditch I will place a good paling (palisade) which will be above the water of the river, which water I can easily make flow into the ditch.[23]

a. Surrounding the City with Walls and Redoubts

Consequently, on April 19, 1792, work began on the most ambitious fortification plan New Orleans had yet known. Roughly approximating the old line of French defenses, Carondelet's engineer, Gilberto Guillemard, traced ample works that enclosed three sides of the city. By the spring of 1792 there were under construction five earthen redoubts, supported by five armed redans and a water battery, all joined together by a ditch and a strongly palisaded covered way surrounding New Orleans. Erected at an angle of the lot gridiron, each pentagonaly-shaped redoubt contained a battery whose fire crossed with that of one of the supporting redans. Riverside defense rested with large artillery complements placed in the two redoubts there, as well as with the guns in the water battery. On a point across the Mississippi two more batteires were raised, arranged so as to cross their cannon fire with those before New Orleans. Carondelet estimated the cost of completing these works at twelve thousand pesos. Ninety-four cannon of medium and heavy calibres would be required for the fortifications.[24] The defenses would be manned by volunteer militia. In New Orleans were eight companies of 100 men each; more volunteers were available outside the city.[25]

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22. Ibid., pp. 319-20.

23. Quoted in Wilson, Vieux Carre, p. 45.

24. "Messages of El Baron de Carondelet." Book 8, Bundle 1447, letter #72, 1792.

25. Martin, History of Louisiana, p. 260.

Carondelet used slave and prisoner labor for the work on the fortifications. In July, 1793, there were two dozen prisoners from La Habana, Cuba, assisting in the construction, and inhabitants were asked to loan their negroes to help complete the redoubts.[26] Ostensibly, the defenses were to protect the city against designs of rival European colonial powers and against perceived expansionist urges of the United States. Yet the new walls also served to impress on French inhabitants of New Orleans the determination of Spanish authorities to discourage notions of rebellion on the part of either the citizens or the slaves.[27]

The five redoubts formed the main features of Carondelet's works. The two structures fronting on the river were Fort San Luis (St. Louis), at present Canal Street, and, 1200 yards to the northeast, Fort San Carlos (St. Charles), the largest of all the works (at present Esplanade Street). Northwest of the latter structure some 530 yards distant stood Fort San Juan (St. John), while 450 yards away to the southwest was Fort San Fernando (St. Ferdinand). Completing the enceinte was Fort Bourgogne (Burgundy) (at present Canal Street). All of the forts adhered to formal specifications for such earthworks; all were constructed in the classic sense to include the components of ditch, rampart, parapet, scarp, counterscarp, and glacis. All utilized traditional fraizes and palisades in their defense design. The profile for Fort St. Louis contained a double ditch where it fronted on the Mississippi. In other respects, except for size, the redoubts were virtually identical to one another.[28] The curtain connecting these works together consisted

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26. Wilson, Vieux Carre, p. 46.

27. Nelson, "Walled Cities," pp. 21, 34; Kendall, History of New Orleans, pp. 34, 35; Castellanos, New Orleans as It Was, p. 316.

28. "Plano topographica que Manifesta la Situacion de la Ciudad de la Nueva Orleans. . . ." 1792. Copy in the Map Division, Library of Congress. See also "Plano de las Fortificaciones que se estau construyendo en la Nueva Orleans. . . ." 1792. Copy in the Map Division, Library of Congress; "Plano detallado de la Fortificacion de la Plaza de Nueva Orleans. . . ." 1792. Seville, Spanish Archives. Reproduced in Samuel Wilson, Jr., "Gulf Coast Architecture," in Earle W. Newton and Ernest F. Dibble (eds.), Spain and Her Rivals on the Gulf Coast: Proceedings (Pensacola: Historic Pensacola, 1971), p. 114.

of a crude stockade, before which was a water-filled ditch, or moat, forty feet wide and seven feet deep. Furthermore, said Governor Carondelet, "the ditches of each redoubt are lined with boards in order to prevent the weakness of the ground from ruining the scarp and counterscarp during the frequent rains in the winter. Fort San Carlos [St. Charles] has been made stronger, designed to serve as a retreat for the garrison in case the enemy penetrates into the city."[29] There were six wooden gates through the curtain into the city. The biggest two were on the levee at riverfront. Two lesser entrances were in the rear of New Orleans, each guarded by a breastwork, and two more led across the ditch and into the city on its southwest side. Any of these entrances, wrote one observer, could be easily forced.[30]

While Carondelet admitted that his defenses were something less than formidable, he maintained that properly manned and armed they could be able to withstand enemy assault. In a lengthy dissertation prepared in 1794 he supported his assertion of defensive capability in detail while discussing in theoretical terms just such an attack.[31] He placed great emphasis on Fort St. Charles as the final bulwark of defense in a siege and advised that a hornwork be constructed parallel to the Mississippi and adjoining that fort to secure life sustaining provisions for the garrison. The fort itself should be faced with brick to insure its security. Garrisoned with 800-1,000 men and defended by its double batteries, the post, wrote Carondelet, "can sustain a siege of a month. . . ."[32]

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29. "Extract of the matters," Book XI, p. 294. Bundle 2354, No. 3, in "Despatches of the Spanish Governors."

30. Baily, Journal of a Tour, p. 167.

31. See "Military Report on Louisiana," in Robertson, Louisiana under the Rule of Spain, France, and the United States, pp. 309-29.

32. Ibid., p. 328.

b. Outsiders' Views

Contemporary descriptions of the Spanish defenses of New Orleans offer significant details about the structures. That of Victor Collot, a Frenchman who visited the city in 1796 and who was imprisoned in Fort St. Charles, noted that the river posts had each "a parapet of eighteen feet thick, lined with brick, with a ditch and covered way. The ditch is eight feet in depth, and twenty broad."[33] Each fort contained a powder magazine and a barracks of sufficient size for 150 soldiers. Twelve cannon, of 12-pounder and 18-pounder calibre, were mounted in each, while a "great battery" stood between Forts St. Louis and St. Charles on the river. The three forts in the rear of the city, said Collot, "have no covered way, but only stakes and palisades." Each of these redoubts was armed with cannon and contained a barracks for 100 men. The palisaded curtain consisted of "a causeway three feet in height . . . on which were placed great picquets of twelve feet. . . . Behind these picquets is a small banquette."[34]

A critical examination of the works by a British traveller, Francis Baily, in 1797 produced the following extensive account:

> The fortification with which this city is surrounded consists of five bastions regularly laid out, and furnished with banquette, rampart, parapet, ditch covered way, and glacis; the curtains are nothing more than a line of stockades about four feet high, which are set at a small distance from each other, which renders them penetrable by musket-ball. This stockade is furnished with a banquette within, and a trifling ditch and glacis without, which extends round the whole of the city, bastions and all. The side next the river is open, so that there are only three sides fortified. In the middle of each curtain there is a small redoubt or ravelin, furnished with three, four, and five embrasures; but none of them have more than two pieces of cannon mounted, which are six or eight pounders. The bastions [redoubts], which might be rendered very strong, have each sixteen embrasures; that is, four in each face, three in each flank, and two in the gorge to face the city. However, they are very badly mounted with cannon, and from what I could understand, they could not remedy this

33. Collot, Journey in North America, p. 95.

34. Ibid., pp. 95, 96, 97.

> matter, as there were no cannons in the place but what were in the bastions. The western bastion [Fort St. Ferdinand] had but three or four pieces, the north-western bastion [Fort St. John] the same quantity, the northern bastion [Fort Burgundy] had about five or six, and the eastern bastion [Ft. St. Charles] had its full complement, besides the same number in the covered way. . . . [the southern bastion, Fort St. Louis,] was furnished with about twelve pieces of cannon, and was also furnished with a counterguard, and had traverses in the covered way. The redoubt on the levee had five pieces of cannon mounted. . . . There is another redoubt [battery?] furnished with four pieces of cannon on the levee, and facing the magazine, which place I suppose it was meant to defend. All the cannon in these last-mentioned places are about twenty-four pounders.[35]

Baily thought the defenses, generally, were weak and could be successfully assaulted on the river front or in the rear by a resolute adversary. Furthermore, the allegiance of the inhabitants--many of whom were British and Americans--was open to question. They "are heartily tired of the Spanish yoke. . . ," wrote Baily.[36] Victor Collot's impressions of the solidity of the works surrounding New Orleans agreed with Baily's. Wrote Collot:

> They look rather like mock fortifications, from their diminutive size, and especially from their ridiculous distribution, than places of war; for there is not one of these forts that is sheltered, and which, five hundred determined men could not carry sword in hand. Should one of the two principal forts, either that of St. Lewis [St. Louis] or St. Charles, be taken, the others are rendered of very little importance; for by turning a part of the guns against the town, it would immediately be forced to capitulate, since it might be burned in an hour, and all its inhabitants destroyed. . . . When Mr. de Carondelet adopted this bad system of defence, it is more likely that he had rather in view to keep his Catholic Majesty's subjects in due subordination than to cover the town. . . . It is one of the misfortunes of this government, to have more to fear from enemies within than from those without.[37]

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35. Baily, Journal of a Tour, pp. 165-66.

36. Ibid., p. 166.

37. Journey in North America, pp. 97-98.

The works prepared under Carondelet survived the ravages of the fire that devastated the city in December, 1794, the second such disaster to strike New Orleans in six years. The powder magazine built by the French exploded during the blaze, but the new fortifications escaped mostly intact.[38] Maintenance was required, but seemingly was not an ongoing process. By the time the French regained Louisiana the line of entrenchments was falling into ruin. French Colonial Prefect Laussat's engineer, Vinache, stated that New Orleans "can scarcely be called fortified." The redans along the curtains, he found, had deteriorated to an extent that "scarcely any traces of them remain."[39] Palisades and fraizes were ruined. The moat had all but evaporated and in warm months exuded a stench that was suspected of causing disease among inhabitants of the city.[40] Fort St. Charles, reported one visitor, was "already falling into ruins and crumbling on all sides."[41] As Laussat concluded,

> The fortifications have never been kept up, and are falling into decay; the ditches are filling up; the terraces are crumbling down, the palisades are wanting, or rotten; the bridges have given way, or consist of only one or two beams; the gates are off their hinges, and are lying on the ground.[42]

c. Arming the Works

Armament for the various redoubts, as of 1803, amounted to sixty-seven guns distributed thusly: Fort St. Charles, 30 iron cannon of

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38. Preservation of the Vieux Carre, p. 12; Wilson, Vieux Carre, p. 48.

39. Quoted in Favrot, "Colonial Forts," p. 747. See also Vinache, "M'emoire, ou Reconnaissance Militaire."

40. Vinache, "M'emoire, ou Reconnaissance Militaire."

41. Berquin-Duvallon, Vue de la colonie espagnole du Mississippi, ou des provinces de Louisiane et Florida occidentale (Paris, 1803), quoted in Robertson, Louisiana under the Rule of Spain, France, and the United States, p. 170n.

42. Letter to Minister Decres, 1803. Quoted in Nelson, "Walled Cities," p. 17.

12-, 18-, 24-, and 30-pounder calibre, 2 bronze 24-pounders, and 2 8-inch bronze obusiers (howitzers); Fort St Louis, 15 iron cannon, 2 bronze 4-pounder cannon, and 1 6-inch obusier; Fort St. John, 9 iron cannon; Fort Burgundy, 2 iron cannon; and Fort St. Ferdinand, 4 iron cannon. In addition, there was an artillery park in which were kept 112 pieces of ordnance ranging from 24-pounder cannon to mortars to carronades.[43] None of these weapons had been fired in hostilities during service under the Spanish flag.

C. Construction of Fort St. Philip

Soon after he began construction on the fortifications around New Orleans, Governor Carondelet proposed work on two new forts, St. Philip (San Felipe), at the site of old Fort Plaquemine below the city, and Bourbon, a smaller post opposite it on the site of the French battery of the same name. This was at a position of utmost defensive importance, a sharp turn of the Mississippi, and there is evidence that preparations by the Spanish to fortify it began in 1786. Functioning defenses at this point would serve to deter any approach to New Orleans via the river. Construction on Fort St. Philip started in 1792 under the contracted direction of Colonel Gilberto de St. Maxent.[44] During that year 14,489 pesos were spent raising the structure.[45]

By late 1792 this "key to the Mississippi" could mount ten 18-pounder cannon against enemy vessels ascending the stream. The rear

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43. Vinache, "M'emoire, on Reconnaissance Militaire."

44. Jack D. L. Holmes, "Some French Engineers in Spanish Louisiana," in The French in the Mississippi Valley. Ed. by John Francis McDermott (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1965), pp. 129, 130, 131; Favrot, "Colonial Forts," p. 748.

45. "Statement formed by the principal accountant's office of the army and royal treasury of the province of Louisiana. . . ." Bundle 1447, Letter #72. WPA, "Messages of El Baron de Carondelet," Book 8.

of the fort was protected naturally by swamps, although four more guns were requested to insure against surprise attacks at night, "as it has no [formal] defense other than a road protected by stakes [palisades]."[46] The builders surmised that the post could be completed for 10,000 more pesos.[47]

Work on Fort St. Philip was frequently interrupted. In August, 1793, a terrific hurricane struck the area, inundating everything in its wake. Several of Colonel St. Maxent's black laborers drowned and the work of revetting the walls with brick was slowed. Moreover, it was difficult finding and keeping labor during the season of peak warmth and humidity. To guard the work, Carondelet stationed three Spanish galleys with artillery mounted in their bows in the Mardi Gras Bayou adjoining the fort. Toward the end of the year fears of a French invasion prompted the garrisoning of Fort St. Philip with several hundred militia.[48]

An early description of Fort St. Philip shortly after its completion stated that the post consisted of

> a strong covered battery in the form of a bulwark which is mounted with 12 cannons of 18[-pounder] caliber, the rest is enclosed by a rampart of dirt covered with green sod and a corresponding parapet eight feet in thickness; a covered-way surrounds the fort with its corresponding stockade and an entanglement at the foot of the glacis.[49]

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46. Statement of condition of forts, in Ibid.

47. Ibid.

48. "Despatches of the Spanish Governors," Bundle 1443-A, Letter 510, Book IV, p. 288; Ibid., Bundle 1447, Letter 76, Book VIII, p. 375; Landry, "History of Forts Jackson and St. Philip," p. 6.

49. "Despatches of the Spanish Governors," Bundle 2354, Letter 3, Book XI, pp. 297-98.

In 1794 the armament was reduced to ten pieces, sufficient, said Carondelet, to stop any frigate in the river. In a detailed analysis of the status of Fort St. Philip, the Governor stated that while the post was susceptible to attack in the rear, there were six 4-pounder guns placed ready to repel such a landward assault. Worst of all conceivable approaches, he said, would be that down the river from the city where a large cypress grove north of the fort would conceal a foe's advance and allow them to establish batteries against the post. Therefore, wrote Carondelet, the walls should be thickened on all landward sides and revetted with brick, and 12-pounders should be mounted on them.[50]

Improvements to Fort St. Philip were made over the next few years. In 1795 estimates were prepared for raising a new rampart at the post. A major problem with the fort was that the ground was forever settling under its great weight, necessitating almost constant rebuilding and strengthening of its component parts. Whenever foundations were erected, large numbers of stakes were driven lengthwise into the ground. Cypress sleepers were laid row upon row over these, secured with nails or wooden pegs. Atop this support the foundations rested.[51] Much of the labor was performed by slaves and by prisoners of the colony. St. Maxent, who owned land near the fort, built cabins for the Negroes and ovens for baking the brick used in the walls. Probably, too, there was a lime kiln at the site.[52]

Maintenance of Fort St. Philip was an ongoing thing. Despite experiments with different kinds of piling and latticework foundations, the walls were continually sinking into the wet earth, causing large cracks to

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50. "Military Report on Louisiana," in Robertson, Louisiana under the Rule of Spain, France, and the United States, pp. 315-25.

51. "Despatches of the Spanish Governors." Carondelet to Don Luis de las Casas, January 26, 1795. Bundle 1443-B, Letter 638, Book XI, pp. 94-99. See ibid., for details of lumber measurements, etc.

52. Ibid.

appear in the brick facings.[53] In 1796 Victor Collot visited Fort St. Philip. He left a brief but vivid rendering of the post:

> Its form is so irregular, that it is difficult to give any clear description, especially having had but a transient view. It is a bastion, closed by two long branches broken in the middle, which gives it at the first glance, the air of a hornwork. The parapets which front the river are eighteen feet thick, lined with brick, and it is surrounded with a ditch twenty feet long and twelve thick.
>
> The two great branches and the gorge are defended only by a causeway, the width of which has been taken from the ditch; this ditch is of the same breadth and depth on each side as in the front; on the causeway are placed picquets twelve feet in height. Mardi Gras Creek furnishes water to all the ditches.
>
> Within the fort are barracks for three hundred men, a house for the commander, and a very good powder magazine. On the northern side is a small bank that extends a thousand yards along the river, and is directed upon one of the points of the bastion, in which is a gate with a drawbridge. This is the only outlet of the fort, without running the risk of being swallowed up in the mud.
>
> Twenty-four guns of different sizes form the battery, and a captain with one hundred men, who are relieved every month, form the garrison. . . .
>
> [The] moving or rather floating grounds admit of no foundation, on the solidity of which there is any dependence. The fort, that is the part covered with brick, though built on piles twenty feet long and two thick, and fixed within six inches of each other, has already given way more than three feet on the side of the creek, and two on the eastern side. The linings of brick, and which have been constructed scarcely three years, are as much damaged as the other parts. The banks of the river are every day falling in, notwithstanding the stakes and the hundred galley slaves employed the whole year to keep them in repair; these circumstances lead us to doubt whether the land will take any firm settlement, at least for a long time.[54]

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53. Favrot, "Colonial Forts," p. 748.

54. Journey in North America, II, 100-03.

In 1801 the fort was in the charge of Lieutenant Colonel Pierre Joseph Favrot. Twenty-four cannons were still present.[55] One resident complained of the unremitting presence of mosquitos and sickness,[56] a common lament of those stationed at Fort St. Philip throughout the history of the post. Inspecting the fort in 1803, Laussat remarked that "one is eaten alive by red bugs, mosquitoes, and gnats."[57] At that time the ordnance had been reduced to eighteen iron cannons. The sixty or so soldiers cultivated a vegetable garden[58] which doubtless helped to offset the ill effects caused by the tepid heat and the marshlands. Fort St. Philip also served to deter smuggling, and captains entering the river were required to stop and declare the nature of their cargo before proceeding on to New Orleans.[59] Upstream from the post there developed several plantations, of which part of the produce likely was sold to the garrison. The lands were fertile and yielded great quantities of cotton, rice, maize, kidney beans, rice, oranges, and pomegranates. Some planters grew sugar cane; others cultivated the fruit of waxplants, used in making candles. Game was plentiful, too, with deer and rabbits

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55. Perrin du Lac, F. M. Voyage dans les deux Louisianes, et chez les nations sauvages du Missouri, par les Etats-Unis, l'Ohio et les Provinces qui le bord, en 1801, 1802 et 1803 (Paris, 1805), reproduced in Robertson, Louisiana under the Rule of Spain, France, and the United States, pp. 160-161n. During his tenure at Fort St. Philip Favrot authored Textbook in Arithmetic by Questions and Answers and a Summary of the Sciences. Holmes, "French Engineers," p. 141.

56. Favrot, "Colonial Forts," p. 752.

57. Quoted in ibid.

58. Laussot, Memoirs of My Life, p. 15; Paul Alliot, "Historical and Political reflections on Louisiana," Part 1, reproduced in Robertson, Louisiana under the Rule of Spain, France, and the United States, p. 51.

59. Alliot, "Reflections on Louisiana," in Robertson, Louisiana under the Rule of Spain, France, and the United States, p. 51.

abounding. Closer to Fort St. Philip, west of the Mississippi, other planters settled, grew similar crops, and pursued their livelihoods hunting and fishing and raising hogs.[60] It was from the work forces of these plantations that much of the black labor came for erecting Fort St. Philip.

In 1803 the engineer Vinache wrote that Fort St. Philip was an irregular work of little relief in generally good condition and armed with eighteen 18-pounders. Vinache stated that to put the post into military readiness a battery should be built at its right front.[61]

D. The Forts Bourbon

As envisioned, the artillery fire from Fort St. Philip was to cross that of the small battery built on the west bank and called Fort Bourbon. The new Fort Bourbon was a crude redoubt of earth and timber containing several guns. Erected by order of Governor Carondelet about 1794, the post ("not more than a redoubt of mud, lined with boards") was to aid in preventing the passage of enemy vessels and also to act as a protective cover for Spanish militia. Carondelet placed five 6-pounder guns in the redoubt.[62] "Ships ascending the river," he wrote, "cannot see it before they find themselves within shotgun range of its battery."[63]

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60. Ibid., pp. 55, 57.

61. "Mémoire, ou Reconnaissance."

62. Carondelet, "Military Report on Louisiana," in Robertson, Louisiana Under the Rule of Spain, France, and the United States, p. 316; "Despatches of the Spanish Governors." Carondelet to Don Luis de las Casas, April 15, 1794. Bundle 1443-A, Letter 510, Book IV, p. 288.

63. "Despatches of the Spanish Governors," Bundle 2354, Letter 3, Book XI, pp. 297-98.

Fort Bourbon was shortlived, destroyed by a hurricane that struck in August, 1795. Whirlpools in the Mississippi undermined the point on which the redoubt stood and it crumbled into the stream. Carondelet immediately proposed that it be rebuilt, using convict labor, on a site "not exposed to inundation."[64] In December, 1796, he directed Colonel Favrot to

> raise the parapet of Fort Bourbon on the river side some nine feet, and the interior of the fort some three and a half and 18 feet wide, so as to be able to erect a battery of three pieces of artillery, for you must leave the rest of the ground free to elevate the roof of the guardhouse before filling the rest of the parade grounds to the same height of three and a half feet.
>
> Your circular battery once finished with its loopholes open, its interior and exterior covered with beams, you will build a levee around the fort, following the line which we have marked on the ground for the parapet of the covered walk; by means of this the waters will not be able any longer to cover the grounds of the fort.[65]

In 1803 the new Fort Bourbon held "several iron cannons that cross-fired with those of Fort Saint-Philippe."[66] Vinache, however, recommended that it be upgraded to prevent an enemy from seizing the post and using it to direct a bombardment against Fort St. Philip.[67] Presumably, this fort likewise succumbed to the ravages of the storm-swept Mississippi delta.

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64. Carondelet to Don Luis de las Casas, August 30, 1795, in "Despatches of the Spanish Governors," Bundle 1443-B, Letter 738, Book V, p. 375.

65. Quoted in Favrot, "Colonial Forts," p. 750.

66. Laussat, Memoirs of My Life, p. 15. See also Perrin du Lac, Voyage dans les deux Louisianes, in Robertson, Louisiana under the Rule of Spain, France, and the United States, p. 160.

67. Vinache, "M'emoire, ou Reconnaissance." Fort Bourbon was located about one mile north of the present Fort Jackson.

E. Carondelet Advises Erecting Other Works

Ever sensitive to the defensive needs in his charge, Carondelet urged that measures be taken to secure other points leading to New Orleans. He proposed that a battery of four 6-pounders be raised on the land between Lake Borgne and Lake Pontchartrain at the pass called Chef Menteur. He further urged the erection of a battery of four 12-pounders "on the bluff or Coquilles" to guard against the passage of vessels from Lake Borgne to Lake Pontchartrain through the Rigolets.[68] Yet another battery should be raised on Grand Terre at the entrance of Barataria Bay to secure that approach to the city.[69] Should these recommendations be fulfilled, maintained the Governor, the defenses of Fort St. John, inadequate as they were, would no longer be needed and its garrison and armament could be moved to more advantageous positions.[70]

Carondelet's advice was not immediately heeded. His concerns soon became American concerns, for in November 1803, the province of Louisiana was transferred from Spain to France. Twenty days later the colony was turned over, through purchase, to the United States, under whose jurisidiction it has since remained.

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68. WPA, "Messages of El Baron de Carondelet," Bundle 1447, Letter 72, 1792. Statement of Condition of forts, etc. Book 8; Carondelet, "Military Report on Louisiana," in Robertson, Louisiana under the Rule of Spain, France, and the United States, pp. 330-31.

69. Carondelet, "Military Report on Louisiana," in Robertson, Louisiana under the Rule of Spain, France, and the United States, p. 332.

70. "Despatches of the Spanish Governors," Bundle 2354, Letter 3, Book XI, p. 297.

CHAPTER III: EARLY AMERICAN DEFENSES

A. The United States Acquires Louisiana

Following the ascendancy of the United States in Louisiana, President Thomas Jefferson appointed William C. C. Claiborne Governor of the Territory of Orleans. It was Claiborne and his successor, Brigadier General James Wilkinson, Governor of Louisiana Territory, who presided over early American efforts to strengthen some of the existing fortifications and destroy others whose effectiveness had passed. National concerns included the security of New Orleans and a diverse ethnic population of varied national loyalties numbering more than 8,000 people. Furthermore, in the country around the city--in Barataria, along the shores of Lake Pontchartrain, and down the Mississippi to the Balize--lived another 3,500 folk whose interests and well-being became concerns of the federal government.[1] The delta country thus retained its strategic importance with the change from old to new world government.

New Orleans was the only metropolis in the American acquisition. Although there existed some sentiment for removing the city to the opposite bank which was deemed "higher and better calculated for a town," with the vicinity of Fort St. Leon thereby assuming preeminent military significance, the notion was fleeting.[2] In the transfer the United States acquired all of the public buildings in the city including the defensive works, a military hospital, the powder magazine across the river, and the barracks.[3]

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1. Martin, History of Louisiana, p. 300.

2. Robert R. Livingston to Talleyrand, February 1, 1803, quoted in Robertson, Louisiana under the Rule of Spain, France, and the United States, p. 174.

3. Martin, History of Louisiana, p. 299.

B. The Spanish Works

Of immediate concern to the new government was the condition of the old Spanish fortifications surrounding the city. Before the transfer these had been described as

> 5 ill constructed field Redoubts with a covered way, pallisade & ditch, the whole going fast to ruins, & could never possibly be of any Service from the want of Judgement in their construction. It would be proper to throw the works into the ditches, & thereby get rid of the stagnant waters which occasion Sickness.[4]

As a commissioner during the transfer proceedings, Claiborne had been well aware of the condition of the works.[5] So bad were they that on a cold night in early January, 1804, New Orleans citizens knowledgeable of the government's intent to demolish them precipitately tore down much of the stockade for use as firewood. "Not one stick was left on a line of one and a half miles, and a house in one of the rear redoubts was razed to its foundation and the materials carried off."[6] The earlier suggestion was realized in 1805 when revetment from the faces of the redoubts was used in filling in the polluted moats.[7] Complicating the early period of American suzerainty were legal claims, from individuals as well as the New Orleans city government, against the United States regarding ownership of the property on which the fortifications stood. Individuals claiming

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4. Daniel Clark to Secretary of State James Madison, September 8, 1803, in Clarence Edwin Carter (comp., ed.), The Territorial Papers of the United States (26 vols.; Washington: Government Printing Office, 1940), IX, 35.

5. Claiborne to Madison, November 26, 1803, in William C. C. Claiborne, Official Letter Books of W.C.C. Claiborne, 1801-1816. Ed. by Dunbar Rowland (6 vols.; Jackson, Mississippi: State Department of Archives and History, 1917), I, 298.

6. Brigadier General James Wilkinson to Secretary of War Henry Dearborn, January 11, 1804, quoted in Wilson, Vieux Carre, p. 57.

7. Castellanos, New Orleans as It Was, p. 316.

ownership occasionally protested the demolition efforts by the city; conversely, the city government felt constrained to seek recognition from Congress of its right to public property in New Orleans. The matter was eventually resolved by compromise after 1812.[8] In the meantime, Governor Claiborne consented to allow the leveling of all the works except Fort St. Charles and Fort St. Louis. The moats of those two structures could be drained, however.[9]

C. Burr's Conspiracy and the New Orleans Fortifications

Toward the end of 1806 news of a conspiracy of former Vice President Aaron Burr against the Spanish Southwest brought a suspension in the demolition. General Wilkinson instead directed that they be rebuilt to protect New Orleans. This work entailed the importation of timber from West Florida, since wood of easy accessibility was now long gone. Workmen were hired at enormous expense to complete the project, which entailed the raising of a rampart between the river and Fort Burgundy and rebuilding part of that structure. In effect, the rampart divided the old city from its newer suburbs, and the prospect of being on the receiving end of heavy artillery startled citizens residing in the latter place. In November, Wilkinson ordered battering cannons placed in Fort St. Louis and Fort St. Charles and on all sides of the city. But the works were inadequate and poorly planned. When Burr's scheme shortly collapsed, labor on Wilkinson's defenses stopped.[10]

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8. Wilson, Vieux Carre, p. 58. See also Claiborne to Madison, January 24, 1804, in Claiborne, Letter Books, I, pp. 348-49; Claiborne to President Thomas Jefferson, December 22, 1804. Carter, Territorial Papers, IX, 359. One Elisha Winters won his property claim in 1812 on a ruling of the Land Claims Board. Part of his land had been seized by Carondelet in 1791 for erecting the Spanish fortifications. Wilson, Vieux Carre, p. 59.

9. Claiborne to Mayor John Watkins, August 2, 1805, in Claiborne, Letter Books, III, 144; Claiborne to Colonel Costant Freeman, August 18, 1805; in ibid., p. 176; Wilson, Vieux Carre, pp. 57-58.

10. "Faithful Picture of the Political Situation of New Orleans, at the close of the last and the beginning of the present year, 1807," cited in Wilson, Vieux Carre, pp. 58-59; Martin, History of Louisiana, pp. 335-36.

D. Razing the Works

Soon after, all the works except Fort St. Louis and Fort St. Charles were razed, although by the spring of 1808 Fort St. Louis, too, had been demolished.[11] A year later Fort St. Charles briefly figured in a short-lived insurrection scare.[12] In January, 1810, however, a slave uprising did occur on a plantation above the city. The blacks marched to New Orleans, enroute inciting other slaves to join them until the assemblage stood several hundred strong. Regular troops from Fort St. Charles aided the militia in quelling the disturbance; some sixty insurgents were killed, either shot, bayoneted, or hanged in the aftermath of the fighting. Insuring against repetition, planters and officials decapitated the corpses and placed the heads on long poles along the Mississippi to discourage similar impulses.[13]

1. Fort St. Charles Survives

With demolition of all the works but Fort St. Charles complete, the streets of the old square, or Vieux Carre, were extended through the former line to join Canal Street which had been located along the former rampart between Fort Burgundy and Fort St. Louis. Subdivisions of the old fortification property took place and, after Congress sanctioned ownership by the city, land sales took place.[14] The sites of the former

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11. The Orleans Navigation Company to President Jefferson, May, 1808, in Carter, Territorial Papers, IX, 778.

12. James Mather to Claiborne, January 8, 1809, in ibid., p. 816; Thomas H. Cushing to Claiborne, January 10, 1809, in ibid., p. 820; Martin, History of Louisiana, p. 346.

13. Martin, History of Louisiana, p. 349.

14. Wilson, Vieux Carre, pp. 59-60. A map by Engineer Bartholemy Lafon entitled "Plan of a Port of New Orleans," c. 1814, shows Fort St. Ferdinand as "about demolish'd By the Corporation [City Government] 1813 & 1814." "Atlas of the 7th Military District Exhibiting the General map of the States of Tenessee [sic] Louisiana and Mississippi Territory with the Fortifications Formerly Built, Projected, or Built Since the Beginning of the War. Together [with] the positions of every place on a large scale." Historic New Orleans Collection.

redoubts eventually became broad public squares. That where Fort St. Ferdinand stood became Congo Square, a popular gathering place for blacks, now known as Beauregard Square. In the space where Fort St. Louis stood a United States Custom House was eventually built. The areas once bordered by the defensive curtain of the Spanish fortifications became, on the northwest, Esplanade Street, and, on the west (or former rear of the city), Rampart Street.[15] In 1812 the city government petitioned Congress for the demolition of Fort St. Charles, "which from the recent Aggrandizements of the City, can no longer be Considered as a Military position."[16] But the redoubt remained standing.

In June, 1814, an army inspector portrayed Fort St. Charles as

> a very handsome little Fort commanding the River and lower end of the City. It receives one company complete . . . [and is] at present commanded by Captain Enoch Humphrey of the Corps of Artillery. . . . The Quarters of this Fort are complete for officers and men, are in excellent order and [are] as healthy as the Barracks or any part of the City.[17]

When in the same year Bartholemy Lafon drew the post of Fort St. Charles he showed the pentagonal, palisaded structure containing eighteen cannon--two 9-pounders, six 12-pounders, six 24-pounders, and four 32-pounders.[18]

2. Other Military Structures

Other military structures supporting New Orleans in the summer of 1814 included the magazine or ammunition depot across the river directly

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15. Latrobe, Impressions Respecting New Orleans, p. 49n; Nelson, "Walled Cities," pp. 21, 22.

16. Petition to Congress of Elliguis Fromentin and Allan B. Magruder, referred May 7, 1812, in Carter, Territorial Papers, IX, 1020.

17. "Inspector's Report of the State of the Barracks, Fort St. Charles, Hospital and Magazine in New Orleans, 30th June 1814." NA, RG 159. Records of the Inspector General's Department. Microfilm M624, Roll 3. Inspection Reports of the Office of the Inspector General.

18. Lafon, "Plan of Fort St. Charles, New Orleans." "Atlas of the 7th Military District."

opposite Fort St. Charles. The magazine contained "an abundant supply of Cannon and Musket powder fixed and unfixed ammunition of all kinds to answer every demand. . . ."[19] Barracks buildings also stood on the east side of the Mississippi, erected in 1813 for the use of volunteers but then occupied by troops of the Forty-fourth U.S. Infantry.[20] Nearby stood a guardhouse. Public stores, i.e., quartermaster, ordnance, and contractor's supplies were kept in buildings adjoining the navy yard, which was next to the public square (present Jackson Square) along the riverfront.[21] The former Spanish barracks, now housing American soldiers, stood further north and were situated well behind the gorge of Fort St. Charles. According to the inspection report,

> The Barracks . . . are buildings large, airy and commodious, equal to the reception of seven hundred men. they are inclosed by a Brick Wall in front and high pailing [sic] in the rear, leaving between the Barracks and the Wall a parade ground for six hundred men, and in the rear for all the shops and buildings of artificers, and characters of the Ordnance Department, as well as furnishing some ground for the use of the Troops. The Rooms in the upper story of the men's barracks requires to be newly floor'd, the present ones being very much worn and in many places broken through. . . . The Parade ground and yard back of the Barracks require to be raised at least eighteen inches, for in all heavy rains in summer and constantly in Winter it is under water which continues on it until evaporated, unless bailed out by the men and carried into the Street.[22]

After the Americans took charge of the barracks many of the rooms were partitioned to accommodate commissioned officers. During the early part

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19. Ibid.

20. Ibid.

21. Ibid.; Bartholemy Lafon, "Plan of a Part of New Orleans," c. 1814, in "Atlas of the 7th Military District."

22. "Inspector's Report, " 1814. NA, RG 159.

of 1814 six companies of the U.S. Seventh Infantry resided in the structures.[23]

E. Improvement of Fort St. John

The ongoing security of New Orleans required the upkeep of Fort St. John, the old work at the mouth of Bayou St. John on Lake Pontchartrain, northwest of the city. Until other defenses could be arranged in the area of the Rigolets, between Lakes Borgne and Pontchartrain, Fort St. John would remain of importance in repelling an enemy advance on the lakes. In the spring of 1805, when authorities in Louisiana feared an insurrection in the colony, Claiborne urged that Fort St. John be strengthened to counter an expected intervention of British warships.[24] When hostilities with Spain threatened that autumn, he again called for bolstering the defenses.[25] "I consider the repairing of . . . [Fort] St. John as a necessary measure," he wrote in June 1806.[26] The post also figured in the preparations to meet Aaron Burr's conspirators late in 1806, though nothing significant transpired because Burr was captured before reaching New Orleans.[27] Beginning in 1807 regulatory passports were issued by the commander of Fort St. John to all trading vessels going to and from New Orleans on Bayou St. John.[28]

Finally, in 1808 work to improve the fortifications began under the direction of Major William MacRea. By September, 1809, some advancement

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23. Ibid.

24. Claiborne to Madison, May 10, 1805, in Claiborne, Letter Books, III, pp. 51-52; Claiborne to Lieutenant Colonel Freeman, May 13, 1805, in ibid., p. 54.

25. Claiborne to Madison, October 24, 1805, in ibid., pp. 212-13; Claiborne to Madison, November 5, 1805, in ibid., p. 227.

26. Claiborne to Dearborn, June 15, 1806, in ibid., p. 329.

27. Claiborne to Wilkinson, December 10, 1806, in ibid., IV, 53.

28. Claiborne to Commander, Fort St. John, in ibid., p. 86.

had been made.[29] Yet the improvements apparently were not extensive, for five years later Fort St. John was once more described as being "out of repair."[30] British intelligence in 1814 held that the post mounted "about 15 or 20 Guns of small Calibre; the works may be easily carried. . . ."[31]

Perhaps the best sources for the appearance of Fort St. John during the period 1809-1814 are the formal drawings prepared by the Engineer Department. An early undated plan shows the structure obviously under construction, probably sometime around 1808. In this drawing, Fort St. John, an irregular work situated on the west bank of Bayou St. John, measured approximately 65 yards north to south and 46 yards east to west. The heaviest fortified part of the enceinte was that armed section facing north towards Lake Pontchartrain. This face was curved and each end swept outward, that on the west forming a rather truncated bastion while that on the east joined the wall bordering the bayou channel. In the rear, close to the bayou, stood a small bastion that joined the back wall. This wall, which must have included the gorge, ran diagonally northwestward to meet the bastion on the west side. Further modifications were projected for the rear of the work, to include enlarged bastions and a barracks and other buildings.[32]

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29. The Orleans Navigation Company to President Jefferson, May, 1808, in Carter, Territorial Papers, IX, 788; Claiborne to MacRea, May 11, 1809, in Claiborne, Letter Books, IV, 350; War Department to MacRea, November 22, 1809, in NA. Microfilm Publications, "Buell Collection of Historical Documents Relating to the Corps of Engineers, 1801-1819."

30. "Inspector's Report," 1814. NA, RG 159.

31. Library of Congress. Manuscript Division. British Public Record Office. War Office, Secretary of War, In-Letters. Vols. 141-144. "Expedition to the Southern Coasts of North America."

32. Plat of Fort St. John. NA, RG 77, "Records of the Office of the Chief of Engineers." Cartographic Archives Division, Drawer 133, Sheet 1; Plat of Fort St. John, ibid., Drawer 133, Sheet 7.

In 1814 Lafon, a civilian engineer commissioned by the government, drew detailed plans of the post that showed its actual state and its projected state. In its projection the palisaded work was to contain eleven cannon, seven in the artillery emplacements facing the lake, three in the left rear bastion, and one in the right rear corner on the bayou. The fort was to be surrounded by a moat, with a gorge and drawbridge near the bayou in the rear. Inside the work two barracks and an officers' quarters were to be erected. When completed Fort St. John lacked a moat, had but two guns mounted, and contained only one barracks and a kitchen.[33]

F. Fort Petite Coquilles

Concern over fortifying the strip of land between Lake Pontchartrain and Lake Borgne seemingly detracted from efforts to secure Fort St. John at great expense. The Rigolets--the narrow waterways that connected the lakes--afforded a more practical site for deterring an enemy than did a post at the back door of New Orleans. On a peninsula covered with small shells (petite coquilles) a defensive work was begun in 1813. This post was situated on the north end of the Rigolets proper, the easternmost of the two connecting watercourses. In June, 1814, the post of Petite Coquilles was only half finished. It stood "on a bank of Shells surrounded by an immense marsh and commands all Craft or Vessels coming . . . from Sea. . . ."[34] Captain Francis Newman, an artillery officer, commanded the garrison raising the fort.[35] Erected under the supervision of the engineer Lafon, Petite Coquilles on the eve of the British invasion in late 1814 was reportedly armed with twenty pieces of heavy artillery.36

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33. Lafon, "Plan of the Pass & Fort St. John," and "Fort St. John," in "Atlas of the 7th Military District." Biographical data on Lafon appears in Holmes, "Some French Engineers in Spanish Louisiana," pp. 141-42.

34. "Inspector's Report," 1814. NA, RG 159.

35. Ibid.

36. "Expedition to the Southern Coasts of North America."

According to Lafon's drawings, Fort Petite Coquilles was another irregular work measuring roughly 310 feet long by 250 feet wide. In July 1813, the fort was projected along the north shore of Shell Island in the midst of a great marsh. Near the place where the Rigolets emptied into Lake Pontchartrain stood a semicircular emplacement for heavy ordnance. Guns mounted here were to cross their fire with a small battery to be built on the opposite point. The rest of Fort Petite Coquilles was to be rectangular, with blockhouse bastions on the two southernmost corners. The structure was to be surrounded by a moat, palisades, and fraizing, with drawbridges planned for the south and west sides. Inside would be two barracks and an officers' quarters, a kitchen, powder house, and magazine. By late 1814 all the major buildings had been erected. The moat only partly surrounded the fort on the east and west sides. At least four cannon, perhaps field pieces, stood on the ground facing the Rigolets, since the emplacements were not yet ready to receive armaments.[37]

G. Fort St. Leon

Also drawing attention from the Americans was the site of old Fort St. Leon along the west shore of English Turn on the Mississippi. In 1807 Claiborne and Wilkinson agreed on the strategic importance of the site, which was also viewed as a possible location for a navy yard. A year later Congress directed that a masonry battery be raised at English Turn and work shortly began at the location of the earlier post. At the same time a small camp was begun upstream on the east side of the river at Bayou Terre au Boeuf.[38] Work on Fort St. Leon evidently was

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36. "Expedition to the Southern Coasts of North America."

37. Lafon, "Fort Petite Coquilles, 7ber the 12th 1813." Map Division, Library of Congress; Lafon, "Plan of Petites Coquilles," and "Fort of the Petites Coquilles." "Atlas of the 7th Military District."

38. W. K. Armistead to Lieutenant Colonel Jonathan Williams, December 25, 1807. NA. Buell Collection, Item 58510/127; Claiborne to Dearborn, July 14, 1806, in Claiborne, Letter Books, III, 368-69; Zarza, "Fort St. Leon," pp. 4-5. On April 21, 1808, Claiborne wrote Secretary of War Dearborn: "The Fort at Plaquemine, may with a leading breeze and under cover of the night, be passed--But under no circumstances, could a Vessel evade a Battery at the English Turn." Carter, Territorial Papers, IX, 783.

completed in October, 1809.[39] In that month Major MacRea submitted a plan for a regular two-bastioned work, to contain a garrison of perhaps fifty men, at English Turn with an artillery battery fronting on the levee along the river. This planned work, apparently never fulfilled, envisioned barracks and officers' quarters inside.[40]

It appears that the labor undertaken in 1809 amounted mainly to reconditioning the old fort, because in 1813 Lafon prepared another diagram showing the existing works at the English Turn along with projected improvements. In May of that year Fort St. Leon consisted of a parapet on the river's edge, probably a remnant of the Spanish fortification there. Another parapet faced south, or downriver. Lafon described the components of this feature as a demi-bastion, a curtain, and a whole bastion. The ditch was "dug to its full depth and fac'd with facines [sic] on both sides from the top to the bottom." Across the ditch was the "glacis more than half finished." On the north and west sides of the structure were incompleted ramparts standing from one to three feet high. Another bastion was outlined at the northwest corner. Inside stood a structure, possibly a barracks, measuring 120 feet long. The entire fortification measured approximately 150 yards square. Lafon's projected design for Fort St. Leon included the completion of a moat around the structure, the addition of another bastion at the northeast corner, and the erection of two officers' quarters, two enlisted mens' barracks, a commanding officer's house, a kitchen, two guardhouses, a magazine, and a powderhouse. Cannon would be mounted to face all directions.[41]

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39. War Department to Major William MacRea, November 22, 1809. NA, Buell Collection. Item 58510/230.

40. "Plan of the Fort at the English-Turn," 1809. NA, Cartographic Archives Division, Drawer 133, Sheet 6; "A Map of the River Mississippi and Territory adjacent to New Orleans Illustrating the Military Position and Camp at Terre au Boeuf," c. 1804-05. Map Division, Library of Congress.

41. Lafon, "English Turn," 1814. "Atlas of the 7th Military District."

H. Fort St. Philip

1. Quarantine Function

Farther downriver at Plaquemines Turn stood Fort St. Philip, built by the Spanish under Governor Carondelet in the 1790s. During its first years under American control Fort St. Philip served the quarantine station established a short distance below the post. Ships with passengers suffering with malaria and similar contagious diseases were required by Louisiana authorities to dock below the fort. "The Officer commanding at Plaquemines," Claiborne addressed the captain of a French brig in 1804, "has orders to do every thing in his power, for your comfort, and that of the unfortunate fugitives who accompany you. . . ."[42] Occasionally bickering erupted at the post between the commanding officer and French ship captains. In one instance cannon were discharged at a brig whose anchor was caught on the river's bottom. The indignant French officer vigorously protested the insult to French Commissioner Laussat, who relayed it to the American Commissioners, Claiborne and Wilkinson. They succeeded in mitigating the "misunderstanding" to the acceptance of all concerned.[43]

During the spring of 1804 fears arose that ships involved in the slave trade were bringing infected cargoes into Louisiana. In April Claiborne ordered that all upstream-bound vessels bearing blacks be stopped by the commandant at Fort St. Philip.[44] Captain William Cooper, who commanded the garrison there, detained several blacks ill with smallpox. Claiborne approved the procedure, writing to Cooper, "You are required to detain them either at the Fort or at some convenient place

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42. January 20, 1804, in Claiborne, Letter Books, I, 343. See also Claiborne to Madison, January 31, 1804, in ibid., p. 353.

43. Laussat to Claiborne and Wilkinson, February 1, 1804; Claiborne and Wilkinson to Laussat, February 2, 1804; Laussat to Claiborne and Wilkinson, February 9, 1804. Pierre Clement de Laussat Papers, folders 425, 427, 434. Historic New Orleans Collection.

44. Claiborne to Mayor Bore, April, 1804, in Claiborne, Letter Books, II, 113.

in the Neighborhood thereof until they may be declared free from infection . . . at which time they may be allowed to ascend the River." Claiborne instructed the captain to take similar precautions with every person "who shall arrive at Plaquemines labouring under that disease." Ship officers, stated Claiborne, must completely wash down and fumigate their vessels before proceeding up to New Orleans.[45]

2. Restrictions on Blacks

Claiborne also wanted to keep out of Louisiana any slave participants in the recent insurrections in Santo Domingo. Ships containing these people were likewise stopped at Plaquemine Turn and ordered away from the province.[46] But many of the vessels transporting blacks "whose characters and conduct have given serious alarm to the good inhabitants of Louisiana" managed to evade the authorities by slipping by Fort St. Philip at night. To tighten control over the Mississippi, Claiborne directed an officer at The Balize to board ascending vessels and determine the origin of their human cargoes. Those from Africa were allowed to proceed north. Those from Santo Domingo, "accustomed to blood and devastations," were henceforth excluded.[47] As a general

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45. Claiborne to Cooper, May 9, 1804, in ibid., p. 136.

46. Claiborne to Madison, July 12, 1804, in ibid., p. 245.

47. Claiborne to Lieutenant Colonel Freeman, July 17, 1804, in ibid., pp. 361-62. A provision in the 1804 act organizing the Territory of Orleans specifically outlawed the importation of slaves except from another state or territory. Harper's Encyclopaedia of United States History, from 458 A.D. to 1902 (10 vols.; New York: Harper and Brothers, 1902), XIII, 209. In this regard, see Claiborne to First Lieutenant Michael Walsh, May 12, 1809, in Claiborne, Letter Books, IV, 351. Many of the offending slave ships traveled under the auspices of the privateer Jean Lafitte and his followers, who operated from a base established on Grand Terre Island at the mouth of Barataria Bay, west of the Mississippi. After March, 1807, when importation of slaves was officially banned by the government, Laffite's outlaws continued in the illicit traffic. Jane Lucas de Grummond, The Baratarians and the Battle of New Orleans (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1961), pp. 12-13.

rule, all armed foreign vessels were required to stop at Fort St. Philip for clearance during ascent and descent of the Mississippi.[48]

3. Renovating the Post

A few years after American acquisition of Fort St. Philip recommendations were made for its improvement. The post had been allowed to decline during the final years of Spanish rule, and in July, 1805, Claiborne urged the federal government to consider "strengthening of the Works at Plaquemine."[49] He further advised the construction of a road between Fort St. Philip and New Orleans to aid in towing upstream vessels stalled in the rapid current.[50] For defensive purposes, the Governor outfitted several gunboats for service on the Mississippi.[51] A major problem facing those advocating new construction at Plaquemines was the relative absence of solid ground on which to build. Much of the brick facing of Fort St. Philip had been destroyed during subsidence of the work, leading American officers to criticize Spanish methods of building the foundation. Assured by a man who had assisted the Spanish in the construction that every effort had been taken to secure the foundation, Captain William K. Armistead concluded that "a Work entirely of Masonry would be too great a weight for this soft and plyable soil. In my Judgement a Work with Bastions would be preferable."[52]

Renovation of Fort St. Philip started in earnest about the summer of 1808. Formal diagrams of the post before that time show it to be of an

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48. Claiborne to Madison, April 21, 1807, in Claiborne, Letter Books, IV, 124-25; Claiborne to Secretary of State Robert Smith, March 30, 1810, in ibid., V, 25.

49. Claiborne to Madison, July 27, 1805, in ibid., III, pp. 137-38; Claiborne to Madison, October 24, 1805, in ibid., p. 213.

50. Claiborne, Address to the Legislature of the Territory of New Orleans, March 24, 1806, in ibid., III, 277.

51. Claiborne to Madison, August 24, 1807, in Ibid., IV, 135.

52. Armistead to Lieutenant Colonel Jonathan Williams, December 25, 1807. NA, Buell Collection, Item 58510/127.

irregular, box-like design with officers' and enlisted men's quarters, hospital, bakery and magazine located inside.[53] The major structural alteration starting in 1808 comprised the addition of a large bastion on the southwest face, fronting the river, to contain six pieces of artillery, three of which composed a water battery. On the northeast face, fronting on Bayou Mardi Gras, a small bastion for three guns was added. This extension served to guard the mouth of the bayou.

Inside Fort St. Philip new buildings were to be constructed. Two new barracks, each measuring 100 feet long by 42 feet wide, were to be built in the rear part of the post, between which, in the rear salient, was to be a powder house surrounded by a wall. New officer quarters were also planned, and the old guardhouse was to be converted to an artificer's magazine. In the northeast rear of the enceinte stood a privy. The profile of the fort remained much the same, consisting of the glacis bordered with palisades, the covered way, and the ditch (moat), rampart, and parapet. At the west curtain stood the entrance, reached across the ditch via a drawbridge. Near the west corner of the fort, on the river, was a wharf; part of the lowlands in the area was to be filled in. The entire post measured approximately 200 yards east to west (paralleling the Mississippi) and 150 yards north to south.[54] Brick for facing the work seems to have been obtained under private contract; the establishment of a government-operated brick-making facility was deemed too expensive by Governor Claiborne.[55] The great cost involved also convinced him that less extensive works should be considered at Plaquemines. In April Claiborne visited the post, still believing that the plan submitted by Captain Armistead "seems to combine elegance with strength" but "would

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53. See, for example, the plan of Fort St. Philip, pre-1808, in NA, Cartographic Archives Division, Drawer 89, Sheet 1; and "Plan of Fort St. Philip at the Plaquemin Turn." NA. Cartographic Archives Division, Drawer 89, Sheet 3.

54. "Plan of the Fort of Plaquemines together with its Projects of Agrandisement [sic]." August 4, 1808. NA, RG 77. Cartographic Archives Division. Drawer 89, Sheet 6.

cost too much money."[56] Nonetheless, by September 1 the Governor told President Jefferson that "the fortifications . . . at Plaquemine are well advanced . . . notwithstanding the most prudent economy on the part of the superintending officers. . . ."[57] Plans also were underway to raise a battery on the west bank of the Mississippi near the former site of the redoubt of Fort Bourbon.[58]

4. The Finished Post

The work pace at Fort St. Philip varied. There occurred occasional lengthy interruptions brought on by unforeseen events. A storm in 1812 flooded the garrison and the soldiers survived by climbing onto the roof of the officers' quarters.[59] With the outbreak of war between the United States and Great Britain in that year, however, the work accelerated. By June, 1814, the post, while a long way from perfect, appeared to be in functional order. "A well executed work," stated an inspecting officer:

> At present the whole command consists of two Companies of Artillery . . . amounting to one hundred and forty only, from which if you deduct sick, music &c will scarcely leave you with enough to mann [sic] one Battery of seven Twenty fours. . . . The Barracks for Officers and men are old Buildings put up by the Spaniards many years ago and entirely out of repair;--The foundation of the New Barracks is already laid, and there is ready burnt brick enough to a wing of the Barracks, lime,

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55. Claiborne to Dearborn, April 21, 1808, in Carter, Territorial Papers, IX, 783.

56. Claiborne to Dearborn, April 21, 1808, in ibid., p. 782; Claiborne to Dearborn, April 21, 1808, in ibid., p. 783.

57. Claiborne to Jefferson, September 1, 1808, in Claiborne, Letter Books, IV, 207.

58. Armistead to Williams, December 25, 1807. NA, Buell Collection. Item 58510/127.

59. "Inspector's Report," May 19, 1822. NA, RG 159. Microfilm M624, Roll 3.

> Tiles, Timber &ca to finish the whole; Could this be permitted to go on the health and comfort of the Command would be materially improved, and by the destruction of the old Barracks furnish a very handsome parade ground, artillery Park, and room for Exercise of Field pieces. . . . Fort St. Phillip [sic] or Placquemines [sic] is at present under the command of Captain Charles Wollstonecraft, whose company with that of Captain Thomas G. Murray's compose the force for its defence. . . . The proportion of ammunition of all description for the defense of the Fort is ample and in good order, The Magazine in excellent repair for its preservation;--Provisions good and wholesome, regularly issued, and never less than three months supply on hand;--Wood, and wholesome water in abundance, obtained from a Bayou convenient to the Fort.--The Supply of Medicine and Hospital Stores is amply furnished from New Orleans on the requisition of the Surgeon [']s Mate.[60]

According to an area plan by Lafon in 1814, several buildings, including the hospital, were located outside the fort along the north side of Bayou Mardi Gras. Other structures stood behind the river levee a short distance above the post.[61]

1. The American Balize

The only defense below Fort St. Philip remained The Balize, the old Spanish outpost near the entrance to Southeast Pass at the mouth of the Mississippi. In 1803 The Balize amounted to little more than "a sorry watch tower on the West side of the river near its mouth."[62] American authorities recognized the need for a new lighthouse of wood, the only material light enough to resist the inexorable subsidence of the soil there. Soon after American acquisition Claiborne issued instructions to stop at The Balize all ships carrying slave cargo. To enforce his decree the Governor sent down from New Orleans one cannon and a detachment of

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60. "Inspector's Report," June 30, 1814. NA, RG 159.

61. "Plan of the Plaquemines Turn," c. 1814. "Atlas of the 7th Military District."

62. John Pintard to Secretary of the Treasury Albert Gallatin, September 14, 1803, in Carter, Territorial Papers, IX, 53.

twenty soldiers.[63] "Every Vessel ascending the Mississippi," wrote Claiborne, "will be visited by the officer at the Balize, and the number of negroes on board, their description and character, from whence they came, the name of their owner, or to whom Consigned, are to be ascertained, and reported."[64] Once cleared at The Balize, the concerned ship was then detained at Fort St. Philip until permission was obtained to proceed north.[65]

Over the next few years efforts were made to improve The Balize, its importance growing with frequent reports of imminent hostilities with Spain and Great Britain. A new tower and several frame buildings were erected before 1813.[66] Specifically, these consisted of four workmen's shops, a barracks, and four pilots' houses erected in a marshy area on the north side of Bayou Balize, some distance east of the old site.[67] There was a blockhouse approximately midway between the buildings, but the principal defensive component was a fort, or redoubt, on the river channel at the mouth of the bayou.[68] This redoubt, to be known as Fort Wilkinson and under construction at the time war with Great Britain began, was to consist of a battery for five cannon fronting on the river. The remainder of the structure, of symmetrical diamond shape, was to present a strong epaulement interrupted by two demi-bastions, likely intended for guns. The whole was to be surrounded by a moat. Inside

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63. Claiborne to Captain Johnson, July 18, 1804, in Claiborne, Letter Books, II, 363; Claiborne to Lieutenant Colonel Freeman, July 19, 1804; in ibid., p. 258; Claiborne to Captain Nicoll, July 25, 1804, in ibid., p. 262.

64. Claiborne to Mayor James Pitot, July 25, 1804, in ibid., p. 264.

65. Ibid.

66. See Bartholemy Lafon's sketch of the Balize in 1814 in his "Plan of the Mouths of the Mississippi," c. 1814. "Atlas of the 7th Military District."

67. Bartholemy Lafon, "Plan of the Balize to shew the position of the Passes," c. 1814. "Atlas of the 7th Military District."

68. Ibid.

an assortment of supporting structures were to be erected--a barracks for one company, an officers' quarters, and a hospital, besides ammunition storage facilities.[69] The battery was finished on April 13, 1813. In July, on the advice of Brigadier General Thomas Flournay, Commander of the Seventh Military District, five cannons--three facing the front, the others covering the flanks--were dismounted and the battery abandoned. In December, 1813, the British occupied it, destroying the incompleted interior of the parapet.[70] The Balize remained in British control until after the Battle of New Orleans.

J. Defending Barataria

As the prospect of war with Great Britain grew and the pace of work on the fortifications of the lower Mississippi quickened, concerns arose over the possible approach of enemy craft through Barataria Bay, west of the river. Two narrow islands, Grande Isle and Grande Terre, guarded the mouth of the pass into the bay. On Grande Isle stood houses and storehouses, and farms yielding vegetables and fruits. On Grande Terre the privateers of Jean Lafitte had established storehouses for their smuggling ventures. There they also built a small brick fort, the remains of which were still to be seen as late as 1856. Farther north, among the marshy shell middens, the Baratarians established another trading post on a small island known locally as the Temple. From the Temple Lafitte smuggled goods up the bayous, particularly those tributaries of Bayou LaFourche that fed into Barataria Bay from the northwest.[71] In May, 1813, Lafon sketched a plan proposed by Lieutenant Colonel George T. Ross for a battery on the west end of

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69. Bartholemy Lafon, "Plan of the Fort of Balise," c. 1814. "Atlas of the 7th Military District." See also Lafon's "Fort of Balise No. 1" and "Fort of Balise No. 2." May, 1813. Map Division, Library of Congress. "Fort Wilkinson" appears in "Plan of the Mouths of the Mississippi [sic]. . . ." 1813. Map Division, Library of Congress. Still another, smaller, battery and signal station was projected upstream from the Balize on a point of land along the east bank of the river at the head of passes. Ibid.

70. Ibid.; Landry, "History of Forts Jackson and St. Philip," p. 11.

71. Cable, Creoles of Louisiana, pp. 164-65.

Grande Terre, square in shape with a single bastion and a parapet seven feet high. This redoubt was to contain one 18-pounder, two 4-pounders, two 9-pounders, and two 12-pounders, besides the customary barracks, officers' quarters, magazine, and guardhouse.[72] Nothing formal was erected, however, until the war was long over.

K. The War of 1812 in Louisiana

1. Readying Defenses

The advent of the war in the South created much consternation in the minds of Governor Claiborne and authorities in Louisiana. As 1814 wore on, a British attack on the new state seemed more and more likely, and preparations for conflict increased. Notably, there was great activity directed toward readying the defenses around New Orleans--especially those guarding the routes to the city via the lakes and the Mississippi River. The advance defenses consisted of Fort St. Philip, the unfinished work at Petite Coquilles, and Fort Bowyer, situated on Mobile Point, to the east of Lake Borgne and guarding the approaches through Mississippi Sound. During the summer work went forward at Fort St. Philip to prepare that neglected post to meet a British invasion up the river. Two less-than-full-strength artillery companies labored to remount cannon and repair broken carriages. A signal station was erected three miles downstream from the post, and additional works were raised behind the fort as protection against attack from the rear. Yet all this labor required reinforcements, and ultimately Claiborne dispatched to Fort St. Philip a small body of militia--free men of color under a lieutenant--to aid in readying the post.[73]

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72. Bartholemy Lafon, "Plan of the entrance of Barataria with a projected battery proposed by Lt. Col. G. T. Ross." May 31, 1813. Map Division, Library of Congress. See also, Betsy Swanson, Historic Jefferson Parish from Shore to Shore (Gretna, Louisiana: Pelican Publishing Company, 1975), pp. 151, 154.

73. Arsene LaCarriere LaTour, Historical Memoir of the War in West Florida and Louisiana in 1814-15 (Philadelphia: John Conrad and Company, 1816; reprint, Gainesville: University of Florida Press, 1964), pp. 7, 188; Wilburt S. Brown, The Amphibious Campaign for West Florida and Louisiana, A Critical Review of Strategy and Tactics at New Orleans (University, Alabama: University of Alabama Press, 1969), p. 65; Claiborne to Major General Andrew Jackson, October 24, 1814, in Claiborne, Letter Books, VI, 289.

In September the New Orleans Committee of Safety made several recommendations to Major General Andrew Jackson, commanding the Department of the South and at the time campaigning in the Southeast. The members urged Jackson to consider other avenues by which the British might assault the city, and urged that 2,000 soldiers armed with heavy artillery be posted above English Turn ready to meet troops coming either up the Mississippi or through Chef Menteur Pass, which place "is at present wholly unfortified." The Committee recommended that a small redoubt be raised to guard the approach from Lake Borgne to the Mississippi along the River Aux Chenes and Bayou Terre Aux Boeuf. The Committee also advised that Bayou LaFourche, west of Barataria Bay, be guarded by 1,000 men placed between the forks of the bayou and New Orleans. Barataria Bay, it was suggested, should be defended by a battery built near its entrance and supported by two or three gunboats, while several cannon should be mounted at the Temple to prevent the British from utilizing the network of bayous and canals leading to the city. The Committee proposed that 1,000 troops be stationed across the river from New Orleans, guarding the barracks and magazine at that point. Five hundred more were considered to be sufficient to guard the city proper. Further, the Committee urged the reestablishment of the battery at The Balize, earlier deemed impractical and consequently abandoned.[74]

In late October, 1814, Governor Claiborne, with Jackson's approval, took measures to protect the state using the militia troops at his disposal. Nearly 150 men were sent to occupy the county around Bayou LaFourche; the commander was instructed to build a blockhouse and erect a battery for one 12-pounder field piece. One hundred more men were posted to the Barataria country, while the "Feliciana and Attackapas Cavalry," numbering about 100 men, were principally employed in scouting the land between the city and English Turn. At that place Claiborne's officers

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74. Committee of Safety to Jackson, September 18, 1814, in John Spencer Bassett (ed.), Correspondence of Andrew Jackson (6 vols.; Washington: Carnegie Institution of Washington, 1926-1933); II, 51-53.

planned to build an epaulement behind which the militia could seek cover if attacked. This earthwork, some 150 yards in front of temporary barracks erected for the militia, extended from the river back to a swamp.[75] Opposite the "post at English Turn," on the east side of the Mississippi, another battery was evidently under construction or already finished.[76] "The Mississippi," warned Claiborne, "may probably be the avenue of approach selected by the Enemy."[77] Other troops, mainly mounted riflemen, were to be posted at New Orleans, partly to insure its defense and partly to help counter slave uprisings should they occur. Claiborne, too, urged the reoccupation of the post at The Balize.[78] "It is believed that a few heavy Pieces mounted at the battery formerly erected at the Balize, Could keep a Fleet from passing the Bar, and in any event, a Detachment stationed in the vicinity of that Pass will give us early notice of the enemy's advance. . . ."[79] Yet Jackson's inspector general, Colonel Arthur P. Hayne, who toured the site, reported negatively on The Balize, and on December 1 stated his objections to a post at that location. For one thing, he said, the battery stood at a distance of five or six miles away from the bar that ascending vessels must pass. "Can Cannon of any Calabre [sic], be efficient and effectual at that distance?" "A Fortification in Siberia, would be of as much service . . . as the Work which has been constructed at the Balize."[80] Besides, the British would likely use Southwest Pass, avoiding The Balize entirely.

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75. Claiborne to Colonel Bartholomew Shaumburg, October 30, 1815, in Claiborne, Letter Books, VI, 376-77.

76. See Colonel Arthur P. Hayne to Jackson, December 1, 1814, in Bassett, Correspondence of Andrew Jackson, II, 108.

77. Claiborne to Jackson, November 4, 1814, in ibid., p. 306.

78. Ibid. The disposition of the state troops is presented in ibid., and in Claiborne to Jackson, October 28, 1814, in ibid., 296-98. See also Charles B. Brooks, The Siege of New Orleans (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1961), p. 73.

79. Claiborne to Colonel MacRea, November 4, 1814, in ibid., p. 309.

80. Hayne to Jackson, December 1, 1814, in Bassett, Correspondence of Andrew Jackson, II, 107-08.

Hayne recommended, however, that two or three old vessels be sunk in the Mississippi channel as obstructions, and that a "Corps of Observation" be posted at The Balize.[81]

Hayne believed that the real obstacle for the British on the river would be Fort St. Philip--"The Key as well as the Kings Port of all our positions on the Mississippi." No effort should be spared in readying its defenses, stated the Colonel, since "it is the first position, which holds forth the prospect of a vigorous stand."[82] He proposed the erection of a battery across the stream near the site of Fort Bourbon, as well as another on the east bank one mile above Fort St. Philip.[83] Hayne also examined Fort St. Leon and the battery opposite that point and pronounced English Turn "a strong position" but subordinate in strategic importance to Fort St. Philip.[84]

2. Jackson's Inspection

Any questions regarding the defenses of New Orleans that General Jackson entertained soon were resolved to his satisfaction. He arrived in the city with his entourage on December 1, having traveled by boat across Lake Pontchartrain to Bayou St. John. Believing that the British would probably try to approach New Orleans by that route, he was concerned that the works at Fort St. John be ready to receive them. He ordered emergency improvements on that post and on Petite Coquilles and directed Governor Claiborne to use the militia to obstruct all bayous and canals leading toward the city, especially those that might aid an enemy traversing the six marshy miles between Lake Borgne and English Turn

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81. Ibid.

82. Ibid., p. 108.

83. Ibid.

84. Ibid.

on the Mississippi.[85] At New Orleans Jackson received reports on the forts below, which posts he determined to inspect himself. On December 3, the General descended the Mississippi to Fort St. Philip. There he ordered the destruction of the old wooden barracks which would be susceptible to fire in a British attack. He also directed the placement of more guns on the rampart and ordered a 32-pounder and a mortar mounted in the covered way. Following the advice of Hayne, Jackson called for the establishment of batteries both above the post and across from it. That opposite Fort St. Philip and several hundred yards above, close to the site of Fort Bourbon, was to mount five 24-pounders; the other battery, on the same side as Fort St. Philip but almost a mile above the post, would contain four 24-pounders, one 32-pounder, and one 13½-inch mortar. All of these guns, crossing fire with each other and with those at Fort St. Philip, would work to repel British movement on the river. Wrote Major Arsene LaTour, who accompanied Jackson: "The general ordered me to draw out the necessary plans for those two batteries, which plans being drawn out and approved by him, the necessary measures were taken for putting them into immediate execution."[86] Because of its situation amid largely impassable swamplands, Jackson felt confident that a land force would be unable to sieze Fort St. Philip; regular siegeworks against it would have been impossible to establish. Nonetheless, the recent reinforcements to the

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85. LaTour, Historical Memoir, p. 54; Brown, Amphibious Campaign, pp. 60, 65, 66, 68; Brooks, Siege of New Orleans, pp. 70, 72. In this connection, Jackson particularly ordered that Bayou Manchac, a major artery north of the city affording a route between Lake Pontchartrain and the Mississippi River, be filled in. He feared that the British might use it to reach the Mississippi then move downriver to New Orleans. See J. Hanno Deiler, The Settlement of the German Coast of Louisiana and The Creoles of German Descent (Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing Company, 1969), pp. 106-07.

86. Historical Memoir, p. 55.

garrison brought the number of defenders to about 400. The batteries of Fort St. Philip contained between twenty-five and thirty pieces of ordnance.[87]

Jackson did not visit The Balize, concurring with his inspector that Fort St. Philip was of superior strategic value. Instead, he moved upriver to Fort St. Leon where the Louisiana militia under Brigadier General David B. Morgan had constructed the epaulement between the river and the marsh.[88] In accord with the recommendations of the Committee of Safety, Jackson ordered the construction of a temporary battery to guard a road along Bayou Terre aux Boeuf, a settled farming area through which British soldiers advancing from Lake Borgne might pass. The battery, called Fort Darby, was raised at a fork in the bayou near Lake Levy and River Aux Chenes.[89] Still another work, a redoubt, was thrown up near the head of Bayou Dupré, three miles north and about two miles east of the Mississippi.[90] Next Jackson proceeded on to

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87. Jackson to Secretary of War James Monroe, December 10, 1814, in Bassett, Correspondence of Andrew Jackson, II, 111; LaTour, Historical Memoir, pp. 54-56; 188; Landry, "History of Forts Jackson and St. Philip," pp. 7-8; Brown, Amphibious Campaign, p. 50; Brooks, Siege of New Orleans, pp. 84-85.

88. Jackson to Monroe, December 10, 1814, in Bassett, Correspondence of Andrew Jackson, II, 111; Zarza, "Fort St. Leon," p. 5; Brown, Amphibious Campaign, pp. 65-66; 183.

89. Jackson to Monroe, December 10, 1814, in Bassett, Correspondence of Andrew Jackson, II, 111; Captain James Gadsden to General J. G. Swift, November 10, 1817. NA, RG 77. Entry 221. "Reports of the Corps of Engineers, 1812-1823"; William Darby, A Geographical Description of the State of Louisiana (Philadelphia: John Melish, 1816), p. 182; William Darby to unidentified recipient, March 1, 1815. Department of Archives and Manuscripts, Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge; Brooks, Siege of New Orleans, p. 84.

90. "Map Shewing the Landing of the British Army, its several Encampments and Fortifications on the Mississippi and the Works they erected on their Retreat also the different posts Encampments and Fortifications made by the several Corps of the American army during the whole Campaign." 1815. Copy in the Historic New Orleans Collection.

the Rigolets. At the juncture of Chef Menteur Pass with Bayou Sauvage, between Lakes Borgne and Pontchartrain, he ordered a battery erected. This structure would command the high ground known as Gentilly Plain which provided relatively easy access through the swamps to New Orleans. To the east from Chef Menteur lay the Rigolets, secured by Fort Petite Coquilles, still in an unfinished state. The mouth of the Rigolets was shallow, but not too shallow for troop-carrying barges to pass through. Thus, Jackson wanted to be certain that the route between that point and the city--called Chef Menteur Road--would be closed to the British. Another fear was that troop-carrying barges might somehow slip past Petite Coquilles, travel across Lake Pontchartrain, and assault the city from the north.[91]

3. The American Forces

On December 10 Jackson requested Governor Claiborne to call on the state legislature for aid in readying the defenses he had lately visited. He asked that planters be urged to loan their slaves to help raise and repair the works.[92] The job at Fort St. Philip, he said, could be accomplished by "two hundred negroes in ten days."[93] The General shortly received notification that the assistance he sought would be forthcoming.[94] In the meantime, Jackson appointed Lieutenant Colonel William MacRea to command all the fortifications and all artillery forces in the New Orleans vicinity, including the downriver posts. MacRea also superintended the artillery ammunition, of which he reported a sizable quantity on hand. Troops of the Seventh U.S. Infantry under Colonel

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91. LaTour, Historical Memoir, p. 55; Brown, Amphibious Campaign, pp. 64-65; Brooks, Siege of New Orleans, pp. 85-86; Grummond, The Baratarians, pp. 62-63.

92. LaTour, Historical Memoir, pp. 55-56.

93. Jackson to Monroe, December 10, 1814, in Bassett, Correspondence of Andrew Jackson, II, 111.

94. Ibid.

George Ross occupied the city, while units of the Louisiana militia were dispersed to crucial points around the town. A battalion of Santo Dominican men of color, commanded by Major Pierre LaCoste, was ordered to take position on the Gentilly Plain near Chef Menteur.[95] Jackson also alerted other troops to the north to remain prepared to march to New Orleans on command. Orders went out to Brigadier General John Coffee, who was stationed with more than 500 Tennessee militia above Baton Rouge; to Major General William Carroll and his 1,500 Tennesseans camped north along the Mississippi, and to Major General John Adair with his 2,200 Kentuckians, further up the Mississippi. On Lake Borgne American naval forces began a cautious surveillance for British vessels under instruction to notify Jackson once any were sighted. The American gunboats were then to withdraw and use their guns to support Fort Petite Coquilles in resisting the British advance.[96]

4. British Victory on Lake Borgne

By December 13, 1814, the British naval squadron had entered Mississippi Sound. The American flotilla, five gunboats and a schooner, acting on Jackson's orders to fall back to guard the Rigolets, weighed anchor with difficulty. On December 14 British troop-carrying barges approached the American flotilla, whose artillery proved ineffective in stopping them. Instead, the British managed to board the vessels and overpower the American crews, inflicting severe casualties and capturing the gunboats. The victory on Lake Borgne allowed the British every opportunity to land soldiers unseen and unopposed. Learning of the disaster, Jackson immediately directed that two new batteries be raised at Fort St. John and that the troops stationed at the unfinished fort at Petite Coquilles be prepared to defend that point most earnestly. If the post seemed about to fall, Captain Francis Newman, the officer in charge,

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95. Brown, Amphibious Campaign, pp. 50, 83.

96. Brown, Amphibious Campaign, pp. 68, 83; Grummond, Baratarians, p. 62.

was to spike the cannon, blow up the fort, and evacuate his command. Jackson further ordered two cannon emplacements and a redoubt with ditch erected at the junction of Chef Menteur Pass with Bayou Sauvage to secure the road to New Orleans along Gentilly Plain. Major LaCoste and the Feliciana Dragoons were placed in charge of this project.[97]

5. Bolstering the Works

Down the Mississippi efforts continued to prepare the forts to repel the British. In December came word that the guard units posted at The Balize had been captured by a British sloop-of-war. On December 15 Major Walter Overton of the rifle corps assumed command of Fort St. Philip. After the American defeat on Lake Borgne Overton directed his energies to finishing the destruction and removal of the old wooden barracks. The principal magazine was camouflaged and protected with layers of earth and timbers, while smaller magazines were built along with epaulements to better protect the men during the anticipated bombardment. As Jackson had directed, more guns were mounted, both on the rampart and in the covered way. Across the river, the battery near the site of old Fort Bourbon was building slowly. Work on the structure began December 15 but was delayed for want of laborers, many of whom had gone upriver on learning of the British approach. The project resumed in early January and by the time the British ships came up the river the battery was nearly ready to receive its armament. The redoubt planned upstream from Fort St. Philip, however, had to be abandoned in an unfinished state.[98]

Work also proceeded slowly on the defenses at English Turn, where the Louisiana militiamen under General Morgan found the laborious enterprise of erecting earthworks a drudgery difficult to sustain. On authority of the legislature, Governor Claiborne distributed a circular

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97. LaTour, Historical Memoir, pp. 64-65; Brown, Amphibious Campaign, p. 81; Brooks, Siege of New Orleans, p. 106.

98. LaTour, Historical Memoir, pp. 189-90.

letter among the planters telling them to send their slaves to English Turn or to Fort St. Charles in New Orleans so that they might be distributed to assist in raising earthworks. Claiborne was also to allot $17,000 to help furnish workmen and materials for building the batteries and redoubts Jackson wanted raised below the city. Many white citizens as well as free men of color volunteered their services to help secure their property.[99] Meantime, General Jackson received the support of Jean Laffite and his Baratarians--an unlikely alliance that ultimately paid rich dividends. The General distributed three companies of Laffite's men--many of them expert artillerists--to several of the posts. One went to Fort St. John, another to Petite Coquilles, and the last to Fort St. Philip. Laffite himself was sent with an American officer to insure the security of the Temple, the shell midden in Barataria Bay. By December 20 all the strategic entrance points were secured. There were troops--regulars and state and city militia--stationed at Barataria Bay, Bayou Lafourche, Plaquemines Turn, English Turn and Terre aux Boeufs, Chef Menteur and the Rigolets, and at Bayou St. John. More soldiers blocked the road along Gentilly Plain and guarded the outskirts of the city, while still others occupied old Fort St. Charles, now uselessly enveloped by the suburb of Marigny.[100]

6. Jackson Meets the British

Events quickened on December 23. News reached Jackson's Royal Street headquarters that the British had effected a landing of their army, via Bayous Bienvenue and Mazant, at the Jacques Villére plantation east of the city. The British troops had penetrated quickly. To guard their route from Lake Borgne they erected strong earthworks. One was a star redoubt (Fort Villére), commanding the fork between Bayou Mazant, which

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99. Ibid., pp. 56-57; Brooks, Siege of New Orleans, p. 99; Landry, "History of Forts Jackson and St. Philip," pp. 9-10.

100. LaTour, Historical Memoir, pp. 68-69; Grummond, The Baratarians, p. 82; Brooks, Siege of New Orleans, pp. 86, 75, 114; Brown, Amphibious Campaign, pp. 86-87.

approached from the southwest, and Bayou Bienvenue, coming in from the north. Farther down Bayou Mazant they threw up an epaulement on either side of the bayou at the head of Villére's canal, which led to the British headquarters on the Mississippi.[101] Informed of the development, Jackson reacted instantly, sending couriers to his various commands stationed around New Orleans--Brigadier General John Coffee's and Major General William Carroll's Tennesseans, the militia under Claiborne on Gentilly Plain, Major Jean Baptiste Plauche and his troops at Fort St. John, the 7th and 44th U.S. Regulars at Fort St. Charles, Jugeat and a contingent of Choctaw Indians--all were to assemble by company unit at Fort St. Charles. A schooner, Caroline, lately employed carrying ammunition from the magazine across the river, was directed to take position on the Mississippi opposite the British soldiers' campground.[102]

Jackson's command marched from New Orleans, reaching the general proximity of the British headquarters at the Villere home after darkness fell the 23rd. Undismayed, the American General divided his force and sent them toward the enemy camp. Following a lengthy bombardment of the British by the Caroline, Jackson's troops attacked them in the night. The ensuing battle splintered into several smaller uncoordinated fights, but the Americans succeeded in repulsing the British soldiers with their artillery and infantry charges. Before dawn, Jackson's army withdrew from the field, leaving the disorganized British command damaged. American casualties numbered 24 killed, 115 wounded, and 74 missing, while the British lost 46 killed, 167 wounded, and 64 missing in the attack.

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101. LaTour, "Map Shewing the Landing of the British Army." In the latter work, according to LaTour, the British "had built magazines for stores, which were guarded by a strong detachment." LaTour, Historical Memoir, p. 140.

102. Brooks, Siege of New Orleans, pp. 135; 136-37; Grummond, The Baratarians, p. 86.

7. Line Jackson

Falling back to a position between the Chalmette and McCarthy Plantations, Jackson--on Laffite's advice--ordered his command to throw up defenses along the shallow Rodriguez Canal which stretched from the Mississippi River more than 1,500 yards south to a large, impenetrable cypress swamp. On the west edge of the canal ditch, which measured from 10 to 15 feet wide and from 4 to 8 feet deep, the soldiers fashioned a rampart of mud, fence posts, and cotton bales, and began building batteries for their field guns. Details of Line Jackson were given by a captain of the Royal Engineers, who inspected the position a few weeks later:

> From the river to within 150 yards of the woods, the line is straight. Here an inverted redan was made, the faces of which were about 40 yards in length. The line then continued into the woods for 400 yards and then made a return to the rear at right angles for 100 yards. The breast works in the woods were made of trees with loop holes. The woods were cleared to the rear of the breastworks for about 50 yards. The section of the ditch for two-thirds of the distance from the river to the woods was 8 feet deep and 15 feet wide; from that to the left, 10 feet wide and about 4 feet deep. The whole length of the ditch was filled with large brambles which would have assisted any ladders or fascines placed as connections across the ditch.[103]

Across the river, the Americans under Commodore Daniel T. Patterson raised a similar defense, known as Line Jourdan, complete with redoubts and batteries to repel assaults on that side. At the left of this work, in the river, the schooner Louisiana was posted. Another line was projected above, but was not built. A mile and a half behind Line Jourdan stood a similar line with redoubts. On the shore of the Mississippi in front of Line Jourdan at least four small water batteries were erected.

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103. Report of Captain H.D. Jones, Royal Engineers, March 30, 1815. Quoted in Powell A. Casey, Louisiana in the War of 1812 (Baton Rouge: Privately published, 1963), p. 72.

8. Lines Dupré and Montreuil

Other fortifications were built behind Jackson's main line at Chalmette. One line stood at Dupré's Canal and was raised by citizen volunteers from New Orleans with the help of slaves and freed men. Line Dupré was described as follows:

> The second line was about 1½ miles to the rear of the advanced line and has been constructed upon the edge of a large bayou which unites with the river. On the right of the line is an enclosed redoubt with heavy artillery and a wet ditch. One hundred yards to the left of this work is a circular battery with a wet ditch in front; under it is a connection with a bayou by sluices. The bayou is about 12 feet wide. The works are commanding and flank the ground in front well. The construction of this line is good and has a banquette parapet revetted with planks.[104]

Should the British succeed in forcing Jackson's line at Chalmette he would withdraw his command to Dupré's canal to make a stand. Between the Chalmette line and Dupré's, to the north in the swamp, Jackson posted several picket guards to watch for flanking maneuvers by the British. Still another fortification was built nearly two miles further back from Dupré's toward the city and primarily consisted of one or two redans placed astride the roadway. As Captain Jones depicted it,

> The third line [known as Line Montreuil] is about a mile in rear of the 2nd line. It is entirely different from the other two having a ditch of 12 feet broad and 6 feet cut expressly. It is well flanked. On the right is an inclined redoubt with its gorge palisaded. At 500 yards from the river is a flat bastion of brickwork for musketry only. The line continues from this to the wood. The redoubt on the right has a good command from being constructed upon the levee. The parapet on this line is in an unfinished state.[105]

Jackson's troops labored through Christmas Day on their "mud rampart." On the General's order, Carroll's soldiers assumed position on the line to bolster Coffee's Tennesseans and the 44th U.S. Infantrymen.

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104. Ibid.

105. Ibid.

Coffee's men, stationed at the left of the line near the swamp, tossed thornbushes into the shallow water of the canal to further impede the enemy. Next day most of Morgan's Louisiana militia were transfered from Fort St. Leon at English Turn to Line Jourdan across the Mississippi from Chalmette. Meantime, Jackson directed that the Chef Menteur road be continually secured by both men and artillery. Patrols were to be constantly on the alert for enemy movement on the land between Lake Borgne and Lake Pontchartrain. LaTour had been sent to finish the battery at Chef Menteur.[106]

9. The American Artillery

Jackson lost no time in stretching his sparse complement of artillery along Rodriguez Canal. On the right of the line he raised a redoubt. Then, at intervals, he built eight gun batteries. Battery No. 1, containing two 6-pounders, was raised on the levee. No. 2, placed to secure a road paralleling the river, contained a 6-pounder howitzer. Batteries Nos. 3 and 4, farther along, each mounted a 24-pounder brought by Jean Laffite. Near the center of Line Jackson stood Nos. 5 and 6; Nos. 7 and 8 were near the swamp.[107] The gun crews manning the ordnance contained some of Laffite's Baratarians, notably his brother, Dominique Youx, and Renato Beluche brought from Fort St. John, as well as an assortment of Regular artillerists, militiamen, and seamen.[108] On Line Jourdan the batteries were similarly erected. One stood near the levee containing two 12-pounders and one 24-pounder. Near the road on that side of the river, near the center of the line, two more 12-pounders were emplaced. These guns, particularly those near the levee, proved

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106. The principal sources for this discussion of Jackson's defensive line are LaTour, Historical Memoir, pp. 116-17; Castellanos, New Orleans as It Was, p. 318; Bassett, Correspondence of Andrew Jackson, II, 123-25; Brown, Amphibious Campaign, p. 120; Brooks, Siege of New Orleans, p. 173; Zarza, "Fort St. Leon," p. 5; Davis, Louisiana, p. 184. Most importantly, see, LaTour, "Map Shewing the Landing of the British Army."

107. Precise information on the guns in each battery is lacking. Some accounts combine the units in Nos. 1 and 2 into one battery. See LaTour, Historical Memoir, p. 122; Grummond, The Baratarians, p. 104n.

108. Grummond, The Baratarians, p. 104.

useful in enfilading the British camp across the river.[109] While Jackson's men labored, the British raised breastworks and redoubts of their own to protect their encampment. Several British batteries were also erected near the levee by the river to prevent the passage of American vessels. On December 27, determined to put an end to the nuisance caused by the schooner Caroline, which had continued to harrass their left flank, the British turned howitzers and cannon loaded with hot shot against the vessel, which caught fire and exploded.

10. The First Engagements

Jackson still feared a British assault up the Mississippi and to bolster Fort St. Philip he ordered another 32-pounder sent to the post. At considerable risk, a private steamer one night slipped past the British guns along the river, completed the delivery of the weapon, and on a succeeding night returned unharmed.[110] American officers were now aware of enemy ships entering the Mississippi. Most of them had confidence in the ability of the garrison at Plaquemines to turn them back.[111] At Chalmette, however, Jackson's attention was riveted on the British army facing him across the fallow sugar cane field. The enemy now numbered about 7,500 men, and on December 28, their commander, Major General Edward M. Pakenham, sent his soldiers forward in two columns, one along the river and the other skirting the swamp. But the American artillery behind the mud rampart successfully broke the advance and Pakenham's command fell into retreat. American casualities in this engagement numbered 7 killed and 10 wounded, while the British lost 9 men killed and 8 wounded.

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109. LaTour, Historical Memoir, p. 117; Brown, Amphibious Campaign, p. 120.

110. Brooks, Siege of New Orleans, pp. 209-10.

111. See Claiborne to Governor Blunt of Tennessee, January 4, 1815, in Claiborne, Letter Books, VI, 330.

In the days that followed, Jackson strengthened his position. More troops arrived and more guns were placed along the rampart. But the enemy also received heavy cannon and on New Year's Day, 1815, the British initiated a long-range artillery duel that momentarily caught Jackson off guard. Recovering quickly, his cannoneers answered the barrage and inflicted severe damage upon the British line. During the day Pakenham directed his infantry in an attack on the Americans, but Coffee's Tennesseans repelled the assault. This day's casualties stood at 11 Americans killed and 23 wounded, and 32 British killed and 44 wounded.

11. The Battle of January 8, 1815

The major battle at Chalmette occurred on January 8 after both sides had received large reinforcements. The American command now numbered approximately 4,000 soldiers; the British attack force under Pakenham numbered about 5,400. Jackson's assorted defenders included the eight artillery batteries with their crews of Regulars, militia, sailors, veterans, and Baratarians. The infantry consisted of the Seventh and Forty-fourth Regulars; one company of U.S. Marines; the volunteers from Tennessee and Kentucky under Coffee, Carroll, and Brigadier General John Adair; units of the Louisiana militia; a battalion of the Louisiana Free Men of Color; and a company of Choctaw Indians. In the rear Jackson posted his five units of cavalry and dragoons. Opposing this assortment were the polished troops of Pakenham, whose infantry consisted of units of the 4th, 7th, 21st, 43rd, 44th, 85th, 93rd, and 95th regiments, plus the 1st and 2nd West Indian (colored) regiments.

The British attack began before dawn. On signal, a column under Major General Samuel Gibbs moved forward across the cane stubble into a hail of American artillery and musket fire. The assailants finally withdrew in disarray only to be collected by the officers and sent back toward the American line. In this assault Generals Gibbs and Pakenham were mortally wounded. An attempt to support Gibbs's foundering command by the 93rd Regiment (Highlanders), who marched obliquely across the field from the left of the British line, near the river, also collapsed in confusion after the Highlanders' commander, Colonel Robert

Dale, was killed and Major General John Keane severely wounded. Near the river and under cover of fog Colonel Robert Rennie charged with his soldiers into the American redoubt and seized the structure. But Rennie was shortly killed and the British soon repulsed from the right of the American line. Two hours after the battle had begun British Major General John Lambert ordered the army withdrawn.

Meanwhile, across the river the British under Colonel William Thornton were more successful, driving Morgan's smaller force of Americans, posted a mile in front of Line Jourdan, into retreat. But before Thornton could capitalize on his success and perhaps turn the battle he was ordered to withdraw his command, thus assuring American victory. British casualties in the fighting of January 8 were enormous and were estimated to have exceeded 2,000 killed, wounded, and missing, compared to Jackson's remarkably small losses of 7 men killed and 6 wounded. In the afternoon Jackson granted a brief truce so that the British dead could be removed and buried. For the next several days and nights the American artillery continued against the enemy until they withdrew, while across the Mississippi the soldiers under Morgan regained Line Jourdan and began preparing new entrenchments.[112] As they gradually withdrew over the course of their earlier advance, the British built covering defenses; one epaulement was raised on the right bank of Bayou Jumonville at its confluence with Bayou Mazant. This work was occupied by British pickets guarding the withdrawal. Another breastwork was raised at the juncture of Bayous Mazant and Bienvenue, across from the star fort. Still another structure, an earthen enclosure to hold 1,000 men, was started on the left bank of Bayou Bienvenue near a fishing

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112. This account of the fighting of December 28 and January 8 is drawn essentially from LaTour, Historical Memoir, pp. 130-78; Brown, Amphibious Campaign; and Brooks, Siege of New Orleans. See also Grummond, The Baratarians, and Davis, Louisiana, pp. 184-85.

village close to the mouth of the bayou on Lake Borgne; this latter work was never completed.[113]

12. The Bombardment of Fort St. Philip

Following the battle of January 8, so disastrous to the British, the focus of activity shifted down the river to Fort St. Philip, where warships under Admiral Thomas Cochrane tried to force passage to Chalmette to assist the British army. At the fort Major Overton's command, aided by plantation slaves, had worked feverishly to prepare the post for the British attempt; by the end of December the new gun emplacements were in order and the debris from the old barracks had been removed. A regular army man on leave from his command in Tennessee, and a future congressman from the state of Louisiana, Overton had served Jackson well.[114] His command at Fort St. Philip was composed as follows:[115]

Field and staff	2
Captain Charles Wollstonecraft's Artillery	64
Captain Thomas Murray's Artillery	50
Detachment of Captain Michael Walsh's Artillery	3
Captain Narcissus Broutin's Seventh Infantrymen	78
Captain James S. Waide's Seventh Infantrymen	85
Captain Francois Lagau's Louisiana Volunteers	54
Ferdinand Listeau's Free Men of Color	30
Crew of Gunboat No. 65	40
Total	406

113. LaTour, Historical Memoir, p. 186; LaTour, "Map Shewing the Landing of the British Army."

114. Brooks, Siege of New Orleans, pp. 114, 129, 175; Landry, "History of Forts Jackson and St. Philip," p. 11.

115. Adapted from LaTour, Historical Memoir, p. 191.

The garrison had little to fear in the way of a land attack; Fort St. Philip and Fort Bourbon were surrounded by a watery, marshy morass that would have deterred the most enterprising foe. Besides, the Fort St. Philip garrison was additionally protected by a deep water-filled ditch, and Bayou Mardi Gras, some forty-five yards wide, flanked its upper side. Inside the fort stood thirty-four pieces of ordnance: twenty-nine 24-pounders, one six-pounder, one 13-inch mortar, one 8½-inch howitzer, and, in the covered way, two 32-pounders, placed level with the river.[116] After January 1, when he learned of the British intention to pass the fort, Overton began raising several small magazines at various points in the post to disperse his ammunition supply; a direct hit by a British bomb would therefore not destroy it all. He also began building strong epaulements to secure his men from exploding shells.[117]

Having blockaded the mouth of the Mississippi, the British ascended the river toward Plaquemine Turn. Major Overton described the start of their attack on Fort St. Philip:

> Early in the day of the 8th instant, I was advised of their approach, and on the 9th at a quarter past ten A.M. hove in sight two bomb-vessels, one sloop, one brig, and one schooner. They anchored two and a quarter miles below. At half past eleven, and at half past twelve they advanced two barges, apparently for the purpose of sounding within one and a half mile of the fort; at this moment I ordered my water battery, under the command of lieutenant Cunningham, of the navy, to open upon them; its well directed shot caused a precipitate retreat. At half past three o'clock, P.M. the enemy's bomb-vessels opened their fire from four sea-mortars, two of thirteen inches, two of ten, and to my great mortification I found they were without the effective range of my shot, as many subsequent experiments proved, they continued their fire with little intermission during the 10th, 11th, 12th, 13th, 14th, 15th, 16th, and 17th. I occasionally opened my batteries on them with great vivacity, particularly when they showed a disposition to change their position.[118]

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116. Ibid., pp. 187-88; Brown, Amphibious Campaign, p. 65.

117. Overton to Jackson, January 19, 1815, in LaTour, Historical Memoir, p. lxix.

118. Ibid., pp. lxix-lxx. See also, Brooks, Siege of New Orleans, pp. 254-55.

In the fort, Lieutenant Cunningham's sailors manned the two 32-pounders earlier placed in the covered way--Overton's water battery. Captain Walsh commanded the right bastion of the fort. Captain Wollstonecraft's command took over the center bastion with its mortar and howitzer. Captain Murray took charge of the battery on the left. Captain Broutin commanded the infantry regulars stationed behind the curtain to support the batteries if required. The Louisiana troops aided the artillerists in the center and on the left of the line. As the artillery exchange progressed the soldiers were employed in melting lead for making canister- and grape-shot, preparing the ammunition charges, and fixing broken gun carriages.[119]

The British mortar boats positioned themselves downstream from the post, behind a bend in the river, and from there proceeded with the bombardment. On the 9th Overton's soldiers hoisted the United States flag; below it, in defiance of their foe, they nailed the British Union Jack.[120] During the first day's action the British bombs fell at two-minute intervals; no one in the post was hurt and most of the shells plowed into the ground or earthen embankments before bursting. Some failed to explode altogether. In the afternoon some of Overton's men earlier posted to a signal station downstream abandoned the place; British soldiers were put ashore to capture the buildings and a lime kiln there. After darkness fell several British boats drew near the fort and fired grapeshot and round shot over the curtain. Fearing a ploy to allow the ships to pass, Overton did not respond and the boats withdrew. The craft downstream resumed a sporadic bombardment.[121] On the 10th the bombardment continued with brief cessations at noon and at sundown, a pattern repeated on ensuing days. Unfortunately for the Americans,

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119. LaTour, Historical Memoir, pp. 191, 196-97.

120. Ibid., pp. 191-92; Brooks, Siege of New Orleans, pp. 218-19. For the position of the British, see Arsene Latour, "Plan of Fort St. Philip at Plaquemines, shewing the position of the British Vessels when Bombarding the Fort." 1815. Map Division. Library of Congress.

121. LaTour, Historical Memoir, pp. 190, 192; Brooks, Siege of New Orleans, pp. 256-57.

their own guns were beyond range to do the attackers any harm.[122] On January 12 the British regulated the fuses on their bombs so that they exploded in the air instead of in the ground, an adjustment that brought much destruction in the garrison from bursting shell fragments. One man died and another was wounded as the contractor's store--one of the few remaining structures in the fort--was hit by a bomb. On the 14th another man was killed and two other soldiers received wounds, one losing a leg. Several of the gun carriages were temporarily knocked out of service and one of the 32-pounders was struck and briefly incapacitated. Yet the American guns, capable of preventing the enemy from passing in front of the fort, were frustrated in reaching the mortar boats beyond the river's bend.[123]

Throughout the British bombardment of Fort St. Philip the weather added to the discomfort of the garrison. Cold rain pelted the fort, turning the ground into a quagmire. The soldiers, wrote LaTour, "cannot be denied praise for the unremitted exertion they made to receive the enemy, the fatigues they underwent during the bombardment, . . . and the patience they exercised thus exposed."[124] To provide shelter from the incessant rain, as well as to secure them against the ravages of bursting shells, the men constructed covers in between the guns facing the river, finishing them the evening of January 15. At the same time the magazines were strengthened by adding earth to them. Late that day boats from New Orleans arrived about a mile upstream bringing ammunition and much-needed fuses for use with the 13-inch mortars.[125] On the 16th the soldiers readied the mortars for action and next day Captain Wollstonecraft's ordnance opened on the British bomb vessels

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122. LaTour, Historical Memoir, pp. 192-93, 196.

123. Ibid., pp. 193-94; Brooks, Siege of New Orleans, p. 259.

124. Historical Memoir, p. 196.

125. Ibid., pp. 194-95; Brooks, Siege of New Orleans, pp. 259-60.

finally striking one. That night the exchange continued sporadically. Then, before dawn on January 18, the British vessels started back toward the mouth of the river.[126]

Following the British withdrawal Overton and his officers assessed their losses. Total American casualties in the nine-day bombardment of Fort St. Philip stood at two men killed and seven wounded.[127] Damage to the post was severe, as reported by LaTour:

> During that time the enemy threw more than one thousand shells and carcases, expended upwards of seventy tons of shells, and more than twenty thousand pounds of powder, besides small shells, and round and grape-shot from their boats. . . . Upwards of one hundred shells had fallen and buried themselves within the fort; the surrounding buildings, workshops, stores, and the hospital, were almost in ruins, and the ground for half a mile around was literally torn up in every direction.[128]

13. The British Withdrawal and Its Aftermath

With the failure of both their land and naval forces, the British finally withdrew altogether from in front of Jackson's army at Chalmette. During the night of January 18 the British soldiers abandoned their encampment, leaving behind their wounded, and proceeded back up the bayous and canals over which they had advanced.[129] Boarding Admiral Cochrane's fleet, which had remained anchored off Ship Island, the defeated troops departed on January 27. "In my own mind," wrote Jackson to the Secretary of War, ". . . there is very little doubt but

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126. LaTour, Historical Memoir, pp. 1xx, 195; Brooks, Siege of New Orleans, pp. 259-60.

127. LaTour, Historical Memoir, pp. 1xx-1xxi.

128. Ibid., pp. 195-96, 197.

129. Jackson to Brigadier General James Winchester, January 19, 1815, in Bassett, Correspondence of Andrew Jackson, II, 149; Martin, History of Louisiana, p. 386.

that his last exertions have been made in this quarter."[130] Yet on February 15 the British fleet did succeed in forcing the surrender of Fort Bowyer on Mobile Point. Four days earlier, however, the Treaty of Ghent, which had been signed December 24, 1814, to conclude hostilities between the United States and Great Britain, reached New York. Upon its ratification by Congress, the war, for all practical purposes, was over. In Louisiana the Battles of New Orleans and the preparation of defenses they entailed had profound meaning. The commonality of purpose exhibited by the disparate ethnic and social elements composing Jackson's army helped solidify the populace and obscured the regional and social distinctions that had formerly impaired state unity. All of this contributed to a growing feeling of national pride and newly found confidence in the country's military strength.

130. Jackson to Monroe, January 19, 1815, in Bassett, Correspondence of Andrew Jackson, II, 149.

CHAPTER IV. THE ERA OF PERMANENT FORTIFICATIONS

A. Condition of the Old Defenses

1. Fort St. Charles

The Battles of New Orleans had a decisive impact on strategic thinking and the formulation of future coastal defenses below that city. In the years immediately after the fighting, however, little was done to improve the existing works. In New Orleans, Fort St. Charles, surviving from the Spanish regime, continued to deteriorate. "Except as a residence for the officers of the army," recorded one observer, "fort St. Charles cannot answer many military purposes. To either check the advance, or repulse the attacks of an enemy, it could yield but little aid."[1] Bounded on the north by the growing suburb of Marigny, the fort could contribute little fire support in that direction without fear of harming the residential district. By 1817 the structure housed ordnance supplies and was described thusly:

> Fort St. Charles is a pentagonal redoubt on the bank of the Mississippi river and at the lower end of the city of New Orleans. The interior revetments of the parapet are of masonry and the exterior of sod, those of the scarp and counterscarp of the ditch are of plank. This work was a part of the enclosing fortifications of New Orleans under the Spanish Government and long since [has been] considered of no consequence to the external defence of that city.[2]

Brigadier General Simon Bernard, the French-born engineer who would greatly influence the course of American coastal defense, visited New Orleans in 1817. Bernard was on a tour to evaluate American coastal defenses looking to the long range improvement of the system. At Fort St. Charles he summed up the post's obvious tactical defects:

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1. Darby, Geographical Description of the State of Louisiana, p. 187.

2. Captain James Gadsden to Brigadier General Joseph G. Swift, November 10, 1817. NA, RG 77. Entry 221. For the fort's relative configuration in regard to Marigny see "Plan of a part of New Orleans." 1814. Historic New Orleans Collection.

> Ft. St. Charles . . . is only a lunette made of earth. . . . It is surrounded and commanded by houses from which its defenders could be shot. It is necessary to add to all this, that it occupies a much wanted and indispensable ground for the commerce, the increase of which goes on in . . . rapid progression. . . . Finally, the lunette St. Charles, useless to the defence of the country and of the Town, does a notable injury to the neighboring proprietors in giving less value to their lands and buildings. . . .[3]

On April 17, 1821, the City of New Orleans received permission to demolish Fort St. Charles after its ordnance had been removed. "The buildings inside will remain entire, until the public property can be removed, and will then be disposed of, by the Quarter Master."[4] Soon after, the old fort was leveled; the ordnance stores were shipped up the river to Baton Rouge, while the cannon projectiles were removed to a lot adjoining the Quartermaster storehouse.[5]

The other military structures in New Orleans remained basically in good condition and were spared the fate of Fort St. Charles. An inspection of the barracks in the spring of 1825 revealed that the quarters were "not clean."[6] Messrooms and kitchens, however, were later described as being in "as good and neat condition, as they can be brought to."[7] Furnishings were adequate; arms racks and bunks, noted

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3. Brigadier General Simon Bernard's Report, December 23, 1817. NA, RG 77. Entry 221. See also "State of Posts in the 8th Military Department." NA, RG 159. Microfilm M 624, Roll 3.

4. Brigadier General Daniel Bissell to Mayor J. Roffignac, April 17, 1821. EPA, "Records of the (New Orleans) City Council in 1815-1822." Book 4089. Copy in the Louisiana State Museum Library.

5. "Report of a Tour of Inspection of the Western Department of the Army of the United States, Commencing 21 March 1825." NA, RG 159. Microfilm M 624, Roll 2.

6. Ibid.

7. Inspection Report, New Orleans, June, 1827. NA, RG 159. Microfilm M 624, Roll 2.

an inspecting officer, were "not in exact conformity with the precise letter of the Genl Regulations, but as nearly so as are generally found elsewhere."[8] The magazine across the river leaked badly, destroying the powder inside. The inspector recommended that the building "be repaired immediately or the powder removed."[9]

2. Fort St. John

In the rear of New Orleans on Lake Pontchartrain Fort St. John continued to be maintained over the next few years. It was still regarded as strategically significant in guarding the approaches to the city through the lakes,[10] a view that gradually changed as better defenses were developed at the Rigolets and Chef Menteur Passes. Nonetheless, in 1817 the post, yet unfinished, represented an important link in the city's security. The front of Fort St. John held a battery "on the curve of a circle with revetements of masonry filled in with earth. . . ." In the rear palisades had yet to be placed, or replaced, and the ditch was incomplete.[11] General Bernard reported that the battery held nine cannon, five of which fronted Lake Pontchartrain. "There are a powder magazine and barracks for a small garrison. . . . It must be considered only as a battery of Police till the time when the Regolets [sic] and Chef Menteur will be defended,"[12] By 1822 the fort had fallen into disrepair, probably because of the shift of attention to the latter two sites. At that time Fort St. John was garrisoned by a

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8. Ibid.

9. Ibid. See also "State of the Posts in the 8th Military Department." NA, RG 159. Microfilm M 624, Roll 3.

10. Darby, Geographical Description of the State of Louisiana, p. 187.

11. Gadsden to Swift, November 10, 1817. NA, RG 77. Entry 221.

12. Report of Brigadier General Simon Bernard, December 23, 1817. NA, RG 77. Entry 22. See also, "Plan and Profiles of the Battery St. John. 1817." NA, RG 77. Cartographic Archives Division, Drawer 85, Sheet 6.

lieutenant and twelve men. "Gun carriages decayed, nearly useless," reported an inspector.[13] A year later, under an agreement with the government, Harvey Elkins occupied Fort St. John and opened a restaurant, casino, and hotel on the site. Returning to the post in 1827, General Bernard decried its condition: "I . . . found it in a state of great dilapidation: the breastworks have been taken off, the ditches have been filled up, the powder magazines demolished and the interior of the work occupied by an entertaining establishment." With Congressional sanction, Elkins finally purchased the fort from the War Department in August, 1831.[14]

3. Fort Petite Coquilles

As indicated, the post of Petite Coquilles was responsible in large measure for the decline of Fort St. John. During the British attack in 1814 and 1815 the security of the Rigolets between Lakes Borgne and Pontchartrain had been critical to the defense of New Orleans, a factor commonly noted by senior strategists after the conflict ended. Late in 1817 Fort Petite Coquille was described as

> a small unfinished nondescript, with a semicircular battery at one angle with revetments of plank filled in with cockle shell. The design was to have enclosed the rear with a Ditch and picket-work with very diminished bastions. The ditch only has been excavated and a temporary framed work erected around the two rear bastions & curtains.[15]

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13. "State of the Posts in the 8th Military Department," NA, RG 159. Microfilm M624, Roll 3.

14. "Abstract from the Records of the Engineer Department relative to lands at Fort St. John (Jean) La." NA, RG 77. Land Papers (Louisiana, General), B388; Chain of Title to Fort St. John. NA, RG 77. Land Papers (Louisiana, General), 3558; "Fort St. John near New Orleans." 1828. NA, RG 77. Cartographic Archives Division, Drawer 133, Sheet 20. See also, Swanson, "Keep Sheet." The brick ruins of Fort St. John, also called Spanish Fort, are today maintained as a city park.

15. Gadsden to Swift, November 10, 1817. NA, RG 77. Entry 221.

Somewhat more detail was given by General Bernard:

> The fort . . . has a semicircular battery for 7 pieces of ordnance, lined with wood. On the right and left side of that Barbet [battery] are likewise two wood linings but without Platform nor Parapet. South and East of this Battery is a front made out of week [sic] palisade and of a Ditch having few feet of water. Finally, the barracks are situated so near the lines of delineation that this latter might be thought [to] have been made rather to please to the eye than to defend the place.[16]

Bernard and his officers found Petite Coquille wanting in several respects. "This battery in its delineation as well as in its relief," remarked the General, "has not been contrived by a man of the art."[17] The gorge, he said, was not well defended, and a determined enemy would find easy access. Moreover, the site was bad, being too far away to properly defend the Rigolets. Bernard advised that the post be abandoned after other fortifications were completed.[18]

4. Fort St. Leon

Below New Orleans, the positions at English Turn and Plaquemine Turn remained important. As long as the lines of earthworks at Chalmette remained intact,[19] however, little or no work was accomplished

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16. Report of Brigadier General Simon Bernard, December 23, 1817. NA, RG 77. Entry 221. In 1822 the post was described as "a miserable constructed work--never completed--platforms out of order--gun carriages need repairs & painting. . . . Magazine bad, too small, badly constructed." "State of Posts in the 8th Military Department." NA, RG 159, Microfilm M624, Roll 3.

17. Ibid.

18. Ibid. Wrote Captain James Gadsden: "The position was badly selected having but a partial command of the head of the Regolets [sic] and from the sinuous direction of that outlet, exposed to be bombarded in its rear." Gadsden to Swift, November 10, 1817. NA, RG 77. Entry 221.

19. Report of Brigadier General Simon Bernard, December 23, 1817. NA, RG 77. Entry 221.

after the War of 1812 on either Fort St. Leon on the west bank of English Turn or on "the remains of an old cantonment and some faint traces of lines of defence" across the stream.[20] During the conflict Fort St. Leon had been finished, its final design approaching Lafon's drawing of 1814, although the location of structures inside the post was at variance.[21] Nearly three years after the British attempt on New Orleans Fort St. Leon was judged as not being fit to hold cannon. General Bernard, however, conceded the value of English Turn, which, he said, "may be considered as a secondary position to be only occupied by field Batteries to protect the lines, the construction of which would be undertaken only during the attack of Fort [St. Philip] at Plaquemine bend." By the early 1820s Fort St. Leon was suffering from effects of the weather, and the barracks and other fixtures had almost completely been destroyed by pilfering residents of the area.[22]

5. Fort St. Philip

At Fort St. Philip Bernard found many problems. The basic delineation and relief of the curtain was bad and afforded little or no flank defense. The terreplein facing the river, on which the artillery was mounted, was almost non-existent. There were serious defects in the solidity and declination of the curtain, parts of which had settled unequally, producing cracks in the masonry revetment. Inside the fort Bernard saw frame buildings erected for the garrison since the war that were in poor condition. He complained that the powder magazine was damp and was not bombproof. All in all, he felt that the post should be razed and a new one built, although economy dictated that improvements instead be made to remedy its deficiencies. To further secure Plaquemine

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20. Gadsden to Swift, November 10, 1817.

21. NA, RG 77. Entry 221. See "Plan and Profiles of the Fort St. Leon, at the English Turn." 1817. NA, Cartographic Archives Division. Drawer 133, Sheet 13.

22. Report of Brigadier General Simon Bernard, December 23, 1817. NA, RG 77. Entry 221.

Turn Bernard recommended that another fort be erected opposite Fort St. Philip on firm ground some 1,100 yards downstream from the site of old Fort Bourbon. Crossfire from the two posts would thus discourage enemy shipping attempting to get by the Turn.[23]

6. The Balize and Barataria

At the mouth of the Mississippi, the post of Balize had clearly outlived its usefulness as a component in the military defense of New Orleans. Not only had it been taken by the British, but its situation on the Southeast Pass was no longer of value; by this time other entrances were more easily navigated.[24] It nevertheless served as a visual aid for ships ascending the Mississippi, and became a small community of dubious reputation. In April, 1819, Benjamin Latrobe depicted The Balize as follows:

> A more wretched village, for it is a sort of a village, cannot be conceived. It consists of a tavern, a wretched habitation for the revenue officer U.S., and three or four other wooden buildings, belonging to the pilots, besides the blockhouse. The whole population consists of 90 men and 11 women, and an internal feud breaks up this little society into parties who are at war with each other. . . . The floors of . . . [the structures] are several inches under water when the wind blows high.[25]

Latrobe provided details of the blockhouse, a structure capable of mounting four guns fronting the bayou and the sole functional fortification at the site:

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23. Report of Brigadier General Simon Bernard, December 23, 1817. NA, RG 77. Entry 221; "State of the Posts in the 8th Military Department." NA, RG 159. Microfilm M624, Roll 3.

24. Report of Brigadier General Simon Bernard, December 23, 1817. NA, RG 77. Entry 221.

25. Latrobe, Impressions Respecting New Orleans, pp. 125-26.

> The blockhouse is a building of squared logs, well adapted to defend itself against any force that is not provided with artillery; and it has repelled in the war of 1756-60 a British boat attack. The walls are now full of bullet holes. The plan of the story below is a square with a port hole in each of the sides and eight holes for musketry. The upper story, which has a steep roof, is set diagonally upon the lower so that the assailants may be attacked from the projecting angles.[26]

Nearby stood the uncompleted water battery abandoned in July, 1813. Latrobe said it "consists of a circular battery elevated 6 or 8 feet above the water.[27] No further fortifications were attempted at the Balize. Fairly destroyed by a hurricane in 1865, the settlement was vacated shortly thereafter.[28]

As military interest in the Balize waned, increasing consideration was paid to the erection of defenses at the entrance to Barataria Bay. In 1817 Commodore Daniel T. Patterson proposed that a triangular-shaped fort with a curved face fronting Barataria Pass be constructed on the western tip of Grande Terre, the old base of Laffitte's privateers.[29] But it was several more years before fortifications were raised on the island. As important as the defense of New Orleans had become, other locations took precedence over the approach via Barataria Bay.

B. General Bernard and the Third American System

Following the War of 1812 there occurred much theoretical thought regarding coastal fortifications. As a result of the work of the fortifications board, headed by General Bernard, the so-called Third

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26. Ibid., pp. 126-27.

27. Ibid., p. 172.

28. Ibid., p. 13n. An 1891 map of the mouth of the Mississippi nonetheless indicates that a settlement at Balize was still extant. See U.S. Geological Survey map, "Louisiana. East Delta Sheet." Edition of July 1893 reprinted October, 1911. Louisiana State Museum Library.

29. Swanson, Historic Jefferson Parish, p. 154.

American System was inaugurated. This system promoted the construction of large, permanent, masonry coastal works, many enclosing multiple casemated tiers of cannon capable of delivering massive firepower. Many of these works were to have detached flanking batteries usually situated at water level. Cannon mounted in the detached batteries would fire en barbette over a brick- or stone-backed earthen parapet. Since the principal forts were designed to protect specific water approaches, as well as to guard against land assault, they were built to hold the requisite artillery, soldiers, and ammunition to resist both land and naval attack. The embrasured casemates with their arched roofs served to shield many of the guns and personnel, and like the magazines they were equipped with thick layers of earth. Profiles of the third system forts were much like those of earlier ones. But for the fact that cannon were mounted in tiered casemates as well as behind the epaulement, the basic components of glacis, ditch, rampart, and parapet were retained. A distinctive type of Third System coastal defense occasionally used in the South was the Martello Tower, a thick masonry structure, either circular or rectangular in shape, intended for the defense of entrances to harbors, rivers, and bayous. Named for the historical tower used by the British to defend the Bay of Martello in Corsica in 1794, few of the structures were built in the United States.[30]

C. Improvements in American Artillery

The development of the Third System of fortification coincided with the beginning of an American standardization system for artillery. In 1819 the first model designations were adopted by the army and existing weapons, mostly an assortment of British-, French-, and American-produced pieces, were gradually replaced. Until 1829 the heaviest cannon manufactured in the United States was the 24-pounder; after 1829 32-pounders and 42-pounders were produced. Other weapons used during this period included the 24-pounder flank defense howitzer, employed in bastion casemates to cover the face of the structure, and the

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30. Lewis, Seacoast Fortifications, pp. 39, 42; Robinson, American Forts, pp. 88-89. See also, Warren Ripley, Artillery and Ammunition of the Civil War (New York: Promontory Press, 1970), pp. 246-250.

weapon called columbiad, produced in 8- and 10-inch calibres, which could discharge either shot or shell at various angles. Mounted on wooden carriages for use in the casemates and en barbette, the various cannon, mortars, and howitzers were potentially capable of unleashing a steady fire against waterborne adversaries.[31]

D. New Forts for the Delta

The Third System works projected to use these weapons in the country around New Orleans were in many respects specially designed in accordance with General Bernard's thought resulting from his personal reconnaissance of the terrain. In the marshy grounds near the city Bernard selected sites for fortifications that would preclude the establishment of regular parallels--siegeworks--against them. With the danger of land attack lessened, smaller forts could be erected and a savings thereby realized. In design the works around New Orleans incorporated contemporary French practices of curving the counterscarp and rentrant angles, though many such features were later modified or abandoned by the engineers charged with erecting the forts. In most other respects the construction followed convention; the forts used red brick, with cut granite employed in building key structural components, in fashioning traverse circles for the guns, and for decorative purposes. The casemates were short, vaulted, and, as designed by Bernard, were approached through tunnels, an element often modified in the actual construction. Foundations for the massive earthworks and their masonry revetment consisted of grillages built of large timbers placed beneath the waterline to absorb the great weight.[32]

As recommended by Bernard the works to be erected in the vicinity of New Orleans were as follows:

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31. Lewis, Seacoast Fortifications, pp. 53, 58, 61, 65.

32. Robinson, American Forts, pp. 89, 91, 95.

1. At the west end of Grande Terre.
2. Plaquemine Turn, both banks.
3. Bayous Dupré and Phillippon.
4. Bayou Bienvenue.
5. Chef Menteur Pass.
6. Rigolets Pass.[33]

Other posts were to be erected on Dauphin Island and Mobile Point. Most of the sites either already had fortifications or defenses for them had been earlier proposed. Bayous Bienvenue, Phillippon, and Dupré comprised the route of advance of the British army toward New Orleans in the recent war; fortifications along this route, it was believed, would deter future such invasions. Relegated in importance in the new defense strategy were the former positions at Fort St. John, English Turn, and The Balize.

1. Problems in Building

Certain problems affected the construction of fortifications in the delta country. For one thing, most of the projected works were widely dispersed and would require the presence of a supervising engineer at each location. For another, the mechanics locally available were considered to be inferior craftsmen, while the labor force was made of up of slaves and freed blacks, viewed as "requiring to be constantly watched and unwilling if capable of performing their duty."[34] Local carpenters were seen as barely competent, and bricklayers were deemed incapable "of that nicer execution so essential in the construction of bombproof arches."[35] Furthermore, the locally manufactured brick was of poor

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33. Report of Brigadier General Simon Bernard, December 23, 1817. NA, RG 77. Entry 221.

34. Gadsden to Swift, November 10, 1817. NA, RG 77. Entry 221.

35. Ibid.

composition. Promoting the project nonetheless, Engineer Captain James Gadsden advised that materials for the forts be purchased wherever the agents could get best advantage, either in the United States or abroad. Regarding the work force, Gadsden urged that the "labouring mechanics" seasonally alternate their work between healthy sites open to sea breezes and those inland sites more prone to unhealthy conditions. "I would suggest," he advised, ". . . the propriety of purchasing in Virginia or the Carolinas fifty or one hundred slaves for the construction of the works in this country."[36] Slaves thus employed, reasoned Gadsden, might be rewarded with their freedom. "Justice would be done the slave holder and an act of noble humanity by our Government at little or no expence to the Republic."[37]

2. A Shortage of Funds

Much time was consumed in discussion of how the forts should be built and by whom. When work finally began, it dragged on for decades, but ultimately resulted in the completion of Fort Wood (later Macomb) at Chef Menteur, Fort Pike at the Rigolets, Fort Jackson opposite Fort St. Philip on the Mississippi, Battery Bienvenue at Bayou Bienvenue, Tower Dupre at Bayous Dupre and Phillippon, Fort Livingston on Grande Terre at the entrance to Barataria Bay, and the fort on Ship Island. All except Tower Dupre were to be first class fortifications, i.e., built to defend a city of major importance. In 1820 the Louisiana State Legislature drafted a memorial addressing Congress of the great need it saw for defending the several sites considered to be the "keys of Louisiana."[38] Twenty-one years later the same body was still requesting "liberal appropriations . . . for completing the fortifications

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36. Ibid.

37. Ibid.

38. Louisiana Senate Journal, 1820, p. 29. Cited in Landry, "History of Forts Jackson and St. Philip," pp. 18-19.

at and near the mouth of the Mississippi. . . ."[39] Total cost for implementation of the system recommended by General Bernard was estimated at $1,566,515.42.[40] Despite continuous requests to Congress for funds from Bernard, and later from Chief Army Engineer Colonel Joseph G. Totten, only niggardly appropriations were forthcoming--enough to finance repairs and modifications of existing works but too little to adequately support the defense system earlier envisioned.[41] Work went on, however, and by 1836 works had been built or were building at all of the specified locations. Of particular concern was the erection of the post on Grande Terre Island, as this site was the only one which previously had gone undefended.[42] In addition, the engineers planned for fifteen two-gun river steamers--floating batteries--to range the waters of the delta frontier in support of the permanent works.[43] Finally, Totten, in reiterating the planned system

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39. U.S. Congress. House. Fortifications at the Mouths of the Mississippi. Resolution of the Legislature of Louisiana. H. Doc. 10, 27 Cong., 1st sess., 1841.

40. U.S. Congress. House. Revised Report of the Board of Engineers on the Defence of the Seaboard, March 24, 1826. H. Ex. Doc. 153, 19th Cong., 1st sess., 1826. (Reproduced in U.S. Congress. House. Permanent Fortifications and Sea-Coast Defenses. April 23, 1862. H. Rept. 86, 37 Cong., 2d sess., 1862.

41. See the recapitulation of the Bernard plan presented in ibid., pp. 47-48, and in Remarks by Lt. Col. Joseph G. Totten, March 29, 1836, in H. Ex. Doc. 243, 24 Cong., 1st sess., reprinted in U.S. Congress. House. Permanent Fortifications and Sea-Coast Defences. April 23, 1862. H. Rept. 86, 37 Cong., 2d sess., 1862, p. 105.

42. Remarks by Totten, March 29, 1836, in Permanent Fortifications, p. 105.

43. "Statements of the Fortifications, Their Garrisons, Steam Batteries, Etc., Necessary for the Defence of the Coasts of the United States, Their Cost, Etc." 1836. Military Affairs No. 650, 24 Congress, 1 Sess. American State Papers. Documents, Legislative and Executive, of the Congress of the United States . . ., December 1, 1823-May 26, 1828, Vol. 021, pp. 112, 115. Regarding the armed steamers, Totten wrote Secretary of War William L. Marcy on April 4, 1846: "A squadron of these should rendezvous in the harbors about Cat and Ship islands, in order to protect the commerce from all predatory enterprise, and to assail an enemy approaching in force. Being obliged to retire, they would find

for the approaches to New Orleans, advised that "in time of war, [there should] be a second line of defences, consisting of field works, block-houses, &c., which, happily, the nature of the country generally allows to be made very strong at a small expense."[44]

E. Colonel Totten's Recommendations

Totten's reference to war was made at a time when hostilities with Mexico appeared imminent. In that prospect the defenses of New Orleans would be of special significance, and the Chief Engineer accordingly weighed their respective needs and merits:

> In order to state what . . . provision should be made to secure a safe plan of defence, the several positions will be noticed in succession, beginning with the most eastern avenue, namely: that passage called the Rigolets, leading from lake Borgne to lake Pontchartrain.
>
> 1st. This channel is defended by Fort Pike, which must be placed in as perfect a state of strength and efficiency as it is capable of. Such measures should also be taken that immediately on the opening of a war the channel may be closed by floating obstructions placed under the fire of the batteries, and a field work may be thrown up on the shore opposite the fort.
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> 2d. The next avenue, proceeding westwardly, also communicates between the same "lakes," and is defended by Fort Wood; which defends, likewise, the termination of the

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shelter behind the fortifications on the passes, to the defence of which they would contribute; and where they would be in position to dash out upon the flanks of an expedition directed against the lower parts of lake Borgne. Another squadron should be stationed within the mouth of the Mississippi, to offer similar protection to commerce, and similar aid in defence of the river." U.S. Congress. Senate. Report of the Secretary of War, Transmitting . . . a plan and estimates of the expense of erecting fortifications for the defence of the city of New Orleans. S. Doc. 281, 29 Cong., 1st sess., 1846, p. 4.

44. U.S. Congress. Senate. Report of the Secretary of War, transmitting . . . a plan and estimates of the expense of erecting fortifications for the defence of the city of New Orleans. S. Doc. 281, 29 Cong., 1st sess., 1846.

Gentilly road. This fort must receive the same attention as the one above named; the channel must be defended in like manner, and a field work be erected on the shore opposite.

3d. The third avenue to New Orleans is that followed by the British in 1814; namely, by the way of bayou Bienvenue, bayou Mazant, and Villeret's canal. It is now defended by Battery Bienvenue, situate at the forks of the Bienvenue and the Mazant, thereby controlling the two passages. This work needs some immediate additions, chiefly with reference to accommodation for a garrison; and, in time of war, the channel should be obstructed.

4th. Going further along the shore of lake Borgne, we come to the mouth of bayou Dupré, a navigable channel; that, in connexion [sic] with the Phillipon canal, leads to the shore of the Mississippi. The little that remains to be added to the strength of the defences at this point should be forthwith supplied, and preparation made for closing the bayou at any moment.

5th. Next, and at the southern end of lake Borgne, is Proctor's landing, from which point a good road conducts to the city. Works have been projected for the defence here, but their erection has not yet been authorized by Congress. They should be begun and finished as soon as possible. If there be not time to complete them before war breaks out, temporary works must be thrown up across the road, in a position for immediate effect, and to act as a second line after the completion of the permanent work; upon which, labors should not be intermitted.

Between lake Borgne and the mouths of the Mississippi there are two or three, long, obscure, and barely practicable routes, which may be closed by temporary expedients, but for which means should be kept in hand for application at the proper moment.

6th. We come now to the Mississippi river itself, which affords the most direct and easy access, if not impeded; and the most difficult to obstruct effectually. It is now defended by Forts Jackson and St. Philip--forts now in good order, but which should be strengthened to the utmost, without delay. Moreover, large batteries, exterior and subordinate thereto, should be added forthwith, and all preparatory steps taken to forming and placing under the fire of the guns one or two lines of floating obstructions; such as cannot be broken through, nor removed, by an enemy, so long as the forts remain in our hands. The mode of accomplishing these objects is already planned, and can be carried into execution as soon as means are supplied.

A second line of defences should, on the declaration of war, be commenced at "English turn," (about 15 miles below the city,) by the erection of strong field works, it being probable that old Fort St. Leon may be made to contribute thereto. In order to inspire greater confidence, in the event of particular demonstrations toward that city by an ememy, a line of floating obstructions might be laid down at this upper barrier also.

7th. Next, west of the Mississippi, comes the entrance to Barrataria bay, for the defence of which Fort Livingston was planned and is in course of construction; it is incomplete; but strenuous efforts have been, and will continue to be, made to bring it into the earlierst possible state of efficiency. Branching off from the bay into which this channel leads, there are several communications with the Mississippi which are navigable for boats, and on each of which it will be advisable to place, in time of war, small defensive posts, covering obstructions in the channels.

8th. There are, besides, near Barrataria, and for a considerable distance westward, lesser inlets from the sea, which conduct, by boat channels and by circuitous routes, to the Mississippi at different points; some quite near, and some quite distant from the city; all these must be secured. But it is believed that adequate preparation can be made on the immediate approach of war. They should generally be defended by small posts consisting of a block house, or something of that nature, and a small battery.[45]

Work on the various permanent fortifications progressed until by 1851 most of them were pronounced fit to receive armaments. Fort St. Philip, undergoing repairs, still occupied the important position at Plaquemine Turn; Forts Jackson, Pike, Wood (Macomb), and Livingston, and Battery Bienvennue and Tower Dupré were either finished or nearly so. Only a designated work at Proctor's Landing on Lake Borgne was yet to be started.[46] In the following pages these fortifications, and some others, will be examined.

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45. Ibid., pp. 1, 2, 3. See also Totten, Report of General J.G. Totten, pp. 15-16, 55, 73.

46. Totten, Report of General J.G. Totten, pp. 51-53.

CHAPTER V. FORT ST. PHILIP AND FORT JACKSON TO 1861

In the years after the War of 1812 the lands adjoining the lower Mississippi continued to attract settlers. Between 1815 and 1820 the bayou country above Fort St. Philip, possibly because it facilitated clandestine smuggling operations, drew new residents, most of whom raised produce of different sorts. Though firm land was seldom found, what existed was cultivable. Fishermen and planters settled at the mouths of the bayous, built small homes, and farmed. Most settlement occurred twenty miles above Fort St. Philip; below the post it was too marshy, the lands too impenetrable with cypress swamps and oak stands to induce rapid population.[1] Fort St. Philip remained in isolation, reached only by water traffic.

A. Fort St. Philip

1. Bernard's Advice

Following his tour of the Gulf Coast defenses, General Bernard made several technical recommendations regarding Fort St. Philip. He urged construction of a new parapet, but, cognizant of the rapid abatement of the soil, suggested that "the old walls forming the interior revetements" remain to help shore up the additional weight. He further suggested that the turf be removed from the glacis for a width of 150 yards to produce a quagmire to help retard land assaults. To defend the rear, Bernard proposed that a strong bastion be raised behind the fort and the ditch be rearranged to encompass this work. Concerning the barracks, Bernard advised that more ceiling beams be added. "Above the rafters alternate layers of mortar & brick, two of each [be placed], the whole covered with paper and tar."[2] Concluded the General,

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1. Gadsden to Swift, November 10, 1817. NA, RG 77. Entry 221; Latrobe, Impressions Respecting New Orleans, p. 16.

2. "Remarks, in relation to the works projected for the defense of the Gulf of Mexico frontier. . . ." NA, RG 77. Entry 221. The projected rear bastion appears on "Plan of Fort St. Philip with projected improvements." 1817. NA. Cartographic Archives Division. Drawer 89, Sheet 9. This structure was apparently never built.

> Fort St. Philip to sustain a seige [sic] would require a garrison of 400 men strong. Its barracks are for two hundred men. Their construction is similar to that of the [projected] fort on the right shore with the only difference that instead of three stories of beds there will be only 2 stories in order to have the barracks not seen by the enemy. A Powder magazine, another for the artillery, a furnace for [heating] red hot balls, a provisions store and a bake house will complete the establishment of this fort.[3]

In peacetime only eighty soldiers would be necessary to man Fort St. Philip. Total armament called for by Bernard was 60 pieces--27 on the river, 29 guarding land approaches, and 4 mortars.[4]

2. Deterioration Sets In

Improvements occurred slowly. In 1819 a traveler passing on the river remarked on the post: "The walled parts are of brick, and the batteries [are] en barbette. The officers quarters appear to be outside of the fort, low and buried in undergrowth. An unfinished, elevated frame, which has remained unfinished for 2 years, I am told, is the only elevated part of the work."[5] Little progress was made over the next few years. In 1822 an army inspector noted that the fort was "in tolerable repair" but that its garrison had experienced much sickness "for want of good and sufficient Barracks. . . ." The inspector observed that the cannon carriages needed painting, the howitzer carriage was decayed, and that the magazine was damp and not bombproof. "I am decidedly of the opinion," he reported, "that Fort St. Philips [sic] is not a healthy place."[6] Fear of the destructive effects of hurricanes on the post

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3. Report of Brigadier General Simon Bernard, December 23, 1817. NA, RG 77. Entry 221.

4. Ibid. See also Gadsden to Swift, November 10, 1817. NA, RG 77. Entry 221.

5. Latrobe, Impressions Respecting New Orleans, pp. 15-16.

6. "State of the Posts in the 8th Military Department." NA, RG 159. Microfilm M 624, Roll 3.

prompted the recommendation that a tall building be raised in the rear to afford the garrison a place of safety during floods.[7]

3. Need for a Road

One major concern during the postwar period was the lack of any good means of land transportation promoting communication between Fort St. Philip and New Orleans, a deficiency often mentioned by the state legislature, especially after construction started on Fort Jackson across the river in 1822. After that time the posts were jointly administered and the need for speedy communication increased. In 1824 the legislature presented a memorial to Congress looking to the construction of roads, after the completion of levees, along both sides of the river from the forts up to English Turn. The Committee on Military Affairs, which included Major General Andrew Jackson, reported favorably on the measure and authorized the completion of such a road.[8]

4. Serious Decline of Fort St. Philip

The ongoing construction of Fort Jackson seems to have deferred many of the improvements scheduled for Fort St. Philip. That post was supposed to be readied according to General Bernard's specifications, but in the words of one official, "it appears to be falling too rapidly to ruins

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7. Inspection Report, May 19, 1822, in ibid.

8. A light road did exist for forty-five miles along the right side of the river, but was deemed inadequate for use by artillery. Total cost for a road to Fort St. Philip was estimated at $16,106.50. Military Affairs No. 273, 18 Cong., 1 Sess. "Military Road from Fort St. Philip to the English Turn in Louisiana." American State Papers, vol. 018, p. 7; Landry, "History of Forts Jackson and St. Philip," pp. 22-23.

to justify such an undertaking."[9] Excepting several cannon in the post, an officer in June, 1827, pronounced the work "in a miserable state." He elaborated:

> The fort itself looks as if it had been for a long time abandoned, the platforms are tumbling in and the gun carriages are no longer able to sustain the weight of their guns, which are falling from them in every direction. Capt [Samuel] Spotts [Fourth Artillery] has but recently taken command here and can not therefore be held responsible for all this, but neglect is justly chargeable somewhere, else more than 40 pieces of Ordnance, most of them heavy, would not have been for years exposed without a covering or protection to the inclemencies of the weather, some upon their rotten carriages on the decayed platforms, others, upon the glacis of the fort and perhaps most generally covered with grass & rank growing weeds.[10]

Of the buildings, the inspector called the hospital, now outside the curtain along Bayou Mardi Gras, too small and, with its contract civilian physician, too costly. The officers' quarters, about 100 yards outside the work, was inadequate by its very situation, for few enlisted men were considered "sufficiently trustworthy to be left even for a single night in charge of a fortress, particularly of one so important as this."[11] The magazine, unventilated, damp, and hot, was termed "unserviceable." The garrison lacked a garden; that formerly cultivated at the post had been discontinued upon the death of the previous commander, Brevet Major

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9. U.S. Congress. House. Revised Report of the Board of Engineers on the Defence of the Seaboard, March 24, 1826. H. Ex. Doc. 153, 19th Cong., 1st sess., 1826, p. 48. "The Fort is in a bad condition: The platforms are entirely rotten and broken to pieces. The Gun Carriages are rotten and entirely unfit for Service. The gates of the Fort are out of repair. The bridges are falling down. The quarters of the Officers and Troops are old & badly constructed. It is very difficult for the soldiers to keep . . . from getting wet whenever it rains. The Hospital is in the same condition. The powder in the Magazine is more or less damaged. The Garden has been destroyed by salt water." Post Returns, Fort St. Philip, January, 1826. NA Microfilm M 617, Roll 1074.

10. Inspection Report, Fort St. Philip, June, 1827. NA, RG 159, Microfilm M 624, Roll 2.

11. Ibid.

Enoch Humphreys, Fourth Artillery, in August, 1825. To preserve the health of the garrison, establishment of a new garden was advised. Another recommendation called for the removal of tall grass and weeds that were encroaching on the post, and for the proper disposal, at least a half mile away, of "all filth & everything calculated to putrify and become offensive."[12] Fort St. Philip, said the inspector, "is not so unhealthy as is generally represented. The sickness of late years, may be ascribed, in a great degree, to bad quarters and worse police."[13]

5. The Garrison Command

According to the post returns, less than 100 men of the Artillery Corps under Captain Humphreys occupied the fort between May, 1821, and January, 1822. Thereafter, until June, 1824, Company B, Fourth Artillery garrisoned the post. In the latter month this unit was joined briefly by Company E, First Infantry, but later the artillery unit alone remained. Captain Jacob Schmuck succeeded to the command of the post on Humphrey's demise. In February, 1827, Company C, Fourth Artillery, took station at Fort St. Philip under Captain Samuel Spotts, and in January, 1828, the post was garrisoned by Company H, Second Artillery, commanded by Captain Richard A. Zantzinger. A year later Company B, Fourth Artillery, resumed its former place under Captain Francis L. Dade (who in 1835 was to die in one of the more noted episodes of the Florida Seminole wars). Company B of the Fourth remained at Fort St. Philip at least through April, 1831, when the returns for this period end.[14] During these years the fort declined seriously and was intermittently garrisoned by the above units, detachments of which were also rotated to duty guarding the magazine across the river from New Orleans. Between

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12. Ibid.

13. Ibid.

14. Post Returns, Fort St. Philip, May, 1821--April, 1831. NA Microfilm M617, Roll 1074.

February, 1828, and the following January the fort was temporarily abandoned. Sometime in the late 1820s or early 1830s a one-story wooden barracks was erected by the Quartermaster Department in the fort near the river front.[15] But with completion of Fort Jackson on the west bank, that post became the predominant defensive work on the lower Mississippi. Although in 1834 estimates for improving Fort St. Philip at a cost of $77,810.79 were prepared, Congress deferred the project.[16] In the following year an inspector of ordnance expressed "little confidence" in the quality of the old guns at the fort and suggested that they be replaced.[17] And in March, 1836, Colonel Totten, recognizing the value of the post and the potential of its batteries declared that Fort St. Philip "must be repaired or renewed" at an estimated expenduture of $117,000.[18]

6. Upgrading the Works

On February 9, 1842, President John Tyler signed a proclamation declaring the Fort St. Philip Military Reservation as "section eleven of Township nineteen, Range seventeen East of the South Eastern District of Louisiana," roughly totaling 595 acres.[19] The action insured the maintenance of the post as an important defensive unit acting in concert

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15. "Sketch of Fort St. Philip La." 1835. NA, Cartographic Archives Division. Drawer 89, Sheet 11.

16. Landry, "History of Forts Jackson and St. Philip," p. 22.

17. Captain Rufus L. Baker to Colonel George Bomford, April 7, 1835, in "Instructions concerning the armament of the fortresses on the Gulf of Mexico." Rufus Lathrop Baker Papers, 1790-1868. Manuscript Division. United States Military Academy Library, West Point, New York.

18. Remarks by Lt. Col. J. G. Totten, March 29, 1836, in H. Ex. Doc. 243, 24 Cong., 1st sess.

19. Land Papers (Ft. Jackson, La.). NA, RG 77. Louisiana ceded the tract to the federal government in 1846. Landry, "History of Forts Jackson and St. Philip," p. 23. In 1902 and 1903 the reservation was increased by virtue of condemnation to additionally include sections 12, 13, 14, and one-half of 15 of T.19S, R.17E., southeast district, totaling about 550 acres. Tracts incorporated in the enlarged reservation (approximately 1,145 acres) included those of local residents Sarah

with Fort Jackson. By the spring of that year the post was in sufficient repair to receive new armaments.[20] In May Captain John G. Barnard of the Corps of Engineers reported that a shot furnace was being built, that construction of a new magazine, bomb-proof quarters and storerooms was about to begin, and that repairs "of no great magnitude" were to be made to the ditch and enciente. Part of the problem of completing repairs on Fort St. Philip was its setting. "This place besides being . . . unhealthy," wrote Barnard, ". . . is so infested . . . by mosquitoes & sand flies that it is difficult to keep a force there. . . ."[21] During this year twenty-eight gun platforms were built, banquettes (firing steps) constructed, "and the Fort made ready to receive its entire armament. . . ." The old wooden bridge across the ditch was temporarily replaced by one of "kyanized" timber and work on a drawbridge was in progress.[22]

Alexis, John Butler, John Margen, Alexander Kelly, John P. Lyons, Dominque Quatrochi, Edmund Buras, Marie Buras, John Bernard Fasterling, Patrick Lyons, John C. Burton, and George O'Brien. For details, see Office of the Judge Advocate General. United States Military Reservations, National Cemeteries and Military Parks. Title Jurisdiction Etc. Rev. ed. (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1916), pp. 151-52.

20. Major William H. Chase to Totten, April 18, 1842. Letters Received (LR) C1052. NA, RG 77. In his report on national defenses published in 1851, General Totten stated that repair work on Fort St. Philip commenced in 1841. Report of General J. G. Totten, p. 94.

21. Barnard to Totten, May 2, 1842. LR, B1314. NA, RG 77. See also Barnard to Totten, July 7, 1842. LR, B1377. NA, RG 77.

22. Barnard to Totten, September 30, 1842. LR, B1499, in NA, RG 77. See also "Fort St. Philip, at Plaquemine Bend, Mississippi River, Louisiana." 1841. NA, Cartographic Archives Division. Drawer 89, Sheet 12. Description of the drawbridge, with an accompanying sketch, is in Barnard to Totten, March 25, 1845. LR, B2468. NA, RG 77. See also Barnard to Totten, December 25, 1845. LR, B2793. NA, RG 77. "Kyanized" timber was decay resistant wood prepared by steeping it in a solution of mercuric chloride.

7. New Construction

Throughout the late 1840s, with the War with Mexico continuing, much effort at Fort St. Philip was directed toward upgrading its capacity for armaments. Granite traverse circles were added to the barbette batteries, and construction began on two exterior batteries.[23] These latter structures, above and below the post, followed the classical precepts in their construction and consisted of a ditch, sloping parapet lined with timber, and magazines.[24] Once these batteries could be finished, wrote Barnard, "this fort will be able to present its full array of guns bearing upon the river."[25] According to General Totten, the total ordnance projected for Fort St. Philip, if operating at full capacity as of 1851, was 124 pieces, embracing twenty-eight 24-pounders, thirteen 18-pounders, fifteen 12-pounders, three field pieces, fifty-five 8-inch howitzers, one 13-inch mortar, two 10-inch mortars, two 8-inch mortars, and five coehorns. Cost of such armament would be $101,980.[26]

8. More Repairs are Necessary

Structurally, however, Fort St. Philip still remained in a poor state:

> Its scarp, badly built & much decayed, requires a new facing--its parapets & ramparts to be raised--its ditch to be deepened & counterscarp revetted--glacis raised &c, &c--and the land fronts strengthened by a chain of outworks, as planned.[27]

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23. Barnard to Totten, December 25, 1845. LR, B2793. NA, RG 77; "Annual Report of Operations for Fort St. Philip for the Year Ending Sept. 30th 1848." LR, B4013. NA, RG 77.

24. "Annual Report of Operations," LR, B4013. NA, RG 77.

25. Ibid.

26. Report of General J.G. Totten, p. 95.

27. Ibid.

Barnard estimated the cost to complete these projects at $130,000.[28] Over the next year and a half, however, the structure worsened, and in May, 1850, Barnard reported as follows:

> The work is built in the most wretched manner: on the [front] curtain . . . the lower half of the wall seems to be nothing but dry bricks--and if they ever had mortar in them it has washed out & disappeared: This part of the wall almost dropped to pieces by the operation of driving large piles at its foot, and at other points we feared it would tumble down & thought necessary to apply props to keep it in position--Every blow of the pile driver seemed to threaten to carry it all into the ditch. Some parts of this old wall settled 6 inches during the pile driving & none less than 2 or 3 inches--I believe that if we build a new face to this old wall it will be destroyed by the connexion with the old wall & that it is idle to think of raising the relief . . . without rebuilding the whole wall from the foot.[29]

Barnard recommended rebuilding the old Spanish-erected curtain. He also urged that the angles of the bastions fronting the river be modified, since "as so arranged . . . neither flank sees the face of its colateral [sic] bastion."[30] "Please bear in mind," explained Barnard, "that I suggest these alterations only because it is absolutely necessary to rebuild from the found[ns], part of these walls; & why in doing so should we return their faulty trace?"[31] He also advised bolstering and thickening the newer portions of the scarp walls.[32] Subsequent diagrams of Fort St. Philip, however, indicate that the contemplated re-design was never completely fulfilled.

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28. Ibid.

29. Barnard to Totten, May 27, 1850. LR, B4845. NA, RG 77.

30. Ibid.

31. Ibid.

32. Ibid.

9. Progress after Abandonment

Work at the post ceased altogether by early 1852. Some progress had been made on the scarp walls, but, after February, Fort St. Philip was placed under the charge of a fort keeper named A. Warrick who along with five black laborers voluntarily continued work on the masonry on the assumption that further appropriations for repairs would be made.[33] But the effort at renovation went on sporadically at best. If adequate funds were not regularly allocated, then the arrival of the annual "sickly season" thwarted the task. Sometimes only partial appropriations were made, necessitating the stoppage of work at inappropriate times. In 1855-56, for example, the completed work consisted of constructing two communication arches beneath the parapets, building a scarp wall across the gorge of a salient, building gun recesses behind the walls facing the river, filling and ramming earth on the parapets, and finishing portions of the parade ground.[34] Similar projects were completed the following year, and improvements were made to the magazine. Captain Pierre G.T. Beauregard, who had replaced Barnard as supervising engineer officer for the works around New Orleans, requested more money to enable him to complete the laying of traverse circles and pintle blocks for the artillery, among other things.[35] In 1857-58 more work was done on the relieving arches erected on the different faces, increasing the width of their foundations. Beauregard anticipated soon finishing repairs on the interior of Fort St. Philip, but he called for funds with which to excavate the ditch and repair the glacis, and to repair the exterior batteries and the levee. In the lower battery, two of the twenty-eight gun platforms were replaced with platforms for columbiads.[36]

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33. Captain P.G.T. Beauregard to Totten, February 21, 1852. LR, B5549. NA, RG 77.

34. For details on this work, see "Annual Report of Operations for the Works under the charge of Capt. & Bvt Major G.T. Beauregard, Corps of Engineers, to September 30, 1856." LR, B6920. NA, RG 77.

35. "Annual Report of Operations for the Works under the charge of Bvt Maj. G.T. Beauregard, Corps of Engineers, to September 30th 1857." LR, B7491. NA, RG 77.

36. "Annual Report of Operations for the Works under the Charge of Bvt Maj. G.T. Beauregard, Corps of Engineers, to the 30th of June 1858." LR, B7856. NA, RG77.

10. Seizure by Louisiana Militia

Such improvements at Fort St. Philip went on infrequently over the next two years. By early 1861, however, threats of civil war engulfed the land. On January 10 orders came from Governor Thomas O. Moore of Louisiana, even before the enactment of an ordinance of secession, for the militia to seize the federal property in the state, including Forts Jackson and St. Philip on the lower Mississippi.[37] Next day Major Paul Theard descended the river on the steamer Yantic with a force of 166 men to capture those posts. At eight o'clock in the evening they approached Fort St. Philip, which was unmanned. The keeper of the fort, Henry Dart, when called upon to surrender the place, replied that "he had no objection in the world" and turned over his entire staff of twelve Negro slaves. Theard left a detachment in the old work and proceeded across the river and took control of Fort Jackson.[38]

11. Beauregard's Advice

On February 2 an ordinance presented in the state legislature provided for the organization of a military command in Louisiana, consisting of artillery and infantry. At the same time the forts defending the lower river were pronounced as unfit and requiring immediate repairs. Before leaving New Orleans to join the Confederate Army, Beauregard,

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37. Specifically, Moore directed that "Captain St. Paul, with his company of foot rifles, [be placed] in possession of Fort Saint Philip." Moore to Adjutant General M. Grivot, January 10, 1861, in The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies. 73 vols., 128 parts (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1880-1901), Series I, vol. I, p. 491.

38. Kendall, History of New Orleans, pp. 233-34; Charles Dufour, The Night the War Was Lost (Garden City, New York: Doubleday and Company, 1960), pp. 19-20. The Louisiana legislature approved Moore's action by joint resolution on February 18, 1861. Jefferson Davis Bragg, Louisiana in the Confederacy (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1941), p. 50. There were several white "hands" working at Fort St. Philip, too, and arrangements were made to pay them what the Government owed them. See Brevet Second Lieutenant Walter McFarland to Totten, January 12, 1861, in War of the Rebellion, Series I, vol. I, pp. 496-97.

who had superintended all of the recent work on the posts, advised that the heaviest guns available be mounted in them, to include cannon removed from other posts. Beauregard advised that the heaviest pieces facing the landward (rear) faces be moved to bear on the river approaches. He also urged that a strong barrier be placed across the Mississippi to impede ascending vessels under the crossfire of the forts. However, it was not until the end of September that a chain barrier was established across the river.[39] Major General Mansfield Lovell, commander of Confederate forces in the area, meantime visited Forts St. Philip and Jackson to determine their readiness. He found the defenses barely adequate; ammunition was of an inferior quality and would hinder operation of the pieces.[40]

12. The Confederate Occupation of Fort St. Philip

Life at the Confederate Fort St. Philip posed hardships for the Louisiana troops unlucky enough to be stationed there in 1861. The humidity was stifling, and the men suffered from the constant annoyance of insects, particularly mosquitoes. One young officer, Lieutenant Edward G. Butler, complained that "when not otherwise employed [we] are actively engaged in fighting the mosquitos. It seems to be the general opinion that they will be the only enemy we will have a chance to encounter for some time."[41] Days were spent mounting cannon and receiving ordnance supplies and ammunition. Food was no problem; beef and other meats arrived regularly from New Orleans, while the plantations a few miles upstream from the post provided fresh vegetables. The troops caught redfish and other kinds in Bayou Mardi Gras next to the fort. Mail reached the post once a week, on Saturdays, and there was a

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39. Dufour, Night The War Was Lost, pp. 27-30, 66.

40. Ibid., p. 94.

41. Butler to Margaret Butler, April 27, 1861. Thomas Butler Family Papers. Folder 102. Department of Archives and Manuscripts, Louisiana State University.

telegraph office nearby at Fort Jackson.[42] Most of the days were occupied with routine matters. An occasional diversion took place, such as on April 20, 1861, when Star of the West, the first Union ship captured by the Confederacy, and which had drawn the fire of Rebel guns at Charleston Harbor on January 9, 1861, passed Fort St. Philip enroute to New Orleans. The soldiers fired a salute to the command composing the escort.[43] Sometimes rumors filled the air; in June a report circulated, later deemed false, that Federal troops were approaching New Orleans through the lakes.[44] And often humor provided respite from the daily regimen at the post. Wrote Butler:

> We had quite an acquisition to our Company last night in the person of Lieut. L. B. Taylor, a New Orleans swell of the first water. He was the gentleman that appeared on Canal St. a few days after his appointment in full uniform, sword and all, and as he unfortunately did not know how to wear the latter, he was disgracefully tripped up by it, in the presence of several fair ladies, to whom he was playing the agreeable at the time. The Crescent [sic] came out in the morning with a poem entitled--"Ye littel man with ye bigge sworde"--and he has gone by that name ever since.[45]

B. Fort Jackson

1. New Post on the West Bank

During the several decades preceding the Civil War, Fort St. Philip declined in official esteem, though never in strategical value, in favor of Fort Jackson across the Mississippi.[46] A post near the former site of

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42. Butler to Margaret Butler, April 27, 1861; Butler to Irwin Butler, April 21, 1861; Butler to "Liz," June 8, 1861; Butler to "Sis," July 20, 1861. Ibid.

43. Butler to Irwin Butler, April 21, 1861, in ibid.

44. Butler to "Liz," June 8, 1861, in ibid.

45. Butler to "SA" (Sara), August 14, 1861, in ibid.

46. Stated one officer: "Mount a hundred guns on the ramparts of Fort Jackson, if you will. Still in the event of trial, it will be found that most of the effective shots are fired from the few pieces pointed from St. Philip." Inspection Report, Fort Jackson, June (?), 1827. NA, RG 159. Microfilm M624, Roll 2.

Fort Bourbon on the west shore had long been contemplated, and tentative plans soon after the War of 1812 called for the erection of one at the place where in 1814 the unfinished water battery had stood.[47] One post designed for the site and possibly started there consisted of a square redoubt with a curved front on the river containing seven pieces of artillery. Another plan drawn in 1816 envisioned a pentagonal fort.[48] In 1817 a plan was drawn that placed the new post a short distance downstream from Fort St. Philip. This star-like fort was to contain five bastions and have a broad, water-filled ditch surrounding it.[49] Still another plan, proposed by Captain William Tell Poussin, projected a fort for ninety-seven guns firing en barbette and from a single tier of casemates below.[50] This fort, as well as several of those planned earlier, was to be very large in order to compensate for the relative weakness of Fort St. Philip. As Captain James Gadsden put it, "It is deemed most advisable to . . . so elevate the projected work that it may command Fort St. Philip."[51] The final plan for the new post was greatly influenced by General Bernard and reflected the classic characteristics of the Third System. Though considered a small work by Third System standards, the fort was to provide ample strength to resist land assault through its swampy environment. The pentogonal structure would be raised so that one 130-yard front faced downstream toward arriving vessels and another

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47. Landry, "History of Forts Jackson and St. Philip," p. 19.

48. See "Plan of Fort St. Philip at Plaquemin [sic] Turn." Undated. NA, Cartographic Archives Division. Drawer 89, Sheet 3. Mention of the possible existence of a battery here is in Gadsden to Swift, November 10, 1817. NA, RG 77. Entry 221. Richard R. Dixon, "Fort Jackson was a Mighty River Bastion," New Orleans Roosevelt Review, XXV (September, 1962), p. 12.

49. "Projected Fort," 1817. NA, Cartographic Archives Division. Drawer 89, Sheet 5. An apparent alternative design that was not adopted made the fort a four-sided single-tiered masonry structure with four bastions. Each side contained six casemates for the artillery complement. "Plan No. 7," 1818. NA, Cartographic Archives Division. Drawer 88, Sheet 1.

50. Dixon, "Fort Jackson," p. 12.

51. Gadsden to Swift, November 10, 1817. NA, RG 77. Entry 221.

upstream; guns on the first might batter ascending vessels, while those on the second face might fire on any that succeeded in passing the fort. "These two fronts," said Bernard, "form in some measure a coast Battery, whilst the other three shut the whole against an attack by land."[52] According to Bernard's plan, only the two sides facing the Mississippi would contain vaulted casemates, their roofs rendered bombproof with a thick covering of earth. Ninety-four pieces of artillery could be employed in the casemates, reckoned Bernard, and they would serve as shelters for the garrison during a siege.[53] As additional protection, Bernard proposed creating a quagmire around the fort to prohibit an enemy from building siegeworks.[54] In the final plan, a covered way and places of arms were built into the landward sides, and traverses were erected as protection from enfilade fire. A water battery stood between the scarp and counterscarp facing the river; another would be built close to the Mississippi beyond the glacis.[55]

2. Construction Progress

The construction of Fort Jackson, named after Major General Andrew Jackson, began in 1822. Built on a grillage of cypress logs and pilings made necessary by the soft soil, the post as erected had far fewer casemates--only eight each in the two fronts facing the river--than General Bernard had contemplated. Work lasted more than ten years, and the average annual cost of construction between 1822 and 1829 was approximately $69,000.[56] Bad weather often delayed the project for months at a time; in 1825 the rainfall alone amounted to 107 inches. In

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52. Report of Brigadier General Simon Bernard, December 23, 1817. NA, RG 77. Entry 221.

53. Ibid.

54. "Remarks, in relation to the works projected for the defense of the Gulf of Mexico frontier." NA, RG 77. Entry 221.

55. Robinson, American Forts, p. 91.

56. Landry, "History of Forts Jackson and St. Philip," p. 19.

1830 and 1831 no appropriations were forthcoming, largely because work delays had caused actual expenditures to be low.[57] During the first years of construction efforts were geared to clearing the land and building the landward side of the fort. A levee several hundred yards long on either side of the fort site was completed by late 1823.[58] Two years later the rear ditch was completed, as was much of the right rear bastion and the traverse. Inside, a strong, ten-faceted circular brick citadel was built, complete with two levels of loopholes through which infantrymen might make a last-ditch defense of the post. Quarters for the laborers were built north of the fort site and included houses for mechanics and laborers, a bakery, carpenter's shop, blacksmith's shop, overseer's quarters, and a stable. Farther north a large garden was planted to furnish vegetables for the workmen. Temporary facilities for building materials stood near the levee in front of the site.[59] In the following year work progressed rapidly, with most of the trace of the post completed and excavations of three feet made on the river side for the foundations of the casemates. Total length from wall to wall across the pentagon was 400 feet. In addition, each of the five bastions measured 100 feet, so that the true diameter of Fort Jackson was closer to 600 feet. A roof was also finished on the citadel and erection of the scarp was begun.[60] By the end of September, 1828, all of the brick casemates except the roofs had been built, the bastions had been refined and two more casemates had been built in the north face, guarding the entrance to the fort.[61] Besides the eight casemates planned for each of

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57. Ibid., p. 21.

58. "Plan of the proposed site of Fort Plaquemine." 1824. NA, Cartographic Archives Division, Drawer 88, Sheet 5.

59. "Plan Sections and Elevations, Exhibiting the Actual State of the Works of Fort Jackson. . . ." 1825. NA, Cartographic Archives Division. Drawer 88, Sheet 8.

60. "Plan Elevation and Sections of Fort Jackson," 1826. NA, Cartographic Archives Division. Drawer 88, Sheet 9.

61. "Plan Elevations and Sections of Fort Jackson," 1828. NA, Cartographic Archives Division. Drawer 88, Sheet 10.

the fronts on the river, two more were scheduled to be built into each bastion to provide flanking fire for the fronts. An arched-roof magazine was also to be erected in the bastion between the two casemated fronts.

3. Post Buildings

Among the post buildings under construction was the hospital, a frame structure located beyond the north face of the fort and containing five wards and rooms for the post surgeon and the post hospital steward. This hip-roofed building had a front porch and was raised on brick piers five feet above the ground surface.[62] An officers quarters, built of brick, stood two-stories high with surrounding porches, and consisted of three rooms per level; an inspector's quarters of similar design was also built. Each of these structures stood on brick piers.[63] In 1834 certain of the facilities were represented as follows:

> The principal Building occupied as officers Quarters is constructed of Brick & plaistered. It is two stories high and consists of a centre and two wings, forming in all, 12 Rooms. There are six rooms on each floor, and the two stories are similarly divided. . . . Each room has in it a fireplace for burning wood & a closet, and all are neatly finished and plaistered.
>
> The Quarters for enlisted men are in the citadel in the interior of the Fort. The Citadel is a regular decagon, nine of the sides of which form rooms of the following dimensions--Exterior side 45 ft.--interior side 35 ft.--width 17 ft. These rooms are plaistered & well finished.[64]

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62. "Plan of Hospital." 1823. NA, Cartographic Archives Division. Drawer 88, Sheet 4.

63. "Plan of the proposed site of Fort Plaquemine." 1824. NA, Cartographic Archives Division. Drawer 88, Sheet 5. In 1833 another officers quarters was built north of the fort and close to the levee. "Fort Jackson, Lou." 1833. NA, Cartographic Archives Division. Drawer 88, Sheet 13.

64. "Report with regard to the Quarters, Kitchens &c.&c. at this Post," December 15, 1834. NA, RG 92, Records of the Office of the Quartermaster General.

4. Planned Armament

Ordnance for Fort Jackson was to be placed as follows: River Front No. 1 (facing upstream), to contain 17 guns en barbette, 8 guns in casemates, and 2 guns on the flank; River Front No. 2 (facing downstream), to contain 18 guns en barbette, 8 guns in casemates, and 2 guns on the flank; Land Fronts Nos. 1, 2, and 3 each to contain 11 cannon en barbette and 2 casemated guns on each of their flanking bastions. In addition, 10 mortars would be emplaced on the rampart, so that the number of ordnance pieces to be mounted in the completed Fort Jackson totaled 104.[65] Some of the casemates, however, were actually used for purposes other than sheltering weapons. Eight of those along one face were "walled up and neatly lined, thus forming convenient rooms for Storehouses, Shops &c."[66] In 1834 these rooms served as carpenter shop, paint store, Quartermaster store, blacksmith shop, artillery laboratory, commissary store, ordnance store, and sutler's store.[67]

5. Operations during the 1830s and 1840s

Post returns for the early years of Fort Jackson are incomplete. From December, 1830, until early March, 1834, the fort was garrisoned by Company I, Second Artillery, commanded by Captain Nehemiah Baden. Over the ensuing year Company C, Second Artillery, under Captain George W. Gardiner, occupied the post.[68]

Work on Fort Jackson proceeded through the 1830s. A drawbridge was erected at the entrance on the north face. Construction of the

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65. "Sketch of Fort Jackson." 1832. NA, Cartographic Archives Division. Drawer 88, Sheet 11.

66. "Report with regard to the Quarters, Kitchens &c.&c. at this Post." December 15, 1834. NA, RG 92.

67. Ibid.

68. Post Returns, Fort Jackson, December, 1830-April, 1835. NA, Microfilm M617, Roll 521.

embrasures continued and tracks for the gun traverse circles were laid.[69] The magazine was lined with lead in an unsuccessful effort to prevent dampness.[70] An ordnance inspector urged that the several old guns then on hand at Fort Jackson be replaced with "twenty four pounders of the new pattern," and that the carriages be painted "at least once a year to preserve them from the ruinous effects of this climate. . . ."[71] He further advised that new carriages made from locally available cypress logs be procured for the cannon at Fort Jackson.[72] The buildings required slight repairs, mostly because of damage from the severe storms that struck the area during the early part of the year.[73]

Concerns over the structural qualities of the masonry walls occupied the attention of army engineers during this period. In 1839 Captain Richard Delafield, who was supervising the construction, deemed the recently-raised brick ramparts not strong enough to sustain the weight of an earthen parapet. Consequently, further construction was suspended until the masonry had sufficiently dried and strengthened. Adding to the worries was knowledge that the foundations of Fort Jackson were gradually subsiding because of the great structural weight on the soft, wet ground. Yet preparations proceeded for the fort to receive its designated armament. In 1838-39 fourteen traverses and granite pintle blocks were laid for the barbette stations on the river front, and plans were drawn up to emplace thirty-eight more. Regarding the casemates, an inspecting officer reported that they remained damp, "and I know of no way to remedy the evil."

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69. "Sketch of Fort Jackson, L." 1835. NA, Cartographic Archives Division. Drawer 88, Sheet 14. See also "Details of Embrasures in Casemates of Fort Jackson." 1832. NA, Cartographic Archives Division, Drawer 88, Sheet 2.

70. Captain Rufus L. Baker to Colonel George Bomford, April 7, 1835. Baker Papers. United States Military Academy Library.

71. Ibid.

72. A. Drane to Baker, January 22, 1835. Baker Papers. United States Military Academy Library.

73. See "Quarterly Report of the State of Barracks & Quarters at Fort Jackson." March 31, 1835. NA, RG 92.

> There are a few leaks in the arches, but not to any extent to do injury. . . . The subsidence of the work had depressed the level of the casemate floors below the high water mark of the main ditch. The water rises to this mark during the floods of the River and causes the inundation of the casemates to a depth of a few inches.[74]

As in the case of Fort St. Philip, progress at Fort Jackson fluctuated with the availability of funds. In November, 1841, work on the post resumed after some delay and lasted until June, 1842, when it stopped for want of money. Later that summer it started up again.[75]

On February 9, 1842, the Fort Jackson Military Reservation was created, consisting of Sections 5, 6, 7, 8, and 9 of Township 20, Range 30, East, of the Southwestern District of Louisiana. Five years later the reservation was modified to include additional public lands surrounding the fort. Total land area encompassed by the reserve was 557.6 acres.[76] The establishment of the reservation coincided with much of the completion of the fort, for in the summer of 1842 the parapet and wall around the perimeter was mostly finished and the gun platforms laid on the ramparts, some of them ready to receive barbette cannons. Yet the workers constantly contended with sickness which inevitably slowed final completion.[77] A major modification had been made on the casemates:

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74. Major William H. Chase to Totten, March 14, 1839. LR C274. NA, RG 77.

75. "Report of the progress of operations at Fort Jackson during the year ending the 30th of September 1842." LR B1499. NA, RG 77.

76. Proclamation of President Tyler. Land Papers (Fort Jackson, La.). NA, RG 77; R.B. Marcy (comp.), Outline Description of the Posts and Stations of Troops in the Geographical Divisions and Departments of the United States (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1872), p. 235; Office of the Judge Advocate General, United States Military Reservations, p. 148; Fortier, Louisiana, II, 151.

77. Barnard to Totten, July 7, 1842. LR B1377. NA, RG 77. In April Major William H. Chase wrote Colonel Totten, recommending that "the whole armament intended for Fort Jackson be sent to that work, since in the case of emergency, that work could be prepared in a very short time, for its complete defence." April 18, 1842. LR C1052. NA, RG 77.

> The embrasures of the curtain casemates on the water fronts have been raised one foot above their former level as well as the floors, gun platforms, &c and are ready for guns. The embrasures of all the flanks have been converted into carronade embrasures--their floors raised (except two) sufficiently to keep them dry & the stone traverse circles laid.[78]

Captain Barnard also reported that the magazine was now "perfectly dry," having been fitted with a kyanized timber lining and grated doors and windows.[79] An important change was the conversion of the covered way branches near the river front into 9-gun batteries complete with hot shot furnaces. A new drawbridge was also in preparation by the carpenters.[80]

Work continued intermittently, tapering off almost entirely with the arrival of summer and its debilitating heat and humidity. Operations closed again in June, 1843, because most of the workhands abandoned the place. Reported Captain Barnard:

> Sickness made its appearance earlier than usual this season & laborers begin to desert & there is no calculating upon further operations. The experience of three summers has convinced me that it is inexpedient to carry on the work at this place after the 1st of June.[81]

By late 1845 Fort Jackson, yet without any large guns, was ready to receive a garrison. "It is hoped," wrote Barnard, "that the Ordnance

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78. Ibid.

79. Ibid.; "Report of the progress of operations at Fort Jackson during the year ending the 30th of September 1842. LR B1499. NA, RG 77.

80. Ibid. For details of construction of the drawbridge, see "Fort Jackson at Plaquemine Bend, Mississippi River, Louisiana." 1841. NA, Cartographic Archives Division. Drawer 86, Sheet 16. See also Barnard to Totten, March 25, 1845, which contains a sketch of the drawbridge. LR B2468. NA, RG 77.

81. Barnard to Totten, June 14, 1843. LR B1764. NA, RG 77.

Dept. will soon supply the armament as the citizens of New Orleans express considerable uneasiness at the unarmed condition of these works."[82] Apprehensions of the Louisiana natives mounted as the country plunged into war with Mexico the following year. Fort Jackson served as a training facility for troops preparing to go to the front, and also as a debarkation point for men and supplies going to Mexico.[83] By the end of the conflict some of the ordnance had arrived and troops were finally stationed at the post. Most labor was now employed in making repairs and alterations. "This work," said Barnard, "may be considered completed so far as concerns the original design. . . ."[84] He expected work the next year to consist of deepening the ditch "to an unfordable depth," re-laying casemate pavements, and attaching shutters to loopholes of the citadel. Two exterior batteries were required, too, but these might be deferred.[85] One such outwork was underway in 1851.[86]

6. Fort Jackson and the Beginning of the Civil War

When, in 1855, Captain P.G.T. Beauregard succeeded Barnard as superintendent of the works around New Orleans, development at Fort Jackson had slowed. The troops were soon withdrawn and the post was placed under a fort keeper who guarded the materials for the exterior battery and performed such maintenance duties as cutting the grass and weeds on the works. Beauregard anticipated a resumption of the battery project in May, 1857, and estimated its completion in four months time. He also urged allocations of $47,000 in order to enlarge the citadel to accommodate an increased garrison and to construct additional officers' quarters. Flooding constantly posed a threat to Fort Jackson, and

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82. Barnard to Totten, December 25, 1845. LR B2793. NA, RG 77.

83. Dixon, "Fort Jackson," n.p.

84. Barnard to Totten, September 30, 1848. LR B4013. NA, RG 77.

85. Ibid.

86. Totten, Report of General J.G. Totten, p. 73.

Beauregard asked for $3,000 to install adequate draining apparatus in the exterior battery.[87] Labor to complete Fort Jackson consisted of a corps of workmen that Beauregard rotated around to the various fortifications in his charge. Although at this time more attention was being paid to Fort St. Philip than to Fort Jackson,[88] early in 1859 the exterior barbette battery at the latter work was finished and ready to receive a complement of thirty-one pieces. This structure measured approximately 215 feet long and 85 feet wide and was built in the traditional manner to include ditch, scarp, parapet and cannon platforms. Many of the guns for the main work being already in place, Beauregard stated that the remaining armament could be mounted "at any time."[89]

Fort Jackson was in operable condition when, in January, 1861, the post was taken over, along with Fort St. Philip, by Louisiana militia under Major Theard. On direction of Governor Moore, the state soldiers seized the fort on the 11th and hoisted the pelican flag.[90] Ordnance Sergeant H. Smith, in charge of Fort Jackson, turned the post over to Theard. "Having no force to defend the public property," Smith notified his seniors, "I was forced to surrender it to superior numbers."[91] Five

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87. "Annual Report of Operations for the Works under the charge of Capt. & Bvt Major G.T. Beauregard, Corps of Engineers, to September 30th 1856." LR B6920. NA, RG 77.

88. "Annual Report of Operations for the Works under the charge of Bvt Maj. G.T. Beauregard, Corps of Engineers, to September 30th 1857." LR B7491. NA, RG 77.

89. "Annual Report of Operations for the Works under the Charge of Bvt Maj. G. T. Beauregard, Corps of Engrs., to the 30th of June 1858." LR B7856. NA, RG 77; "Sketch exhibiting the actual condition of the Exterior Battery A." December 24, 1858. NA, Cartographic Archives Division. Drawer 88, Sheet 42.

90. Moore to Adjutant General M. Grivot, January 10, 1861, in War of the Rebellion, Series I, Vol. I, p. 491.

91. Smith to Colonel Samuel Cooper, January 11, 1861, in War of the Rebellion, Series I, vol. I, p. 491.

days later Captain C.M. Bradford and a small force of Louisiana militia relieved Major Theard at Fort Jackson and Captain St. Paul at Fort St. Philip.[92] On January 18 Dr. James Trudeau was appointed as artillery instructor for the troops at both forts and given instructions to ready their defenses.[93]

7. The Lines of Defense

For the next sixteen months Louisiana Confederate soldiers occupied both forts. Major Johnson K. Duncan assumed command. On May 27, 1861, the Union navy implemented a blockade of the mouth of the Mississippi, news of which caused dismay among residents of New Orleans and the surrounding country and evoked calls from Confederate authorities for the military security of the city. The loss of New Orleans could deal a severe psychological as well as financial blow to the Southern war for independence. Yet there was initial delay in the expenditure of funds to secure the Mississippi forts because Confederate Major General David E. Twiggs wanted direct orders from the Government specifying his course of action. As in 1812, New Orleans was vulnerable to enemy assault through several avenues, most notably up the river past Forts Jackson and St. Philip which at the time could offer but token resistance for lack of both guns and the powder to fire them. Federal vessels might also descend the Mississippi from Cairo, Illinois, an operation that could involve army support. Should a joint naval operation proceed from both approaches, the city would surely succumb.[94]

Forts Jackson, St. Philip, Pike, Macomb, and Livingston and several smaller works around Lake Borgne formed what Twiggs perceived as the

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92. General Orders No. 11, Headquarters Louisiana Militia, New Orleans, January 15, 1861, in War of the Rebellion, Series I, Vol. LIII, p. 612.

93. General Orders No. 19, Headquarters Louisiana Militia, New Orleans, January 18, 1861, in War of the Rebellion, Series I, Vol LIII, p. 614.

94. Dufour, Night the War was Lost, pp. 41, 47, 48.

outer line of defense for New Orleans. Further efforts were needed to raise an inner line--temporary earthworks to be erected at key points along the watercourses closer to the city--and to obtain the necessary weapons and ammunition with which to arm them.[95] Already gun carriages and component articles were being shipped from New Orleans downstream to Fort Jackson.[96] As the defenses gradually rose, the first pieces of ordnance began to reach New Orleans in July. These consisted of six 24- and 12-pounder brass howitzers sent from Richmond, Virginia, all finished and mounted in workshops located in the Custom House. A total of ninety-five heavy guns had arrived by the middle of September, and with the increase in armaments a new confidence arose among the inhabitants of New Orleans.[97]

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95. Ibid., p. 48.

96. See entries for April 13 and May 18, 1861, in "Excerpts from the Diary of John Ray, Assistant Superintendent of Construction, U.S. Custom House, New Orleans, La., 1860-1862." Department of Archives and Manuscripts, Louisiana State University.

97. Dufour, Night the War was Lost, p. 66.

CHAPTER VI: THE PASSING OF THE FORTS

A. Confederate Preparations

The summer of 1861 saw feverish activity in New Orleans as various camps were established to receive volunteers to defend the city. Camp Walker was set up in the suburb of Metairie, but soon another was established north of Lake Pontchartrain, named Camp Moore after the Governor. As the Union blockade effectively cut off entrance to the city via the Mississippi, the route across the lake became popular for officials going to and from New Orleans and Richmond and utilizing the railroad that ran through Jackson, Mississippi. Goods brought to Mobile by blockade-running craft were forwarded on to New Orleans by the Lake Pontchartrain route.[1] Slowly and steadily the blockade took hold, however. In September the Confederate troops occupying Ship Island withdrew under threat of being shelled by a federal warship, a loss that was to prove injurious, for the island was now open to occupation by the Union navy and presented a staging area for contemplated moves against New Orleans. Compounding the situation was the preoccupation of Confederate authorities with events unfolding in the East. New Orleans, it was thought, would never be attacked and as a result its defensive needs were by and large neglected.[2] Several military advocates, including Brigadier General Beauregard, spoke fervently for adequately defending the city, but to little avail. Beauregard mentioned to President Jefferson Davis the vital necessity of placing heavier guns in the river forts, as well as of obstructing the Mississippi. Davis hesitated. Beauregard did succeed in getting his views across to Major General Mansfield Lovell, who

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1. Dufour, Night the War was Lost, p. 40; W. Adolphe Roberts, Lake Pontchartrain (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill Company, 1946), p. 254.

2. Dufour, Night the War was Lost, p. 66; Landry, "History of Forts Jackson and St. Philip," p. 38.

in September succeeded Twiggs in command of Confederate Military Department No. 1.[3]

1. The Inner Works

A West Pointer who had earlier retired from, then rejoined, the service, Lovell wasted little time in readying the defenses of New Orleans with the resources at his disposal. Much effort was devoted to refining the interior line begun under Twiggs's administration. This line of earthworks, built according to specifications for field fortifications, stretched around the city between swamps and bayous adjoining the Mississippi. Where the works reached the river, batteries were thrown up, each to mount ten or more cannon of 32-or 42-pounder calibre. The line started about four miles below New Orleans and continued, intermittently divided by swamplands, around the east flank of the city all the way to Lake Pontchartrain. The entrenchments on the right bank of the Mississippi were called the McGehee line of batteries; those on the left bank were known as the Chalmette line and occupied the ground fought over by Jackson in 1814-15. Other works were raised above New Orleans. All lacked armaments.[4] Lovell described the interior line:

> Commencing at the swamp on the west side of the river, about 4½ miles below Algiers, this interior line extended across the firm ground of the right bank of the river, and from the right bank at a point just opposite across the dry ground, to a swamp which occupied the space between it and Gentilly Ridge, where the line extended across the ridge to the adjoining swamp. It was resumed at the various points of firm ground on the railroad, canal, and roads, when they issued through the swamp in rear of the city, towards Lake Pontchartrain. Above

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3. Pierre G.T. Beauregard, "Note Relative to Obstructions Designed by Col. G.T. Beauregard for the Mississippi River at Fort Jackson and Fort St. Philip, La. in Feb'y 1861," The Louisiana Historical Quarterly, II (1919), p. 451; Landry, "History of Forts Jackson and St. Philip," pp. 28-29.

4. Dufour, Night the War was Lost, p. 119; Alfred T. Mahan, The Gulf and Inland Waters (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1883), p. 60; Landry, "History of Forts Jackson and St. Philip," p. 27.

the city it also extended from the swamp to the left bank of the river again, and from the opposite side it ran along the Barataria Canal from the bank of the river to the swamp above Algiers. The total length of the intrenchments on this line was more than 8 miles, and, when completed, it, in connection with the swamp, put New Orleans in an impregnable position so far as regarded any attack by land. [When finally finished] it mounted more than sixty guns, of various calibers, and was surrounded by wide and deep ditches.[5]

2. The Outer Works

Of the several posts that comprised the exterior works, Forts Jackson and St. Philip were in the best condition, but as Lovell put it, they were "still sadly deficient in very many respects for their full defense. . . ."[6] More guns were needed, also better quality ammunition, to put these two most important forts in the exterior line into readiness. Nearly all the remaining posts required additional armanents, too. As the defenses gradually became delineated and refined, they consisted of, besides Fort Jackson and St. Philip, the following: Fort Pike and Fort Macomb, guarding the Rigolets; Battery Bienvenue and Tower Dupre, guarding the bayou approaches to the city from Lake Borgne; a tower at Proctorville, guarding a railroad approach to New Orleans; Fort Livingston, protecting the entrance of Barataria Bay;[7] Fort Berwick and Fort Chene, earthworks located on Berwick Bay, guarding another rail approach; and Fort Guion, on Bayou LaFourche, another earthen structure. Minor earthworks eventually comprising parts of the exterior line included redoubts at Little Temple in Barataria Bay, at Grand

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5. "Proceedings of a Court of Inquiry, Assembled at Jackson, Miss.," War of the Rebellion, Series I, Vol. VI, p. 560. (Hereafter cited as Lovell Court of Inquiry.) See also the statement of Major General M.L. Smith in ibid., p. 582.

6. Ibid., p. 559.

7. These principal fortifications are discussed in their entirety later in this narrative.

Caillou, at the Manchac Passes north of the city, and at Calcasieu Pass.[8] Other works stood on the southern and western shores of Lake Pontchartrain above New Orleans. Placed in command of the exterior line was Colonel Johnson K. Duncan, with headquarters at Fort Jackson.

3. Ordnance Requirements

Lovell's immediate task lay in securing ample cannon with which to arm his lines. His predecessor, Twiggs, had received a number of outmoded pieces from the Norfolk Navy Yard, but they were considered practically worthless.[9] In frustration Lovell applied to Richmond and Pensacola for mortars and columbiads for the lower forts, but met with no success and had to improvise with the weapons at his disposal. Twelve 42-pounders were shipped downriver to Forts Jackson and St. Philip and work was begun on a raft obstruction to block enemy vessels. Other obstructions were prepared for blocking Pearl River, and piles were driven into the channels of Salt, Gentilly, and Ciletche Bayous. Bayous l'Outre, Terre Aux Boeuf, and Aux Chene had the timber on their banks felled into the water to obstruct passage. Obstructions were also placed in Atchafalaya Bay and in the river below Fort Berwick.[10] But Lovell needed guns most of all, and guns were not forthcoming. Indeed, even among those already at the various forts, many remained to be mounted. Most of the pieces were smoothbores, though a few had been rifled. Artillery components, besides ammunition, were in a bad condition or were altogether nonexistent. Gun carriages proved to be so rotten that, as Lovell recounted, "I could insert a penknife with ease into the wood."

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8. Lovell Court of Inquiry, pp. 560, 574, 582; Mahan, Gulf and Inland Waters, pp. 59-60.

9. Lovell Court of Inquiry, p. 559.

10. Ibid., p. 560; Lovell to General Samuel Cooper, May 22, 1862, in War of the Rebellion, Series I, Vol. VI, pp. 512-13; Bragg, Louisiana in the Confederacy, pp. 98, 99; Davis, Louisiana, p. 254.

He remarked on "a very great deficiency in all the implements and equipments necessary for the service of heavy guns, as sponges, rammers, priming wires, friction tubes, primers, haversacks, handspikes, hot-shot implements, budge-barrels, &c."[11] To offset deficiencies in ammunition, a powder mill and cartridge factory began operation in New Orleans, and Lovell persuaded local founderies to undertake the casting of guns, shot, and shell.[12]

4. Arming the River Posts

By late 1861 General Lovell had made substantial progress, despite the obvious shortage of supplies. Nearly 4,500 men guarded the exterior line and 3,500 more the interior line. New Orleans itself was occupied by 6,000 volunteers, and Lovell felt confident he could withstand a siege of lengthy duration.[13] Nonetheless, the armament for the two principal river fortifications remained distressingly inadequate. Fort Jackson early in 1862 mounted fourteen 24-pounder smoothbore cannon in her casemates, along with ten 24-pounder flanking howitzers. Mounted en barbette on the rampart were two 10-inch columbiads, three 8-inch columbiads, one 7-inch rifle, two 8-inch mortars, six 42-pounders, fifteen 32-pounders and eleven 24-pounders, one 8-inch howitzer and one 7-3/8-inch howitzer. One 6-pounder cannon and one 12-pounder howitzer were emplaced on the parade. The exterior water battery, only lately finished below the fort, mounted one 10-inch columbiad, two 8-inch columbiads, one 10-inch seacoast mortar, and two 32-pounder rifled cannons. Total pieces in Fort Jackson numbered seventy-four. Much of this artillery was badly positioned to enable it to fire on an advancing fleet. In Fort St. Philip were mounted en barbette four 8-inch columbiads, one 24-pounder cannon, one 8-inch mortar, one 10-inch siege mortar, and one 13-inch

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11. Lovell Court of Inquiry, p. 559; Dufour, Night the War was Lost, p. 94.

12. Lovell Court of Inquiry, p. 560; Bragg, Louisiana in the Confederacy, p. 99; Davis, Louisiana, p. 254; Dufour, Night the War was Lost, p. 97.

13. Lovell Court of Inquiry, pp. 560-61; Dufour, Night the War was Lost, p. 118; Davis, Louisiana, p. 254.

seacoast mortar. On the parade stood one 6-pounder, one 12-pounder, and one 24-pounder field howitzer. The lower exterior water battery held one 8-inch columbiad, one 7-inch rifle, six 42-pounders, nine 32-pounders, and four 24-pounders; the upper battery contained sixteen 24-pounders. In addition, there were four 10-inch seacoast mortars northeast of the lower water battery. Total armament in Fort St. Philip was fifty-two pieces. Many of these guns had been sent downriver from Forts Pike and Macomb and from the arsenal at Baton Rouge, while others consisted of the derelict pieces sent earlier from Norfolk. Some ordnance arrived from Pensacola before the Confederate evacuation there, and new powder and ammunition for the artillery arrived from New Orleans. To finalize preparations, trees lining the Mississippi above and below the forts were cut down to afford clear fields of fire. Approximately 700 men garrisoned Forts Jackson and St. Philip, some of them northerners and many of foreign birth.[14]

5. Strengthening Fort Jackson

Besides emplacing guns the soldiers worked to strengthen the river forts, and in the case of Fort Jackson, to complete the lower water battery, notably the breast-height walls and the gun platforms. Although much of the original brickwork on the forty-year-old post was in

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14. Information concerning the number of artillery present in Fort Jackson and Fort St. Philip was found in various sources, among them: War of the Rebellion, Series I, Vol. XV, pp. 428-29; Ibid., pp. 587-88; Thomas J. Scharf, History of the Confederate States Navy (Albany: Joseph McDonough, 1894), p. 279; David D. Porter, "The Opening of the Lower Mississippi," in Battles and Leaders of the Civil War. 4 vols. (New York: Thomas Yoseloff, 1956), II, 30-31; James Parton, General Butler in New Orleans: History of the Administration of the Department of the Gulf in the Year 1862 (Boston and New York: Houghton, Mifflin and Company, 1892), pp. 220, 221; Mahan, Gulf and Inland Waters, pp. 58-59; Landry, "History of Forts Jackson and St. Philip," pp. 26-27; and Dufour, Night the War was Lost, p. 119. The most detailed accounting seems to be that presented in "The Opposing Forces in the Operations at New Orleans, La.," in Battles and Leaders of the Civil War, II, 75. Information on the cutting of the trees is in Beauregard to Military Board of the State of Louisiana, February 12, 1861, in War of The Rebellion, Series I, Vol. I, p. 501; and Diary of George Booth, entry June 2, 1862. Civil War Times Illustrated Collection, U.S. Army Military History Institute.

disrepair, and the masonry had settled in places, the post was basically in good condition, and the men spent many hours preparing sandbags with which to bombproof magazines and casemates. Early in 1862 much of the parade of Fort Jackson was under water from the flooding Mississippi, a factor that complicated the progress of working parties.[15] As an assault by Union forces appeared increasingly likely early in 1862, Duncan, recently appointed to the grade of brigadier general, called for additional troops below New Orleans. A Louisiana contingent known as the Chalmette Regiment, some 500 volunteers, commanded by a Polish revolutionary, Colonel Ignace Szymanski, arrived at the quarantine station six miles above the forts to watch for Union forces attempting to reach the Mississippi through bayous to the east. A group of sharpshooters under Captain W.G. Mullen took post below the forts on either side of the river to look for Union vessels.[16]

Late in March, on word that the Federal fleet was crossing the bars at the mouth of the Mississippi, General Duncan arrived at Fort Jackson and personally assumed command. The post was flooded, as noted by Duncan:

> Notwithstanding every effort which could be made, the water kept daily increasing upon us, partly owing to the sinking of the entire site and to the natural lowness of the country around it, until the parade-plain and casemates were very generally submerged to the depth of from 3 to 18 inches. It was with the utmost difficulty, and only then by isolating the magazines and by pumping day and night, that the water could be kept out of them. As the officers and men were all obliged to live in these open and submerged casemates, they were greatly exposed to discomfort and sickness, as their clothing and feet

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15. Report of Brigadier General Duncan, April 30, 1862, in War of the Rebellion, Series I, Vol. 18, p. 262. Porter, "Opening of the Lower Mississippi," p. 30; Dufour, Night the War was Lost, p. 203; Parton, General Butler in New Orleans, p. 252.

16. Parton, General Butler in New Orleans, p. 223; Dufour, Night the War was Lost, p. 204.

were always wet. . . . Fort St. Philip, from the same causes, was in a similar condition, but to a lesser extent.[17]

The forts, under the nominal command of Lieutenant Colonel Edward Higgins, a former U.S. Navy officer, were prepared to receive the Union naval advance. Discipline became strict and some of the troops of northern birth suspected of harboring Unionist sentiment were tied to a rope and floated on the "stinking ditch"--the moat around Fort Jackson.[18]

6. Confederate Naval Support

In addition to the land forces manning the forts, Duncan received supplemental aid in the form of four river steamers specially fitted out with shot-proof cotton bulkheads and iron prows to serve as rams. They were Warrior, Stonewall Jackson, Defiance, and Resolute. Similarly, two state-owned steamers, Governor Moore and General Quitman, were also on hand, along with the steam ram, Manassas, which was stationed a little way above Fort Jackson ready to strike the enemy when needed. Other available craft included the Confederate States steamers Louisiana and Jackson, and numerous unarmed steamers to be used for tending and towing. Upstream many fire rafts were in preparation, to be tied along the banks until needed, when they would be set ablaze and allowed to drift downstream with the dual intention of striking enemy vessels and illuminating nighttime targets for the gunners at Forts Jackson and St. Philip.[19]

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17. Report of Brigadier General Duncan, April 30, 1862, in Official Records of the Union and Confederate Navies in the War of the Rebellion (30 vols. Washington: Government Printing Office, 1894-1922), Series I, Vol. 18, p. 262.

18. "The Opposing Forces," p. 75; Joseph Harris, U.S. Coast Survey, to F.H. Gerdes, U.S. Coast Survey, May 4, 1862, in Official Records of the Union and Confederate Navies, Series I, Vol. 18, p. 392.

19. Report of Brigadier General Duncan, April 30, 1862, in Official Records of the Union and Confederate Navies, Series I, Vol. 18, p. 263; Scharf, History of the Confederate States Navy, p. 279; Dufour, Night the War was Lost, pp. 204, 205.

7. The River Obstruction

Besides the presence of the forts, a major hindrance to any Union advance was the heavy obstruction brought in place to slow down the steamships so that they must maneuver at their peril beneath the guns of the posts. Months earlier Beauregard had suggested such a barrier, a "floating boom" he called it, made of heavy timbers grouped together, connected by strong chains, and arranged to function on the river as two halves. One half was to be anchored to each shore; a steam engine at Fort Jackson would open and close the boom to accommodate the passage of vessels and driftwood. Beauregard also suggested another obstruction consisting of several barges supporting chains and placed above the floating boom to further insure blocking of the channel. This construction never occurred, nor was Beauregard's plan of utilizing timber floats connected to mines as a barrier ever attempted.[20] Instead, a heavy chain supported by cypress logs some thirty to forty feet long and spaced at several feet was placed across the river in September. The chain was attached to the upstream end of each log and was kept from sagging by a number of heavy anchors and collateral chains placed intervally across the river. This barrier lasted but a few months. High water in March brought a superior accumulation of driftwood on the upstream side and forced the chain to snap, leaving about one third of the river open.[21] It was replaced by another obstruction, this consisting of a line of seven or eight schooners filled with logs, anchored across the river with bows facing upstream and chained together at stem, stern, and between. Masts and rigging of the vessels was allowed to drag behind to further embarrass enemy efforts by snarling in their screw propellers. Each end of the new obstruction was attached to sections of the old one

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20. Beauregard, "Note Relative to Obstructions," pp. 451-53; Landry, "History of Forts Jackson and St. Philip," p. 29.

21. For detailed descriptions of this early obstruction, see Lovell Court of Inquiry, pp. 564, 582; Report of Duncan to Major J.G. Pickett, April 30, 1862, in War of the Rebellion, Series I, Vol. VI, p. 522; Harris to Gerdes, May 4, 1862, in Official Records of the Union and Confederate Navies, Series I, Vol. 18, p. 392; Scharf, History of the Confederate States Navy, p. 283; Mahan, Gulf and Inland Waters, pp. 64-65.

remaining near each bank. To permit movement of friendly vessels passing above and below the forts, Higgins's troops could haul the Barrier out of place as necessary.[22] To prevent Union landing parties from trying to cut the cable, a small earthen battery was raised and occupied at its terminus on the east side of the river.[23] The schooner raft stretched across the Mississippi from a point on the west bank before Fort Jackson to a point on the east bank some 1,500 yards below Fort St. Philip. Critics later suggested that the east end of the obstruction might better have been placed above Fort St. Philip, thereby requiring a party intent on breaking the barrier to remain more directly beneath the fire of guns from both forts. Stated one commentator, "The cable was not ill-planned, but wrongly placed."[24]

B. Union Forces Advance

1. Importance of Capturing New Orleans

The Confederate preparations on the lower Mississippi were not ill-conceived. Since the federal blockade had been in effect there had been fears among Confederate authorities in New Orleans that the city would soon become the target of a powerful Union army and naval enterprise, fears that proved to be fully warranted. Since the autumn of 1861 Union plans for the reduction of Forts Jackson and St. Philip had been in preparation. New Orleans, largest city in the Confederacy (population over 170,000) and a principal industrial center, had great strategic value to federal officials. By capturing the city and commanding the lower Mississippi, Union forces would divide the Confederacy east from west. Goods produced in Texas, Arkansas, Louisiana, and southern Missouri, could be isolated from the lower South;

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22. Report of Duncan to Major J. G. Pickett, April 30, 1862, in War of the Rebellion, Series I, Vol. VI, p. 522; Scharf, History of the Confederate States Navy, p. 284; Mahan, Gulf and Inland Waters, pp. 64-65; Alfred T. Mahan, Admiral Farragut (New York: Haskell House Publishers, Ltd., 1968), pp. 131-32; Porter, "Opening of the Lower Mississippi," p. 31; Dufour, Night the War was Lost, p. 205.

23. Parton, General Butler in New Orleans, p. 222.

24. Ibid.

the capture of New Orleans and the deprivation of its resources would thereby supplement the work of the blockade in forcing the Confederacy into submission.

2. Fox, Porter, and Farragut

With these facts in mind, Assistant Secretary of the Navy Gustavus V. Fox conceived a plan for taking the city following a run by an armed flotilla past the lower forts. Fox believed that once the forts were passed communication between them and New Orleans would be gone. He proposed his plan to Gideon Welles, Secretary of the Navy, who conveyed it to President Abraham Lincoln who gave his assent.[25] Toward the middle of November, Lincoln, Welles, and Fox met with Major General George B. McClellan, commander of the Union armies, to discuss the plan. Also present was Navy Commander David D. Porter, who had recently been serving with the Gulf Blockade Squadron. From McClellan the advocates requested a large body of troops to occupy New Orleans once the city was taken. With McClellan's reluctant concurrence in the plan, Porter suggested that a mortar flotilla be outfitted to accompany the assault fleet to bombard, and thus weaken, the forts prior to attempting their passage. McClellan appointed Brigadier General John G. Barnard, who years earlier had served at both Forts Jackson and St. Philip, to preside over details of the expedition. Barnard agreed with Porter that the forts should be reduced before effecting the passage.[26] The man chosen to command the naval expedition was sixty-one-year-old Flag Officer David G. Farragut, an officer of wide experience and talent. Farragut was confident in the success of his fleet, but doubted the practicality of a mortar bombardment beforehand. Nonetheless, Porter was assigned the task of preparing and commanding this aspect of the naval campaign.[27]

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25. Mahan, Admiral Farragut, pp. 118-20; Bragg, Louisiana in the Confederacy, p. 102.

26. Mahan, Admiral Farragut, p. 121.

27. Ibid., p. 124. Porter in later years created some controversy by claiming that it was he who had advanced the initial plan for capturing New Orleans, an assertion that brought swift rebuttal. See Porter, "Opening of the Lower Mississippi," p. 24 and William T. Meredith, "Farragut's Capture of New Orleans," in Battles and Leaders, II, 70.

3. General Barnard Describes the Forts

For the next two months the plan was carefully refined. General Barnard provided elaborate details about both forts, some drawn from the records and others from his memory. Concerning Fort St. Philip, he said:

> It is very irregular in figure. It occupies a quadrilateral space of about 150 by 100 yards. The front toward the river (first built) had a bastioned trace; the other portions have been added to inclose the work. . . . Under my charge the walls were strengthened by relieving arches, an additional thickness of masonry given to them, the earthen parapets extended all around the work . . . and the wet ditch deepened. . . . It was intended to arrange a low glacis with covert way and reveted breast-height wall around the work, but I believe this has not been done; if not, one-half of the height of the scarps would be seen from outside, and it would require little battering to bring them down. . . . Two external batteries (earthen) have been built of late years in connecton with this work, having wet ditches (6 feet at low water), having parapets 20 feet thick, crest 19 feet above bottom of ditch, which is 20 feet wide (at bottom).[28]

Barnard then described the existing armament capacity of Fort St. Philip. Of Fort Jackson he wrote:

> Its scarp walls are 22 feet high, measured from the offset of the foundation, which is pretty nearly the bottom of the wet ditch. The work is surrounded by a wet ditch. . . . Owing to the fact that the parapets are not carried around the flanks and faces of the bastions (for fear they would not sustain the weight) there is not much room for musketry fire on the flanks. . . . The faces of the bastions may be lined with infantry, as the bastions are hollowed out, leaving the top of the scarp to serve as parapet. . . . The report that the work had sunk so that the casemate guns would not fire over the levees is one of those canards which had its flight long ago. . . . When I took charge of this work in 1840 the report was that the whole work had disappeared. It had settled

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28. Barnard to Fox, January 18, 1862, in War of the Rebellion, Series I, Vol. XV, p. 415.

probably about a foot. . . . I cut out the embrasures and raised them 1 foot. The work has settled very little, if at all, since then. . . . In the center of Fort Jackson is a defensive barrack of decagonal shape. It is intended to be made bomb-proof by covering the 1-foot-square timbers of the ceiling with earth. Probably the rebel garrisons have done this.[29]

4. Butler Prepares His Army

On February 23, 1862, McClellan placed Major General Benjamin F. Butler of Massachusetts in command of the land forces. His command totaled almost 18,000 men, mostly recently recruited infantry troops from New England. McClellan told Butler that his object was the capture of New Orleans, and after the navy reduced the forts Butler's command was to secure them. "Should the Navy fail to reduce the works," said McClellan, "you will land your forces and siege train, and endeavor to trench the works, silence their fire, and carry them by assault."[30] After success was assured, Butler was to occupy the city. If the passage were indeed successful, Butler was to land his troops in the swamps behind Fort St. Philip, then endeavor to take that post by force if it had not yielded.[31]

Butler departed for his assembly point, Ship Island, on February 25. Some naval forces were already converging on Southwest Pass, preparatory to entering the Mississippi. Plans were for Farragut's fleet to cross the bar and move upstream, remaining in reserve while Porter's mortar schooners battered Fort Jackson and Fort St. Philip from

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29. Ibid., pp. 413, 414, 415.

30. McClellan to Butler, February 23, 1862, in Jessie Ames Marshall (comp.), Private and Official Correspondence of Gen. Benjamin Butler during the Period of the Civil War (5 vols.; Norwood, Massachusetts: Privately published, 1917), I, 361.

31. Benjamin F. Butler, Butler's Book (Boston: A.M. Thayer and Company, 1892), p. 359.

a position around the sharp bend below the posts. Once the forts were reduced, Farragut's steam vessels would advance quickly upstream past the forts, past the defenses at English Turn and Chalmette, and on to New Orleans. Meantime, Butler's army would wait at the mouth of the river ready to move as soon as word reached it that the forts had been passed.[32]

5. Farragut's Fleet

Farragut's force, after it succeeded in surmounting the troublesome sandbars at the entrance to Southwest Pass, consisted of Porter's mortar flotilla--twenty schooners and six gunboats that had entered the river via Pass l'Outre, four steam sloops-of-war each displacing 2,000 tons, three more vessels weighing 1,000 tons apiece, a side-paddle ship-of-war of 1,700 tons, and nine gunboats each weighing 500 tons. Armament for these craft approached 154 pieces, most of which were 32-pounder calibre or larger. In addition, each of Porter's schooners mounted one 13-inch mortar. Accompanying the mortar flotilla were six gunboats of varying firepower. All of the ships, stripped of nearly all appurtenances, were reinforced with iron fixtures to strengthen their sides against fire from the forts.[33]

6. Confederate Intelligence Efforts

Meantime, the Confederate defenders of water-flooded Forts Jackson and St. Philip sought to improve their advantage once the purpose of the Union advance became obvious. At Fort Jackson, Duncan induced planters along the river to loan him 120 Negroes to help mount guns. The new ram, Manassas, was sent downriver to assist Duncan's command. Additional mortars and columbiads were procured and brought down to Fort Jackson, and Szymanski's and Mullen's soldiers maintained a steady

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32. Ibid.

33. Scharf, History of the Confederate States Navy, pp. 278-79; Mahan, Gulf and Inland Waters, pp. 53, 54, 55, 56; Mahan, Admiral Farragut, pp. 126-27; Parton, General Butler in New Orleans, p. 224; Bragg, Louisiana in the Confederacy, p. 103.

alert along the shorelines near the posts.[34] Occasionally a few of the Confederate vessels would reconnoiter downstream, beyond the schooner-raft obstruction. Scouts further kept Duncan apprised as to Farragut's circumstances in the area of Southwest Pass. On April 9 a federal gunboat chased a Confederate steamer up to the point of woods below Fort Jackson. Guns fired from the fort at the Union vessel went unanswered. Telegraph communication with points below Fort Jackson eventually had to be terminated because of the difficulty the soldiers had negotiating the bayous in pirogues while protecting the line repairmen.[35]

At Head of Passes, Porter's mortar vessels practiced firing their huge shells into the surrounding swamps. Seeking knowledge of the forts and the condition of the obstruction, Farragut continued sending details upstream; on April 5 he went himself aboard the steamer Iroquois to reconnoiter the posts. Fort Jackson's guns opened on the ship, but it was beyond their range.[36] With the frequency of the naval scouts, General Duncan believed that an assault was imminent. Yet his command, heartened by news of the Confederate April 6 success at Shiloh, was confident that the attack would be repulsed.[37] Amid final preparations, however, Duncan's command was startled when the schooner-raft obstruction gave way during a storm on April 10 and 11. High winds and flooding caused some of the fire barges to break loose above the forts,

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34. Lovell Court of Inquiry, p. 563; Duncan to Pickett, April 30, 1862, in War of the Rebellion, Series I, Vol. VI, 521, 522; Lovell to Cooper, May 22, 1862, in Ibid., p. 513; Porter, "Opening of the Lower Mississippi," p. 29.

35. These intelligence activities are described in Duncan to Pickett, April 30, 1862, in War of the Rebellion, Series I, Vol. VI, 524.

36. Dufour, Night the War was Lost, pp. 222, 225-26.

37. Duncan to Lovell, April 5, 1862. Letters of Brigadier General J.K. Duncan during the siege of Fort Jackson, April 1862. Historic New Orleans Collection; Duncan to Governor Thomas Moore, April 7, 1862, in ibid.

float downstream, and slam into the barrier, fatally weakening it. Efforts to repair it were not altogether successful.[38]

7. Farragut Reconnoiters

All the while Farragut's data-gathering efforts proceeded, including a professional survey of the river below the forts performed by several officiers of the U.S. Coast survey. As the men ascended the stream they drew the fire of Mullen's sharpshooters posted along the banks. The snipers were driven off with grapeshot from covering vessels, but not before they had killed several Union sailors.[39] Farragut's party succeeded in providing the Flag Officer with sufficient information to warrant his proceeding. On April 13, General Duncan reported,

> Several of the hostile gunboats again came up to make observations. They would occasionally show themselves singly or in pairs above the point of woods and exchange a few shots with the forts and then retire again behind the point. Our sharpshooters obtained a few shots on this occasion, but with very partial success, owing to the lowness of the country and the extreme rise in the river. Many of the men were up to their waists in water, and in consequence sickness prevailed among them and unfitted them for duty. . . .[40]

Consequently, Duncan recalled Lieutenant Mullen's men and sent them off to New Orleans to regain their strength.[41] This day, the 13th, the

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38. Duncan to Pickett, April 30, 1862, in War of the Rebellion, Series I, Vol. VI, 523; Lovell to Cooper, May 22, 1862, in ibid.; Scharf, History of the Confederate States Navy, p. 284.

39. Duncan to Lovell, April 14, 1862, in Letters of Brigadier General J.K. Duncan; Dufour, Night the War was Lost, p. 223.

40. Duncan to Pickett, April 30, 1862, in War of the Rebellion, Series I, Vol. VI, 523.

41. Ibid. One account stated that the sharpshooters, tired of being shelled by the Union ships, "broke up their camp, came into the fort all wet and draggled, having thrown many of their arms away, and swore that they would go to New Orleans, and they went." Harris to Gerdes, May 4, 1862, in Official Records of the Union and Confederate Navies, Series I, Vol. 18, 391.

Union sailors triangulated the points below the forts in preparation to positioning the mortar schooners.[42]

C. The Bombardment

Porter's vessels were at hand, and on April 15, they began moving into place about 1,500 yards below Fort Jackson around the bend in the Mississippi. Most of the craft hugged the shoreline at a point beyond where the trees had been levelled, their masts painted dark gray and their rigging camouflaged with foliage. Six of the schooners were anchored along the east shore to attract the guns of Fort Jackson. In anticipation, General Duncan ordered his artillery at the ready, including those in the water battery, and directed Captain John A. Stevenson, commanding the Confederate river fleet, to prepare fire barges for release against the Union gunboats. On April 16 the Union craft boldly approached the forts only to withdraw at the first fire, apparently checking the range of Fort Jackson's artillery. At 5 that afternoon a gunboat and two mortar boats appeared and discharged several rounds at the post before retiring.[43] On the 17th a large fire raft was sent below the obstruction, but had no effect on the gathering Union flotilla. That same day a northern gunboat and two mortar bombers engaged Fort Jackson in a duel of scant significance, except for some damage to the levee that allowed more water to enter the grounds of the post.[44]

1. Initiating the Attack

The bombardment of Fort Jackson began in earnest at nine o'clock the following Friday morning, April 18. Porter's vessels, shielded by the

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42. Duncan to Lovell, April 14, 1862, in Letters of Brigadier General J.K. Duncan.

43. Duncan to Pickett, April 30, 1862, in War of the Rebellion, Series I, Vol. VI, 524; William B. Robertson, "The Water-Battery at Fort Jackson," in Battles and Leaders of the Civil War, II, 99.

44. Porter, "Opening of the Lower Mississippi," pp. 34-35; Kendall, History of New Orleans, pp. 250-51; Dufour, Night the War was Lost, p. 227.

woods, started firing their mortars at ten-minute intervals, delivering a veritable hail of shell on the garrison. The Confederates responded in kind, delivering a mighty barrage against the hidden mortar boats. So great was the firing that reportedly large numbers of bees swarmed out of the woods and buzzed around the sailors on the ships; and the concussion of the guns and exploding shells killed hundreds of fish in the river.[45] Inside Fort Jackson men took cover. Said one account, "the fort was so much shaken by this firing that it was feared the casemates would come down about their ears."[46] The falling bombs took immediate effect inside the fort, the explosions igniting numerous small fires that had to be extinguished by the soldiers, many of whom were engaged in the batteries. Soon the frame quarters both within and without the fort were ablaze, as was wooden fabric of the masonry citadel. In the afternoon the Federal gunboat Iroquois destroyed the flag staff at Fort Jackson. Sailors cheered the sight, as well as the news just arrived that the Confederate ironclad Virginia had been neutralized. Towards evening the fire in the citadel flared up, and the soldiers were hard pressed to put out the flames. This blaze caused great destruction, burning up much clothing and bedding to add to the discomfort of the officers and men. But the guns of the fort took some toll, too. Late in the day a 120-pound shell pierced the cabin of one ship, while a 10-inch shot damaged the hull of another. Fort St. Philip, upstream from the engagement, was largely ignored, although its batteries delivered shot

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45. Parton, General Butler in New Orleans, p. 231.

46. Harris to Gerdes, May 4, 1862, in Official Records of the Union and Confederate Navies, Series I, Vol. 18, 391.

and shell at long distance. The huge 13-inch mortar in the fort was ruined shortly after opening on the federal ships.[47]

2. Fort Jackson under Attack

During the first day's bombardment most of the men garrisoning Fort Jackson took refuge in the casemates. Colonel Higgins later described to Commander Porter the conditions at the post the night following commencement of the attack:

> On the first night of the attack the citadel and all buildings in rear of the fort were fired by bursting shell, and also the sand-bag walls that had been thrown around the magazine doors. The fire, as you are aware, raged with great fury, and no effort of ours could subdue it. At this time, and nearly all this night, Fort Jackson was helpless; its magazines were inaccessible, and we could have offered no resistance to a passing fleet. The next morning a terrible scene of destruction presented itself. The wood-work of the citadel being all destroyed, and the crumbling walls being knocked about the fort by the bursting shells, made matters still worse for the garrison. The work of destruction from now until the morning of the 24th, when the fleet passed, was incessant.
>
> I was obliged to confine the men most rigidly to the casemates, or we should have lost the best part of the garrison. A shell, striking the parapet over one of the magazines, the wall of which was seven feet thick, penetrated five feet and failed to burst. If that shell had exploded, your work would have ended. Another burst near the magazine door, opening the earth and burying the sentinel and another man five feet in the same grave. The parapets and interior of the fort were completely honeycombed, and the large number of sand-bags with which we were supplied alone saved us from

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47. For discussion of the start of the bombardment see Duncan to Pickett, April 30, 1862, in War of the Rebellion, Series I, Vol. VI, 525; Report of Lieutenant Colonel Higgins, April 27, 1862, in ibid., p. 547; Report of Captain M.T. Squires, April 27, 1862, in ibid., p. 550; Harris to Gerdes, May 4, 1862, in Official Records of the Union and Confederate Navies, Series I, vol. 18, 392-93; Porter, "Opening of the Lower Mississippi," pp. 34, 35; Parton, General Butler in New Orleans, pp. 229-30, 232; Dufour, Night the War was Lost, pp. 231, 232, 233, 234, 235; Mahan, Gulf and Inland Waters, p. 69; Mahan, Admiral Farragut, p. 130; Kendall, History of New Orleans, p. 251.

being blown to pieces a hundred times, our magazine doors being much exposed.[48]

At 6 o'clock the next morning Porter's mortars barked forth again. Both forts responded vigorously, forcing the withdrawal of Farragut's gunboats. One mortar schooner was sunk and several others were damaged during the day. Porter adjusted his fuses to burn longer, causing the shells to plow several yards into the muddy ground before exploding. Reported Duncan:

> The terre-plein, parade plain, parapets, and platforms were very much cut up, as well as much damage done to the casemates. The magazines were considerably threatened, and one shell passed through into the casemate containing fixed ammunition.[49]

Several of Fort Jackson's guns were put out of commission, but the artillerymen succeeded in damaging the Federal ship Oneida, injuring nine of her crewmen.

3. Union Impatience, Confederate Negligence

On April 20, Easter Sunday, the pounding of the Union mortars went on, booming to such an extent that they shattered windows as far away as The Balize. Some platforms were damaged in Fort St. Philip but the effect was insignificant.[50] That night the mortar fire continued. In the darkness and rain some of the federals advanced to try and remove the damaged raft blocking the river. They managed with difficulty to cut the

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48. Higgins to Porter, April 4, 1872, in Porter, "Opening of the Lower Mississippi," p. 36.

49. Duncan to Pickett, April 30, 1862, in War of the Rebellion, Series I, Vol. VI, 525.

50. Report of Captain M.T. Squires, April 27, 1862, in ibid., pp. 550-51; Robertson, "The Water-Battery at Fort Jackson," pp. 99, 100; Parton, General Butler in New Orleans, pp. 232-33; Kendall, History of New Orleans, p. 252; Dufour, Night the War was Lost, pp. 236-37, 252.

chain barrier despite their discovery by the Fort Jackson command.[51] By this time Farragut was becoming discouraged at the progress of the mortar schooners in reducing the forts. He was anxious to press on to the city.[52] Meantime, General Duncan was not happy either. When he called for fire rafts his navy either did not deliver or sent them down in such a fashion that they took little effect. Duncan also needed ironclad rams to counter the federal attempt to run the forts that he knew was coming. Some of these vessels eventually arrived; however, they were to be commanded not by Duncan but by Captain Jonathan K. Mitchell.[53]

On April 21 the mortar fire continued. Some guns at Fort Jackson needed repairing, a task accomplished under the constant hail of shells. Responding to Duncan's pleas for more naval support, the incomplete ironclad Louisiana arrived that night, towed downstream from New Orleans by one of Mitchell's vessels. The Louisiana, which used 500 tons of railroad iron in its construction, was far from ready for naval combat and was expected to serve rather as a stationary battery while repairs were made to Fort Jackson's artillery.[54] Next day the steamer was drawn alongside the shoreline near Fort St. Philip. Hopefully, the Louisiana would be able to deliver salvos against the mortar boats moored below the

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51. Report of Captain M.T. Squires, April 27, 1862, in ibid., pp. 550-51; Robertson, "The Water-Battery at Fort Jackson," pp. 99, 100; Parton, General Butler in New Orleans, pp. 232-33; Kendall, History of New Orleans, p. 252; Dufour, Night the War was Lost, pp. 236-37, 252.

51. For details of the removal of the schooner-raft obstruction, see R. Bacon, "One Night's Work, April 20, 1862. Breaking the Chain for Farragut's Fleet at the Forts below New Orleans," Magazine of American History (XV (March, 1886), pp. 305-07; Farragut to Secretary of the Navy Gideon Wells, April 21, 1862, in Official Records of the Union and Confederate Navies, p. 135.

53. Lovell to Cooper, May 22, 1862, in War of the Rebellion, Series I, Vol. VI, 513-14.

54. Duncan to Pickett, April 30, 1862, in War of the Rebellion, Series I, Vol. VI, 526; Parton, General Butler in New Orleans, p. 237; Kendall, History of New Orleans, pp. 252-53; Dufour, Night the War was Lost, pp. 252, 253-55; Scharf, History of the Confederate States Navy, p. 266.

wooded point. The Union pieces roared all that night and all morning the 23rd. At noon the guns fell silent. Duncan appealed to Captain Mitchell to move Louisiana farther below the fort into a more commanding position, but Mitchell demurred. Meanwhile, Farragut was repairing his gunboats, preparatory to driving his fleet up the Mississippi. By that time the mortar flotilla had lofted into Fort Jackson almost 2,800 bombs per day--about 16,800 shells in all--and the ammunition was beginning to run low.[55]

D. Farragut Runs By the Forts

1. Last Minute Details

Neither Fort Jackson nor Fort St. Philip fired their guns on April 23. Inside, the troops were readying for the final struggle. General Lovell wired Duncan to

> Say to your officers and men that their heroic fortitude in enduring one of the most terrific bombbardments ever known, and the courage which they have evinced will surely enable them to crush the enemy whenever he dares come from under cover. The gallant conduct attracts the admiration of all, and will be recorded in history as splendid examples for patriots and soldiers.[56]

Again Duncan remonstrated with Mitchell to move Louisiana below Fort St. Philip. He also called on the captain to insure that the river was "well lit up with fire rafts tonight, as the attack may be made at any time."[57] In the late afternoon a small boat appeared along the Fort St. Philip side,

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55. Duncan to Pickett, April 30, 1862, in War of the Rebellion, Series I, Vol. VI, 526; Parton, General Butler in New Orleans, p. 237; Parton, "Opening the Lower Mississippi," p. 38; Kendall, History of New Orleans, p. 254.

56. Quoted in Parton, General Butler in New Orleans, pp. 237-38.

57. Duncan to Mitchell, April 23, 1862, in Letters of Brigadier General J.K. Duncan.

and men were seen placing white range-finding flags on the shore, evidence to Duncan that Farragut was preparing his advance.[58]

2. The Advance

By this time the Flag Officer was tired of waiting. He expressed confidence in his ability to pass the works and in consultation with his officers decided to move before the next morning. His ships, hastily armored with cable and netting to protect the engines, and daubed with mud to lessen their visibility, would proceed in three columns, headed, respectively, by Farragut, Captain Theodorus Bailey, and Captain Henry H. Bell. They would move swiftly beyond the damaged schooner-raft and upstream while Porter's men delivered heavy covering mortar fire from below the wooded bend.[59]

At 3:30 a.m., April 24, the attempt began, the first ships advancing silently against the current through the starry night. From his post in Fort Jackson, General Duncan watched the dark hulks slipping through the water. Again he sent an urgent message to Captain Mitchell to move Louisiana into better firing position. He looked in vain for the fire rafts from above. At 3:40 the Fort Jackson water battery opened on the ships, followed immediately by the weapons in both forts. Farragut's gunners responded, unleashing heavy broadsides from the advancing sloops and gunboats. The lead vessel, Cayuga, pushed close to Fort St. Philip while passing and delivering several rounds of grape and canister. As the Union fleet kept coming the flash of guns and bursting mortar shells lit the sky and surrounding water, while the guns at Fort Jackson and Fort St. Philip roared forth one barrage after another. Before long

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58. Duncan to Mitchell, April 23, 1862, in Official Records of the Union and Confederate Navies, Series I, Vol. 18, 329; Robertson, "The Water-Battery at Fort Jackson," p. 100; Duncan to Pickett, April 30, 1862, in War of the Rebellion, Series I, Vol. VI, 527.

59. Duncan to Pickett, April 30, 1862, in War of the Rebellion, Series I, Vol. VI, 528; Porter, "Opening of the Lower Mississippi," p. 38; Butler, Butler's Book, pp. 362, 364; Meredith, "Farragut's Capture of New Orleans," p. 71. Mahan, Gulf and Inland Water, p. 71. For analysis of Farragut's reasoning, see Mahan, Admiral Farragut, pp. 141-42.

the ships became hidden in the smoke. A Confederate soldier recorded the scene:

> It was so dark we could see nothing; but as the second rocket faded, in one instant the whole scene was brilliantly illuminated as if by magic. Every gun opened in the forts. The vessels poured broadside after broadside as they rushed past. The mortars filled the air. It was so bright with the glare of the guns' rapid firing, that we could see every yard, every sail, every man in the rigging, every man at the guns in the Forts, dark against the red sulphurous light. . . . It was the most superb sight I ever witnessed--so flashing, so bewildering, so magnificent, so brief.[60]

William Robertson, commanding the Fort Jackson water battery, later stated:

> I do not believe there ever was a grander spectacle witnessed before in the world than that displayed during the great artillery duel. . . . The mortar-shells shot upward from the mortar-boats, rushed to the apexes of their flight, flashing the lights of their fuses as they revolved, paused an instant, and then descended upon our works like hundreds of meteors, or burst in mid-air, hurling their jagged fragments in every direction.[61]

It was, said one officer, like "all the earthquakes in the world, and all the thunder and lightning storms together, in a space of two miles, all going off at once. . . ."[62] Surprisingly, most of the Federal ships got past the forts unharmed. One vessel in tow was lost when a Confederate round cut the tow rope and the ship drifted away downstream. Elsewhere, Louisiana, posted above Fort St. Philip, withstood a vigorous cannonading by the Union side-wheeler Mississippi, and the Federal gunboats Itasca, Winona, and Kennebec, suffered damage that rendered them helpless. Farragut's flagship, Hartford, was struck several times, but delivered a terrific broadside against Fort Jackson that killed some men in the batteries. Another Union vessel, Brooklyn, engaged the

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60. Quoted in Davis, Louisiana, p. 254.

61. Robertson, "The Water Battery at Fort Jackson," p. 100.

62. Quoted in Butler, Butler's Book, p. 366.

Confederate ram Manassas, but neither was crippled. The Manassas then steered a fire raft against Hartford, which ran aground and caught fire, but the crew managed to put out the flames and extricate the ship without serious problems. Soon Manassas sustained injury to her engines, forcing her abandonment. The ram, ablaze, drifted harmlessly downstream and out of the fight before sinking.

3. Casualties

Once past the forts the Union ships faced the remainder of the Confederate fleet. Rammings occurred. The Stonewall Jackson crashed into the Federal Varuna. Both vessels were put out of action, Varuna foundering. Presently, the entire Confederate fleet was dispersed, some craft disabled and drifting, others driven aground and abandoned. The Rebel fleet endured heavy casualties, Governor Moore losing seventy-four crewmen killed and wounded out of ninety-four. On the other hand, Farragut's casualties after two hours of fighting numbered but 37 killed and 147 wounded. At Fort Jackson, nine men had been killed and thirty-five wounded, and at Fort St. Philip two were dead and four wounded.[63]

4. Manning the Fort Guns

Throughout the action the guns of both forts maintained a steady fire on Farragut's ships. At Fort Jackson, the 42-pounder barbette battery was constantly at work, in charge of First Lieutenants Eugene W.

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63. This account of the passage of the forts is drawn from the following sources: Duncan to Pickett, April 30, 1862, in War of the Rebellion, Series I, Vol. VI, 528-29; Report of Lieutenant Colonel Edward Higgins, April 27, 1862, in ibid., p. 547; Report of Captain M.T. Squires, April 27, 1862, in ibid., p. 551; Porter, "Opening of the Lower Mississippi," pp. 41, 46-47; Scharf, History of the Confederate States Navy, pp. 26465, 270; Parton, General Butler in New Orleans, p. 245; Kendall, History of New Orleans, pp. 255, 256, 257; Dufour, Night the War was Lost, pp. 266, 267, 269, 283. For losses in both forts, see "Return of casualties in the Confederate garrisons of Forts Jackson and Saint Philip, April 18-25, 1862," in War of the Rebellion, Series I, Vol. VI, 550; and "List of killed and wounded in Fort St. Philip," in Official Records of the Union and Confederate Navies, Series I, Vol. 18, p. 283.

Baylor and Richard Agar. Other batteries fronting on the Mississippi were commanded by Lieutenants A.N. Ogden, Beverly C. Kennedy, and William T. Mumford, among others, of the Louisiana Heavy Artillery. Captain William B. Robertson commanded the water battery, ably assisted by Captain R.J. Bruce and Company D, First Louisiana Heavy Artillery. Other troops in the water battery included a detachment of Company B, First Louisiana, and a detachment of St. Mary's Cannoneers under First Lieutenant George O. Foot, altogether about 100 men. Armament at the time of the action consisted of two rifled 32-pounders, one 10-inch columbiad, one 9-inch columbiad, three smoothbore 32-pounders, and one 10-inch seacoast mortar. Two hastly-constructed magazines serviced the pieces, and there were two "temporary hovels" to serve as shelter for the soldiers. The water battery, only recently prepared, had no covered way. During the fighting it lay almost in a direct line with the mortar schooners, which delivered a steady bombardment on the men working there. During the time of the passage by Farragut's fleet, the battery came under severe fire from five of Porter's steamers that took up position just 200 yards below.[64] At Fort St. Philip the artillery was also capably handled, although some confusion occurred in the upper water battery manned by inexperienced soldiers of Company B, Twentieth Regiment Louisiana Volunteers, and Company D, Chalmette Regiment. This latter unit, reported Captain M. T. Squires, "was raw, undrilled, perfectly ignorant even of the use of the shot-guns with which it was armed, and had never been drilled as artillery."[65]

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64. Report of Lieutenant Colonel Higgins, April 27, 1862, in Official Records of the Union and Confederate Navies, Series I, Vol. 18, 278-79; Robertson, "The Water Battery at Fort Jackson," p. 99; Porter, "Opening of the Lower Mississippi," p. 42.

65. Report of Captain Squires, April 27, 1862, in War of the Rebellion, Series I, Vol. VI, 551.

E. The Capture of New Orleans

1. Getting By the Final Confederate Defenses

Once past the forts and with a soundly thrashed Confederate river fleet left in its wake or fleeing, Farragut's squadron churned upriver toward New Orleans. At the quarantine, Bailey's flotilla effected the capture of Szymanski's Chalmette Regiment of about 400 men. The prisoners were immediately paroled. Here Union dead of the fleet were buried and the wounded sailors attended. Upstream, Confederates at English Turn frantically tried to mount additional ordnance to halt the advance. As the deep-water ships ascended, dodging fire rafts sent from above, they blasted dwellings and thickets purportedly occupied by guerillas. One child was killed in this attack. At English Turn the defenders of Fort St. Leon were driven "flying across the flats to the cypress forest." Next morning, April 25, four miles below the city the steamers encountered the batteries of McGehee and Chalmette on either side of the river. The Cayuga took the brunt of the cross-fire before Hartford, Pensacola, and Brooklyn could discharge broadsides that forced the Confederates to abandon their weapons. By evening all obstacles had been removed and Farragut's steamers lay in front of the city.[66] In the face of the strong Union naval presence, General Lovell, who had narrowly escaped capture attempting to reach Fort Jackson the night of the 23rd to effect a reconciliation between Duncan and Mitchell, prudently retreated back up the river to New Orleans. There, in consultation with his officers, Lowell determined he must withdraw his command to spare the city bombardment by Farragut's guns. All the posts manned by the

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66. Report of Brigadier General M.L. Smith, May 6, 1862, in Official Records of the Union and Confederate Navies, Series I, Vol. 18, pp. 284-85; Extract from Papers of Lieutenant Warley, C.S. Navy, July, 1865, in ibid., p. 342; Lovell to Cooper, May 22, 1862, in War of the Rebellion, Series I, Vol. VI, 512, 514-15; John Ray Diary, entry April 25, 1862; John William DeForest, A Volunteer's Adventures: A Union Captain's Record of the Civil War. Ed. by James H. Croushore (Hamden, Connecticut: Archon Books, 1970), p. 18; Zarza, "Fort St. Leon," p. 6; Porter, "Opening of the Lower Mississippi," p. 49; John S.C. Abbott, "Heroic Deeds of Heroic Men. Opening the Mississippi," Harper's New Monthly Magazine, XXXIII (August, 1966), pp. 298-300; Butler, Butler's Book, p. 370; Mahon, Gulf and Inland Waters, p. 85; Davis, Louisiana, p. 255; Landry, "History of Forts Jackson and St. Philip," pp. 65-66, 68.

Confederate troops and Louisiana militia, including Forts Pike, Macomb, and Livingston, and Battery Bienvenue and Tower Dupré were shortly abandoned. Furthermore, all supplies and subsistance were destroyed to keep them from falling into federal hands.[67] Explained Lovell:

> I adopted this course, recognizing the perfect absurdity of confronting more than 100 guns afloat of the largest caliber, well manned and served, and looking down upon the city, with less than 3,000 militia, mostly armed with indifferent shotguns. It would, in my judgement, have been a wanton and criminal waste of the blood of women and children without the most remote possibility of any good result. . . .[68]

2. Butler Takes Over

During the bombardment of the forts, General Butler had watched with interest from a vessel moored downstream. With the success of Farragut's venture, Butler returned downriver to his waiting army at Head of Passes. His command had heard the distant thunder for a week, but being so far away Porter's bombardment had lacked the excitement of the moment. Stated an officer with Butler's soldiers in a letter home:

> I shall probably astonish you when I say that we did not find the bombardment magnificent nor even continuously interesting. It was too distant from us to startle the senses and too protracted to hold our attention. We could hear a continuous uproar of distant artillery; we could see clouds of smoke curling up from behind the leafage which fringed the river; and on the first day, when we were near the scene of action, we could see vessels lying along the low banks. Also, if we climbed up to the crosstrees, the forts were visible beyond a forested bend. Then we were ordered to the head of the

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67. Lovell to Cooper, May 22, 1862, in War of the Rebellion, Series I, Vol. VI, 514, 515; Report of Major General Mansfield Lovell, April 26, 1862, in ibid., p. 510; "Investment and Surrender of Forts Jackson and St. Philip." Unpublished manuscript in the Joseph Jones Papers, Department of Archives and Manuscripts, Louisiana State University; Abbott, "Opening the Mississippi," p. 298; Landry, "History of Forts Jackson and St. Philip," pp. 82-83.

68. Lovell to Cooper, May 22, 1862, in War of the Rebellion, Series I, Vol. VI, 515.

passes, seven miles below; and there we lay for a week, gradually losing our interest in the combat.[69]

Butler's task of taking the forts and occupying New Orleans had just begun. On his ascension of the Mississippi, Farragut cleared the bayous above Fort St. Philip and sent word to Butler that he could now land his troops. On reaching his command, the Twenty-sixth Massachusetts Infantry and companies of the Fourth Wisconsin and Twenty-first Indiana infantries, Butler pushed forward with them to Sable Island, twelve miles in the rear of Fort St. Philip. The trip was made aboard several transports and an old ferry boat, Miami, which grounded frequently in the shallows. Thirty small boats were employed in bringing the troops to Maumeel canal, through which rowing was impossible. Soldiers then waded through breast-deep water and mud as they towed the boats forward one and one-half miles to a point five miles above Fort St. Philip. Part of the command was then dispatched by Mississippi to the west bank of the river. Meanwhile, Commander Porter had positioned two of his mortar vessels in the rear of Fort Jackson. Both posts were securely invested.[70]

3. Mutiny and Surrender

Soon after Farragut's fleet had passed the forts on the morning of April 24, Commander Porter had sent one of his vessels, under a flag of truce, to demand their surrender. The demand was refused and Porter resumed his bombardment. The firing stopped soon after, when the mortar command slipped away downriver and beyond range of Louisiana and other damaged Confederate craft that yet posed a danger.[71]

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69. DeForest, A Volunteer's Adventures, pp. 15-15.

70. Butler, Butler's Book, pp. 358, 362-63, 367-68; Butler to Secretary of War Edwin Stanton, April 29, 1862, in Marshall, Correspondence of Gen. Benjamin Butler, I, 426-27; "Investment and Surrender of Forts Jackson and St. Philip." Jones Papers; Parton, General Butler in New Orleans, pp. 248-50; Mahan, Admiral Farragut, pp. 164-65; Landry, "History of Forts Jackson and St. Philip," pp. 75-76.

71. Duncan to Pickett, April 30, 1862, in War of the Rebellion, Series I, Vol. VI, 529; Mahan, Gulf and Inland Waters, p. 87.

With the abatement of firing, Duncan took advantage of the time to repair his guns. Still confident of holding out, he knew that his success was entirely dependent on whether or not New Orleans had capitualated. "We are like rats in a hole," he wrote, "perfectly surrounded, and cut off from all sources of supply or information."[72] Yet he still prepared to resist, and spent many hours fixing his cannon to traverse in a full circle to be able to point them upstream as well as down. On April 26, the Confederate steamer McRae was permitted to sail under a flag of truce for New Orleans with the wounded from the forts. Duncan knew from the encircling forces about him that it was only a matter of time until he must accept defeat.[73] Again on the 26th, when Porter repeated his offer of terms, Colonel Higgins refused.[74] The next day, hoping to inspire his restless command, General Duncan delivered the following order:

> To the Soldiers of Forts Jackson and Saint Philip:
>
> You have nobly, gallantly, and heroically sustained with courage and fortitude the terrible ordeals of fire, water, and a hail of shot and shell wholly unsurpassed during the present war. But more remains to be done. The safety of New Orleans and the cause of the Southern Confederacy, our homes, families, and everything dear to man yet depend upon our exertions. We are just as capable of repelling the enemy to-day as we were before the bombardment. Twice has the enemy demanded your surrender and twice has he been refused. Your officers have every confidence in your courage and patriotism, and feel every assurance that you will cheerfully and with alacrity obey all orders and do your whole duty as men and as becomes the well-tried garrisons of Forts Jackson and Saint Philip. Be vigilant, therefore, and stand by your guns, and all will yet be well.[75]

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72. Quoted in Dufour, Night the War was Lost, p. 319.

73. Duncan to Pickett, April 30, 1862, in War of the Rebellion, Series I, Vol VI, 529-30; Parton, General Butler in New Orleans, p. 248; Dufour, Night the War was Lost, pp. 319-20.

74. Porter to Higgins, April 26, 1862, in War of the Rebellion, Series I, Vol. VI, 543; Higgins to Porter, April 27, 1862, in ibid., p. 544.

75. Ibid., 544.

Many of the command were foreigners and lacked sympathy with the Confederate cause, and during the period following the bombardment had begun to reflect on their misgivings. Moreover, rumors already were circulating that New Orleans had surrendered.[76] At midnight of the 27th the Fort Jackson garrison mutined, spiked the cannon, and refused to fight any longer, in some instances actually shooting at officers attempting to quell the uprising. Unsuccessful efforts were made to communicate with the garrison of Fort St. Philip. Eventually, 250 of Fort Jackson's men marched out of the post and surrendered to General Butler's pickets at the quarantine.[77]

Next morning, Duncan, seeing resistance futile, sent word to Captain Mitchell that he planned to capitulate. Mitchell disagreed with the decision, as he hoped to soon have Louisiana ready for combat. At Duncan's direction Colonel Higgins penned a note to Porter:

> Sir: Upon mature deliberation it has been decided to accept the terms of surrender of these forts under the conditions offered by you in your letter of the 26th instant, viz, that the officers and men shall be paroled, officers retiring with their side-arms. We have no control over the vessels afloat.[78]

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76. Perhaps the source of the rumors were many of the wives of the Fort Jackson soldiers who were camped at the Quarantine Station. On this day Butler's command allowed the women to go to the fort to see their husbands. Extract from Papers of Lieutenant Warley, C.S. Navy, July, 1865, in Official Records of the Union and Confederate Navies, Series I, Vol. 18, 343.

77. Higgins to Lieutenant William A. Bridges, April 30, 1862, in ibid., p. 549; Duncan to Pickett, May 13, 1862, in ibid., pp. 531-32, 535; Butler to Stanton, April 29, 1862, in Marshall, Correspondence of Gen. Benjamin Butler, pp. 427-28; Butler, Butler's Book, pp. 368-69; Dufour, Night the War was Lost, pp. 320-22; Landry, "History of Forts Jackson and St. Philip," pp. 78-79.

78. War of the Rebellion, Series I, Vol. VI, 544.

That afternoon Duncan and Higgins joined Porter aboard the latter's flagship, Harriet Lane, to agree on articles of surrender. During a discussion of whether or not the Confederate river vessels were bound by the agreement, Louisiana, burning fiercely, suddenly drifted towards the conference ship. Fearing treachery, Porter handed the document to Higgins and Duncan to sign as the powder-laden craft bore down on them. Some distance away Louisiana exploded, sending fragments in all directions and killing one man and wounding others. Mitchell's actions, taken to insure that the armored ship did not fall into Union hands, greatly offended Porter, for he believed that the explosion had been timed to occur after Louisiana struck Harriet Lane. Sailing after Mitchell, Porter and his flotilla captured fourteen officers, and 200 sailors. Mitchell was promptly confined and was later imprisoned in Boston. According to terms of the capitulation Duncan and Higgins turned over all munitions and public property in the forts. The prisoners were to be released on parole, the officers to retain their side arms. Finally, the Confederate flags on both forts were to be replaced by those of the United States. Porter agreed to delay fulfilling this last article until the troops had left the garrisons. Duncan, Higgins, and the other officers, along with the St. Mary's Cannoneers, were taken upriver to New Orleans. Elated with his success, Porter prepared a wire for Secretary of the Navy Welles reporting the surrender and enclosing all the flags taken from the forts. "Truly the backbone of the rebellion is broken," he wrote.[79]

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79. Porter to Welles, April 30, 1862, in ibid., XV, 461-62. Sources for the surrender are Duncan to Pickett, April 30, 1862, in ibid., VI, 531-33; Butler to Secretary of War Stanton, April 29, 1862, in ibid., p. 505; Report of Lieutenant Colonel Higgins, April 30, 1862, in Official Records of the Union and Confederate Navies, Series I, Vol. 18, 280; Dufour, Night the War was Lost, pp. 323-26; Landry, "History of Forts Jackson and St. Philip," pp. 79-82. The articles of capitulation are in War of the Rebellion, Series I, VI, 544-45. Porter was later chastised by Farragut for having the surrender made to his (Porter's) flotilla rather than to the larger command. Dufour, Night the War was Lost, p. 326. Butler was angered by Porter's official report of the surrender, believing that the Captain had taken too much ill-deserved credit for effecting that event. "No

4. Damage to the Forts

On April 29 General Butler wrote Secretary of War Edwin M. Stanton: "I have taken possession of the forts, and find them substantially as defensible as before the bombardment."[80] But the General did not tarry long for his presence was required at New Orleans, and he left minute examination of the defenses to his subordinates. The forts were garrisoned by units of the Twenty-sixth Massachusetts Volunteer Infantry.[81] Of the two, Fort St. Philip had escaped extensive damage. "Fort St. Philip," reported Captain Porter,

> received little damage from our bombs, having fired at it with only one mortar, and that for the purpose of silencing a heavy rifled gun which annoyed us very much. We were fortunate enough to strike it in the middle and break it in two, and had not much more annoyance from that fort.[82]

The ruined gun was a 7-inch rifle in the lower battery. In addition, Porter's bombs dismounted a 13-inch seacoast mortar, a 24-pounder cannon, and an 8-inch columbiad, the last of which was quickly remounted.[83] During the fighting 1,591 rounds of shot and shell were discharged by the artillery in the fort.[84]

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naval vessel or one of the mortar fleet had fired a shot at the forts for three days. . . . A majority of the garrison of Fort Jackson had surrendered to my pickets on the night before the officers made a surrender to Commodore Porter and obtained from him better terms than has been or ought to be given during the war to a rebel officer or soldier. . . ." Butler to Stanton, June 1, 1862, in War of the Rebellion, Series I, Vol. XV, 449-50.

80. War of the Rebellion, Series I, VI, 505.

81. Report of Brigadier General John W. Phelps, April 30, 1862, in ibid., pp. 508-09.

82. Porter to Welles, April 25, 1862, in Official Records of the Union and Confederate Navies, Series I, Vol. 18, 373.

83. Report of Captain M.T. Squires, April 27, 1862, in War of the Rebellion, Series I, Vol. VI, 552. See also Report of First Lieutenant John C. Palfrey, in ibid., XV, 435.

84. For a breakdown of the ammunition fired, see ibid.

Fort Jackson sustained by far the worst destruction. That post bore the brunt of the six-day mortar attack and evidence of Porter's work was at every hand. "Never in my life," stated the Captain, "did I witness such a scene of desolation and wreck as . . . [Fort Jackson] presented."

> It was plowed up by the XIII-inch mortars; the bombs had set fire to and burned out all the buildings in and around the fort; casemates were crushed and were crumbling in. . . . The levee had been cut by the XIII-inch bombs in over a hundred places and the water had entered the casemates, making it very uncomfortable if not impossible to live there any longer. It was the only place the men had to fly to out of reach of the bombs. The drawbridge over the moat had been broken all to pieces, and all the causeways leading from the fort were cut and blown up with bombshells so that it must have been impossible to walk there or carry on any operations with any degree of safety. . . . The walls were cracked and broken in many places, and we could scarcely step without treading into a hole made by a bombshell.[85]

Another observer noticed the barracks, "a curiosity of ruin. . . . If the garrison had remained in them it would have been made mincemeat of."[86] Porter declared the survival of the post was due to the extreme wetness and softness of the ground on which it stood. Otherwise, he noted, "the first day's bombardment would have blown Fort Jackson to atoms."[87] So bomb-riddled was the terreplein inside the fort that it looked, said another witness, "as if a thousand antediluvian hogs had rooted it up."[88] Most injury to the ramparts occurred on the north side, where much bolstering had been done with sandbags. Nearly all the casemates showed

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85. Porter to Welles, April 25, 1862, in Official Records of the Union and Confederate Navies, Series I, Vol. 18, p. 372.

86. DeForest, A Volunteer's Adventures, p. 15.

87. Porter to Welles, April 25, 1862, in Official Records of the Union and Confederate Navies, Series I, Vol. 18, p. 373.

88. Gerdes to A.D. Bache, May 4, 1862, in ibid., p. 427.

cracks, and the roof of one in a bastion had been torn through three times.[89] Opined another witness: "It looks to me as if the whole structure would have to be demolished and rebuilt if the Government ever intends to fortify the site again."[90]

Repairs to Fort Jackson were underway by summer. After the initial shock of seeing the post had passed, more conservative estimates of the destruction were advanced. On May 5 First Lieutenant Godfrey Weitzel, an engineer, reported to General Butler on the state of the fort. "To an inexperienced eye it seems as if this work were badly cut up. It is as strong to-day as when the first Shell was fired at it."[91] Reported another officer:

> The burning of the citadel and the demolition of its walls, . . . give the fort an appearance of confusion and ruin that does not really exist. I am surprised to notice the small amount of actual damage that the works have sustained by the severe bombardment to which it has been exposed.
>
> The ramparts are encumbered in many places with rubbish which may easily be cleared away, and the parapets are somewhat injured by neglect and abrasion in several places. The scarp-walls have been slightly injured in a few places by shot and shell, but no material damage has been sustained by them. The revetment of the parapets is of brick masonry and requires some repairs, as it has been neglected for a long time and was not originally protected at top from the weather by a water-proof. Five guns only were dismounted during the bombardment, and these may easily be put in position, as the

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89. Joseph Harris to Gerdes, May 4, 1862, in ibid., pp. 393-94. See also Report of Brigadier General John W. Phelps, April 30, 1862, in War of the Rebellion, Series I, VI, 510. The report of a detailed examination of the casemates by Army engineer First Lieutenant John C. Palfrey is in ibid., XV, 429-32.

90. Harris to Gerdes, May 4, 1862, in Official Records of the Union and Confederate Navies, Series I, Vol. 18, p. 394. See "Plan of Fort Jackson, Showing the effect of the Bombardment by the U.S. Mortar Flotilla and Gunboats April 18th to 24th 1862." Map Division, Library of Congress.

91. Quoted in Parton, General Butler in New Orleans, p. 251.

injury is to the carriages only, and that only trifling in amount. In a word, the principal difficulty with the fort is slovenliness. . . .[92]

Already work was in progress to repair the fort for occupation by Union soldiers, and in accordance with Butler's wishes the debris from the demolished citadel was removed from within the garrison.[93] By the middle of July a workforce of nine masons, five carpenters, four blacksmiths, and sixty-nine laborers had started putting the post back into a defensible state, and within a month 200 blacks had arrived to help with the repairs. Brick from the ruined citadel was employed in patching the fort, a job estimated to last three to four months.[94] The artillery, however, stood in good condition, particularly the barbette guns, and could in an emergency be employed almost immediately.[95]

F. Assessing the Confederate Disaster

1. General Lovell's Retreat

For the present, however, officials held little fear that the Confederates would regain the forts. On April 29 Flag Officer Farragut notified Secretary Welles that federal forces had occupied New Orleans and that Butler's soldiers were moving to occupy all forts in the area abandoned by General Lovell's command. In his haste, Lovell had left most of his artillery in place, taking only a few heavier pieces north toward Vicksburg, Mississippi, where the next defense would be made. Most of the remaining guns were spiked and their carriages burned,

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92. Brigadier General Neal Dow to Captain R. A. Davis, July 18, 1862, in War of the Rebellion, Series I, Vol. XV, 523.

93. Butler to Colonel E.F. Jones, April 30, 1862, in Marshall, Correspondence of Gen. Benjamin Butler, I, 429.

94. Report of Lieutenant Colonel Frank S. Hesseltine, July 17, 1862, in War of the Rebellion, Series I, Vol. XV, 524; DeForest, A Volunteer's Adventures, p. 39.

95. Brigadier General Neal Dow to Captain R.S. Davis, July 18, 1862, in ibid., 523.

including those in Forts Pike and Macomb and in the earthen fortifications above the city.[96] By the time Butler's soldiers reached them, the forts were long since evacuated. At New Orleans the General encountered jeers from the populace along with cheers in support of Confederate President Jefferson Davis. At least one man was arrested and sentenced by the provost judge to ninety days' hard labor at Fort Jackson,[97] the beginning of the post's role as a military prison. Another man was tried and executed.

2. Reaction to the Union Presence

Despite the federal presence small parties of rebels occasionally managed to breach the security. In one instance forty men got through the Union lines below New Orleans and cut the levee in six places to flood the crops of planters purportedly sympathetic to the Union occupation. The levee was repaired before extensive destruction could occur.[98] Many of the planters had, in fact, left the region as a result of Farragut's victory, some perhaps fearing a slave revolt, but more likely they left because of the damage Union gunboats had inflicted during their ascent. One of Butler's junior officers who came up the river a few days later remarked on the dearth of population:

> Between Fort Jackson and Chalmette, a few miles below New Orleans, we saw hardly fifty white people on the banks, and the houses had the look of having been closed and abandoned. Even the Negroes were far from being as numerous as we had expected. None of the whites signalled to us, or took any other notice of us, or seemed to see us. One elderly man, driving northward with a rockaway full of women, kept along with us for a quarter of a mile or so, without once turning his white-bearded face toward us.

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96. Farragut to Welles, April 29, 1862, in Official Records of the Union and Confederate Navies, Series I, Vol. 18, p. 148; Farragut to Fox, April 26, 1862, in ibid., p. 155; Mahan, Gulf and Inland Waters, pp. 89-90.

97. Butler to Stanton, May 8, 1862, in Marshall, Correspondence of Gen. Benjamin Butler, I, 431.

98. W. Mithoff, President of Police Jury, Jefferson Parish, to Butler, May 29, 1862, in ibid., p. 537.

> The blacks, as might be expected, were more communicative and more friendly. They gathered to stare at us, and when there were no whites near, they gave enthusiastic evidence of good will, dancing at us, waving hats or branches and shouting welcome. One old mauma, who spoke English and had perhaps once been "sold down de ribber," capered vigorously on the levee, screaming, "Bress de Lawd! I knows dat ar flag. I knew it would come. Praise de Lawd!"[99]

3. Meaning of the Federal Victory

Thus, by mid-May, 1862, little more than one year after the war began, New Orleans and the lower Mississippi to Vicksburg lay securely in Union control. The victory was great, because New Orleans was the South's wealthiest and largest city and its loss dealt Jefferson Davis's government a devastating psychological as well as physical blow. Along with losing the tremendous resources of New Orleans the Confederacy also saw European interventionist sentiment in favor of the South begin to erode. Furthermore, several ironclad vessels on which the South's naval hopes might have rested were destroyed or captured before they could operate to advantage elsewhere.[100]

4. Southern Heroism

Despite the Confederate disaster, Southern army officers paid tribute to the bravery of their soldiers at the forts. "More than 25,000 shells were thrown [at them]," wrote Lovell with certain exaggeration, ". . . yet the garrisons held out, although wet, without change of clothing, and exhausted for want of rest and regular food, with a heroic endurance which is beyond all praise."[101] He made little of the mutiny at Fort Jackson. General Duncan praised the "heroic courage" of the men,[102] and Colonel Higgins singled out some of his officers for compliment:

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99. DeForest, A Volunteer's Adventures, p. 17.

100. Porter, "Opening of the Lower Mississippi," p. 22; Landry, "History of Forts Jackson and St. Philip," pp. 74, 83.

101. Lovell to Cooper, May 22, 1862, in War of the Rebellion, Series I, VI, 517.

102. Duncan to Pickett, April 30, 1862, in ibid., p. 529.

> Capt. W.B. Robertson, who commanded . . . the water battery, remained with his command during the whole of this protracted ordeal . . . , although suffering from severe physical disease. . . . He was most ably and gallantly assisted by Capt. R.J. Bruce, of the Louisiana Artillery.
>
> First Lieut. Eugene W. Baylor, Louisiana Artillery, who was in command of the 42-pounder barbette battery, and First Lieut. Richard Agar, of the same battery. . . .
>
> The officers stationed at the heaviest batteries on the river front. . . . Lieuts. A.N. Ogden, Beverly C. Kennedy, and William T. Mumford, of the Louisiana Artillery, particularly distinguished themselves in this service.
>
> Lieut. William M. Bridges, who . . . took charge of the two 10-inch columbiads, and fought them night and day with ceaseless energy.
>
> Lieut. Thomas K. Pierson, Twenty-third Regiment of Louisiana Volunteers, was killed in the thickest of the fight, while gallantly fighting his guns.
>
> Lieut. J.W. Gaines, in command of the 32-pounder battery on the riverfront, assisted by Lieut. E.A. Woodlief; Capt. S. Jones, Company I, Twenty-third Regiment Louisiana Volunteers; Capt. F. Peter, Company I, Twenty-second Regiment Louisiana Volunteers, fought their batteries gallantly and well.

Higgins also paid particular praise to the Saint Mary's Cannoneers, under Captain F.O. Cornay, who

> have my warmest gratitude and admiration for their whole conduct, both in face of the enemy and in the severe and arduous fatigue duties, which they discharged always and at all times, day and night, with alacrity and energy. They are an honor to the country, and well may their friends and relatives be proud of them.[103]

5. Charges Against General Lovell

Yet professions of the courage of the soldiers in Forts Jackson and St. Philip could not remove the realities of what had occurred. General Lovell blamed the loss on three factors: namely, the lack of sufficient

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103. Report of Lieutenant Colonel Edward Higgins, April 27, 1862, in ibid, pp. 547-48.

heavy guns; the high water of the Mississippi that contributed to the destruction of the barriers placed across the stream; and "the failure, through inefficiency and want of energy" of the Confederate naval officers, especially in regard to the completion and placement of the ironclads Louisiana and Mississippi. Had the garrisons of the forts "been seconded . . . by the defenses afloat," lamented the General, "we should not have had to record the fall of New Orleans."[104] Lovell himself came under criticism for withdrawing prematurely in the face of the enemy. Among other charges, Lovell was accused of abandoning artillery in the fortifications around New Orleans instead of removing it when there was ample time to do so, and of destroying rather than carrying off perfectly good powder and ammunition.[105] The allegations prompted Lovell to request a court of inquiry which met a year later and absolved him from blame. The court ruled the fall of New Orleans as "inevitable and its evacuation a military necessity."[106] In that opinion they were probably correct.

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104. Lovell to Cooper, May 22, 1862, in ibid., p. 517. See also Duncan to Pickett, April 30, 1862, in ibid., pp. 527-28; and Report of Lieutenant Colonel Edward Higgins, April 27, 1862, in ibid., p. 548.

105. Governor Moore to President Davis, May 21, 1862, in ibid., p. 642.

106. Lovell Court of Inquiry, p. 642.

CHAPTER VII: LATER YEARS OF FORTS JACKSON AND ST. PHILIP

A. Fort Jackson

1. Later Wartime Use

Throughout the remaining years of the Civil War Forts Jackson and St. Philip were garrisoned by northern commands. Soon after the fall of New Orleans General Butler received orders to prepare the posts to meet a possible attack by a French fleet to be sent by the Emperor Louis Napoleon to assist the Confederacy. Napoleon coveted Mexico at this time and it was feared he would offer the South his support in return for acquiescence in his intrigues. Butler was directed to put Fort Jackson and Fort St. Philip in a condition to prevent any such challenge; heavy guns from above New Orleans and from Chalmette were moved down to the posts. Farragut's fleet was also available to impede any French naval activity in the lower Mississippi.[1] But the French never appeared.

Shortly after the capture of New Orleans by Farragut's force, Fort Jackson was used as a military prison for the incarceration of political and military foes of the federal government. Butler apparently used the threat of imprisonment at the post fairly often to get his way among the populace.[2] Mayor John T. Monroe was jailed there along with the editor of the New Orleans Commercial Bulletin.[3] The practice of imprisoning civilian and military personnel continued until after the war was over.

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1. Butler, Butler's Book, pp. 464, 465, 466.

2. Memoir of George Booth. Diary, April-July, 1862, p. 42. Civil War Times Illustrated Collections, U.S. Army Military History Institute. In May, 1862, Butler issued an exclusion order preventing "all persons, black or white, not officers or soldiers or belonging to the Navy . . . or laborers . . . and all women and children not wives of laborers actually employed in the service of the United States or having their homes there before the occupation of our troops or confined as prisoners" from entering Fort Jackson, Fort St. Philip, and the quarantine station. Special Order No. 45, Headquarters, Department of the Gulf, May 27, 1862. War of the Rebellion, Series I, Vol. XV, 446.

3. Special Order No. 228, Headquarters, Department of the Gulf, July 30, 1862, in War of the Rebellion, Series I, Vol. XV, 553; Landry, "History of Forts Jackson and St. Philip," p. 85.

2. Occupation by Black Troops

For much of the remaining war years Fort Jackson was garrisoned by black soldiers, members of the Corps d'Afrique, units formed to take advantage of available black manpower in southern Louisiana after the fall of New Orleans. Initially, General Butler adamantly opposed the notion of making soldiers out of Southern black men. As he wrote Secretary Stanton when the subject was first broached,

> The negro here by long habit and training has acquired a great horror of fire-arms, sometimes ludicrous in the extreme when the weapon is in his own hand. I am inclined to the opinion . . . of arming the negro with a pike or spear instead of a musket, if they are to be armed at all.[4]

Butler's sentiments gradually changed in the summer of 1862. Troops were needed. Black soldiers might be able to serve garrisoning the delta forts, thereby freeing white soldiers for combat duties. Although Butler protested the formation of black companies by Brigadier General John W. Phelps in the summer of 1862 ("The President has not yet indicated his purpose to employ the Africans in arms"), he later found himself appealing for black volunteers. Between September and November black units were recruited, consisting of the First, Second, and Third Regiments Louisiana Native Guards, plus the First Regiment Louisiana Heavy Artillery.[5]

It was Butler's successor, Major General Nathaniel P. Banks, who dealt with the black regiments on a large scale. Banks sought competent and ambitious white officers to command these troops, but often got inept political appointees with little or no qualifications to lead men, regardless of race. The first three regiments were staffed partially by black officers, and few major difficulties arose.[6]

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4. Butler to Stanton, May 25, 1862, in Marshall, Correspondence of Gen. Benjamin Butler, I, 519.

5. Butler to Phelps, August 2, 1862, in War of the Rebellion, Series I, Vol. XV, 536; DeForest, A Volunteer's Adventures, p. 37.

6. C. Peter Ripley, Slaves and Freedmen in Civil War Louisiana (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1976), pp. 114, 115, 116.

3. Colonel Rust and the Blacks

Late in 1862 Forts Jackson and St. Philip were garrisoned by Companies A, B, C, D, E, F, I, and K, Thirty-first Massachusetts Volunteers under Colonel Oliver P. Gooding. But in January and February 1863, these troops were replaced by Companies A, D, F, G, I (Fort Jackson), B, E, and H (Fort St. Philip), Thirteenth Maine Volunteers, under Colonel Henry Rust. Also assigned to the posts were two companies of the all-black First Louisiana Native Guards and one company of the First Louisiana Heavy Artillery Regiments.[7] Colonel Rust, it became evident, had no use for the blacks and worked intently at trying to get either himself or the Negroes sent into the field. "Any thing to get rid of them," he wrote in his diary.[8] Rust wanted nothing to do with these men, and he spent most of his early days at Fort Jackson grappling with, as he put it, "the nigger question."[9] At the start he even refused to allow the black soldiers into the forts, insisting that they pitch tents outside the walls. Major Abernathy Grover, who commanded at Fort St. Philip, was ordered to do likewise with his men.[10] On January 24, soon after taking command, Colonel Rust noted in his diary:

> Have been hard at work trying to bring order out of chaos. Have visited the quarters assigned them to officers and men, have been looking up orders very few of which I found, and seeing how matters could be arranged. There are many questions constantly arising as to how this vagrant contraband crowd can be fed, their labor organized and made profitable &c &c. Niggers still stick out as the most annoying feature of this whole trouble.[11]

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7. Post Returns, Fort Jackson, October, 1862, and January, 1863. NA, Microfilm M617, Roll 521.

8. Diary of Henry Rust, Jr., Col. 13th Maine Regt. Entry for January 21, 1863. Military Order of the Loyal Legion of the United States--Massachusetts Commandery Collection (MOLLUS-Mass.). U.S. Army Military History Institute.

9. Ibid.

10. Ibid., January 22, 1863.

11. Ibid.

Rust's problems were soon partially resolved. After four days the black troops at Fort Jackson were ordered to move to English Turn to build entrenchments there. "I ordered them in readiness to leave by 9 PM," wrote Colonel Rust, "and at half past nine the boat was here for them. Good bye niggers. I am glad enough to be rid of them."[12]

4. Practicing on the Guns

Rust's diary reveals something of the mundane existence at the forts during this period of relative inactivity. On January 25, 1863, he received orders to dismount six 24-pounders at Fort St. Philip and forward them to Donaldsonville. That evening dress parade was held at Fort Jackson. On the 27th the soldiers spent the day in marching, bayonet, and heavy artillery drill. Next day the men practiced on the barbette pieces.[13] The men lacked skill in handling the guns, a deficiency noticed by Brigadier General Thomas West Sherman, commanding the Defenses of New Orleans, who inspected the forts in early February. "Have had a severe time," explained Colonel Rust.

> He [Sherman] expected me to be proficient in artillery having been in a fort but a week and having never seen a book of instruction. I explained to him the difficulties under which we were laboring. He spent the day in inspecting the troops and seeing them in the afternoon work awkwardly at the guns. If I have my health I will know something about a fort and its armament before long.[14]

Rust's soldiers next day fired the guns and mortars in Fort Jackson. General Sherman, he wrote, "is Pleasant this afternoon."[15] On February 7 Sherman went across the river and inspected the black troops

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12. Ibid., January 28, 1863.

13. Ibid., January 25, 1863; January 26, 1863, January 27, 1863; January 28, 1863; January 29, 1863.

14. Diary of Henry Rust, Jr., February 5, 1863.

15. Ibid., February 6, 1863.

remaining at Fort St. Philip. The guns at that post were in better working condition that those at Fort Jackson.[16]

As further precaution against enemy vessels ascending the Mississippi a picket station was established below Fort Jackson. Union authorities also imposed strict regulations governing the passage of ships. Colonel Rust was directed to board all vessels and prevent their passage without written authorization from General Banks.[17] Rust recounted the following event concerning one ship that failed to properly yield:

> A brig tried to come up this afternoon past the signal station without stopping. Signals were made a solid shot was fired across her bow, still she kept on. I pointed another and fired as the signals went up. [She] did not stop. Fired another directly under her fore foot, could have hit her every time and should have done so had I not recognized her as the brig Boston. . . . She was completely at my mercy. I however pointed another gun and made up my mind that when she crossed the range I would in obedience to order let her have it and then if she did not stop I would open with every gun. But she began to back down river. Before her bow touched my line of fire of the gun I had pointed, she backed directly in line of Fort St. Philip so they could not discover her retrograde motion. And as I had already fired so many shots that the Major had a right to consider her an enemy, as well as myself, he let go one of his Columbiads and the big missile went ricocheting along the water passed along her port side and threw water all over her decks. She then skedaddled double quick and went back to my boarding boat which was waiting for her down the stream.[18]

Colonel Rust practiced with the artillery regularly, effectively using it as a deterrent to ships trying to pass freely by the forts. Repairs to Fort Jackson continued; the soldiers busied themselves erecting new quarters with lumber brought down the river on boats. The guns in the

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16. Ibid., February 7, 1863.

17. Ibid., February 9, 12, 1863.

18. Ibid., February 17, 1863.

water battery were dismounted in late February. Cannon in the barbette units were fired almost daily, either in practice or in warning to approaching river craft. "Eight pounds of powder jars this fort to its foundations," reported Rust.[19]

5. Mutiny of the Black Soldiers

In August, 1863, Rust and his troops were replaced by the newly-formed Fourth Regiment, Corps d'Afrique, commanded by Colonel Charles W. Drew. Ultimately four companies, A, D, F, and I, joined Company A, First Louisiana Heavy Artillery, at Fort St. Philip, while Companies B, C, E, G, H, and K were posted to Fort Jackson. Apparently the blacks were subjected to various degrading treatment, notably by a lieutenant colonel named Augustus W. Benedict. Their frustrations culminated in a short-lived mutiny on the evening of December 9. During the investigation which followed it was disclosed that the specific cause of the disturbance was the conduct of Benedict, who persisted in mistreating the men. At about 5 p.m. on the afternoon of the 9th the command became agitated watching Colonel Benedict whip two drummers, Privates Harry Williams and Munroe Miller. An hour and a half later most of the 500 troops had taken up arms and were firing into the air. Colonel Drew managed to steady the situation and after promising the blacks justice succeeded in quelling the disruption. Some of the soldiers, however, moved outside the fort and continued firing their weapons for some time before returning. By next morning the incident was over.[20]

During the investigation that followed it was revealed that Colonel Benedict took sadistic delight in meting out cruel punishment to the blacks. Captain James Miller commented on Benedict as follows:

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19. Ibid., February 20, 1863.

20. Colonel Drew's testimony, December 12, 1863, in War of the Rebellion, Series I, Vol. XXVI, Part I, pp. 460, 461, 464; Major William Nye's testimony, December 12, 1863, in ibid., p. 465.

> I have seen him, in the month of August, at Fort Saint Philip, spread a man out on his back, drive stakes down, and spread out his hands and legs, take off his shoes, and take molassas and spread it over his face, hands and feet. Lieutenant-Colonel Benedict ordered this punishment, and was present part of the time. The man lay there a whole day, and was put out again on the next day, though I do not know how long he remained on the second day. I have seen him strike men on other occasions. I have seen him strike men on the parade without any cause whatever, while under arms. It was a common thing.[21]

And Captain William Knapp reported that

> I have seen him strike them in the face with his fist, kick them and, in one instance, strike a man with his sword in the face. On the 19th of October, I was officer of the day; the guard was turned out for Lieutenant-Colonel Benedict, and one man, Private Francis, of my company, did not dress properly, and Lieutenant-Colonel Benedict took the sergeant's sword and struck him in the face. I have frequently seen him at Fort Saint Philip, at guard-mounting, strike men in the face with his fist and kick them because their brasses were not bright or their boots not polished.[22]

Clearly the brief insurrection represented the culmination of grievous wrongs caused by one individual. "The negroes have been constantly assured," remarked General Banks, ". . . that under no circumstances whatever were they to be subjected to the degrading punishment of flogging."[23] Found guilty of inflicting cruel and unusual punishment, Lieutenant Colonel Benedict "ceases . . . to be an officer in the military service of the United States."[24] Two of the blacks who revolted were

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21. Captain Miller's Testimony, December 12, 1863, in ibid., p. 468.

22. Captain Knapp's Testimony, December 13, 1865, in ibid., p. 473.

23. Report of Major General Banks, December 11, 1863, in ibid., p. 456.

24. General Order No. 90, Headquarters, Department of the Gulf, December 30, 1863, in ibid., p. 479.

returned "to be shot to death" for their part in the episode. They were, however, transferred temporarily to confinement at Fort Jefferson, Florida.[25]

6. Changing Units

In the aftermath of the mutiny General Banks sent Brigadier General William Dwight, "an officer of high rank and good judgment," with 272 men of the Eighty-third Ohio Volunteer Infantry to reassert authority at Fort Jackson.[26] The Ohio troops made camp just above the fort, clearing out the thickets of vines and palms for sufficient space. In early January, 1864, the weather turned bad and the soldiers endured great discomfort in their makeshift accommodations--"Ship Island No. 2," they called it. They purchased oranges and lemons from creole settlers who lived above and who daily brought skiffloads of the fruit down to the forts. The presence of the Eighty-Third had the desired effect and the blacks were intimidated to the extent that they refused to go outside the walls of Fort Jackson.[27]

The Fourth Regiment Corps d'Afrique was soon transferred from Fort Jackson. In February, 1864, the post was garrisoned by ten companies of the Ninety-first New York Volunteers and Battery D of the Fourth Wisconsin Heavy Artillery under Lieutenant Colonel Jonathan Tarbell. In the following month General Sherman took personal command of the fort. In May Colonel Tarbell resumed command and four more companies of the

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25. Ibid., pp. 476-77, 478.

26. Brigadier General Charles P. Stone to Dwight, December 13, 1863. NA, RG 393, Part 4, Forts Jackson and St. Philip, LR; Post Returns, Fort Jackson, December, 1863. NA, Microfilm M617, Roll 521.

27. Frank McGregor to "Dear Susie," January 1, 6, 21, 1864. McGregor Papers, U.S. Army Military History Institute.

Seventy-seventh joined the post, making a total of ten in garrison. In June Colonel Charles A. Hartwell took command.[28]

Over the next few months the units at Fort Jackson changed frequently. In July the Ninety-first New York returned, and four companies--A, B, C, and D--of the Eighth U.S. Heavy Artillery (colored) garrisoned the post along with Battery D, Fourth Wisconsin Heavy Artillery. From August, 1864, through March, 1865, only the four companies forming the first battalion, Eleventh U.S. Heavy Artillery (colored) (formerly the Eighth) were at the post. In April and May, 1865, these units were replaced by seven companies (A, B, D, E, F, H, and I) of the Tenth U.S. Heavy Artillery (colored), four of which eventually occupied Fort St. Philip.[29] From September through the end of the year there were two companies stationed at each post.[30]

Most days were spent in drill, guard, and fatigue duty at Fort Jackson. Often there occurred dismounting and remounting of cannon as the guns were shifted among the forts around New Orleans. For example, in August, 1864, twelve 30-pounder Parrott guns were removed from Fort Jackson and Fort St. Philip for use elsewhere.[31] In fact, by late January, 1865, Fort Jackson mounted only eighty-two pieces, nearly 100 less than its capacity.[32] The fort's prime function remained as a

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28. Post Returns, Fort Jackson, January-June, 1864. NA, Microfilm M617, Roll 521.

29. Post Returns, Fort Jackson, June-December, 1865. NA, Microfilm M617, Roll 521.

30. Post Returns, Fort Jackson, June-December, 1865. NA, Microfilm M617, Roll 521.

31. Post Returns, Fort Jackson, August, 1864. NA, Microfilm M617, Roll 521.

32. Fort Jackson guns. NA, RG 77, Drawer 255, Sheet 17-1.

military prison for some time after the war. Among those released in early 1866 were former Confederate Colonel P.N. Luckett and a Judge Devine, both of Texas, and ex-Senator William M. Gwin. A filibusterer named Crawford, arrested on order of Major General Philip H. Sheridan and held at the fort, managed somehow to escape. Convicted soldiers were also imprisoned in casemates at Fort Jackson, rooms that were damp, close, badly ventilated, and otherwise ill-suited for the men. In 1870 thirty-two prisoners occupied one casemate, causing the post surgeon to urge the adoption of "other means for their confinement."[34]

In January, 1866, Battery H, Ninety-sixth U.S. Heavy Artillery (colored) joined the post and was mustered out after two month's service there, leaving only Companies A and H of the Tenth present for the rest of the year. In January, 1867, these units were replaced by Company G, Twentieth U.S. Infantry. Later, Company K of the Twentieth, along with Companies D and F, Thirty-ninth Infantry, arrived; for almost two years, until April, 1869, companies of the Thirty-ninth garrisoned Fort Jackson.[35] Under a general army reorganization at that time, the three companies of the Thirty-ninth were consoldidated with companies of the Fortieth Infantry and redesignated the Twenty-fifth Infantry regiment--an all-black unit. Companies of the Twenty-fifth remained at Fort Jackson until reassignment of the regiment in May, 1870.[36] Their replacements, Companies I and K, Nineteenth Infantry, occupied the fort through the summer of 1871.[37]

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33. New Orleans Times, May 17, 1866; New Orleans Daily Crescent, January 1, 1866; New Orleans Bee, February 21, 1866.

34. Letter of Assistant Surgeon P.F. Harvey, June 16, 1870. NA, RG 393. Fort Jackson, LR.

35. Post Returns, Fort Jackson, January, 1866-April, 1869. NA, Microfilm M617, Roll 521.

36. Post Returns, Fort Jackson, April, 1869-May, 1870. NA, Microfilm M617, Roll 521.

37. Post Returns, Fort Jackson, May, 1870-July, 1871. NA, Microfilm M617, Roll 521.

7. Health of the Garrison

Generally, the health of the soldiers at the post was good. During a yellow fever epidemic in New Orleans in 1867 no instances of the disease were reported from Fort Jackson.[38] The black troops did suffer from malarial fever in 1868, although cases of the sickness were down the following year. Other common maladies included diarrhea, rheumatism, pneumonia, and venereal diseases. The incidence of disease rose sharply after the post was garrisoned by unacclimated white troops in the spring of 1870.[39]

8. Armament and New Construction at the Post

While the utility of Fort Jackson declined in the late 1860s and early 1870s, construction continued to keep the fort ready for defense. In 1866-1867 twenty-two barbette platforms were erected and the casemates prepared to receive heavy guns. At that time there were eighty-four pieces of ordnance in the work, as follows: casemates, sixteen 10-inch Rodman guns (smoothbores) and ten 24-pounder flank howitzers; barbette, two 15-inch Rodmans, twenty 10-inch Rodmans, three 10-inch columbiads, five 8-inch columbiads, six 32-pounders, six 24-pounders, two 7½-inch howitzers, two 13-inch mortars, two 10-inch mortars, two 8-inch mortars, five 100-pounder rifled cannon, two 32-pounder rifled cannon, and one 7-inch rifled Brooke gun. Among other construction, a new oven was built, the levee repaired, and two mortar platforms started. Officials planned to erect a storage magazine to secure the powder against

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38. Marcy, Outline Description of the Posts, p. 235. One black soldier possibly had yellow fever but recovered. See War Department, U.S. Surgeon General's Office. Circular No. 1. Report on Epidemic Cholera and Yellow Fever in the Army of the United States, During the Year 1867 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1868), p. vii.

39. War Department. U.S. Surgeon General's Office. Circular No. 4. A Report on Barracks and Hospitals with Descriptions of Military Posts, by John S. Billings (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1870), pp. 172, 173.

"sudden rises of water" resulting from storms in the region.[40] In 1868 several "temporary" buildings were erected outside the fort, 150 yards from its west wall. These consisted of a commanding officer's quarters, two officers' quarters, a storehouse, an office building, an enlisted men's barracks, a workshop building, and a kitchen and mess room, all arranged around a parade ground in typical fashion. Next year only "slight repairs" occurred, although lightning rods were installed over the powder magazines. The storage magazine had not been started for want of funds. In 1869 there were only seventy pieces of ordnance mounted at the post and in 1870 this armament was reduced to fifty-five pieces.[41]

9. Fort Jackson in 1870

Several buildings at Fort Jackson, including a newly completed hospital, were described in detail by an inspector who visited there in 1870:

> The quarters, barracks, and hospitals . . . are built on brick piles between two and three feet high. The barracks [built in 1868] consist of one frame building, lathed and plastered inside. The building is divided in the center by a hall, 24 by 11 feet, into two equal compartments, each measuring 70 by 24 feet, with a general height of 13 1/2 feet. A covered gallery, 11 feet wide, surrounds the building. Ventilation is effected solely by means of windows and doors. There are ten of the former opening into the barrack rooms, each measuring 5 1/2 by 3 1/2 feet, and four of the latter 6 1/2 by 4 1/2 feet. Two

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40. "Report of the Chief of Engineers," October 21, 1867, in Report of the Secretary of War, 1867 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1867), p. 14; Report of Heavy Ordnance, Fort Jackson, June 30, 1867. NA, RG 77. Cartographic Archives Division, Drawer 255, Sheet 17-3; "Fort Jackson, La. Horizontal & Cross Sections." May-June, 1868. NA, RG 77. Cartographic Archives Division, Drawer 88, Sheet 69.

41. "Fort Jackson, La. Sketch showing the location of Proposed Temporary Quarters for Garrison as designated by the Engineer Department." June 30, 1867. NA, RG 77. Cartographic Archives Division, Drawer 88, Sheet 62; "Report of the Chief of Engineers," October 20, 1868, in Report of the Secretary of War, 1868 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1868), p. 19; "Report of the Chief of Engineers," October 25, 1869, in Report of the Secretary of War, 1869 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1869), p. 18; Post Returns, Fort Jackson, October, 1869, September, 1870. NA, Microfilm M617, Roll 521.

rooms, 11 by 8 1/2 feet, at each end of the building, are occupied by non-commissioned officers. A ridge ventilator and registers are great desiderata for all barracks in this climate, and especially for one in question, as the windows are altogether too small to admit the requisite amount of air. These rooms are at present occupied by about 100 men, giving to each an air space of 453 cubic feet. Double bunks in two tiers are used. . . .

Five buildings are used as officers' quarters; No. 1, a large two-story brick building, containing twelve rooms, and belonging to the engineer department, old and condemned, and nearly unfit for occupation. Each room has an average size of 18 by 15 feet. In addition to quarters for two officers, the building also furnishes offices for adjutant and quartermaster. No. 2, a one-story frame building 82 by 16 feet, yellow washed, and containing four rooms and a kitchen, formerly used as a hospital, is situated on the bank of the river, heated by means of stoves, and ventilated by windows. The remaining three buildings are built in cottage style, roofed with slate, painted white, and furnished with green window shutters. They are each one story high, 45 feet long by 18 feet wide, with ceiling 14 feet high. The first of this series contains three rooms, each 18 by 14 feet, and hall, 18 by 13 feet; the second, two rooms and hall of same dimensions; the third, three rooms, each about 18 by 14 feet. The latter was formerly intended for use as offices, but has served as quarters ever since it was built. The rooms do not connect. There are no water-closets or bath-rooms. Two sinks, which were built many years ago, and stand facing the row of cottages, are used by officers. They should be removed or inclosed in lattice-work. . . .

The guard-house is situated in the fort, with two doors opening into the sallyport and one into the fort. It comprises three rooms, viz: The guard-room, 13 1/2 by 14 1/2 feet; the prison, 17 by 20 feet; and the dungeon, 14 1/2 by 7 feet, all having an average height of eight feet, warmed by means of fireplaces, and ventilated by one embrasure, 3 by 2 feet, and three doors, 3 1/2 by 5 feet. For the ordinary uses of a guard-house the prison-room would be entirely suitable; but for the confinement of general prisoners, in such numbers as are at present confined, it is altogether unfit. Fort Jackson has recently been converted into a penal post, and there are at present sixty-five convict prisoners here, undergoing sentence for various offenses, desertion being the principal. Eleven are confined in the prison room above described, and thirty-two in a casemate of the fort, (29 by 15 feet, and 9 feet high) and twenty-two in two hospital tents pitched on the parade in the fort. It will be readily seen that the allowance of air to the prisoners in the casemate and prison is quite insufficient. As a remedy for this state of affairs another casemate in the fort is

preparing for the reception of a dozen or so, and will be ready for occupation in a few days. The stockade, at present in course of erection, is built of piles, 10 by 10 inches, implanted five feet in the ground and projecting twelve feet above. A space of two inches is left between each pile to secure a little circulation of air inside. This structure will inclose an area 150 by 75 feet, and a building 100 by 25 feet, with ceiling about fourteen feet high, eighteen windows, three doors, fourteen registers, and a ridge ventilator running the entire length of the building. It will accommodate about 100 prisoners, and at least two months will be consumed in its completion. . . .

The hospital, situated on the bank of the river, is a new building, 135 by 25 feet, constructed of boards, arranged vertically and battened; the ward, 65 by 24 feet, occupying the center. At one end are two lavatories, 15 1/2 by 13 1/2 and 13 1/2 by 8 feet; kitchen, 15 1/2 by 10 feet; pantry, 10 by 8 1/2 feet, and dining-room 15 by 24 feet--the dispensary, 15 by 15 1/2 feet; the store-room and steward's quarters occupy the other end. The rooms are all 14 feet high. The building is yellow washed and furnished with green window shutters exteriorly, and is lathed and plastered inside; warmed by means of stoves, lighted and ventilated by windows and doors. The ward contains twenty beds, allowing to each an air space of about 1,100 cubic feet. No water-closet; no dead-house. Baggage of patients stored in store-room. A covered gallery around the hospital is included in the plan of the building, but as yet has not been constructed. . . . Two casemates in the fort are occupied as a post bakery. There is no library.

Accumulations of water in the immediate vicinity of the fort and buildings are conducted by ditches into a reservoir near the edge of the river, where a stationary engine of eight to ten horsepower is worked almost incessantly in rainy seasons discharging into the river. This apparatus was brought here in 1865 upon the recommendation of an inspecting board of surgeons, and answers an excellent purpose. The slops, offal, excreta, &c. are thrown into the river.[42]

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42. Report on Barracks and Hospitals, pp. 168, 170, 171. See also War Department, Quartermaster General's Office, Outline Description of U.S. Military Posts and Stations inthe Year 1871 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1872), p. 47; Marcy, Outline Description of the Posts and Stations, p. 235; and War Department, U.S. Surgeon General's Office. Circular No. 8. A Report on the Hygiene of the United States Army, with Descriptions of Posts. By John S. Billings (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1875), pp. 138-39. In 1866 total value of Fort Jackson was estimated at $3,100,000. New Orleans Times, October 12, 1866.

In addition to these buildings, a large one-story frame structure, measuring 60 by 47½ feet and used as a quartermaster and commissary storehouse, stood between the barracks and the officers' quarters. Two old rough board buildings, whitewashed in and out and located on the bank of the exterior moat, were used for laundresses and married soldiers. A kitchen and mess-room, behind the barracks, was shared by the two companies at the post.[43] No privies or waterclosets existed at the fort, and the men used a sink built on an abandoned gunboat to project over the river. The soldiers bathed twice a week in the Mississippi.[44] Since before the Civil War part of the parapet over the covered way had served as a cemetery. Some time after the war the dead were removed to the post cemetery of Fort St. Philip.[45]

The country around the post harbored numerous types of trees and foliage, including ash, cypress, white oak, willow, cottonwood, and poplar. The moist, alluvial soil yielded rich crops of strawberries, blackberries, and dewberries, as well as watermelons, muskmelons, and cantaloupe. Planters in the area grew eggplant, okra, potatoes, lettuce, cabbage, onions, and cauliflower. The country, still sparsely populated, was farmed by persons of Spanish, French, German, and Irish ancestry.[46] In 1870 alligators were plentiful in the area and could be seen sunning themselves or floating in Fort Jackson's moat:

> They are from five to fifteen feet in length, and possess great strength. It has been customary to feed them with bread and crackers, from the bridges over the moats, calling them up by whistling, and from frequent repetition they appear to have learned that signal, and generally obey it with as much readiness as so many dogs.[47]

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43. Report on Barracks and Hospitals, pp. 170, 171.

44. Ibid., pp. 170, 171.

45. Ibid., p. 170.

46. Ibid., pp. 169, 171.

47. Ibid., p. 169.

Mosquitoes still posed a terrific nuisance at the fort, and the troops had to smudge themselves with a mixture of kerosene oil, spirits of camphor, and other "pungent substances," as a repellant. "Rags saturated with crude carbolic acid, and waved to and fro in the air . . . will drive these pests out of an apartment; but they return soon after in increased numbers."[48] The post water supply was kept in seven wooden cisterns situated next to the barracks, hospital, and officers' quarters and affording a total of 35,000 gallons of rain water. During occasional draughts, when this supply was exhausted, the soldiers used river water. In the rainy season flooding became a problem despite the erection of a levee around the fort. At those times a stationary steam engine was used to bail out the water.[49] Five miles upstream from Fort Jackson was the quarantine, where vessels arriving from infected ports were impounded ten or more days. The nearest village of any magnitude to Fort Jackson was the tiny community of Buras, located across the stream from the quarantine station. Here were the post office and telegraph station that served both forts.[50]

10. Soldier Life at the Fort

The daily routine at Fort Jackson consisted of drill and fatigue duty, as shown in the following 1870 schedule of service calls:[51]

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48. Ibid., p. 170.

49. Ibid., pp. 168, 169.

50. Ibid., p. 168.

Reveille Call	at	Day Break
Police Call		15 Mintutes after
Breakfast Call for Prisoners		6 A.M.
Do Do Companies		6:30 A.M.
Surgeons Call		7 A.M.
Fatigue Do	7:30 A.M. and	1 P.M.
1st Call Guard Mount		9:45 A.M.
Guard Mount		8 A.M.
Drill Call	9 A.M. and	3 P.M.
Recall from Drill	10:30 A.M. "	4:30 P.M.
" " Fatigue	11:30 A.M. "	5:30 P.M.
Dinner Call		12 M
Retreat		Sunset
Tattoo		8:30 P.M.
Taps		9 P.M.

Occasionally some excitement disrupted the regimen. On March 28, 1871, the principal magazine caught fire. The blaze was battled by a number of prisoners for three hours before it was brought under control. Four of the men "volunteered to take their stations inside the magazine where the heat and smoke were fearful . . . and with frequent fainting made way against the flames." Their work so impressed the fort's commander, Major Henry A. Hambright, that he recommended remission of the prisoners' sentences.[52]

11. Operations in the 1870s and 1880s

On July 7, 1871, the tedium of garrison life at Fort Jackson was finally broken when the soldiers vacated the post.[53] Nonetheless, the fort and its counterpart across the river were still viewed as important defenses of New Orleans and the upkeep of Fort Jackson was deemed essential. Administratively, after November, 1871, the post lay in the

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51. General Order No. 12, Headquarters Post of Forts Jackson and St. Philip, La., April 18, 1870. NA, RG 393. General and Special Orders, Fort Jackson and Fort Pike, 1863-1870.

52. Report of Major H.A. Hambright, May 7, 1871. Letters Sent, Fort Jackson and Fort Pike, 1869-1871. NA, RG 393.

53. Report on the Hygiene of the United States Army, p. 139.

Department of the Gulf and constituted a component in the nation's seacoast defense system. Yet funds during the postwar economic recession were not easily forthcoming from Congress, and many projects recommended for the post had to be deferred year after year. One of these called for modifications to the water battery to accommodate 15-inch smoothbore guns and 12-inch rifled cannon; another called for construction of a second earthen barbette battery above the fort. Yet only $50,000, or approximately a quarter of the estimated cost, was appropriated for Fort Jackson in 1871.[54] In 1872 projects at the post, now accomplished by a large force of civilian laborers under charge of army engineers, consisted of demolishing outmoded buildings, repairing the levee, installing a draining machine, clearing and repairing the grass slopes of the work, building a railroad from the wharf to the lower battery, and constructing drains and concrete traverses in the detached work. Two batteries were also under construction in the covered way and emplacements for two more guns were being built on the north bastion of the main work.[55] These batteries were essentially completed in 1873.[56] Foundations and platforms for the new batteries were added the following year.[57]

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54. See "Fort Jackson as proposed by the Board of Engineers, 1870" NA, RG 77. Cartographic Archives Division, Drawer 88, Sheet A; "Report of the Chief of Engineers," October 25, 1870, in Report of the Secretary of War 1870 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1870), p. 26; "Report of the Chief of Engineers," October 20, 1871, in Report of the Secretary of War, 1871 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1871), p. 23. Outline Descriptions of the Posts in the Military Division of the Missouri (Chicago: Headquarters Military Division of the Missouri, 1876; reprint, Fort Collins: The Old Army Press, 1972), p. 211.

55. "Report of the Chief of Engineers," October 19, 1872, in Report of the Secretary of War, 1872 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1872), p. 21. See "Fort Jackson." 1872. NA, RG 77. Cartographic Archives Division, Drawer 259, Sheet 44.

56. "Report of the Chief of Engineers," October 20, 1873, in Report of the Secretary of War, 1873 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1873), p. 22.

57. "Report of the Chief of Engineers," October 20, 1874, in Report of the Secretary of War, 1874 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1873), pp. 26-27.

Appropriations for Fort Jackson dwindled badly in the late 1870s. From 1877 through 1886 no funds were allocated for the post, and after 1884 none were requested.[58] In 1875 bridges were built across the moats and repairs made to the casemate storerooms. In 1876 minor tasks were completed, such as building granite foundations, cutting stone for breast-height walls, repairing the parapet slopes, and "raising, bonneting, and resodding [the] magazine traverses."[59] For the next two years little was done to prepare the fort to receive heavy armament, operations being confined to "the care and preservation of the work."[60] In May, 1878, a storm damaged the fort, and repairs were made in 1878-79 to "buildings, fences, and revetment near the wharf."[61]

Little more activity went on at the fort in the 1880s. Although the Board of Engineers for Fortifications designed modifications "to adapt it for the use of modern heavy ordnance," funds to implement the alterations and additions, including finishing the exterior batteries, were not forthcoming.[62] In 1882 floods again ravaged Fort Jackson and $5,926.21 was allotted for repairs to the levee, a job completed by civilian

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58. See Reports of the Chief of Engineers, 1877-1886, in the appropriate Reports of the Secretaries of War, 1877-1886.

59. "Report of the Chief of Engineers," October 18, 1875, in Report of the Secretary of War, 1875 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1875), p. 26; "Report of the Chief of Engineers, October 21, 1876, in Report of the Secretary of War, 1876 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1876), p. 27.

60. "Report of the Chief of Engineers," October 12, 1877, in Report of the Secretary of War, 1877 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1877), p. 22; "Report of the Chief of Engineers," October 19, 1878, in Report of the Secretary of War, 1878 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1878), p. 25.

61. "Report of the Chief of Engineers," October 20, 1879, in Report of the Secretary of War, 1879 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1879), p. 30.

62. "Report of the Chief of Engineers," October 16, 1880, in Report of the Secretary of War, 1880 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1880), p. 50; "Report of the Chief of Engineers," October 22, 1881, in Report of the Secretary of War, 1881 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1881), p. 51.

workers under contract.[63] So bad were the breaks that an inspecting officer in 1884 reported that "what was the parade and barrack grounds is a marshy lake from eighteen inches to three feet deep." The family of the ordnance sergeant stationed at Fort Jackson since 1880 was often confined to their house, the water rising so high that the porch was used as a resting place for snakes, alligators, and frogs.[64]

In 1884 the post was turned over to the Engineer Department as officially inactive.[65] During that year minimal maintenance was performed:

> The grass was mowed three times; the buildings and walls were whitewashed, and portions of the officers' quarters were painted, also doors of magazines. Drains were cleaned out; twelve shot-beds were constructed, and shot and shell piled. Considerable number of guns, carriages, and chassis were moved and blocked; some [repairs] were made to bridges. The front levee, which was commenced last year under contract, was completed. Owing to a very high river, a temporary revetment was placed to correct the new levee.[66]

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63. "Report of the Chief of Engineers," October 19, 1882, in Report of the Secretary of War, 1882 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1882), p. 49; "Report of the Chief of Engineers," October 13, 1883, in Report of the Secretary of War, 1883 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1883), p. 45.

64. Major James W. Scully to Chief Quartermaster, Department of the East, June 10, 1884. NA, RG 92. File 3075 (QM Consolidated). Inspection Report, 1884.

65. Order of Battle of the United States Land Forces in the World War (1917-19) Zone of the Interior (3 vols.; Washington: Government Printing Office, 1949), III, 582.

66. "Report of the Chief of Engineers," October 15, 1884, in Report of the Secretary of War, 1884 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1884), pp. 50-51.

> the grass [was] mowed twice, a new wharf, 55 feet front by 25 feet deep, with an approach 25 feet long by 19 feet broad, together with a drift boom 71 feet long to protect the same from floating logs and drift-wood, was completed, a barbed-wire fence was also constructed to protect the levee and grounds from cattle. There was also purchased a cistern for use of ordnance sergeant at this fort. Two stone platforms for 15-inch guns were also completed during the year.[67]

Similar operations took place in 1886; new concrete platforms for the 15-inch guns replaced old ones made of wood and concrete, additions to the levee were made, and a new dwelling was constructed for the ordnance sergeant in charge of the post. In 1887 plans were made to install a sixteen-mortar battery, yet only forty-two pieces of ordnance were mounted in the post as of June, 1890.[68]

12. Preparations during the Spanish-American War

A plan taken of Fort Jackson in December, 1896, showed that many of the old cannon platforms had become rotten with age and that nineteen 15-inch Rodman guns and two 13-inch mortars all badly mounted, constituted the armament.[69] A changing world situation, however,

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67. "Report of the Chief of Engineers," October 16, 1885, in Report of the Secretary of War, 1885 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1885), p. 44.

68. "Report of the Chief of Engineers," October 28, 1886, in Report of the Secretary of War, 1886 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1886), p. 44; "Report of the Chief of Engineers," October 22, 1887, in Report of the Secretary of War, 1887 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1887), p. 11. Report of Heavy Ordnance, Fort Jackson, 1889, 1890. NA, RG 77. Cartographic Archives Division, Drawer 255, Sheet 17-7½. The mortars were to be clustered in four groups of four in the battery, which subscribed in construction and appearance to the Endicott prototype. See "Plan and Sections of Mortar Battery for sixteen 12-inch rifled Mortars. . .," December 19, 1892. NA, RG 77. Cartographic Archives Division, Drawer 88, Sheet 86A. This battery was never built.

69. "Plan of Fort Jackson showing condition of work," December 31, 1896. NA, RG 77. Cartographic Archives Division, Drawer 255, Sheet 17-10.

coupled with technological advances in weaponry, brought a brief revival of activity at the post. Deteriorating relations with Spain in the mid-1890s prompted construction of two large concrete batteries for modern artillery. On the river bank above the post Battery Millar was to contain two heavy calibred weapons, while inside Fort Jackson on the parade Battery Ransom was built on a foundation of thick pilings. In 1896 and 1897 two large hydraulically-operated disappearing guns were mounted in Battery Ransom. In 1898, when the Spanish-American War broke out, Fort Jackson again defended the strategic Mississippi approach to New Orleans. During the conflict the river below Forts Jackson and St. Philip was mined; patrol boats kept track of the explosive devices, which were ordered removed on August 16, 1898. All but six of the mines were recovered.[70]

By late 1898 the fort was better armed than it had been in many years. The water battery east of the post mounted three 15-inch Rodman guns. In the covered way batteries were two 15-inch Rodmans, while six 10-inch Rodmans were placed elsewhere in the covered way. In Fort Jackson the barbette positions facing the river were occupied by five 100-pounder Parrott guns and eleven 10-inch Rodmans. In the casemates, which were not all occupied, there were sixteen 10-inch Rodmans mounted on iron carriages, along with nine 24-pounder flank howitzers and two 13-inch mortars on iron carriages. The new battery on the parade held two 8-inch breech-loading rifles, model 1896, mounted on disappearing

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70. Landry, "History of Forts Jackson and St. Philip," p. 85; "Report of the Chief of Engineers," September 28, 1899, in Report of the Secretary of War 1899 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1899), pp. 32-33. Batteries Millar and Ransom were formally named in 1903. Battery Millar honored Captain James F. Millar, Fourteenth Infantry, who was killed in action with Apache Indians at Cottonwood Springs, Arizona, March 22, 1866. Battery Ransom honored Colonel Truman B. Ransom, Ninth Infantry, killed September 13, 1847, at Chapultepec, Mexico. General Order No. 78, May 25, 1903. General Orders and Circulars, Adjutant General's Office, 1903 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1903).

carriages.[71] In 1899 the detached battery for the two 15-pounder rapid fire guns was finished, and the weapons were emplaced in it by late 1901.[72]

13. Last Years of the Post

Fort Jackson saw no action in the Spanish-American War, and thereafter resumed its marginal status. Early in the twentieth century it became a "subpost" of Jackson Barracks, located just below New Orleans. All armaments, excepting the two 8-inch disappearing guns and two 15-inch Rodmans, were removed from the post by late 1901.[73] An ordnance sergeant performed the routine duties of caretaker. In 1908 Sergeant Marius Petersen was assigned that task and he remained until 1914.[74] In that year the Corps of Engineers generated a study of the delta area fortifications in which it suggested possible retention of the works as national monuments:

> To restore them to their original condition would, even if possible, entail a large expenditure of money. To cut down trees and brush, and to preserve such parts of the old structures that are still left should, however, be comparatively an inexpensive task. It is recommended, if the Department decides to retain these old fortifications as national monuments, that sufficient funds be appropriated or allotted to establish fences, meets and bounds, and to cut down trees, brush and

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71. "Fort Jackson, showing condition of armament, December 31, 1898." NA, RG 77. Cartographic Archives Division, Drawer 255, Sheet 17-15; "Report of the Chief of Engineers," September 29, 1898, in Report of the Secretary of War, 1898 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1898), pp. 28-29. See also Reports of Heavy Ordnance, Fort Jackson, December 31, 1898, and December 31, 1899. NA, RG 77. Cartographic Archives Division, Drawer 255, Sheets 17-16 and 17-18.

72. "Fort Jackson, showing condition of armament, December 31, 1899." NA, RG 77. Cartographic Archives Division, Drawer 255, Sheet 17-17; "Armament Sketch: Fort Jackson, La., showing condition Secember 31st 1901." NA, RG 77. Cartographic Archives Division, Drawer 255, Sheet 17-21.

73. "Armament Report for year ending December 31, 1901, Fort Jackson, La." NA, RG 77. Cartographic Archives Division, Drawer 255, Sheet 17-22.

74. Post Returns, Fort Jackson, April, 1910-December, 1914. NA, Microfilm M617, Roll 521.

rank grass, and to restore such of the old structures that can still possibly be saved.[75]

The report further recommended that the yearly sum of $500 be expended for the services of a caretaker at Fort Jackson.[76]

During World War I the post was used as a training facility, and in 1920 Fort Jackson was finally abandoned by the military. On March 12, 1926, Congress authorized the sale of the post and reservation, now designated surplus property. The land was purchased on November 9, 1927, by a New Orleans photographer, Herbert J. Harvey, who desired to keep the fort intact and parcel out the surrounding lands to area farmers.[77] From then until the 1960s, however, Fort Jackson deteriorated badly and became overrun with weeds, mud, and snakes. In 1960 it was donated by Harvey to Plaquemines Parish. In that year the Department of the Interior recognized the old post, designating both it and Fort St. Philip as National Landmarks of historic importance. In 1961 the Plaquemines Parish Commission Council, under the leadership of Judge Leander H. Perez, undertook to clean up and restore Fort Jackson and develop it into a historical park for the benefit of visitors. It proved to be a major project, involving the construction of a new levee around the fort and the installation of an automatic pumping station to remove the water, after which tons of mud were removed, the structures cleaned, a parking lot and access road built, and repairs made to the scarp and casemates. On May 12-13, 1962, the parish dedicated Fort Jackson, officially recognizing the post's long history and contributions to the local

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75. Memorandum, District Engineer Officer, New Orleans, to the Chief of Engineers, on the subject of "Historical permanent fortifications in the United States," August 14, 1915. NA, RG 77. Correspondence File, 1894-1923, file 96697, enclosure 39. (Hereafter cited as "Historical permanent fortifications.")

76. Ibid.

77. Dixon, "Fort Jackson was a Mighty River Bastion," p. 13; Landry, "History of Forts Jackson and St. Philip," p. 86; Federal Writers' Program, Louisiana: A Guide to the State (Rev. ed.; New York: Hastings House, 1971), p. 554.

region, the state, and to the nation.[78] Fort Jackson was entered on the National Register of Historic Places on October 15, 1966.

B. Fort St. Philip

1. Blacks at the Fort

Fort Jackson and Fort St. Philip continued to be jointly administered, with the former the headquarters post, following their return to federal control on Farragut's victory. As they had at Fort Jackson, blacks played a significant role at Fort St. Philip during the next few years. Early on, contraband blacks worked for nothing at the post because General Butler refused to pay them, even though it was well within his power and discretion to do so.[79] After the capture of New Orleans the number of contrabands at Fort St. Philip swelled to several hundred. They were a curiosity to many of the white soldiers. Wrote one observer, a stranger to black culture:

> The Dr. & I went to one of their prayer meetings the other night. I wish I could give you some idea of a nigger meeting, but it's no use to try. Perhaps you might think that some of the newspaper take-offs are exaggerated, but, as the Doc said, "the half has not been told." But however strange & uncouth their services may be, they certainly seem to be very much in earnest.
>
> Some big nigger is praying perhaps. He kneels on the ground & pours out a stream of words as fast as he can utter them, or rather sing them, for the voice rises & falls almost in the cadence of a rude song, the congregation all accompanying his voice, the men in a groaning voice & the women & children in all sorts of wailings & whinings, & sometimes sending up an extra shout or yell. During the prayer all are kneeling or crouching on the ground. The prayer over, they all rise to sing, the leader "deacons" it out--one line at a time in his sing-song & at the top of his voice & the whole congregation sing in the most intensified hard-shell twang they can possibly attain. Frequently the leader makes up his hymn as he goes along, the matter being very simple & the english as barbarous as you can imagine. But you must see it to appreciate it.[80]

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78. Dixon, "Fort Jackson was a Mighty River Bastion," pp. 13-14.

79. Ripley, Slaves and Freedmen in Civil War Louisiana, p. 43.

80. Simeon A. Evans to Mother, August 21, 1862. Simeon A. Evans Letters, 1862-1863. Department of Archives and Manuscripts, Louisiana State University.

2. Routine Garrison Life

Eventually most of the blacks departed, and Fort St. Philip settled into a military routine. Sometimes rumors arose that the fort was about to come under attack, and occasionally parties went out to break up Rebel companies reportedly forming in the vicinity or to plunder the countryside.[81] But for the most part the soldiers stayed in garrison and contended with the weather and the daily monotony. Some sickness occurred; "Our men are all coming down with the shakes," wrote one man. "I have not had them yet. . . ."[82] Hospital stores, however, were easily obtainable from New Orleans.[83] Young Lieutenant Simeon Evans wrote his family that he had carved a picture frame from part of the stump that had anchored the chain aross the Mississippi.[84] Days seemingly passed slowly with little activity during this period. As Evans reported, "There is nothing new going on here. The routine of camp to garrison life is about the same from day to day & from month to month."[85]

Living conditions at Fort St. Philip, at least for the officers, were comfortable enough. As Evans informed his mother,

> I live in a very respectable story & a half house on the bank of the river so that I can see everything passing up & down. The Dr & I occupy one of the front rooms for office & sleeping room. The other rooms of the main house are occupied for the dispensary, Dining room & sleeping rooms for the attendants. In the back part of the house is the kitchen, wash room, store rooms & room for the niggers of which we have five. Three women & two men. There is a piazza or gallery as they call it

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81. Evans to Mother, August 12, 21, 1862; September 9, 20, 1862. Evans Letters.

82. Evans to Mother, August 12, 1862. Evans Letters.

83. Evans to Mother, September 29, 1862. Evans Letters.

84. Evans to Mother, August 21, 1862. Evans Letters.

85. Evans to Mother, November 3, 1862. Evans Letters.

> across the front facing the river & one all around the back or kitchen part. The kitchen is connected with the new hospital by a walk three feet from the ground (in summer, & water in spring). Every thing about the hospital is well regulated & neat. We have good ventilation, good moss mattresses, iron bedsteads, mosquito bars, & good facilities for bathing in the building. All slops from house & hospital are drained into the moat & I make it a matter of personal supervision to see that the grounds, buildings, bedding, clothes & patients are kept neat & clean & have plenty of black help to do what I want.[86]

After General Thomas W. Sherman's visit of inspection in February, 1863, events picked up, for orders were given to stop "all vessels" on the river to insure that they had permission to pass. Strict constructionists took this to include federal craft, and for several days river traffic was backed up considerably.[87] Nonetheless, the directive had the effect of awakening the garrisons of Fort Jackson and Fort St. Philip. "We have detained two schooners with English colors bound to Matamoras, Mexico, loaded with boots, shoes, blankets &c for the rebel army," wrote Simeon Evans from Fort St. Philip. "How long this trade has been carried on nobody knows."[88]

The garrison was also expected to develop proficiency in handling the guns of the fort. In a directive of September 28, 1863, troops at all the New Orleans defenses were to become perfected at the manual, then practice with blank cartridges to become familiar with the sound, and finally perform with live rounds for accuracy. "All lines of approach by which the enemy are likely to . . . assail a work should be carefully measured . . . and practiced upon with artillery where it can be done safely." Commands were ordered to drill twice daily, at 8 A.M. and 3:30 P.M., for four hours.[89] At the same time, the garrisons were ordered to

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86. Evans to Mother, November 25, 1862. Evans Letters.

87. Evans to Mother, February 17, 1863. Evans Letters.

88. Ibid.

89. Special Order No. 112, Headquarters Defenses of New Orleans, September 28, 1863. NA, RG 393. General and Special Orders, Fort Jackson and Fort Pike, 1863-1870.

maintain the fortifications in the best condition. Officers and men were directed to keep off the parapet and glacis. No horses or shelter tents were to be permitted on the terreplein. All slopes were to be kept free of weeds and brush and were to be mowed monthly. "The Army Regulations referring to the care of fortifications will be rigorously observed." At Fort St. Philip steps across the ditch were ordered removed, with "all ingress and egress [to] be through the Sally Port across the drawbridge." Also, the guard house situated on the glacis was to be dismantled, and "the spouts used as urrinals [sic] along the magistral of the scarp will be removed and sinks be confined to the banks of the river."[90]

3. Changing Commands in the Mid- and Late 1860s

Fort St. Philip, like Fort Jackson, was garrisoned by units of the Thirty-first Massachusetts in 1862. Late that year these troops were replaced by Companies A, B, E, G, H, and I of the Thirteenth Maine, along with black artillerymen of the First Louisiana Heavy Artillery. Major Abernathy Grover commanded the post. In December the Maine soldiers were replaced by six companies of the Fifth Regiment Corps d'Afrique, Colonel Charles A. Hartwell, commanding. In August, 1863, Companies A, D, F, and I, Fourth Regiment, Corps d'Afrique, were also stationed with the artillerymen at Fort St. Philip.[91] During the short-lived insurrection at Fort Jackson on December 9, 1863, the blacks at Fort St. Philip did not mutiny. On hearing the firing across the river, Colonel Hartwell caused a "long roll" to be beat on the drums which brought his soldiers out under arms and ready for action. Hartwell dismissed the troops once the firing at Fort Jackson had ceased.[92] Some

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90. Special Order No. 241, Headquarters Dept. of the Gulf, New Orleans, September 26, 1863. NA, RG 393, General and Special Orders, Fort Jackson and Fort Pike, 1863-1870.

91. Post Returns, Fort Jackson, October, 1862; January, 1863; Fort St. Philip, October, 1862-March, 1864. NA, Microfilm M617, Rolls 521, 1074.

92. Hartwell to Post Adjutant, Fort Jackson, December 9, 1863. NA, RG 393. Fort Jackson, LR.

of the Fort St. Philip soldiers slipped out of the post a few weeks later and marauded "up the coast on or about the night of Jan. 6/64, during which a woman was seriously wounded by a Musket ball." Five artillerymen and one infantryman were subsequently arrested and court martialed for their participation in the deed.[93]

In the weeks following the disturbance at Fort Jackson the troops of the Corps d'Afrique were relieved and both posts were occupied by various units of the Ninety-first New York and the Fourth Wisconsin Heavy Artillery. In March and April, 1864, however, black troops returned to Fort St. Philip.[94] By July the post held Companies A, B, C, D, E, F, G, H, I, and K, Seventy-seventh U.S. Infantry (colored) plus Company A of the Seventh U.S. Heavy Artillery (colored). The number of these units actually at the fort fluctuated over the next few months. In December, 1864, the artillery unit was replaced by Companies B, D, E, and F, Tenth U.S. Heavy Artillery (colored), and in January, 1865, the Seventy-seventh troops departed.[95] For a brief time in that year four companies of the Eleventh Heavy Artillery (colored) garrisoned the post, but for most of the time through 1866 one or two units of the Tenth manned Fort St. Philip.[96]

In January and February, 1867, Companies G and K, Twentieth U.S. Infantry garrisoned the fort, joined in March by Companies D and F of the all-black Thirty-ninth U.S. Infantry. From May, 1867, through March, 1869, Company D of the Thirty-ninth garrisoned Fort St. Philip. Then in April, 1869, Companies D, F, and G, Thirty-ninth, were consolidated with three companies of the Fortieth Infantry to constitute

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93. Post Returns, Fort St. Philip, January, 1864. NA Microfilm M617, Roll 1074.

94. Post Returns, Fort Jackson, January-June, 1864. NA, Microfilm M617, Roll 521.

95. Post Returns, Fort St. Philip, July, 1864-January, 1865. NA, Microfilm M617, Roll 521.

96. Post Returns, Fort St. Philip, February, 1865-October, 1866. NA, Microfilm M617, Roll 521.

the Twenty-fifth Infantry, a black unit.[97] One company of the Twenty-fifth occupied the fort until December, 1869, when the new regiment was reassigned to Texas. Early in 1870 Companies I and K, Nineteenth Infantry, took station at Fort St. Philip. By September, only Company A was assigned to the fort, remaining on duty there until July, 1871.[98]

4. Disease Strikes the Fort

During the postwar years sickness was common at Fort St. Philip. Several cases of smallpox had occurred early in 1864, and one black soldier died from the disease. Troops stationed at the fort escaped the yellow-fever epidemic that struck New Orleans in 1867. The sickness was apparently introduced by a brig arriving from Havana July 1, and the fever first appeared at the quarantine station a few miles above the forts.[99] The black troops experienced some disease, however, notably diarrhea and malaria, among lesser maladies, in 1868 and 1869.[100]

5. New Post Structures

Fort St. Philip was valued at $1,510,000 in 1866.[101] Throughout the early postwar years soldiers at the fort labored to keep it in serviceable condition. Because the post had not been heavily damaged by Farragut's fleet, it generally was pronounced as being in good to excellent shape. In February, 1864, new barracks, kitchens, and officer quarters were completed and the old quarters "put in thorough repair." An underwater

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97. Post Returns, Fort St. Philip, March, 1867-April, 1869. NA, Microfilm M617, Roll 521.

98. Post Returns, Fort St. Philip, May, 1867-July, 1871. NA, Microfilm M617, Roll 521.

99. Post Returns, Fort St. Philip, February, 1864. NA, Microfilm M617, Roll 1074; Surgeon General's Office, Report on Epidemic Cholera and Yellow Fever, pp. vii, 109.

100. "Report on Barracks and Hospitals," p. 173.

101. New Orleans Times, October 12, 1866.

telegraph cable was laid between the post and Fort Jackson.[102] In 1867 and 1868 work consisted of repairing and building new levees, building a magazine and seventeen platforms for the lower battery, modifying parapets, terrepleins, and breast-height walls, and repairing the drawbridge.[103] Only slight repairs were completed in 1869 and 1870, although plans were being made to build a barbette battery for 15-inch guns, 12-inch rifles, and several mortars.[104]

A description of Fort St. Philip after its evacuation by troops in the latter year provides some details of the post and its structures:

> There are no suitable quarters provided for garrison inside the fort. One wooden building is used for barracks, 88 by 25 feet, with a porch, 9 feet wide, running the length of the building in front and rear. The barrack-room is 74 feet long by 24 feet wide, 14 feet from the floor to the eaves, and about 19 feet from the floor to the ridge. There are two rooms at one end, 12 by 9 feet, with a corridor between them, 12 by 5 1/3 feet. Inclusive there are fifteen windows, each 7 1/3 by 3 1/2 feet, and five doors, 8 by 3 2/3 feet; a ridge ventilator about 50 feet long by 3 1/2 feet in height, and twelve base ventilators, (registers,) afford an ample circulation of air. Warmed by stoves burning wood.
>
> These barracks were intended for occupation by one full company, (100 men,) but as companies are rarely or never full, that number is seldom quartered in them. For 50 men there is an air space of about 560 cubic feet for each. At present Fort St. Philip is not garrisoned, and there is consequently no bedding in the quarters. There are no water-closets; sinks

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102. Post Returns, Fort St. Philip, February, 1864. NA Microfilm M617, Roll 1074.

103. "Report of the Chief of Engineers," October 21, 1867, in Report of the Secretary of War, 1867, p. 14; "Report of the Chief of Engineers," October 20, 1868, in Report of the Secretary of War, 1868, p. 19. See "Fort St. Philip, La., Plan and Sections showing parapet, Terreplein and Armament as Modified Jan. 15, 1867." NA, RG 77. Cartographic Archives Division. Drawer 89, Sheet 28.

104. "Report of the Chief of Engineers," October 25, 1869, in Report of the Secretary of War, 1869, p. 18; "Report of the Chief of Engineers," October 25, 1870, in Report of the Secretary of War, 1870, p. 26.

built over the moat. The kitchen and mess-room are in a detached wooden building about 15 yards from the barracks, 50 by 20 1/4 feet, with a porch in front, 50 by 5 1/2 feet.

The officers' quarters are two new wooden buildings, of equal size, 45 feet in length by 25 feet 3 inches in width, built in cottage style. There are porches in front and rear of the buildings and of the same length, by 9 feet 7 inches wide. Each building contains four rooms, each 17 feet 10 inches in length by 11 feet 9 inches in width, and 13 feet 9 inches in height. A hall, 24 by 9 feet, divides each building into two equal parts. There are no offices or store-houses. Supplies are obtained from Fort Jackson.

The guard-house is a small frame building, situated on the bank of the river, 18 1/2 by 14 feet, with four windows and one door, and divided into two rooms of nearly equal size. The hospital is precisely similar in its main details to the one at Fort Jackson. No bakery, laundry, school-house or chapel, nor stables. Water is obtained from four overground cisterns, each capable of holding about 5,000 gallons. No means of extinguishing fire. Natural surface drainage pretty good. No artificial drains or sewers.[105]

There were no storehouses at Fort St. Philip. Supplies arrived at Fort Jackson from a depot at New Orleans and were transported across the river to the post.[106]

6. Big Guns Present, 1865-1897

The number of artillery pieces at Fort St. Philip dropped sharply during the decade after the war. Whereas in January, 1865, there were 100 pieces mounted in the post, within three years that figure had fallen to sixty. And in the fall of 1875 the fort maintained only sixteen

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105. Report on Barracks and Hospitals, p. 172. A further description of the hospital stated that it consisted of "one new frame building, 135 by 25 feet, lathed and plastered--accommodation for twenty-five patients." Outline Description of U.S. Military Posts and Stations in theYear 1871, p. 57. See also Marcy, Outline Description of the Posts and Stations, p. 238.

106. Marcy, Outline Description of the Posts and Stations, p. 238.

mounted pieces, some on worthless carriages (two 15-inch Rodman guns, eight 10-inch Rodmans, four 100-pounder Parrott guns, and two 13-inch mortars). Eleven more guns were available but not mounted on carriages. In 1889 and 1897 the ordnance complement was virtually the same.[107]

7. Development in the 1870s, 1880s, and 1890s

No construction occurred at Fort St. Philip in 1871, despite recommendations from the Board of Engineers for the barbette battery. In 1872 $37,500 was appropriated for commencing this work and arrangements were completed to hire about 100 civilian laborers and purchase the requisite tools and materials for the construction. Five concrete magazines and the parapet of a twelve-gun battery were largely completed along the front of the post, between the two water batteries flanking the structure.[108] Much of this work was finished under similar appropriations in 1873 and 1874, and parts of the old counterscarp and ditch were demolished and removed from in front of the fort so that gun emplacements could be erected. In 1874 five magazine-traverses were mostly completed along with the parapet and breast-height wall in the

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107. "Report of Heavy Ordnance, Fort St. Philip, January 31, 1865. NA, RG 77. Cartographic Archives Division, Drawer 255, Sheet 20-1; Report of Heavy Ordnance, Fort St. Philip, June 30, 1867. NA, RG 77. Cartographic Archives Division, Drawer 255, Sheet 20-3; Report of Heavy Ordnance, Fort St. Philip, October 22, 1875. NA, RG 77. Cartographic Archives Division, Drawer 255, Sheet 20-6. By February, 1865, the armament in the fort and its exterior batteries was reduced to forty-two pieces as guns were drawn off to be mounted elsewhere. Some ordnance was later returned to the post. "Fort St. Philip, La. Sketch showing state of Armament, Feb. 1st. 1865." NA, RG 77. Cartographic Archives Division. Drawer 89, Sheet 25.

108. "Report of the Chief of Engineers," October 20, 1871, in Report of the Secretary of War, 1871, p. 23; "Report of the Chief of Engineers," October 19, 1872, in Report of the Secretary of War, p. 21. The progress of this work can be seen in two 1873 plats: "Fort St. Philip." NA, RG 77. Cartographic Archives Division, Drawer 259, Sheet 99; and "Fort St. Philip." NA, RG 77. Cartographic Archives Division, Drawer 255, Sheet 20-5.

lower battery. Workmen graded and sodded the slopes of the upper battery, and tore down two old magazines and a redan on the north front of the fort.[109] Similar projects took place in 1875 and 1876, and in the latter year three more magazines were built, the foundation of the salley port improved, the wharf extended thirty-two feet, and the reservation re-surveyed.[110]

After 1876 work halted at Fort St. Philip as no further funds were appropriated for maintenance of the post. Yearly requests for $25,000 to complete and repair the exterior batteries went unheeded from 1877 to 1883.[111] The next year Major Amos Stickney, Corps of Engineers, reported on developments at the post:

> During the past fiscal year the grass was cut in the fort and willows were cut on the batture outside of the fort. All shot and shell were moved and piled, eight new shot-beds were constructed, three repaired. A number of guns, carriages,

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109. "Report of the Chief of Engineers," October 20, 1873, in Report of the Secretary of War, 1873, pp. 22-23; "Report of the Chief of Engineers," October 20, 1874, in Report of the Secretary of War, 1874, p. 27.

110. "Report of the Chief of Engineers," October 18, 1875, in Report of the Secretary of War, 1875, p. 26; "Report of the Chief of Engineers," October 21, 1876, in Report of the Secretary of War, 1876, p. 27. The survey resulted from the request of a Mrs. Smith, whose land adjoined that of the military reservation and who was concerned because the wooden posts marking the 1842 boundaries had all rotted away. The boundary was re-run and marked with granite monuments. Captain C.W. Howell to Brigadier General A.A. Humphreys, February 25, 1876. NA, RG 77. Land Papers (Louisiana, General), 115. Details fo the survey, during which local landholders offered little cooperation, are in Albert G. Blanchard, Civil Engineer, to Major C.W. Howell, April 15, 1876. NA, RG 77 Land Papers (Louisiana, General) 469, encl. 2. For graphics of the survey, see "Plan of the Survey of Sn. 11 . . . T. 19.S. . . . R. 17.W., S.E. District of Louisiana, known as Fort Saint Philip Reserve . . . made in March 1876. . . ." NA, RG 77. Cartographic Archives Division, Drawer 89, Sheet 39.

111. See Reports of the Chief of Engineers for 1877-1883, in the appropriate Reports of the Secretaries of War, 1877-1883.

> and chassis were blocked up, and the fort was generally cleaned of brick, stones, wood, &c., which were lying scattered about the work. Ditches and drains were dug and cleaned out, and bridges repaired temporarily. A new levee was built in front of the old one from the upper end of the reservation to where the back levee begins, and from this point to the lower end of the reservation part of the old front levee was repaired. The back levee was rebuilt. A fence of barbed wire will be constructed to keep cattle from passing along the river front and on the levee.[112]

In 1885 another wharf was built and the usual maintenance performed looking to Fort St. Philip's "protection, preservation, and repair." And a dwelling for the ordnance sergeant charged with watching the post was erected in 1886.[113]

Even less development occurred at the fort in the late 1880s, although in 1887 a battery for two disappearing guns was proposed.[114] By 1896 construction had started on emplacements for these weapons, 10-inch breech-loading rifles, at a cost of over $68,000.[115] This work was supervised by First Lieutenant Charles S. Riche, of the Corps of Engineers, who headed a round-the-clock work force. His staff consisted of Assistant Engineer C.A. Miner, construction supervisor; Overseer J. I. Conklin, who directed the work shift between midnight and noon;

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112. "Report of the Chief of Engineers," October 15, 1884, in Report of the Secretary of War, 1884, p. 51.

113. "Report of the Chief of Engineers," October 16, 1885, in Report of the Secretary of War, 1885, p. 44; "Report of the Chief of Engineers," October 28, 1886, in Report of the Secretary of War, 1886, p. 44; Major James W. Scully to Chief Quartermaster, Department of the East, June 10, 1884. NA, RG 92. File 3075 (QM Consolidated). Inspection Report, 1884.

114. "Report of the Chief of Engineers," October 22, 1887, in Report of the Secretary of War, 1887, p. 11.

115. "Report of the Chief of Engineers," September 29, 1896, in Report of the Secretary of War, 1896 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1896), p. 19. See "Plan of Disappearing Gun Battery, Fort St. Philip, La.," September, 1896. NA, RG 77. Cartographic Archives Division, Drawer 89, Sheet 51-1.

Overseer R.Y. Briggs, in charge from noon to midnight; Overseer R.O. Sweeney, Jr., responsible for iron and steel work; and Draftsman S.H. Lea, responsible for drafting battery plans.[116] The battery went up quickly, but the placement of the platforms was delayed because of soil subsidence.[117] Lieutenant Riche was reassigned in June and Fort St. Philip's farewell to him was a sumptuous affair:

> The large mess room was handsomely decorated for the occasion and a most elaborate supper was spread. The health of Lieut. Riche was eloquently and feelingly proposed and drank with all the honors usual to such occasions and his modest replay was received by all present with great applause.[118]

Riche was well liked, both by his employees and by the residents around Fort St. Philip. "His untiring energy as displayed in the construction of the new battery . . . is evidence of his great ability as an engineer."[119]

8. Building New Batteries

From the 1870s on, Fort St. Philip had mounted only sixteen or seventeen weapons.[120] In 1898 the 10-inch guns were mounted in the new battery and an electric power plant was finished in the lower water battery. Work on additional armaments followed in response to the War with Spain, and by that autumn emplacements were being completed for two 8-inch disappearing guns, two 8-inch breech-loading rifles, and two

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116. Army and Navy Journal, February 13, 1897.

117. "Report of the Chief of Engineers," September 30, 1897, in Report of the Secretary of War, 1897 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1897), pp. 18-19.

118. Army and Navy Journal, June 19, 1897.

119. Ibid.

120. "Extract from Annual Report for 1889, Fort St. Philip." NA, RG 77. Cartographic Archives Division, Drawer 255, Sheet 20; Report of Heavy Ordnance, Fort St. Philip. NA, RG 77. Cartographic Archives Division, Drawer 255, Sheet 20-15.

4.7-inch Armstrong rapid-fire guns.[121] The battery for the 10-inch disappearing guns stood almost 250 yards northeast of the old fort. Adjoining the southwest side of that battery was the structure to contain the two 8-inch disappearing guns. A temporary battery, later made permanent, for the 4.7-inch rapid-fire guns was erected off the southwest corner of Fort St. Philip. Also under construction early in 1899 was a battery to mount two 15-pounder rapid-fire guns (a project entailing the demolition of gun emplacements erected in front of the fort a few years earlier), and another battery, slightly northeast of the preceding, to hold two 8-inch breech-loading rifles. These structures were all later given names, respectively, of Batteries Pike, Forse, Ridgely, Scott, and Brooke.[122] Other projects in 1899 involved construction of searchlight and electrical facilities, installation of temporary telephone communication with Fort Jackson, erection of concrete walks, placement of electric lights

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121. "Report of the Chief of Engineers," September 29, 1898, in Report of the Secretary of War, 1898, pp. 28-29; "Proposed Battery for Two 8 inch B.L. Steel Rifles on U.S. Disappearing Carriage. Fort St. Philip, La." July 31, 1897. NA, RG 77. Cartographic Archives Division, Drawer 89, Sheet 62-1.

122. See "Plan of Fort Saint Philip, Showing Condition of Armament Dec. 31, 1897." NA, RG 77. Cartographic Archives Division, Drawer 255, Sheet 20-14; "Fort Saint Philip, Showing Condition of Armament, Dec. 31, 1898." NA, RG 77. Cartographic Archives Division, Drawer 255, Sheet 20-16; "Armament Sketch: Fort Saint Philip, La., showing condition December 31st 1900." NA, RG 77. Cartographic Archives Division, Drawer 255, Sheet 20-18; Dave D. Davis, John D. Hartley, and Ruth Wiens Henderson, "An Archaeological and Historic Survey of the Lowermost Mississippi River" (unpublished draft manuscript dated 1979, Corps of Engineers, New Orleans District), p. 120. These batteries were named in 1903. Battery Pike honored Brigadier General Zebulon M. Pike, killed in action in 1813. Battery Forse was named for Major Albert G. Forse, First Cavalry, killed July 1, 1898, at San Juan, Cuba. Battery Ridgely honored First Lieutenant Henderson Ridgely, Fourth Infantry, killed November 24, 1847, at Gualaxara Pass, Mexico. Battery Scott was named for First Lieutenant Richard W. Scott, Seventh Infantry, killed November 30, 1817, in action with Seminole Indians at Appalachicola River, Florida. Battery Brooke honored First Lieutenant Francis J. Brooke, Sixth Infantry, killed December 25, 1837, with Seminole Indians at Okeechobee, Florida. General Order No. 78, May 25, 1903. General Orders and Circulars, 1903.

in the batteries of the disappearing guns, and storage of torpedoes in specially prepared casemates.[123]

Construction of new batteries was much more extensive at Fort St. Philip than at Fort Jackson, most likely because the higher and more expansive terrain surrounding that post was more conducive to the dispersed arrangement of Endicott period fortifications. Thus, armament at Fort St. Philip increased toward the turn of the century. Whereas in 1890 there were but sixteen older pieces mounted at the fort, by 1898 the post and its collateral batteries together mounted twenty pieces, including eight modern and rapid-fire weapons.[124] The emergency of war passed quickly, however, and by December, 1900, all of the older ordnance had been removed, leaving only the four disappearing guns and the four rapid-fire guns.[125] These modern weapons required the presence of a garrison of about 187 men and five officers. In 1900 funds were requested to fill in some forty acres around the fort and batteries, including the old moat, to insure the health of the soldiers stationed at Fort St. Philip.[126]

9. Modifications after 1900

At the beginning of the Spanish-American War a detachment of Battery D, First Artillery, was at the post. In May, 1898, Company D, Fifteenth U.S. Infantry, arrived, but departed in July for Tampa, Florida, the embarkation point for troops going to Cuba. Detachment Battery D was augmented by one of Battery C, First Artillery, in the

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123. "Report of the Chief of Engineers," September 28, 1899, in Report of the Secretary of War, 1899, pp. 32-33.

124. "Report of Operations for the month of April, 1890, Fort St. Philip, La." NA, RG 77. Cartographic Archives Division, Drawer 255, Sheet 20-8; Report of Heavy Ordnance, Fort St. Philip, December 31, 1898. NA, RG 77. Cartographic Archives Division, Drawer 255, Sheet 20-17.

125. Report of Heavy Ordnance, Fort St. Philip, December 31, 1900. NA, RG 77. Cartographic Archives Division, Drawer 255, Sheet 20-19.

126. U.S. Congress. House. Improving Military Reservation, Fort St. Philip, La. H. Doc. 508. 56 Cong., 1 Sess., 1900, pp. 1-2.

spring of 1899, and these units served jointly or singly at the fort through January, 1901. Thereafter detachments of Companies 4 and 91, Coasts Artillery Corps garrisoned Fort St. Philip until April, 1914.[127]

More modifications to Fort St. Philip and its batteries were made in 1900, including construction of further electrical power plants and the releveling of the floors in magazines and passageways to prevent dampness.[128] Several older structures stood around the fort, beyond the old brick wall. Those on the west were the artillery headquarters, while to their north stood the commissary building, part of which had functioned as a hospital. In the rear of the fort were quarters for enlisted men and civilian laborers, and those for engineer officers. On the east flank stood a mess and kitchen for engineers and another engineer quarters.[129] Thirty-one frame buildings were erected at the post between 1900 and 1910. These included four two-story officers' quarters, two barracks, three non-commissioned officers' quarters, a new hospital, a post exchange, a mess hall, a headquarters building, several storehouses, and a pumping plant.[130]

Additional gun emplacements were located in 1900-01 for four more 15-pounder rapid-fire guns. These emplacements, collectively known later as Battery Merrill, stood approximately 200 yards northeast of Battery Pike. A range-finder tower for the artillery commander was also begun in 1902 and repairs were made to the levee, damaged by a storm in

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127. Post Returns, Fort St. Philip, April, 1898-April, 1914. NA, Microfilm M617, Rolls 1075 and 1076.

128. "Report of the Chief of Engineers," September 18, 1900, in Report of the Secretary of War, 1900 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1900), pp. 28-29.

129. "Map of Fort St. Philip Reservation, January, 1899." NA, RG 77. Cartographic Archives Division, Drawer 89, Sheet 74-1.

130. Landry, "History of Forts Jackson and St. Philip," p. 85; Davis, Hartley, and Henderson, "Archaeological Survey," pp. 137-38.

August, 1901. Civilian watchmen were employed to care for the torpedo materials stored at the fort.[131]

During this period the one or two detachments of artillery stationed at Fort St. Philip spent most of their days at fatigue and drill. The troops composed units from Jackson Barracks below New Orleans, and the post returns disclose a constant fluidity of movement of personnel, particularly officers, between the two stations. Occasional diversions included saluting the foreign steamers that plied the Mississippi River. At 4:30 P.M., November 21, 1904, the soldiers delivered a seventeen-gun salute to Secretary of War William Howard Taft as he went by on the navy dispatch boat, Dolphin. Numerous military inspectors called on the garrison, too, and a brief visitor was Major George Goethals who later headed the Panama Canal project.[132] Considerable money and effort was spent at this time fixing the old levees and erecting new ones because of increased flooding in the region caused by the private building of levees below the forts.[133]

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131. "Report of the Chief of Engineers," October 1, 1901, in Report of the Secretary of War, 1901 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1901), p. 30; "Report of the Chief of Engineers," September 29, 1902, in Report of the Secretary of War, 1902 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1902), p. 30. Several other emplacements for 15-pounder, 6-inch, and 3-inch rapid fire guns were also built at this time. Ibid. Battery Merrill, named in 1903, honored Captain Moses E. Merrill, Fifth Infantry, who was killed in action September 8, 1847, at Molino del Rey, Mexico. General Order No. 78, May 25, 1903. General Orders and Circulars, 1903.

132. Post Returns, Fort St. Philip, November, 1904, and December, 1905. NA, Microfilm M617, Roll 1076.

133. "Report of the Chief of Engineers," August 1, 1907, in Report of the Secretary of War, 1907 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1907), p. 10; "Report of the Chief of Engineers," September 29, 1908, in Report of the Secretary of War, 1908 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1908), p. 14; "Report of the Chief of Engineers," September 29, 1909, in Report of the Secretary of War, 1909 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1909), p. 15; "Report of the Chief of Engineers," October 14, 1911, in Report of the Secretary of War, 1911, (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1911), pp. 13-14.

In its 1915 report on delta fortifications, the Corps of Engineers noted that Fort St. Philip, considering its past, "is most valuable from a historical standpoint." The report described a recent unsuccessful attempt to tear down one of the old brick scarp walls using dynamite. Some damage to the work occurred, although overall it was seen as being "in a comparatively good state of preservation."[134]

10. World War I and Prohibition

During World War I a few of the old quarters at Fort St. Philip were occupied as the post was irregularly used as a training camp. Some new buildings were also erected at this time, and more than 3,000 feet of six-inch wooden disposal pipe was laid to replace an antiquated system. Other work contemplated at the post was never completed because of the Armistice.[135] By the 1920s the fort was deemed an unnecessary expense and on November 20, 1922, Fort St. Philip was declared surplus property subject to disposal for the public good. Congress approved the sale of the fort on March 4, 1923, and on January 12, 1929, it was purchased by John and Joseph Vela, oyster fishermen, who proceeded to destroy many of the frame structures for the lumber for use in erecting a shrimp cannery.[136] But the business never prospered, and the Velas became involved during Prohibition in smuggling alcohol from Cuba, using Fort St. Philip as their distribution headquarters. In 1935 John Vela and two of his employees were arrested, convicted, and sentenced for violation of the internal revenue laws. Agents had confiscated some 7,500 gallons of smuggled spirits along with three rum-running vessels at the fort. John Vela, moreover, had never finished paying for the property. As a result, the Government threatened to seize Fort St. Philip with the

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134. "Historical permanent fortifications."

135. Landry, "History of Forts Jackson and St. Philip," pp. 85-86; "Here's Historical St. Philip Today," Headquarters Heliogram, No. 126 (August, 1980), p. 8.

136. Landry, "History of Forts Jackson and St. Philip," p. 86; "Military Lands. Fort St Philip." NA, RG 77. Cartographic Archives Division, Drawer 189-La.-2-1.

intention of again selling it to satisfy a jeopardy assessment against Vela.[137]

11. Judge Perez and Fort St. Philip

John Vela retained control of his property, however, and in the early 1960s, after Vela's death, the old fort played a role in a civil rights controversy in southern Louisiana. In October, 1963, Judge Leander H. Perez urged the Plaquemines Parish Commission Council to negotiate a five-year lease of Fort St. Philip with Vela's heirs. He planned to erect a stockade at the remote old post to hold various white and black racial agitators he thought might attempt to integrate the parish. After the agreement was made to rent the property, Perez visited the fort for a personal inspection. He selected the old emplacement for 15-pounder guns--Battery Merrill--as the site for his prison. Work crews from Plaquemines Parish trimmed the weeds and raised an elaborate electric barbed-wire fence around the former battery. Among those activists that might be expected in the parish were Martin Luther King and Malcolm X. Neither appeared. Nonetheless, the commission council adopted a number of ordinances restricting use of public facilities to further discourage demonstrators. The Fort St. Philip compound brought Perez national publicity as the media broadcast the story of the parish's preparations. Whatever Perez's real intention, civil rights organizers were effectively intimidated and stayed clear of Plaquemines Parish.[138]

12. Fort St. Philip Today

Since the 1960s the isolated post has undergone steady deterioration. Today the Fort St. Philip reservation, bordered along its river front by a

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137. Landry, "History of Forts Jackson and St. Philip," p. 86; The Times-Picayune, November 9, 1935.

138. New Orleans States-Item, October 11, 15, 1963; The Times-Picayune, October 12, 16, 1963. Davis, Hartley, and Henderson, "Archaeological and Historic Survey," p. 128. The most complete treatment of this incident is in Glen Jeansonne, Leander Perez, Boss of the Delta (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1977), pp. 279-83.

levee and a sea wall, contains numerous traces of the post's long, colorful history. At the center of the tract lie the brick walls of the original fort built by the Spanish in the 1790s and modified by the Americans in the nineteenth century. Three of the four double-story frame officers' quarters built early in the twentieth century are standing and in 1979 one was occupied by an area family. Nearby stand the post exchange and the pumping plant. Several gun platforms front on the river, along with the Endicott period batteries, all minus their armaments.[139] Presently owned by Frank Ashby of New Orleans, in December, 1960, Fort St. Philip was recognized as a National Historic Landmark, worthy notice for the post that had guarded an entrance to the continent for over 120 years.[140] In October, 1966, the fort was entered on the National Register of Historic Places.

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139. Davis, Hartley, and Henderson, "Archaeological and Historic Survey," pp. 137-38.

140. "Here's Historic St. Philip Today," p. 8.

CHAPTER VIII: FORT PIKE AT THE RIGOLETS

A. Importance of the Site

As another feature of General Bernard's defensive strategy for the region, Fort Pike was erected near the site of old Fort Petite Coquilles to guard the passage known as the Rigolets between Lakes Borgne and Pontchartrain. As early as 1793 the Spanish Governor Carondelet had directed that a fortification be raised there, and an American work later erected on the site proved valuable during Jackson's campaign in 1814-15. As William Darby, one of Jackson's subordinates, later put it,

> Fort Petite Coquilles, at the junction of the Rigolets with Ponchartrain, is one of the most important posts in Louisiana. It is the key to West Florida, and effectually covers one flank of New Orleans. While this excellent position is maintained, it would be extremely difficult for an enemy to get into the rear of the city, and if well constructed, strongly garrisoned, and skillfully commanded, a few places could present a more formidable aspect to a besieging army; the country around devoid of wood, and mostly a morass, would render very hazardous either sudden attack or regular approach.[1]

Petite Coquilles, however, was not completed at the time of the British invasion and, fortunately, its vulnerability was never tested. Soon after the War of 1812 concern for greater security prompted an intense evaluation of the Rigolets defenses, and the decision to erect a new fortification resulted. "The present position," reported Captain James Gadsden, "is objectionable, on account of its being exposed to be bombarded in the rear, its having but a partial command of the head of the Regolets [sic] and to perfect the defence a cooperating battery on the opposite shore . . . would be necessary." Gadsden recommended a position that would both command the pass and make disembarkation and advance of enemy ground forces extremely difficult. He concluded that it would be cheaper to build a new fortification than to modify Petite Coquilles.[2]

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1. Geographical Description of the State of Louisiana, p. 188.

2. Gadsden to Brigadier General Joseph G. Swift, November 10, 1817. NA, RG 77. Entry 221, "Report of the Corps of Engineers, 1812-1823"; "Capt. Gadsden's Plan." 1818. NA, RG 77. Cartographic Division. Drawer 85, Sheet 1.

B. Building Fort Pike

What Gadsden proposed was a fan-shaped work, revetted with brick, with an earthen rampart in front and casemates in the other faces. The fort, built on solid piling, would contain quarters for officers and enlisted men, a guardhouse, powder magazines, and storage facilities.[3] On July 20, 1818, a contract for the work was let by the government to James Bennett and Peter Morte, of Washington, who under direction of the Engineer Corps would construct "a fort or forts, to be constituted of such walls, ditches, embankments, buildings, parts and dimensions . . ." as might be prescribed. Bennett and Morte were to furnish all materials, artisans, and laborers, and were to start work no later than December 1, 1818, and finish no later than December 1, 1821.[4]

The fort at the Rigolets, as the post was early called, was built on the west side of the pass, a mile from its confluence with Lake Pontchartrain. A strong foundation of cypress logs supported a layer of cemented shell. Built like a triangle with a curved base facing the water, its design followed closely Bernard's plan for functional defenses, and as a "crescent battery" was conceived to achieve uniformity of coverage in its front. Before the fort a breakwater was built to help prevent erosion; inner and outer moats surrounded the land sides of the structure.[5] The fort was protected from land attack by a glacis, covered ways, and a high scarp, while a regular bastion and two demibastions flanked its curtains. To ward off attack by water, the planned casemates would hold thirteen cannons covering the pass; each curtain also was to

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3. Ibid.; "Plan of a projected Fort for the defense of Pass-Rigolets. 1817." NA, RG 77. Cartographic Archives Division. Drawer 85, Sheet 11.

4. "Contract made between Joseph G. Swift and James Bennett and Peter Morte, 20th July, 1818." Louisiana Collection, Howard-Tilton Memorial Library, Tulane University. The construction of Fort Wood (Macomb) was also carried out under terms of this contract.

5. Report on Barracks and Hospitals, p. 166; Robinson, American Forts, p. 91.

mount two guns and each flank one more, all mounted in arched, brick casemates. These were to be covered with a thick layer of earth, forming the parapet on which more cannons were to be mounted en barbette. This fort and its sister work at Chef Menteur represented the first American permanent structures reflecting a coalition of thought on land and water defense.[6]

Overall, the curved front of the fort measured about 160 yards in length, while the sides measured approximately 100 yards each. Construction lasted until 1824 and cost $635,000, most of the work being completed under the direction of First Lieutenant William H. Chase, Corps of Engineers. Inside the fort a strong loopholed brick citadel was built to be used as a defensive barracks. This structure ran seventy feet in length and twenty-four in width and was segmented twice to correspond with the curving nature of the front scarp. One story high, the citadel contained casemates that could be used as quarters for enlisted men. This structure, a shot furnace, and a cistern facing the apex of the rear bastion, were the only improvements in the fort. An L-shaped officers' quarters was built in the covered way beyond the moat, facing the rear bastion.[7]

Soon after its occupation by one company of artillery under Captain A.L. Lands in July, 1821, the new post was named Petite Coquilles, a name it retained until November 8, 1827, when it was redesignated Fort Pike, after Brigadier General Zebulon Montgomery Pike, the famed army

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6. Robinson, American Forts, p. 91.

7. "General Bernard's Plan for the Rigolets and Chef Menteur." Undated (1819?). NA, RG 77. Cartographic Archives Division, Drawer 86, Sheet 3. Plat of Fort at Rigolets, 1821. NA, RG 77. Cartographic Archives Division. Drawer 85, Sheet 12; Report of the Hygiene of the United States Army, p. 168; Richard R. Dixon," Fort Pike at the Rigolets," New Orleans Roosevelt Review (undated copy in the Louisiana Collection, Howard-Tilton Library, Tulane University, p. 10. For the citadel, see especially "Plans, Sections & Elevations of the Citadel of Fort Pike," March 27, 1850. NA, RG 77. Cartographic Archives Division, Drawer 85, Sheet 32.

explorer killed in 1813.[8] By late 1821 refinements to the post had been completed, so that it contained storage facilities in its landward walls. These included holds for quartermaster, commissary, and ordnance stores, besides a magazine, guardhouse, and sutler's store.[9] The casemates fronting the Rigolets were finished by October, 1822.[10]

Nevertheless, construction continued on the fort throughout the 1820s as many of its supporting outbuildings had not earlier been erected. Between 1821 and 1834 the brick officers' quarters in the covered way had another story added. Another officers' quarters was built on the rampart of the northwest bastion, while yet a third stood three-quarters of a mile away, on the site of old Petite Coquilles. The post hospital of four rooms was also on that site. The enlisted men's barracks in the citadel consisted of three rooms measuring, respectively, 34½ feet by 17 feet, 37 feet by 17 feet, and 34 3/4 feet by 17 feet. There was also a messroom and a kitchen maintained in a separate building. The commanding officer's office was "a small brick building . . . in good repair." By 1834 the staff department stores were lodged in frame buildings. The bakery and blacksmith's and carpenter's shop were also of frame construction.[11]

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8. Post Returns, Fort Pike, July, 1821. NA Microfilm M617, Roll 906; Report on the Hygiene of the United States Army, p. 168; Francis Paul Prucha, A Guide to the Military Posts of the United States, 1789-1895 (Madison: State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 1964), p. 97; Order of Battle of the United States Land Forces, III, 583.

9. "Plan No. 1. Showing the present state of the Work at the Rigolets, Decbr 31. 1821." NA, RG 77. Cartographic Archives Division, Drawer 133, Sheet 93-2; Plat of Fort at Rigolets, October 1, 1822. NA, RG 77. Cartographic Archives Division, Drawer 85, Sheet 13.

10. Plat of Fort at Rigolets, October 1, 1822. NA, RG 77. Cartographic Archives Division, Drawer 85, Sheet 13.

11. First Lieutenant James A. Chambers to Brigadier General Thomas S. Jesup, December 9, 1834. NA, RG 92. Drawings of these structures prepared in January, 1835, are in NA, RG 77. Cartographic Archives Division, under "Camp Pike, La." One of the best plans of the citadel is in Drawer 85, Sheet 31.

C. Occupying the Fort

1. Early Garrisons and Continuing Construction

Units stationed at the fort in the 1820s and 1830s consisted of Company D, Fourth Artillery, until December, 1821, when replaced by Company F, Fourth Artillery, which remained until the end of 1827. Company G, Second Artillery, garrisoned the post from January, 1828, through December, 1835. It was succeeded by Company A of the Second, which was assigned to the "Cherokee country" in May, 1838. Through August, 1841, and perhaps beyond--the returns appear incomplete--a caretaker crew maintained the fort.[12] Refinements to the post went on through the 1830s. In 1835 one of the rear casemates (which had formerly served in a storage capacity) was converted to contain a unique kind of magazine. According to an inspector,

> It is to be a frame house set upon brick piers, about nine inches high above the permanent of the casemate so as to admit of a circulation of air all around the sides, top & bottom. The embrasure & side arches are built up with masonry, with sufficient openings to serve as ventilators.[13]

In 1839, Chase, now a major, reported that repairs to the arches of the casemates and their embrasures and to the cisterns and the glacis were needed. Traverses and pintles for thirteen barbette guns, called for by the recent armament board, were still to be built. The magazines still posed a problem. "Unless some means are devised not heretofore resorted to," said Chase, "powder cannot be preserved for any length of time in magazines lying contiguous to Rivers & Coasts to the Gulf."[14]

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12. Post Returns, Fort Pike, July 1821-August, 1841. NA, Microfilm M617, Roll 921.

13. Captain Rufus L. Baker to Colonel George Bomford, April 7, 1835. Baker Papers, United States Military Academy Library.

14. Chase to Totten, March 19, 1839. NA, RG 77. LR C277.

2. Seminole Prisoners

Occasionally some excitement broke the tedium of garrison life at Fort Pike. In the late autumn of 1837, for example, a number of Indian and Negro prisoners began arriving at the post from Florida, scene of the then-raging Second Seminole War. One black child died at the fort. By February, 1838, the number confined there had risen to 258. In March they were escorted to New Orleans in the charge of a Marine Corps lieutenant.[15]

3. Changes in the 1840s

On February 9, 1842, President John Tyler signed an Executive Order establishing a military reservation around Fort Pike to embrace all public lands within a 1,200 yard radius of the post. The reserved land encompassed all of Section 19, Township 10 S., Range 15 E., and took in all of the point of land on which the fort and hospital were situated.[16] Throughout the early 1840s much progress was made on Fort Pike. An inspecting officer in 1843 remarked that the post "is now in excellent condition." Leakage of the casemates had been stopped, and with their raised floors they remained dry. "The magazines have been fitted up in a proper manner and are now dry & well adapted for the preservation of powder." In addition, the parapets had been reformed with lime covering and flank howitzer embrasures had been cut in the curtain and flanks of the land fronts.[17] Also during this period the barbette emplacements were being readied to mount heavy armament.

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15. Post Returns, Fort Pike, November, 1837-March, 1838. NA, Microfilm M617, Roll 921.

16. "Military Lands. Louisiana." NA, RG 77. Cartographic Archives Division, Drawer 189, Louisiana-8-1; United States Military Reservations, p. 150.

17. Captain John G. Barnard to Major William H. Chase, March 24, 1843, enclosed in Chase to Totten, April 4, 1843. NA, RG 77. LR C1321.

In 1841 the traverse circles were laid and by 1848 most of the ordnance was apparently mounted.[18] This consisted of forty-nine pieces--twenty-eight 24-pounders, six 12-pounders, fourteen howitzers, and one mortar. In that year copper gutters were affixed over the embrasures so that dripping rain water would not harm the carriages. Other projects entailed painting and minimal repairs because construction funds for Fort Pike were not allowed that year. In April, 1849, the Post Quartermaster requested permission to purchase mosquito netting to cover doors and windows of the quarters. He also asked to build an enclosure around the two cemeteries at the fort because the graves were subjected to disturbance by hogs and cattle roaming the reserve. As of August 11, 1849, Fort Pike was relegated to caretaker status and the troops withdrawn. Nonetheless, the post still figured in national defense concerns and would have been activated in an emergency.[19] In the early 1850s a second story, apparently of frame construction, was added to the citadel.[20]

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18. Major William H. Chase to Colonel Joseph G. Totten, April 18, 1842. NA, RG 77. LR C1052. For details of the barbette batteries and casemate construction, including embrasures, see "Plan of Fort Pike," 1841. NA, RG 77. Cartographic Archives Division, Drawer 85, Sheet 17; "Plan of Casemates at Fort Pike," December 4, 1841. NA, RG 77. Cartographic Archives Division, Drawer 85, Sheet 16; "Plan of Part of Fort Pike," March, 1842. NA, RG 77. Cartographic Archives Division, Drawer 85, Sheet. 18. Earlier, Chase had suggested that Fort Pike could get along sufficiently with only half of its projected armament. Chase to Totten, March 19, 1839. NA, RG 77. LR C277.

19. "Annual Reports of Operations at Forts Pike, Wood, Battery Bienvenue & Tower Dupres for the year ending Sept. 30, 1848." NA, RG 77. LR B4013; Captain John P. J. O'Brien to Major Daniel D. Tompkins, December 7, 1848. NA, RG 92; First Lieutenant Simon S. Fahnestock to Brigadier General Thomas S. Jesup, April 3, 1849. NA, RG 92.

20. "Plans, Sections & Elevations of the Citadel of Fort Pike," March 27, 1850. NA, RG 77. Cartographic Archives Division, Drawer 85, Sheet 32.

D. Fort Pike in the Civil War

1. Abandonment before the War

During the 1840s a succession of artillery and infantry companies served at Fort Pike. In April, 1842, Company F, Third Artillery, was there, but was replaced in June by Company B, Seventh Infantry, under Captain Francis Lee. In August, 1845, this unit was succeeded by Company K, Eighth Infantry, which itself shortly vacated the post, replaced in November, 1845, by Company H, First Artillery. This unit remained at Fort Pike at least through April, 1846. Between November, 1848, and July, 1849, the garrison consisted of Company F, Fourth Artillery, under Captain William P. Bainbridge.[21]

From then until the Civil War Fort Pike was manned by an ordnance sergeant. In August, 1860, Sergeant William Bosworth reported that a severe storm had taken its toll at the post:

> The tileing and slating on the North west end of the citadel was blown off for ten feet from the end. The piling in front of the works is more or less washed away. The abutments of the outside bridge have given away. The small breakwater around the inner ditch has been partially destroyed. The shingling on the breast high walls on the Barbette battery, also the shingling on the glacis walls is giving away, and the old lumber belonging to the Engineer Department was washed away by the tide which was four feet higher than our common high tides, and overflowed the gun rooms. . . . I have had no men here with me for nearly one year, and the post is in very bad order--grass growing over everything.[22]

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21. Post Returns, Fort Pike, April, 1842-July 1849. NA, Microfilm M617, Rolls 921, 922.

22. Bosworth to First Lieutenant Walter H. Stevens, August 17, 1860. NA, RG 77. LR S8614. In September, 1860, an inspector noted that "the Ordnance Sergeant in charge has had but one man, and has not been able to keep grass & weeds mown, or to keep the police of the work generally in any way to compare with its former condition." First Lieutenant Walter H. Stevens to Lieutenant Colonel Rene E. DeRussey, September 12, 1860. NA, RG 77. LR S8616.

And in October another storm did further damage to the post.[23]

2. The Confederates Take Charge

Before Louisiana seceded from the Union state troops seized Fort Pike on January 14, 1861. Garrisoned by Confederates, the post stood guard at the eastern approaches to New Orleans for more than a year. For some time there existed fears that Union gunboats might somehow get through the Rigolets and bombard villages on the shores of Lake Pontchartrain, or that an attempt would be made to capture the city using the route of the British in 1814. Reportedly, men of the First Louisiana Infantry stationed at Fort Pike fashioned a crude state flag from a tablecloth and flaunted it over the post. Three hundred fifty soldiers garrisoned the place, ready to man the thirty-three guns mounted in the fort.[24] Some of this ordnance was likely removed for use elsewhere as needed. That summer an observer passing Fort Pike on Lake Pontchartrain by night recorded this impression:

> By the light of the moon [I] had an imperfect view of this place, and its surroundings. It is situated upon rather an elevated spot, and has several buildings of considerable dimensions, having in from the lake a huge brick wall some 12 or 15 feet in height. A number of camp tents could be seen near the Barracks, which would lead one to the conclusion that the fort is amply provided with men--& mounting (as I learned from the Capt. aboard) 16 heavy guns, and has in its walls port-holes for a number more. Were it not for the almost total absence of shade trees I would have been favorably impressed with its locality.[25]

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23. Bosworth to Brigadier General Joseph E. Johnston, October 6, 1860. NA, RG 77.

24. Secretary of War Joseph Holt to B. Stanton, February 7, 1861, in War of the Rebellion, Series III, Vol. I, pp. 61-62; Dufour, Night the War was Lost, p. 48; Dixon, "Fort Pike," pp. 11, 12.

25. Unidentified writer to Ann E. Spears, July 23, 1861. Ann E. Spears Papers. Department of Archives and Manuscripts, Louisiana State University.

3. Federal Reoccupation

Following passage of Forts Jackson and St. Philip by Farragut's fleet and the capture of New Orleans by Federal forces, Confederate troops in Fort Pike, on orders of Major General Mansfield Lovell, abandoned the post. Before leaving they spiked the guns and burned the carriages so that the ordnance would be temporarily useless to General Butler's advancing army. Some of Butler's men briefly occupied Fort Pike before it was formally re-garrisoned on August 18, 1862, by Companies F, G, and I of the Thirty-first Massachusetts Volunteers under Lieutenant Colonel Charles M. Wheldon.[26] In January, 1863, three companies of the Second Regiment, Louisiana Native Guards, joined the post, and in August the Massachusetts soldiers were transferred to Baton Rouge, leaving six companies of the newly organized Twentieth Infantry, Corps d'Afrique, under Captain Eliot Bridgman, in charge of Fort Pike.[27] During early 1864 Fort Pike became an unofficial assembly point for war refugees from Mississippi who fled their homes before Major General William T. Sherman's rampaging army as it swept through the central part of the state in February and March on its march from Vicksburg to Meridian. At Fort Pike the recent Confederate citizens were welcomed back to the Union fold by black soldiers of the Ninety-first Infantry, six companies of which were stationed there. As of July, 1864, Companies A, B, and C, Seventy-fourth U.S. Infantry (colored), garrisoned Fort Pike, remaining until September, 1865.[28]

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26. Farragut to Assistant Secretary of the Navy Fox, April 26, 1862, in Official Records of the Union and Confederate Navies, Series I, Vol. 18, p. 155; Prucha, Guide to the Military Posts, p. 97; Post Returns, Fort Pike, October, 1862. NA, Microfilm M617, Roll 922.

27. Special Order No. 205, Headquarters, Department of the Gulf, August 20, 1863. NA, RG 393. "General and Special Orders, Fort Jackson and Fort Pike, 1863-1870"; Post Returns, Fort Pike, January, September, 1863. NA, Microfilm M617, Roll 922.

28. New Orleans Times, April 2, 1864; Post Returns, Fort Pike, April, July, August, 1864-September, 1865. NA, Microfilm M617, Roll 922.

4. Troops in Garrison

As peace returned, the troops at Fort Pike began a routine military existence. The post contained nineteen casemated guns and twenty-four arranged in barbette batteries[29] and from October, 1865, through April, 1866, the post was manned by Company L, Tenth U.S. Heavy Artillery (colored), commanded by Captain Erwin F. Barstow. When this unit was transferred to Ship Island it was succeeded by Companies E and G of the Tenth under Major E.P. Loring. These units left in September, 1866, and were replaced in January, 1867, by Company A, First Infantry, and in March by Company C, Thirty-ninth Infantry, under Captain Gaines Lawson. This last unit remained at Fort Pike until December.[30]

For awhile the black soldiers enjoyed fresh produce from a garden on the east side of the Rigolets.[31] This garden failed, probably because of its presence so near a saltwater marsh, and the troops subsisted mainly on salt pork and beans through 1867 and 1868. Scurvy broke out among the men in the latter year, prompting a request from the post surgeon that a quantity of potatoes, onions, and other vegetables be obtained for distribution.[32] A typical day at Fort Pike during this period consisted of this schedule:[33]

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29. Report of Heavy Ordnance, Fort Pike, June 30, 1865. NA, RG 77. Cartographic Archives Division, Drawer 255, Sheet 9-1.

30. Post Returns, Fort Pike, October, 1865-December 1867. NA, Microfilm M617, Roll 922.

31. First Lieutenant Emerson J. Dodge to Lieutenant Colonel A.G. Hall, February 14, 1865. NA, RG 393. "General and Special Orders, Fort Jackson and Fort Pike, 1863-1870."

32. Post Surgeon Alfred C. Girard to Brigadier General Thomas A. McParlin, March 24, 1868. NA, RG 393. Fort Pike LR.

33. "General Orders No. 5. Headquarters, Fort Pike, La., March 30th 1867." NA, RG 393. "General and Special Orders, Fort Jackson and Fort Pike, 1863-1870."

Reveille	at full day-break
Police of Quarters	" 15 minutes after Reveille
Breakfast call	" 7 o'clock A.M.
Sick call	" 7 1/2 " " "
Fatigue call	" 7 1/2 " " "
1st Call-Guard Mounting	" 10 minutes before 9 A.M.
Guard Mounting	at 9 o'clock A.M.
Dinner call	" 12 " M
Retreat	" 15 minutes before sundown
Tattoo	" 8.30 P.M.
Taps	" 9 "

Generally, inspections were held each Sunday.[34]

Black soldiers occupied Fort Pike for most of the remaining years of its existence as a garrisoned post. From January, 1868, until the following year Companies A, C, and K, Thirty-ninth Infantry, were at the fort, replaced in April, 1869, by Company A, Twenty-fifth Infantry, which remained there through April, 1870. Thereafter, until May, 1871, Company F, Nineteenth Infantry, garrisoned Fort Pike.[35]

E. Operations during the Postwar Years

Limited construction took place at Fort Pike in the late 1860s, although a new hospital was begun on the site of old Petite Coquilles in 1868, and a wharf and boathouse were erected in front of the scarp by 1869.[36] Most of the mounted ordnance, consisting of only six 24-pounder iron howitzers, was neglected, and few projects were contemplated other than minor repairs on the post. Most of the casemate and barbette guns

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34. "General Orders No. 16. Headquarters Post of Fort Pike," June 22, 1868. NA, RG 393. "General and Special Orders, Fort Jackson and Fort Pike, 1863-1870."

35. Post Returns, Fort Pike, January, 1868-May, 1871. NA, Microfilm M617, Roll 922.

36. "Sketch showing the Armament of Fort Pike, Rigolets Pass La.," June 30, 1869. NA, RG 77. Cartographic Archives Division, Drawer 259, Sheet 47.

were dismounted and sold.[37] In 1869 the glacis fronting on the Rigolets was partly washed away, through no appropriations were requested to fix it.[38] The Board of Engineers for Fortifications prepared designs to modernize Fort Pike to include placement of several new 10-inch rifled guns, and in 1870 its members requested $24,000 to complete the work. Despite the lack of funds, during the year a new breakwater was built and the old wharf replaced.[39]

A description of Fort Pike published in 1870 presented the following details of its buildings:

> The citadel of the fort is a building 70 feet long by 24 feet deep, two stories high: the lower story is casemated, and contains six divisions, used as kitchens; the upper story is occupied as officers quarters, containing six rooms, each 12 by 24 feet. The three bastions have small frame buildings, used as offices. On the east side of the outer moat are the quarters of the troops, a single-story frame building, 314 by 19 feet, and 11 feet high, running from east to west. At the east end is a part of the commissary store-house; at the west end, a shoemaker's shop. The building is comfortable, well lighted and ventilated, and warmed by two stoves in winter. Air space per man, 400 cubic feet. The men sleep in single, two-story bunks, furnished with bedsack, blankets, and mosquito bars. The company and officers sinks are built on piles, over the outer moat, and are washed by the tide, except at very low water. The kitchens and mess-rooms are separate buildings, parallel with the quarters on the bank of the outer moat, and separated from them by the parade ground. They are temporary buildings, and poorly adapted to their purpose. On the other side of the quarters, running parallel also, are the carpenter shop, bakery, commissary and quartermaster's store-house, and the blacksmith shop. The laundresses'

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37. Ibid.; "Report of the Chief of Engineers," October 20, 1868, in Report of the Secretary of War, 1868, p. 18; Outline Description of U.S. Military Posts and Stations in the Year 1871, p. 50.

38. "Report of the Chief of Engineers," October 25, 1869, in Report of the Secretary of War, 1869, p. 18.

39. "Report of the Chief of Engineers," October 25, 1870, in Report of the Secretary of War, 1870, p. 25.

quarters are built more toward the west, in the swamp, and are miserable shanties, submerged in high water.[40]

The post hospital was described as follows:

> On the site known as the "Spanish Fort" [old Fort Petite Coquilles] is situated the post hospital. It is at a distance of three-quarters of a mile from the fort, and directly on the shore of Lake Pontchartrain. There have been at different intervals hospital buildings at this place, but they were all destroyed by fire or blown down by gales. The present hospital was commenced in 1868, the plan of the same having been previously made by an officer. Neither capacious wards nor ventilation were provided for, the largest room of the house being 15 by 16 feet, the average 15 by 10 feet. Upon the suggestion of the medical officer two additional wings were erected, . . . retaining the original structure as an administration building. The central building is warmed by fireplaces, the wings being supplied with stoves. The ward is ventilated in summer by eight openings, with movable shutters, near the floor, and a raised ridge capable of being shut on the sides by eight boards, hinged, so as to be opened by pulling a cord, and shut by their own weight. . . . The ward contains twelve beds, giving 1,320 cubic feet of air space to each. One wing of the building is fitted up as quarters for the medical officer. There is no bath-room or lavatory. The water-closet is a small building placed over the water and cleansed by the tide.[41]

The guardhouse, a white-washed frame structure measuring 24 feet by 16 feet by 9 feet high, stood on the wharf and was considered "the poorest building at the post" and an "eyesore."[42] The bakery was described as housing a new oven, and the post library as being "in its infancy," but with a good selection of military books and fiction by American and British authors. Water was supplied by twenty-two cisterns positioned about the post, and a condenser converted brackish water from the Rigolets into fresh water. The men bathed twice weekly at a

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40. Report on Barracks and Hospitals, pp. 166-67.

41. Ibid., p. 167.

42. Ibid.

designated beach on Lake Pontchartrain.[43] The health of the troops was generally good. Drunkenness was rarely encountered because of the problem of obtaining alcohol, although incidents of venereal disease, contracted by the black soldiers while on leave in New Orleans, appear to have been high.[44] Communication with New Orleans was by rail and daily steamer, and mail was picked up in the city three times per week. The country around the post consisted solely of marshlands inhabited by native species of raccoons, ducks, wild geese, wildcats, alligators, water moccasins, and numerous harmless snakes. Mosquitos proved to be an especially difficult problem in hot weather.[45]

Plans for upgrading Fort Pike in line wth the advice of the Board of Engineers went unfulfilled. No appropriations were made during the 1870s, although occasionally small amounts of money were allotted for minimal repairs.[46] Bridges were fixed in 1872, and measures were taken to preserve the quarters and magazines by Captain Charles W. Howell of the Engineer Corps.[47] The next year part of the revetment on the terreplein and on the wall of the covered way was replaced.[48] From 1874 through 1879 operations at Fort Pike were "confined to necessary repairs for the preservation of the work."[49] Official disinterest in the post

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43. Ibid.

44. Ibid.

45. Ibid., p. 166; Outline Description of U.S. Military Posts and Stations in the Year 1871, p. 51.

46. See appropriate Reports of the Chiefs of Engineers, 1871-1880, in Reports of the Secretaries of War, 1871-1880. See also "Fort Pike as proposed by the Board of Engineers, 1870." January, 1888. NA, RG 77. Cartographic Archives Division, Drawer 85, Sheet A.

47. "Report of the Chief of Engineers," October 19, 1872, in Report of the Secretary of War, 1872, p. 20.

48. "Report of the Chief of Engineers," October 20, 1873, in Report of the Secretary of War, 1873, pp. 21-22.

49. See appropriate Reports of the Chief of Engineers, 1874-1879, in Reports of the Secretaries of War, 1874-1879.

continued through the 1880s, with the only maintenance consisting of cutting weeds and grass, whitewashing walls, and building walks and placing fresh shells on them.[50] In January, 1887, a fire destroyed the citadel and quarters on the parade. An inventory of buildings outside the fort reported as follows:

> 1 one story wooden barracks about 315' x 20', upright timbers appear sound, weather pieces and roof are rotting, one room is occupied as a Post Office by the Ordnance Sergeant who is also postmaster. 1 one-story barracks about 150' x 20', in worse condition than former building, now contains some engineer property and a carpenter and Smith's Shop. 2 one-story buildings, one as a Surgeon's house, the other as a sort of special ward, each is about 30' x 40', inside timbers are apparently good, roof fair, galleries are tumbling down, unoccupied. The hospital is a one-story building about 80' x 22', is tumbling down, unoccupied.[51]

At that time the post still mounted six 24-pounder howitzers and a 30-pounder Parrott gun.[52]

F. Abandonment and Final Disposition

During its decline Fort Pike remained in the charge of a non-commissioned officer. On October 7, 1890, General Order No. 119 directed that the post be abandoned and its property turned over to the Quartermaster Department for disposal. At that time it was cared for by a corporal of Company B, Fifth Infantry.[53] Four years later the State of

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50. See appropriate Reports of the Chief of Engineers, 1880-1886, in Reports of the Secretaries of War, 1880-1886.

51. "Fort Pike, Rigolets Pass, La.," NA, RG 77. Cartographic Archives Division, Drawer 85, Sheet A.

52. Ibid.

53. "Report of the Quartermaster-General," October 3, 1891, in Report of the Secretary of War, 1891 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1891), p. 530.

Louisiana obtained a license to use part of the military reservation for the care of persons afflicted with leprosy, and a resident physician took quarters in one of the old buildings. Under the agreement, any structures erected by the state would "be readily destroyed by fire in case of occupying the fort by troops. . . ." Furthermore, under no condition could any part of the fort proper be used or visited by the quarantine establishment.[54]

Abandoned by the government, Fort Pike deteriorated into the twentieth century. It was of no use during the Spanish-American War, and by 1915 had been leased to a private party through the Quartermaster Corps. The Army regarded the post in this heyday of modern armament as having "practically no military value," although in an emergency situation it "may be of strategic importance, particularly in connection with Coast Defense Guard." Fort Pike did, however, have historical value, and a report of the Engineer Corps urged that it be considered as a historical monument.[55] With that vaguely in mind, in 1927 the Louisiana Highway Commission purchased the Fort Pike reservation, though mainly to obtain right of way for the Chef Menteur Highway and the approaches to the Rigolets bridge.[56] On November 15, 1934, Governor Oscar K. Allen proclaimed the establishment of Fort Pike State Park Monument as the initial unit in an envisioned "Louisiana Purchase Memorial Park." Preservation of Fort Pike began in 1935 under the first park superintendent, E.H. Chagnard. Over the following years the post was the featured setting for several movies.[57] Today visitors

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54. Fortier, Louisiana, II, 151-52; Dixon, "Fort Pike," p. 12. Senators Donelson Caffery and Newton C. Blanchard to Secretary of War Daniel S. Lamont, April 23, 1894, with indorsements. NA, RG 77. Land Papers (Louisiana), 5619.

55. "Historical permanent fortifications."

56. The Times-Picayune, September 1, 1927.

57. Dixon, "Fort Pike," p. 14; "This is Tale of Fts. Pike, Macomb."

are allowed into the garrison and casemates, and various documents and historical uniforms are exhibited in a small museum. Though having never fired a hostile shot from its ramparts, the old post today stands in a preserved order, in its purity a historically and architecturally significant survivor of the American Third System of fortifications protecting New Orleans and the lower Mississippi region. Fort Pike was entered on the National Register of Historic Places on August 14, 1972.

CHAPTER IX: FORT MACOMB AT CHEF MENTEUR

A. Erecting the Sister Work

1. Need for the Post

Opposite the west end of Petite Coquilles Island, near the mouths of Bayous Sauvage and Chef Menteur, stands Fort Pike's sister post, Fort Macomb, guarding Chef Menteur Pass between Lakes Borgne and Lake Pontchartrain.[1] The tract on which the post was built had proved of strategic value to Andrew Jackson during the campaign of 1814-15, when he had a battery erected there garrisoned by free blacks from New Orleans. Originally the land had been granted to Gilbert de St. Maxent in 1763 and was called Chantilly. It was sold by auction to Don Luis Declouet in 1796 and was then known as "the plantation and land commonly called Chef Menteur." Declouet sold the tract to Bartholomy Lafon in 1801, upon whose death it was divided into lots and sold.[2]

In 1817 Captain James Gadsden examined the site of the old battery and recommended that a work be constructed below Bayou Sauvage so as to "protect New Orleans from a land attack" yet provide "enfilading fire down one turn and a reverse fire up another of the pass."[3] In December

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1. "Chef Menteur" meant "Lying Chief," a term derived from a Choctaw legend regarding the expulsion of a tribesman and his family to that point. See P.M. Milner, "Fort Macomb," Publications of the Louisiana Historical Society, VII (1913-14), pp. 144-45.

2. Ibid. Ownership of the property on which the fort at Chef Menteur was raised was contested throughout most of the post's active existence. See application for compensation of Antoine Michoud dated January, 1831. NA, RG 77. Land Papers (Louisiana), C684. For refusal of the government to acknowledge one claim, see U.S. Congress. Senate. Report of the Secretary of War, in answer to a resolution of the Senate as to the expediency of granting the fort at Chef Menteur Pass to owner of the land upon which it is erected. S. Doc. 34, 31 Cong., 2 Sess., 1851, pp. 1-2.

3. Gadsden to Swift, November 10, 1817. NA, RG 77. Entry 221.

General Simon Bernard reported on the old battery at Chef Menteur. It was, he said, an earthen epaulement capable of holding nine pieces and was at that time "almost destroyed." He urged construction of a circular casemated fortification for thirty-nine guns and mortars almost identical to the fort projected for the Rigolets.[4] In July, 1818, a contract was arranged with James Bennett and Peter Morte to construct the new fort in the same manner as that prescribed for the Rigolets and in the same time period, between December, 1818, and December, 1821.[5] Like the other fort, this one was to incorporate Bernard's ideas regarding the combining of features for land and sea defense.

2. Construction

Fort Chef Menteur, as the new work was called, consisted of a triangular-shaped brick structure, the apex of which sported a bastion and the base of which curved 160 yards along the waterfront. At either side of 100 yards was a demibastion. According to Bernard's plan, the fort would contain a citadel-barracks and a shot furnace. Construction of the fort took place long after the contract terms had stipulated, initial excavation getting underway in 1823 and the work of erecting the post lasting through 1828.[6] In February of the latter year Company H,

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4. Report of Brigadier General Bernard, December 23, 1817. NA, RG 77. Entry 221.

5. "Contract made between Joseph G. Swift and James Bennett and Peter Morte, 20th July, 1818." See also "Projected Fort." Undated (1817?). NA, RG 77. Cartographic Archives Division, Drawer 86, Sheet 2.

6. "Gen. Bernard's Plan for the Rigolets and Chef Menteur." Undated (1818?). NA, RG 77. Cartographic Archives Division, Drawer 86, Sheet 3. "Fort Chef Menteur." Undated (1819?). NA, RG 77. Cartographic Archives Division, Drawer 86, Sheet 4; Report on Hygiene, p. 152; U.S. Congress. House. Revised Report of the Board of Engineers on the Defence of the Seaboard, March 24, 1826. H. Ex. Doc. 153, 19-Cong., 1 Sess., 1826, p. 48. For periodic progress of the construction, see "Plan and sections exhibiting the exact state of the Fortifications under construction on the 30th September 1823. . . ." NA, RG 77. Cartographic Archives Division, Drawer 133, Sheet 95; "Plan Exhibiting the advancement of the Fort constructing at Pass of Chef Menteur,

Second Artillery, garrisoned the place under command of Captain Richard A. Zantzinger.[7] This and succeeding units often interacted with the garrison of Fort Pike, seven miles distant, although in the early 1830s a series of storms and floods destroyed the road running across Petite Coquilles Island, complicating the communication between the forts.[8] By the time the first troops arrived, the fort was nearly ready to receive its armament and was certified by Captain William H. Chase of the Engineer Corps as being "completed for all the purposes of defense."[9] Ordnance originally projected for the work, the same as at Fort Pike, consisted of twenty-two casemated pieces, thirty-six en barbette, with six mortars in the covered way.[10]

3. Armament

Some of the armament for Fort Chef Menteur was on hand during the early 1830s. In 1835 an ordnance inspector found fifteen new 24-pounder cannon at the post. By January of that year the work had been officially redesignated Fort Wood, to honor Captain Eleazer D. Wood, killed during

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September 30th 1824." NA, RG 77. Cartographic Archives Division, Drawer 86, Sheet 7. Dimensions of the post appear on the untitled plan of October 5, 1839 in NA, RG 77. Cartographic Archives Division, Drawer 86, Sheet 15.

7. Milner, "Fort Macomb," p. 147.

8. "Sketch of the vicinity of Forts Pike, Wood and Tower Dupre," 1835. NA, RG 77. Cartographic Archives Division, Drawer 86, Sheet 14.

9. "Fort Chef Menteur." September 30, 1827. NA, RG 77. Cartographic Archives Division, Drawer 86. Sheet 11.

10. "Plan of the Forts at the Rigolets and Chef Menteur exhibiting the position of te Guns en barbette," December 27, 1832. NA, RG 77. Cartographic Archives Division, Drawer 86, Sheet 12. Twenty of the barbette guns were to be mounted on the curved front of the fort facing the water, while six would be positioned along each landward side, two in the rear bastion and one each in the demibastions. Ibid. For description of the casemates, see "Plans & Details of Casemates and Embrasures at Chef-Menteur and Coquilles," December 27, 1832. NA, RG 77. Cartographic Archives Division Drawer 86, Sheet 13; and "Plan of Casemates of Fort Wood," December 13, 1841. NA, RG 77. Cartographic Archives Division, Drawer 86, Sheet 17.

the War of 1812.[11] The military command occupied the one-story citadel-quarters and a number of frame structures raised along the north side of the fort.[12] Arranged beyond the moat, these latter consisted of the commanding officer's quarters, two officers' quarters, a married soldier's quarters, a commissary storehouse, a quartermaster storehouse, carpenter's and blacksmith's shops, a hospital with kitchen, a bakery, a gun shed, and a sutler's store. Near the waterfront stood a boat house and stable. Repairs were recommended for some of these structures in 1839, and an inspecting officer urged that the terreplein be coated with asphalt to protect the casemates. He also advised the removal of some trees in front of and behind the fort.[13] In February, 1842, a reservation was proclaimed of all lands lying within 1,200 yards of the post in Section 28, Township 11 S., Range 14 E., Southern District of Louisiana.[14] The fort stood prepared to receive its remaining artillery in April, 1842.[15] Thenceforth operations at Fort Wood comprised maintenance and periodic repairs. A bridge of kyanized timber was erected over the main ditch and a new drawbridge built in 1848. Further development was not required. "It is in good condition & mounts or is prepared to mount all its guns," wrote an officer who examined the

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11. Captain Rufus L. Baker to Colonel George Bomford, April 7, 1835. Baker Papers, U.S. Military Academy Library; Dixon, "Fort Pike," p. 11; Richard C. Maxwell, "Fort Macomb, An Architectural Documentation" (unpublished manuscript dated May 22, 1969), in the Howard-Tilton Library, Tulane University), p. 3. Although not indicated as such in plans of the period, the post was called Fort Wood in the monthly returns as early as January 1829. NA, Microfilm M617, Roll 716.

12. "Fort Wood with Chef Menteur Pass," January, 1835. NA, RG 77. Cartographic Archives Division, Drawer 133, Sheet 22.

13. "Ground Plans of Public Buildings," June, 1840. NA, RG 77. Cartographic Archives Division, Drawer 86, Sheet 16; Chase to Totten, March 19, 1839. NA, RG 77. LR C277.

14. "Military Lands. Louisiana. Fort Macomb." NA, RG 77. Cartographic Archives Division, Drawer 189-La.-9-1; United States Military Reservations, p. 149.

15. Captain William H. Chase to Colonel Joseph G. Totten, April 18, 1842. NA, RG 77. LR C1052.

work.[16] In 1849 plans were finalized for construction of a second story on the citadel, work apparently accomplished in the early 1850s.[17]

B. Occupying the New Fort

1. Early Garrisons

Several different units manned Fort Wood during its first two decades. From 1829 until March, 1834, Company H, Second Artillery, garrisoned the place along with some military convict laborers. In that month Company A, Second Artillery, arrived from Fort Mitchell, Alabama, and took station there, although in May the entire unit was assigned to the nearby Bay of St. Louis, leaving only an ordnance sergeant and three privates to care for Fort Wood. In December, 1835, Company K, Fourth Infantry, manned the post, apparently briefly, for from that month until 1842 Fort Wood seemingly went ungarrisoned. In May, 1842, Company A, Third Artillery, occupied the fort, succeeded in July by Company A, Seventh Infantry. This unit was relieved in December, 1844, by Company H of the Seventh, then in August, 1845, Company F, First Artillery, occupied Fort Wood through April, 1846, when the post was again temporily deactivated. Between November, 1848, and June, 1849, men of Company L, Fourth Artillery, under Captain John H. Miller, garrisoned the fort. In the latter month Fort Wood was once more ungarrisoned.[18]

On June 23, 1851, the name of the post was again changed to Fort Macomb, after Major General Alexander Macomb, hero of the Battle of

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16. "Annual Reports of operations at Forts Pike, Wood, Battery Bienvenne & Tower Dupres for the year ending Sept. 30, 1848." NA, RG 77. LR B4013.

17. "Sketch of a proposed additional story to the Barracks at Forts Pike and Wood La.," September 30, 1849. NA, RG 77. Cartographic Archives Division, Drawer 85, Sheet 30.

18. Post Returns, Fort Wood, January, 1829-December, 1835; May, 1842-April, 1846; November, 1848-June, 1849. NA, Microfilm M617, Roll 716.

Plattsburgh during the War of 1812, former Chief Engineer (1821-1828) and Commanding General of the Army (1828-1841).[19] In that year Fort Macomb was described by General Totten as being "in the most efficient state," although additional funds would be needed for maintaining its security and accommodations.[20] Three years later the post was considered as being "not in as good order as Fort Pike," the structure plagued with leaking casemates and citadel that required immediate attention. The drawbridge, moreover, was rotten "and unless soon repaired will ere long fall into the ditch." Necessary repairs were soon performed.[21] The improved post would require 400 men during time of war, 80 men during peacetime.[22] In March, 1856, mounted artillery at Fort Macomb consisted of twenty-eight 24-pounder guns (twelve in casemates, one in the water battery, and fifteen in the barbette batteries) and eight 24-pounder howitzers in casemates. More funds were needed to complete the mounting of ordnance pieces.[23]

2. Fort Macomb in the Civil War

Through the 1850s Fort Macomb was in the charge of an ordnance sergeant. Little further development took place, and in April, 1860, an inspecting officer depicted the post as being in good condition. Although most of the outer buildings were "very much dilapidated," the casemates and quarters in the garrison appeared in satisfactory shape. Weeds and

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19. Prucha, Guide to the Military Posts, pp. 89-90; Heitman, Historical Register, I, 680. The writer has been indirectly informed by descendents of General Macomb that the proper pronunciation of his name, and the fort named for him, is "Macoomb."

20. Report of General J.G. Totten, p. 73.

21. Beauregard to Totten, February 3, 1854. NA, RG 77. LR B6186; Stevens to Totten, October 1, 1855. NA, RG 77. LR S7367.

22. Untitled plan of Fort Macomb dated October 5, 1839. NA, RG 77. Cartographic Archives Division, Drawer 86, Sheet 15.

23. Stevens to Totten, March 27, 1856. NA, RG 77. LR S7509.

grass were beginning to overrun the place, and the officer recommended that a few men be assigned to put the fort in "complete order."[24]

The placid existence of Fort Macomb was disrupted on January 28, 1861, when forty men of Company C, First Louisiana Infantry, under Captain H.A. Clinch, seized the post from Ordnance Sergeant Daniel Wilbur on orders of Governor Moore. Fort Macomb was placed under command of First Lieutenant William C. Capers of the First,[25] and remained garrisoned by the Confederates until after the fall of Forts Jackson and St. Philip the following year. That autumn, after General Lovell took command of the Confederate military department, Fort Macomb received additional armament to help prevent a Union advance on New Orleans by the lakes. Added to the ordnance complement of 24-pounders were one 8-inch columbiad, four 42-pounders, six 32-pounder smoothbores, and one 32-pounder rifled gun, besides a large supply of powder and munitions. At the direction of Capers the soldiers felled the trees along Chef Menteur Pass above the post to present a clear field of fire for the artillery. Two hundred and fifty militiamen garrisoned Fort Macomb and rigorously prepared for its defense.[26]

One soldier stationed at Fort Macomb during this anxious time was Edward G. Butler, temporarily detailed to the post from Ft. St. Philip as an instructor in heavy artillery. "I . . . have two Volunteer Companies to drill--the Marion Guards and Scotch Rifle Guards--I find it very different from drilling regulars." Regarding Fort Macomb, Butler wrote that "this is a very pleasant station except that the mosquitoes were even

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24. First Lieutenant Walter H. Stevens to Colonel René E. DeRussy, April 19, 1860. NA, RG 77. LR S8559.

25. General Orders No. 34, Headquarters Louisiana Militia, New Orleans, January 27, 1861. War of the Rebellion, Series I, Vol. LIII, 616; Sergeant Daniel Wilbur to Colonel Samuel Cooper, January 31, 1861, in ibid., Vol. I, 492.

26. Lovell Court of Inquiry, pp. 584, 593; Dufour, Night the War was Lost, p. 119.

worse than they were at St. Philip. . . . The only objection I have [to this place], is that the discipline is awful, in fact there is none. . . ."[27]

The fort was evacuated the night before Farragut's warships captured New Orleans. General Butler's soldiers shortly occupied it, and it remained in Union control for the duration of the war. In January, 1863, 278 men of the Thirteenth Maine Volunteer Infantry and the First Louisiana Native Guards were at Fort Macomb under the command of Lieutenant Colonel Frank Hesseltine. By November it was garrisoned by Companies G, H, I, and K, Twentieth Regiment, Corps d'Afrique, and in April, 1864, the unit was reorganized as the Ninth U.S. Infantry (colored). The black soldiers simultaneously garrisoned Battery Bienvenue. In July these companies, numbering approximately 200 men, were consolidated into Companies D and E, Seventy-fourth Infantry (colored). A year later they were joined by 150 soldiers of Companies A and I, Seventy-seventh U.S. Infantry (colored). All of these troops were replaced in October, 1865, by 150 men of Company M, Tenth U.S. Heavy Artillery (colored), which garrisoned Fort Macomb until August, 1866.[28] During the war many guns in Fort Macomb were removed and shipped to more demanding stations, so that in January, 1865, only thirty-eight pieces remained mounted at the post.[29]

3. The Postwar Decline

Troops were stationed at Fort Macomb after the war until 1867. On January 27 of that year the fort, appraised at $520,000, was once more

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27. Butler to Mother, November 2, 1861. Thomas Butler Family Papers. Department of Archives and Manuscripts, Louisiana State University.

28. Post Returns, Fort Macomb, January, 1863-March, 1863; November, 1863-August, 1866. NA, Microfilm M617, Roll 716.

29. Report of Heavy Ordnance, Fort Macomb, January 31, 1865. NA, RG 77. Cartographic Archives Division, Drawer 255, Sheet 11; Report of Heavy Ordnance, Fort Macomb, June 30, 1866. NA, RG 77. Cartographic Archives Division, Drawer 255, Sheet 11-2. Seven of the guns of Fort Macomb were sent to Battery Bienvenne but were never mounted. Post Returns, Fort Macomb, March, 1866. NA, Microfilm M617, Roll 716.

consigned to the care of an ordnance sergeant.[30] In 1868 it was described as being in "serviceable condition," although a few artillery platforms and bridges needed fixing. No work was completed in 1868 or 1869.[31] Nonetheless, the Board of Engineers for Fortifications next year advised that Fort Macomb be modified to receive modern armaments and urged during succeeding years that $24,000 be appropriated to effect the recommendations.[32] Instead, the post received maintenance funds of $4,000 in 1871 and 1872, allotted from the general appropriation for contingencies of fortifications.[33] Between 1874 and 1879 Fort Macomb underwent minimal maintenance; no appropriations were requested during that time.[34] From 1880 through 1882 renewed requests for funds were made without success. Thereafter the smallest expenditures were made for mowing the grass and cutting weeds.[35] Fort Macomb seemed destined for the same fate of deterioration as Fort Pike a few miles away.

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30. Report on Hygiene, p. 152; Prucha, Guide to the Military Posts, pp. 89-90; New Orleans Times, October 12, 1866.

31. "Report of the Chief of Engineers," October 20, 1868, in Report of the Secretary of War, 1868, p. 19; "Report of the Chief of Engineers," October 25, 1869, in Report of the Secretary of War, 1869, p. 18.

32. "Report of the Chief of Engineers," October 25, 1870, in Report of the Secretary of War, 1870, p. 25. See also reports for 1871, 1872, and 1873.

33. "Report of the Chief of Engineers," October 20, 1871, in Report of the Secretary of War, 1871, pp. 22-23; "Report of the Chief of Engineers," October 19, 1872, in Report of the Secretary of War, 1872, p. 20.

34. See appropriate Reports of the Chiefs of Engineers, 1874-1879, in Reports of the Secretaries of War, 1874-1879.

35. See appropriate Reports of the Chiefs of Engineers, 1880-1866, in Reports of the Secretaries of War, 1880-1886.

C. The Abandoned Fort

1. Reservation Settlers

On October 7, 1890, Fort Macomb was abandoned and turned over to the Quartermaster Department for disposition.[36] One civilian, an elderly black man, had resided on the reservations since 1864 at the then permission of Major C.C. Pike, whose servant the old man had been. Previous to the abandonment, and on authority of the Secretary of War, the man, Charles Wilson, was permitted to remain in his shanty about one-fourth mile northwest of the fort where he gathered moss and raised chickens.[37] Meantime, others had settled on the reservation, most of them in shanties on the east side of Chef Menteur Pass during the period of Fort Macomb's long inactivity. Local citizens claiming occupancy rights included Nicholas Sheneville, Francis Bienvenne, and Louis Rapho, besides three private associations--the Commercial Hunting Club, the Tally Ho Club, and the Happy Club.[38] The matter was resolved on June 20, 1896, when an executive order transferred that part of the reserve lying east of the pass to the Department of the Interior for disposal.[39]

2. The Motor League's Interest

In 1910-11 the Motor League of Louisiana completed construction of a dirt highway from New Orleans to Fort Macomb, to be known as Chef

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36. "Report of the Quartermaster-General," October 3, 1891, in Report of the Secretary of War, 1891, p. 530.

37. Lieutenant Colonel Oliver D. Greene to Chief of Engineers, August 20, 1890, with indorsements. NA, RG 77. Land Papers (Louisiana), 5054.

38. Major James W. Scully to the Quartermaster General, May 25, 1894, and July 2, 1894. NA, RG 49. Records of the General Land Office. Division "K," Abandoned Military Reservation Files, Ft. Macomb. See also the plat, "Chef Menteur, La. Settlement on Fort Macomb Military Reservation," 1896. NA, RG 49. Division "K," Abandoned Military Reservations.

39. United States Military Reservations, p. 149; Fortier, Louisiana, II, 151.

Menteur Highway.[40] Soon after, the Continental Trust and Savings Bank brought suit in a United States District Court looking to the sale of the Fort Macomb Reservation. In July, 1914, the court decreed the sale except for 16.03 acres, including the site of the fort proper, that was leased through the Depot Quartermaster in New Orleans to the Motor League, which shortly won clear title to the fort property through a foreclosure proceeding.[41] The League planned to erect a large clubhouse on the tract where "at night a thousand rays of light will pierce the darkness and a great beacon will throw its beams over Lake Borgne and Lake Ponchartrain, and be alive to the people of New Orleans. . . ." This plan was not fulfilled, although the League managed to keep the old fort in good condition.[43]

3. Destruction of Fort Macomb, 1966-1981

Probably the greatest threat in its long history came to Fort Macomb in recent years. In 1966 the State of Louisiana, which had acquired the property in 1927, leased the fort for fifty years to a private developer who promised to restore it. Instead of rehabilitating the old masonry structure--all that was left of the original fort complex--the developer hastened its ruin by destroying or threatening numerous historical features including the ditch, walls, and foundations. In the effort to develop a marina and cognate recreational facilities, the structural integrity and historical significance of Fort Macomb was severely compromised. Bulldozers marred the old barbette batteries, ripped off aged traverse pintels, leveled the glacis, and opened parts of the bastion scarp. In 1979, appalled at what was happening to the old post, the

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40. Milner, "Fort Macomb," p. 150.

41. United States Military Reservations, p. 149; Milner, "Fort Macomb," pp. 151-52.

42. Milner, "Fort Macomb," p. 152.

43. "Historical Permanent Fortifications."

State began litigation to cancel the lease. Legal efforts were frustrated in 1980 when a decision of the Fourth Circuit Court of Appeals opposed the State's contention that the terms of the lease had been violated. However, in February, 1981, an out-of-court settlement awarded the lessor $392,500 in return for cancellation of the lease.[44] The Louisiana State Parks Department yet hopes to restore Fort Macomb as an historical accompaniment to nearby Fort Pike. Like that post, Fort Macomb represents in its purest form an example of Third System fortification in the United States.[45] The post was entered on the National Register of Historic Places in October, 1978.

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44. "State buys back Ft. Macomb lease," Headquarters Heliogram of the Council on Abandoned Military Posts, No. 133 (March, 1981), p. 5.

45. Maxwell, "Fort Macomb, An Architectural Documentation," p. 6; "This is Tale of Fts. Pike, Macomb"; "Courts, Inaction, Neglect Speed Ft. Macomb's Destruction" Headquarters Heliogram, No. 110 (March, 1979), p. 8.

CHAPTER X: FORT LIVINGSTON AT BARATARIA PASS

A. Building Fort Livingston

1. Initial Designs

A fort at Grande Terre Island to guard the main entrance to Barataria Bay against enemy naval incursions was considered of paramount importance during the War of 1812. During the 1814 campaign, at Jackson's urging, a small post had been erected at the west end of the island, at a point formerly occupied by the smuggling enterprise of Jean Lafitte. After the war a major fortification, initially conceived as a pentagonal redoubt, was recommended for the site as being essential to the security of Barataria Bay:

> The site effectually commands the main channel which does not exceed four or five hundred yards in width. The other entrances into Barataria Bay are practicable only for small boats and only under favourable circumstances of wind and tide, and may be easily obstructed during war. . . .[1]

Moreover, the site at the west end of Grande Terre was viewed as being less susceptible to damage by the great waves that commonly rolled out of the Gulf than the neighboring shores of Grand Isle and Petite Isle.[2] A plan prepared by Captain Daniel T. Patterson, in accordance with the recommendations of General Bernard, envisioned a crescent battery built on a triangular design similar to those contemplated for the Rigolets and Chef Menteur Passes. The curved battery was to face Barataria Pass.[3]

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1. Captain James Gadsden to Brigadier General Joseph G. Swift, November 10, 1817. NA, RG 77. Entry 221.

2. Ibid.

3. "Remarks, in relation to the works projected for the defense of the Gulf of Mexico. . . ." NA, RG 77. Entry 221; Swanson, Historic Jefferson Parish, p. 154.

2. Delays in Funding

Construction of the proposed fort met delay. While an appropriation was made in 1822 for the collection of building materials, work did not proceed.[4] Part of the problem was in obtaining title to the desired property, while part lay in obtaining and transporting bricks to the remote location. In 1827 work had still not started and estimated cost of construction over a three-year period was placed at $264,000. Captain William H. Chase, senior engineer officer in charge of building Forts Pike and Chef Menteur, urged that funds be immediately appropriated, as "the construction of the fort at Barrataria alone remains to perfect the system of defence for Louisiana."[5] Furthermore, the work could proceed more economically than otherwise if undertaken by officers already acclimated to the extreme southern climate.[6]

3. Acquiring the Land

Though pressed by members of the Louisiana congressional delegation, the Government had to delay work into the 1830s.[7] In 1833 Mr. A. Foucher sold part of his plantation land on the western tip of Grande Terre "to the United States for military purposes," and the property was surveyed that September.[8] On January 10, 1834, 126.16 acres was deeded by Etienne and Marie Laure Verloin de Gruy to the

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4. Robert W. Frazer, Forts of the West (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1972), p. 62.

5. Chase to Macomb, November 25, 1827. Military Affairs No. 377, 20 Cong., 1 Sess. "Fortifications at Barrataria, Louisiana." American State Papers, Vol. 018, p. 806.

6. Macomb to Secretary of War James Barbour, January 23, 1828, in ibid.

7. J.S. Johnston to Barbour, January 20, 1828, in ibid.

8. "Plan of the west end of Grand Terre . . .," September 20, 1833. NA, RG 49. General Land Office. Abandoned Military Reservations File. Fort Livingston.

United States. The State of Louisiana ceded its jurisdiction over the site to the federal government on March 10, 1834.[9] Still construction did not get underway; though in 1834 temporary quarters were erected for the engineer and superintendent, operations were suspended in July for "want of an officer of engineers to take immediate direction. . . ."[10] As of January, 1839, the operations had not been resumed and money appropriated for them had reverted to a surplus fund. "The causes which have retarded the completion of the . . . fortification are the same that caused the original interruption, namely, the want of an officer . . . who could be detailed for that service."[11]

4. A Modified Design

Construction on the post, to be named Fort Livingston in honor of Edward Livingston, former New York City mayor, Louisiana senator, and Secretary of State under Andrew Jackson, began in earnest in 1840.[12] Captain John G. Barnard supervised the initial work which entailed raising quarters and shops for the laborers, along with the necessary sheds and stables.[13] Although as late as 1833 Bernard's plan for a crescent-shaped structure were still being considered, the fort started in the 1840s to hold fifty-two guns was shaped more like a slightly skewed square. A moat would parallel its northeast and northwest faces, and its principal gun batteries were to be in arched, single-tiered casemates on

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9. Military Lands. Louisiana. Fort Livingston. NA, RG 77. Cartographic Archives Division, Drawer 189-La.-7-1; United States Military Reservations, p. 149; Fortier, Louisiana, II, 151; Swanson, Historic Jefferson Parish, p. 154.

10. Quoted in Lieutenant Colonel Joseph G. Totten to Secretary of War J.R. Poinsett, January 7, 1839. U.S. Congress. House. Fort Livingston, Grand Terre, Louisiana. Letter from the Secretary of War. H. Doc. 67, 25 Cong., 3d sess., 1839, p. 1.

11. Ibid.

12. Army and Navy Journal, February 23, 1889; Order of Battle of the United States Land Forces, III, 582.

13. Swanson, Historic Jefferson Parish, p. 155.

the southeast side. Quarters, storerooms, and guardhouse were to be in casemates in the northeast, northwest, and southwest faces, and these were built with loopholes facing outward through which muskets could be fired. The walls were made of cement mixed with shells, some stripped from middens in the region once used by Indians. Pediments, lintels, and stairways were of granite. Along the rampart above the casemates were positions for guns to be fired en barbette. Outside and beyond the ditch was a glacis that sloped downward to meet the level terrain. A drawbridge was to facilitate passage from the covered way over the ditch and into the fort on the north face.[14]

5. Progress Amid Subsidence

By the end of September, 1841, only part of the foundation and main scarp wall had been completed because of the difficulty in getting sufficient funding and in procuring supplies. One year later the foundation was mostly done and the scarp raised six feet all around. Progress was also made on the counterscarp and glacis, and a large amount of earth was accumulated for the rampart. In addition, a wharf had been built, and in 1842 a 600-yard railway was laid for transporting bricks, shells, and cement from the wharf to the construction site. More accommodations were erected for mechanics and a mortar mill was constructed. The concrete and shell mixture was used in building the foundation and large parts of the core's superstructure "wherever practicable," resulting in a substantial savings. Nearly all the scarp wall was so constructed, with brick primarily used for exterior facing and for arches.[15] Much of the brick and all of the shell was obtained locally; plantation owner Andrew Hodges delivered shells by the barge-load, and

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14. "Historical Permanent Fortifications": Swanson, Historic Jefferson Parish, pp. 155, 156, 158.

15. "Annual Report of the progress of operations at Fort Livingston during the year ending September 30, 1842." NA, RG 77. LR B1499.

residents named McRae and Strong provided bricks of varying quality. Other bricks may have been imported from Mississippi or Florida.[16]

Over the next year little progress was made, not only because of slow military appropriations but because of a purposeful delay: Captain Barnard wanted to allow the foundation to settle sufficiently before adding further weight to the tenuous clay soil. "Underneath the piers of the casemates I employed both the rammer and the passage of carts to consolidate the earth & even then have not considered it prudent to build on them until after a years exposure to rains & the influence of time."[17]

The settling of Fort Livingston even in these early stages of construction constituted a severe impediment both to its eventual completion and to later government decisions affecting its use. By 1844 part of the scarp had been damaged by the massive weight of the earthen ramparts, but Barnard maintained that in reality the backward curvature actually increased the stability of the work. In that year the casemates on the northwest and southwest fronts were finished and Barnard proposed to complete the scarp before them and build up the glacis with earth.[18]

Despite the delays in erecting Fort Livingston, the Army was determined as to its future importance in the nation's coastal defense. On March 25, 1844, President John Tyler declared the east end of Grand Terre Island a military reservation, a measure taken to insure security at

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16. Ibid.; Swanson, Historic Jefferson Parish, p. 155, 158.

17. Barnard to Totten, December 20, 1842. NA, RG 77. LR B1561.

18. Barnard to Totten, December 7, 1844. NA, RG 77. LR B2333. For discussion of the problem of settlement at Fort Livingston, see "Remarks on the settlement which has taken place from June 11th to November 13th 1844. Extract from Book of Miscellanys," enclosed in ibid.

that point over the narrow pass into Barataria Bay.[19] Yet even the emergency of the War with Mexico could not speed work on Fort Livingston and it went slowly while the subsidence proceeded. At the end of September, 1848, Barnard reported that the parade wall was finished, brick pavement laid in certain of the casemates, the ditch graded and a tile drain placed therein, and leaks in the casemate roof caused by the settlement repaired. Also, the breast-height wall around the rampart was completed and the remaining earth required for the parapet, terreplein, parade, and glacis was put in place. More earth was added to the northwest and southwest walls "to equalize the settlement with that of the other fronts." The officer quarters were completed and painted, too.[20]

B. Failure of the Post

1. A Gradually Changing Opinion

Much work was still needed to finish the post. Barnard estimated that a considerable part of this--laying the banquette, finishing the casemate interiors, grading grounds and earthen surfaces, adding covers to the cisterns, installing pumps, repairing frame buildings, erecting a permanent wharf, and re-pointing all the masonry--could be accomplished during 1849 using locally available resources. Gun platforms had yet to be placed in the fort.[21] In 1851 Chief Engineer Totten wrote that Fort Livingston "is kept from entire completion, to await the cessation of a slight subsidence," but could be finished "by a few weeks' work."[22]

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19. This reservation comprised the "south half of Section 13; Section 24; and so much of Section 23 as lies on the East side of the Pass. Township 21 Range 25 E." Military Lands. Louisiana. NA, RG 77. Cartographic Archives Division, Drawer 189-La.-14-1. This reservation was relinquished to the Department of the Interior in September, 1886. Ibid.

20. "Annual Report of operations at Fort Livingston La. for the year ending Sept. 30th 1848." NA, RG 77. LR B4013.

21. Ibid.

22. Report of General J.G. Totten, p. 73.

Another concern arising in the early 1850s was erosion of the shoreline in front of the fort, and in 1853 shell and sandbag jetties were erected to retard the loss. These proved inadequate; from 1840 to 1854 the beach receded some 237 feet, and the erosion continued in the following years.[23]

The slowness of construction, and thus the delay in placing armaments in the fort, eventually caused some official concern. In 1856, as work continued, there were only four 6-pounders on hand to defend Fort Livingston against attack. Nevertheless, First Lieutenant Walter H. Stevens expressed confidence in his ability to prepare the post in an emergency.

> Supposing a contingency to arise requiring an immediate arming necessary, and if the guns were on hand, I could put its batteries in fighting condition, quarters for troops &c in order for their reception in 30 days, from the date of arrival of the force. I could mount and have in readiness for use, about 4 guns per day but would have in doing so, to neglect details of construction necessary for permanency and would require for the work $20,000.[24]

On top of all the other delays, hurricanes in the Gulf damaged Fort Livingston in August, 1856. As had occurred before, the jetties failed to sufficiently stem the fierce waves and action of the rising tide. "I confess I am much puzzled as to what should be done," wrote Stevens to General Totten.[25] He later advised that a strong dike be built in the affected area.[26] During the storms, which inundated Grand Terre, the fort sheltered local residents. Lieutenant Stevens described the scene:

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23. Captain P.G.T. Beauregard to Totten, April 13, 1854. NA, RG 77. LR B6233; Swanson, Historic Jefferson Parish, p. 158. Experiments with the construction of jetties at Fort Livingston between 1853 and 1856--all of which failed--are discussed in Stevens to Totten, February 6, 1857. NA, RG 77. LR S7811.

24. Stevens to Totten, March 27, 1856. NA, RG 77. LR S7509.

25. September 27, 1856. NA, RG 77. LR S7675.

26. Stevens to Totten, February 6, 1857. NA, RG 77. LR S7811.

> On the 10th Mr. Wilkinson's family took refuge in the fort, ladies going waist deep in water to reach the glacis. On the 29th the surf broke in the parlor windows of the Quarters--after which the family left in boats. Mr. W. was observing the breakwaters and told me the sea poured over them furiously--that on the lee side, a hole was washed out 10 ft. deep.[27]

2. Operations Become Futile

Progress on Fort Livingston proved frustrating for the officers responsible for its construction. As they tried to resolve problems of subsidence and erosion, the very effects of these concerns--cracks and settlement--required their immediate attention. Other refinements needed to finish the post were relegated as urgent measures cropped up, such as the need to raise some of the casemate floors to compensate for subsidence. Lieutenant Stevens continued to press for a dike, or sea wall, which would, he felt, alleviate much of the beach erosion.[28] But in the spring of 1859 another storm struck Fort Livingston.

> It carried away some of the wooden pile jetty [built] in the pass, cut an opening into the outer ditch on the south east front, and at the same time it washed into the ditch of the scarp, some front. . . . From the old quarters (cottage house) to the S.E. angle of the fort [the beach]. . . has suffered considerably; about 20 feet of the s. end of the glacis of N.E. face has [been] cut away. . . . Another storm like the above may seriously endanger the fort.[29]

The frequency of the Gulf storms and their accompanying destruction finally became too much. When yet another great storm hit Fort Livingston on October 2, 1860, eroding the shoreline with water so high as to reach the loopholes on the counterscarp, Stevens wrote, "It is useless to attempt any repairs . . . without a large sum of money."[30]

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27. Ibid.

28. Stevens to Lieutenant Colonel Rene E. DeRussy, December 29, 1858. NA, RG 77. LR S8426.

29. Stevens to DeRussy, May 24, 1859. NA, RG 77. LR S8470.

30. Stevens to DeRussy, October 26, 1860. NA, RG 77. LR S8628.

3. Louisiana Troops Garrison Fort Livingston

In January, 1861, Fort Livingston was thus in an unfinished condition when Louisiana militiamen seized the post. There is no indication that these troops accomplished much upgrading of the works until the autumn when General Lovell assumed direction of affairs in Confederate Louisiana. Lovell ordered that the flooded covered way be pumped out and directed the installation of traverse circles and gun platforms to receive sufficient armaments as might deter a Union approach to New Orleans through Barataria Bay. Artillery mounted in Fort Livingston by the Confederates consisted of fifteen pieces--one 32-pounder rifled gun, one 8-inch columbiad, seven 24-pounders (smoothbores), four 12-pounders, and two howitzers. Garrisoning the post to operate this ordnance were four companies under Colonel Paul Theard numbering in all more than 300 men.[31] A battery of two small-calibred guns was positioned at the Temple, a shell midden in Barataria Bay above Fort Livingston.

Fort Livingston saw no action while it remained in Confederate hands. After the success of Farragut's squadron in ascending the Mississippi and capturing New Orleans, the Confederates abandoned the post early on April 27, 1862. By that time several Union vessels were in the vicinity of the fort. At 7:30 a.m. naval officers spied a flag of truce above the ramparts. Going ashore, they found the place deserted, with only a few local inhabitants to meet them. Immediately, Union sailors hoisted the United States flag over the fort. A woman told the officers that the garrison was mostly composed of French and Italian soldiers and that they were poorly clothed and had little food. Although the

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31. Lovell Court of Inquiry, pp. 582, 583-84; Swanson, Historic Jefferson Parish, pp. 158-59; Dufour, Night the War was Lost, pp. 118-19. A Union naval officer who examined Fort Livingston soon after it was evacuated by the Confederates in April, 1862, reported finding eleven 32-pounders, three 12-pounder howitzers, two 24-pounders, one 8-inch columbiad, and one 80-pounder rifled gun. Report of Acting Master Lewis W. Pennington, April 28, 1862, in Official Records of the Union and Confederate Navies, Series I, Vol. 18, p. 396.

departing troops had set the fort on fire, it apparently did no great damage and the sailors extinguished the flames easily.[32]

4. The Federal Occupation

From then until the autumn of 1863 Fort Livingston was unoccupied. In October of that year units of the Sixteenth Maine Volunteer Infantry garrisoned the post.[33] Later it was occupied by 130 soldiers of Company C, Tenth U.S. Heavy Artillery (colored), under Captain Albert Loring. Loring arrived at the fort on November 23, 1864, to learn of abuses being perpetrated on the black soldiers there:

> I found the command in very bad condition. The men came to me at once and told me they were not getting enough to eat on account of their rations being sold. Daniel Wilbur, Ordnance Sergeant, U.S.A., told me the same thing and I began immediately to investigate the matter. In doing this 2d Lieutenants Wm G. Walker and Leonard Hilton opposed me so much that I have seen fit to put both of them in arrest and shall file charges against them. I feel it to be my duty to report that the troops of this command have been grossly robbed of their rations for months past.[34]

This unit remained in charge of Fort Livingston and the sixteen guns there until September, 1866, when the post was left in the hands of an officer and fifteen men. These soldiers departed in December, leaving the fort in the care of the ordnance sergeant.[35]

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32. Report of Acting Master Lewis W. Pennington, April 28, 1862, in Official Records of the Union and Confederate Navies, Series I, Vol. 18, p. 396.

33. Order of Battle of the United States Land Forces, III, 582; Federal Writers' Program, Louisiana: A Guide to the State, p. 413.

34. Post Returns, Fort Livingston, November, 1864. NA, Microfilm M617, Roll 639. The troops were in good health the next month, although they had not been paid in eight months. Post Returns, Fort Livingston, December 1864. NA, Microfilm M617, Roll 639.

35. Post Returns, Fort Livingston, November, 1864--December, 1866. NA, Microfilm M617, Roll 639. Earlier returns are unavailable because the officer preceding Loring did not prepare any. In November, 1864, he was placed under arrest in New Orleans. Post Returns, Fort Livingston, November, 1864. NA, Microfilm M617, Roll 639.

5. Postwar Maintenance

After the war plans were made to complete work on Fort Livingston, and in 1868 an appropriation of $24,500 was requested. By 1869, however, this attitude had changed with no work comtemplated at the fort and no appropriation asked.[36] In 1870 the Board of Engineers for Fortifications decided that Fort Livingston should be modified to receive several large rifled and smoothbore cannon, but its request for $38,000 to implement the changes was denied that year and in 1871.[37] Instead, $2,500 from the general contingency appropriation was spent to preserve the work. In April, 1872, all guns were dismounted at Fort Livingston. From then through 1880 only minimal maintenance was performed at the post.[38] During the 1880s officials believed there was a remote chance that the post would become significant because of ongoing work connecting Barataria Bay with Bayous Lafourche and Terrebonne and the

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36. "Report of the Chief of Engineers," October 20, 1868, in Report of the Secretary of War, 1868, p. 19; "Report of the Chief of Engineers," October 25, 1869, in Report of the Secretary of War, 1869, p. 18.

37. "Report of the Chief of Engineers," October 25, 1870, in Report of the Secretary of War, 1870, p. 26; "Report of the Chief of Engineers," October 20, 1871, in Report of the Secretary of War, 1871, pp. 23-24.

38. Swanson, Historic Jefferson Parish, p. 159; Reports of the Chiefs of Engineers, 1872-1880, in Reports of the Secretaries of War, 1872-1880; "Fort Livingston," 1872. NA, RG 77. Cartographic Archives Division, Drawer 259, Sheet 32. Despite the growing insignificance of Fort Livingston, the War Department showed concern over persons photographing the work. In 1874 it asked the Treasury Department to instruct the keeper of a light house recently built west of the post "to prevent the taking of photographs of the Fort, if any person should attempt to use the Light House site for that purpose." This decision was in line with an 1869 War Department directive "prohibiting the taking of photographic or other views of regular forts built by the Engineer Department without permission of the War Department." Clark H. Crosby to Secretary of the Treasury, October 12, 1874, enclosed in Brigadier General Edward D. Townsend to Commanding General, Military Department of the South, October 21, 1874. NA, RG 77. Land Papers (Fort Livingston) 2208.

Atchafalaya.[39] In 1884 more work was done than was accomplished in the previous decade:

> Grass, weeds, &c., were cut from inside the fort and on the ramparts. Some whitewashing was done and a fence built to keep cattle off the slopes. Minor repairs were made to bridges; shot-beds were constructed; shots moved and piled; dismounted guns were raised and blocked; holes in the parade filled, &c.[40]

Minor repairs were made to the ordnance sergeant's quarters in 1885, and in 1886 more plans were prepared for the construction of jetties to protect the shoreline from further erosion.[41]

6. Abandonment of Fort Livingston

But the realities of the times were that Fort Livingston's final days were drawing near. In 1888 the Quartermaster Department took over the post and began removing whatever useful public property remained. Early the next year the last load of ammunition was removed and the ordnance sergeant named Gill, lately in charge of the fort, was transferred to Texas.[42] Livingston was finally abandoned. In 1892 the War Department granted authority to the Treasury Department to build a lighthouse on the fort, the earlier one then being threatened by encroachment of the sea.[43] Eventually (1897) a lighthouse was erected on

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39. See Reports of the Chiefs of Engineers, 1880-1883, in Reports of the Secretaries of War, 1880-1883.

40. "Report of the Chief of Engineers," October 15, 1884, in Report of the Secretary of War, 1884, p. 51.

41. "Report of the Chief of Engineers," October 16, 1885, in Report of the Secretary of War, 1885, p. 45; "Report of the Chief of Engineers," October 28, 1886, in Report of the Secretary of War, 1886, pp. 44-45.

42. Frazer, Forts of the West, p. 62; Army and Navy Journal, February 23, 1889.

43. Secretary of the Treasury Charles Foster to Secretary of War Stephen B. Elkins, May 3, 1892, with indorsements. NA, RG 77. Land Papers (Fort Livingston) 2398.

the north glacis of Fort Livingston.[44] Meantime, erosional damage continued and in 1893 a devastating hurricane swept over the region, destroying the southern corner of the fort.[45] Over the years the wave action gradually advanced on the work, and in 1915 another hurricane added to the earlier destruction of the south corner of the scarp wall, finally exposing the parade to the combined effects of wind, sand, and sea.[46]

In 1923 Fort Livingston and its reservation was returned to the State of Louisiana. Today the remains of the fort erected under such trying conditions over so many years lie on a state wildlife and fisheries reserve.[47] In 1974 the sand-filled ruins of Fort Livingston were entered on the National Register of Historic Places.

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44. "Historical Permanent Fortifications"; Federal Writers' Project, Louisiana: A Guide to the State, p. 413.

45. "Historical Permanent Fortifications."

46. Swanson, Historic Jefferson Parish, pp. 159-60.

47. Military Lands. Louisiana. Fort Livingston. NA, RG 77. Cartographic Archives Division, Drawer 189-La.-7-1; Swanson, Historic Jefferson Parish, p. 159.

CHAPTER XI: BATTERY BIENVENUE, TOWER DUPRÉ, AND THE TOWER AT PROCTOR'S LANDING

A. Battery Bienvenue

1. Guarding the Shoreline

Ever since the British invasion in 1814 had proved the ease of access of the Lake Borgne approach to New Orleans, security-conscious military engineers hoped to thwart similar future designs. The southwestern shore of Lake Borgne beheld several advantageous locations through which a dedicated foe might pursue his objective. As the Board of Engineers for Fortifications years later explained,

> Between the solid ground of the East bank of the Mississippi River and Lake Borgne lies an impassible swamp. Through this swamp the high ground can be approached from the lake by three routes, viz: by a natural ridge from Proctor's Landing, and by the Bayous Dupre and Bienvenue. The closing of these routes would prevent an expeditionary force from a fleet in Lake Borgne from reaching the solid river bank with a view of marching on New Orleans.[1]

The British in 1814, of course, had maneuvered their forces down to Chalmette via the waterways known as Bayous Bienvenue and Mazant. From the marshy, southwestern shore of Lake Borgne, Bayou Bienvenue ran back nearly two and one-half miles before joining Bayou Mazant. Their confluence was deemed the most strategic point at which to locate a permanent fortification. Here an earthen star redoubt had been commenced following the British withdrawal in 1815.[2]

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1. Board of Engineers for Fortifications to Brigadier General Andrew A. Humphreys, February 9, 1878. NA, RG 77. Land Papers (Tower Dupre', La.) 67.

2. Gadsden to Swift, November 10, 1817. NA, RG 77. Entry 221. For the proposed location of the battery, see "Projected Redoubt for the defense of Bayous Bienvenu [sic] and Mazant," 1818. NA, RG 77. Cartographic Archives Division, Drawer 133, Sheet 94-1.

2. General Bernard's Plan

In 1817 General Simon Bernard proposed that a battery be erected here sufficient to hold twenty-three guns and two mortars. This work was to be surrounded by a water-filled ditch and would have a brick-lined scarp completely around--"as it has no flanks and [is] far distant from any succour, the expense of a scarp appears to us indispensable."[3] When threatened by attack, the post was to be garrisoned by between 128 and 224 men, the proposed quarters to accommodate 196 soldiers. In peacetime the garrison would number twenty-five men. As designed, the battery was to take the shape of an irregular rectangle some 332 yards long. Gun platforms would be placed on strong foundations of pilings and grillage sunk in the spongy soil. Besides the quarters, there would be provisions stores, a magazine, and a furnace to heat cannon balls.[4] In addition, plans were drawn for a six-sided three-story citadel for last-ditch defense should the main battery fall to an enemy assault. This martello tower-like structure, to be built some distance behind the main battery, was itself to have a small battery in front. Loopholes for musket fire were to be on the lower level, while the two upper stories, complete with embrasures, would together contain twelve guns. Cost of the main battery was estimated at $94,582, while the citadel was to cost $16,677.[5]

3. Building the Battery

Construction on Battery Bienvenue, as on the other delta area fortifications, went slowly. Scaled down from Bernard's earlier plans, the

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3. Report of Brigadier General Simon Bernard, December 23, 1817. NA, RG 77. Entry 221.

4. Ibid.; "Plan of a projected Battery for the defence of Bayou Mazant, 1817." NA, RG 77. Cartographic Archives Division, Drawer 87, Sheet 1.

5. Ibid.; "Plan, Elevation and Section of a Tower or Resisting Post after reduction of the Battery, 1817," in ibid. An alternate plan for a work at Bayou Bienvenue is in "Projected Redoubt for the defense of Bayous Bienvenu and Mazant," 1818. NA, RG 77. Cartographic Archives Division, Drawer 133, Sheets 94-1 and 94-2.

trace was not completed until December 15, 1826, and excavation did not start until the middle of January, 1827. Work on the masonry scarp walls began in February under the supervision of Captain William H. Chase.[6] By late September, 1827, a grillage of cypress timbers had been laid for the foundation along the front of the work where the ordnance was to be mounted and in the areas designated for buildings. Erection of the scarp walls, quarters, storehouses, and magazine was also underway. A portion of the moat on the side and rear was excavated by civilian labor.[7] As built, Battery Bienvenue was approximately 140 yards long by about 60 yards wide. An open work with a moat, its scarp above the water was two and one-half feet thick. Behind the projected barbette artillery emplacements at the front of the structure was a parade ground, bordered on the east by a brick storehouse, on the west by a powder magazine, and in the rear by a four-roomed, single story brick officers' quarters and a two-room, one-level, brick barracks for enlisted men. A cistern flanked each of the latter two buildings. Behind these structures and all around the battery stood the six-foot-high scarp. On the east side was an entrance with a wooden bridge to cross the moat.[8] The armament to be mounted in Battery Bienvenue comprised twenty cannon and two mortars. The guns were to include eight 24-pounders, three 12-pounders, and two 8-inch seacoast howitzers.[9]

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6. "Sketch exhibiting the actual condition of Battery Bienvenue on the 31st March 1827." NA, RG 77. Cartographic Archives Division, Drawer 87, Sheet 4.

7. "Plan of the Battery Bayou Bienvenue, Exhibiting its construction and condition on the 30th Septr. 1827." NA, RG 77. Cartographic Archives Division, Drawer 87, Sheet 5.

8. Plan of Battery Bienvenue, 1828. NA, RG 77. Cartographic Archives Division, Drawer 87, Sheet 13; "Historical Permanent Fortifications."

9. "Plan of the Battery at Bayou Bienvenue, Louisiana," 1832. NA, RG 77. Cartographic Archives Division, Drawer 87, Sheet 9; Plan of Battery Bienvenue, 1828. NA, RG 77. Cartographic Archives Division, Drawer 87, Sheet 13.

4. Problems and Repairs

Although the battery was finished during the 1830s, it was not occupied on a regular basis and required frequent repairs. In 1839, Chase, now a major, reported on its conditions:

> The Battery Bienvenue having been left without any person to take care of it, the Quarters and cisterns have received much injury. The Parapets of the Battery will require some additional embankments of the Earth. The Magazine requires repairs and also the Ammunition and Provision stores. Stone Traverses for 8 Guns and Beds for two mortars must be constructed.[10]

On February 9, 1842, a military reservation was established in Township 12 south, range 13 east, Southeastern District, Louisiana, containing 934.7 acres along the right bank of Bayou Bienvenue. The reservation embraced all public land within a radius of 1,200 yards of the battery. On June 1, 1846, the State of Louisiana ceded jurisdiction over the tract to the United States.[11] Work underway in 1843 entailed levelling the top of the scarp wall and reducing parapet thickness, the earth removed being used to raise the parade ground. This unfortunately made the parade higher than the floors and doorsills of the quarters and also caused the shot furnace to fill with water in wet weather. "A new one must be built or this one rebuilt," wrote Captain Barnard. Other work involved revetting the interior slope of the parapet

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10. Chase to Totten, March 19, 1839. NA, RG 77. LR C277.

11. United States Military Reservations, p. 146; Fortier, Louisiana, II, 150; Military Lands. Louisiana. Battery Bienvenue. NA, RG 77. Cartographic Archives Division, Drawer 189-La.-3. The land on which the post was erected had been obtained under French patent by M. De Vauxparis and G.B. Prevost in 1730 and 1764. See plat of T12S-R13E, Southeastern District, La. (c. 1850). NA, RG 49. Abandoned Military Reservation Files. Box 103. A later owner, Tumonville DeVilliers, in 1829 tried to get compensation from the Government for the "serious inconvenience and prejudice" that Battery Bienvenue's erection and presence caused him. DeVilliers to Captain William H. Chase, March 20, 1829. NA, RG 77. Land Papers (Louisiana) C418.

with timber, laying wooden gun traverses, and placing a line of palisades to close the gorge at the rear of the work.[12] Like other delta area fortifications, Battery Bienvenue was susceptible to the inherent problems of construction on infirm terrain. By 1846 subsidence had accelerated to the extent that some renovation of the walls of the work was required.[13] Two years later Captain Barnard described his work at the post:

> During the year the main ditch has been excavated all around to a width of 60 feet and to a depth of 5' on the water fronts & 3' on the land fronts. All the walls of officer's quarters & store-rooms were furred & plastered. New brass locks were put upon all the doors. The gable ends of the barracks were anchored to the rafters to prevent their springing off and the backs of the fire-walls cemented to slates, to prevent leaks.[14]

Barnard recommended that stone be substituted for wood in the traverse circles and pintle blocks of the gun emplacements, and earth for wooden banquettes, but concluded that "there is nothing to be done at this work of immediate importance," and requested no appropriation.[15]

5. An Ungarrisoned Post

Through the 1850s the post was almost entirely deserted, watched over by a citizen caretaker. In 1853 tin gutters were installed on the buildings in the work. An inspector next year noted that they

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12. Barnard to Chase, March 24, 1843, inclosed in Chase to Totten, April 4, 1843. NA, RG 77. LR C1321.

13. Swanson, "Keep Sheet." Betsy Swanson has described the marsh lands in which Battery Bienvenue was built as being "so unstable that, in most places, they will not support the weight of a man. They have often been called 'trembling prairies.' They consist of large reeds growing six to eight feet high on a thin layer of floating soil and decaying vegetation." Ibid.

14. "Annual Report of operations at Forts Pike, Wood, Battery Bienvenue & Tower Dupres for the year ending Sept. 30, 1848." NA, RG 77. LR B4013.

15. Ibid.,

"have not been painted and will ere long be corroded through with rust." By then, too, most of the palisades earlier erected had grown rotten.[16] In 1856 ten 24-pounders were mounted in Battery Bienvenue.[17] Yet deterioration of the structure increased. In 1859 the place was depicted as being in bad condition, and the powder magazine had been damaged by lightning.[18] Then in August, 1860, a bad storm struck the area, doing considerable harm to the post. It blew down much of the fence on the west and southwest sides and caused the cannon fronting the southeast face to lean badly. The bridge over the moat was put out of order and the storm destroyed part of the parapet. Moreover, reported the fort keeper, "The Bayou that surround the battery is filling with sand. It wants deepening for in low water, even with a perogue [sic] I cannot come in."[19] Soon after this, Lieutenant Stevens reported that Battery Bienvenue was "in a very bad condition" and that damages to the work "have been accumulating since '58, and have not been attended to for want of funds."[20]

6. The Civil War and After

a. Federal Occupation

In June, 1861, after the Confederate seizure of all fortifications in the delta region, a small unit of sappers and miners under Major Martin L. Smith occupied Battery Bienvenue. Under General Lovell's administration of affairs in the autumn of 1861, ten 24-pounder guns were readied in the battery; five more were stationed in an earthwork battery at nearby Bayou Phillippon, and other works were under construction

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16. Captain P.G.T. Beauregard to Totten, February 3, 1854. NA, RG 77. LB B6186.

17. First Lieutenant Walter H. Stevens to Totten, March 27, 1856. NA, RG 77. LR S7509.

18. First Lieutenant Walter H. Stevens to Lieutenant Colonel Rene E. DeRussy, June 30, 1859. NA, RG 77. LR S8484.

19. W. Saltzmann to Stevens, August 20, 1860. NA, RG 77. LR S8609.

20. Stevens to DeRussey, September 12, 1860. NA, RG 77. LR S8616.

near Berwick Bay, the latter west of New Orleans.[21] But these works were quickly evacuated by the Confederates in April, 1862, with the fall of New Orleans. While General Butler sent his troops to occupy Forts Pike and Macomb, he did not send a force to Battery Bienvenue, considering that post and Tower Dupre to be "defenses from exterior enemies [which] we are in no need to occupy . . . at present."[22] After that, however, Battery Bienvenue was garrisoned by a detachment of the First Infantry Regiment, Corps d'Afrique, reorganized as part of the Twentieth Regiment, Corps d'Afrique, in August, 1863.[23] Through the first part of 1864 Company G, Ninety-first U.S. Infantry, garrisoned Battery Bienvenue, relieved in May by Company K. In August the post was manned by a lieutenant and forty-four men of Company D, Seventy-fourth U.S. Colored Infantry. This unit apparently stayed over the next year, but by November, 1865, a detachment of Company M, Tenth U.S. Colored Artillery (Heavy), was assigned there.[24] Only six guns (four 42-pounders, one 32-pounder, and one 24-pounder) were mounted in the battery at the end of the war.[25]

b. Decline, 1865-1900

Battery Bienvenue saw little use after the Civil War. Valued at $60,000 in 1866,[26] the post's condition worsened through ensuing years.

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21. Lovell Court of Inquiry, pp. 558, 584; Dufour, Night the War was Lost, p. 46.

22. Butler to Secretary of War Edwin Stanton, May 8, 1862, in Marshall, Private and Official Correspondence of Gen. Benjamin Butler, I, 454.

23. Special Order No. 202. Headquarters, Department of the Gulf, August 17, 1863. NA, RG 393. "General and Special Orders, Fort Jackson and Fort Pike, 1863-1870."

24. Post Returns, Fort Macomb, May-August, 1864, September-November, 1865. NA Microfilm M617, Roll 716.

25. Report of Heavy Ordnance, Battery Bienvenue, January 31, 1865. NA, RG 77. Cartographic Archives Division, Drawer 255, Sheet 15-2.

26. New Orleans Times, October 12, 1866.

Work on the gun platforms was proposed in 1868 but evidently was not performed, and in the following year the battery was judged "in very bad condition," requiring extensive repairs.[27] In December, 1869, Ordnance Sergeant William Daniels, who attended the work from Fort Macomb, reported that Battery Bienvenue had been vandalized. On examination, sizeable damage had occurred:

> The wooden revetment of the interior slope of the parapet has been entirely destroyed by fire, four of the chassis have been nearly burned through at the front transom; the Stockade, with the exception of but a few yards has been burned down and partly cut up. The Magazine has been badly damaged by bricks being torn from the side of the door to allow the removal of the hinges, all the windows, locks and pumps, have been taken away and a great amount of smaller damage that cannot be here particularized has been done to the work.[28]

In 1870 the Board of Engineers for Fortifications recommended that Battery Bienvenue be kept from further deterioration. For the next few years small amounts of money from the general contingency fund helped pay for mowing the grass, removing rubbish, building a foot-bridge across the moat, and making small repairs to the barracks and officers' quarters, but beginning in 1873 little more work was done.[29] Subsidence of the foundation increased, and flooding became common. In 1876 the keeper cleared away the sea marsh from the structure to help lessen the danger of fire.[30] In 1877 an officer described Battery Bienvenue as follows:

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27. "Report of the Chief of Engineers," October 20, 1868, in Report of the Secretary of War, 1868, p. 19; "Report of the Chief of Engineers," October 25, 1869, in Report of the Secretary of War, 1869, p. 18.

28. Unidentified officer to Captain George, AAAG, Department of Louisiana, December 16, 1869. NA, RG 393. "Letters Sent, Fort Jackson & Fort Pike, 1869-1871."

29. Reports of the Chiefs of Engineers, 1870-1875, in Reports of the Chiefs of Secretaries of War, 1870-1875.

30. "Report of the Chief of Engineers," October 21, 1876, in Report of the Secretary of War, 1876, pp. 26-27.

> This work has no armament [mounted]; the parade is flooded by high tides and storms; what remains of the buildings will stand, it is thought, for years without material injury, and the cost of caring for the work seems greater than warranted by its present value.[31]

Between 1877 and 1886 virtually nothing was done at Battery Bienvenue and the work fell into decay.[32] Dismounted artillery pieces, consisting of four 42-pounders, one 32-pounder, one 24-pounder, and one 9-pounder howitzer, lay in disarray on the old emplacements into the 1890s.[33] By 1892 the barracks were in ruins,[34] and the deterioration of the post continued into the next century. An army engineering report of 1915 described Battery Bienvenue thusly:

> The work and buildings are in a state of great delapidation [sic]. The roof still remains on the barracks but all the woodwork is gone. The other buildings are a little more than crumbling ruins. The parapet is covered with heavy undergrowth of fair sized trees, and the parade ground is overgrown with marsh grass. All of the guns are dismantled but several of them are still left in the battery.[35]

Today the remains of Battery Bienvenue are hardly visible in the heavy marsh growth. Several 1861-dated cannons are on the site. The masonry scarp has survived its abandonment well, with but a few large

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31. "Report of the Chief of Engineers," October 12, 1877, in Report of the Secretary of War, 1877, p. 22.

32. Reports of the Chiefs of Engineers, 1878-1886, in Reports of the Secretaries of War, 1878-1886.

33. "Battery Bienvenue," 1872. NA, RG 77. Cartographic Archives Division, Drawer 87, Sheet 38; Report of Heavy Ordnance, Battery Bienvenue, December 15, 1873. NA, RG 77. Cartographic Archives Division, Drawer 255, Sheet 15-7; Report of Heavy Ordnance, Battery Bienvenue, June 30, 1892. NA, RG 77. Cartographic Archives Division, Drawer 255, Sheet 15-10.

34. Report of Heavy Ordnance, Battery Bienvenue, June 30, 1892. NA, RG 77. Cartographic Archives Division, Drawer 255, Sheet 15-10.

35. "Historical Permanent Fortifications."

cracks apparent. Most of the powder magazine has also survived, but only portions of the walls of the barracks and other buildings remain. Several private residences are now on the lands adjacent to the ruins of Battery Bienvenue.[36]

B. Tower Dupré

1. The Martello Tower Concept

In 1829 a masonry fortification was commenced on the right bank of Bayou Dupré, along the western shore of Lake Borgne, to guard the way through that pass to higher ground in the vicinity of New Orleans. Erroneously termed a Martello Tower, after a round stone structure standing on the coast of Corsica which had frustrated the British navy in 1783, Tower Dupré (or Dupres or Dupris, as it variously appears in the literature) was neither round nor as large as the popular pattern adopted by British theorists in the eighteenth century. Nonetheless, it represented American adherence to the Martello Tower concept spawned in Europe and introduced to the West with Britain's erection of several in Canada beginning in 1796. In the United States, the tall, circular gun batteries which could direct fire in every front remained a rarity, with only five erected besides Tower Dupré. Two of these were built at Key West in Florida to prevent enemy vessels from entering Gulf Coast waters unmolested. Two more were built along the Atlantic seaboard as far north as South Carolina.[37]

2. Beginning of Tower Dupré

The structure begun in 1829 on Lake Borgne was a hexagonal fortification containing three levels. The first tier had an arched, double entrance guarded by loopholes on either side; twenty more loopholes for muskets were built on four other facets of the tower. Casemated guns were planned for the upper levels, and embrasures for them pierced the

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36. Mike Haubner, "Here are 2 Forts not on Schedule," Headquarters Heliogram, No. 122 (March, 1980), p. 8.

37. Hughes, Military Architecture, p. 175; Sheila Sutcliffe, Martello Towers (Newton Abbot: David and Charles, 1972), p. 22, 135, 137, 138.

thick brick walls that rose almost thirty-two feet above the terrain. To accommodate the concentrated weight, a strong grillage foundation of cypress planks was built to radiate from the center of the base. Similarly, a network a radating beams comprised the basic construction of each of the three tiers and the roof. Eight embrasures were arranged in the walls on the second level, with three of them on the facet fronting on the lake. The third level contained ten embrasures, seven on the three facets bearing toward the lake. As added defense, a pentagonally-shaped exterior lunette with salient in front and complete with wet ditch before it stood adjacent to the tower.[38]

3. Alterations

Tower Dupré was completed by 1841 and then mounted four 24-pounders and two 8-inch seacost howitzers. In that year plans were prepared for two significant modifications to the structure. The first entailed transformation of the lunette in front of the tower into a barbette water battery for six pieces. Although gun emplacements were indeed prepared, no major change occurred in the overall design of the earthwork as was originally considered. The other modification, completed in 1843, involved removal of the third level of the tower, changing it into a two-tiered fortification. The alteration necessitated building a new roof, new floors, and doors. Also, a magazine and storerooms were built into the first tier. A cistern was installed, too, and a palisade was raised connecting the tower and the battery.[39] The

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38. Report on the Hygiene of the United States Army, p. 128; "Plan and Sections of Grillage Foundations for the Tower at Bayou Dupré, Louisiana. 1829." NA, RG 77. Cartographic Archives Division, Drawer 87, Sheet 7; "Tower Duprés" August 30, 1841. NA, RG 77. Cartographic Archives Division, Drawer 87, Sheet 12. On one early map the structure s called the "Military Castle." "Plan of te Plantation of Mr. Antoine Phillippon Junr." 1831. NA, RG 77. Cartographic Archives Division, Drawer 87, Sheet 9.

39. Captain John G. Barnard to Major William H. Chase, March 24, 1843, inclosed in Chase to Totten, April 4, 1843. NA, RG 77. LR C1321; "Plan of a projected Battery to be constructed in front of the Tower erected for the defence of Bayou Dupré." 1841. NA, RG 77. Cartographic Archives Division, Drawer 87, Sheet 10; "Plans, Sections &c of Tower Dupre's [sic] exhibiting proposed alterations and repairs." 1841. NA, RG 77. Cartographic Archives Division, Drawer 87, Sheet 16.

reason why this change was accomplished is unclear, although the loss of the upper tier might have contributed to lessening the overall weight of the structure, thus retarding its subsidence. Furthermore, the erection of gun emplacements in front of the tower would perhaps have compensated for the removal of the third level.

4. Land Claims and Repairs

On February 9, 1842, President Tyler proclaimed a military reservation of all lands lying within 200 yards of Tower Dupré. The Louisiana legislature approved cession of the tract on June 1, 1846, even though the property was claimed under Spanish grant to a Madame Lecompte by a citizen named James McMaster.[40] It appears that the land claim-jurisdiction issue was not legally resolved. By early 1848 Tower Dupré was viewed as a defensively insignificant structure and the Board of Engineers for Fortifications advised that it no longer be maintained.[41] Yet during the year a new slate roof was installed "in place of the old flat one," a cupola was built for a lookout, and the revetment and parapet of the battery near the bayou repaired. "Nothing further is required at present at this work," reported Captain Barnard.[42]

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40. "Military Lands. Louisiana. Tower Dupré." NA, RG 77. Cartographic Archives Division, Drawer 189-La.-6-1.

41. Ibid. Complicating the land claims matter, a 1929 survey, disclosed that the property lay within the old claim of Bartholomy Lafon, which was based on a 1763 French patent to St. Maxent. The Land Commissioner stated, "The records of this office furnish no explanation as to why jurisdiction was assumed over said land. . . ." Commissioner, General Land Office, to Mr. R.P. Rordam, September 24, 1929. NA, RG 49. Records of the General Land Office. Abandoned Military. Reservation Files, Box 57. As early as 1886, however, Secretary of War William C. Endicott wrote: "It appears. . . is not owned by the United States, although it has been in the possession of the Government since the commencement of the work in 1829." Endicott to Secretary of the Interior, June 7, 1886. NA, RG 49. Abandoned Military Reservation Files, Box 125, Item 38.

42. "Annual Report of operations at Forts Pike, Wood, Battery Bienvenue & Tower Dupres for the year ending Sept. 30, 1848." NA, RG 77, LR B4013.

During the 1850s a caretaker looked after the tower, which received damage from numerous storms that swept the region. According to a report of February, 1854, the parapet of the exterior work was beginning to subside and most of its wooden palisades and banquettes were decaying. The ditch surrounding the tower had filled up with residue to about six inches of the level of the parade.[43] In 1855 the palisade was repaired and a levee raised to protect Tower Dupré from high tides.[44] The next year Lieutenant Stevens reported to General Totten that the work mounted four 24-pounders and needed a shot furnace.[45] Over the next few years minor repairs were made to the parapet and cistern. A break in the levee was fixed and the same revetted along the bayou. In 1858 and 1859 it was noted that two 8-inch columbiads would replace two of the 24-pounders in the work as part of an ordnance upgrading planned for all the permanent works along Lake Borgne.[46]

In August, 1860, Keeper Manuel Gerpas reported that a storm that month flooded the inside of Tower Dupré with five feet of water and washed away thirty-five feet of the battery wall in front of the work. The storm also battered down part of the palisade fence and carried off some heavy timbers, necessitating repairs.[47]

5. Occupation and Abandonment

During the first months of the Civil War, Tower Dupré remained in the control of Louisiana militia troops, although no action occurred

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43. Beauregard to Totten, February 3, 1854. NA, RG 77. LR B6186.

44. Stevens to Totten, October 1, 1855. NA, RG 77. LR S7367.

45. Stevens to Totten, March 27, 1856. NA, RG 77. LR S7509.

46. Stevens to Totten, October 2, 1856. NA, RG 77. LR S7685; Stevens to Totten, September 30, 2857. NA, RG 77. LR S8125; Stevens to Lieutenant Colonel Sylvanus Thayer, May 10, 1858. NA, RG 77. LR S8319; Stevens to Thayer, August 10, 1858. NA, RG 77. LR S8380; Stevens to De Russey, August 4, 1859. NA, RG 77. LR S8498.

47. Gerpas to First Lieutenant Walter H. Stevens, August 13, 1860. NA, RG 77. LR S8609.

there. Several 24-pounder cannons guarded the tower,[48] but these were abandoned in the spring of 1862 after the federal navy took New Orleans. Figuratively, the work remained in Union hands for the duration of the war; it was never garrisoned by more than a very few troops. (In March, 1863, four men of Company D, First Infantry Regiment, Louisiana Native Guards, on detached service from Fort Macomb, garrisoned Tower Dupré.)[49] In 1866 and 1867 there were no guns present in Tower Dupré.[50] In 1868 the empty post was reported as being in good condition and needing only a magazine.[51] Two years later, however, it was viewed as being "in a dilapidated condition." Yet there remained the possibility of a new day for the post:

> Should the enterprise of the Mississippi and Mexican Gulf Ship Canal Company in cutting a canal from the Mississippi River to Lake Borgne be successful, the protection of the debouch of the canal into the lake by Tower Dupres, with an exterior battery armed with rifled guns, may become necessary.[52]

During the year that part of the parapet of the exterior battery subjected to heavy erosion during storms was levelled to the height of the terreplein,[53] probably to obviate the need for making frequent repairs.

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48. Lovell Court of Inquiry, p. 584.

49. Post Returns, Fort Macomb, March, 1863. NA, Microfilm M617, Roll 716.

50. Reports of Heavy Ordnance, Tower Dupré, June 30, 1866, and June 30, 1867. NA, RG 77. Cartographic Archives Division, Drawer 255, Sheets 13-2, 13-3.

51. "Report of the Chief of Engineers," October 20, 1868, in Report of the Secretary of War, 1868, p. 19.

52. "Report of the Chief of Engineers," October 25, 1870, in Report of the Secretary of War, 1870, pp. 25-26.

53. "Tower Duprés," 1870. NA, RG 77. Cartographic Archives Division, Drawer 255, Sheet 15.

Over the next decade work on Tower Dupré was minimal, with funds drawn from the contingency appropriation used for its maintenance.[54]

In 1873 some stabilization took place amounting to repairing the interior walls, re-laying part of the floors, hanging a door, and removing trash from the property.[55] But soon after this work was accomplished vandals raided the untended structure, necessitating further improvements. Accordingly, a full-time keeper was employed to look after the tower.[56] Through the rest of the decade of the 1870s work on Tower Dupré was either slight or nonexistent.[57] In 1878 the Board of Engineers for Fortifications reported that

> The battery at Tower Dupré is essentially destroyed and of the Tower itself little was left beside the wall and roof eight years ago. . . . To restore this work and make it available for the purpose for which it was designed would be costly. This Board do not recommend its restoration. . . . It is assumed . . . that the Ship Canal from the Mississippi River to Lake Borgne through Bayou Dupré, in process of construction in 1870, has been abandoned.[58]

In fact, part of the canal had been completed about 1873 and 1874, and Bayou Dupré was widened and straightened for much of its length so that vessels drawing four feet of water or less could pass through the canal to a point near the Mississippi.[59]

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54. "Report of the Chief of Engineers," October 20, 1871, in Report of the Secretary of War, 1871, p. 23; "Report of the Chief of Engineers," October 19, 1872, in Report of the Secretary of War, 1872, p. 20.

55. "Report of the Chief of Engineers," October 20, 1873, in Report of the Secretary of War, 1873, p. 22.

56. "Report of the Chief of Engineers, October 20, 1874, in Report of the Secretary of War, 1874, p. 26.

57. See appropriate Reports of the Chief of Engineers, 1875-1879, in Reports of the Secretaries of War, 1875-1879.

58. Board of Engineers for Fortifications to Brigadier General Andrew A. Humphreys, February 9, 1878. NA, RG. Land Papers (Tower Dupré, La.) 67.

59. "Report of the Chief of Engineers," October 16, 1880, in Report of the Secretary of War, 1880, p. 50.

By this time, however, Tower Dupré was obsolete in an era of rapidly improving armament systems. "The parapet of the battery has nearly all been removed, and there is no armament," observed an officer.[60] Yet the work could, in an emergency, be quickly fitted out "to receive a section of a battery of rifled field guns and a suitable garrison."[61] In 1884 Major Amos Stickney, Corps of Engineers, recommended that Tower Dupré be abandoned and sold. "The tower might be . . . converted into a light-house for entrance to Mexican Gulf Canal, if the canal should ever become a commercial route."[62] Instead, the decline continued. In 1892 the armament return for Tower Dupré read simply: "No guns. No platforms. Work in ruins."[63] Almost a quarter of a century later the tower was surrounded by water because of erosion of the shoreline. Nothing but the walls and a piece of the roof remained.[64] Ultimately the land passed into private hands and in recent years the surviving remnant of Tower Dupré has served as a fishing camp.[65]

C. Tower at Proctor's Landing

1. An Overlooked Approach

In an effort to further protect the approaches through the bayous from Lake Borgne to New Orleans, the War Department as early as 1841 advocated that a defensive work be erected in St. Bernard Parish at Proctor's Landing on the southwest shore of the lake. Particularly, at

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60. "Report of the Chief of Engineers," October 16, 1880, in Report of the Secretary of War, 1880, p. 50.

61. Ibid.

62. "Report of the Chief of Engineers," October 15, 1884, in Report of the Secretary of War, 1884, p. 50.

63. "Tower Duprés, La. Armament Return, April, 1892." NA, RG 77. Cartographic Archives Division, Drawer 255, Sheet 13-6. See also Report of Heavy Ordnance, Tower Dupré, June 30, 1892. NA, RG 77. Cartographic Archives Division, Drawer 255, Sheet 13-7.

64. "Historical Permanent Fortifications."

65. Swanson, "Keep Sheet."

Proctor's Landing there was Bayou Ysclosky leading inland toward the Mississippi, beside which ran a shell-surfaced road.[66] For some inexplicable reason this route to New Orleans had been neglected earlier. "Why the defence of this avenue was not provided for in the system proposed by General Bernard, I have not been able to divine," wrote Chief Engineer Totten.[67]

2. Delays in Construction

The site on the point of Proctor's Landing just above high tide was surveyed early in 1845 by Second Lieutenant Paul O. Hébert.[68] In the following year the State of Louisiana, manifestly desirous of obtaining the fortification quickly, ceded jurisidiction of the tract to the United States.[69] Basic designs for a garrisoned tower structure were shortly prepared by Second Lieutenant Horatio G. Wright, and a request for $30,000 for beginning the work was submitted to Congress.[70] A fortification at the landing was deemed essential:

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66. "Map of Proctor's Landing," 1845. NA, RG 77. Cartographic Archives Division, Drawer 87, Sheet 18; Colonel Joseph G. Totten to Secretary of War W.L. Marcy, July 5, 1848. U.S. Congress. Senate. Report of the Secretary of War, in answer to a resolution of the Senate calling for information as to the necessity of a fortification at Proctor's Landing, Louisiana. S. Doc. 61, 30 Cong., 1st sess., 1848, p. 2.

67. Quoted in Colonel Joseph G. Totten to Secretary of War W.L. Marcy, July 5, 1848. U.S. Congress. Senate. Report of the Secretary of War, in answer to a resolution of the Senate calling for information as to the necessity of a fortification at Proctor's Landing, Louisiana. S. Doc. 61, 30 Cong., 1st sess., 1848, p. 2.

68. "Map of Proctor's Landing," 1845; Hébert to Captain John G. Barnard, March 12, 1845. NA, RG 77. LR B2452; "Plan of the Position at Proctor's Landing," March 15, 1845. NA, RG 77. Cartographic Archives Division, Drawer 87, Sheet 17.

69. Military Lands. Louisiana. Proctor's Landing. NA, RG 77. Cartographic Archives Division, Drawer 189-La.-17-1.

70. "General Plan of Tower and Battery (large)." April, 1846. NA, RG 77. Cartographic Archives Division, Drawer 87, Sheet 19; Colonel Joseph G. Totten to Secretary of War W.L. Marcy, April 4, 1846. U.S. Congress. Senate. Report of the Secretary of War, transmitting . . . a plan and estimates of the expense of erecting fortifications for the defence of the city of New Orleans. S. Doc. 281, 29 Cong., 1st sess., 1846.

> From this landing to the city of New Orleans is twenty eight miles of good road, without any obstacle, natural or artificial, to prevent the debarkation of troops or their march with baggage and artillery. A battery is proposed to be erected at this point to prevent the approach of boats, and a tower to be erected for the garrison. The facilities now presented at this place for the approach of an enemy should no longer be afforded. Common prudence requires that every important point of approach to any of our principal cities, which is peculiarly vulnerable, should be put in a situation to resist attack.[71]

Yet funds for construction of a work were not forthcoming for several years, despite constant urging by the Chief Engineer.[72]

3. Land Acquisition

Part of the delay perhaps hinged on the fact that the United States had not yet obtained clear title to the property in question. Early in 1855 Captain P.G.T. Beauregard, a native of the area, surveyed several places in the vicinity of Proctor's Landing and the nearby community of Proctorville. He looked for available property that would effectively command Bayou Ysclosky, the Shell Road, and the newly-completed Mexican Gulf Railroad that paralleled the bayou. Beauregard finally selected as ideal a tract just north, and adjacent to, Bayou Ysclosky. Not only could a fort erected there guard the important routes inland, but it "could not be turned on account of the low prairies on either side of it, so that it would be perfectly secure in its rear. . . ."[73] On March 15, 1856, 100 acres, ten of them fronting Lake Borgne

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71. U.S. Congress. House. Dauphin Island and Proctor's Landing. H. Rept. 2450, 29 Cong., 1st sess., 1846, p. 2.

72. See Totten to Marcy, July 5, 1848. U.S. Congress. Senate. Report of the Secretary of War, in answer to a resolution of the Senate calling for information as to the necessity of a fortification at Proctor's Landing, Louisiana. S. Doc. 61, 30 Cong., 1st sess., 1848, pp. 1-3.

73. Beauregard to Totten, April 7, 1855. NA, RG 77. Land Papers (Proctor's Landing, La.) B6504.

on the north side of Bayou Ysclosky, were finally acquired by the Government from Mary Screven, widow of Stephen R. Proctor, for $10,000. Meantime, the state had ceded jurisdiction over the site to the United States by virtue of an act of legislature dated March 9, 1855. The square tract became known as the Proctor's Landing Military Reservation.[74]

4. Building Begins

Construction of the work at Proctor's Landing began in March, 1856, under the supervision of Beauregard and his assistant, Brevet Second Lieutenant Godfrey Weitzel. Initial operations involved the building of a canal and levee around the site. Many supplies were obtained locally, including lumber from Jonathan Frestem and brick from Moses Eastman.[75] In addition, civilian carpenters, masons, pile drivers, and laborers were hired for work that summer in building a lime and cement house, an overseer's quarters, a wharf, and a rail track for transporting materials, and in placing the piles for the foundation of the tower. Later that season more buildings were erected and a unique, tri-level grillage for the tower was completed.[76] Cypress pilings were also driven for the walls of an exterior battery to be built in the rear of the tower, and ditches for that structure were commenced.[77] Raised mostly according to Beauregard's own specifications, the three-tiered tower was built with

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74. Military Lands. Louisiana. Proctor's Landing. NA, RG 77. Cartographic Archives Division, Drawer 189-La.-17-1; "Sale of a tract of land" (Proctor's Landing), March 15, 1856. NA, RG 49. Abandoned Military Reservation Files. Box 118; United States Military Reservations, p. 151; Fortier, Louisiana, II, 152.

75. Beauregard to Totten, April 5, 1856. NA, RG 77. LR B6774.

76. "Monthly Report of Operations at Military Defences at Proctor's Landing La. during the Month of July 1856." NA, RG 77. LR B6867; "Annual Report of Operations for the Works under the charge of Capt. & Bvt Major G.T. Beauregard, Corps of Engineers, to September 30th 1856." NA, RG 77. LR B6920.

77. "Annual Report of Operations," September 30, 1856. NA, RG 77. LR B6920.

strong iron reinforcing beams, an unusual feature on military fortifications of that day. The heavy brick walls were buttressed at the foundations by reversed arches that helped offset their tremendous weight. Two wet ditches surrounded the tower, the outer one equipped with a flood gate. A modern plumbing system was designed for the structure, involving the collection of runoff water in cisterns from which it could be pumped to centrally-located toilets and washrooms. Soldiers stationed at the tower were to reside in the two lower levels, the walls of which were equipped with long, narrow loopholes that could be closed with sliding sashes. On the second tier eight guns were to be placed, while on the third level, or top of the work, four more guns were to be arranged on traverse circles at the corners, en barbette. The entrance to the tower, at its rear, was reached by a drawbridge across the inner moat. Beyond the ditch stood the outbuildings whose rear walls also contained loopholes. The exterior barbette battery facing the lake was formed inside a zigzag-running wall designed to reduce the destructive power of the waves. Overall, the tower measured seventy-six feet square by twenty-seven feet high.[78]

In 1857 the foundation was finished and the masonry walls raised twelve feet all around. Much work on the outside battery was completed, its parapet formed, and the gun platforms and traverse circles emplaced.[79] Transportation problems forced some delays, notably in the placement of granite blocks for the entrance, loopholes, and embrasures. In May, 1858, work on the masonry was briefly suspended because of lack

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78. "Fortification, Proctors Landing, La.," 1856. NA, RG 77. Cartographic Archives Division, Drawer 87, Sheet 29; "Proctor's Landing, La.," September 30, 1857. NA, RG 77. Cartographic Archives Division, Drawer 87, Sheet 31; "Plans, Sections, & Details of Roof Surface, Terre-pleine, Gun Platforms &c. of Tower at Proctor's Landing," June, 1858. NA, RG 77. Cartographic Archives Division, Drawer 87, Sheet 34; "Proctor's Landing, La., June 30th 1858." NA, RG 77. Cartographic Archives Division, Drawer 87, Sheet 35; Swanson, "Keep Sheet."

79. "Annual Report of Operations for the Works under the charge of Bvt Maj. G.T. Beauregard, Corps of Engineers, to September 30th 1857." NA, RG 77. LR B7491.

of funds to pay the masons, although the scarp wall was mostly finished already. Placement of the iron beams on the first and second levels also occurred.[80] Eventually, a granite pediment with a bold date of 1856 was erected over the entrance of the tower.

5. The Unfinished Tower

The tower at Proctor's Landing went uncompleted, however, largely because work on it was disrupted by the Civil War. Consequently, the post was neither formally garrisoned nor armed, although during the war years a unit of the Ninth Connecticut Volunteer Infantry was stationed at nearby Proctorville.[81] In January, 1865, Captain James Parker, Company C, Seventy-seventh U.S. Colored Infantry, nominally commanded the post, though no one was there.[82] No further work was completed on the tower, and after the war it fell into decline. In 1871 and 1872 a fort-keeper was employed at $360 per year "to protect the work and material on hand from depredation."[83] Thereafter, virtually nothing was done to improve or preserve the post and it severely deteriorated in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.[84]

Perhaps because it was never completed, the tower was never officially named. Local inhabitants of Shell Beach called it Proctor's Tower or Fort Beauregard, after its principal architect and builder. By

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80. "Annual Report of Operations for the Works under the charge of Bvt Major G.T. Beauregard, Corps of Engrs to the 30th of June 1858." NA, RG 77. LR B7856.

81. The Connecticut War Record, February, 1864, in the MOLLUS-Mass. Collection, United States Army Military History Institute.

82. Report of Heavy Ordnance, Proctor's Landing, January 31, 1865. NA, RG 77. Cartographic Archives Division, Drawer 255, Sheet 15-1.

83. "Report of the Chief of Engineers," October 20, 1871, in Report of the Secretary of War, 1871, p. 23; "Report of the Chief of Engineers," October 19, 1872, in Report of the Secretary of War, 1872, p. 20.

84. See Reports of the Chiefs of Engineers, 1873-1886, in Reports of the Secretaries of War, 1873-1886.

1915 much of the shoreline had eroded on three sides of the tower and it stood in the middle of a marsh.[85] While the post never figured in the military defense of the region, it nonetheless attained a measure of social significance. Local Isleño residents came to attach great meaning to the abandoned structure and "the fort and its inexplicable light" became an enduring local legend.[86]

In 1919 the tower and surrounding property was turned over to the Department of the Interior for disposal. Three years later the land was auctioned off, realizing proceeds of $2,196.80. At the time, the old brick tower was valued at only $250 and was acquired by Joseph Gottlieb.[87] No improvements have since been made to the property. Encroaching waves now lap constantly against the masonry scarp and ultimately the tower at Proctor's Landing will most likely be lost. On September 20, 1978, it was entered on the National Register of Historic Places.

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85. "Historical Permanent Fortifications."

86. In 1949 a visitor to Shell Beach encountered "the fort light" while hunting alligators. Years later he recalled the event: "I spotted this strange light. It glowed like a coal oil lamp, then it looked like an old carbide light. . . . The light just stood there suspended in the air about three feet off the water and about 50 feet away. I . . . paddled toward it, but the more I paddled toward it the further it seemed to move away. . . . After paddling about one-fourth mile, I reached the big 'fort lagoon.' The light was still in front of me. It moved across to the west side of the lagoon. I was in the middle of the lagoon when the light reached the shoreline on the west side and then all of a sudden the marsh lit up in a huge white glow with white smoke bellowing up into the air." Bernard Treadaway, "The Mysterious Light of Old Fort Beauregard." Clipping from an unidentified newspaper, ca. October, 1976.

87. Proctor's Landing. NA, RG 49. Abandoned Military Reservations Files. Box 5; George J. Reiley to Land Commissioner, June 6, 1922. NA, RG 49. Abandoned Military Reservations Files. Division K. Fort Beauregard. Other locals who obtained parcels of the reservation were Oliver S. Livaudais, Vick Jourdain, Nicholas Robin, J.A. Nunenmacher, Anthony Alonzo, Gerald Deo Gracias, J.W. Burdge, Frank Fernandez, Emilio Robin, Martinez Campo, Marzelmo Rano, Joseph Campo, Jr., Licio Assevedo, Flore Gonzalez, Sebastian Campo, and Sciano Guerra. Ibid.

CHAPTER XII: CAMP PARAPET, A CIVIL WAR EARTHWORK

A. Establishment of Camp Parapet

In 1861 Confederate defensive preparations entailed not only the strengthening of existing permanent works around New Orleans, but also the establishment of extensive earthen fortifications in the immediate vicinity of the city. These consisted of a line of entrenchments on either side of the Mississippi River at Chalmette; another line on the right bank farther upstream along Company's Canal; numerous scattered works guarding the Pontchartrain Railroad, Bayou St. John, New Canal, and the Jefferson & Lake Pontchartrain Railroad all north of the city; and the most elaborate of them all, Camp Parapet.[1]

1. Description

Like the others, Camp Parapet was not a permanent fortification of masonry, but rather a vast earthwork erected on the east bank of the Mississippi River above New Orleans. Begun in 1861 by the Confederates who feared a Union assault from the north, the post became an important occupation point for federal troops following the fall of the city in April, 1862. On the west end of the line of fortifications, at the river bank, stood a main redoubt of irregular, or asymmetrical, design with two pentagonally-shaped features facing south, or downriver. From there the line extended in zigzag fashion some two miles east, crossing the important high ground of Metairie Ridge and its railroad, and terminating in a star-like work, called Fort Star, next to a swamp. The line was

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1. Atlas to Accompany the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1891-95), plate XC, 1; "Fortification on Bayou St. John." 1864. NA, RG 77. Cartographic Archives Division, Drawer 133, Sheet 66. In late 1863 and early 1864 federal engineers proposed a single-tiered work for English Turn to contain emplacements for twenty-eight casemated guns and eighteen barbette pieces. This fort, planned to front the Mississippi for approximately 230 yards, was never constructed. "Proposed Fortification at English Turn." 1864. NA, RG 77. Cartographic Archives Division, Drawer 133, Sheet 64.

armed with various pieces of artillery throughout its length, and a short distance from Fort Star it formed a hornwork in which a cavalier unit was built.[2]

The earthworks of Camp Parapet comprised large, heavy defenses prepared in accordance with the strictures governing erection of temporary fortifications. Reportedly, they were designed by an old, retired European officer, Pierre Benjamin Buisson. The line of epaulement stood upwards of nine feet high throughout its length; the superior slope was eight feet, while the parapet was twenty-seven feet thick at its base. A wide ditch between seven and nine feet deep fronted the works and behind this were situated the soldiers' campground and an artillery park.[3] Across the Mississippi from Camp Parapet the Confederates erected another, smaller, line of works that ran south along the Westwego Canal. Like Camp Parapet, this fortification was designed to protect the rail lines running north and west from the city.[4]

2. A Confederate Garrison

As a Confederate post, Camp Parapet provided a rallying point for volunteer troops desirous of protecting the region from Yankee incursions. Camp routine differed little from that at any other army post, Union or Confederate, with the daily regimen consisting of drill and

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2. "Camp Parapet. Defences of New Orleans," November, 1863. NA, RG 77. Cartographic Archives, Drawer 133, Sheet 77; Swanson, Historic Jefferson Parish, pp. 129-30. During the early months of the war great numbers of troops assembled at several Confederate camps set up in the area. Besides Camp Parapet, the most extensive and fortified, there was Camp Lewis, some distance below on the river; Camp Walker, at Metairie Race Track; and Camp Moore, north of Lake Pontchartrain. Ibid., pp. 93, 129.

3. "Camp Parapet. Defences of New Orleans," November, 1863. NA, RG 77. Cartographic Archives Division, Drawer 133, Sheet 77; Clipping from an unidentified newspaper, May 3, 1936, in the Louisiana Collection, Howard-Tilton Library, Tulane University.

4. Swanson, Historic Jefferson Parish, p. 95.

fatigue duty. Occasional festivities interrupted the otherwise mundane life of the soldiers. In September, 1861, a soldier stationed at Camp Parapet wrote that he had attended a barbecue and a ball and that he had "danced all night." He stated that "we have had a ball two or three times a week since we came down here."[5]

B. Union Troops Occupy Camp Parapet

The Confederates withdrew from Camp Parapet after Farragut's ships got by Forts Jackson and St. Philip in April, 1862, and steamed north to take New Orleans. Federal troops descended on Camp Parapet in large numbers after the Battle of Baton Rouge the following August. There they began strengthening the post to meet an anticipated counter assault by the Confederates. At the same time they improved the smaller work across the river and upstream from Camp Parapet, calling it Fort Banks after Major General Nathaniel P. Banks. This latter post, under the site of the present Huey P. Long Bridge, held emplacements for six cannons. Five miles above New Orleans on the east bank stood yet another military facility, Sedgewick Hospital.[6]

One new occupant of Camp Parapet was Captain John William DeForest of the Twelfth Connecticut Volunteer Infantry. DeForest penned a vivid impression of the post on his arrival:

> We took the steam transport Mississippi and came to Carrollton. . . . Here there is a large Rebel fortification, facing northward and stretching from the levee on the west to a cypress swamp on the east. It is an earthwork nearly twelve feet high and protected by a ditch fifteen feet broad. The twenty large iron guns which lately defended it are lying on the ground, their carriages having been burned by the rabble after the garrison left. At present our sole artillery consists of four brass pieces belonging to a Massachusetts battery. We,

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5. Private James D. Durin to his sister, September 1, 1861. Quoted in Ibid., p. 93.

6. Atlas to Accompany the Official Records, plate XC, 1; Swanson, Historic Jefferson Parish, p. 95; Unidentified newspaper, May 3, 1936.

> the Twelfth Connecticut, are encamped next the levee, while the Ninth holds the flank near the swamp. It is reported that the rest of the brigade will soon be here, and we earnestly hope so, for the front is long and the guard duty heavy.[7]

In May, 1862, Camp Parapet was occupied by 3,746 officers and men of the following units: Ninth and Twelfth Regiments, Connecticut Volunteer Infantry; eight companies of the Seventh Regiment, Vermont Volunteer Infantry; the Fifteenth Regiment, Maine Volunteer Infantry; Manning's Fourth Massachusetts Artillery Battery; Duncan's First Vermont Artillery Battery; Holcomb's Second Vermont Artillery Battery; Brown's Pioneer Company E, Thirtieth Regiment, Massachusetts Volunteer Infantry; and seven companies of the Eight Regiment, New Hampshire Volunteer Infantry.[8] These numbers fluctuated from month to month as troops arrived at and departed the post. In Union control, Camp Parapet became a defensive bulwark. The principal redoubt on the river had two 32-pounder carronades, one 32-pounder gun, and three 24-pounder guns to defend it. Inside stood a few structures, including four magazines, a hot-shot furnace, observatory, guard house, and officers quarters. A flagpole stood near the center of the redoubt, and sallyports were in the northwest corner and on the south, or rear, side. Along the zigzag epaulement other armament was placed. Eight 24-pounder cannon, including a pair guarding the crossing of the New Orleans, Jackson, & Great Northern Railroad, two 42-pounders, and one 10-pounder Parrott were mounted between the main redoubt and the hornwork. Four more 24-pounders were placed in that structure. In the star fort at the east

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7. Letter, May 14, 1862, in DeForest, A Volunteer's Adventures, p. 20.

8. Post Returns, Camp Parapet, May, 1862. NA Microfilm M617, Roll 898.

end of the line was a powder magazine. In front of the earthwork line, at about the halfway point, a military cemetery was established.[9]

1. The Butler-Phelps Controversy

During the first weeks of Union occupation there arose a controversy between General Butler, commanding the Department of the Gulf, and Brigadier General John W. Phelps, who commanded Camp Parapet. The problem arose following the fall of New Orleans when numerous runaway blacks began appearing at the federal camps around New Orleans, sometimes forcibly attempting entrance for food and shelter. In Butler's view, the runaways, while private property, were to be considered as contraband of war, and thus were not subjected to the laws governing the disposition of fugitive slaves. Yet occasionally the blacks confronted not only municipal police but the federal troops called to assist the civil authorities. This policy in effect alienated the blacks from their supposed liberators. Complicating this situation was the attitude of General Phelps, an ardent abolitionist from Vermont who believed that the slaves should be freed and armed and not forced to perform fatigue labor as was the usual military practice. When Butler issued a directive to Phelps excluding "all unemployed persons, black and white, . . . from your lines," the austere Phelps openly challenged it. Numerous blacks were permitted into the federal lines at Camp Parapet. When irate planters sought return of their slaves, Phelps rebuffed them, whereupon they complained to Butler, who investigated the dispute.[10]

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9. "Camp Parapet. Defences of New Orleans." NA, RG 77. Cartographic Archives Division. Drawer 133, Sheet 77; "Main Redoubt. Camp Parapet, New Orleans," 1864. NA, RG 77. Cartographic Archives Division, Drawer 133, Sheet 80; "Camp Parapet Fortifications. Cavalier." August 1, 1864. NA, RG 77. Cartographic Archives Division, Drawer 133, Sheet 79. Swanson, Historic Jefferson Parish, p. 94. The star fort was incomplete, with only the salients on the south half finished. In late 1864 plans were drawn for completing the work. "Star Redoubt at Camp Parapet, New Orleans," November 3, 1864. NA, RG 77. Cartographic Archives Division, Drawer 133, Sheet 78.

10. Ripley, Slaves and Freedmen in Civil War Louisiana, pp. 28-31; Butler to Phelps, May 23, 1862, in Marshall, Correspondence of Gen. Benjamin Butler, I, 514.

Butler sent an aide to check on Phelps's adherence to the exclusion order. The aide reported that "the soldiers from Camp Parapet are allowed to range the country, insult the planters, and entice negroes away from their plantations. . . ." He continued:

> If on any of the Plantations here a negro is punished when he most deserves it, the fact becoming known at General Phelps' camp, a party of soldiers are sent immediately to liberate them, and with orders to bring them to Camp. A negro convicted of barn-burning, and afterwards of riotous conduct on the plantation of Mrs. Butler Kennar (a lady who has from you a safe guard, and by which all officers and soldiers are commanded to respect her property, and to afford her every protection), was confined in the stocks, that he might on the first opportunity be sent to the city for trial, was by a company of soldiers, sent by General Phelps, taken to the Camp. Yesterday an outbuilding on Mrs. Fendeair's Plantation was broken open by these soldiers, and three negroes, confined there over night, taken out and carried to the Camp, notwithstanding the presence of the owners, who protested against the act as one contrary to all orders. The soldiers also broke into the house and stole therefrom silver spoons, dresses, and other articles.
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> While, Sir, such acts are permitted, it is utterly impossible to call upon the negroes for any labor, as they say they have only to go the Fort to be free, and are therefore very insolent to their masters.[11]

This officer estimated that there were between 100 and 150 blacks then at Camp Parapet,[12] and within a few weeks' time up to fifty a day were reaching the post, all the while the planters complained that they could not gather their crops. When Phelps finally ordered his pickets to turn away the refugees it was too late. They kept coming. On June 15, 1862, an officer reported on a large group of negroes, young and old, robust and infirm, that had crossed the river and was camped on the levee near Camp Parapet:

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11. Captain Edward Page, Jr., to Butler, May 27, 1862. Ibid., pp. 524-25. See also W. Mitthoff, President of Police Jury, Jefferson Parish, to Butler, May 21, 1862, in ibid., pp. 509-10.

12. Page to Butler, May 27, 1862, in ibid., p. 525.

> They brought with them boxes, bedding, and luggage of all sorts, which lie strewn upon the levee and the open spaces around the picket. The women and children, and some feeble ones who needed shelter, were permitted to occupy a deserted house just outside the lines. They are quite destitute of provisions, many having eaten nothing for days except what our soldiers have given them from their own rations. In accordance with orders already issued the guard was instructed to permit none of them to enter the lines.[13]

Phelps's zeal finally got the best of him. During the summer of 1862 he tried to recruit the blacks as soldiers, a notion that Butler then resisted, preferring to use the Negroes as laborers. Disgusted, Phelps resigned his commission in August.[14]

2. Army Life at Camp Parapet

Some idea about life at Camp Parapet during these first months after the fall of New Orleans can be discerned in the letters of Captain DeForest and others. The camp was surrounded by diverse ethnic groups, including rich planters, poor but "industrious" Germans, French Creoles "dressed in tatters and extremely dirty," and "ragged slaves."[15] Officers commonly employed black servants from among the runaways.

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13. Major Frank H. Peck to Phelps, June 15, 1862, in War of the Rebellion, Series I, Vol. XV, 491. Captain DeForest referred to this event in a letter of June 15, 1862, in A Volunteer's Adventures, pp. 26-27.

14. Phelps to Captain R.S. Davis, July 31, 1862, in ibid., pp. 534-35; Mark Mayo Boatner III, The Civil War Dictionary (New York: David McKay Company, Inc., 1959), p. 650. The immediate issue surrounding Phelps's departure had to do with the leveling of some trees between Lake Pontchartrain and the right of the Camp Parapet line. "You have 500 Africans organized into companies . . .," wrote Butler to Phelps. "This work they are fitted to do. It must either be done by them or by soldiers now drilled and disciplined. You have said the location is unhealthy to the soldiers; it is not to the negro. Is it not best that these unemployed Africans should do this labor? . . . In so employing them I see no evidence of slave-driving or employing you as a slave-driver." August 2, 1862, in War of the Rebellion, Series I, vol. XV, 536.

15. Letter, May 14, 1862, in DeForest, A Volunteer's Adventures, pp. 20-21.

> Negroes have depreciated as much as any other Southern circulating medium. They straggle into camp daily, more than we know what to do with. I have one named Charley Weeks, a bright and well-mannered mulatto, evidently a pet household servant, and lately chattel to one General Thompson of the departed Rebel army. He has a trunk and two suits of broadcloth, besides his workday clothes. I have established him in my cooking tent and promised him my sublime protection, which is more effective here now than it would have been three weeks ago.[16]

The drill and fatigue of the camp proved extremely boring, and fortunate indeed was the regiment that got orders to head north.[17] Wrote DeForest:

> It would seem that we of the Twelfth Connecticut, one of the healthiest, largest and best drilled regiments in the division, are destined to stay in peaceful possession of this earthwork, guarding New Orleans against a foe which cannot get near it. I begin to despair of finding a chance to fight unless there is another war after this one.[18]

Yet the officers, at least, fared quite well in their circumstances. DeForest's group organized an officers' mess in a small house within the camp. Cooks were hired from neighboring plantations and the black servants waited tables. Army stores were bartered for fresh eggs, fish, vegetables, and chickens.[19] Nonetheless, there existed much sickness at Camp Parapet and "swamp fever" took a deadly toll among the troops of DeForest's regiment.[20] Lack of sanitation in the low country complicated the medical picture. One post along the Camp Parapet line became known as "Camp Death," where sickness and demise occurred daily. A soldier of the Sixth Michigan Volunteer Infantry observed that in December,

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16. Ibid., p. 22.

17. Letter, June 15, 1862, in ibid., p. 25.

18. Ibid.

19. Ibid.

20. Ibid., p. 27n.

1862, only about one quarter of his regiment was healthy and fit for duty. The soldier described the virulence and squallor of "Camp Death":

> Mud ankle deep, almost pulling our brogans from our feet at every step . . . we pitched our tents among the slimy brakes and disagreeable odors that arose from the surface. To bunk on the ground was simply impossible, therefore we drive stakes in the soft earth and built our bunks up from the mud as much as possible. Ten thousand pests continually harrassed us day or night in the shape of monstrous mosquitoes and gnats. Our faces assumed the color and appearance of some pestilential plague. To sleep was sometimes an impossiblity, and often times only utter fatigue could bring this solace for our sad condition. . . . Water was hauled to us in barrels from the city or from the lake or river. Sometimes this supply failed us and we were compelled to drink of this filth to quench the burning thirst that continually abided with us in that camp. . . . Oh, that terrible enemy to the Yankee soldier in the Louisiana swamp, known as swamp fever, by his hand many comrades were stricken down in the midst of life and laid away under the accursed soil of the swamp.[21]

To counteract the troops' susceptibility to malaria, the surgeons urged that they be drilled daily in the hot sun for exercise to promote their abundant perspiration.[22]

Compounding the health problem was boredom; most of the time there was nothing to do but drill. "Our life is roundly dull," wrote DeForest, "and would be unsupportable but for drilling, making returns and other such small chores which fritter time into digestible fragments. We wish we were on the Potomac or Rappahannock."[23] And there was no hope of an insurrection of New Orleans citizens against the presence of Union troops to break the monotony. The city was "too helpless to do more than glare and mutter," and many of the Irish and German element, in fact, supported the federal objectives. "Probably half the fellows who

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21. Reminiscence of Ben C. Johnson, Sixth Michigan Volunteer Infantry, quoted in Swanson, Historic Jefferson Parish, p. 130.

22. Letter, June 29, 1862, in DeForest, A Volunteer's Adventures, p. 28.

23. Letter, July 13, 1862, in ibid, p. 31.

defended the [lower] forts against us are already wearing our uniform," stated DeForest, and he knew some in his own regiment.[24]

The climate and the insects together provided a grueling test of endurance for the men stationed at Camp Parapet. Captain DeForest elaborated:

> This is the rainy season here, but by no means a cool season. I cannot give you the temperature, for there is not a thermometer in the brigade; but in scorching and sweating a man's strength away it beats anything that I ever before experienced. Sitting in my tent, with the sides looped up all around, I am drenched with perspiration. I come in from (p. 38) inspection (which means standing half an hour in the sun) with coat and trousers almost dripping wet, and my soaked sash stained with the blue of my uniform. There is no letup, no relenting, to the heat. Morning after morning the same brazen sun inflames the air till we go about with mouths open like suffering dogs. Toward noon clouds appear, gusts of wind struggle to overset our tents, and sheets of rain turn the camp into a marsh, but bring no permanent coolness.
>
> The night air is as heavy and dank as that of a swamp, and at daybreak the rotten odor of the earth is sickening. It is a land moreover of vermin, at least in this season. The evening resounds with mosquitoes; a tent hums with them like a beehive, audible rods away; as Lieutenant Potter says, they sing like canary birds. When I slip under my mosquito bar they prowl and yell around me with the ferocity of panthers.
>
> Tiny millers and soft green insects get in my eyes, stick to my perspiring face, and perish by scores in the flame of my candle. Various kinds of brilliant bugs drop on my paper, where they are slain and devoured by gangs of large red ants. These ants rummage my whole habitation for rations, crawl inside my clothing and under my blanket at night, and try to eat me alive.[25]

3. Training Black Soldiers

In August, 1862, several hundred more blacks arrived with the troops coming down from Baton Rouge. Still more arrived daily from

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24. Ibid.

25. Letter, August 13, 1862, in ibid., pp. 37-38.

the plantations. Because of Butler's exclusion order, all camped in front of the rampart, some in leaky huts of cane or rails, some out in the open under the drenching rains that came each afternoon. Some of the Negroes already had been shipped downriver to help repair Fort Jackson. Many of those remaining at Camp Parapet were formed into a squad at General Phelps's behest and began drilling.[26] Prophetically, DeForest guessed that they would soon be enlisted as soldiers, despite the misgivings of Butler and others. "They take to drilling kindly; they learn to keep rank and step in a very short time; and those who have been tried at the heavy guns work them as well as our fellows." Furthermore, noted DeForest, "At Baton Rouge the officers' waiters and other black camp followers picked up the rifles of the wounded and fought gallantly."[27]

4. A False Alarm

Occasionally, the prospect of battle broke the tedium of life at Camp Parapet. For a while shortly after its occupation troops were sent out after wagon trains hauling Confederate supplies. In the course of pursuing them the soldiers were often forced to wade through swamps in waist-deep water amid fallen trees and alligators.[28] One false alarm occurred in September, 1862. Fortunately the emergency was not real, for the soldiers, as described by DeForest, were in no condition to meet it.

> Last evening I thought that . . . the Twelfth was about to fight its first battle. About nine o'clock scattering musket shots broke out on the picket line, running along the front from the river to the cypress swamp. Then, before I could buckle on sword and revolver, there was a yell from the sergeants of "Fall in!" followed by the long roll of all the regiments roaring sullenly through the damp night.
>
> The rain had poured nearly all day, and the camp was a slop of mud and puddles. My men splashed through the

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26. Ibid., p. 39; Letter, August 27, 1862, in ibid., p. 39.

27. Letter, August 27, 1862, in ibid., pp. 39-40.

28. Swanson, Historic Jefferson Parish, p. 130.

sludge and halted on the little company parade, jabbering, reeling and scuffling. I saw at once what was the matter: payday had worked its usual mischief: one third of them were as drunk as pipers. In my rage at their condition I forgot all about the enemy. I pushed and flung them into their places, and called them sots, and used other bad language.

"If I was the angel Gabriel," said my lieutenant, "I should take my trumpet out of my mouth to swear."

The company had scarcely counted off when there came a yell from the piercing voice of the lieutenant colonel: "Battalion! load at will; load!"--When the rattle and thud of the ramrods ceased he added, "To the parapet!--double quick; mar--ch!"

Through the mud we trotted, jumping the ditches which pretend to drain the camp, and forming battalion-line along the base of our earthwork. Ten minutes of silence followed, and then came an order from the general to return to quarters, the alarm having been a false one, perhaps for practice. Now ensued a real fight among my bacchanals, which I quieted by sending one man to the guardhouse, pushing others into their tents, and ordering lights out.

To comprehend this drunkenness you must understand that many of my men are city toughs, in part Irish; also that they are desperate with malaria, with the monotony of their life, and with incessant discomforts; finally, that intoxication in itself is not a military offence and not punishable. If you could look into our tents you would not wonder that consolation is sought for in whiskey. The never-ceasing rain streams at will through numerous rents and holes in the mouldy, rotten canvas. Nearly every night half the men are wet through while asleep unless they wake up, stack their clothing in the darkness, and sit on it with the rubber blankets over their heads, something not easy to do when they are so crowded that they can barely move.

It must be added in fairness that intoxication is not confined to the soldiers. The officers are nearly as miserable, and are tempted to seek the same consolation. Lately a lieutenant reeled into my tent, dropped heavily on a bed, stared at me for a minute as if to locate me, and said in a thick voice, "Capm, everybody's drunk today. Capm, the brigade's drunk."[29]

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29. Letter, September 2, 1862, in ibid., pp. 40-41.

For DeForest, life at Camp Parapet ended soon after this episode. In October he was assigned to duty closer to New Orleans at Camp Kearney.[30]

5. Improved Conditions

Early in 1863 there were 2,727 officers and men at Camp Parapet. They belonged to the Sixth Michigan Volunteer Infantry; the Twenty-sixth Connecticut Volunteer Infantry; the Fifteenth and Sixteen Regiments, New Hampshire Volunteer Infantry; the 128th and 165th Regiments, New York Volunteer Infantry; the Second Maine Volunteer Infantry; and the Fourth Wisconsin Volunteer Infantry.[31] By then conditions had somewhat improved, and one soldier commented that "we are quite comfortable here, board floors in our tents, and pretty good living."[32] Rations consisted of potatoes, baked beans, fried pork, bread, and coffee. "It is very pleasant here mornings, before it gets too warm; . . . we hear the birds sing, and the gardens are full of flowers."[33] This soldier, Private Elbridge L. Sweetser, was the beneficiary of the kindness of an old black woman, who gave him and his colleagues freshly boiled down cane sugar and who refused to take payment for the courtesy.[34] On January 31, 1863, Sweetser entered the following in his journal:

> Heard the music of a "minnie" ball yesterday; we were in company street, drilling, when with a "whirr," a ball struck near the cook house causing our cook to give a high jump; it

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30. Letter, October 10, 1862, in ibid., p. 50.

31. Post Returns, Camp Parapet, February, 1863. NA, Microfilm M617, Roll 898.

32. "Army Life. Experiences of Elbridge L. Sweetser, Private in Co. E. (Richardson Light Guard, of So. Reading) 50 Reg. Mass. Vols. 3d Brigade, 1st Division, 19th Army Corps of the Army of the Gulf." Earl M. Hess Collection. U.S. Army Military History Institute.

33. Ibid.

34. Ibid.

was owing to the old guard firing off their guns, and by accident one ball was sent in the wrong direction.[35]

Two days later Private Sweetser recorded this entry:

> Yesterday secured pass good not only beyond the main guard but outside the pickets, and started on tour of observation; walked about 3 miles from camp; went over 3 large plantations, and into 2 sugar mills, and saw the process of making sugar; there were any quantity of negroes at work; I had as much syrup as I could eat, and was told by a foreman that if I happened around again, when they wasn't boiling, he would give me plenty to carry to camp. I returned to camp about dark safe and sound.[36]

Sweetser was not the only soldier who commented on the improved conditions at Camp Parapet. A New Hampshire man, Daniel P. Mason of the Fifteenth Regiment, wrote home that "we are having a very easy time now. We do not have to drill only two or three hours in a day and that is not very hard work." When it got hot, he wrote, the soldiers were allowed to lie in their tents and sleep.[37]

A soldier in the Twenty-sixth Connecticut wrote in The Letter H, a newspaper published by his company at Camp Parapet, that "we can feel that we are favored being furnished with good tents, board floor, and . . . corn husks . . . for beds." Rations, he said, were of good quality and medical facilities, while "not as pleasant as the dormitory apartments at the St. Nicholas," were quite adequate. "I . . . believe our situation is preferable to any in the department of the Gulf."[38]

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35. Ibid.

36. Ibid.

37. Quoted and cited in Swanson, Historic Jefferson Parish, p. 94.

38. Letter to editor, signed "Omaha," The Letter H, March 16, 1863. Civil War Miscellaneous Collection. U.S. Army Military History Institute.

Surely the situation at Camp Parapet in 1863 differed greatly from what it had been in the preceding year.

6. Units at Camp Parapet

The units stationed at Camp Parapet changed frequently. In July, 1863, the Fifteenth Maine Volunteer Infantry was at the post, along with a battalion of heavy artillery and one company of the Fourteenth New York Cavalry. Later, the Eightieth and Ninety-third Regiments of U.S. Colored Infantry garrisoned the post, and in May, 1865, they were replaced by the Third Battalion, Eleventh U.S. Colored Artillery (Heavy), and the Eighty-seventh U.S. Colored Infantry, in all totaling 994 officers and men. They were joined the next month by the Seventy-seventh U.S. Colored Infantry. While the larger number of these men garrisoned Camp Parapet, some were variously assigned among other nearby camps at Carrollton, Ponchatoula, and at Fort Banks across the river.[39] In July, 1865, the Ninety-third Regiment was relieved, and in the following month Camp Parapet was occupied by the Seventy-seventh, the Seventy-third U.S. Colored Infantry (relieving the Eighty-seventh), and the Third Battalion of the Eleventh Colored Artillery (Heavy). In October, Company F, Tenth U.S. Colored Artillery (Heavy) joined from Fort Jackson, although the principal unit then at Camp Parapet was the Ninety-sixth U.S. Colored Infantry. Two months later the Sixty-eighth U.S. Colored Infantry joined the post bringing the total number of troops to 1,355. These units shortly departed Camp Parapet, leaving eighty officers and men of the First New Orleans Volunteers to garrison the place.[40]

After the withdrawal of Union forces from Camp Parapet following the war, the earthworks gradually melted away. Jefferson Parish authorities

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39. Post Returns, Camp Parapet, July, 1863; May, 1865-June, 1865. NA, Microfilm M617, Roll 898. Post Returns for Camp Parapet are incomplete.

40. Post Returns, Camp Parapet, July 1865-January, 1866. NA Microfilm M617, Roll 898.

permitted the demolition of the works when the earth was needed for fill.[41] Erosion, too, probably contributed to their loss. In later years a tiny settlement developed at the site of Camp Parapet.[42] Today few traces of the earthworks can be seen. The best surviving element of the post is the brick powder magazine at the north end of the fortification line in what was once Fort Star. Originally covered with earth, the magazine stands at the end of present Arlington Street east of Causeway Boulevard. The thick walls enclose a rather small, vented chamber whose entrance is through a narrow passage and iron door.[43] In 1977 the Camp Parapet Powder Magazine was entered on the National Register of Historic Places.

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41. Unidentified newspaper, May 3, 1936.

42. Swanson, Historic Jefferson Parish, p. 107.

43. Ibid., p. 94.

CHAPTER XII: JACKSON BARRACKS AT NEW ORLEANS

A. Construction of New Orleans Barracks

Many of the army units that garrisoned the delta region fortifications had at various times served at, or passed through, Jackson Barracks on the Mississippi three miles below New Orleans. United States troops originally occupied the old French and Spanish barracks in the city, beginning in 1803, but on December 14, 1833, the Government acquired property outside the city from Pierre Cotteret and his wife on which the later barracks were raised. In 1848, another land parcel was acquired from Mrs. Prudence Desilets, the widow of one Louis Badins, bringing the total extent of the reservation to 87.87 acres.[1] The reservation property fronted along the levee road near the river for 689 feet; then it went back 3,252 feet where its width was slightly narrower, 680 feet 5 inches; from there the reservation, 680 feet wide, extended back into a swamp.[2] Ostensibly, the post was built to provide defense in case of a slave insurrection, but it also was to assist in the defense of the city as well as provide a general depot for supplies and troops assigned to permanent fortifications in the area.[3]

Established in 1834 as New Orleans Barracks, the post began construction of its buildings that year and completed most of them the next at a cost of $182,000. Designs for the structure had been prepared by Second Lieutenant Frederick Wilkinson. Surrounded by a strong brick wall cornered with loopholed towers, the station was first garrisoned in 1837 by Company K, Second Dragoons, and was commanded by

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1. Wilson, "Colonial Fortifications," p. 118; Prucha, Guide to the Military Posts of the United States, p. 94; Fortier, Louisiana, II, 151.

2. Outline Description of U.S. Military Posts and Stations in the Year 1871, p. 46.

3. Report on the Hygiene of the United States Army, p. 136; Swanson, "Keep Sheet." Plans for the post were initially prepared in 1825. "This is Historic Jackson Barracks," Headquarters Heliogram (C.A.M.P.), No. 118 (November, 1979), p. 8.

Colonel David E. Twiggs.[4] Only a few soldiers actually occupied the place over succeeding months, usually less than fifty men. New Orleans Barracks served as an assembly point for recruits enlisted in the region, too, and the monthly post returns almost always indicated that a detachment of them was present. Soldiers of regular army units posted to the Barracks included those from the First and Second Dragoons and the First, Fourth, Fifth, and Sixth Infantry regiments. In July 1838, sixty-three Seminole Indian prisoners from Florida were held at the post enroute to the Indian Territory.[5] Later, detachments of the Second, Third, and Fourth Artillery, and the Second, Third, Seventh, and Eighth Infantry regiments joined the garrison. Despite the presence of representatives of all these units, the post numbered only fifty-six officers and men in the fall of 1840.[6]

B. Early Use during the Mexican War

During the 1840s New Orleans Barracks continued as a rotation point for troops destined elsewhere. It also continued to serve as a facility for transient military prisoners. A detachment of 205 captured Seminole Indians passed through the post on their way to the Arkansas River in March, 1841, in charge of Captain William G. Belknap.[7] Until later in the decade, though, little major excitement transpired among the usually less than 150 men stationed at the barracks. After the War with Mexico began New Orleans Barracks assumed the important role of a military hospital

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4. "This is Jackson Barracks," p. 8; Outline Description of the Posts in the Military Division of the Missouri, p. 211; Report on Barracks and Hospitals, p. 162; Swanson, "Keep Sheet"; Post Returns, New Orleans Barracks, April, 1837. NA Microfilm M617, Roll 523.

5. Post Returns, New Orleans Barracks, March-July, 1838. NA Microfilm M617, Roll 523.

6. Post Returns, New Orleans Barracks, August, 1838-October, 1840. NA Microfilm M617, Roll 523.

7. Post Returns, New Orleans Barracks, March, 1841. NA Microfilm M617, Roll 523.

for sick and wounded soldiers transported from the scenes of conflict. Assistant Surgeon William J. Sloan recalled the post at this time:

> The post hospital was then a small, two-story brick building, with two wards on the second floor. The garrison was withdrawn, and the hospital gradually enlarged by the occupancy of the vacant barrack and the admission of sick men from the regiments encamped in the vicinity en route to Mexico. During that year it became gradually a general hospital. An officer remained with a small guard, but all the soldiers' barracks and the unoccupied soldiers' quarters were fitted up for hospital purposes, and during the years 1847-'48 were filled with sick and wounded from the army in Mexico. In the fall of 1848 additional accommodations became necessary. Adjacent ground was purchased, and a general hospital erected, which was finished at the close of the war in season to accommodate the returning sick and wounded.[8]

In January, 1847, New Orleans Barracks was garrisoned by 132 officers and men of the First and Third Artillery regiments; the Third, Sixth, and Seventh Infantry regiments; a group of Mounted Riflemen; the First and Second Regiments, Pennsylvania Volunteer Infantry; and the Second Mississippi Volunteer Infantry. In March there were eight soldiers present who had been wounded in action in Mexico. "A number of these men . . . will never recover," noted Colonel George M. Brooke.[9] After the war most troops were withdrawn from the post; in May, 1851, there were only forty-nine men of Company F, First Artillery present.[10]

C. The Civil War, Cholera, and Yellow Fever

On January 11, 1861, on orders of the Governor of Louisiana, Captain C.M. Bradford and the First Company, Louisiana Infantry, formally demanded the surrender of New Orleans Barracks. He was

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8. Quoted in Report on Barracks and Hospitals, p. 162.

9. Post Returns, New Orleans Barracks, January-March, 1847. NA Microfilm M617, Roll 523.

10. Post Returns, New Orleans Barracks, March, 1851. NA Microfilm M617, Roll 523.

instructed to seize the post "in the name of the State of Louisiana, to lower down the flag of the United States, if floating there, and hoist the pelican flag of Louisiana."[11] Thereafter the post remained in Confederate control until the capture of New Orleans in April, 1862, whereupon it, like other posts in the area, was abandoned to the Union forces. Occupied by federal troops on May 1, 1862, the Barracks appears not to have been regularly garrisoned, however, until the war was over. On July 7, 1866, it was renamed Jackson Barracks in honor of Andrew Jackson, the "Hero of New Orleans,"[12] possibly in an attempt to allay antagonism of local residents towards the federal occupation.

By the end of July, 1866, Jackson Barracks held 950 officers and men of the First Infantry and the First Artillery regiments. Lieutenant Colonel William H. Wood commanded the post, and most of these troops remained through 1866, 1867, and 1868.[13] During these years the spread of cholera in the Gulf region constituted a medical problem for the army. In August, September, November, and December, 1867, and in January, 1868, several cases of cholera were recorded at Jackson Barracks but the disease did not become virulent. Four cases of yellow fever, three of them fatal, were reported at the post in July, 1867. This illness spread through New Orleans the following month and was responsible for many deaths. Among 761 white troops in the vicinity, there were 659 cases reported, with 195 of them fatal. Of some 313 black soldiers, 163 contracted yellow fever and 23 perished from it. Nearly all of these cases were treated at the post hospital at Jackson Barracks.[14]

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11. General Orders No. 5, Headquarters Louisiana Militia, January 11, 1861, in War of the Rebellion, Series I, Vol. LIII, 611.

12. Post Returns, Jackson Barracks, July, 1866. NA Microfilm M617, Roll 523; Order of Battle of the United States Land Forces, p. 828.

13. Post Returns, Jackson Barracks, August, 1866-December, 1868. NA Microfilm M617, Roll 523.

14. Report on Epidemic Cholera and Yellow Fever in the Army of the United States, During the Year 1867, pp. vii, xxii-xxiii.

D. Reconstruction and After

1. Units at Jackson Barracks

Early in 1869 Jackson Barracks was garrisoned by battalions of the Thirty-ninth and Fortieth Infantry regiments. In April, Companies D, G, and H of the all-black Twenty-fifth Infantry arrived and the Thirty-ninth and Fortieth was soon disbanded, its personnel absorbed into the Twenty-fifth. Units of the Twenty-fifth remained at the post until May, 1870, when the regiment was transferred to Texas.[15]

Some of the men contracted malaria, and a good many caught venereal diseases around New Orleans. White doctors usually ascribed the latter affliction "to the unclean habits and salacious disposition of the colored troops. . . ."[16]

2. Description of Post Buildings

Details of the buildings composing Jackson Barracks published in 1870 offer clues to their appearance at that time.

> The buildings are well constructed of brick and granite. The quarters for [four companies of] enlisted men consist of four separate buildings, two stories high, each 53 by 32 feet, and surrounded with a spacious veranda. They are heated by open fireplaces, and lighted and ventilated by large windows. The dormitories are all on the second floor. Each contains 20,187 cubic feet of air space, with an average occupancy of about 45 men, giving 440 cubic feet of air space per man. The doors and windows are large, and during a great part of the year the majority of the men sleep on the veranda. The dormitories are fitted up with double bunks in two tiers; but it is believed that the upper tier is generally unoccupied, and no ill effects are known to have arisen from want of air space.
>
> The officers' quarters are contained in seven two-story buildings, two of which measure 42 by 21 feet, and five 82 by 21 feet, divided into rooms about 18 feet square. They are very substantially built, though now somewhat out of repair. There are forty eight rooms in all, of which one-half are on the first floor, and one half on the second, the former being used

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15. Post Returns, Jackson Barracks, March, 1869-May 1870; NA Microfilm M617, Roll 523.

16. Report on Barracks and Hospitals, p. 165.

for kitchens and dining rooms, and the latter for living apartments.

The building designed for quarters of commanding officer fronts the river, and has four rooms on the second floor and four on the lower. The buildings for other officers' quarters are on the long sides of the post, opposite, and similar to each other. The two nearest the commanding officer's quarters contain each two rooms up stairs and two down, with a small yard adjacent. There are two more buildings on each side of the post, each containing four rooms on the upper and lower floors, with small yards at each end.

As the main wall of the post forms one of the sides of the rooms in the lower stories of the officers' quarters, and appears to have been made with a view to defense alone, there are no windows-except at the front in these lower rooms; hence they are deficient in ventilation, and generally dark. River water is supplied to the rooms, both up and down stairs, through pipes leading from the large tank in the tower at the southwest angle of the post. There is one cistern to each building. Water closets are situated in the yards; they are brick sinks, cleaned through a trap in the floor. The want of natural drainage of course prevents the use of water in them.

The quartermaster and commissary store house is a two-story building, 42 by 32 feet, constructed of granite and brick. A similar building, 32 by 14 feet, is used as an engine-house, and another, 12 by 21 feet, is occupied as quarters by the band. In addition, at each of the four angles of the main wall surrounding the post, there is a circular brick tower, 29 feet in diameter, and used as store-house, &c. Some of the supply buildings were overhauled and repaired in the winter of 1870-71.

The guard-house is a building 65 by 21 feet, and similar in construction to those described. Only the lower story of the building is used for guard purposes, and the cells consist of three of the following dimensions, viz: One, 20 3/4 feet long, 17 feet wide, and 11 2/3 feet high: two, 9 2/3 feet long, 8 3/4 feet wide, and 11 2/3 feet high. The ventilation of all is defective, and of the large cell very bad, there being no openings at all on one side of it, and on another only a grating above the door. . . .

The hospital buildings and grounds are immediately adjacent to the post proper, and occupy about the same space. The buildings were erected in 1849, and are constructed of wood, two stories high, and arranged in the shape of a square, open at the angles. . . . In front and nearest the river is a fine garden, handsomely and thickly shaded with magnolia, cedar, pine and other trees. The buildings are in number and

dimensions as follows, viz: Three 168 by 31 feet; one, 112 by 31 feet; two, 50 by 25 feet. They are all at present in bad repair. The first three mentioned are intended for wards, the second for mess rooms, quarters of nurses, &c., and the last mentioned for kitchens and quarters. The wards are divided on the second floor into two separate rooms, while on the first floor they are in one large room. The buildings are all surrounded by spacious verandas, and the ventilation of all is excellent. . . .

The post bakery and stables are in the rear of the barracks inclosure, on the outside. The former is a small brick building in bad repair; the latter of wood, open in front.

The library is kept in one of the hospital wards, the miscellaneous collection consists of the debris from former general hospitals in the department, and numbers 500 volumes, but few of them being standard works.[17]

In addition, there were two brick and granite magazines, 84 by 35 feet and 28 by 16 feet; a wooden shed used as a stable; a brick tackhouse; a frame dead house; and another wooden structure used as laundresses' quarters. Also, laundresses occupied the three rooms above the guard house.[18] Quarters for married soldiers were in a two-story building measuring forty-five feet long by twenty-one feet wide. Kitchens and mess rooms were on the first floors of all the quarters. There existed no wash houses, and the troops cleansed themselves at the cisterns. Rainwater was also used for drinking and cooking. Each of the barracks had two cisterns of 8,000-gallon capacity, while each officers' quarters had one. Six more cisterns of 12,000-gallon capacity stood near the hospital,and three more, each holding 8,000 gallons of water, serviced the bakery, sutler's store, and ordnance sergeant's quarters. Furthermore, water from a 40,000-gallon reservoir was pumped by steam engine through pipes into the hospital buildings. Numerous fire hydrants were appropriately situated around the post. Two brick sinks, lined with cement and measuring eight feet deep, were complete

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17. Ibid., pp. 163-64.

18. Outline Description of U.S. Military Posts and Stations in The Year 1871, p. 46.

with urinals and were disinfected daily.[19] Brick-lined drains discharged waste into the swamps behind the post, while "slops, offal, and exerta are dumped into the Mississippi River."[20] Bathing in the river was considered dangerous, although proficient swimmers often took to the water after dark during the summer months. In 1872 twenty acres were being cultivated as a post garden; however, three years later there was no garden at Jackson Barracks. Streetcars furnished transportation between the post and New Orleans.[21]

When, in 1870, the Twenty-fifth Infantry was reassigned to San Antonio, four companies of the Nineteenth regiment replaced it at Jackson Barracks. Some of these units served temporary duty at the different posts around New Orleans. In October, 1872, five companies of the Nineteenth and two batteries of the Third Artillery were assigned to the Barracks; in December the Third departed, leaving the post in control of seven companies of the Nineteenth and Company L of the Seventh Cavalry, which soon departed. In June, 1874, the Nineteenth Infantry was transferred west and companies of the Third Infantry Regiment and two units of the First Artillery garrisoned Jackson Barracks. For the next few years companies of the Third and Thirteenth regiments manned the post, although in 1878 it was left in charge of four non-commissioned officers and ten privates. Beginning in November, 1880, artillery units took over exclusive control; for four years two batteries of the Third Artillery garrisoned Jackson Barracks with less than 100 officers and men.[22] Armament reported at the post in 1876 consisted of four bronze 12-pounders and two 1-inch and two 1/2-inch Gatling guns.[23]

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19. Report on Barracks and Hospitals, pp. 163-65.

20. Ibid., p. 165.

21. Report on the Hygiene of the United States Army, p. 138; Marcy, Outline Description of the Posts, p. 234;

22. Post Returns, Jackson Barracks, May, 1870-December, 1884. NA Microfilm M617, Roll 524; Army and Navy Journal, October 26, 1878.

23. Outline Descriptions of the Posts in the Military Division of the Missouri, n.p.

3. Army Life and the Mardi Gras

Life at Jackson Barracks during the postwar period appears to have been leisurely for the troops stationed there. The command performed routine drill and fatigue duty, occasionally diverted by special events. One of these occurred in the late summer of 1878 when yellow fever again struck the detachment at the post. The non-commissioned officer in charge of Jackson Barracks at this time died of the fever, and five privates shortly succumbed. Others survived the sickness.[24] Colonel Luther P. Bradley, commanding there in 1879, wrote that "I find Jackson Barracks a very pleasant place, with fine grounds & buildings, but a good deal out of repair."[25] Bradley found himself cleaning and painting his quarters before his wife's arrival. "The upper rooms are the principal living rooms here, as the ground floors are damp." Another complaint was the proximity of his quarters to the street car line. "Our house is a noisy one," he wrote Mrs. Bradley. "The street cars run close to the house, and they run all night."[26]

While the Bradleys were stationed at Jackson Barracks the post played a role in the annual Mardi Gras celebration in New Orleans. Carnival, a traditional event in the city, had been suspended during the Civil War and was suppressed one time during Reconstruction.[27] By 1880, however, the festival was back in full splendor. Mrs. Bradley recounted the special participation of Jackson Barracks in that year's proceedings:

> A special order is issued by "his Majesty" ["King Rex"] to the commandant at Jackson Barracks commanding him to be in readiness to receive his Royal Highness and escort him with the troops in his command to the city. And it is the custom for the officer in command to enter into the spirit of the festival

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24. Army and Navy Journal, October 26, 1878.

25. "Private Journal," 1867-1880. Luther P. Bradley Papers. United States Military History Institute.

26. Bradley to wife, November 16, 1879. Bradley Papers.

27. Roberts, Lake Pontchartrain, p. 151.

and carry out this order. Jackson Barracks is five miles south of the city on the shores of the Mississippi, and the commandants house is within a stones throw of this majestic river. . . .

Monday morning, the Monday morning before the great throng Tuesday the first steamer the city could muster steamed quietly down the river and somewhere they found the merry monarch and his courtiers, we are not supposed to know where, and having arrayed themselves in regal splendor the steamer returned to the Jackson Barracks landing. There it was met by the officer in command with his aides and a battalion of Infantry, together with the regimental band, which greeted the incoming steamer with a national air and all the ceremony for his majesty. The ladies were cordially invited on board, and were introduced to his majesty and his courtiers all of them in masques. It is always a beautiful sail up the river, but that day the shores were bright with color, flags of every nation floating from the ships that passed thru. As we neared the city the bells rang and the whistles blew, and at the landing the King and his suite were met by the Mayor and city officials, the Mayor giving to the King the keys of the city.[28]

The Bradleys enjoyed their tour at Jackson Barracks--Mrs. Bradley called it "a beautiful spot," situated amid magnolia and orange groves. Once, ex-President Ulysses S. Grant visited for an afternoon, during which time the old warrior reminisced about his days spent at the post in 1846.[29] Soon after the Mardi Gras and Grant's visit the Thirteenth Infantry, and the Bradleys, were reassigned to New Mexico.

4. Occupation and Improvements in the 1880s and 1890s

Although the United States operated the military post of Jackson Barracks, jurisdiction over the tract on which it stood was retained by the State of Louisiana until July 6, 1882, when it was ceded to the

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28. Mrs. Luther P. Bradley, "Reflections of the New Orleans Mardi Gras, 1880," Unpublished manuscript in the Bradley Papers.

29. Mrs. Luther P. Bradley, "Recollections of Army Life." Unpublished manuscript in the Bradley Papers; Bradley, "Private Journal," 1867-1880. Bradley Papers.

Federal government.[30] During the 1880s artillery units garrisoned the post; after the Third Artillery batteries transferred in 1885, two batteries of the Second took their place, remaining until May, 1889, when they were relieved and replaced with a single battery of the Fourth Artillery.[31]

Through the early 1890s Jackson Barracks was successively garrisoned by Battery I, Fourth Artillery; Companies B, G, and H, Fifteenth Infantry; and Batteries D, G, and L, Third Artillery.[32]

Repairs to the post were made annually, as necessary. In 1887 a new galley was added to the commanding officer's quarters. Gutters and leader pipes were built on all the quarters, and bathrooms were added to the officers' residences. Ceilings were installed in two of the barracks and all of them were whitewashed. Minor repairs and alterations were made to other post structures.[33]

A soldier writing in the Army and Navy Journal in 1893 observed that

> The barracks look better than ever, not a day older, with fresh paint everywhere; and improvements here and there that add to comfort, and yet leave it--this pleasantest of posts--just the same, for general appearances to eyes that seek it again and again.
>
> The long iron veranda on the outer front of the sallyport quarters and officers' [quarters] gives an agreeable southern expression that the face of the barracks had not in former years.

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30. United States Military Reservations, p. 149; Fortier, Louisiana, II, 151.

31. Post Returns, Jackson Barracks, May, 1885-May, 1889. NA Microfilm M617, Roll 525.

32. Post Returns, Jackson Barracks, December, 1889-November, 1894. NA Microfilm M617, Roll 525.

33. "Report of Annual Inspection of Public Buildings at Jackson Barracks La. made March 31, 1887." NA, RG 92.

> The grassy levee, with its big old trees, is a hillock park in front of the sallyport; here are summer seats--and all the year is summer: here the guns are placed, and here the sentinel paces--not within the walls as in the long ago.[34]

In 1893 some major changes were made at Jackson Barracks, including the demolition of the old hospital. A writer, "M.M.," reported on this and other matters in nostalgic prose:

> You remember the old hospital, in the pretty natural park, alongside the barracks, with a gate in the wall between. Well, this morning this hospital remnant deflected the idler's path this side of the barracks sally-port, for the last of the buildings is going the way of the others--to oblivion.
>
> You remember there were four long, two-story buildings, loosely inclosing a quadrangular court, each building having an enclircling upper and lower gallery, making an almost august array of columns in the moonlight, and an alluring series of colonades in true tempered sunlight. One by one these buildings passed their usefulness, and perhaps for a long time had been merely monumental, and now but a single range of columns stand, to fall to-morrow. The little octagonal, cupoloed building, the centre of the old columned courtyard, will follow in the wreck. Then, full green will lead from the river side road to the new, more distant, utterly unarchitectural, and, happily, very much smaller hospital. But the barracks man must miss the thousand columns gone.
>
> In a spring morning like this, it is pleasant--delicious--to be tinkled along by the mule car through the miles of peach-blow lanes to the barracks: but for other days there is a path along the levee crest, and you cannot imagine a brighter stroll. You are six or eight feet above the river, close on one side of you, and on the other a narrow road, which you do not really see, for it is bordered by the gardens, orchards, and pretty, old-fashioned, and simple-hearted homes of other times, into which you look--not without a longing. The river reflects a sky that makes the Mississippi as clear as Lake Huron, and for company, on that side, you have every kind of craft, from lightest to largest.

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34. January 28, 1893.

> If an old timer, you would have to look for a moment for the adjutant's office at the barracks--how one's pen returns within the precluets--for it now is in one of the round towers, at the down river corner.[35]

Perhaps the same writer commented upon changes to the round towers at the post:

> Of the four original round towers at the corners of the outer quadrangle of the barracks, but one remains as of old. This is a trophy captured or held from innovation: this happy left one keeps its low, crenelated sky line unspoiled. The others have had put on--it must have been with some protest--perhaps some slight sinking of the walls--let us hope at least that--flattish conical roofs; and one has had added a story, the only thing of brick and mortar that has climbed so high about the outer walls.[36]

Thereafter, structural changes rarely occurred at Jackson Barracks, although in 1896 an addition to the commissary storehouse was erected.[37] Essentially, Jackson Barracks, garrisoned by only two batteries of the First Artillery, did not require too many improvements.

There appears to have developed a kind of rapport between the troops and the residents of New Orleans, who often turned out in large numbers to witness sporting events at Jackson Barracks. One field day held in May, 1897, consisted of events like the 100-yard dash, a "440-yard race for men over 35," a relay race, and a wall-scaling contest. "A most gratifying feature was the large number of

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35. Army and Navy Journal, March 4, 1893.

36. Army and Navy Journal, April 22, 1893. Two of the towers, those on the upriver side of the post, were equipped with tanks for water storage. "Plan of Post of Jackson Barracks, La.," 1893. NA, RG 77. Cartographic Archives Division, No. 72; "Section of Tower and proposed tank at Jackson Barracks, La.," 1893. NA, RG 77. Cartographic Archives Division, No. 11.

37. "Jackson Barracks, Louisiana," 1896. NA, RG 77. Cartographic Archives Division, No. 22.

entries for many of the events . . . ."[38] And an "interested and enthusiastic crowd from the city" attended an exhibition of field sports held at the post on July 3, 1897. The agenda of events included a one-mile run, broad jumping contest, litter-bearing contest, blank cartridge contest, spare wheel race, gun detachment contest, tent pitching contest, and an obstacle race. Awards were provided by the post exchange.[39]

E. Into the Twentieth Century

The garrison of Jackson Barracks increased during and following the Spanish-American War. Whereas but few men of the First and Fourth Artillery regiments were there in April, 1898, along with a few soldiers assigned casually to the post, by July the numbers of officers and men had grown to 333. These were troops of the Twenty-third Infantry and Batteries A, B, and C, Louisiana Volunteer Light Artillery. In October the total climbed to 508 as Battery D, First Artillery, and a small group of soldiers of the Third Texas Volunteer Infantry joined the post.[40] Many of these units, like men casually assigned, were transient, enroute to other assignments. In 1899 the number of men at Jackson Barracks gradually dropped until by 1900 they totaled slightly over 100.[41]

After 1900 the garrison increased again, fluctuating between 150 and 250 officers and men. In January, 1901, Battery D, First Artillery, occupied the Barracks, although in April the Fourth and Ninety-first Companies of Coastal Artillery replaced that unit, staying at Jackson Barracks until May, 1907, when the Fourth Company was transferred. The Ninety-first was shortly joined by the 164th Company of Coast Artillery; together they manned Jackson Barracks until at least June,

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38. Army and Navy Journal, May 22, 1897.

39. Army and Navy Journal, July 17, 1897.

40. Post Returns, Jackson Barracks, March-October, 1898. NA Microfilm M617, Roll 525.

41. Post Returns, Jackson Barracks, November, 1898-July, 1900. NA Microfilm M617, Roll 525.

1914, when the post returns end.[42] In 1907 Fort Jackson, below New Orleans, was designated a subpost of Jackson Barracks.[43]

A principal structural modification to Jackson Barracks was necessitated on October 25, 1912, when the levee fronting the post gave way and sank into the Mississippi. Consequently, the entire river front of the tract had to be built back, requiring the dismantling of the two corner towers and the administration building. Also, the pumping plant had to be removed back and many magnolia trees felled in the construction.[44]

During World War I Jackson Barracks served as the headquarters of the Coast Defenses of New Orleans, South Atlantic Coast Artillery District, and garrisoned five coast defense companies.[45] Regular troops were also processed and trained there. Later, in the 1920s, units of the Louisiana National Guard were authorized to use the post. During this period a number of field artillery and cavalry companies were stationed at Jackson Barracks, and with the multitude of horses present polo became a lively pastime. Spectators from New Orleans frequently came to watch the games.

Many of the older buildings of Jackson Barracks were rehabilitated during the 1930s, and a new administration building was erected. When World War II began the post was back in army control and being used as a station of the New Orleans Post of Embarkment. After the war the State of Louisiana resumed charge, and in 1955 the state acquired

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42. Post Returns, Jackson Barracks, January, 1901June, 1914. NA Microfilm M617, Rolls 526, 527.

43. Post Returns, Jackson Barracks. NA Microfilm M617, Roll 524

44. Post Returns, Jackson Barracks, November, 1912. NA Microfilm M617, Roll 527.

45. Order of Battle of the United States Land Forces, pp. 82829.

ownership of the reservation, total expanse of which had been increased to 101 acres. Presently, Jackson Barracks serves as headquarters of the Louisiana Military Department, the state Civil Defense Agency, and the Selective Service System. The post provides facilities for training for units of the Louisiana National Guard stationed in New Orleans. It is in a good state of preservation because of generous state and federal funding. Current maintenance of the post is performed by prisoner labor.[46]

46. "This is Historic Jackson Barracks," p. 8.

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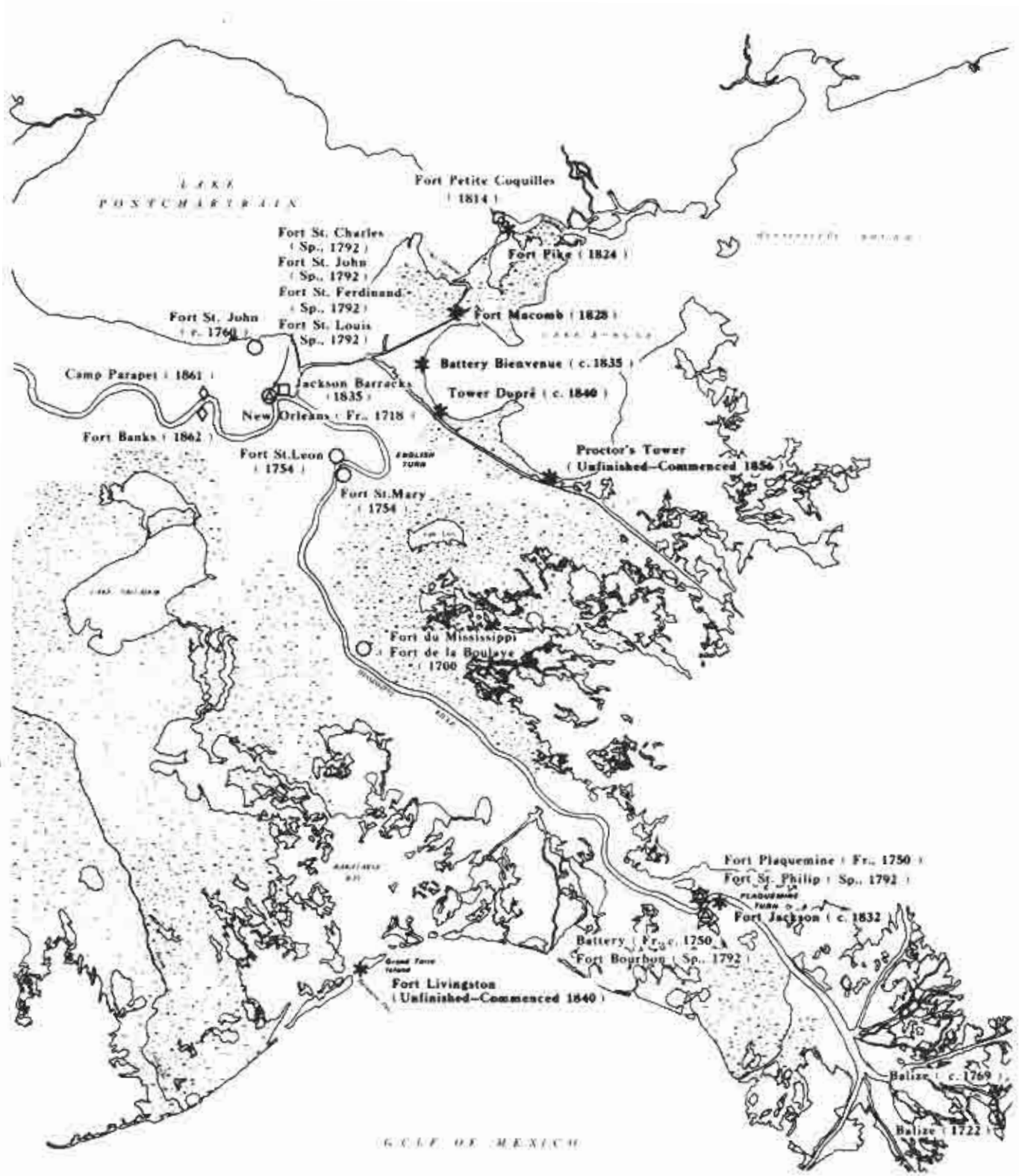
Illustration 1.

Historical Base Map. Principal Mississippi Delta Area Defenses, 1700-1900.

Prepared by Jerome A. Greene



- ✱ AMERICAN PERMANENT FORTIFICATIONS
- ○ FRENCH FORTIFICATIONS
- △ SPANISH FORTIFICATIONS
- □ EARLY AMERICAN FORTIFICATIONS
- ◊ MAJOR CIVIL WAR EARTHWORKS

ON MICROFILM

HISTORICAL BASE MAP

PRINCIPAL MISSISSIPPI DELTA AREA DEFENSES, 1700-1900

JEAN LAFITTE NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK, LOUISIANA

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR / NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

667, 23,000
AA 81 DSC

Illustration 2.

Plan of New Orleans, 1729, showing idealized fortifications envisioned by French engineers but never built.

Map Division, Library of Congress.

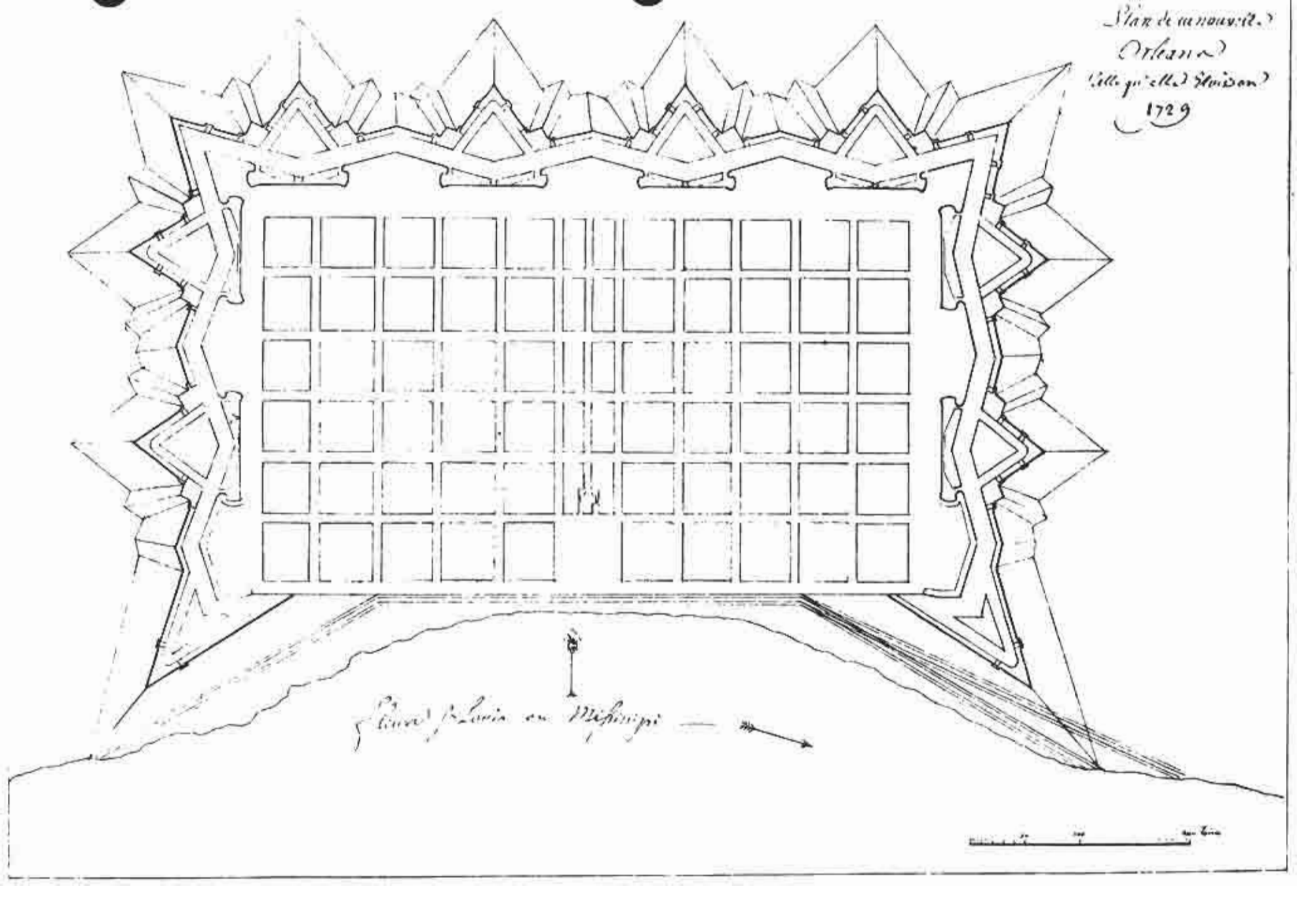

Plan de la nouvelle
Orleans
Celle qu'elle Etoit en
1729
Fleuve St Louis ou Mississipi

Illustration 3.

Plan of 1792 showing the fortifications erected around New Orleans during Carondelet's administration. Clockwise from top center, the redoubts are: Fort St. Ferdinand, Fort St. John, Fort St. Charles, Fort St. Louis, and Fort Burgundy.

Map Division, Library of Congress.

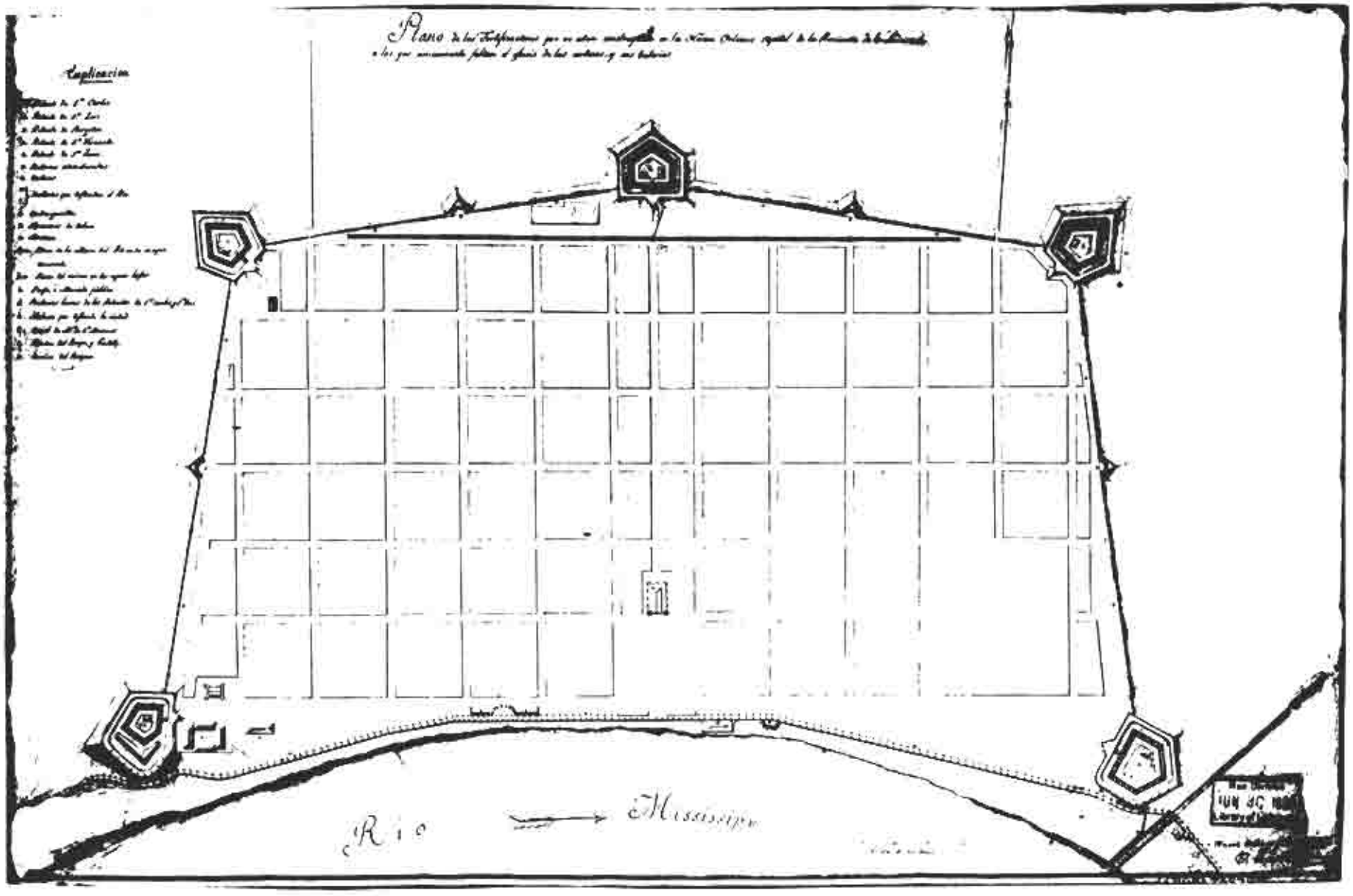

Explicacion
Rio
Mississipi

Illustration 4.

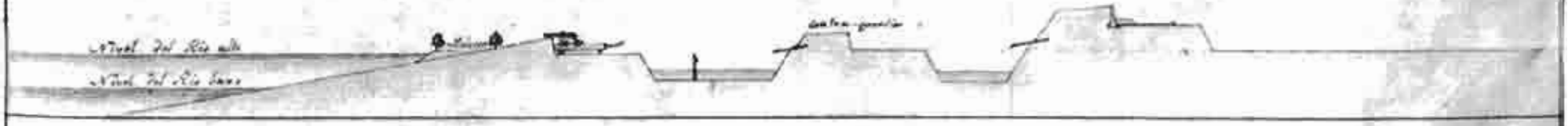
Profile of the Spanish works at New Orleans. Top to bottom: Fort St. Charles, Fort St. John, Fort St. Louis, Forts Burgundy and St. Ferdinand, and the curtain.

Detail from "Plano topographico que Manifiesta la Situacion de la Ciudad de la Nueva Orleans, y sus contornos." 1792. Map Division, Library of Congress.

Perfil del Reducto de S.t Carlos cortado sobre la Linea 1. y 2.

Perfil del Reducto de S.t Juan cortado sobre la linea 3. y 4.

Perfil del Reducto de S.t Luis cortado sobre la linea 5. y 6.



Perfil de los Reductos de Borgoña, y S.t Fernando cortado sobre la linea 7. y 8.

Perfil de las cortinas cortado sobre las lineas 9. y 10.

Map Division
JUN 30 1927
Library of Congress

Escala de 100 Pies

Illustration 5.

Plan of New Orleans, 1813-14. Forts Burgundy and St. Louis had been demolished and Fort St. Ferdinand was partially demolished at this time. Drawn by Bartholemy Lafon.

Historic New Orleans Collection.

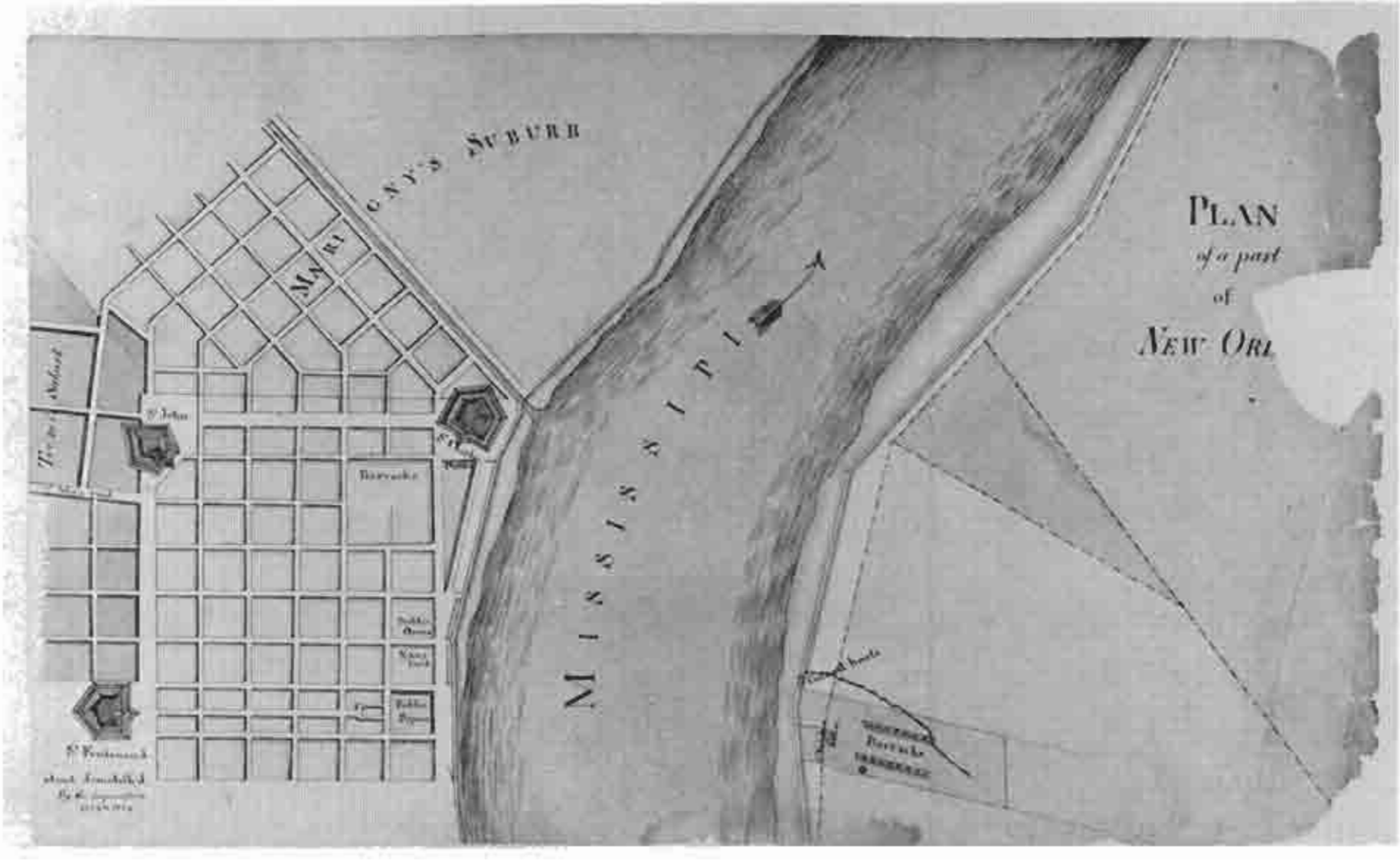

PLAN
of a part
of
NEW ORL
MISSISSIPI
MARIGNY'S SUBURB
Barracks

Illustration 6.

Plan of Fort St. Charles, New Orleans. Drawn by Bartholemy Lafon, 1814.

Historic New Orleans Collection.

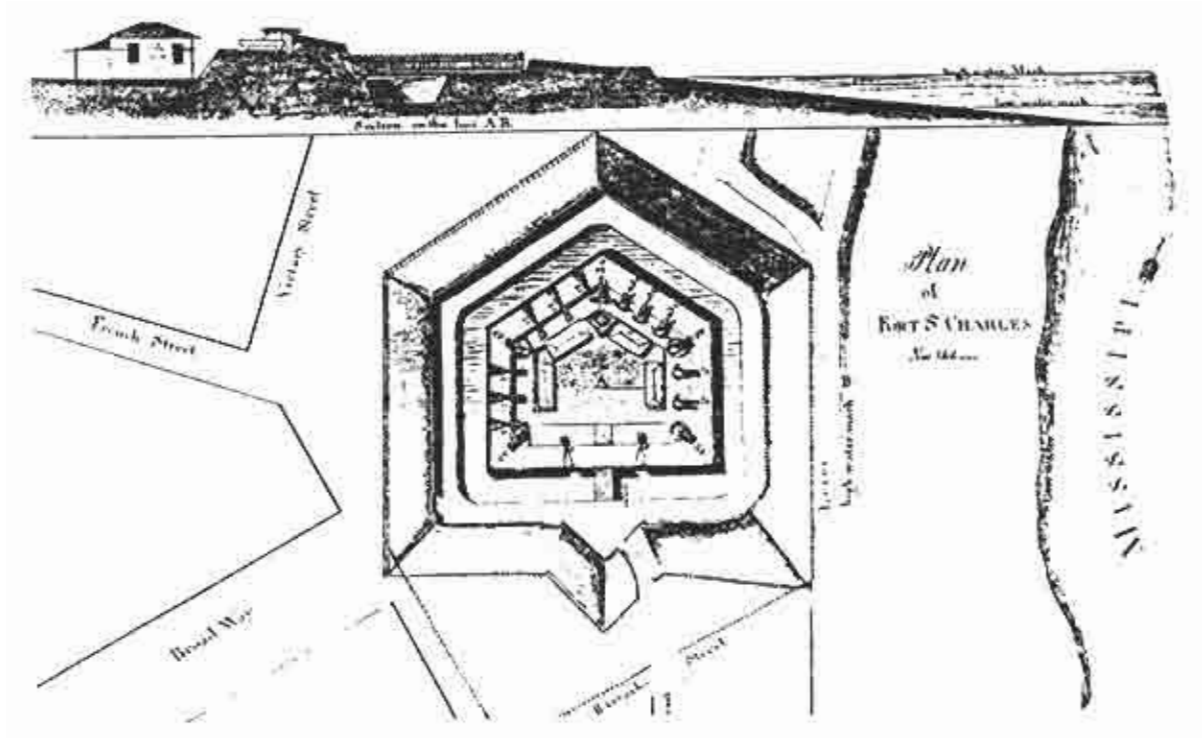

Plan
of
Fort St Charles
Mississippi
French Street
Broad Way

Illustration 7.

Map of part of the mouth of the Mississippi River, showing location of the French Balize, 1731.

Map Division, Library of Congress.

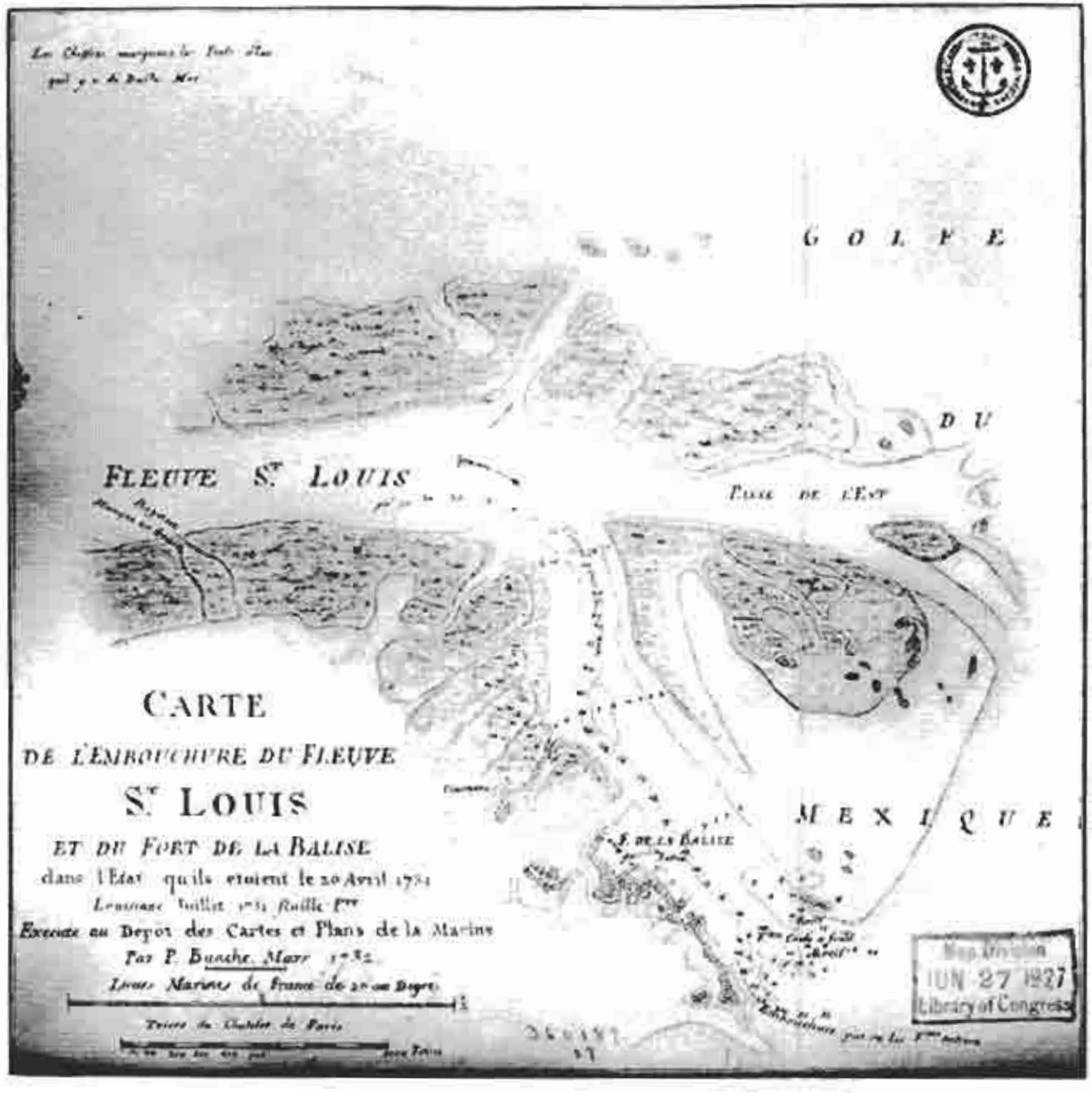
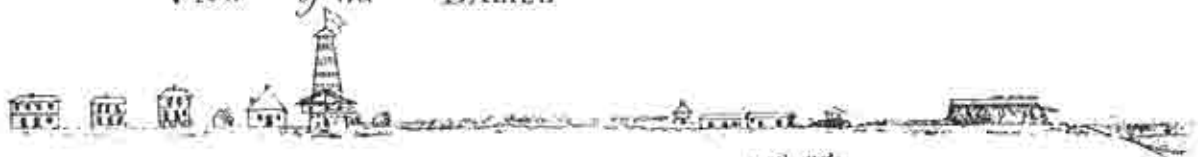

GOLFE
DU
MEXIQUE
FLEUVE St LOUIS
CARTE
DE L'EMBOUCHURE DU FLEUVE
St LOUIS
ET DU FORT DE LA BALISE
dans l'Etat qu'ils etoient le 20 Avril 1764
Executée au Depot des Cartes et Plans de la Marine
Par P. Bauche. Marr 1782
Lieues Marines de France de 20 au Degré
Toises du Chatelet de Paris
Library of Congress
JUN 27 1927

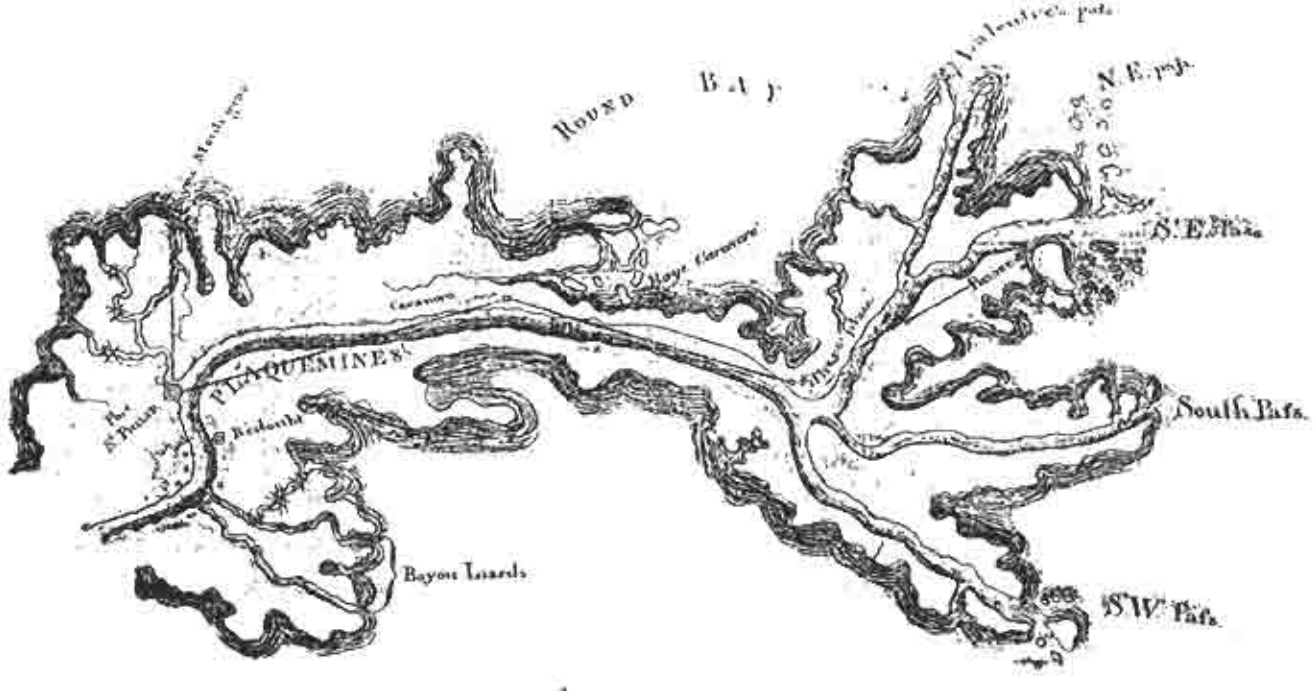
Illustration 8.

The Balize and its location in 1813. Plan by Bartholemy Lafon.

Historic New Orleans Collection.

View of the Balise





Map
of the
Mouths of
MISSISSIPI

Illustration 9.

Plan of the lower Mississippi River, 1813. Drawn by Bartholemy Lafon.

Historic New Orleans Collection.

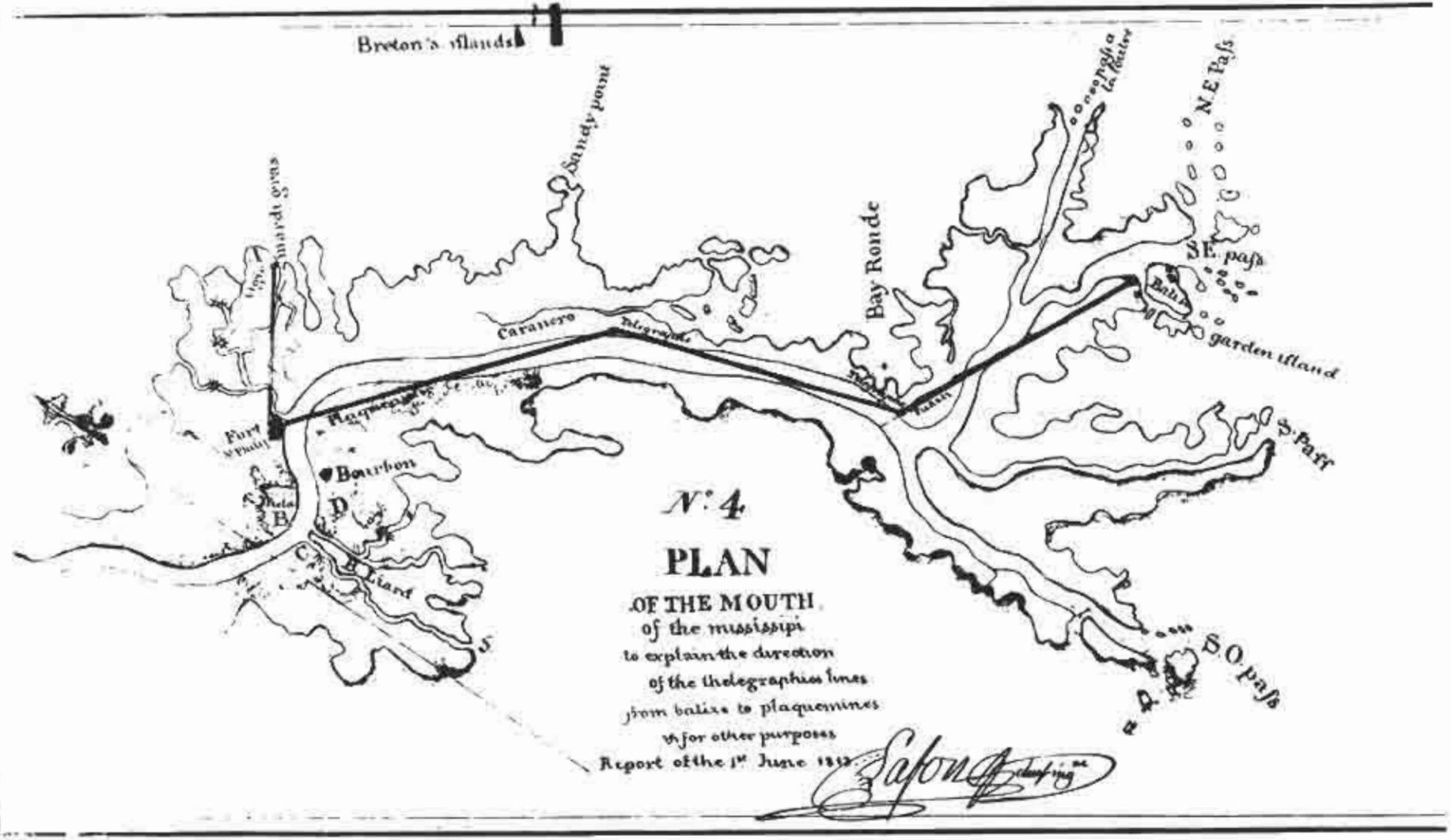
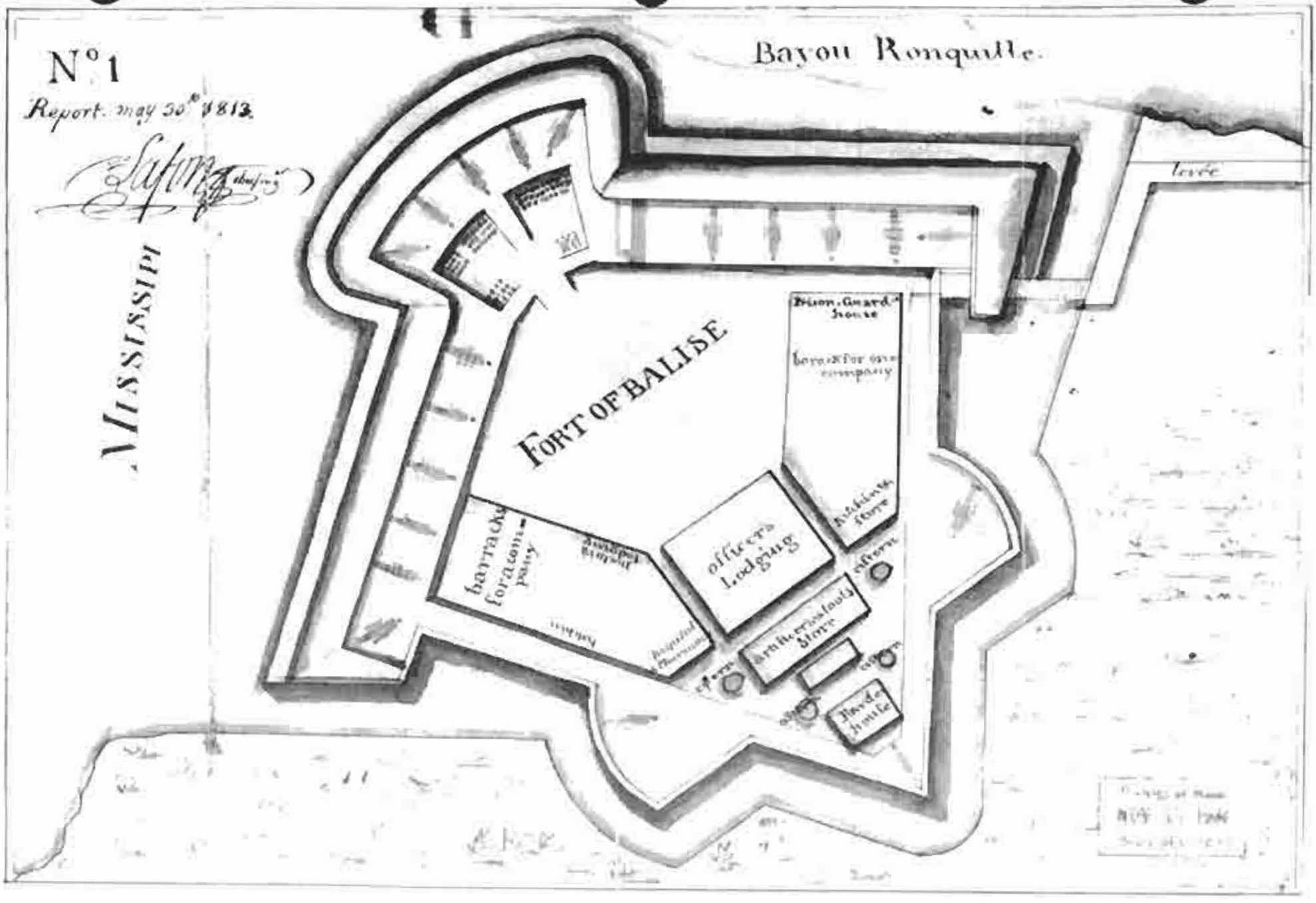

Breton's islands
Sandy point
Bay Ronde
N.E. Pass
S.E. pass
garden island
S. Pass
S.O. pass
Caranero
Telegraphs
Fort
Bourbon
B
C
D
Liard
N°. 4
PLAN
OF THE MOUTH
of the mississipi
to explain the direction
of the thelegraphies lines
from balize to plaquemines
& for other purposes
Report of the 1st June 1812
Lafon

Illustration 10.

Fort of Balize, as projected, 1813. Plan by Bartholemy Lafon.

Map Division, Library of Congress.



N°1
Report. may 30th 1813.
Bayou Ronquille.
levée
MISSISSIPI
FORT OF BALISE
Prison, Guard house
barracks for one company
barracks for a company
officers Lodging
Kitchin & store
cistern
artificers & tools store
Powder house

Illustration 11.

Fort of Balize, actual state as of May, 1813. Drawn by Bartholemy Lafon.

Map Division, Library of Congress.

Fort of Balise

N. 2.

Report may 24th. 1813.

Lafond chief ingr

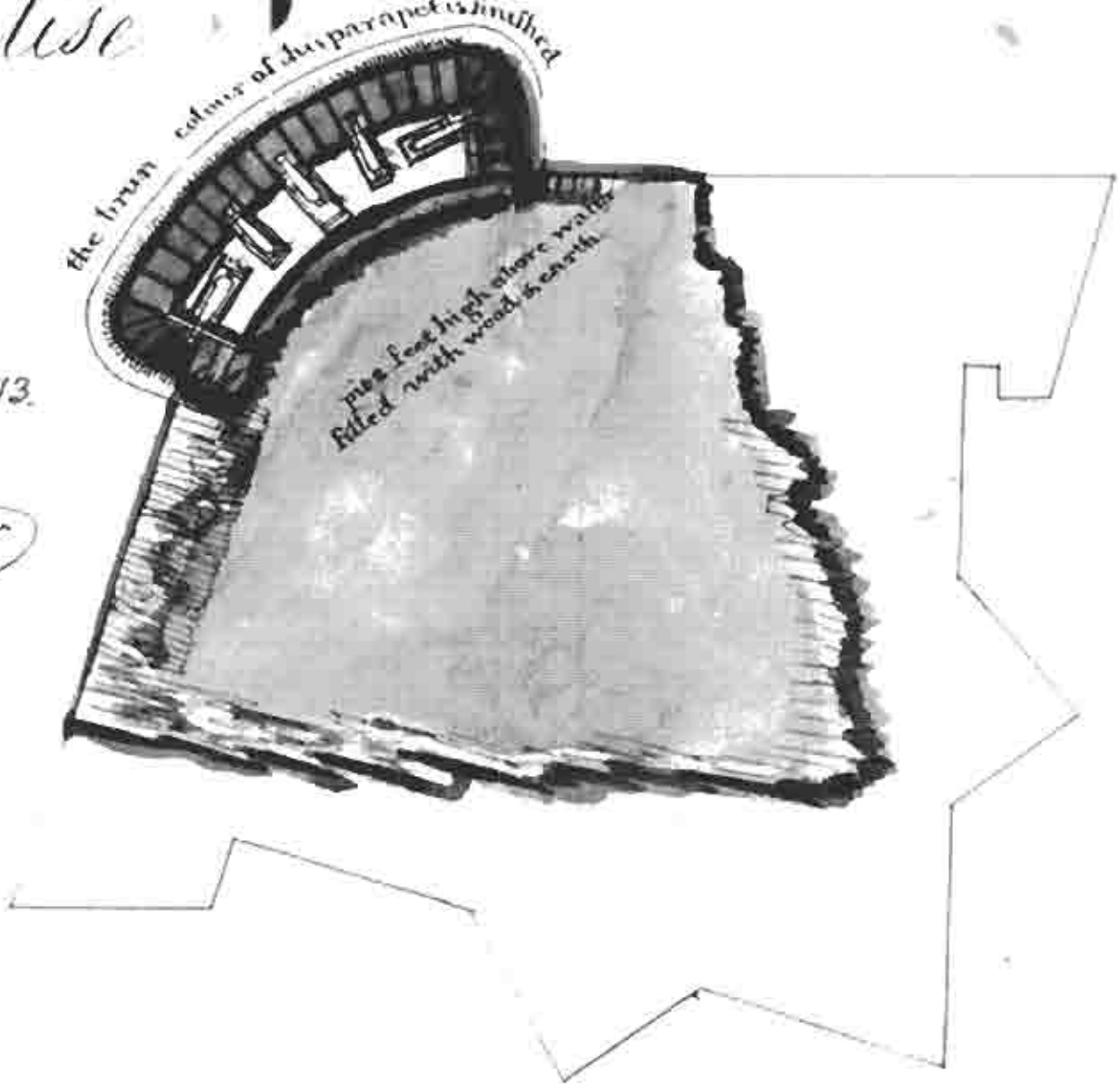


Illustration 12.

Fort of Balize, 1814. Drawn by Bartholemy Lafon.

Historic New Orleans Collection.

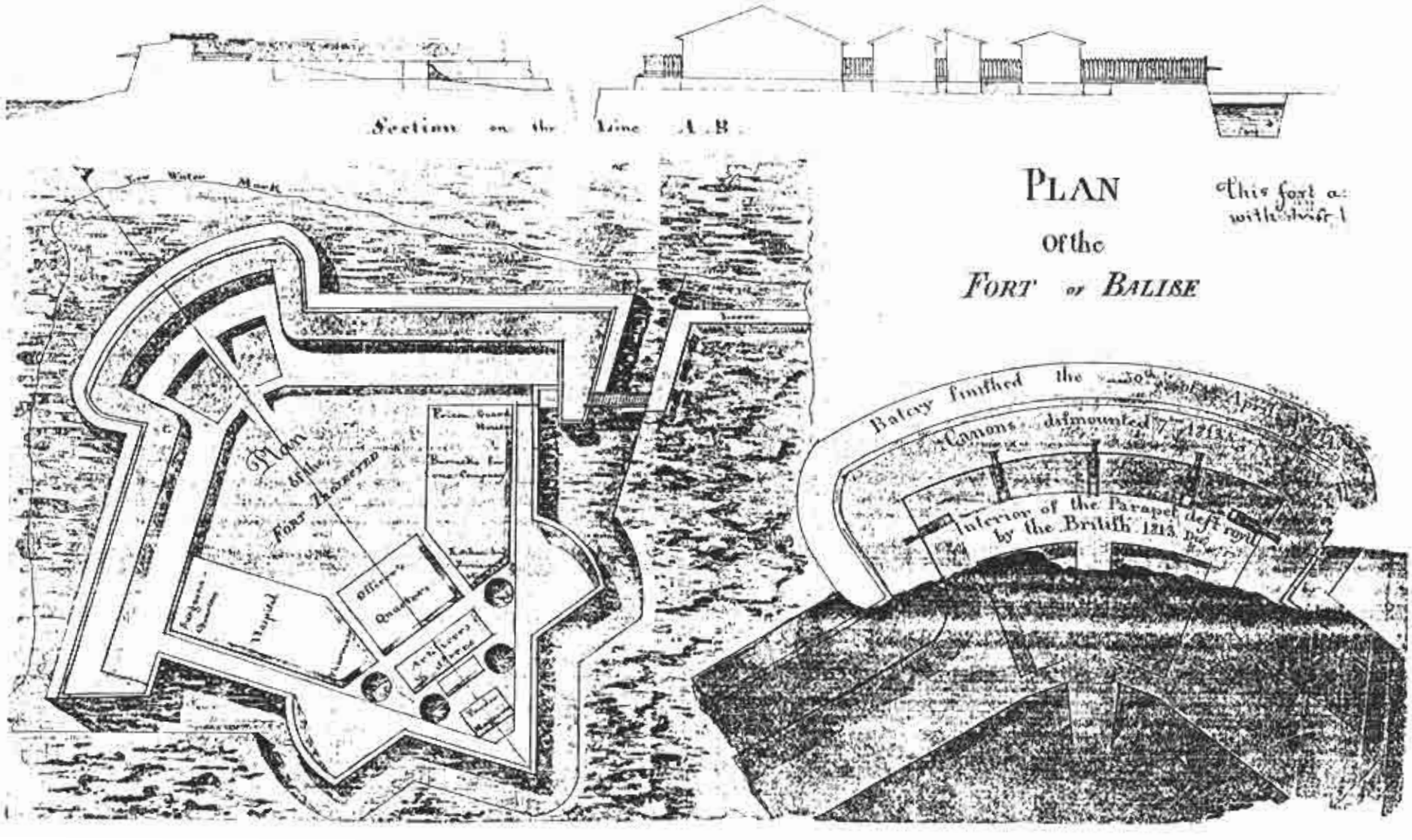

Section on the Line A.B.
PLAN
of the
FORT of BALISE
This fort a:
with drift
Low Water Mark
Plan of the Fort Inclosed
Officers Quarters
Artificers Stores
Hospital
Batery finished the
Canons dismounted 7 1813
Interior of the Parapet deft royd
by the British 1813

Illustration 13.

Sketch plan of the Balize as it appeared in 1819. At right is the old Spanish lookout.

From Benjamin Latrobe, Impressions Respecting New Orleans. Ed. by Samuel Wilson, Jr., 1951.

Balize
marsh
a
b
c
d
Bayou
Marsh
River
Mississippi
a, Captain Gardner's
b Spanish Blockhouse
c Tavern
d. Fort begun & never finished by General Wilkinson at the expense of 50000 dollars.
e Franks Island & the Lighthouse
Franks Island
e

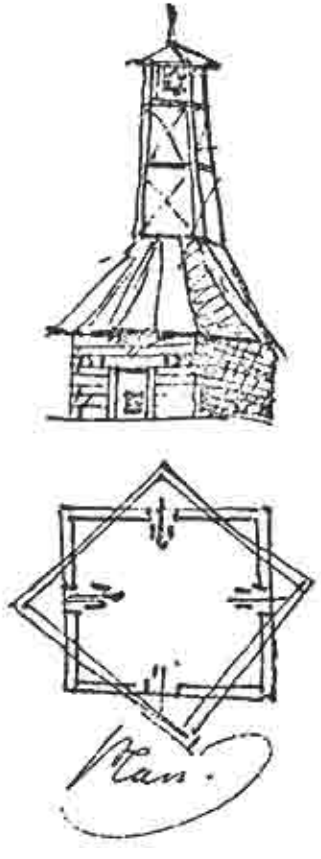
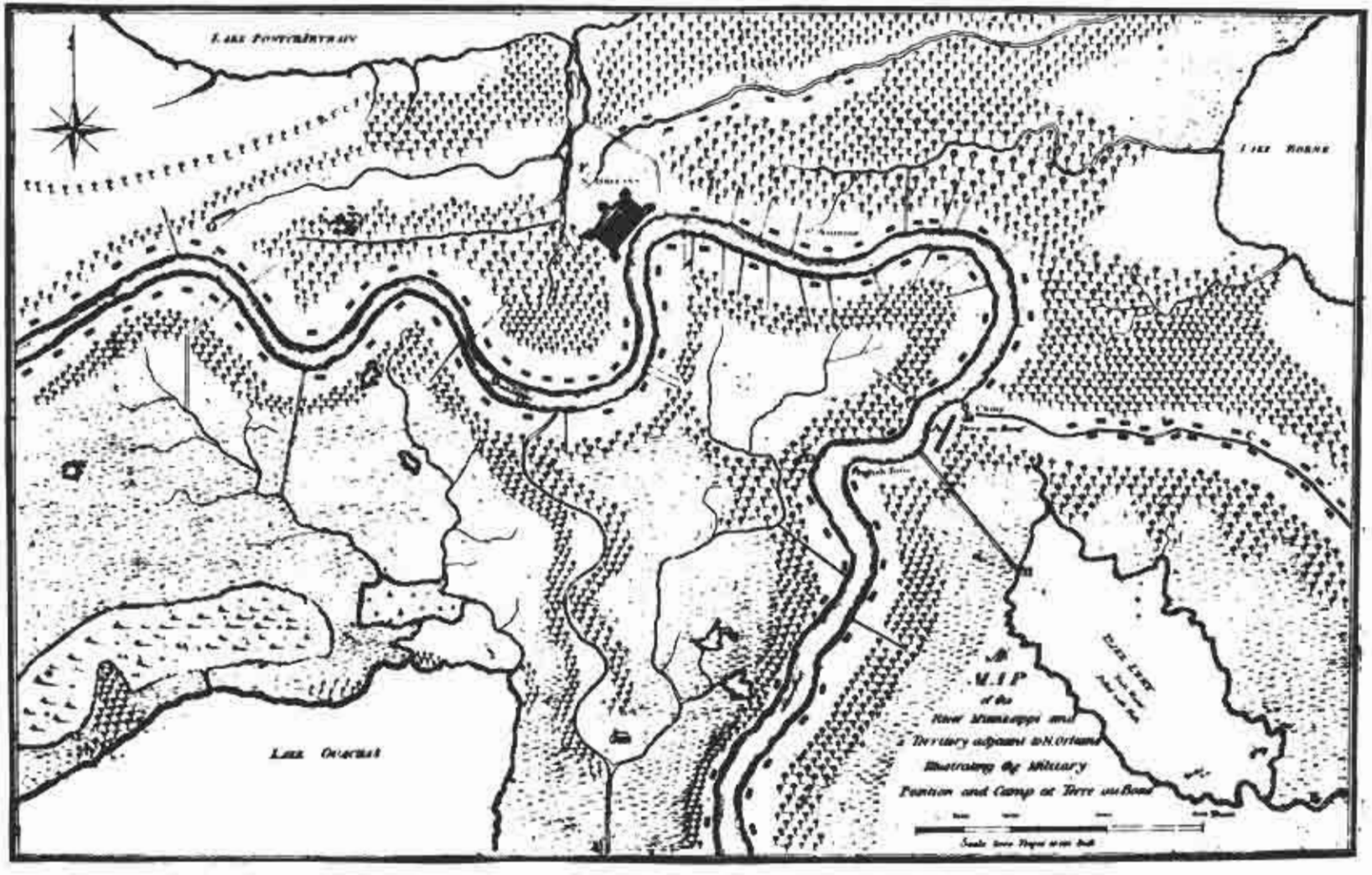

Plan.

Illustration 14.

Downriver defenses during the War of 1812.

From William Darby, A Geographical Description of the State of Louisiana, 1816.



REFERENCES.

A. The position of the camp at Terre au Bœuf.

B. The mansion of the proprietor of the ground, Mr. Delassize.

C. The church and settlements of Terre au Bœuf, on the Bayou, or creek of that name.

D. A battery at the English Turn, calculated to receive a garrison of fifty men.

E. A creek leading from Lake Barataria, navigable to battelux, and communicating with the Mississippi by a canal.

F. Route from New-Orleans to the bridge of the Bayou or creek St. John, distant two miles.

G. The position or encampment of the troops in 1804, under lieutenant colonel Freeman.

H. The canal of captain Rinker, communicating with Lake Lery.

I. The Bayou or creek Chantilli.

K. The Bayou or creek leading from Lake Lery, [illegible] joins the Bayou [illegible] good landing from the [illegible] from whence there is a good and firm road to New-Orleans, the distance [illegible] or nine [illegible] only.

Illustration 15.

The British and American lines at Chalmette, 1814-15.

"Plan of an Attack made by the British Forces on the American Lines in advance of New Orleans." Map Division, Library of Congress.

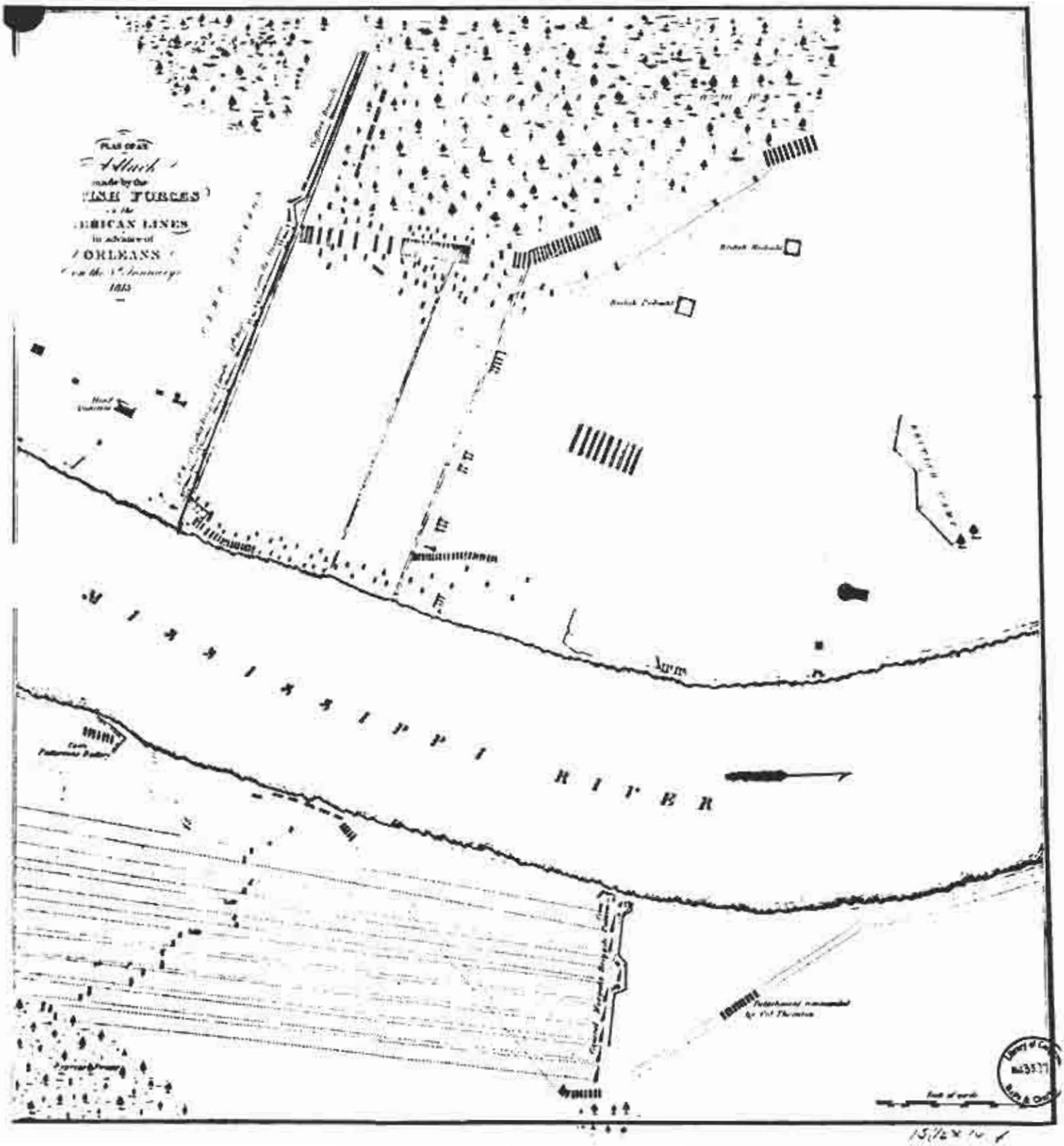
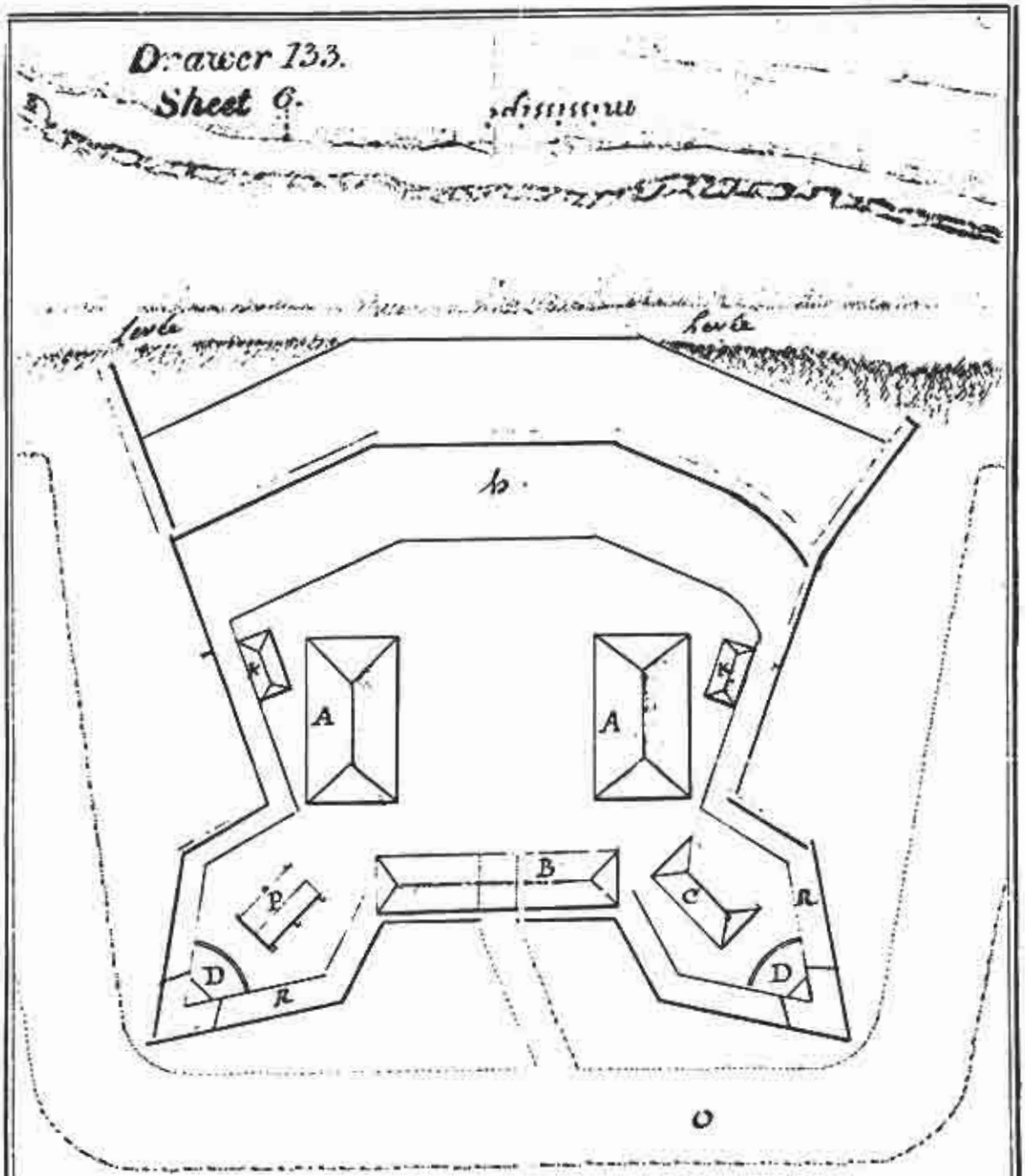

Mississippi
RIVER

Illustration 16.

Plan of Fort St. Leon at English Turn, 1809.

National Archives.

Drawer 133.
Sheet 6.



Eng: Dept
August 7 1811.
Received with Col. Abert's letter of August 5 (A 336)

133-6

Mellorhum L 18 7bre 1809.
& W. Mowry Fellehow
Engineer

'Plan of the Fort at the English-Turn, (New Orleans)
Transmitted by Major Mac Ee Oct 1st 1809' (⟷ [illegible])

Illustration 17.

Fort St. Leon as of May, 1813. Drawing by Bartholemy Lafon.

Historic New Orleans Collection.

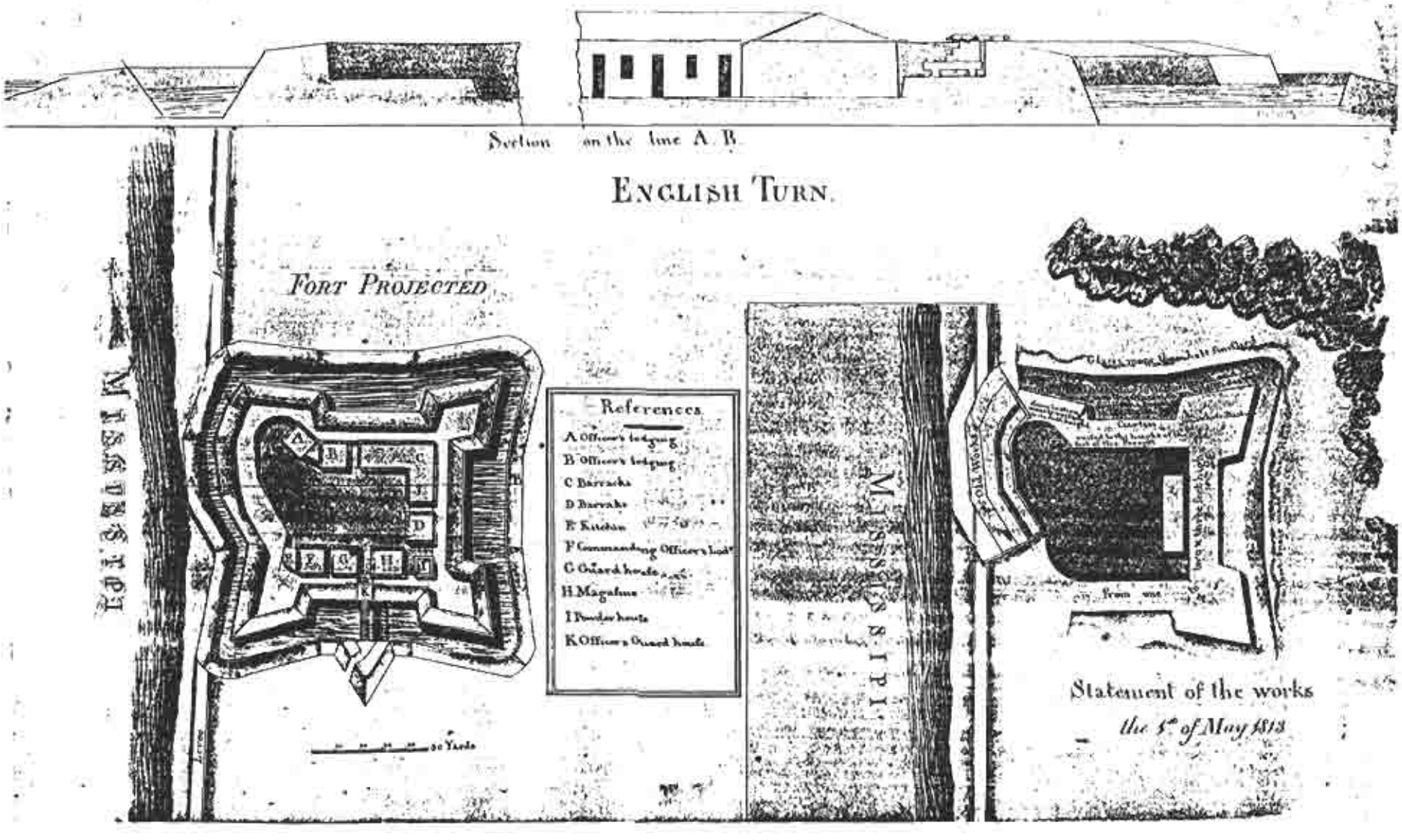

Section on the line A. B.
ENGLISH TURN.
FORT PROJECTED
References
A Officer's lodging
B Officer's lodging
C Barracks
D Barracks
E Kitchen
F Commanding Officer's lodg.
G Guard house
H Magazine
I Powder house
K Officer's Guard house
50 Yards
MISSISSIPPI
Statement of the works
the 1st of May 1813

Illustration 18.

Fort St. Leon, 1817.

National Archives.

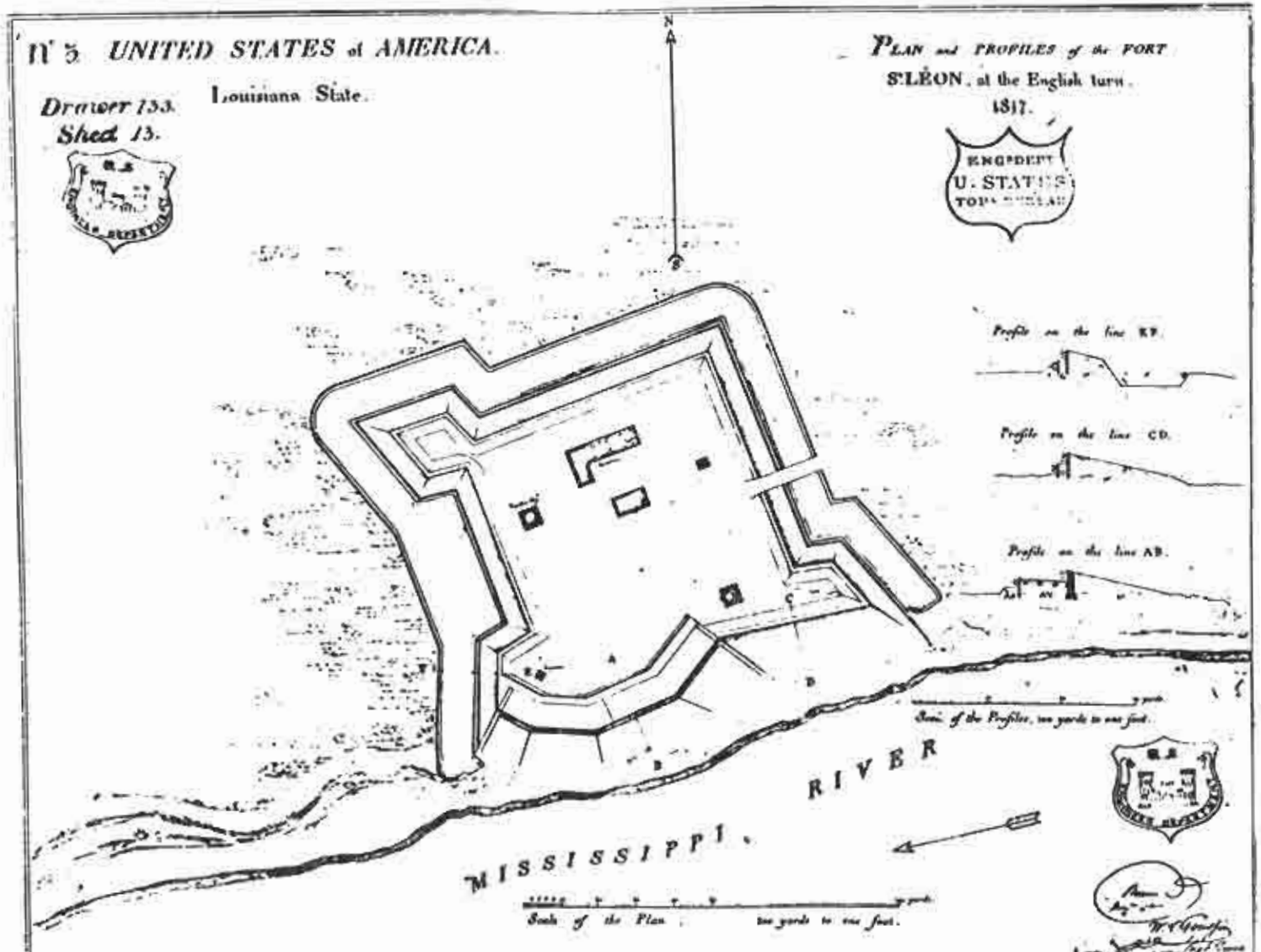
N° 5 UNITED STATES of AMERICA.

Drawer 133.
Shed 13.

Louisiana State.

PLAN and PROFILES of the FORT
S.t LEON, at the English turn.
1817.

ENGR DEPT
U. STATES
TOPL BUREAU

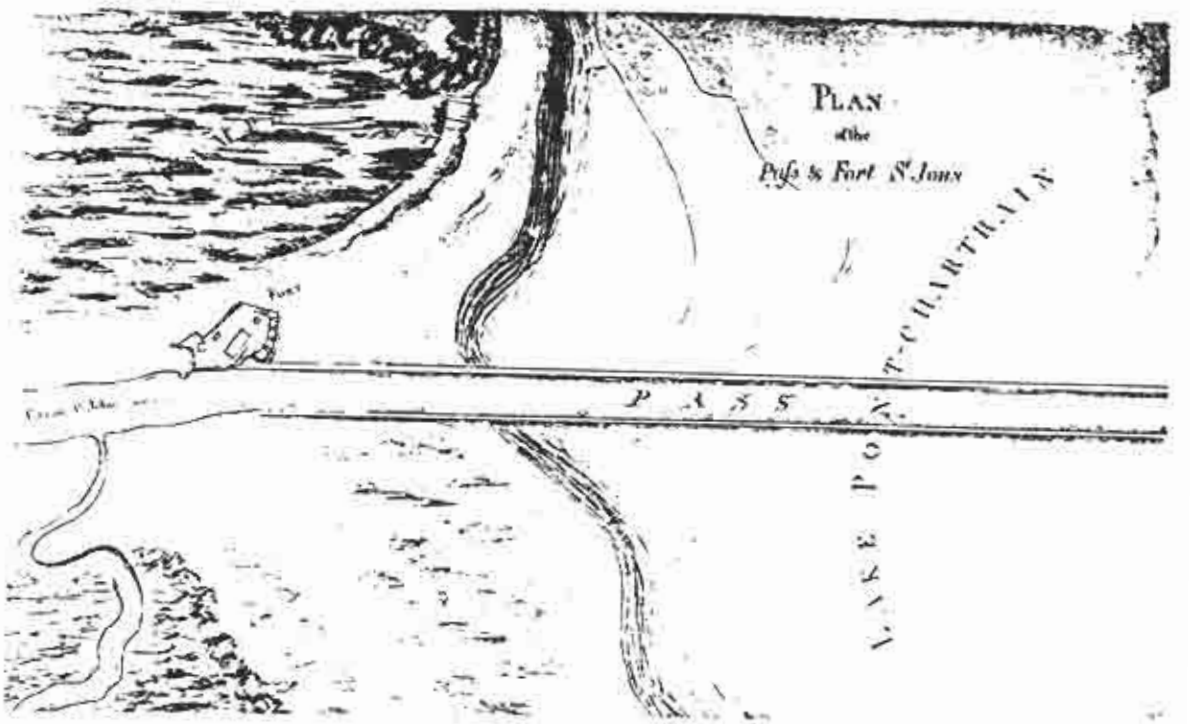


133-13

Illustration 19.

Location and plans of Fort St. John on Bayou St. John, 1814. Drawn by Bartholemy Lafon.

Historic New Orleans Collection.


PLAN
of the
Pass & Fort St. Johns
PASS
LAKE POINT-CHARTRAIN

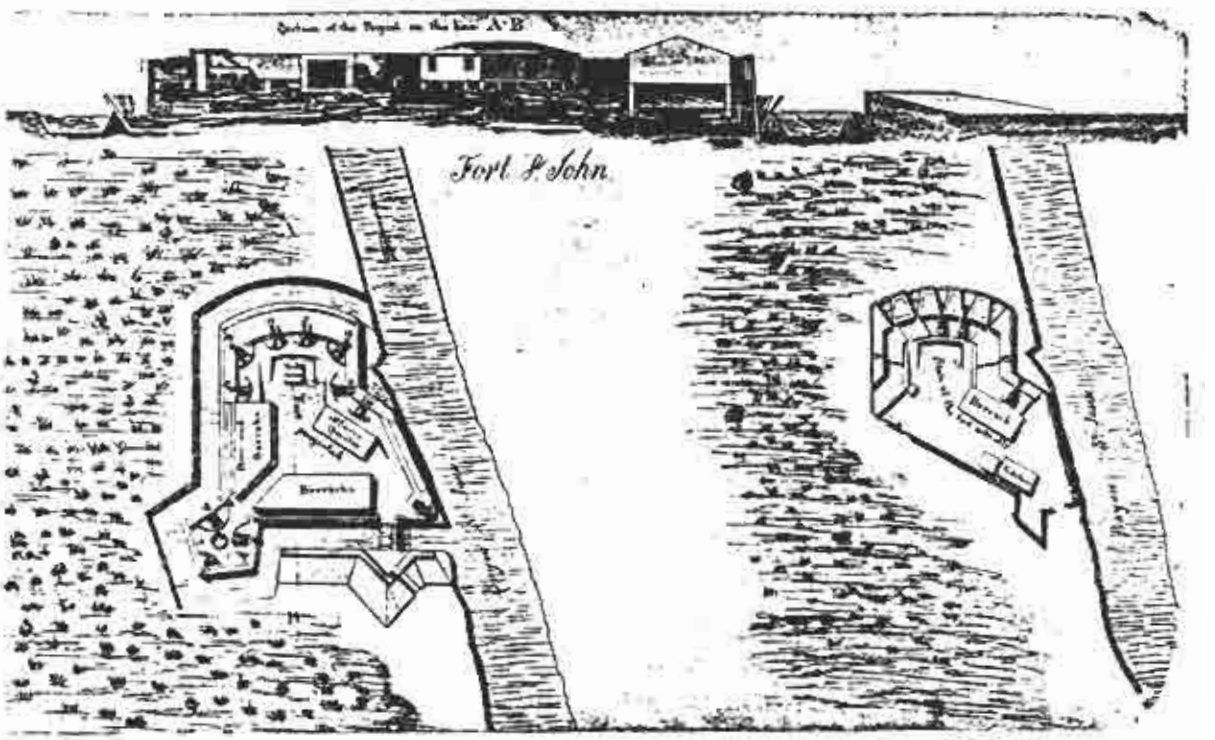

Fort St John
Barracks

Illustration 20.

Plan of Fort St. John on Bayou St. John, 1817.

National Archives.

PLAN and PROFILES of the BATTERY

ST. JOHN.

1817

U. STATES
TOPL. BUREAU

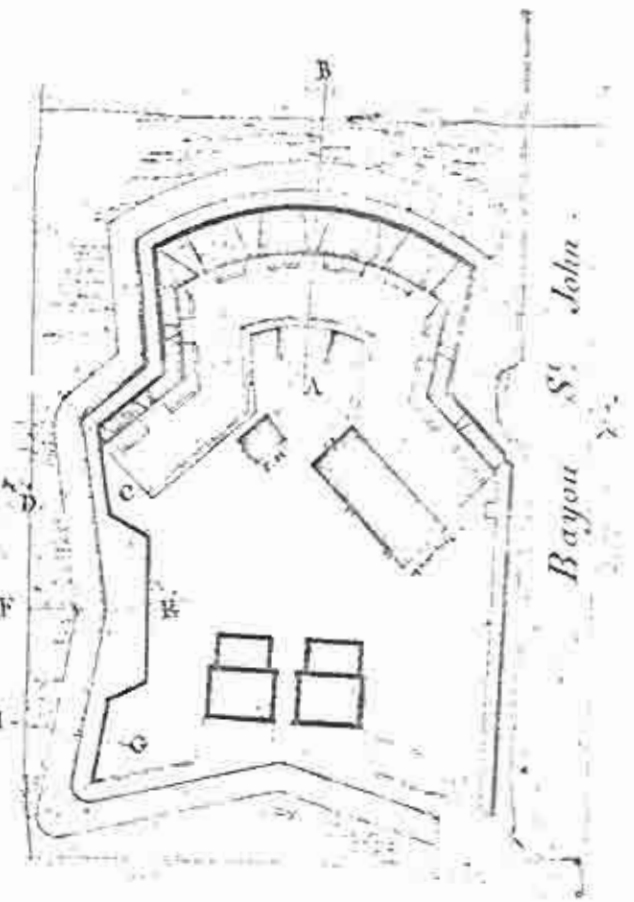
Profile on the line AB.

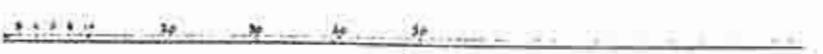
Scale of the Profiles.

Profile on the line CD.

Profile on the line EF.

Profile on the line GH.





Scale of the Plans

Illustration 21.

Ruins of Fort St. John at Bayou St. John, 1980

Photograph by Jerome A. Greene.

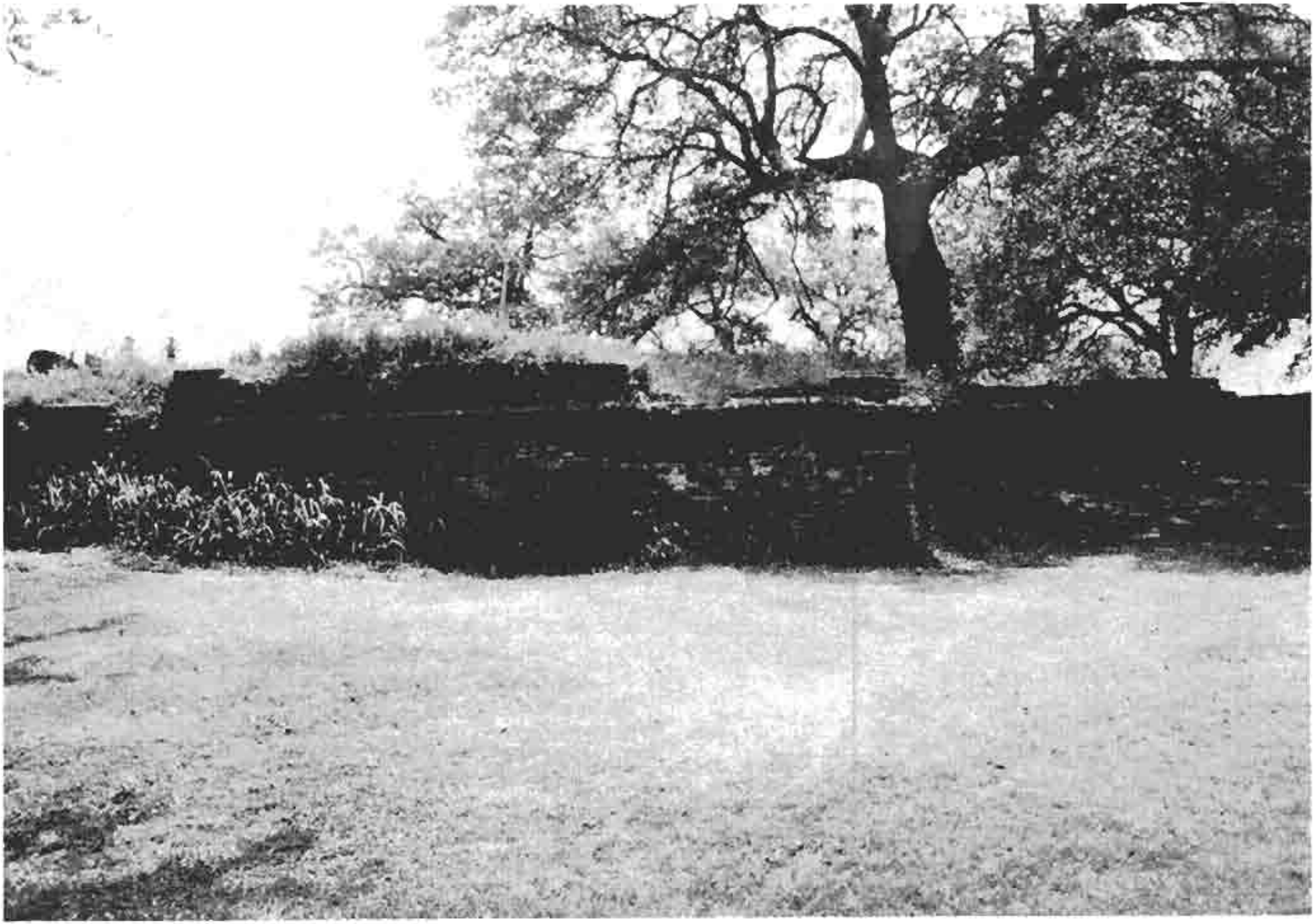


Illustration 22.

Plan of the Rigolets and Chef Menteur Pass, showing location of Fort Petite Coquilles. Drawn by Bartholemy Lafon.

Historic New Orleans Collection.

PLAN
of
PETITES COQUILLES
LAKE PONT-CHARTRAIN
Projected battery
Fort
MARSHES
Proposed to New Orleans Canal
SHELLS ISLAND
Marshes
Catherine bayou & Lake
Bayou du Pont
BAY
PINES
MARSHES
Pine encampment
Goode Island

Illustration 23.

Condition of Fort Petite Coquilles as of December, 1813, with projection of the finished work. Drawn by Bartholemy Lafon.

Map Division, Library of Congress.

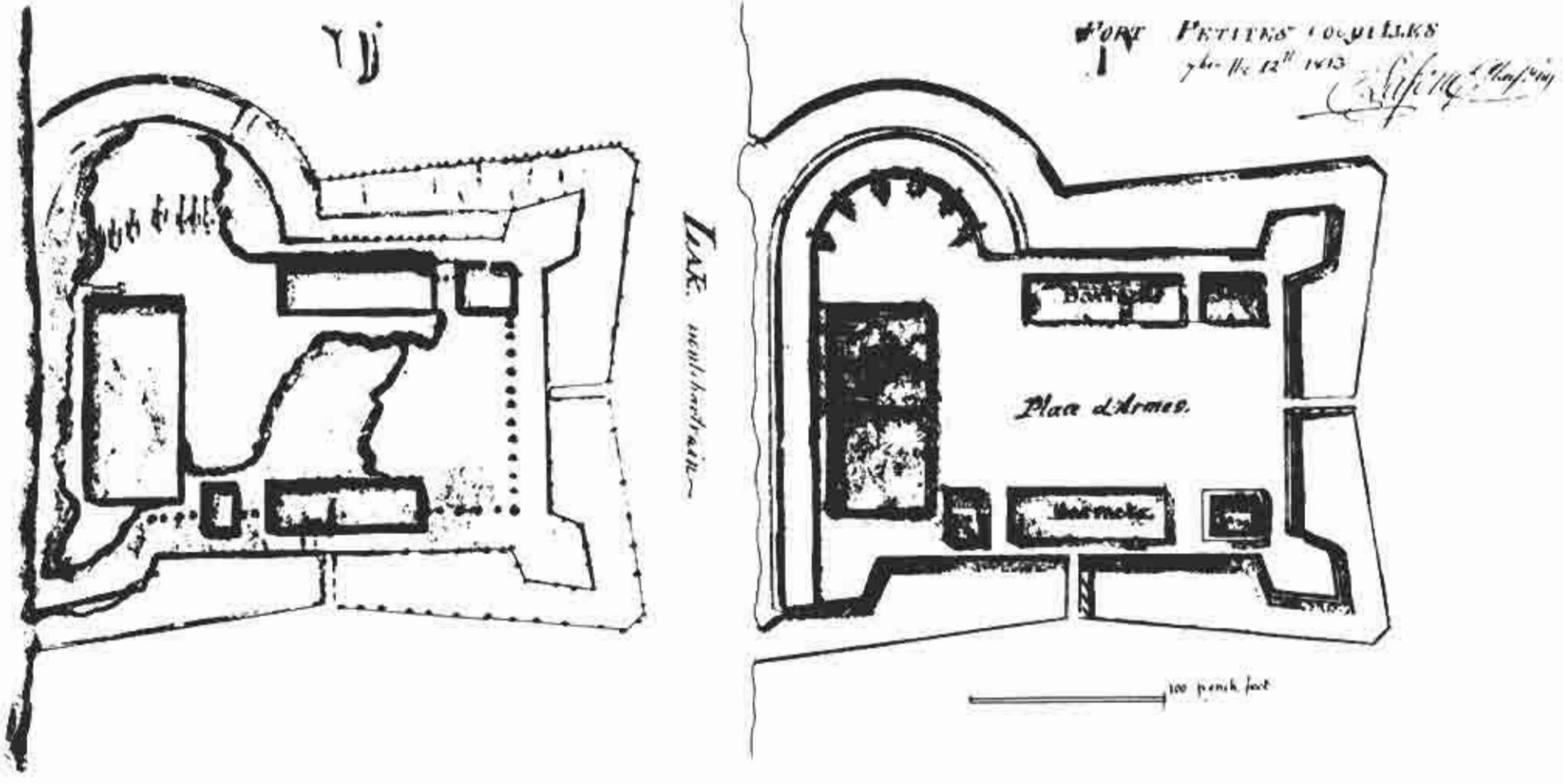

Barracks
Place d'Armes.
Barracks
100 French feet

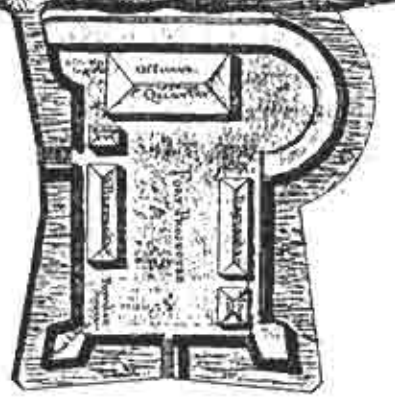
Illustration 24.

State of Fort Petite Coquilles, 1814. Drawn by Bartholemy Lafon.

Historic New Orleans Collection.

Section of the Fort projected, on the line A B

LAKE PONTCHARTRAIN



FORT OF THE

PETITES COQUILLES

LAKE PONTCHARTRAIN

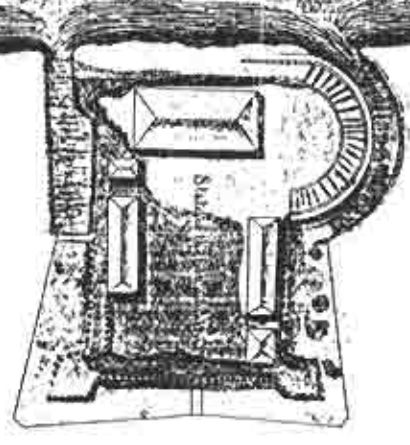


Illustration 25.

The British bombardment of Fort Plaquemine (Fort St. Philip) in January, 1815.

Historic New Orleans Collection.

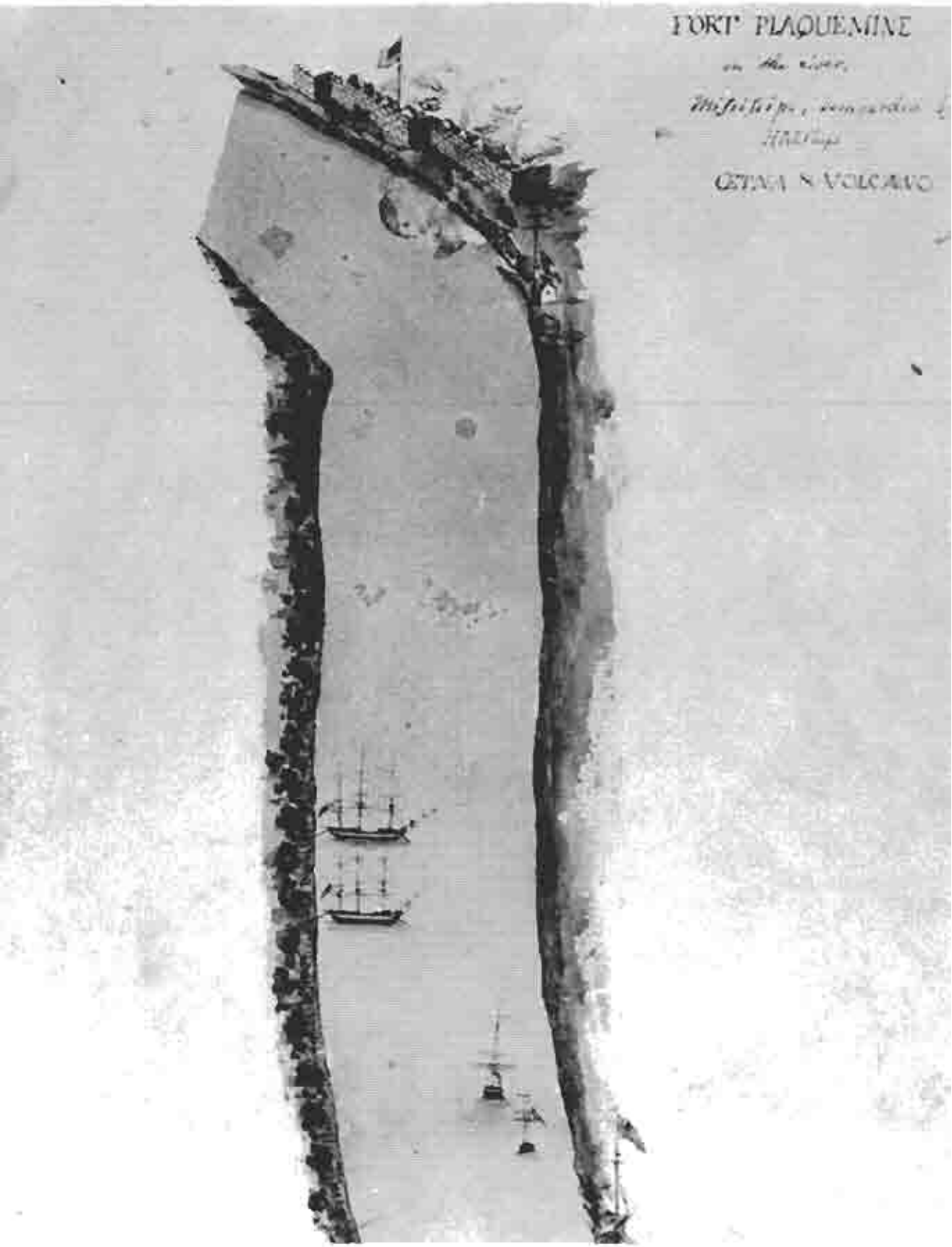

FORT' PLAQUEMINE
ÆTNA S VOLCANO

Illustration 26.

Bombardment of Fort St. Philip by the British, 1815.

From Arsene La Carriere La Tour, Historical Memoir of the War In West Florida and Louisiana in 1814-15, 1816.

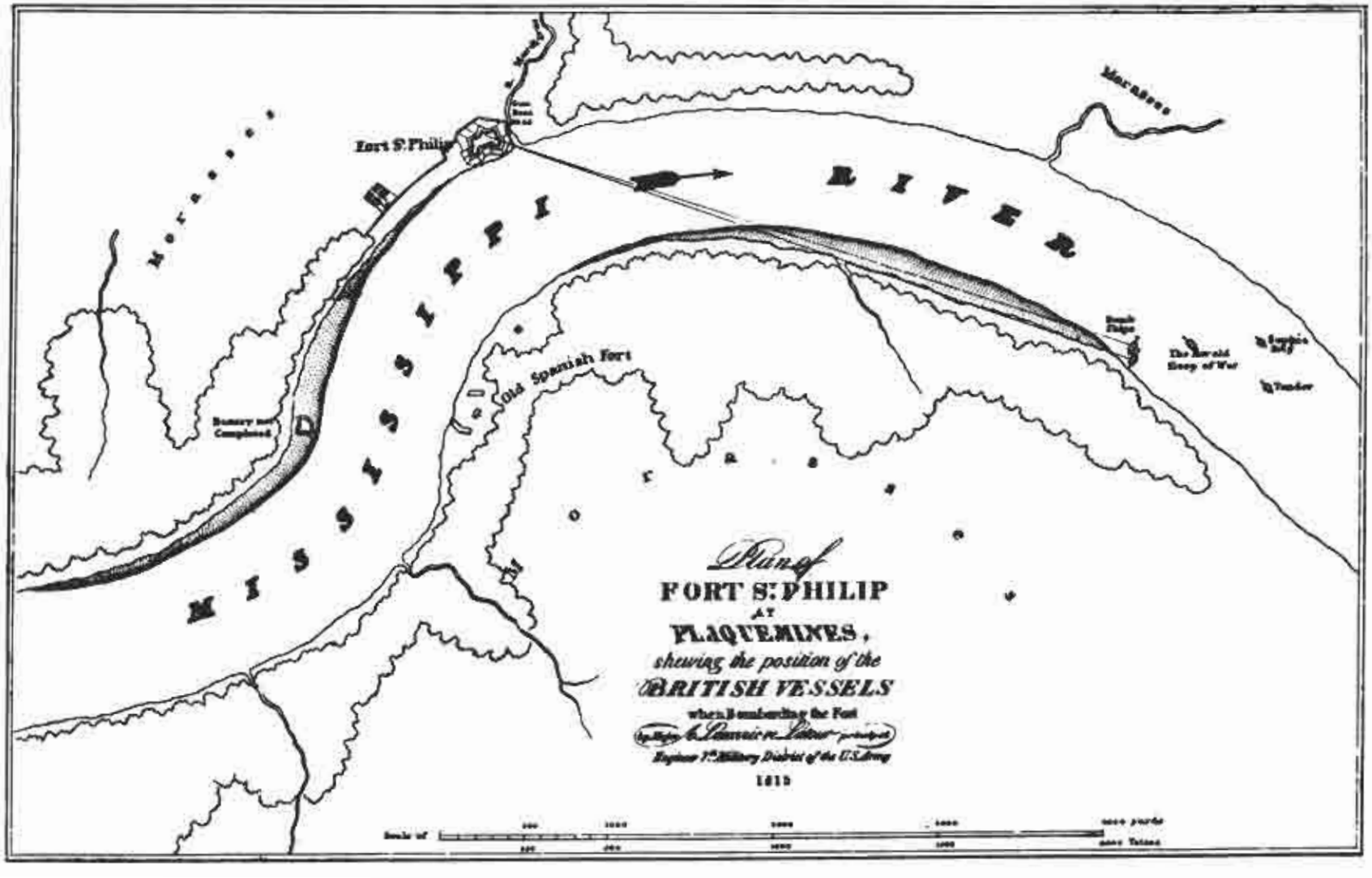

Fort St. Philip
Old Spanish Fort
MISSISSIPPI RIVER
Plan of
FORT St. PHILIP
AT
PLAQUEMINES,
shewing the position of the
BRITISH VESSELS
when Bombarding the Fort
1815

Illustration 27.

Top: Riverside interior of Fort St. Philip. From a photograph taken in 1884.

Bottom: Entrance to Fort St. Philip. From a photograph taken in 1884.

From Battles and Leaders of the Civil War, II

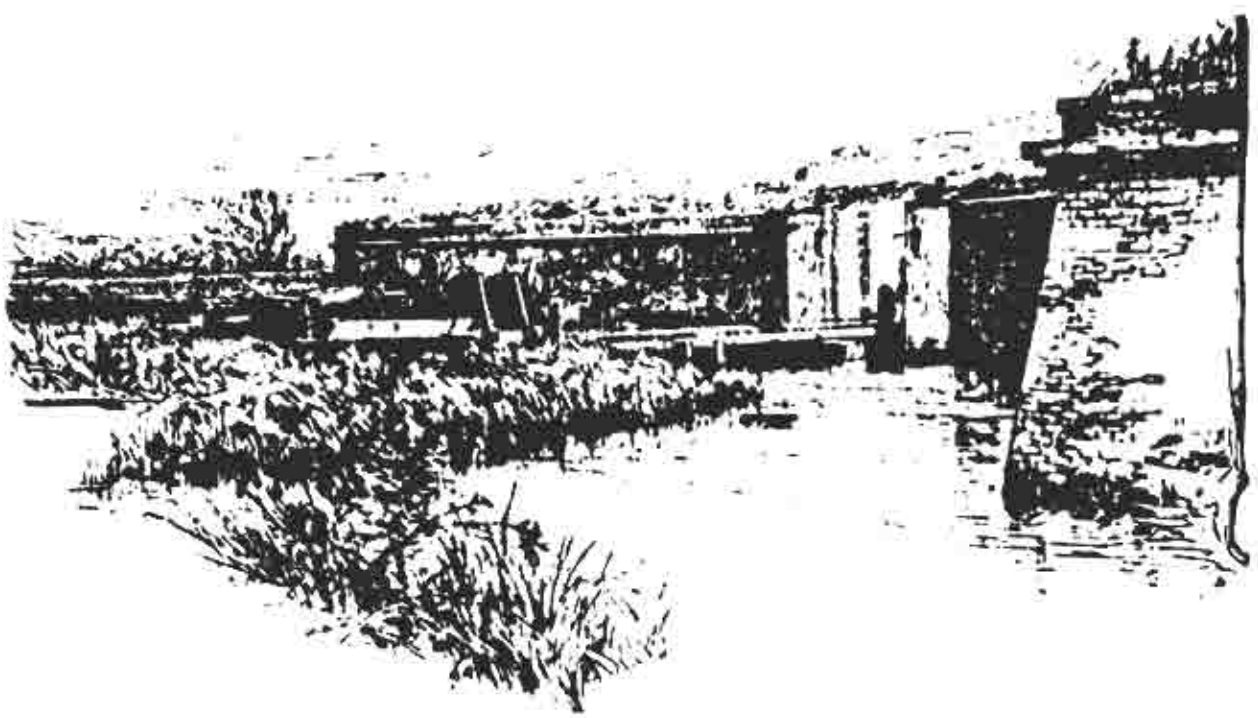


Illustration 28.

Fort St. Philip, probably in the early 1900s.

U.S. Military Academy Library.

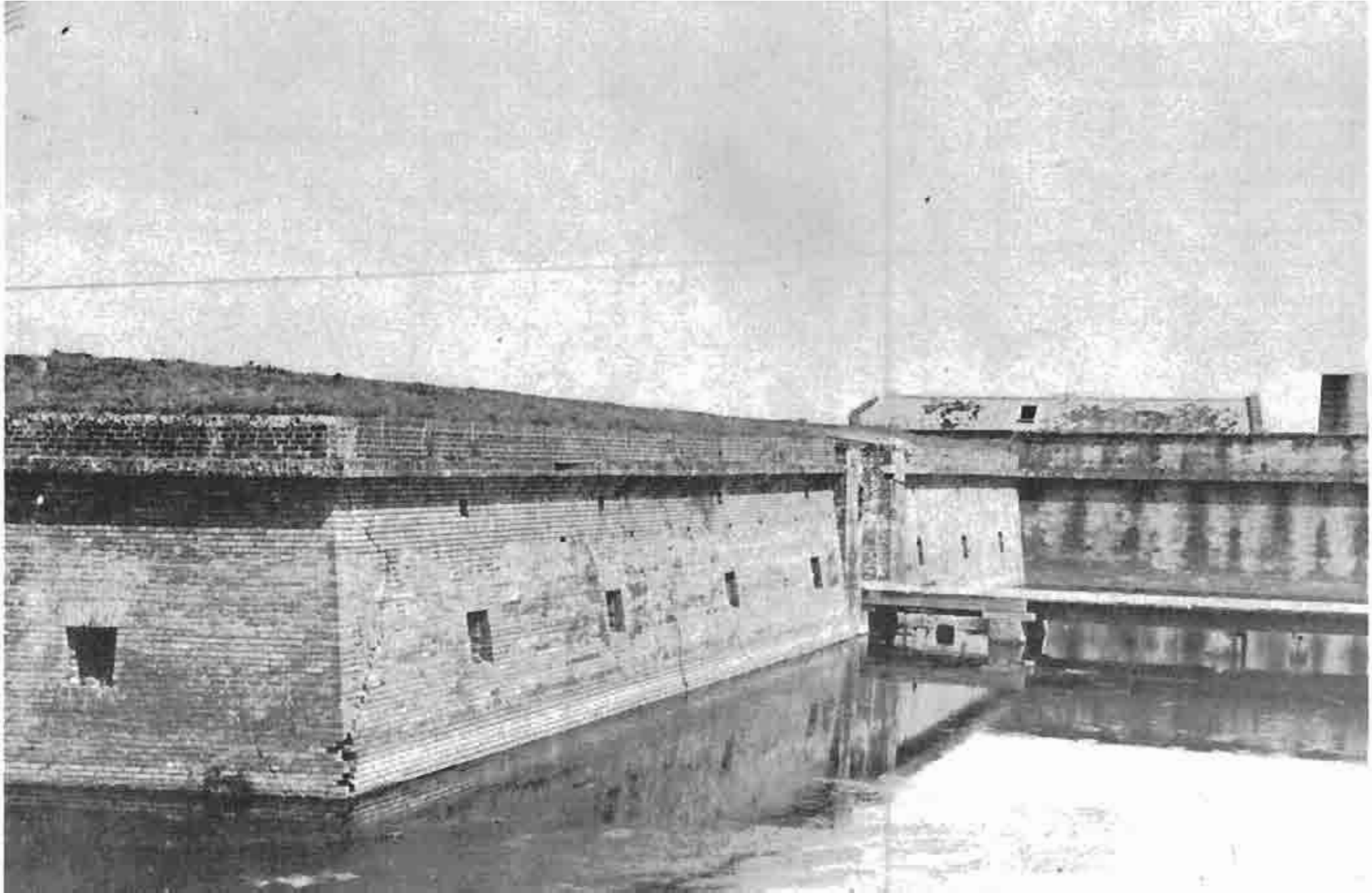


Illustration 29.

Quarters at Fort St. Philip, c. 1900.

U.S. Military Academy Library.

Illustration 30.

View of Fort St. Philip, 1915, showing effects of demolition.

National Archives.

Illustration 31.

View of main parade at Fort St. Philip, 1915.

National Archives.

Illustration 32.

Left: View of Battery Merrill, Fort St. Philip.

Right: Battery for disappearing gun, Fort St. Philip.

Photographs by Jerome A. Greene, 1980.

Illustration 33.

Battery Merrill, Fort St. Philip, showing barbed wire fixtures prepared for use against racial demonstrators in 1963.

Photograph by Jerome A. Greene, 1980.

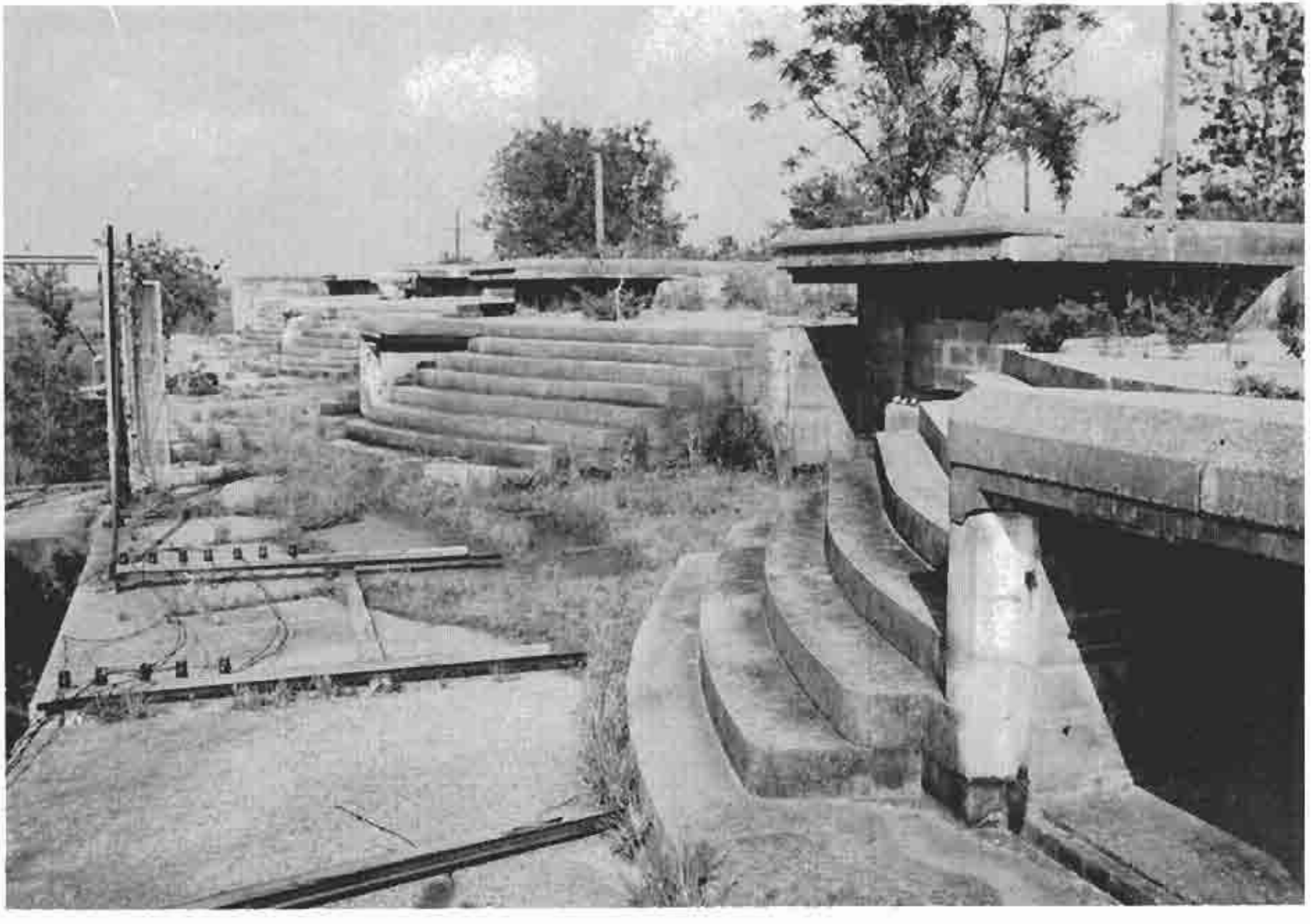


Illustration 34.

Top: Fort St. Philip, showing a section of the original Spanish-built curtain.

Bottom: Barbette emplacement at Fort St. Philip, showing pintle block and traverse circle.

Photographs by Jerome A. Greene, 1980.

Illustration 35.

Plan of Fort St. Philip, August, 1808.

National Archives.

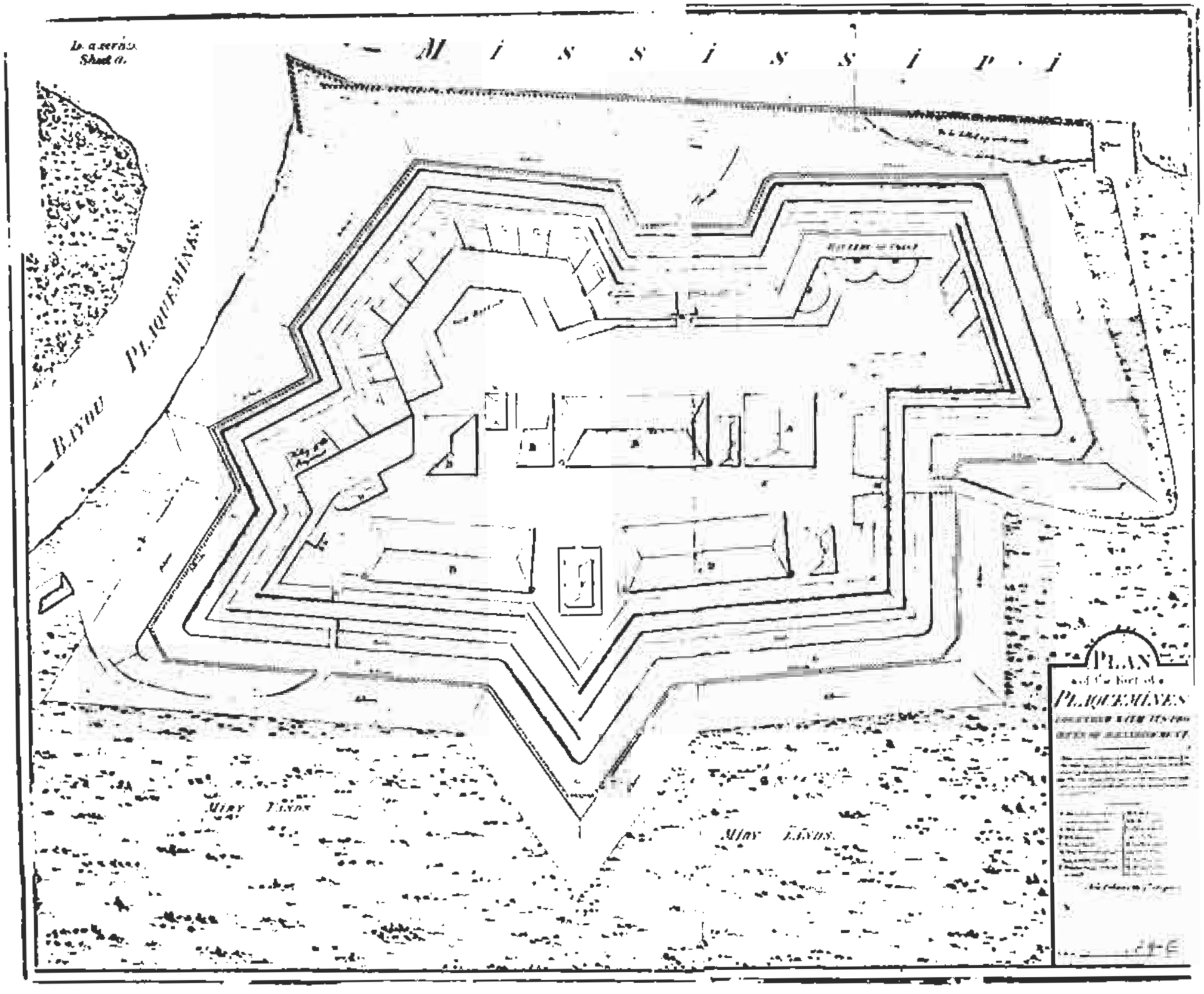
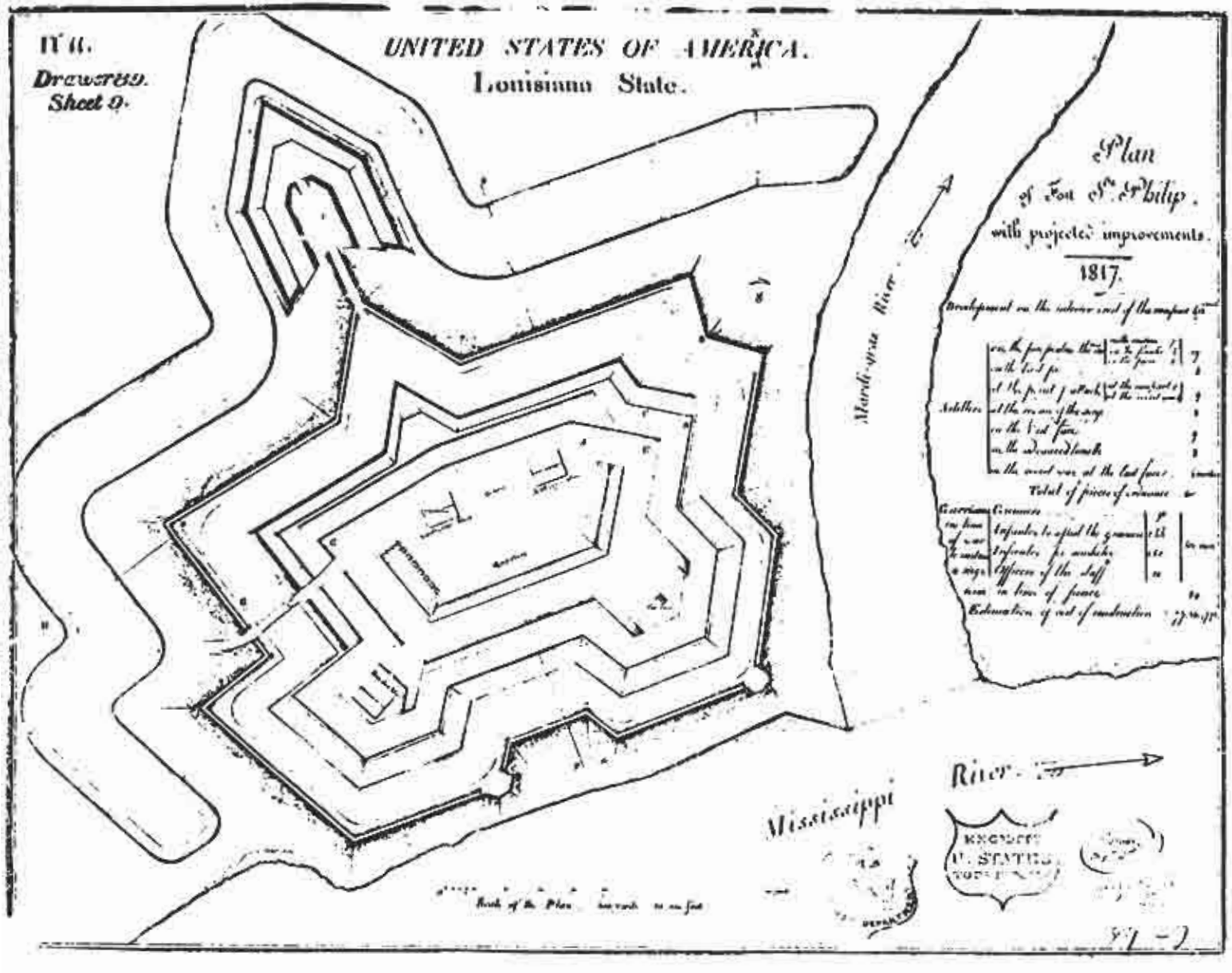

Mississipi
Bayou Plaquemines
Miry Lands
Miry Lands
Plan
Plaquemines

Illustration 36.

Plan of Fort St. Philip, 1817, showing rear bastion proposed by General Simon Bernard but never erected.

National Archives.



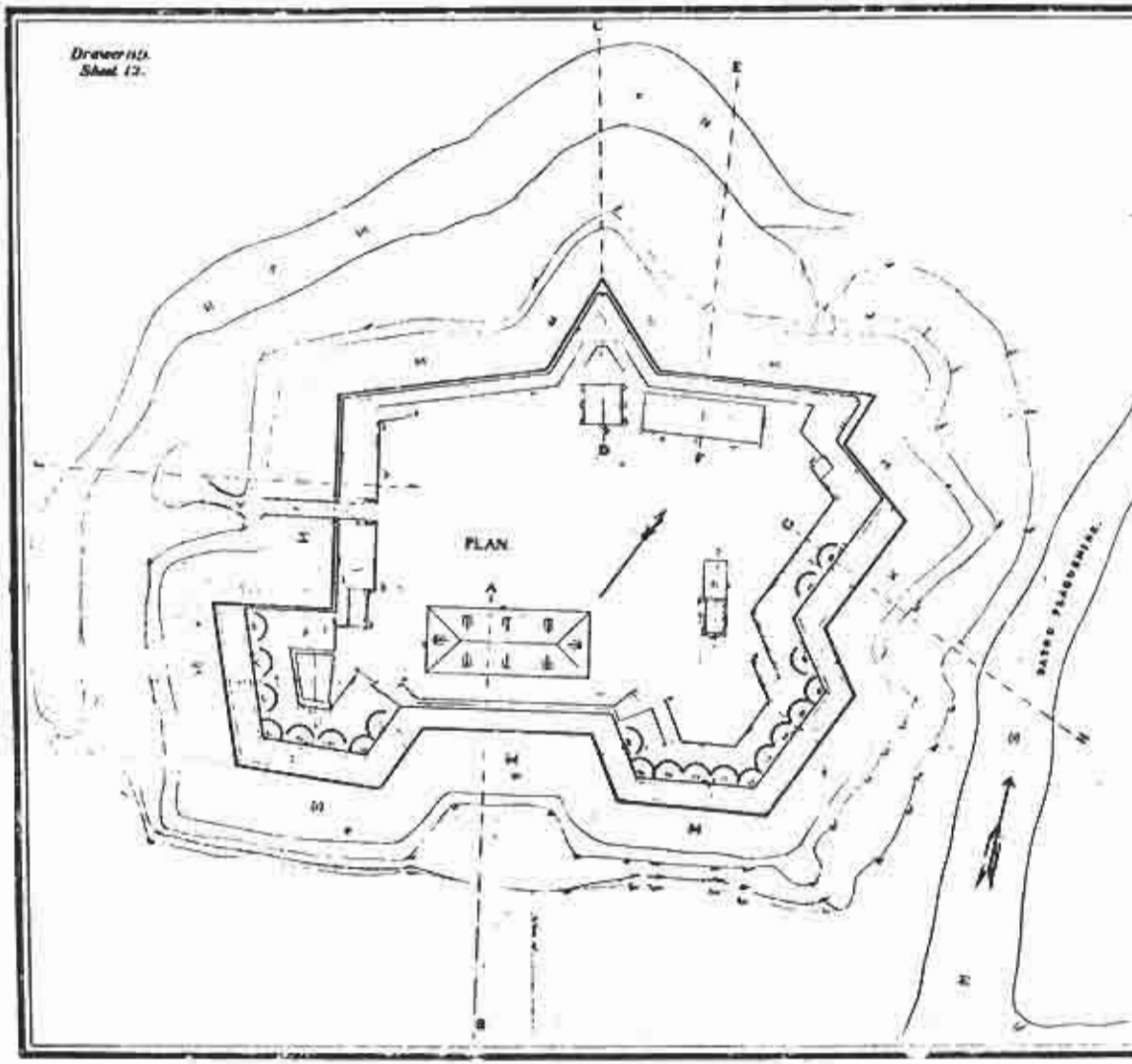
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.
Louisiana State.
Drawer 89.
Sheet 9.
Plan
of Fort St. Philip.
with projected improvements.
1817.
Mardi-gras River
Mississippi River

Illustration 37.

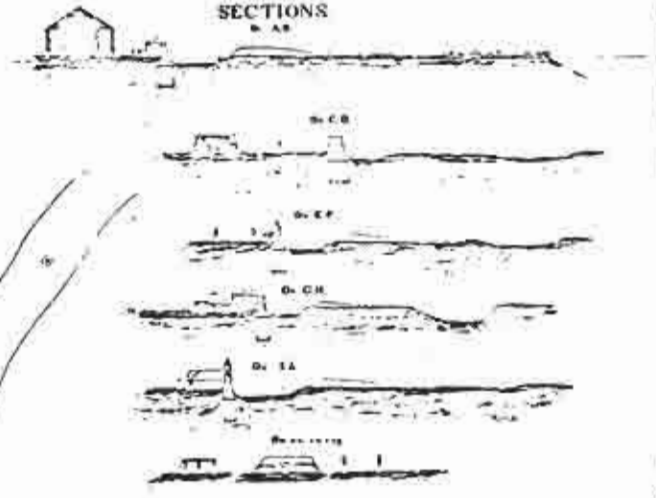
Fort St. Philip, 1841, showing location of barbette batteries.

National Archives.

Drawer 10.
Sheet 12.



SECTIONS



FORT St PHILIP

AT

PLAQUEMINE BEND.

LOUISIANA.

Illustration 38.

Outline of Fort St. Philip as it appeared in 1863.

National Archives.

Drawer 89.
Sheet 21.

BY HER MAJESTY'S ROYAL LETTERS PATENT
THE
VELLUM TRACEING CLOTH
Sagars Patent

(21)
6

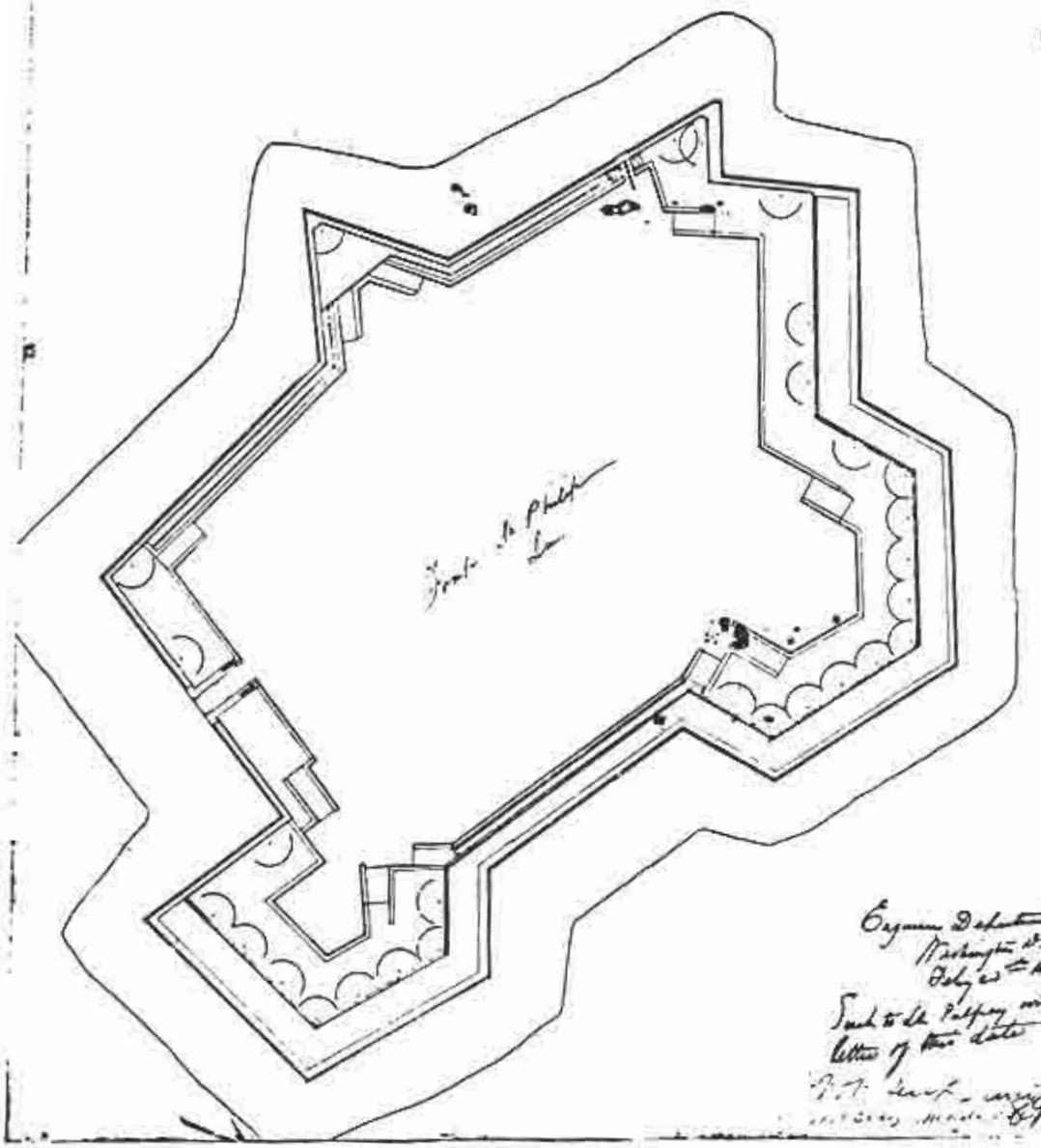


Illustration 39.

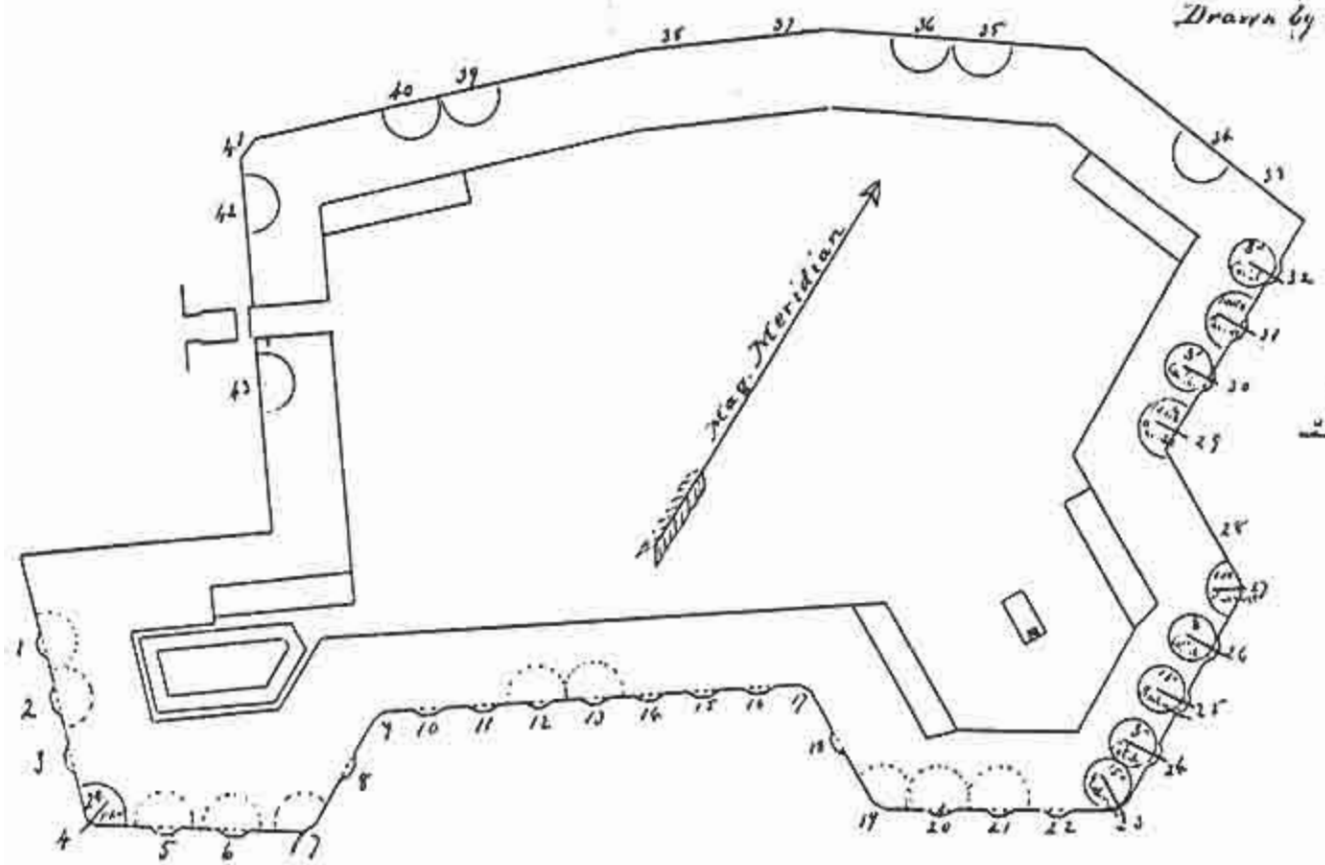
Armament in Fort St. Philip, May, 1865.

National Archives.

May 18. 1865.

Rec'd with letter of Capt. Palfrey
of 18th May. 1865 (P. 2773)

sketch showing state of
Armament
Aug 1st. 1865
Outlines from Dept. Tracings
Details from Actual Survey.
Drawn by FRANKLIN C. HILL Asst. Engr.



Scale 1" = 60'

Ext from report of Operations for April 65

No guns received during the Month
" " are now on hand unmounted
Seven platforms have been made ready

Illustration 40.

Armament of the water batteries at Fort St. Philip, May 1865.

National Archives.

Note. The carriages of Nos. 92 & 93
were taken away early in April and
have not yet been brought back.

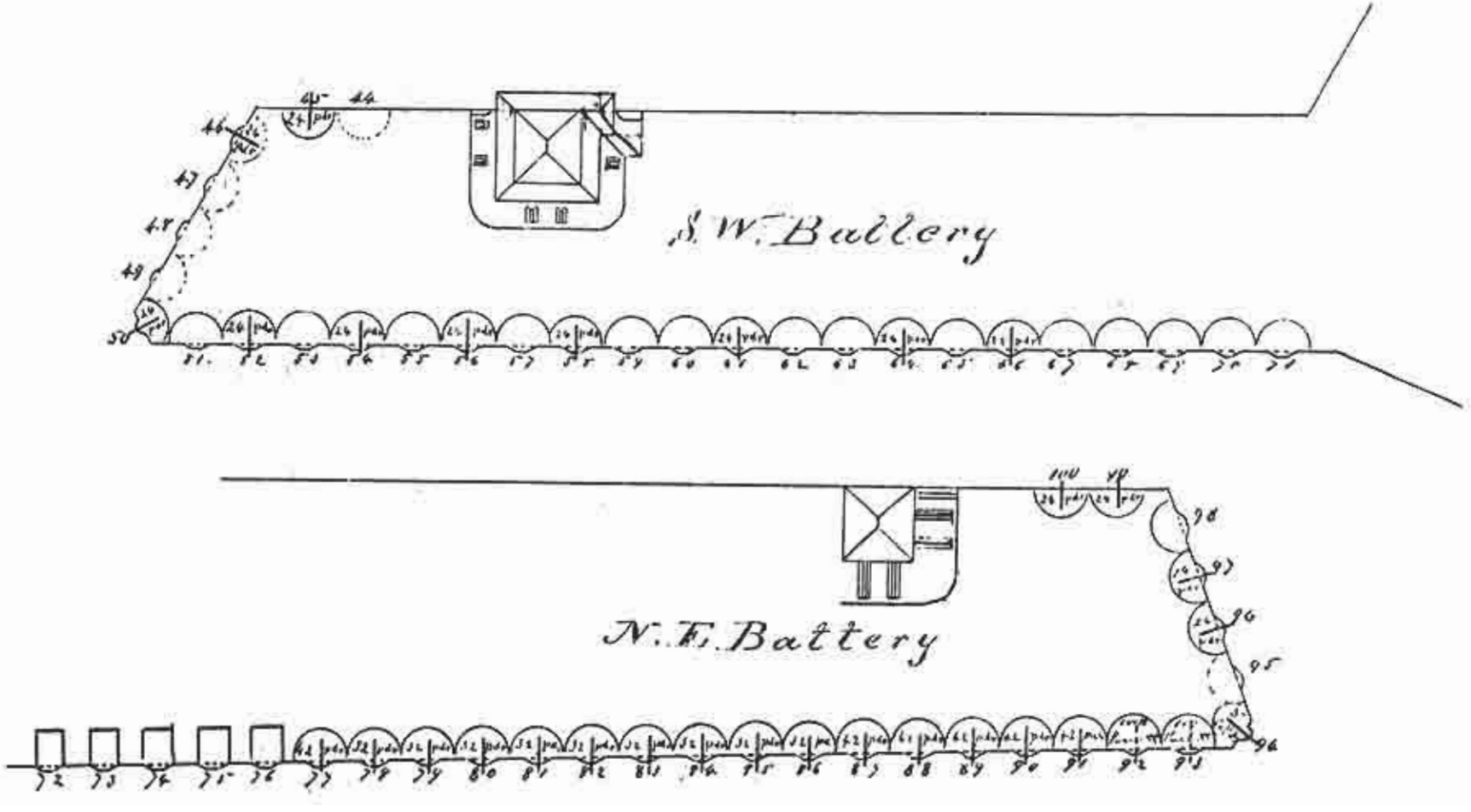


Illustration 41.

Fort St. Philip with exterior batteries, January, 1867.

National Archives.

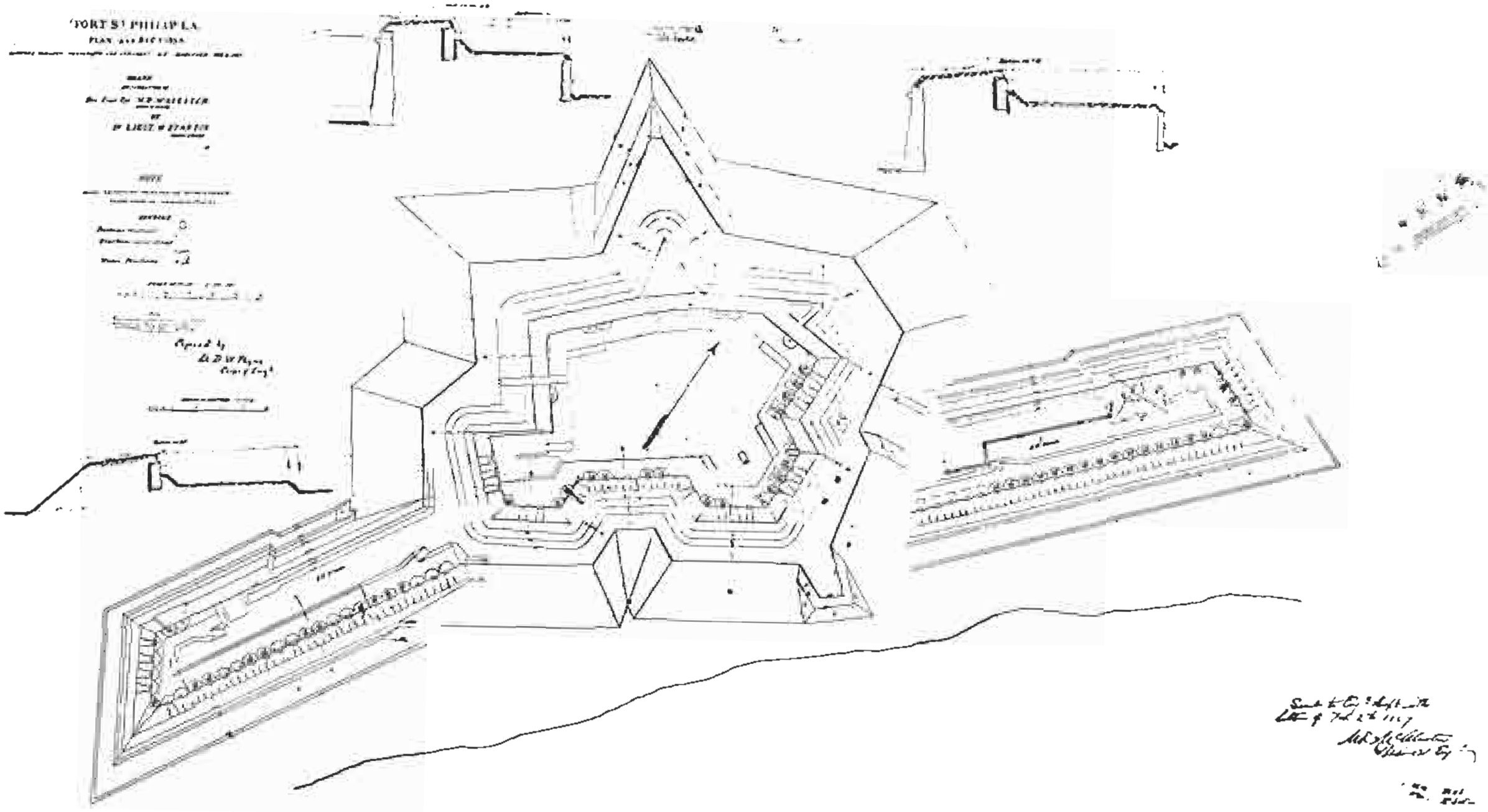

FORT ST PHILIP LA.

Illustration 42.

Diagram showing projected cross fire of artillery at Forts St. Philip and Jackson, 1870.

National Archives.

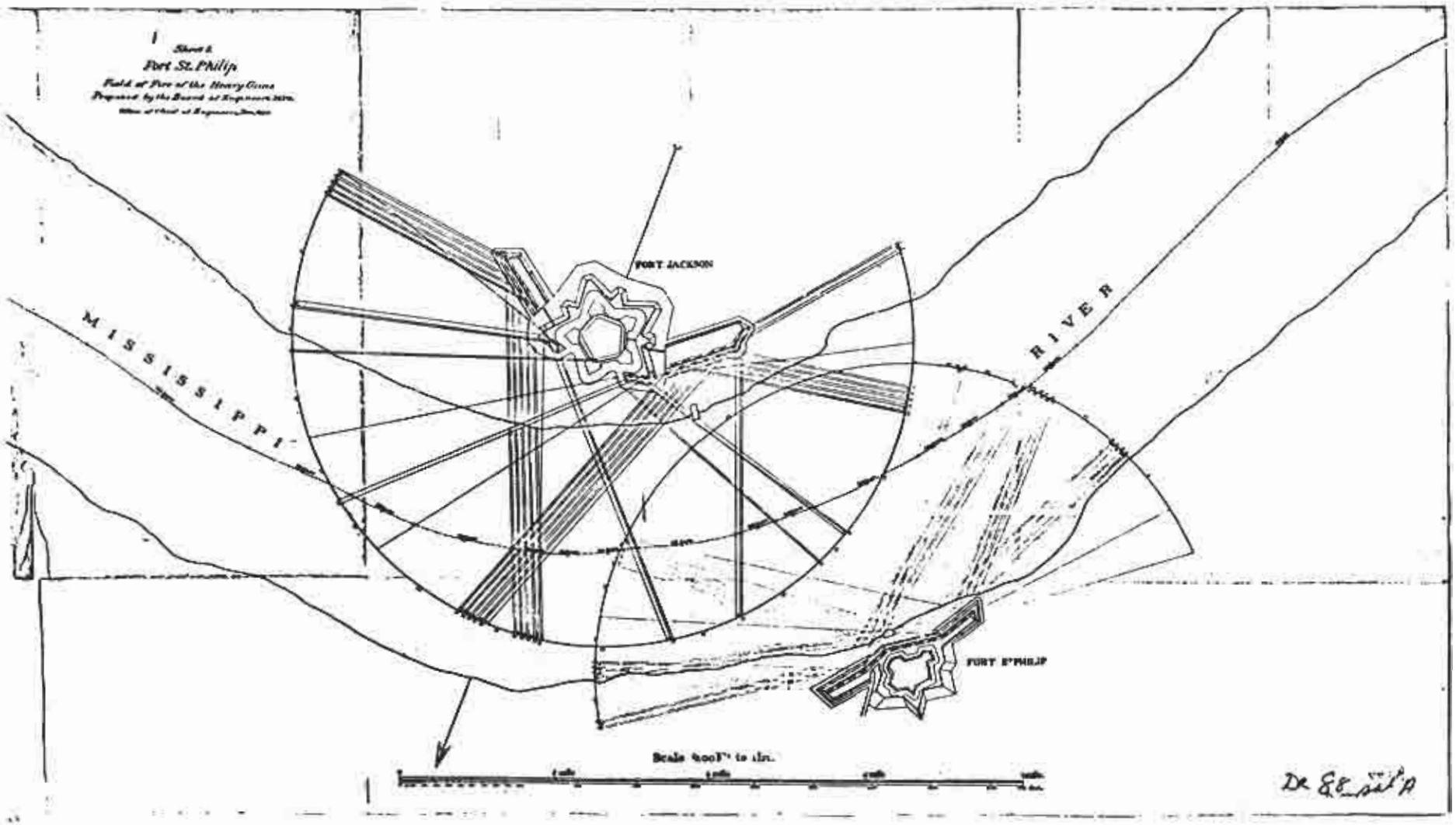

Sheet 2.
Fort St. Philip
Field of Fire of the Heavy Guns
Prepared by the Board of Engineers 1870.
FORT JACKSON
MISSISSIPPI
RIVER
FORT ST PHILIP
Scale 400 ft to 1 in.

Illustration 43.

Condition of Fort St. Philip in 1884.

National Archives.

Drawer 89
Sheet 41.

PLAN OF
FORT St PHILIP

Showing Condition of Work

March 7 1894.

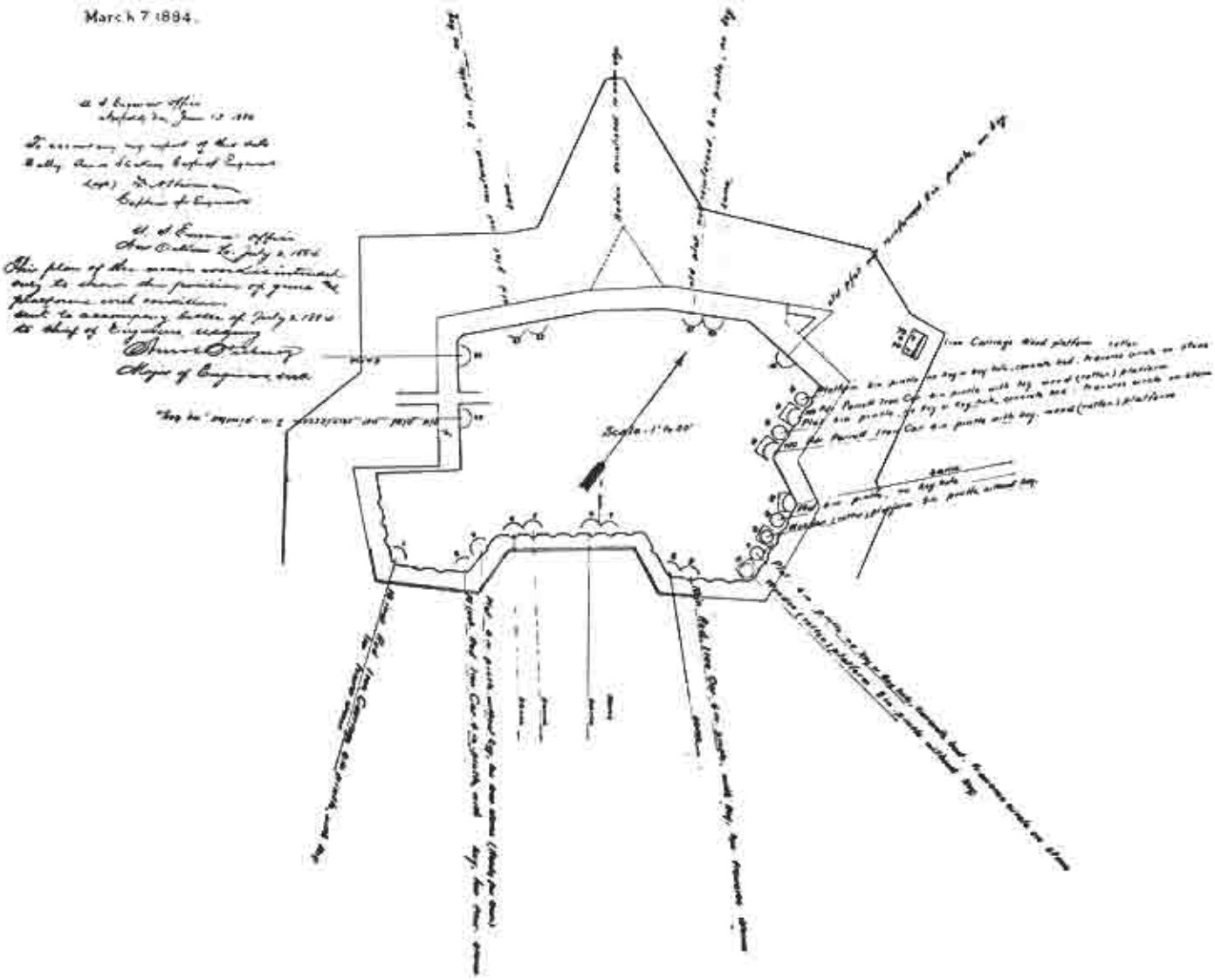


Illustration 44.

Fort St. Philip and its Endicott batteries, December, 1898.

National Archives.

FORT SAINT PHILIP.

SHOWING CONDITION OF ARMAMENT

DEC. 31, 1898

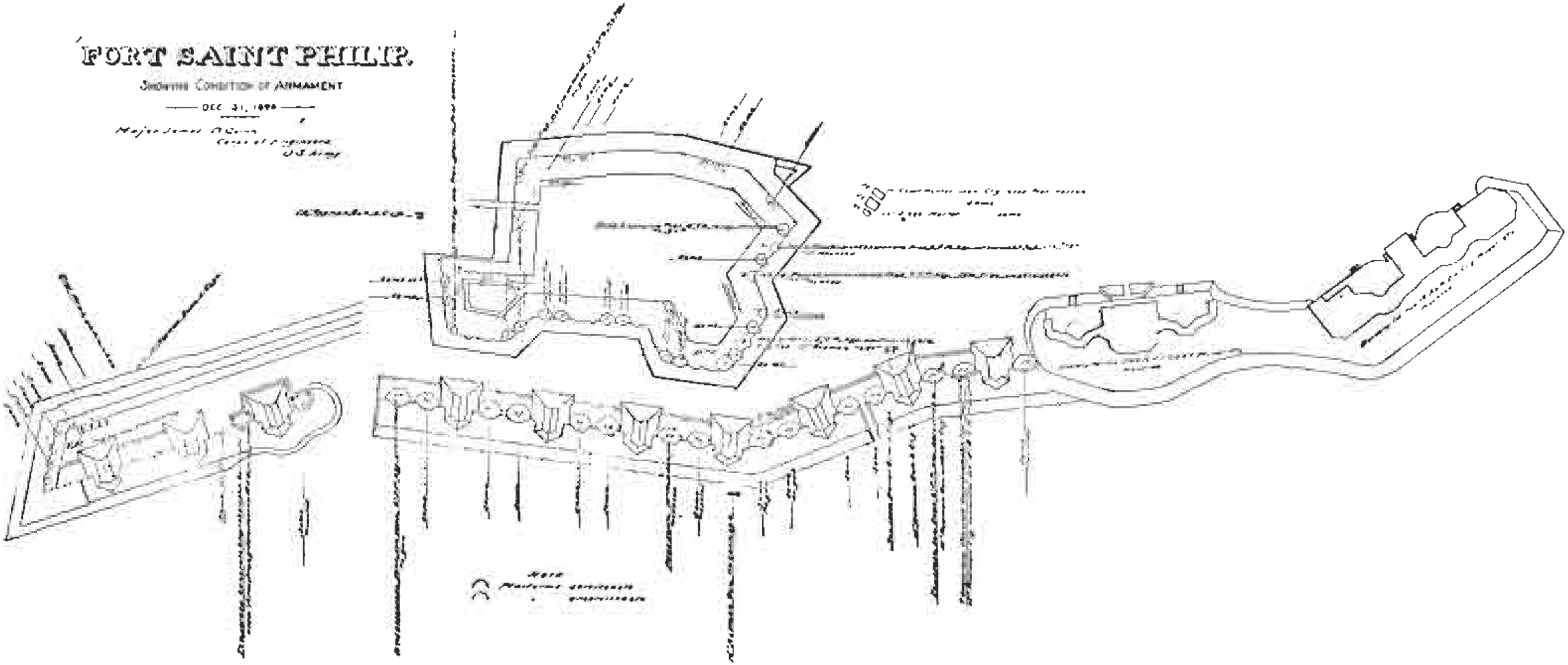


Illustration 45.

Fort St. Philip. Armament Sketch, December, 1900.

National Archives.

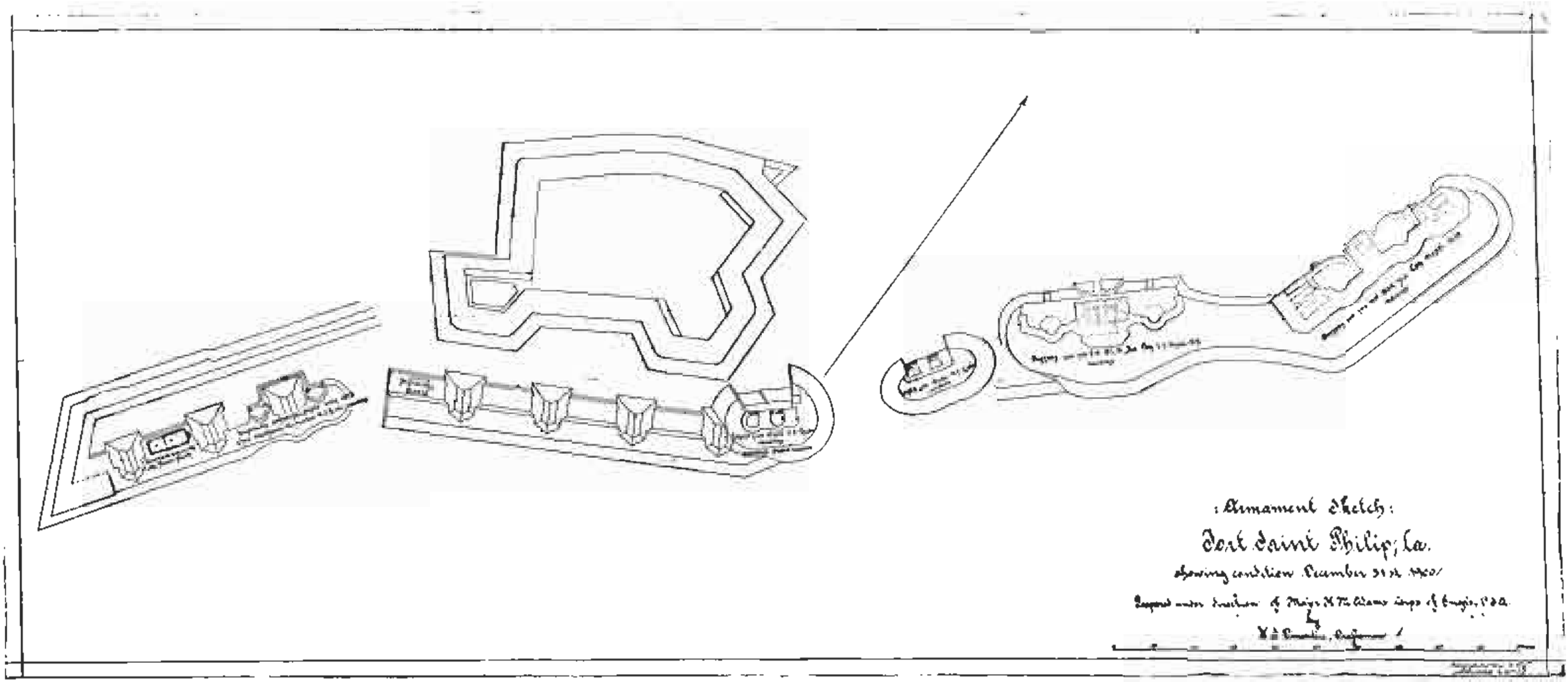

: Armament Sketch :
Fort Saint Philip, La.
showing condition December 31st 1900.

Illustration 46.

Top: View of Fort Jackson, 1885, from the levee looking south. From a photograph.

Bottom: Location of the Mortar boats during bombardment of Forts Jackson and Fort St. Philip, 1862.

From Battles and Leaders of the Civil War, II.

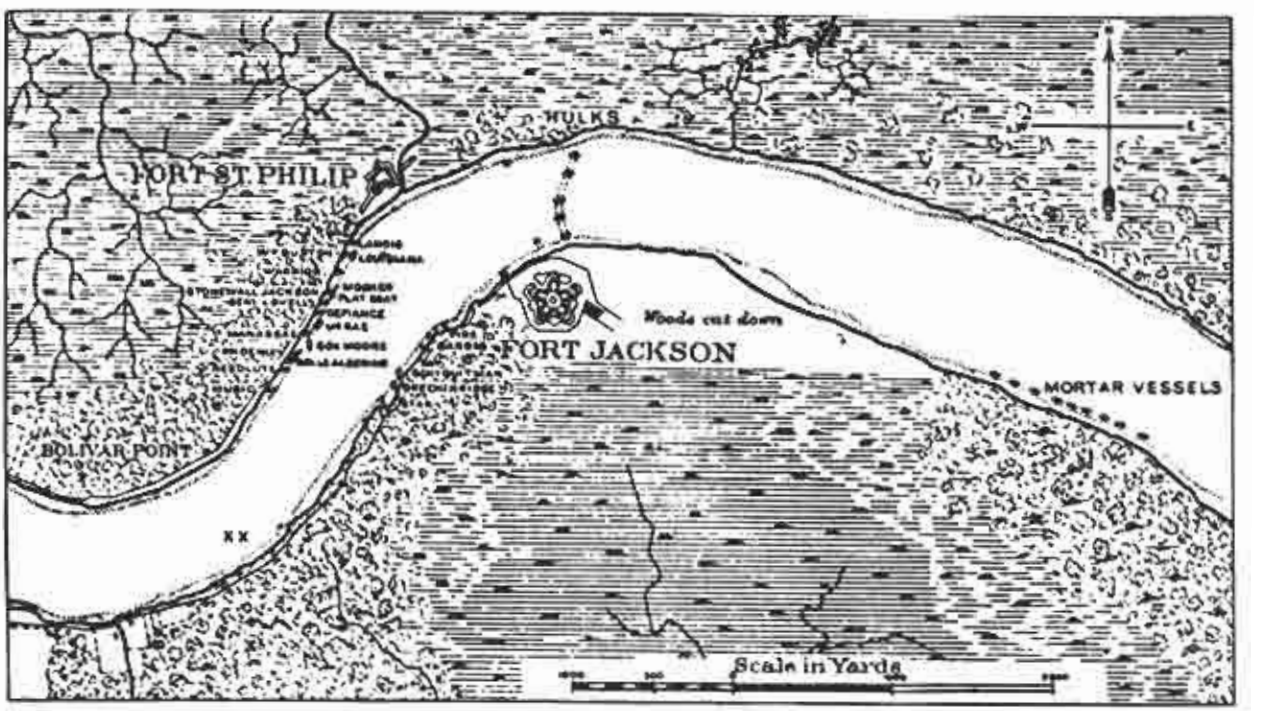

HULKS
FORT ST. PHILIP
Woods cut down
FORT JACKSON
MORTAR VESSELS
BOLIVAR POINT
XX
Scale in Yards

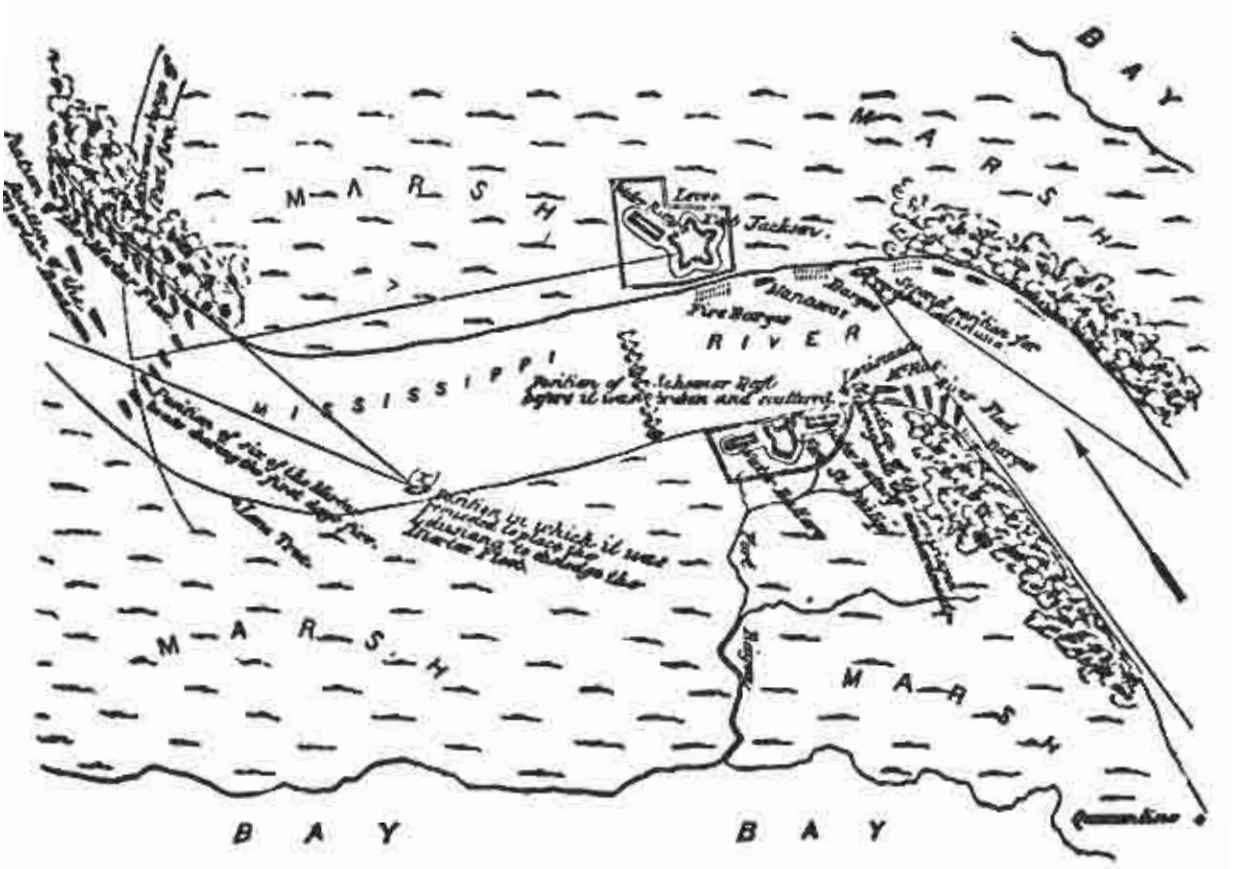
Illustration 47.

Top: Diagram of the bombardment of Forts Jackson and St. Philip, April, 1862.

From J. Thomas Scharf, History of the Confederate States Navy, 1894.

Bottom: Plan showing the effects of the bombardment on Fort Jackson, 1862.

From Battles and Leaders of the Civil War, II.


BAY
MARSH
MARSH
Levee
Fort Jackson
Fire Barges
Manassas
Barges
RIVER
MISSISSIPPI
Position of Jackson Raft before it was broken and scuttered
Position in which it was rendered to place the Louisiana to dislodge the Mortar Float
Lone Tree
MARSH
MARSH
BAY
BAY

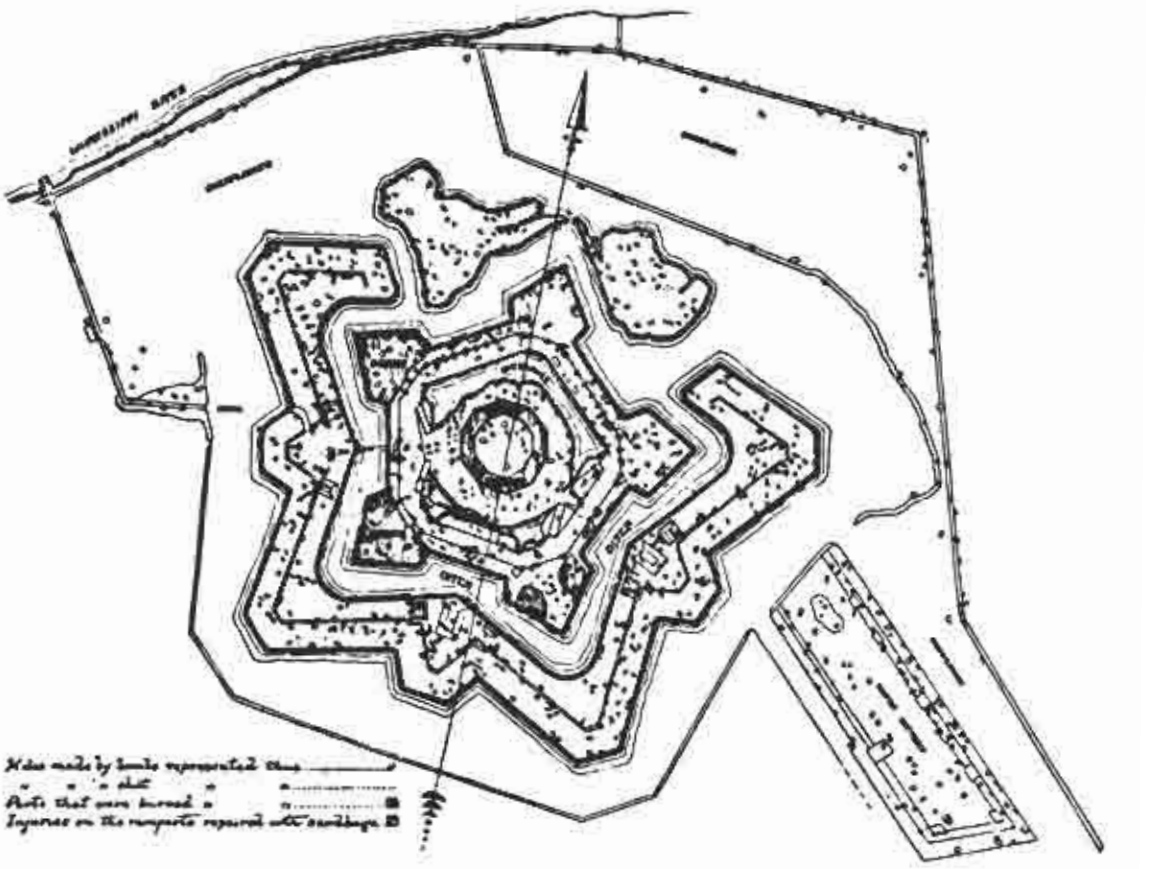

Holes made by bombs represented thus
" " " shot " "
Parts that were burned " "
Injuries on the ramparts repaired with sandbags

Illustration 48.

Farragut's fleet passing Forts Jackson and St. Philip, April 24, 1862.

U.S. Army Military History Institute.

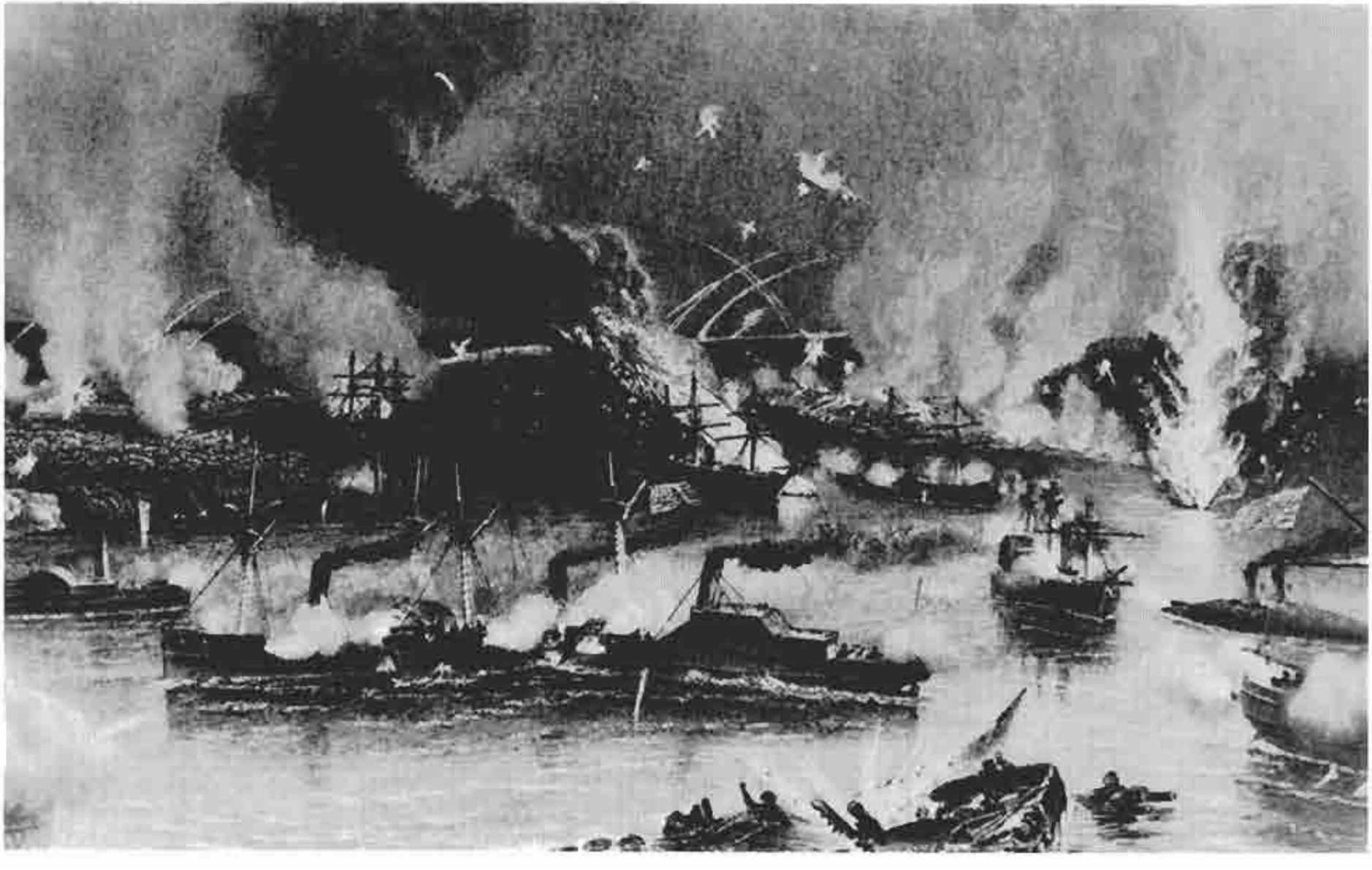


Illustration 49.

Fort Jackson, 1915. View of inner moat, sallyport, bridge, and portcullis.

National Archives.

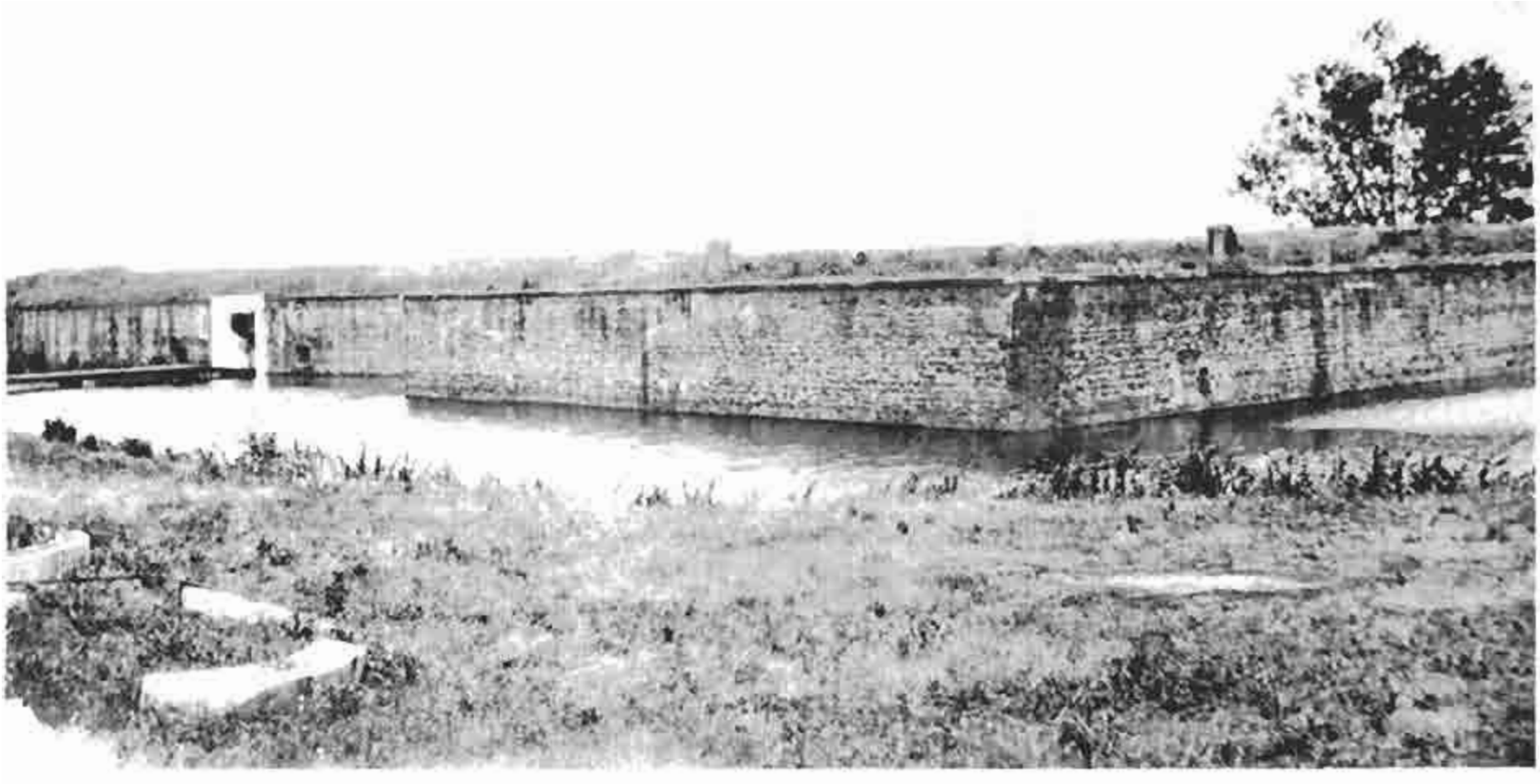


Illustration 50.

Main parade of Fort Jackson, 1915.

National Archives.

Illustration 51.

Fort Jackson, 1915, showing buildings and barbette emplacements along the outer line.

National Archives.

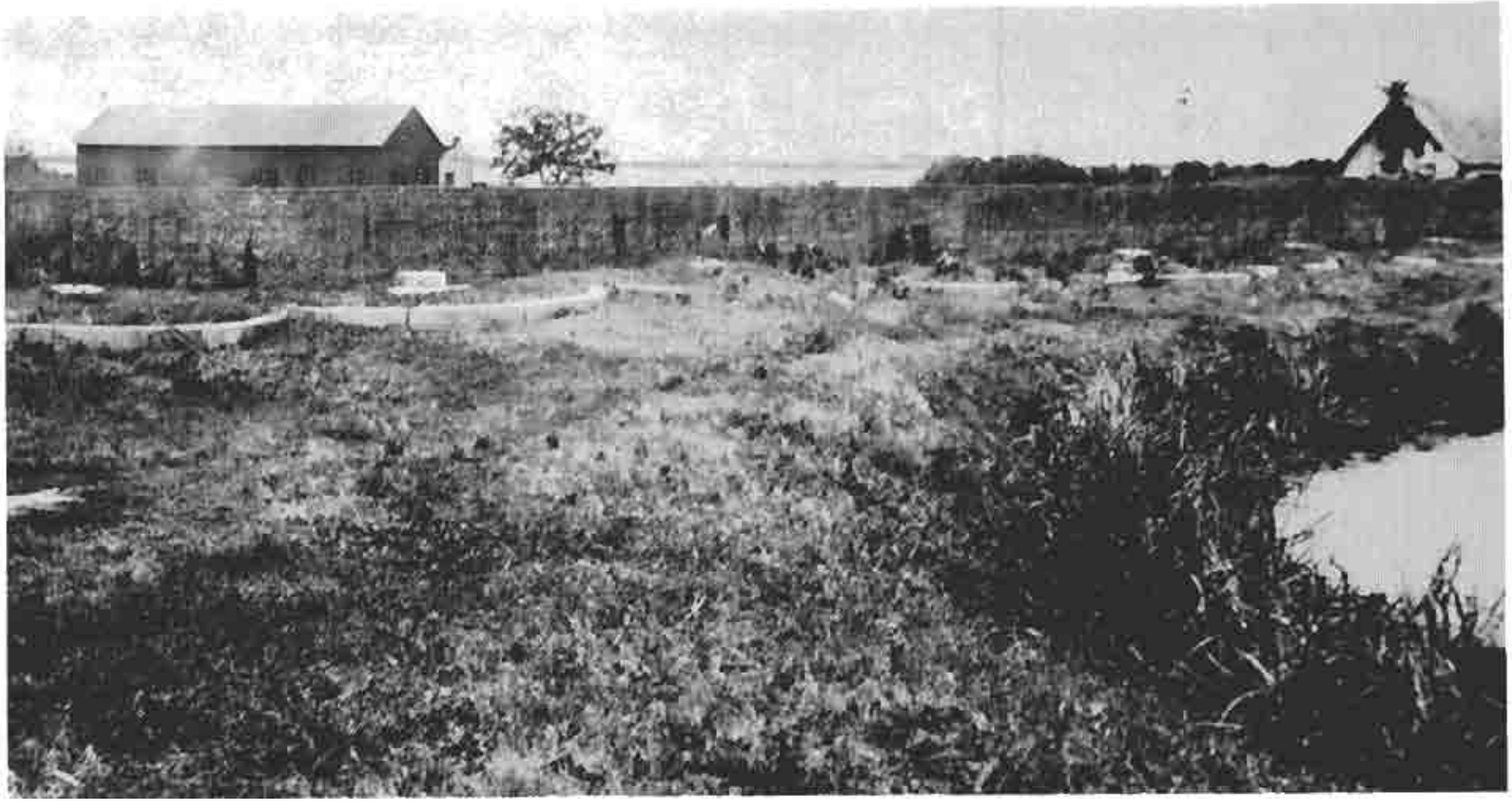


Illustration 52.

Blind casemates at Fort Jackson, 1915.

National Archives.

Illustration 53.

Moat of Fort Jackson.

Photograph by Jerome A. Greene, 1980.

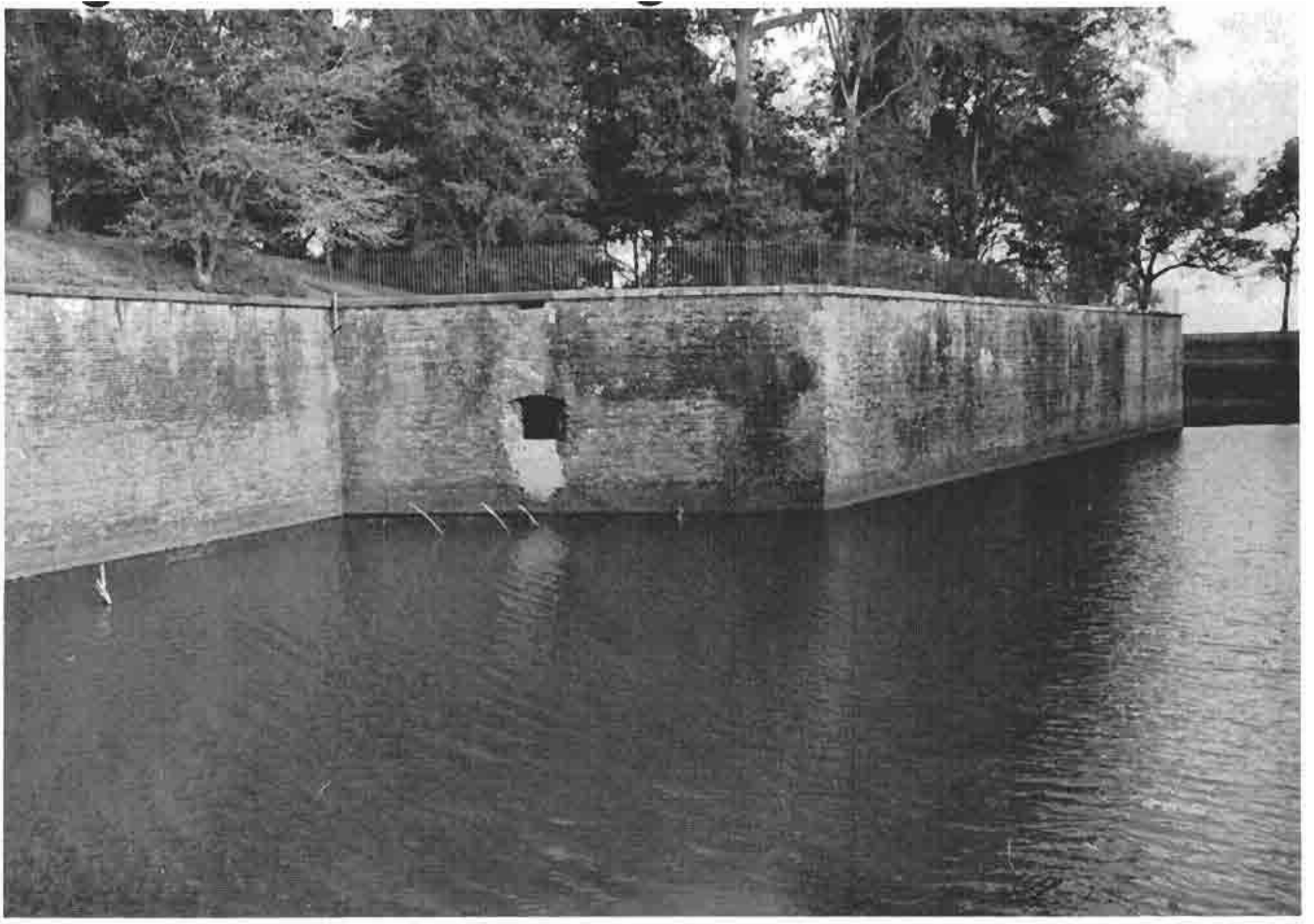


Illustration 54.

The water battery at Fort Jackson, showing magazine and a gun emplacement.

Photograph by Jerome A. Greene, 1980.

Illustration 55.

Top: View of bastion and ditch at Fort Jackson.

Bottom: Endicott era gun emplacements at Fort Jackson.

Photographs by Jerome A. Greene, 1980.

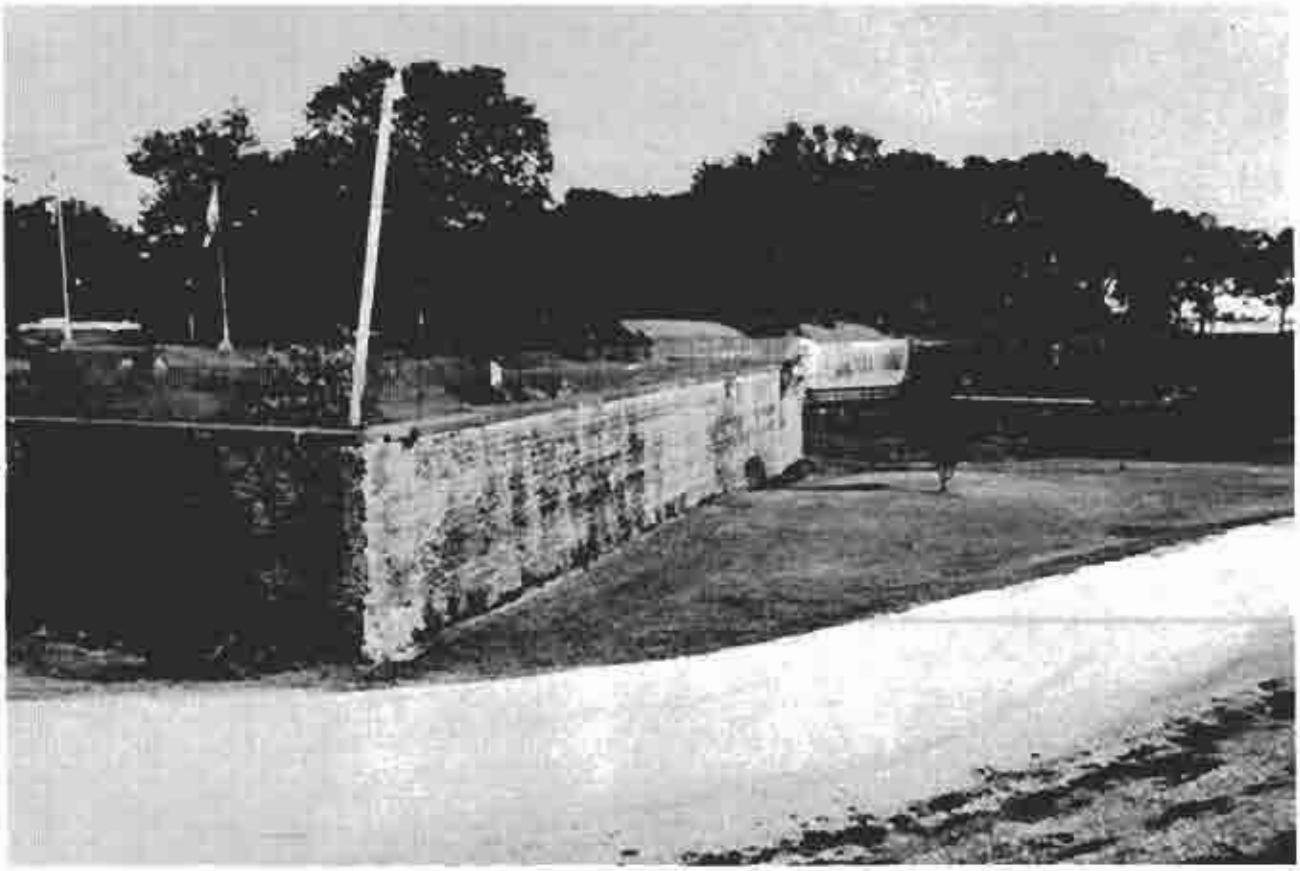


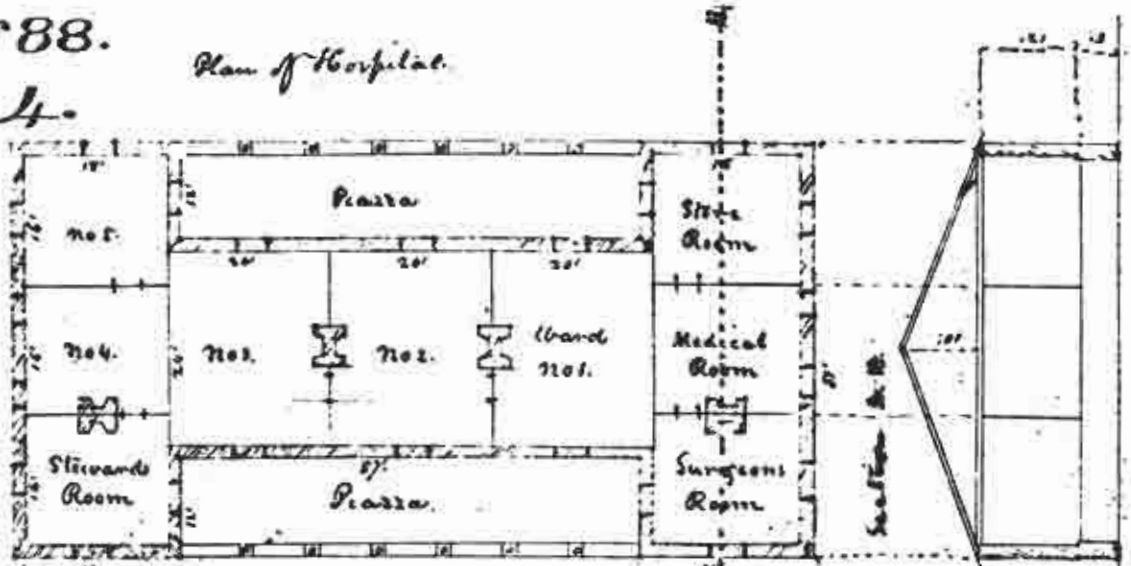
Illustration 56.

Plan of hospital at Fort Jackson, 1823.

National Archives.

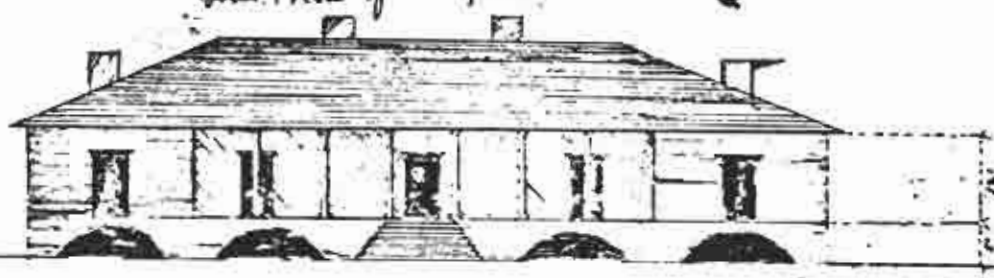
Drawer 88.
Sheet 4.

Plan of Hospital.

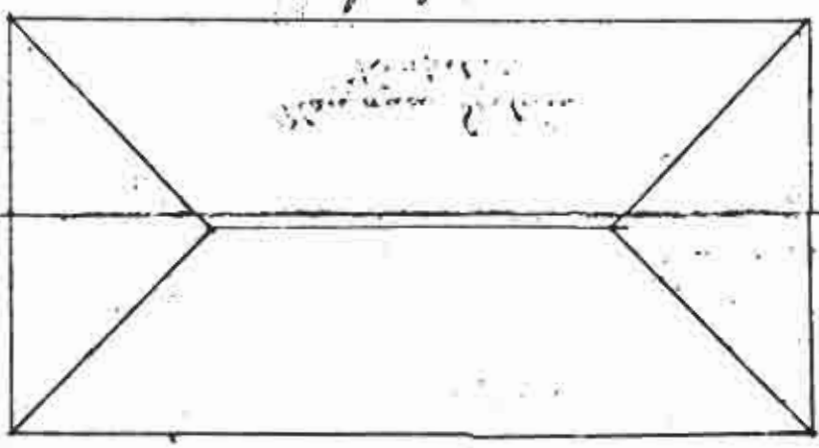


Scale 30 feet to one inch.

Front View of Hospital



Plan of Roof



Engineer Dept
Recd from Lt H. H. Chase with his
letter dated Fort Pulaski Nov 24 1873
(C. 1493) E.

Fort Jackson

Illustration 57.

Projected plan of Fort Jackson, 1824. Inset shows plan for officers' quarters and inspector's quarters.

National Archives.

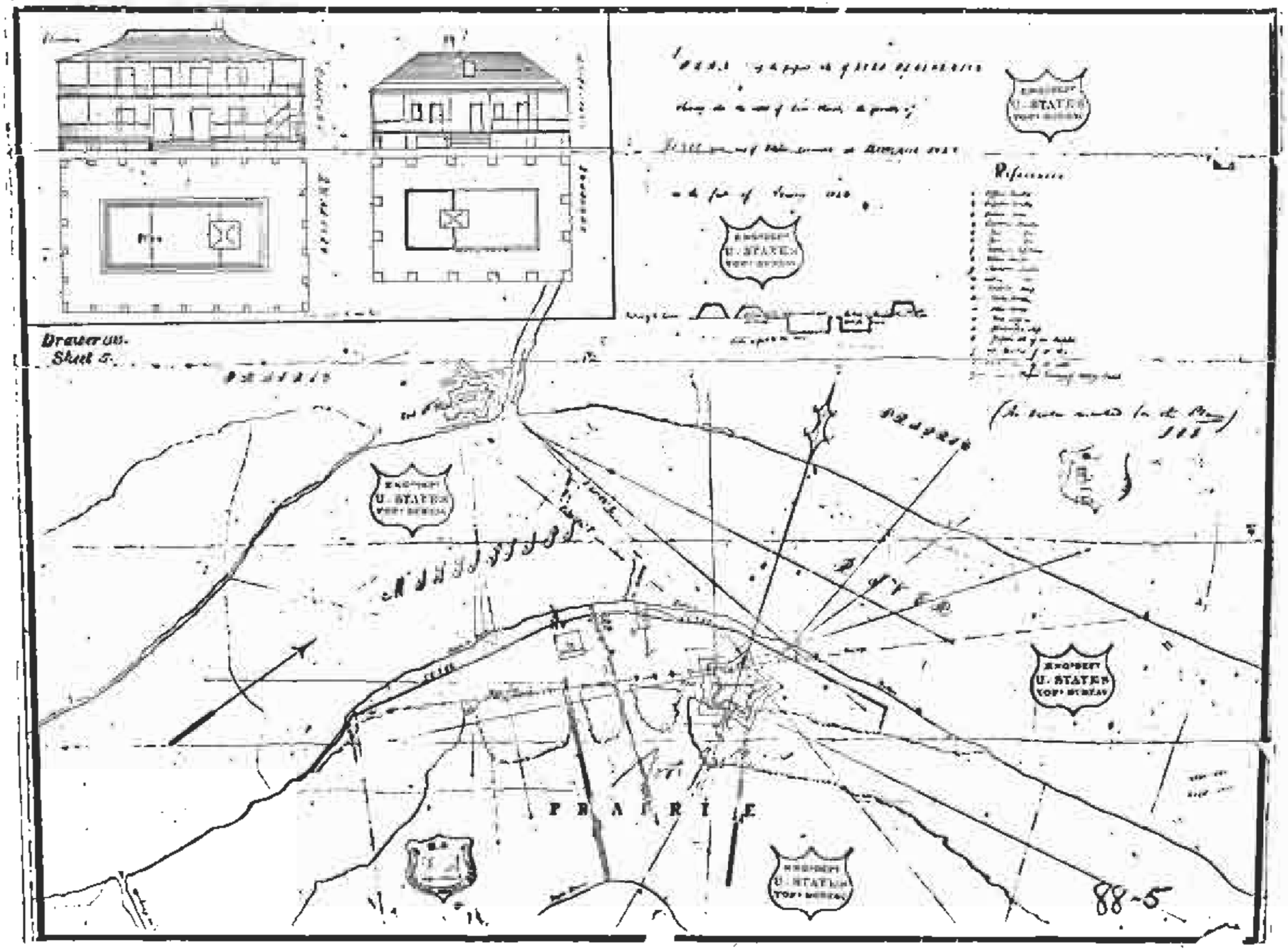

Drawer 10.
Sheet 5.
PRAIRIE
88-5

Illustration 38.

Fort Jackson under construction, September, 1815.

National Archives.

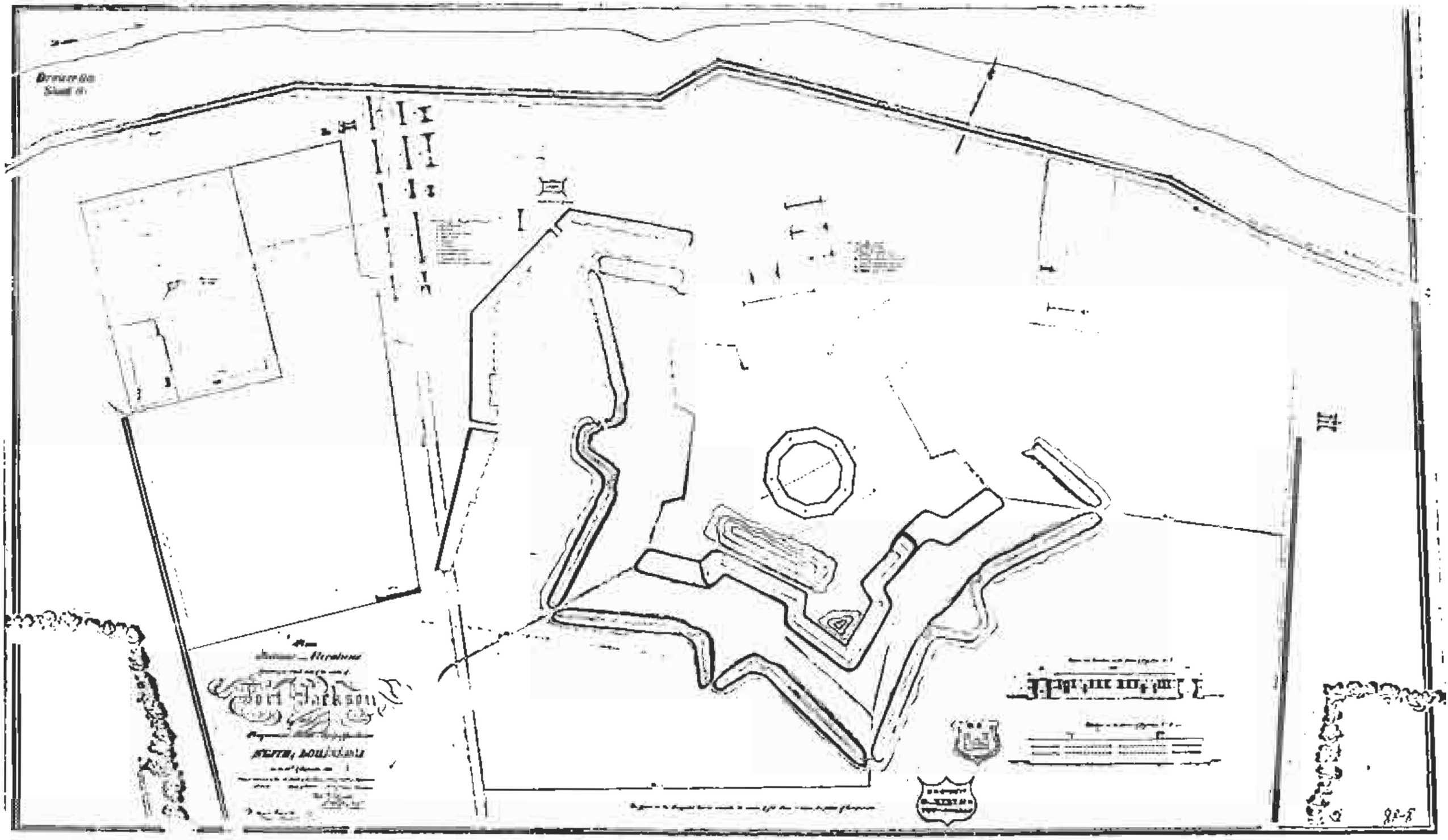

Fort Jackson

Illustration 59.

Fort Jackson under construction, September, 1826.

National Archives.

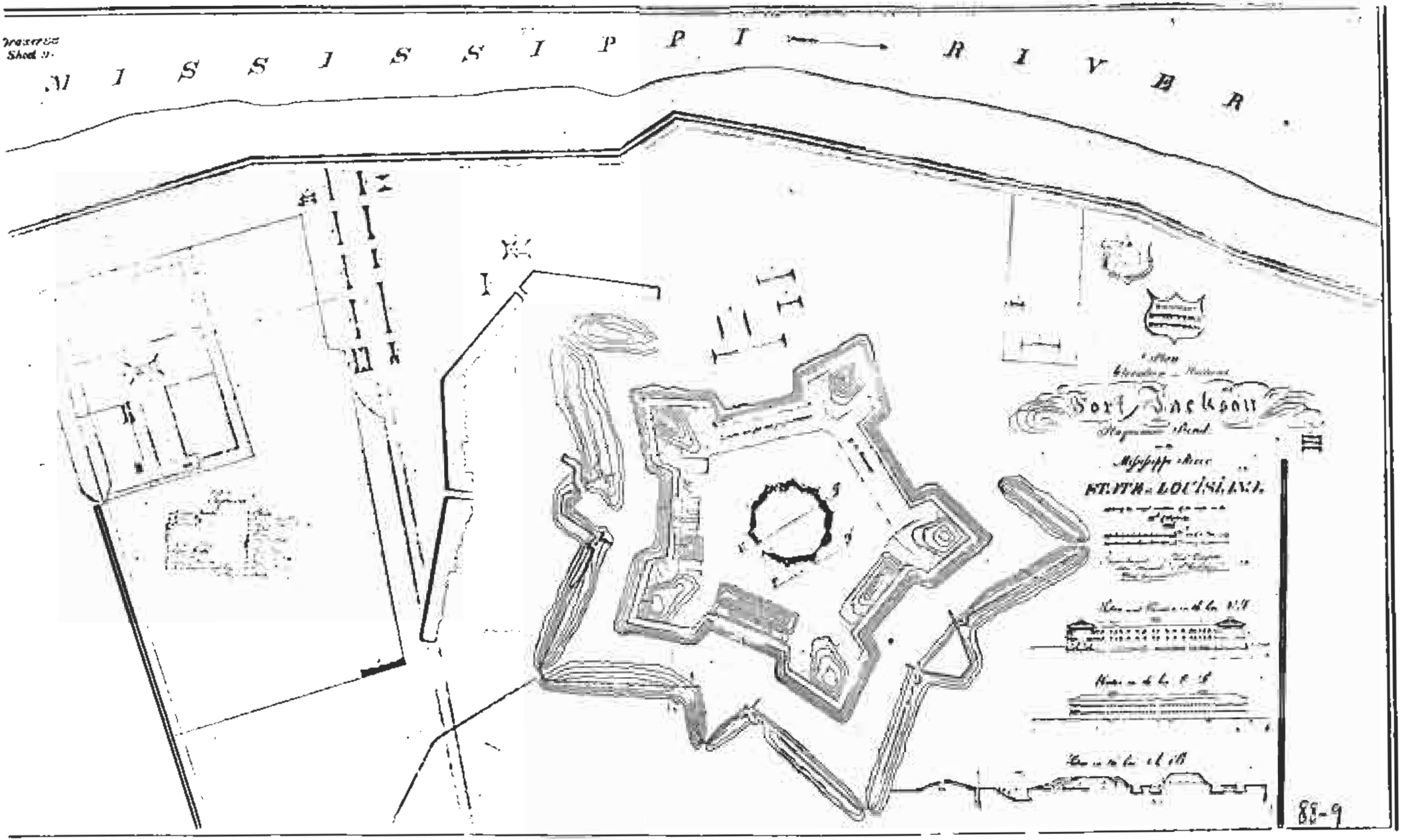

Drawer
Sheet 9.
MISSISSIPPI RIVER
Fort Jackson
STATE LOUISIANA
88-9

Illustration 60.

Fort Jackson, September, 1841, showing location and details of casemates and citadel.

National Archives.

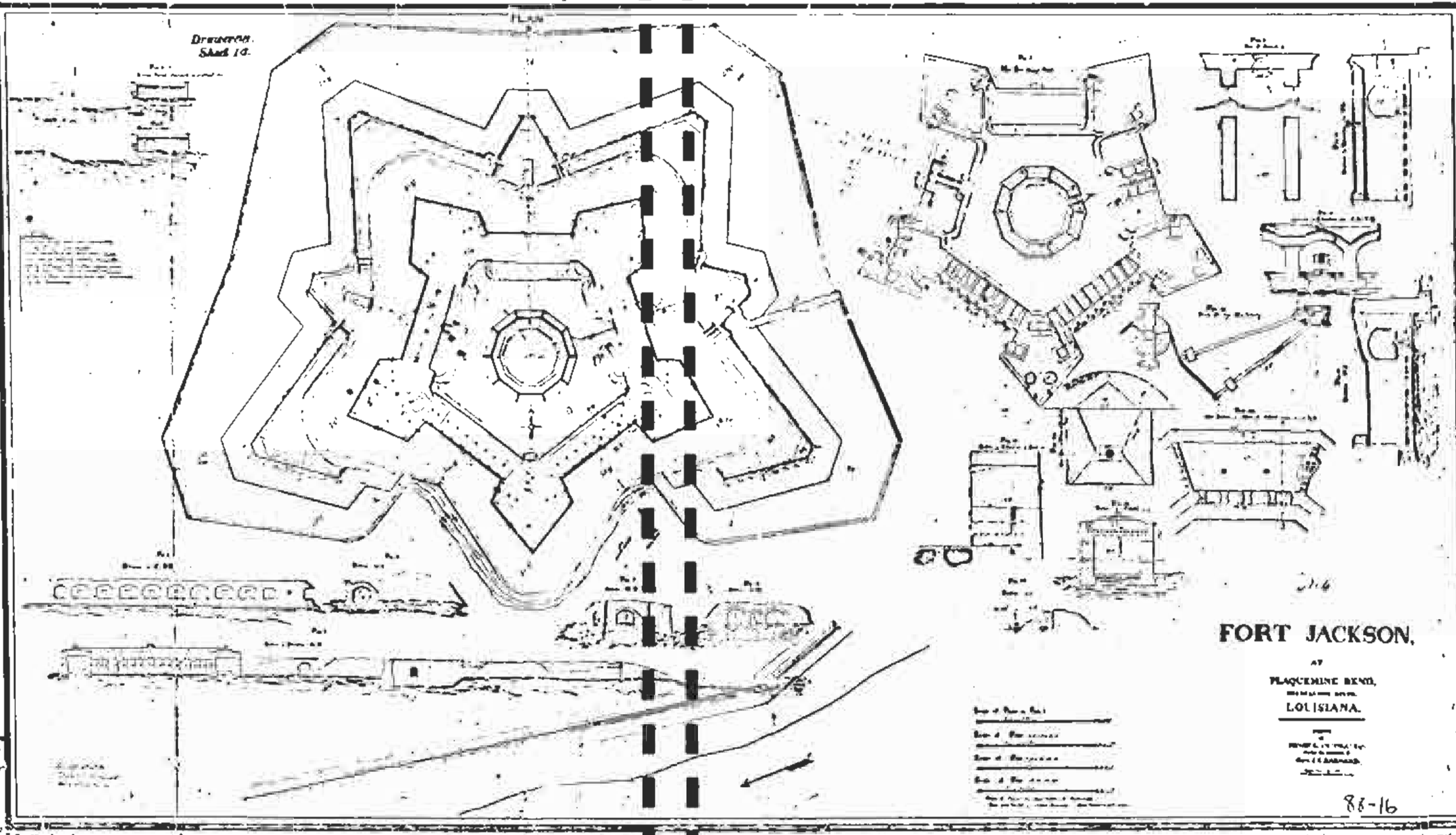

Drawing
Sheet 16.
FORT JACKSON,
AT
PLAQUEMINE BEND,
LOUISIANA.
88-16

Illustration 61.

Plan showing effects of the mortar bombardment of Fort Jackson, April 18-24, 1862.

Map Division, Library of Congress.

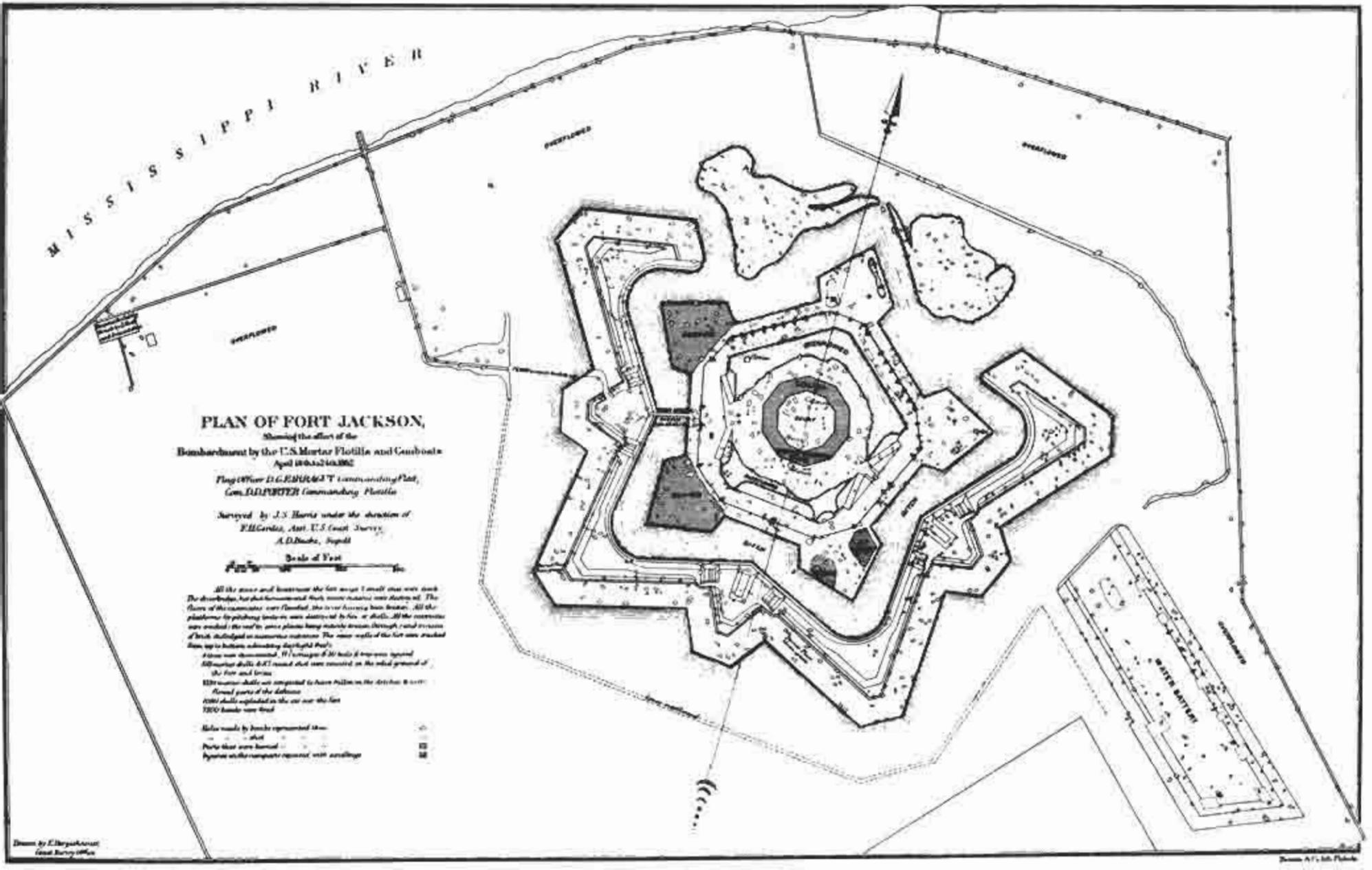

MISSISSIPPI RIVER
OVERFLOWED
OVERFLOWED
OVERFLOWED
OVERFLOWED
WATER BATTERY
PLAN OF FORT JACKSON,
Showing the effect of the
Bombardment by the U.S. Mortar Flotilla and Gunboats
Flag Officer D.G.FARRAGUT Commanding Fleet,
Com. D.D.PORTER Commanding Flotilla
Surveyed by J.S. Harris under the direction of
F.H.Gerdes, Asst. U.S. Coast Survey,
A.D.Bache, Supdt.
Scale of Feet

Illustration 62.

Fort Jackson in 1870, showing battery on right as proposed by the Board of Engineers for Fortifications. This battery was never built.

National Archives.

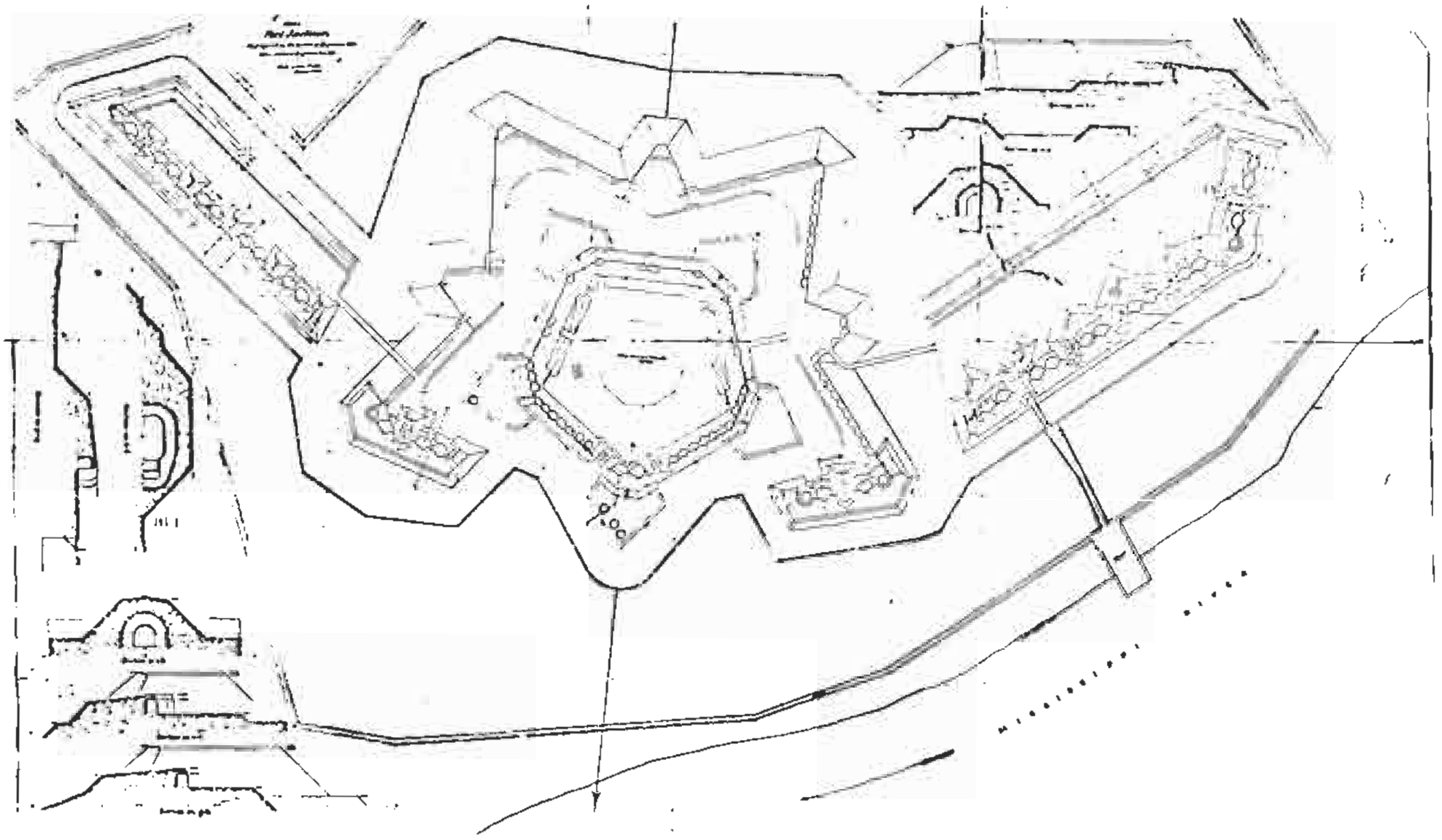


Illustration 83:

Fort Jackson in 1864, showing casemates, barbette emplacements, and water battery.

National Archives.

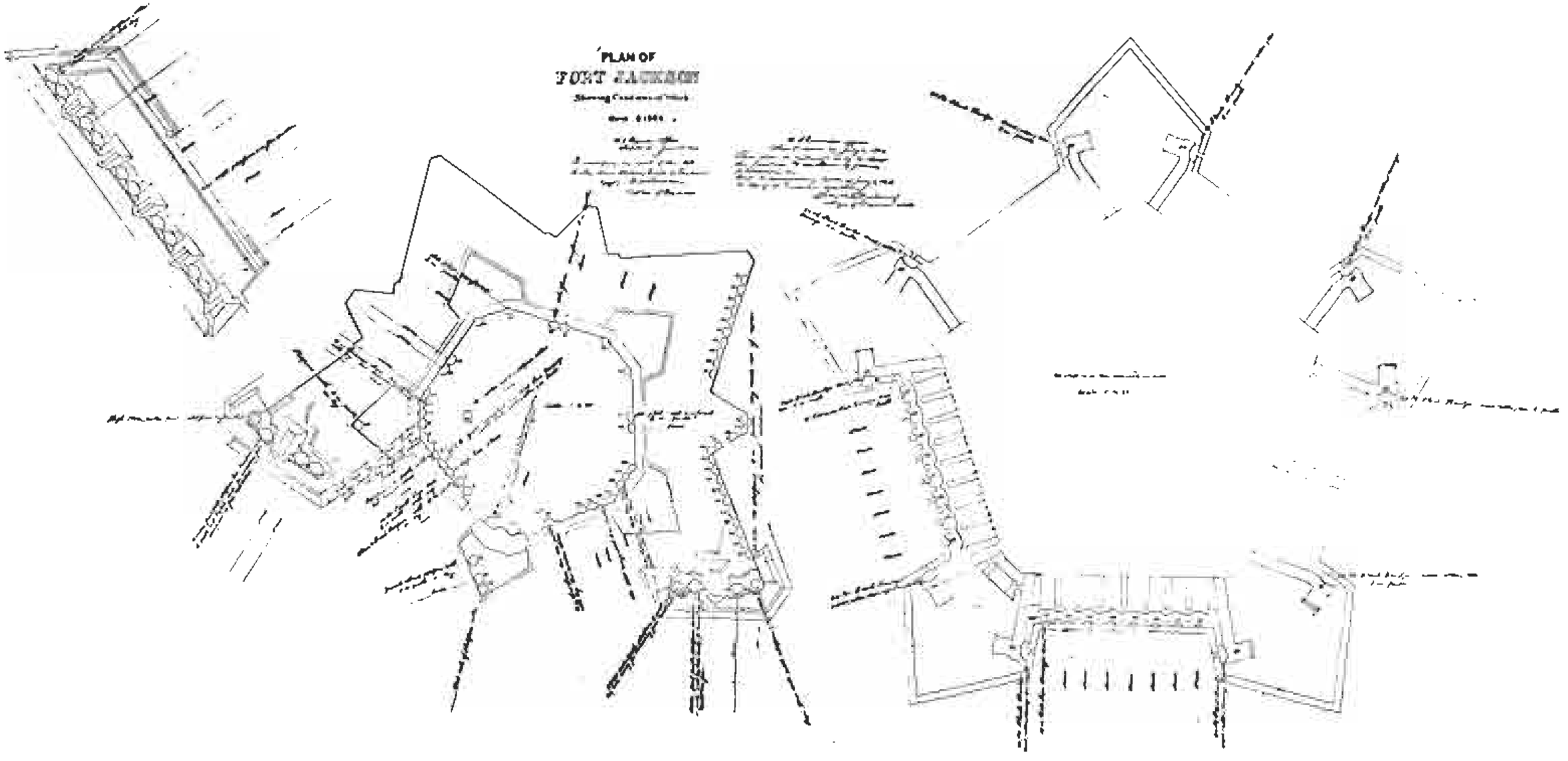
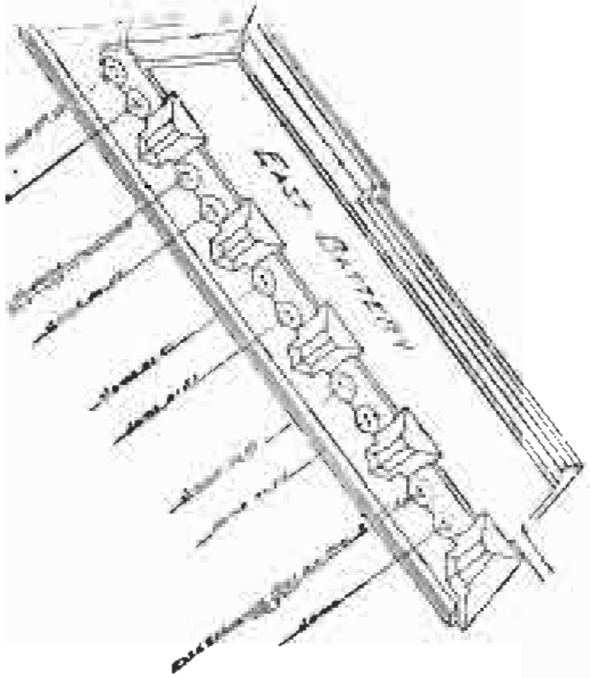

PLAN OF
FORT JACKSON

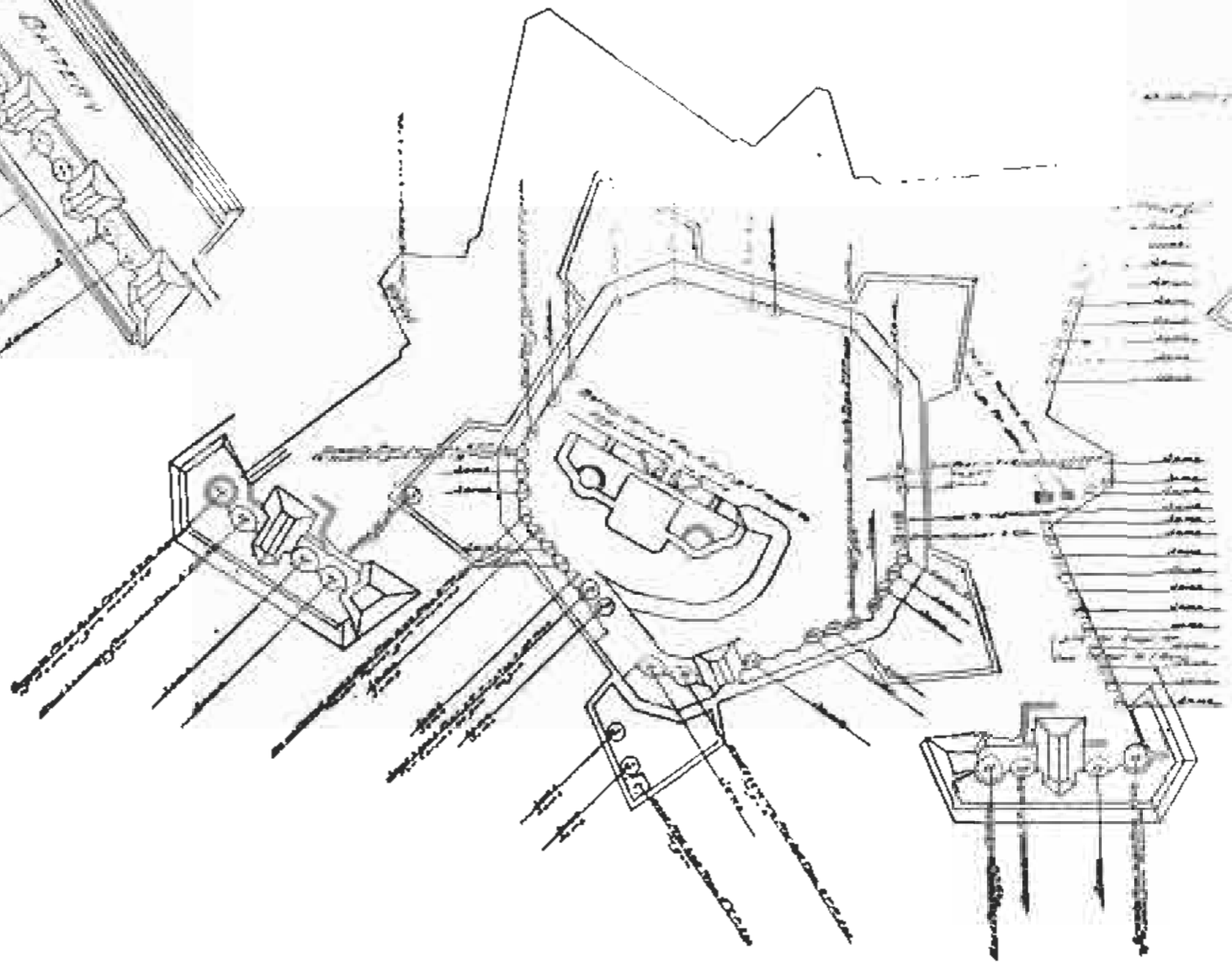
Illustration 64.

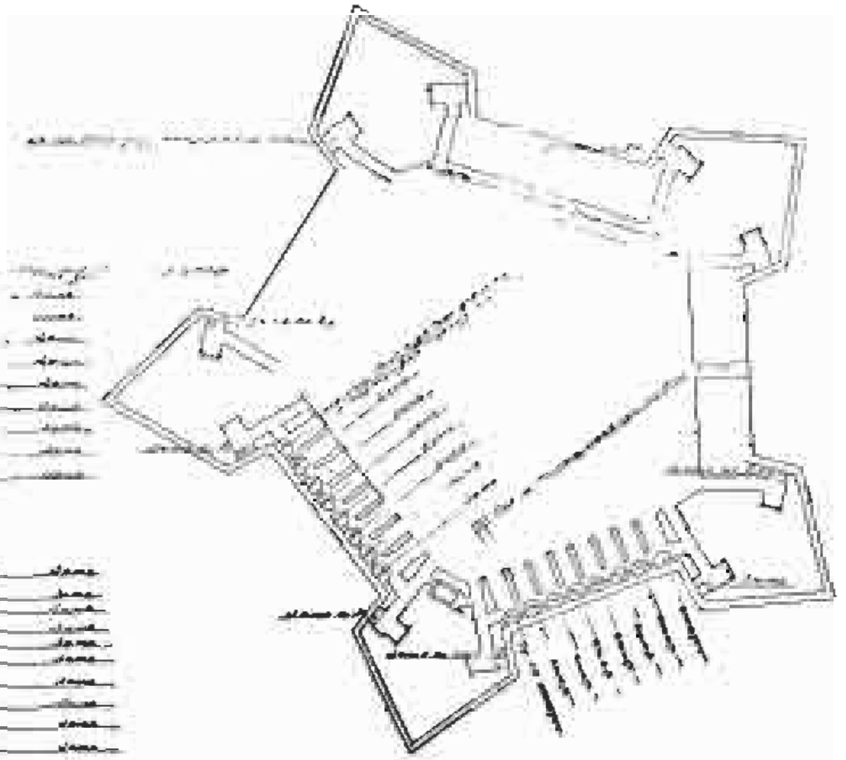
Fort Jackson. Armament as of December, 1898.

National Archives.

FORT JACKSON.







PLAN SHOWING ARRANGEMENT IN CASEMATES

Illustration 65.

View of Fort Pike, 1915.

National Archives.

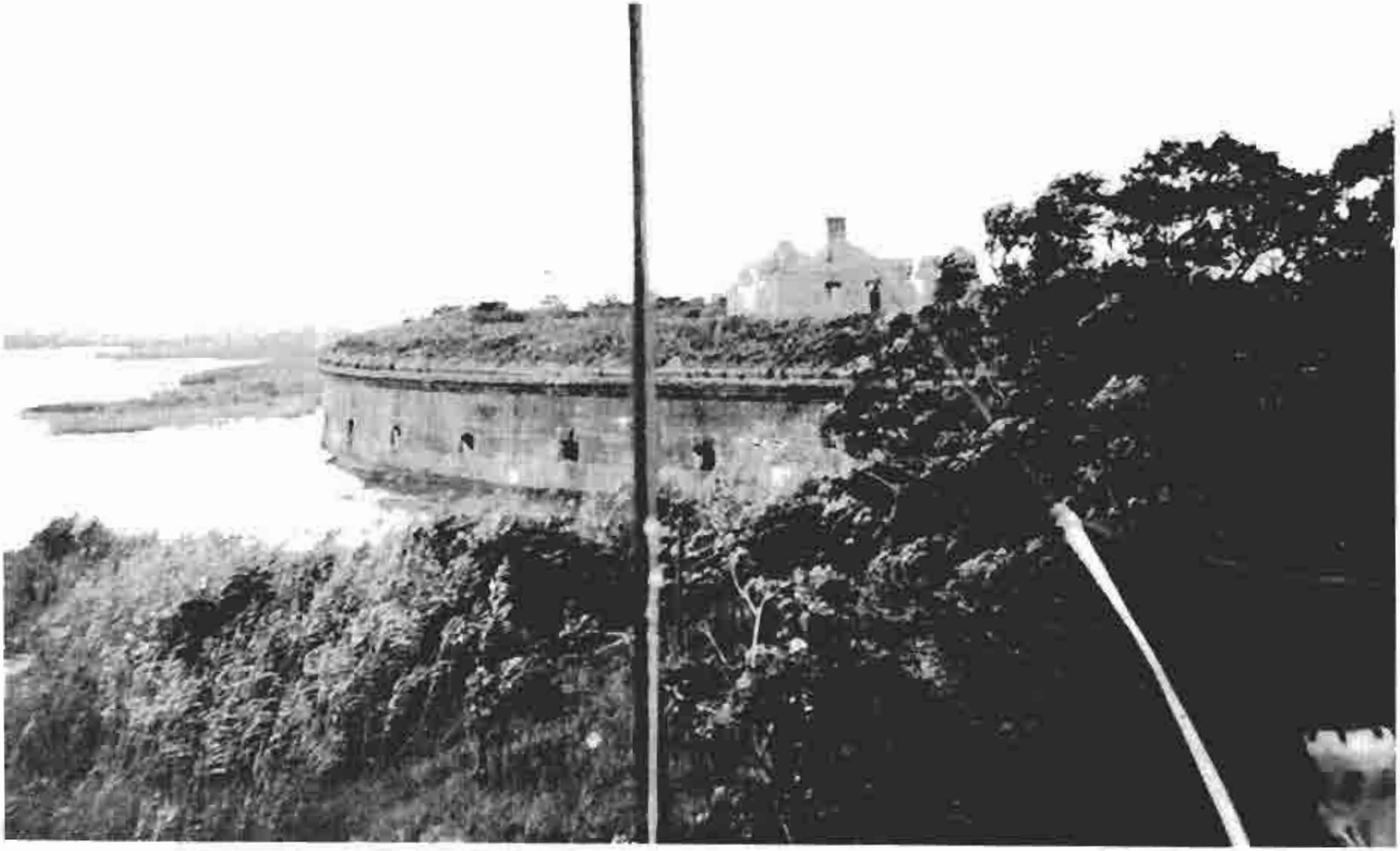


Illustration 66.

Fort Pike, 1915. Front view of quarters.

National Archives.

Illustration 67.

Quarters at Fort Pike, 1915.

National Archives.

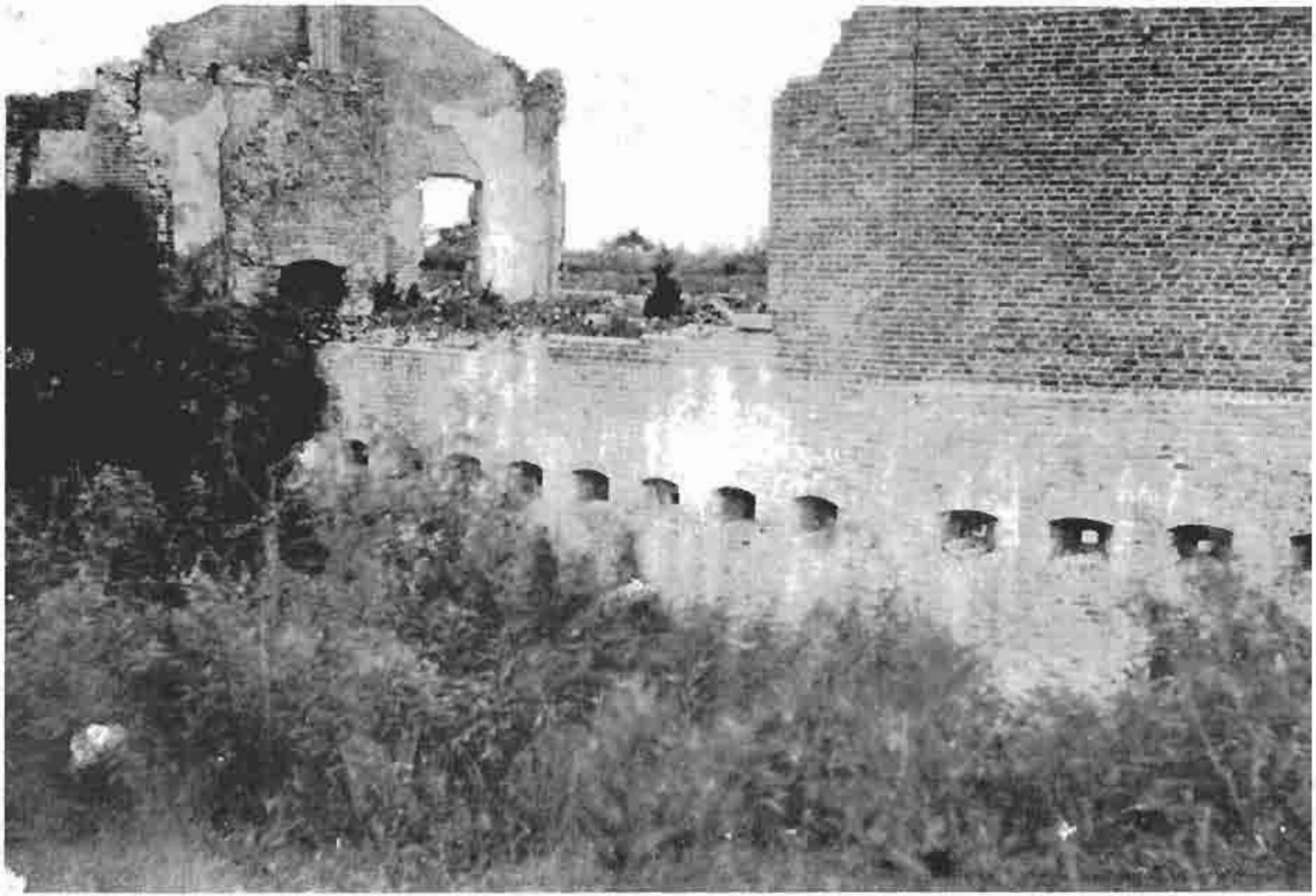


Illustration 68.

Fort Pike, 1915. Interior view of casemate batteries.

National Archives.

Illustration 69.

Sallyport at Fort Pike, 1915.

National Archives.

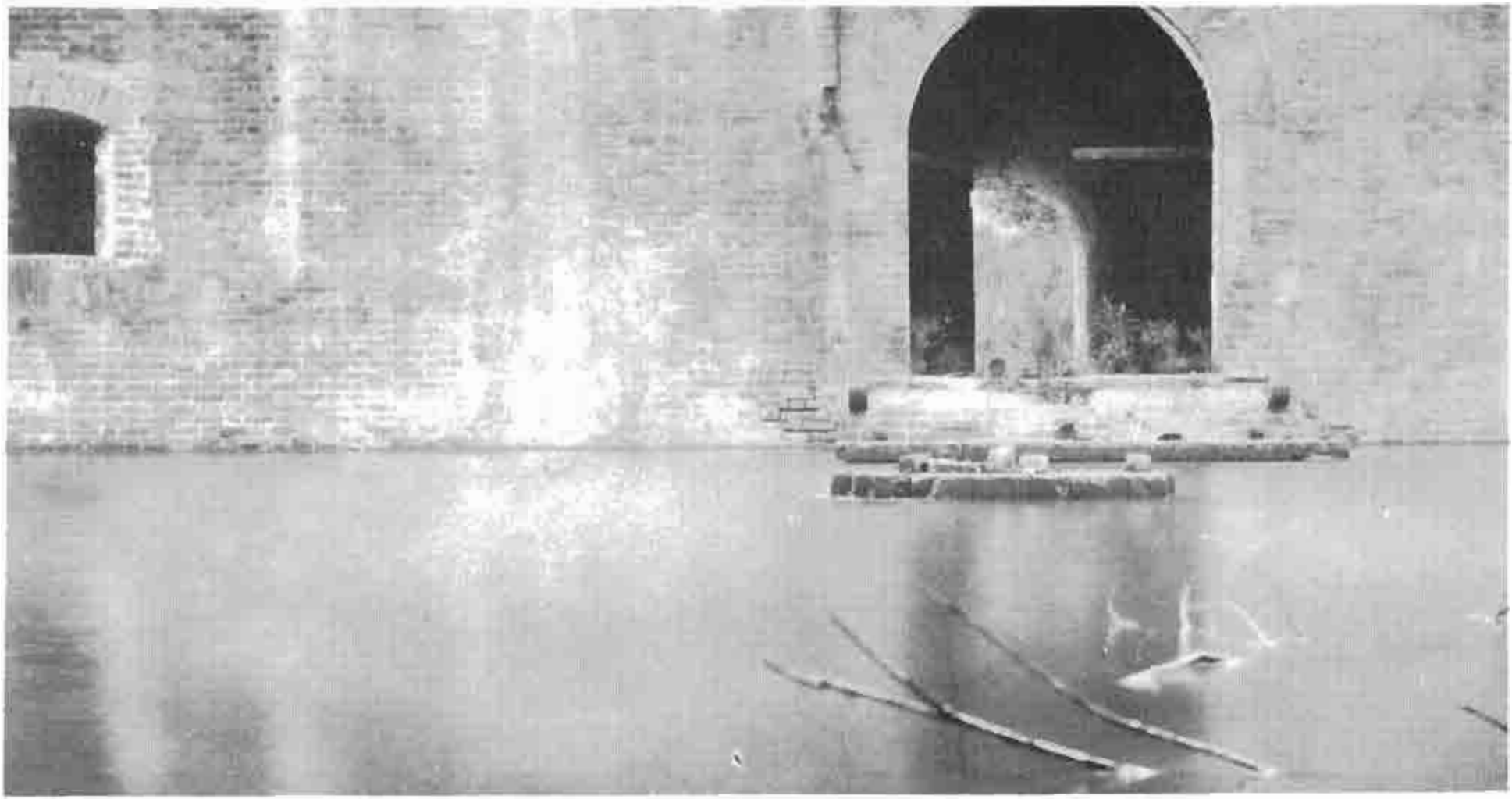


Illustration 70.

Fort Pike, 1915. View of citadel.

National Archives.

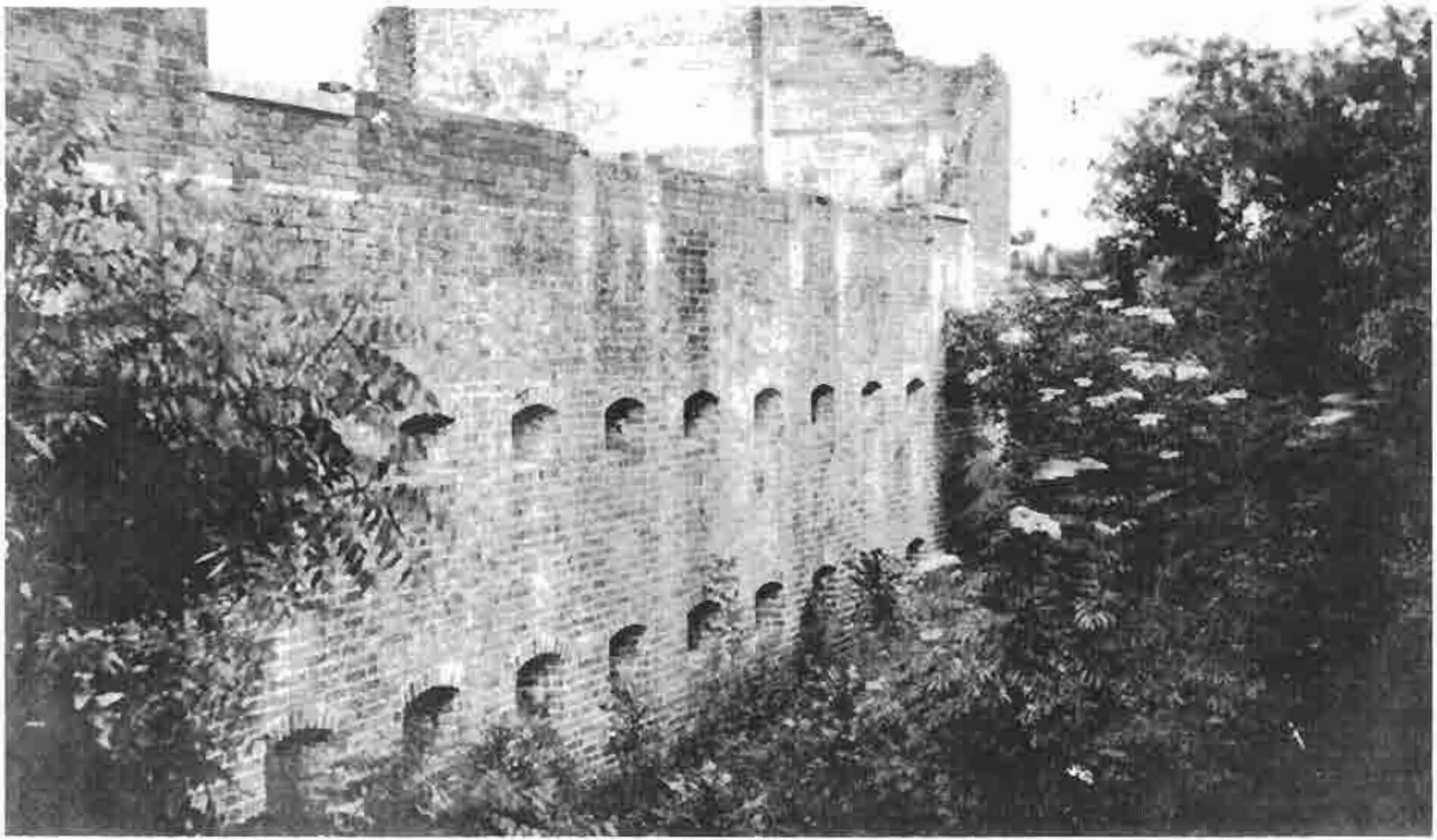


Illustration 71.

Top: Fort Pike, showing citadel and barbette emplacements.

Bottom: The citadel at Fort Pike, 1980.

Photographs by Jerome A. Greene.

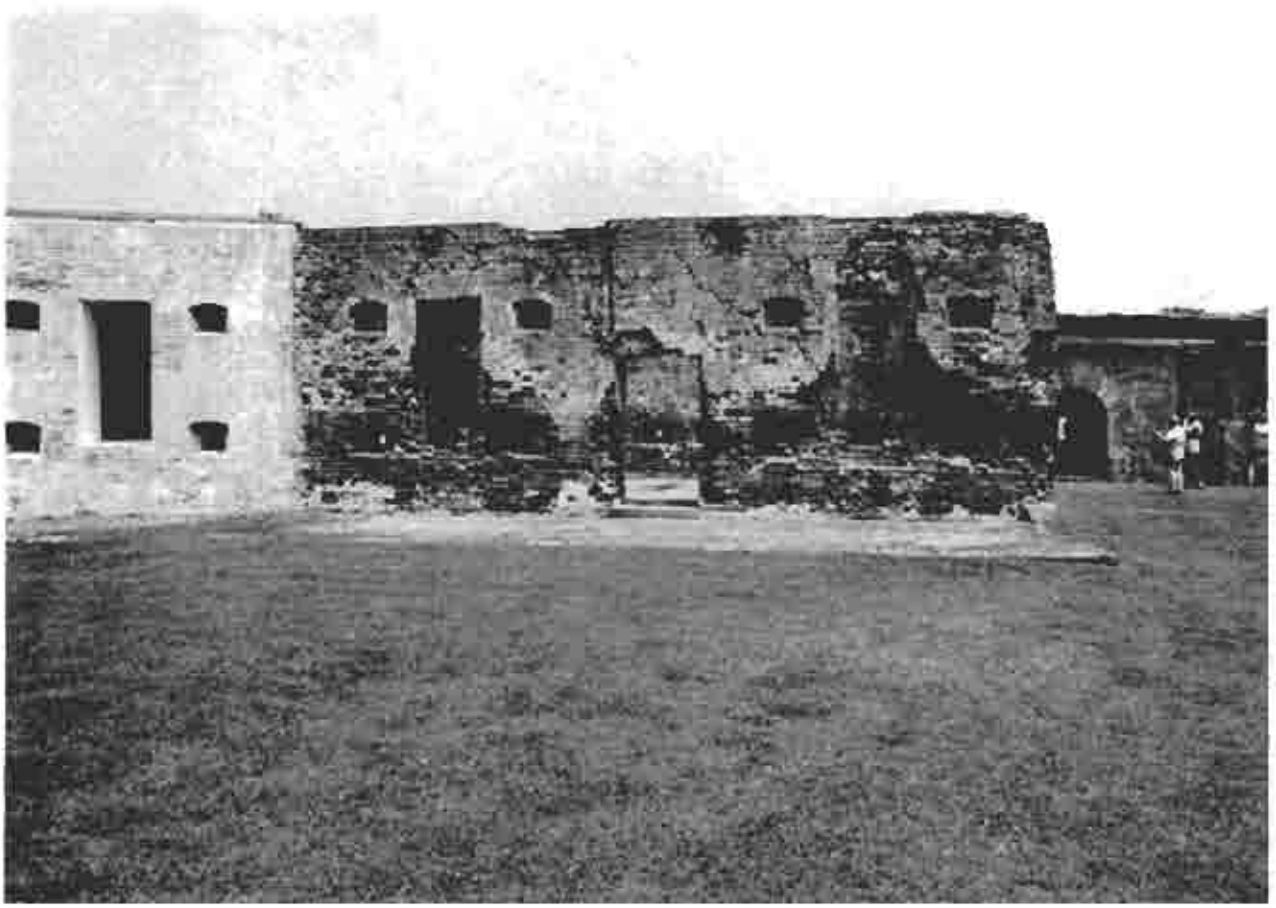


Illustration 72.

Sallyport of Fort Pike, 1980.

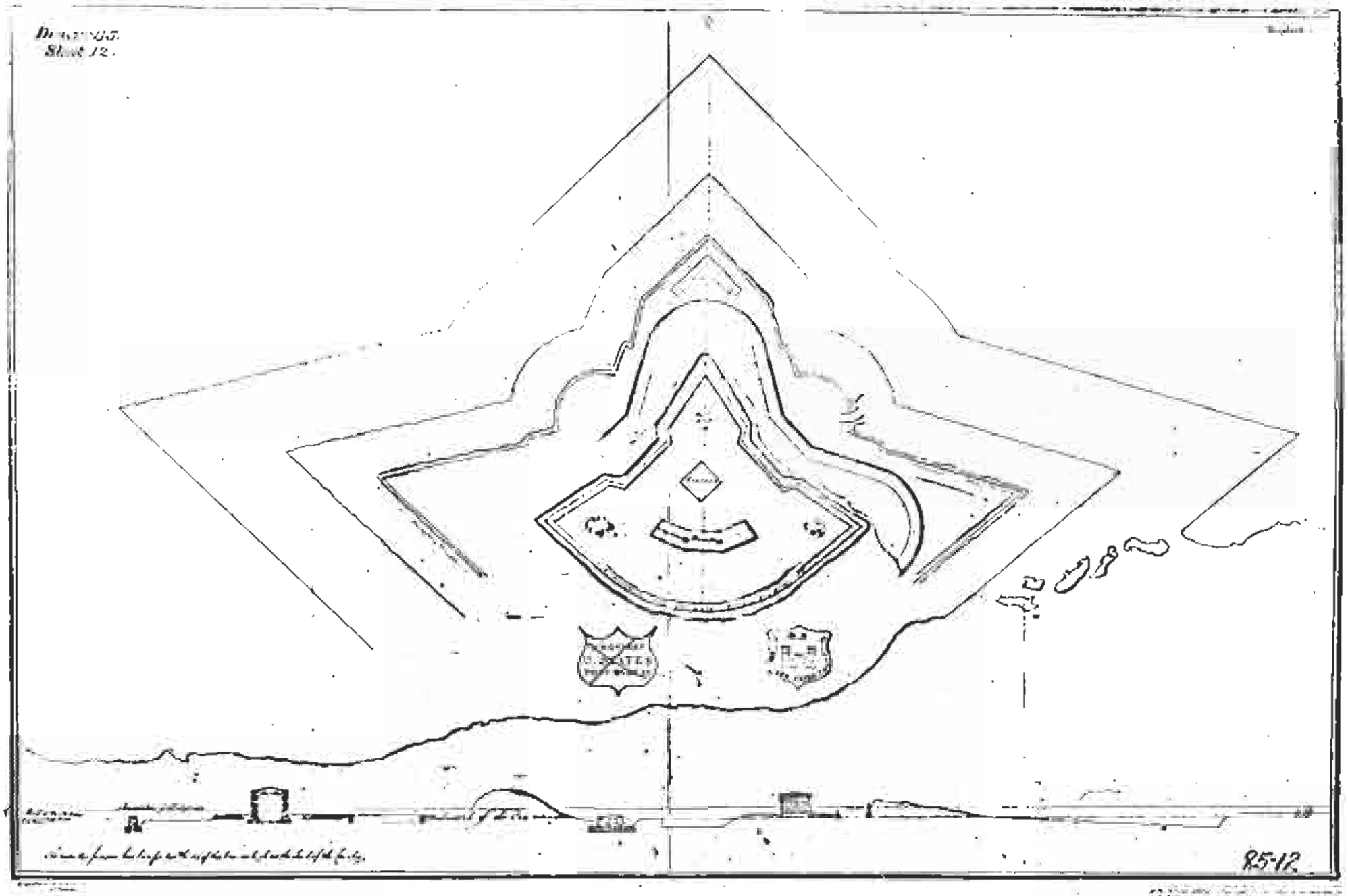
Photograph by Jerome A. Greene.

Illustration 73.

Fort Pike, construction as of November, 1821.

National Archives.

Drawing
Sheet 12



85-12

Illustration 74.

Fort Pike, construction as of October, 1822.
Note positions of casemates.

National Archives.

Drawer 45.
Sheet 18.

N 65.

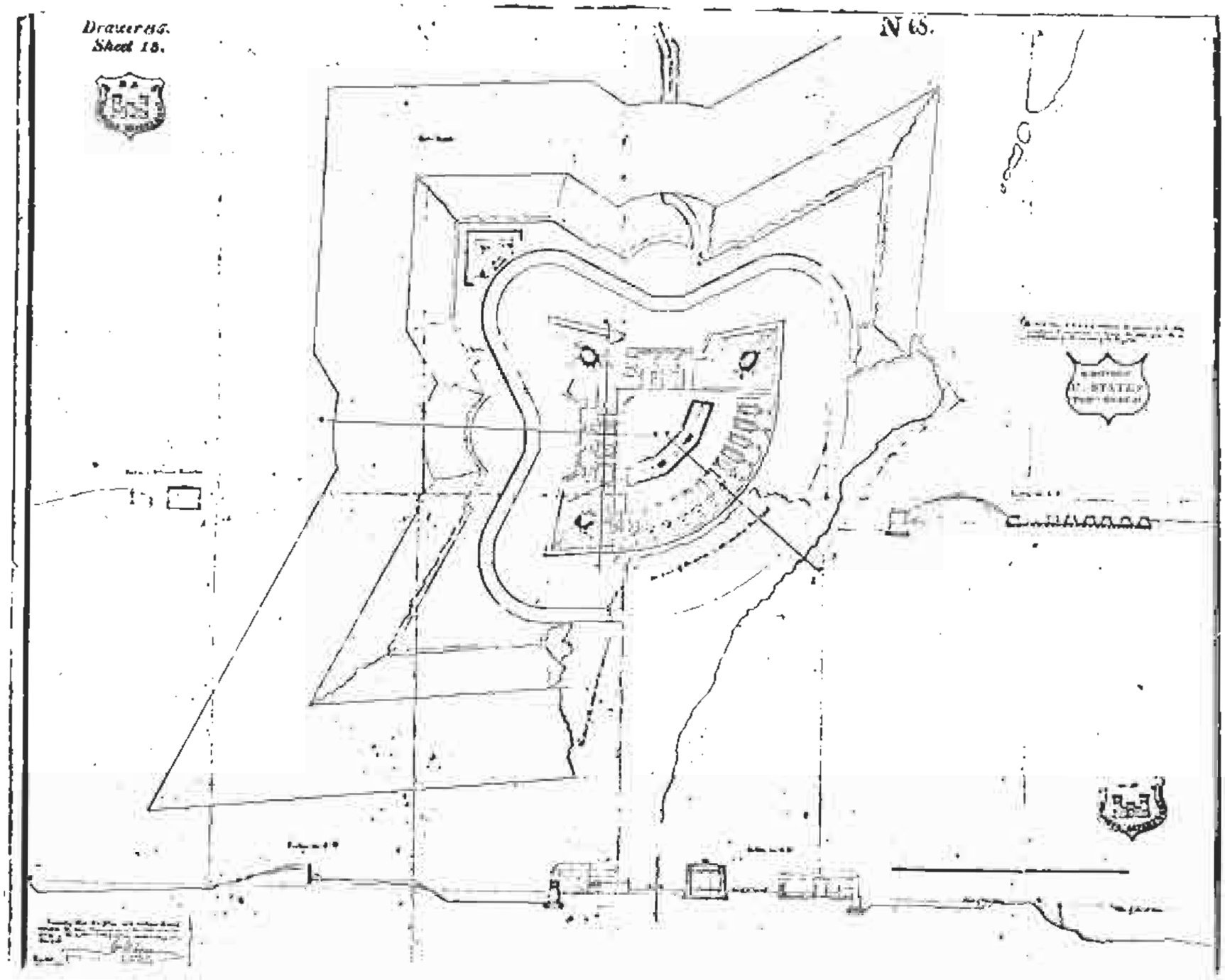


Illustration 23.

Fort Pike, 1841, showing details of barbette emplacements.

National Archive..

Drawer 63.
Sheet 17.

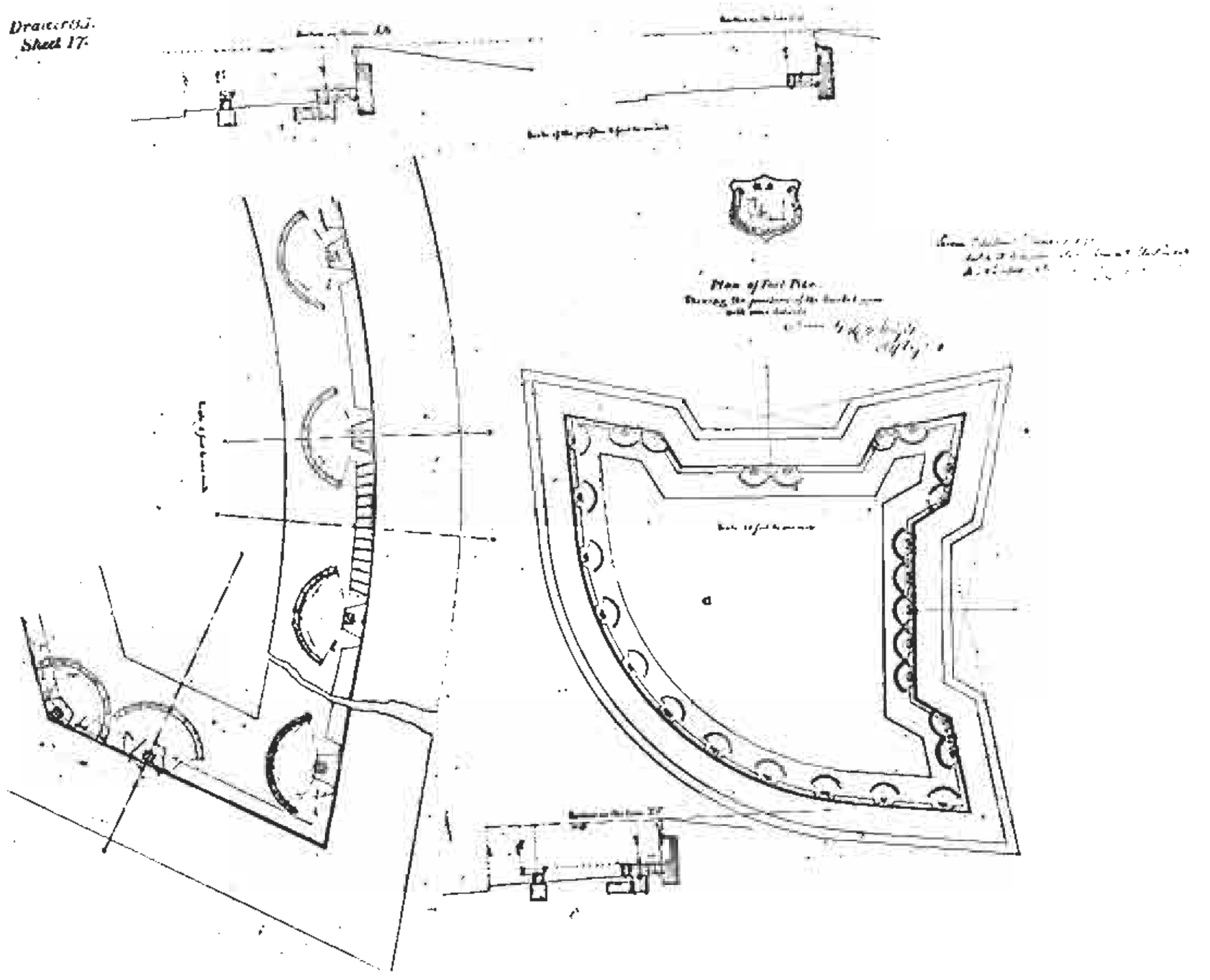


Illustration 76.

Details of ceremonies at Fort Pike, 1841.

National Archives.

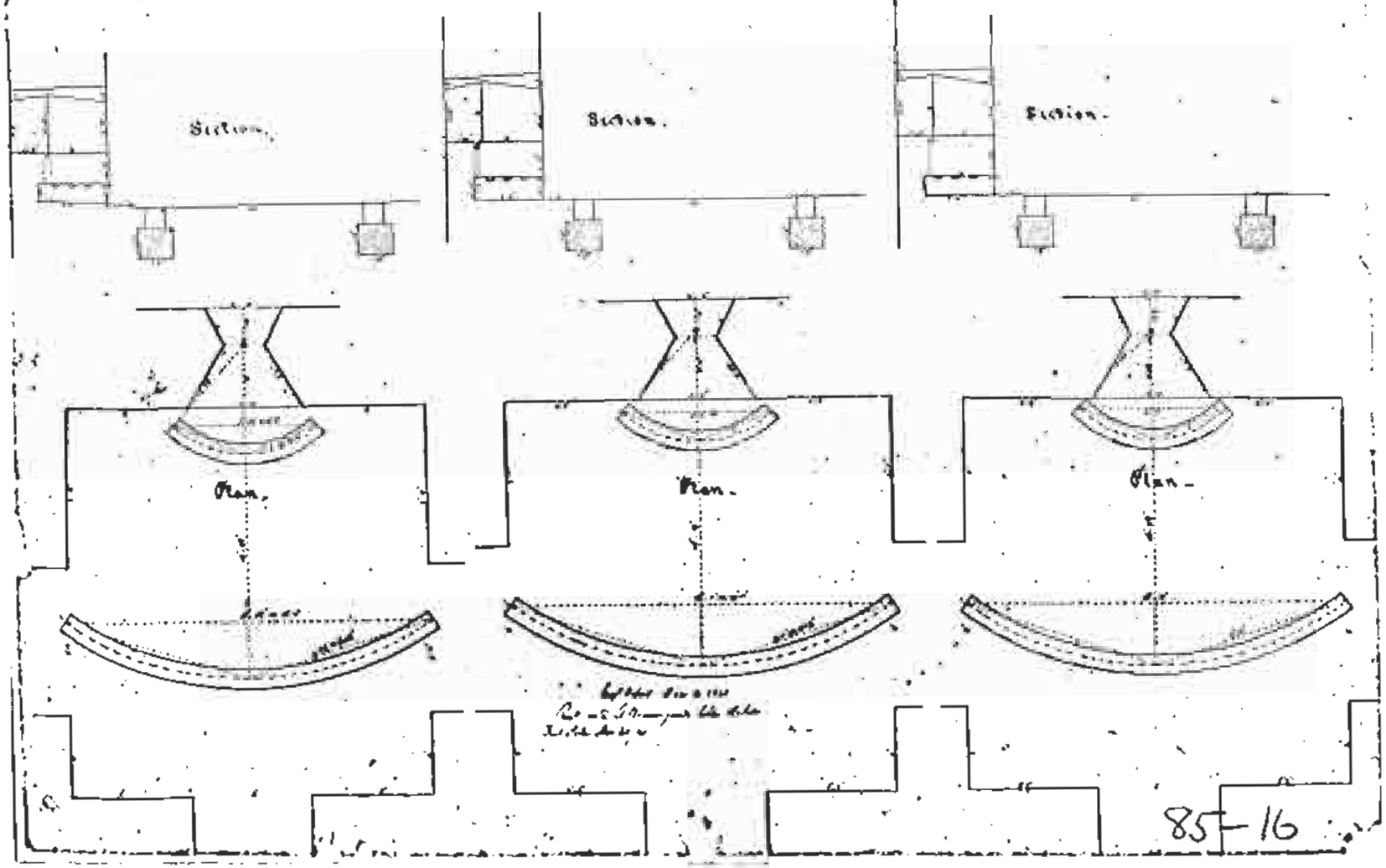
Drawer B7.
Sheet 16.

PLAN of CASEMATES at FORT PIKE

Casemate on Water Front.

Casemate on South Land Front.

Casemate on East Land Front.



85-16

Illustration 77.

Fort Pike, 1842. Details of magazines and casemate embrasures.

National Archives.

Drawer 85.
Sheet 18.

Plan of Embrasure

Section of Embrasure

Plan of Embrasure

Scale ¼in to 1 foot

85-18

Illustration 78.

Plan of the citadel of Fort Pike, 1850, showing second story to be added.

National Archives.

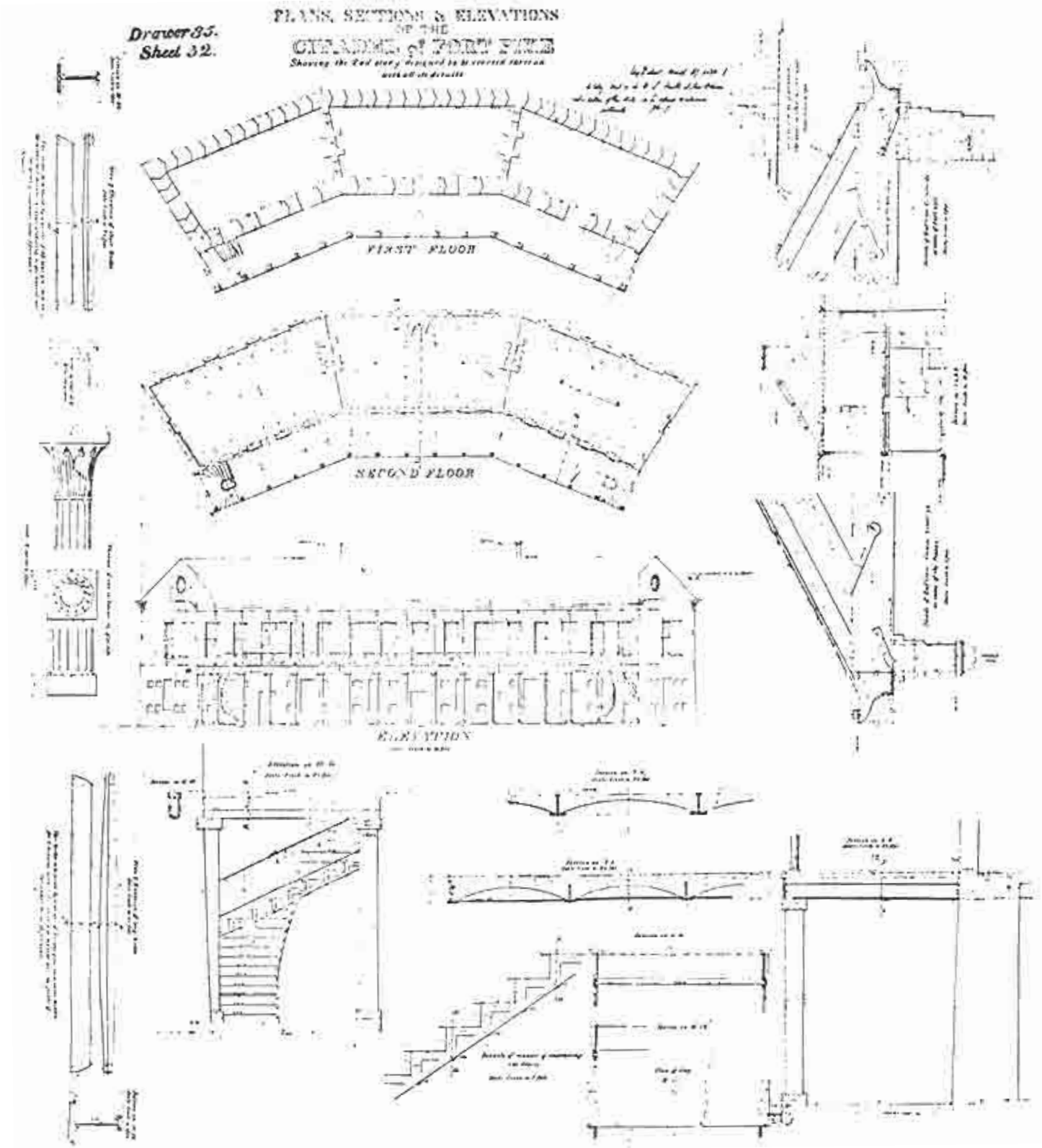

Drawer 35.
Sheet 32.
PLANS, SECTIONS & ELEVATIONS
OF THE
CITADEL of FORT PIKE
FIRST FLOOR
SECOND FLOOR
ELEVATION

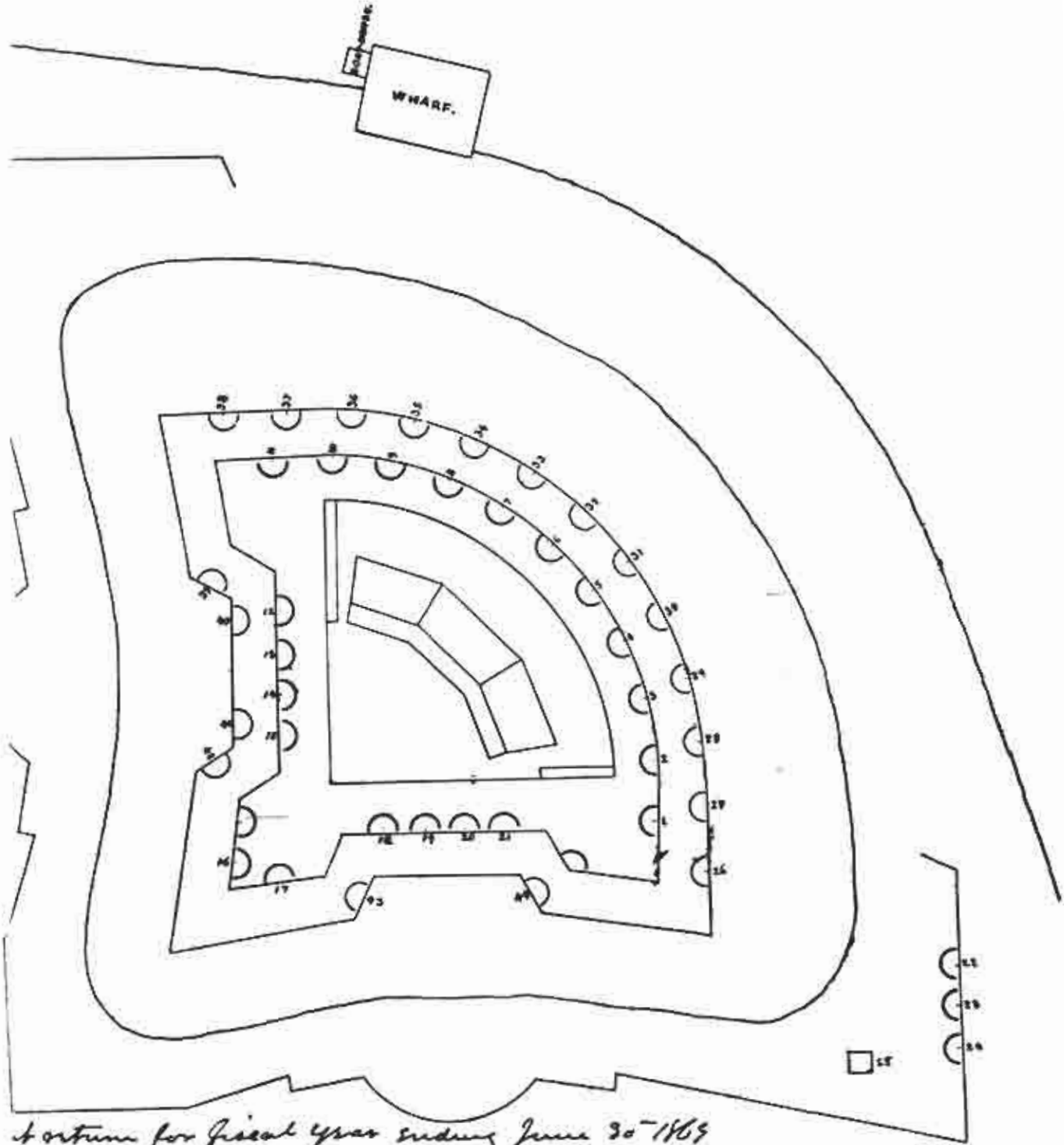
Illustration 79.

Armament of Fort Pike, 1869.

National Archives.

A Sketch showing the Armament
of

FORT PIKE. RIGOLETES PASS LA.



A return for fiscal year ending June 30th 1865

Guns in Casemate.

Nos 26.27.28.30.32.34.35.36 & 50. 24 pdrs from Carriages 3° Front pintle. no Key low stones serviceable
Nos 38.31.33 & 37. . . . . 24 pdrs wood " " " " " "
Nos 39.40.41.42.43 & 49. Casemate Rowling Howitzer wood Carriages " " " " " "
No 45. 32 pdr Parrott.
No 46. 6 pdr Field-piece.

Illustration 80.

Projected improvements to Fort Pike as envisioned by the Board of Engineers for Fortifications, 1870.

National Archives.

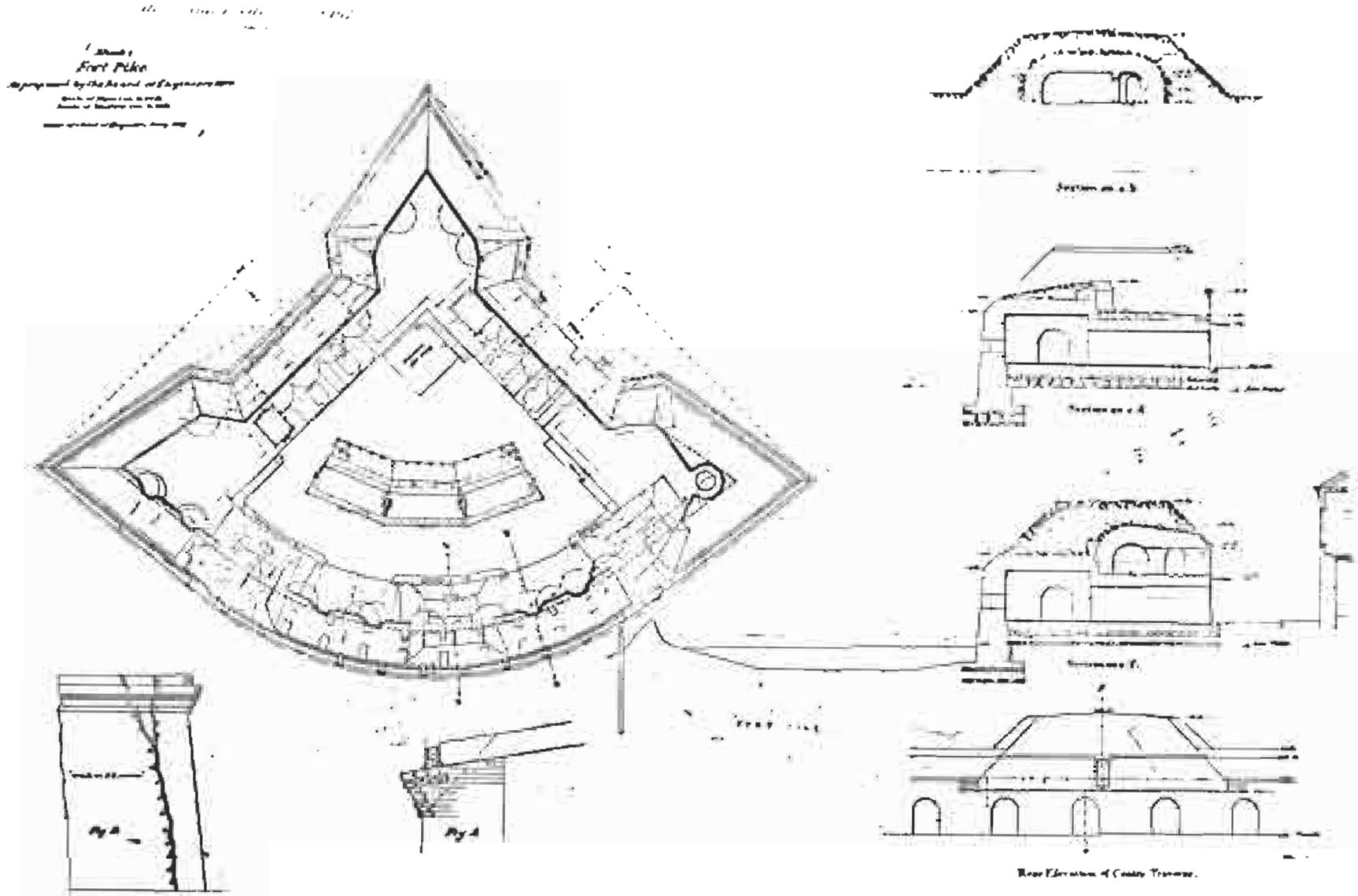


Illustration 81.

Quarters at Fort Macomb, 1915.

National Archives.

Illustration 82.

Fort Macomb. Front view of quarters, 1915.

National Archives.

Illustration 83.

Fort Macomb, 1915. Rear view of quarters.

National Archives.

Illustration 84.

Fort Macomb. Interior view of casemate batteries, 1915.

National Archives.

Illustration 85.

Sallyport at Fort Macomb, 1915.

National Archives.

Illustration 86.

Two views of Fort Macomb, 1980.

Photographs by Jerome A. Greene.

Illustration 87.

Plan of fort at Chef Menteur Pass, 1824.

National Archives.

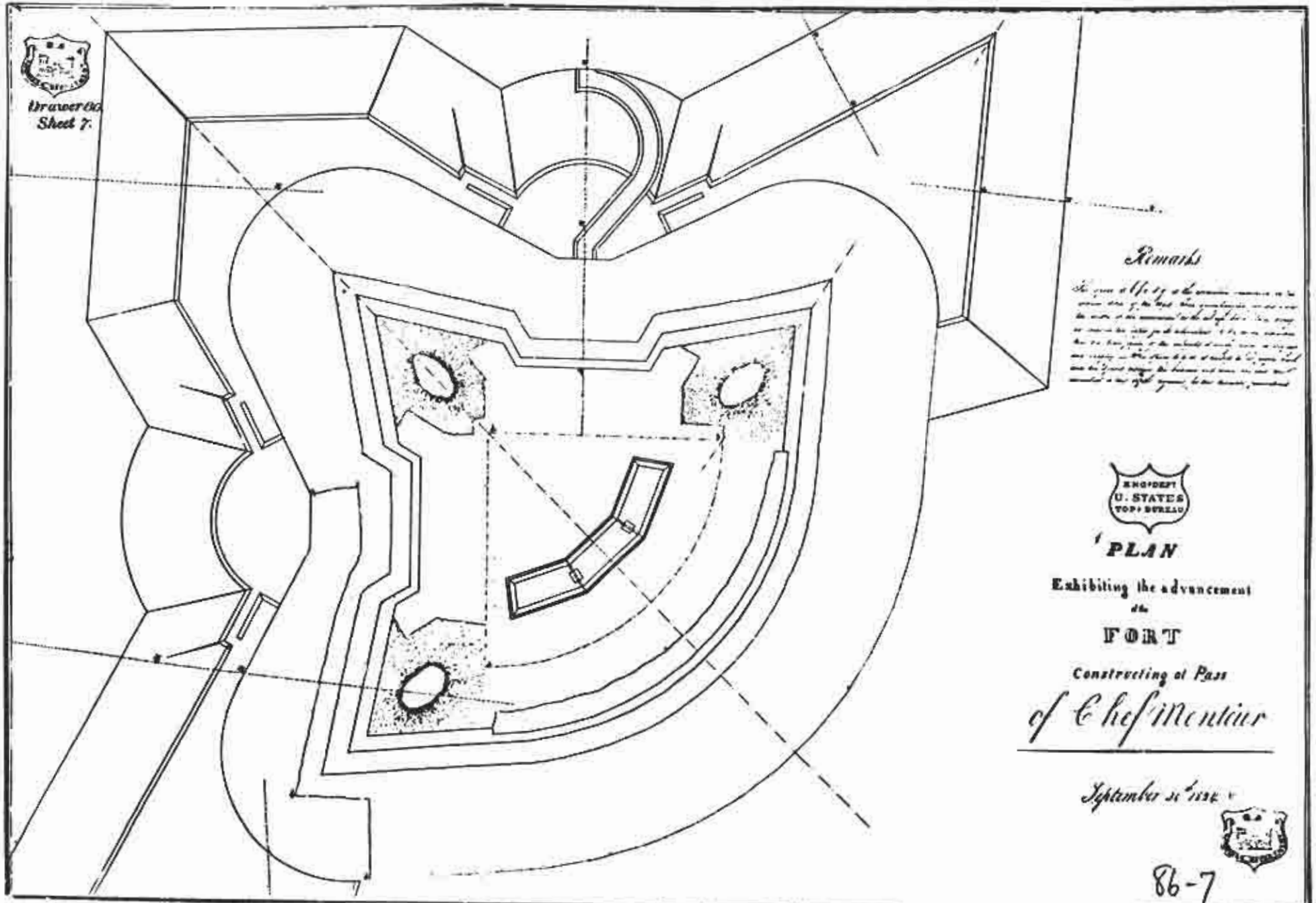

Drawer 86
Sheet 7.
Remarks
ENG'R DEP'T
U. STATES
TOP'L BUREAU
PLAN
Exhibiting the advancement
de
FORT
Constructing at Pass
of Chef Menteur
September 1st 1814
86-7

Illustration 88.

Fort Chef Menteur (Fort Macomb) as of September, 1827.

National Archives.

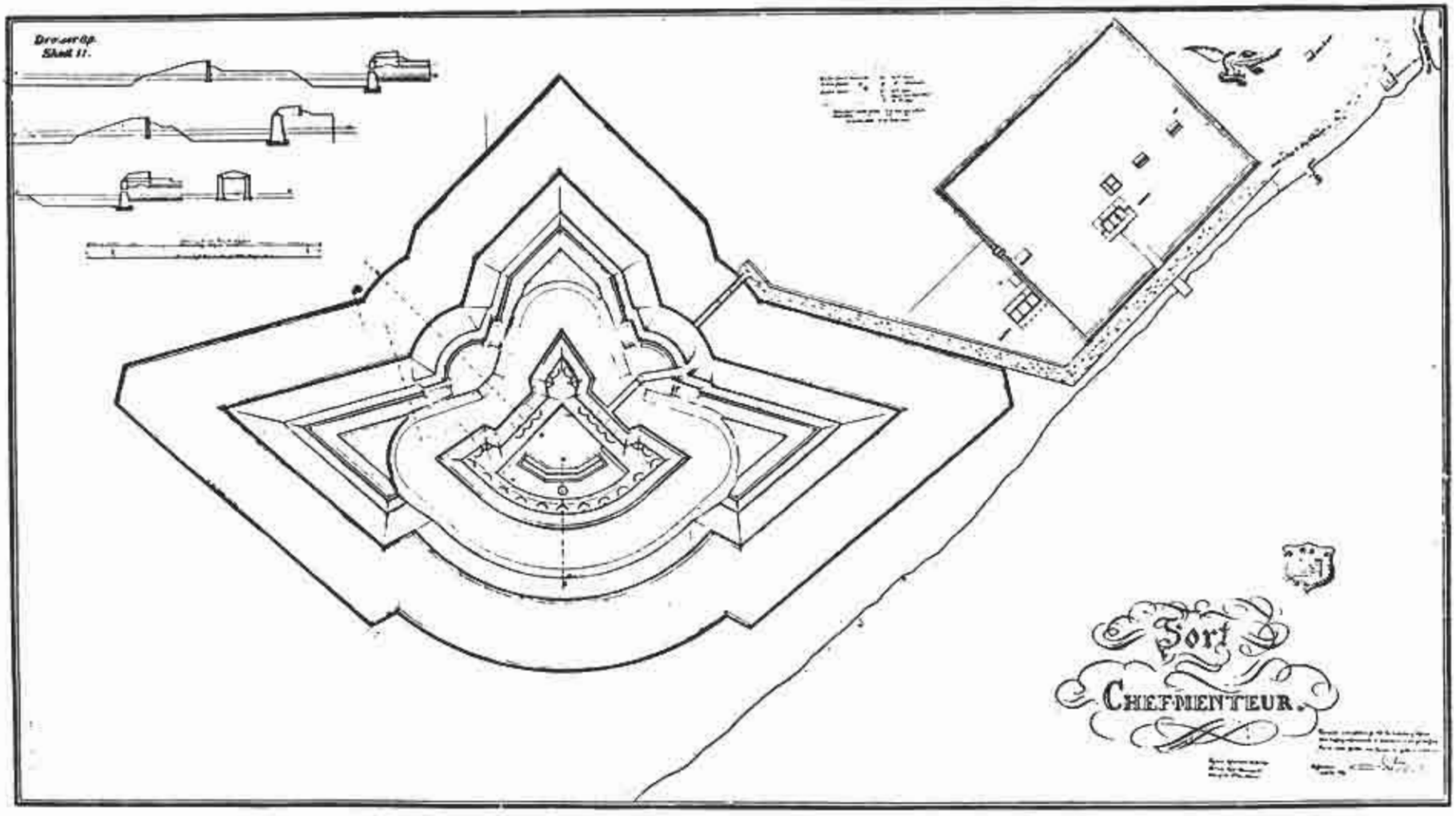
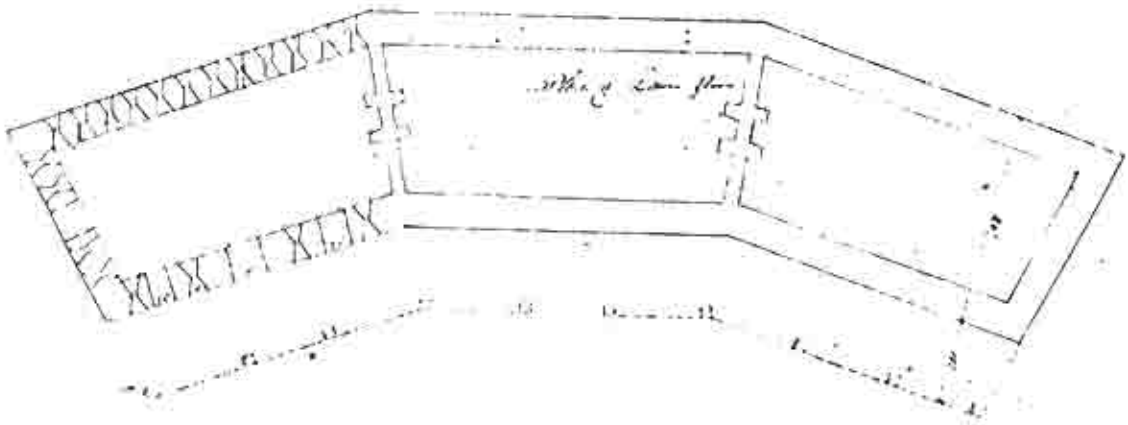

Fort
Chefmenteur.

Illustration 89.

Sketch of addition to citadel, Forts Pike and Wood (Macomb), September, 1849.

National Archives.

Drawer 85.
Sheet 30.



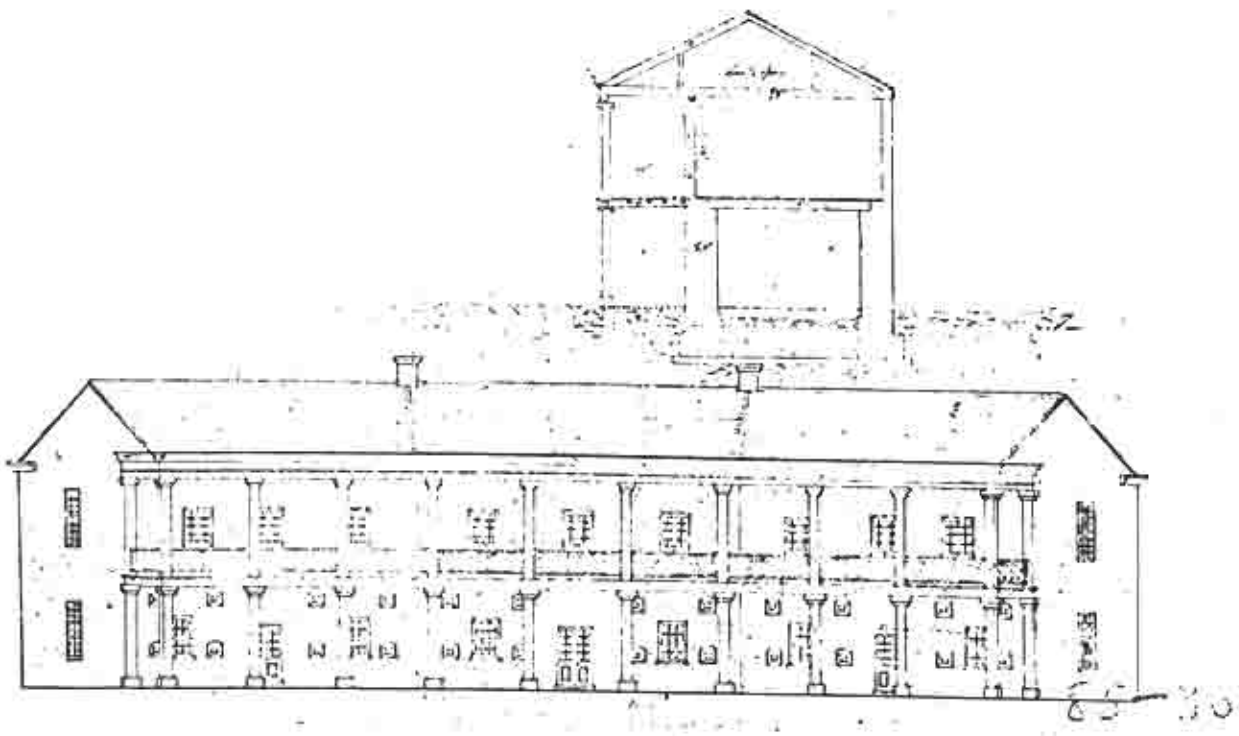
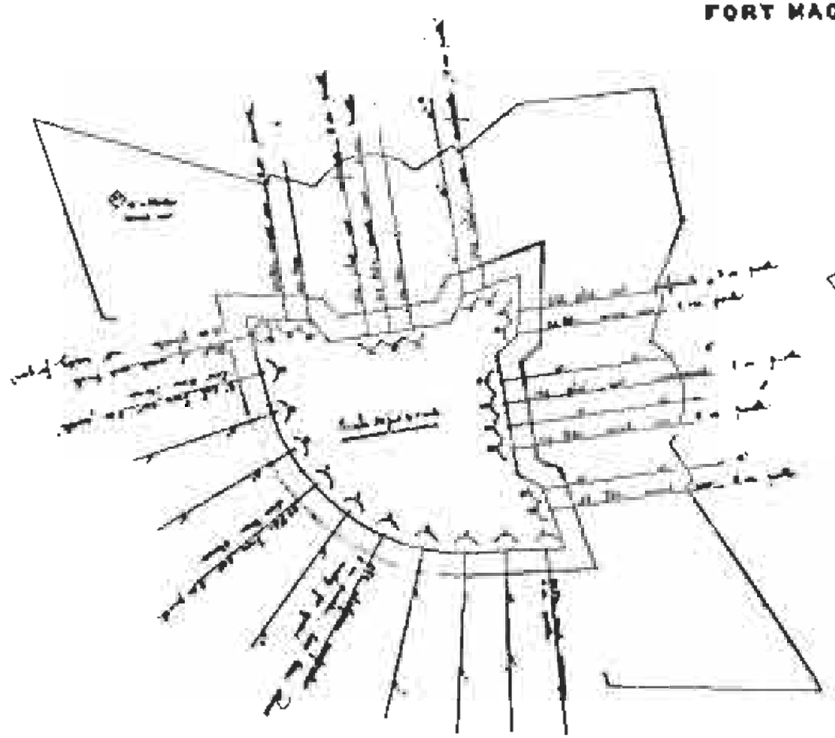


Illustration 90.

Fort Macomb, showing location of casemates, barbette emplacements, and armament, as of 1870.

National Archives.

FORT MACOMB.



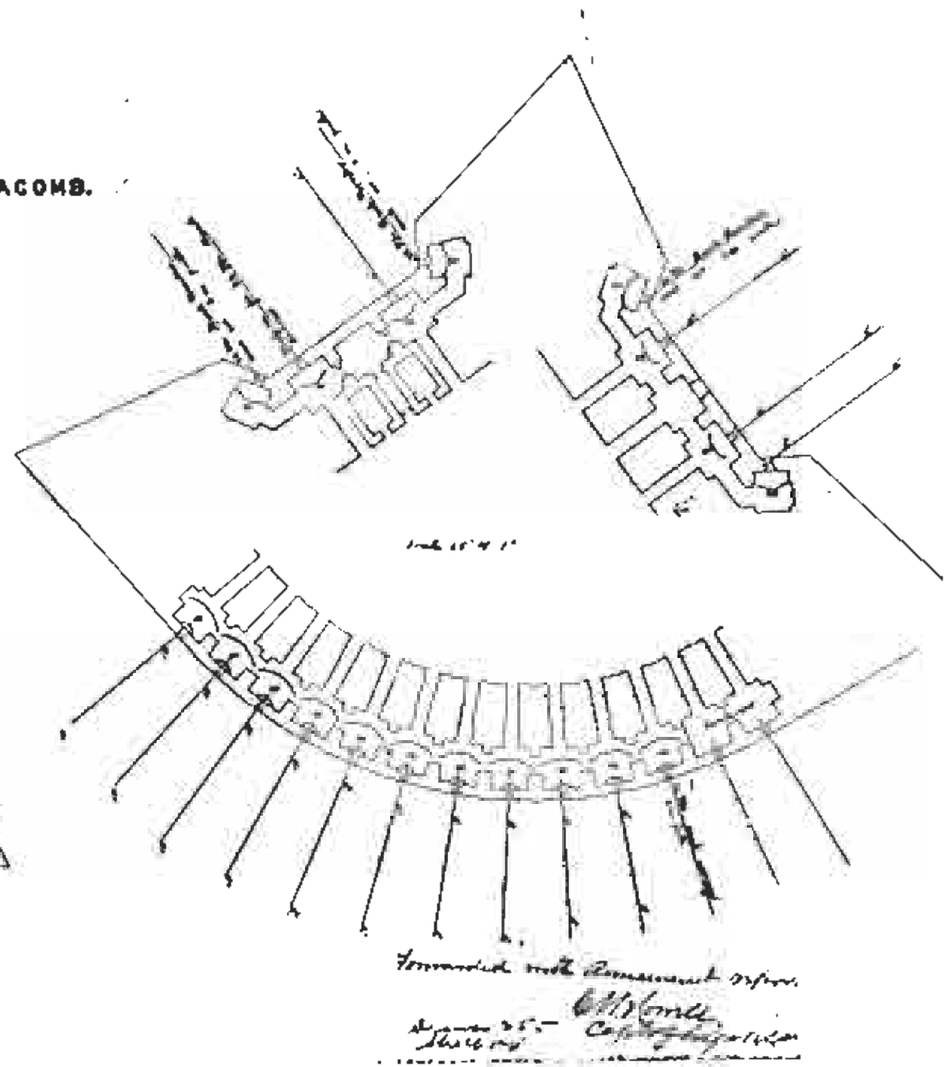


Illustration 91.

Fort Livingston, 1915. View of parade from southeast wall looking northwest.

National Archives.

Illustration 92.

Fort Livingston, 1915. View from the lighthouse on the north glacis.

National Archives.

Illustration 93.

Fort Livingston, 1915. View of parade looking northwest.

National Archives.

Illustration 94.

Damaged south corner of Fort Livingston, 1915.

National Archives.

Illustration 95.

Sallyport of Fort Livingston, 1915.

National Archives.

Illustration 96.

Plan of Lieutenant Colonel Ross for defending Barataria Pass, 1813. Drawn by Bartholemy Lafon.

Map Division, Library of Congress.

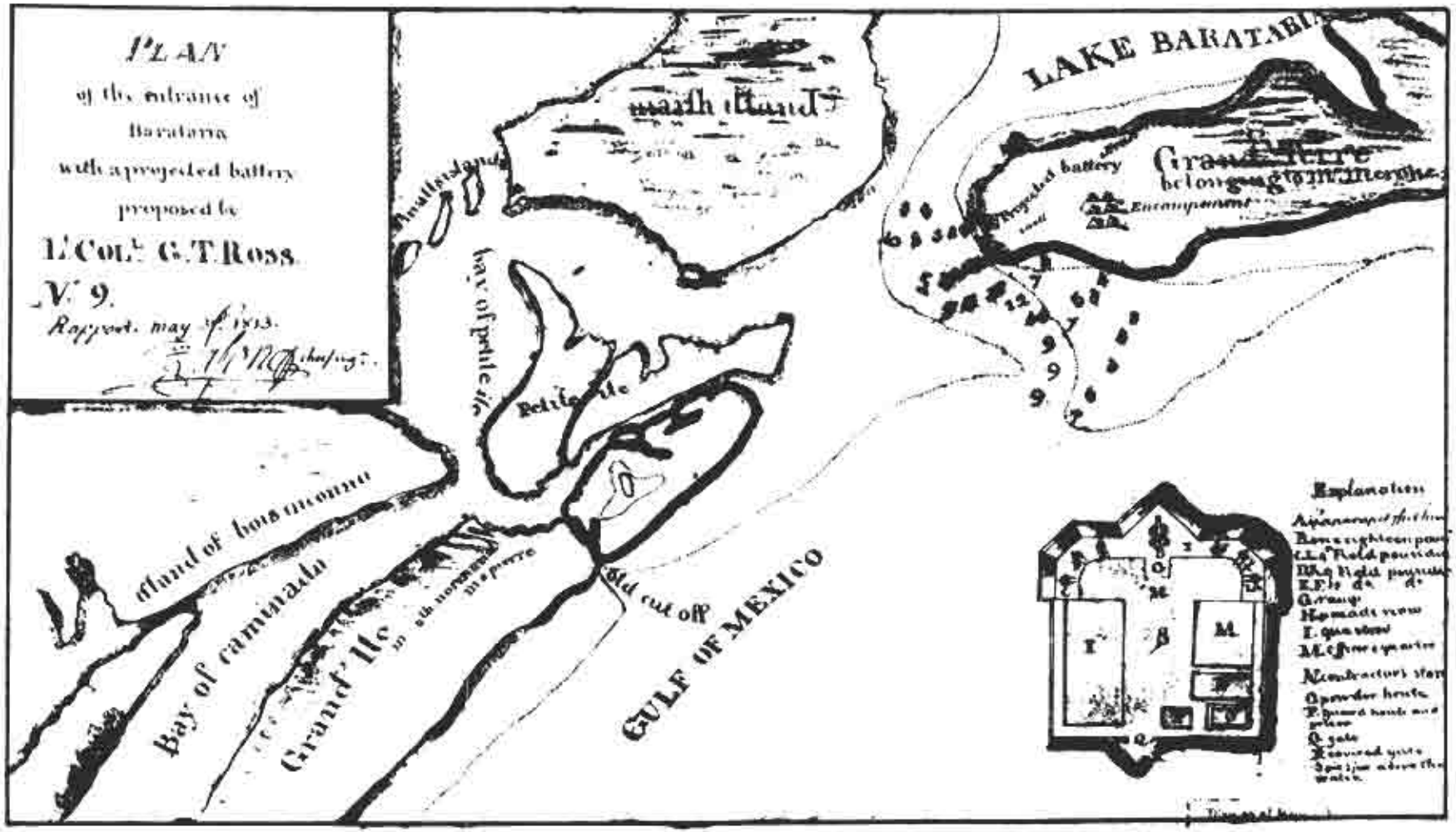

PLAN
of the entrance of
Barataria
with a projected battery
proposed by
L'Col. G. T. Ross.
N. 9.
Rapport. may 1813.
LAKE BARATARIA
marsh island
bay of petite ile
Petite ile
island of bois inconnu
Bay of caminada
Grand' Ile
old cut off
GULF OF MEXICO
Projected battery
Encampement
Explanation

Illustration 97.

Fort Livingston, incomplete in 1872, showing emplacements for artillery.

National Archives.

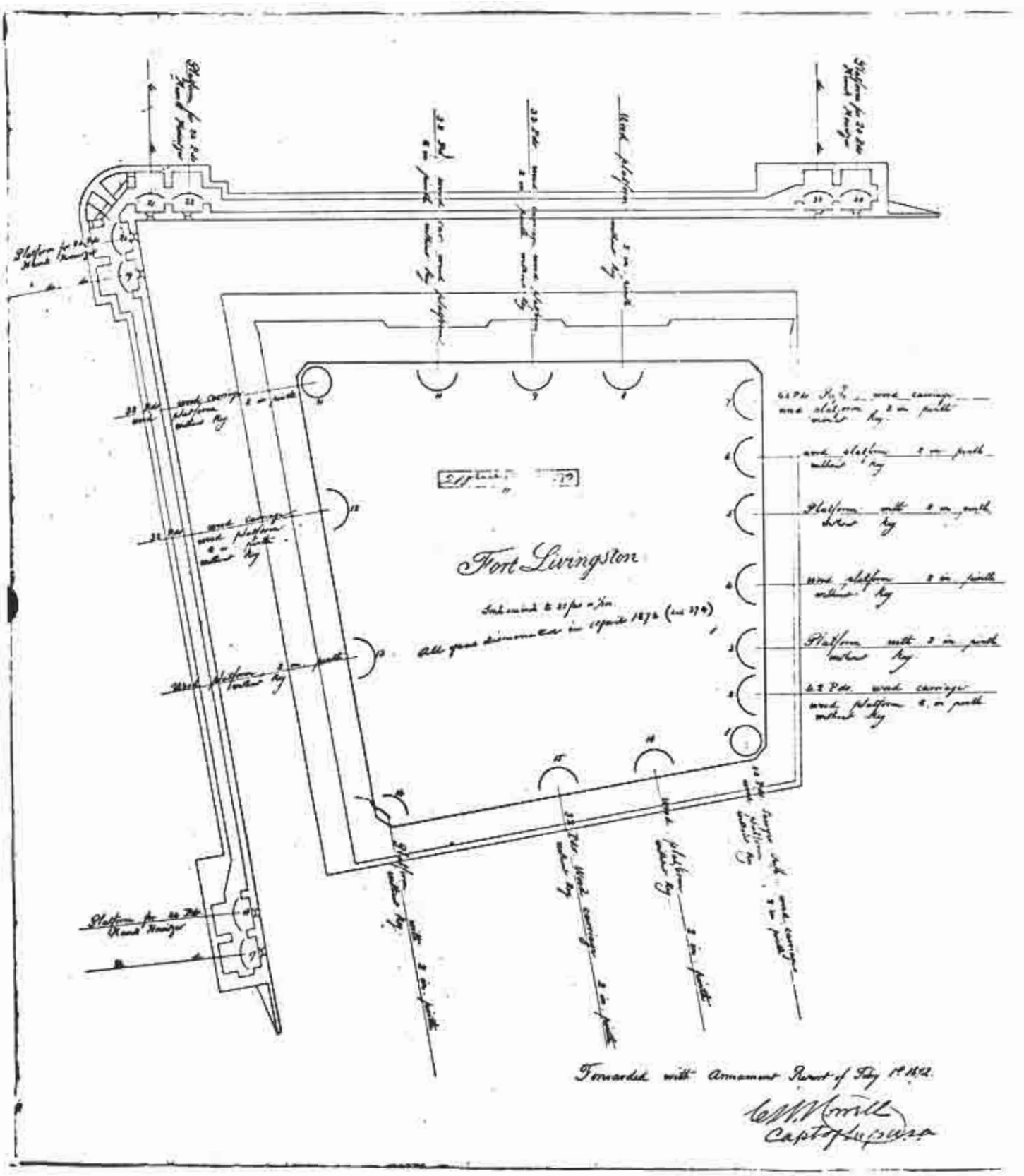

Fort Livingston
Platform with 2 in. pinth without Ry
Platform with 2 in. pinth without Ry
Platform with 2 in. pinth without Ry
Platform with 2 in. pinth without Ry
Platform with 2 in. pinth without Ry
Platform for 24 Pds Hand Hoisting
Forwarded with Armament Report of Feby 1st 1872.
C. W. Morrill
Capt of Lupusa

Illustration 98.

West end of Grand Terre Island, with Fort Livingston, 1840-1886.

National Archives.

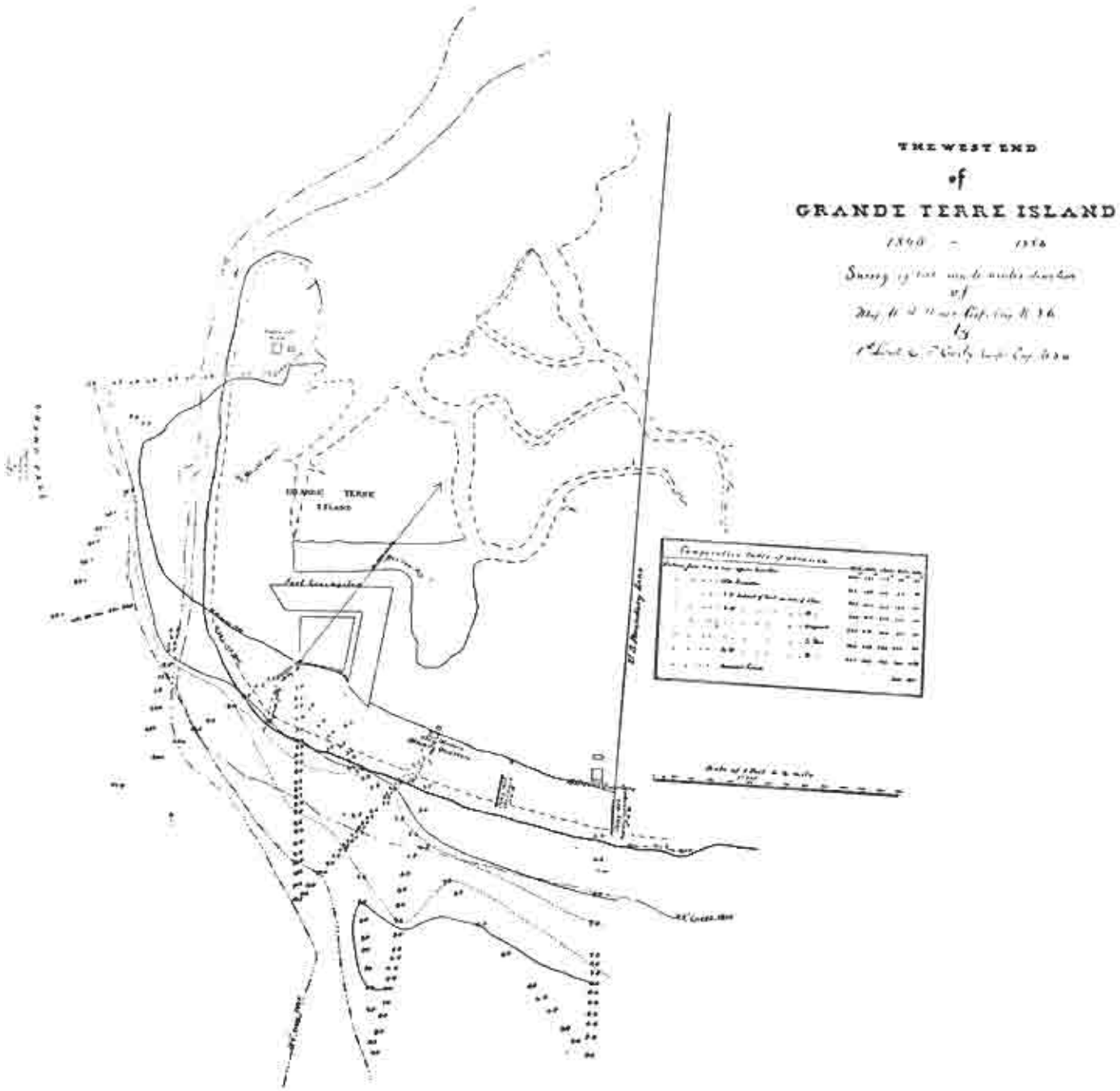

THE WEST END
of
GRANDE TERRE ISLAND
GRANDE TERRE
ISLAND

Illustration 99.

View of Battery Bienvenue, 1915.

National Archives.

Illustration 100.

Plan of Battery Bienvenue, 1817.

National Archives.

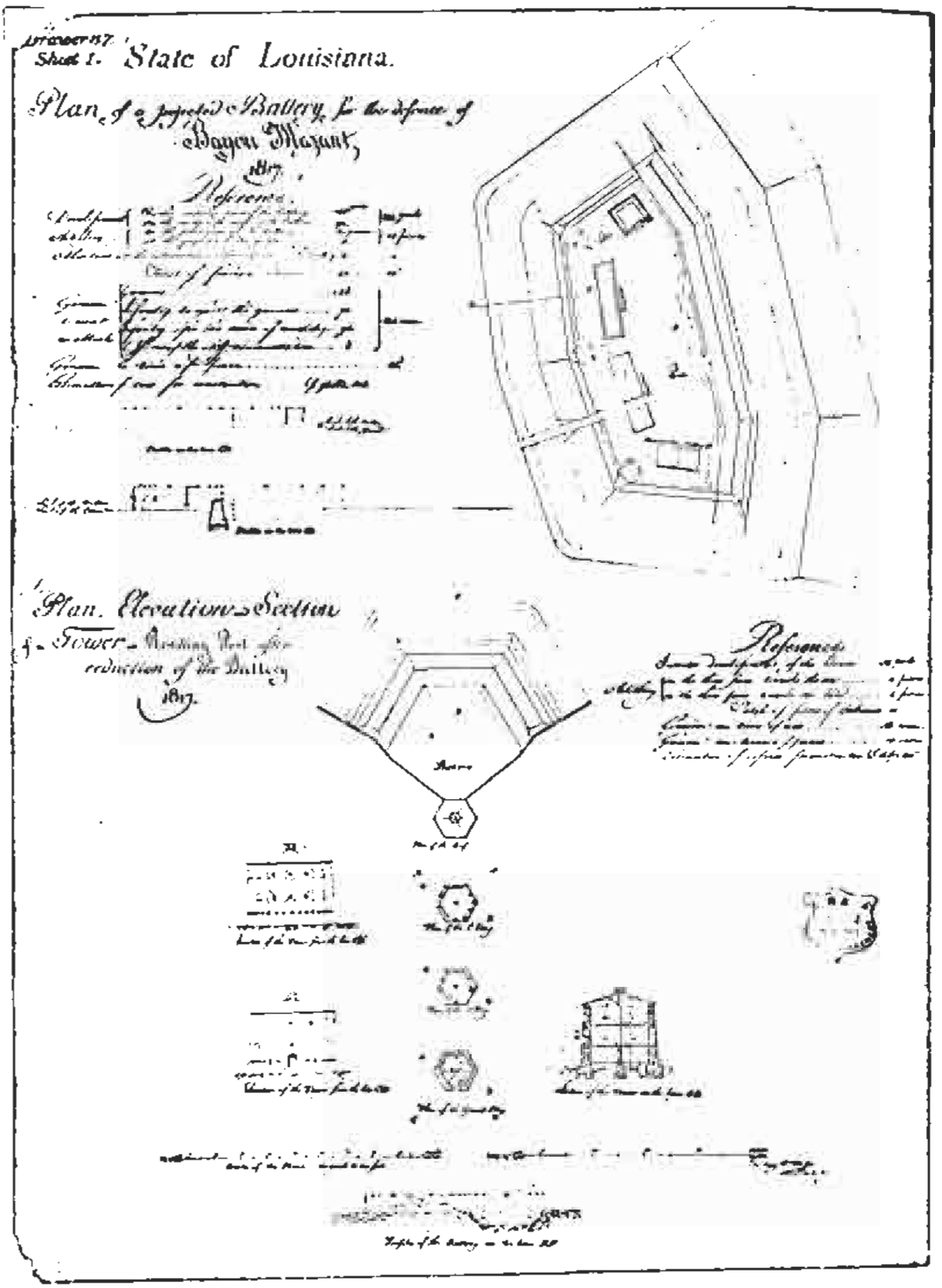

Shet 1. State of Louisiana.
Plan of a projected Battery for the defence of
Bayou Mazant,
1817.
Reference.
Plan. Elevation & Section
of a Tower
reduction of the Battery
1817.
Reference

Illustration 101.

Battery Bienvenue in 1827.

National Archives.

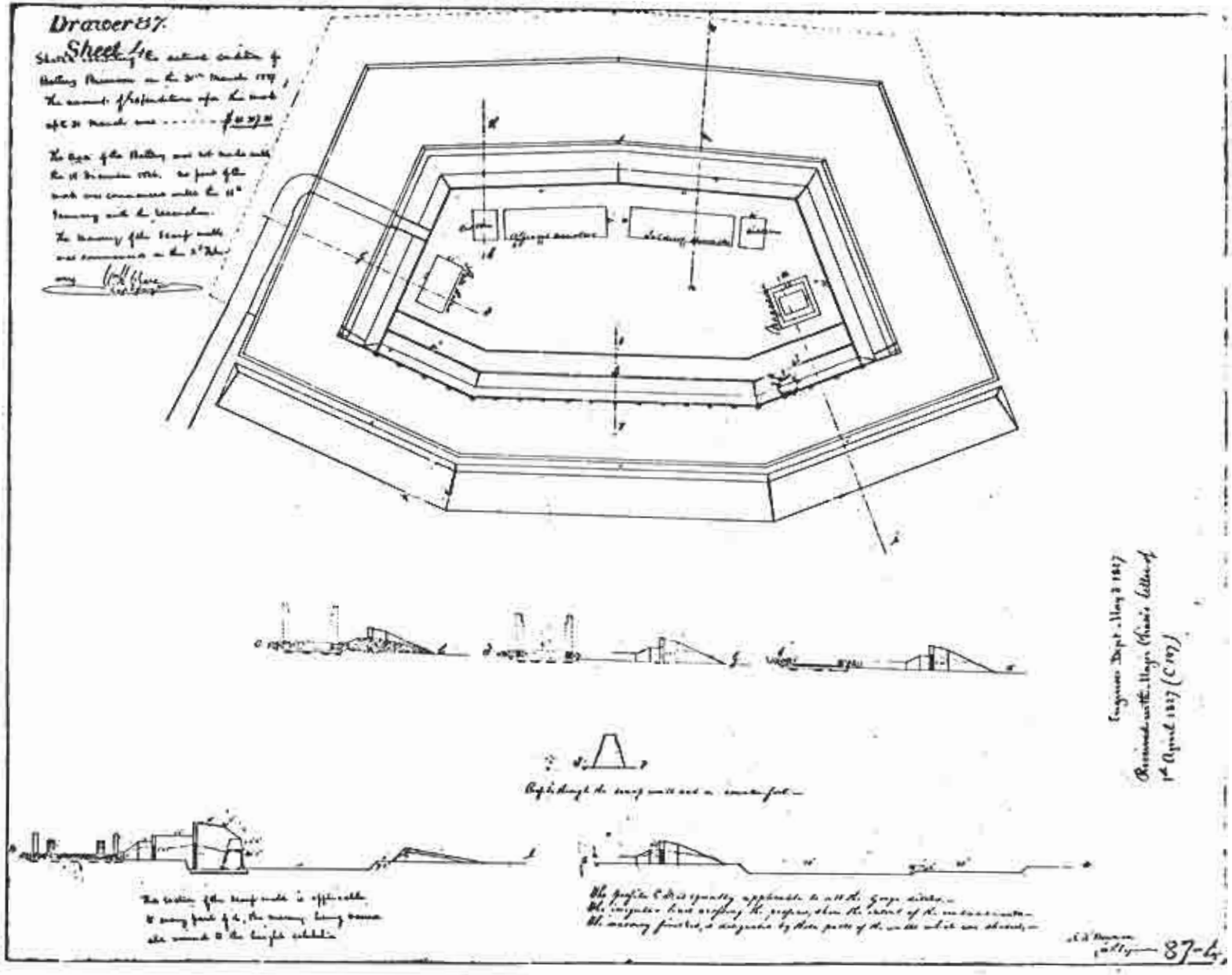

Drawer 87.
Sheet 4
87-4

Illustration 102.

Battery Bienvenue, 1841,
showing gun emplacements.

National Archives.

BAYOU MAZANTE
BREAKERS ASHORE

Illustration 103.

Battery Bienvenue, 1869.

National Archives.

BATTERY BIENVENUE.

Scale 1in = 60 feet.

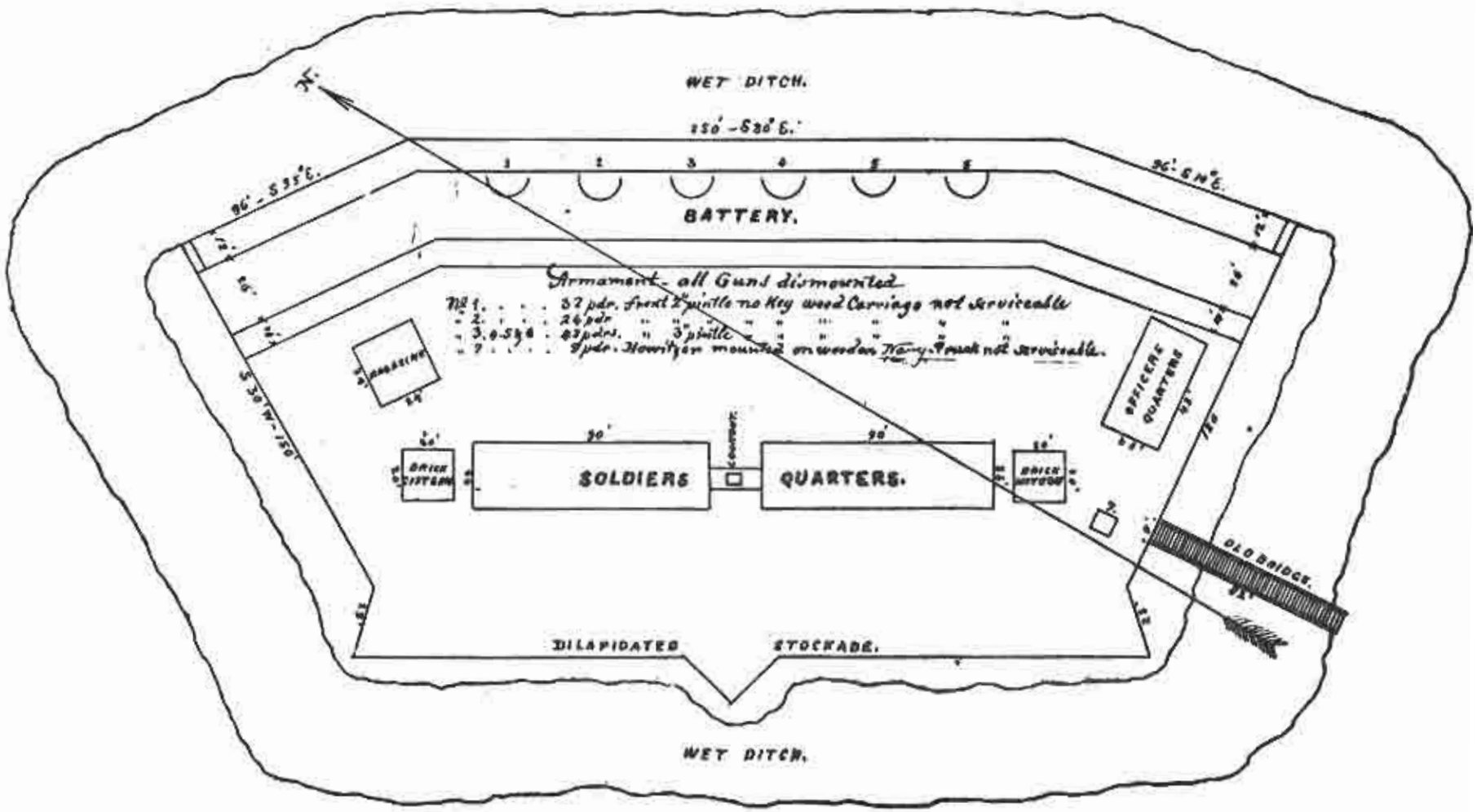


Illustration 104.

Tower Dupré, 1915.

National Archives.

Illustration 105.

Tower Dupré, 1915.

National Archives.

Illustration 106.

Plan of Tower Dupré, 1841.

National Archives.

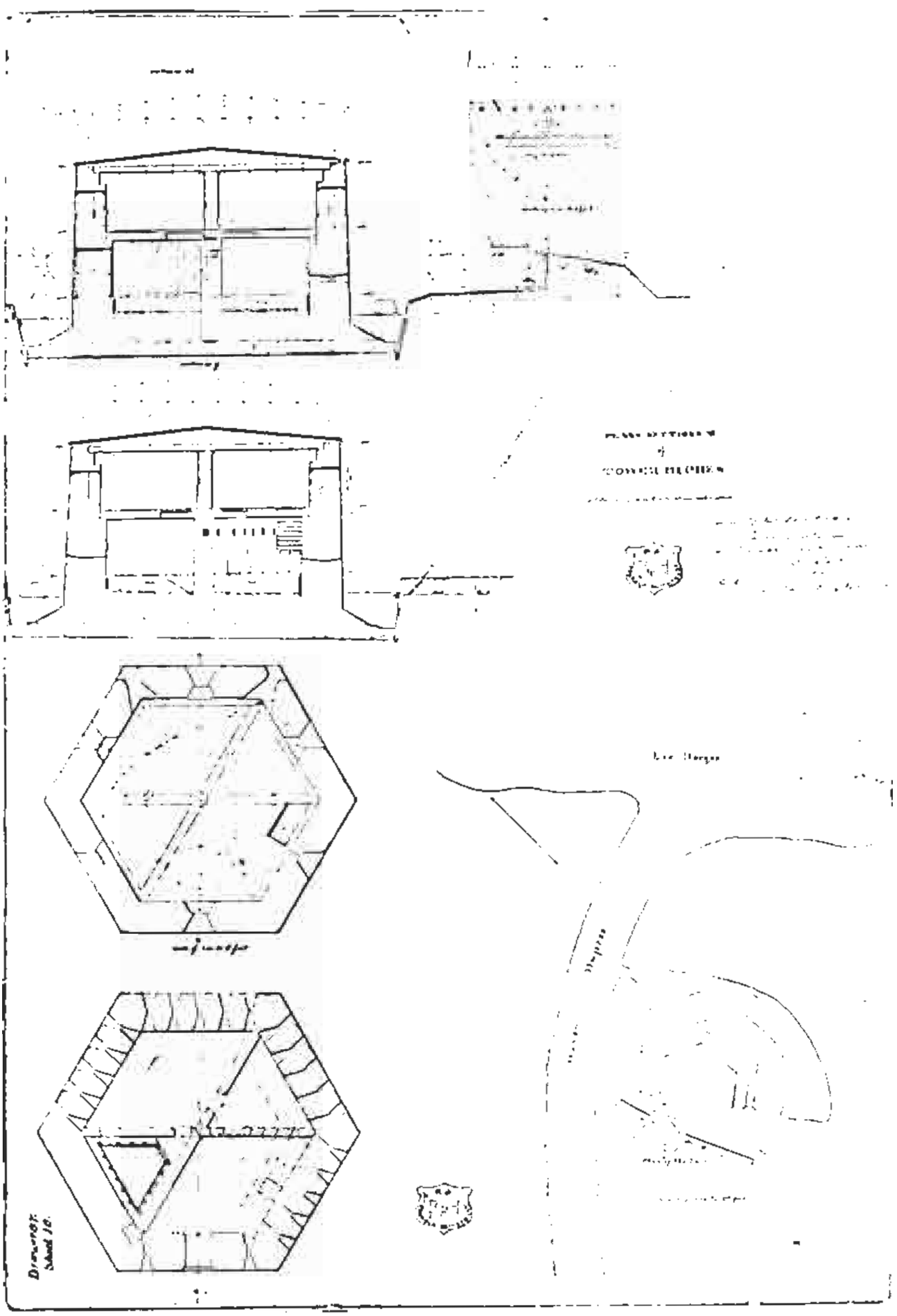


Illustration 102.

Tower Duprè, 1869.

National Archives.

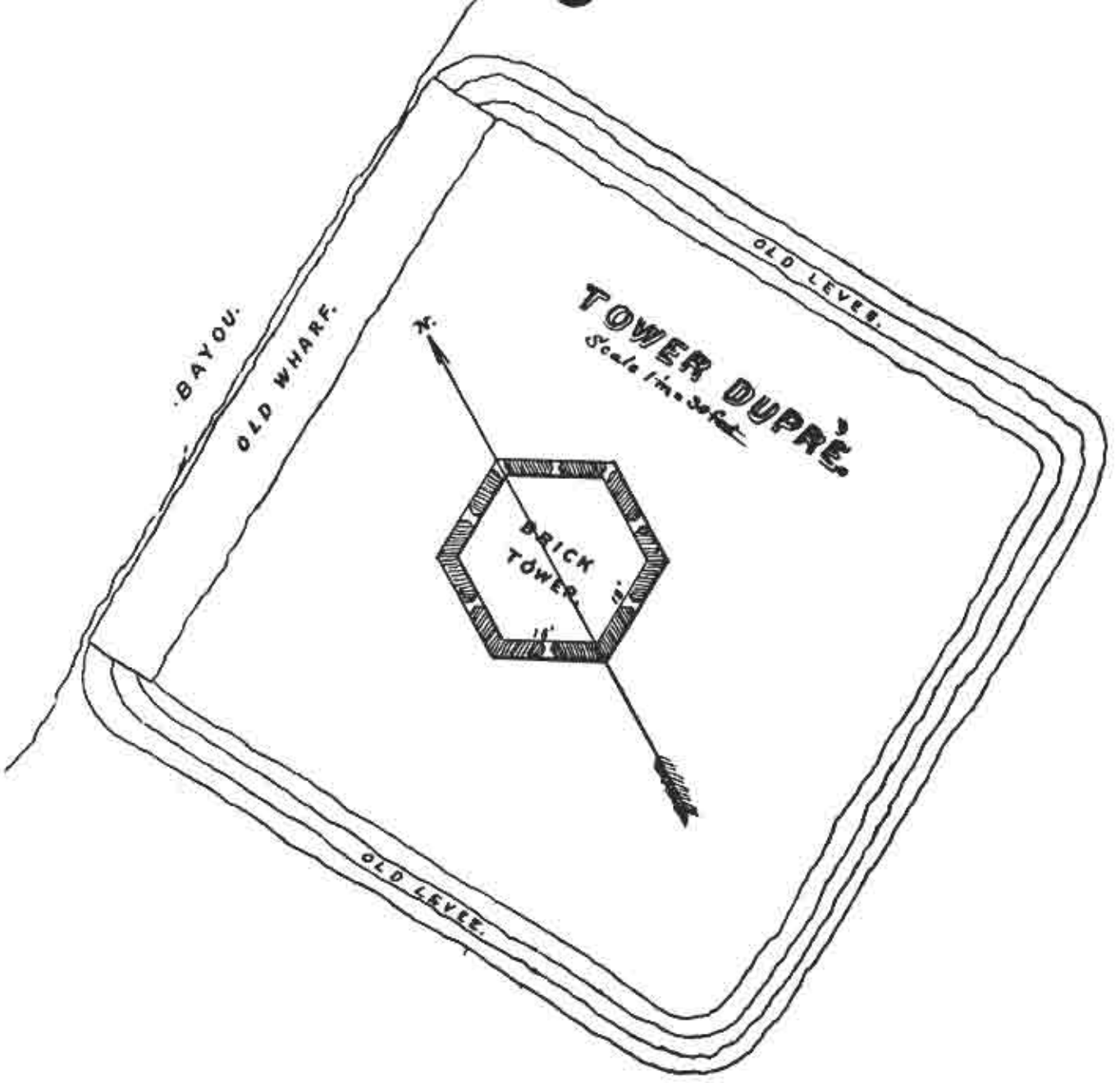

TOWER DUPRÉ.
Scale 1 in. = 30 feet
BAYOU.
OLD WHARF.
OLD LEVEE.
OLD LEVEE.
BRICK TOWER.
N.

Illustration 108.

Tower Dupré, January, 1872.

National Archives.

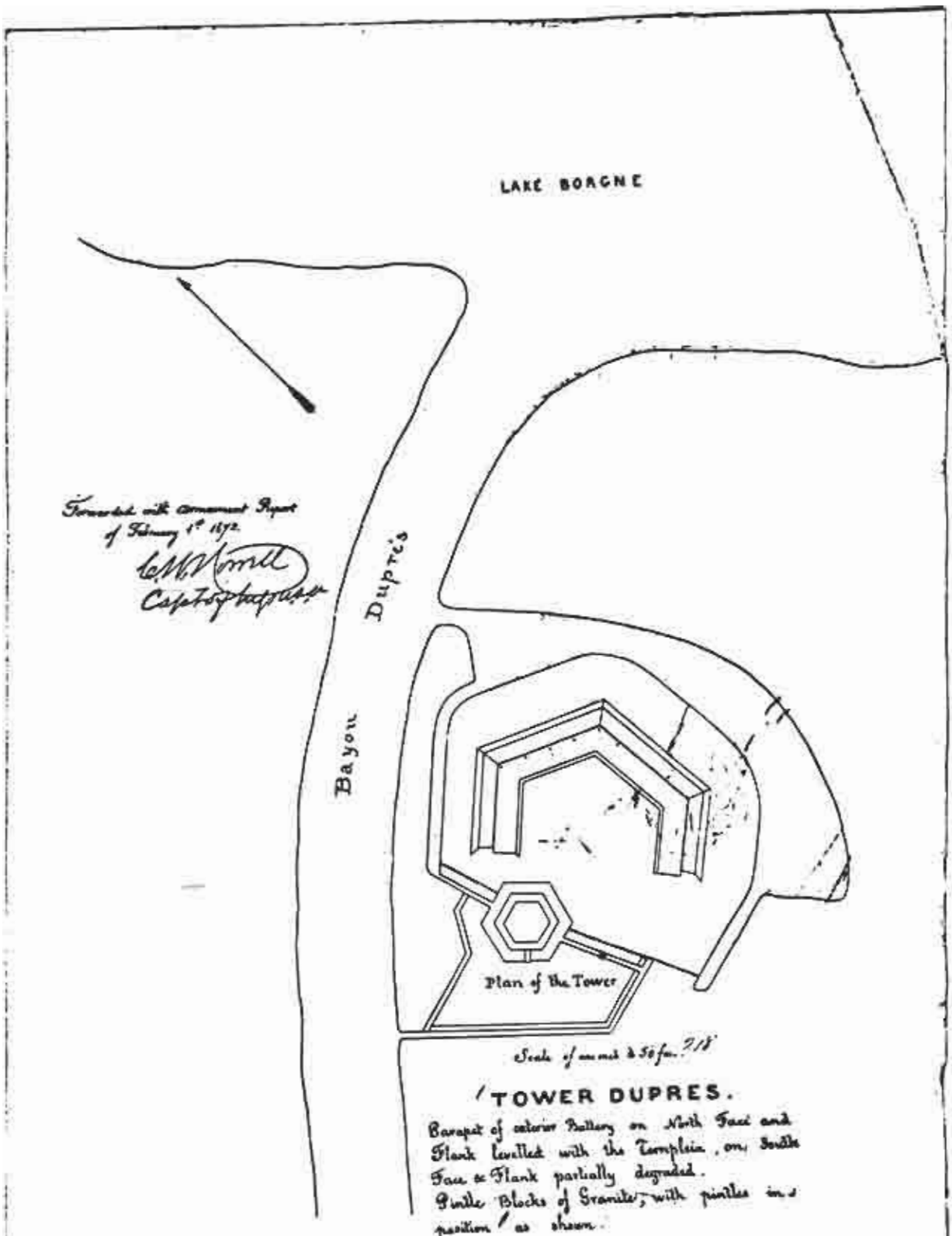

LAKE BORGNE
Bayou Dupre's
Plan of the Tower
Scale of [illegible] 50 fm.
TOWER DUPRES.
Parapet of exterior Battery on North Face and Flank levelled with the Templein, on South Face & Flank partially degraded.
Pintle Blocks of Granite, with pintles in position as shown.

Illustration 109.

Tower at Proctor's Landing, 1915.

National Archives.

Illustration 110.

Entrance to tower at Proctor's Landing.
Note date of 1856 on pediment.

Courtesy of Frank Fernandez.

Illustration 111.

Tower at Proctor's Landing. Aerial view of the unfinished structure showing sea wall erected to retard erosion.

Courtesy of Frank Fernandez.

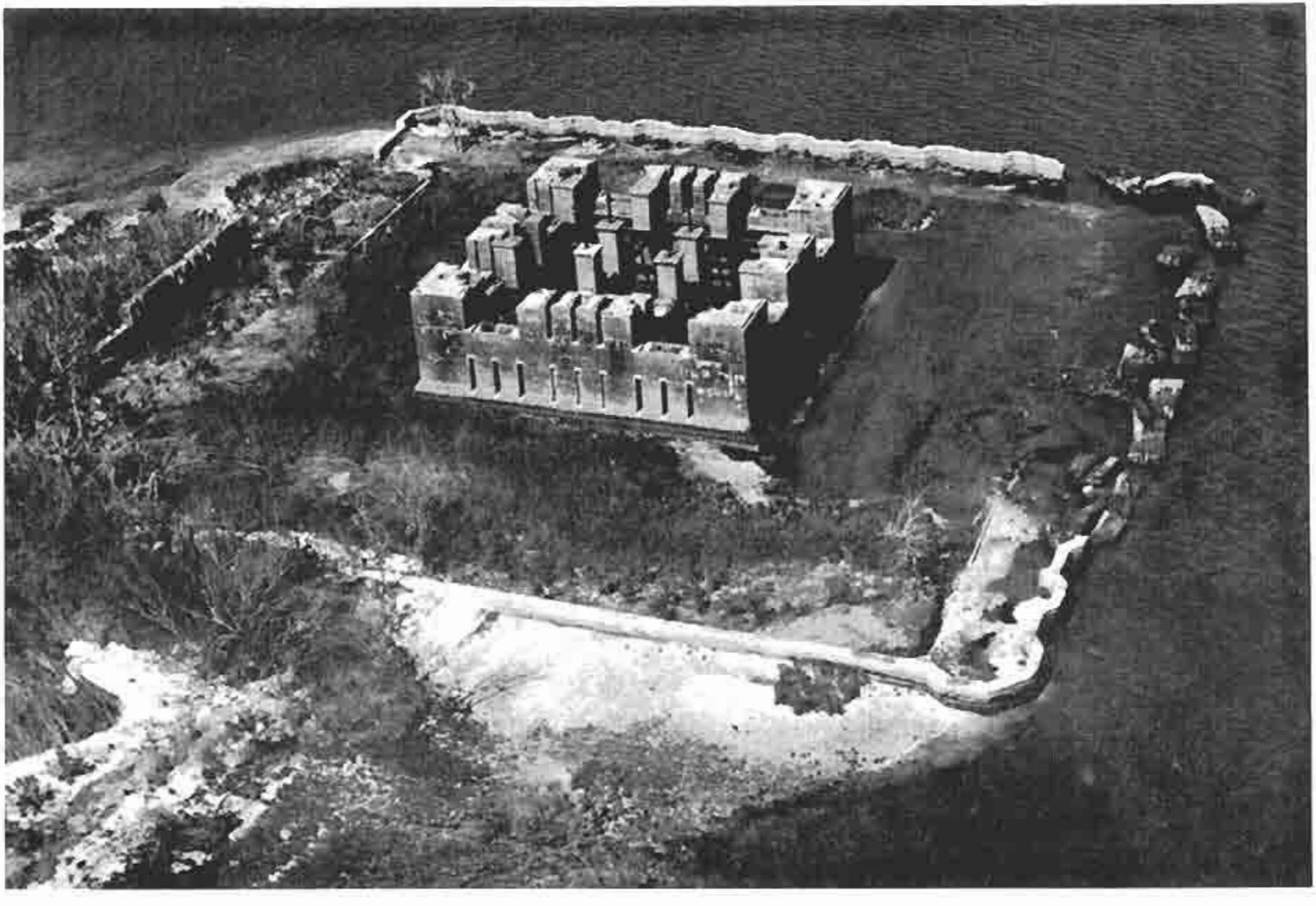


Illustration 112.

Top: View of tower at Proctor's Landing.

Bottom: Interior of tower at Proctor's Landing, showing iron beams employed in the construction.

Photographs by Jerome A. Greene, 1980.

Illustration 113.

Plan of tower at Proctor's Landing, 1858.

National Archives.

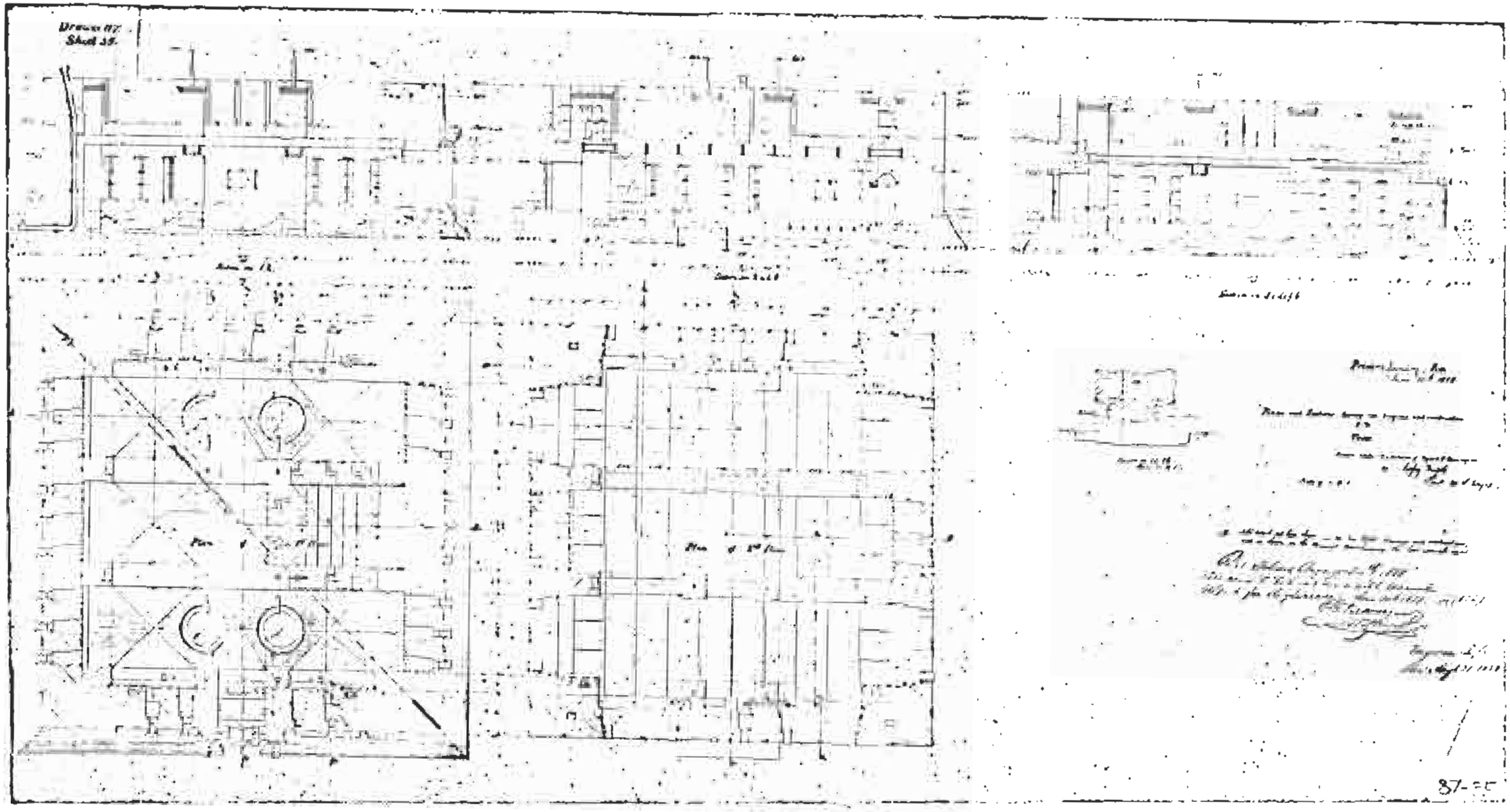

Drawn 117
Sheet 35.

Illustration 115.

Roof and gun platforms projected for tower at Proctor's Landing, June, 1838. The post was never completed.

National Archives.

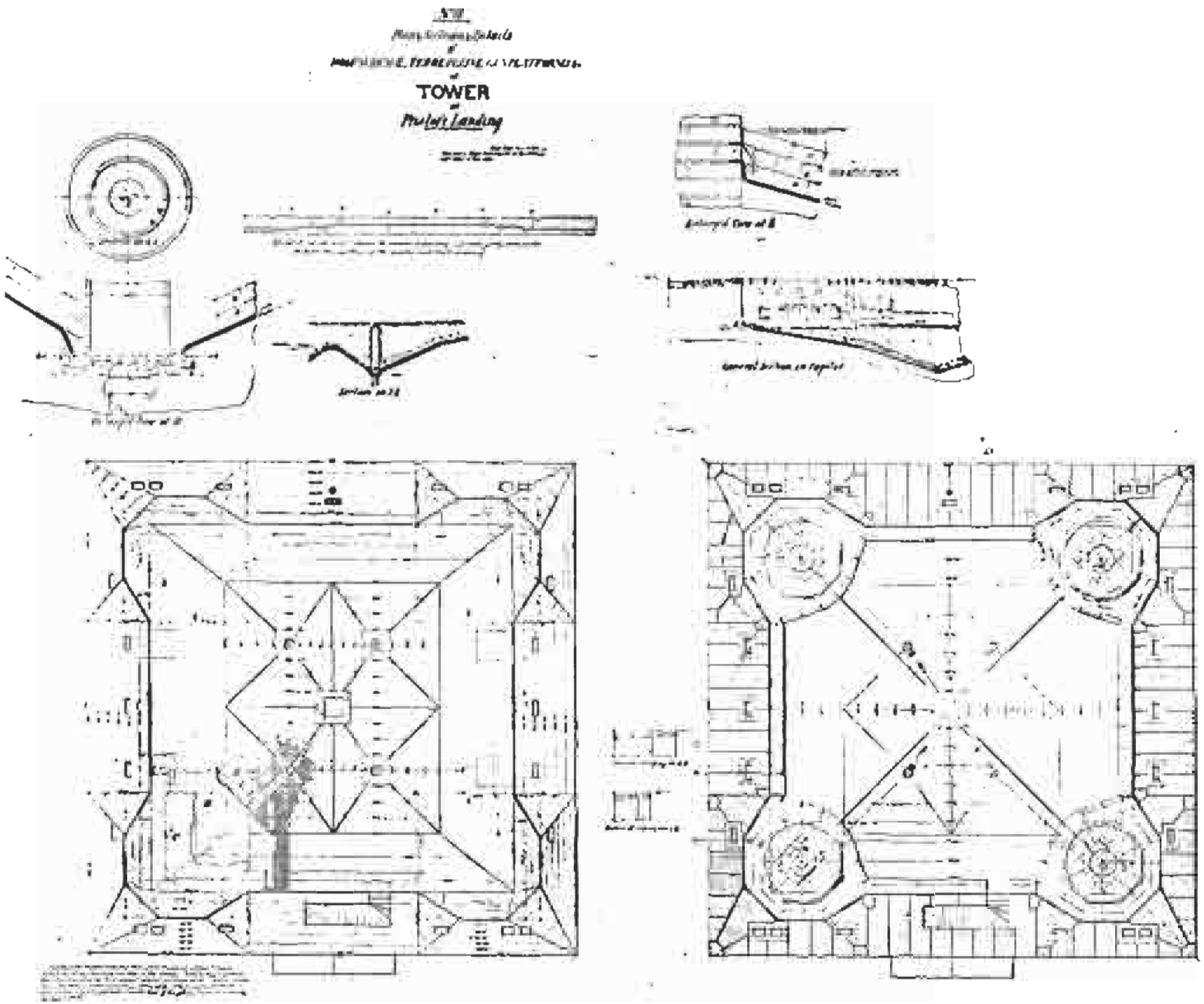

TOWER

Illustration 113.

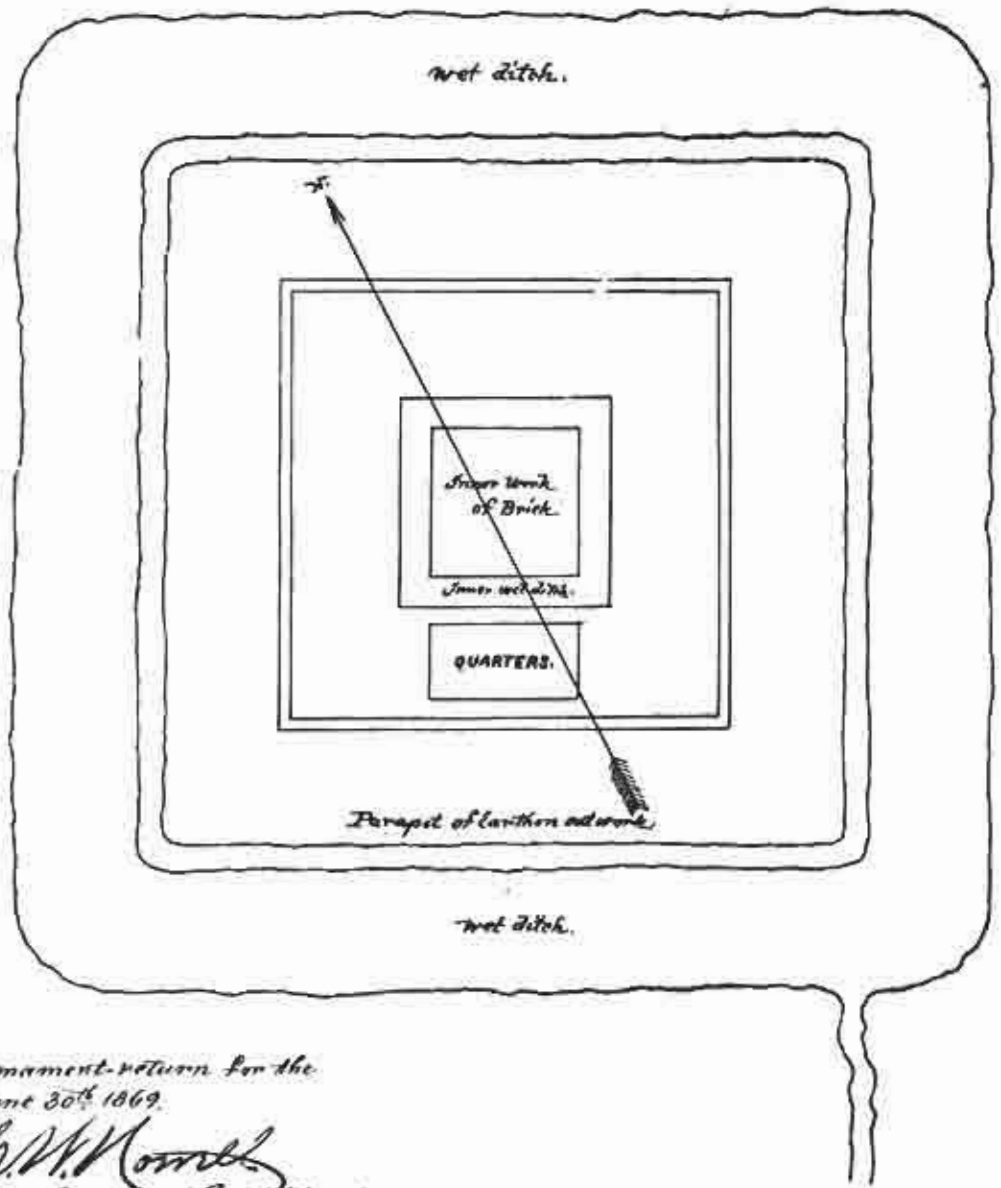
Tower at Proctor's Landing, 1863.

National Archives.

WORK AT

PROCTERVILLE.

Scale 1 in. 60 feet.



To accompany Armament-return for the fiscal year ending June 30th 1869.

C. W. Howell
Capt of Engs & Bvt Maj U.S.A.

Illustration 116.

Powder magazine, Main Redoubt, Camp Parapet. The magazine was originally covered with earth.

Photograph by Jerome A. Greene, 1980.

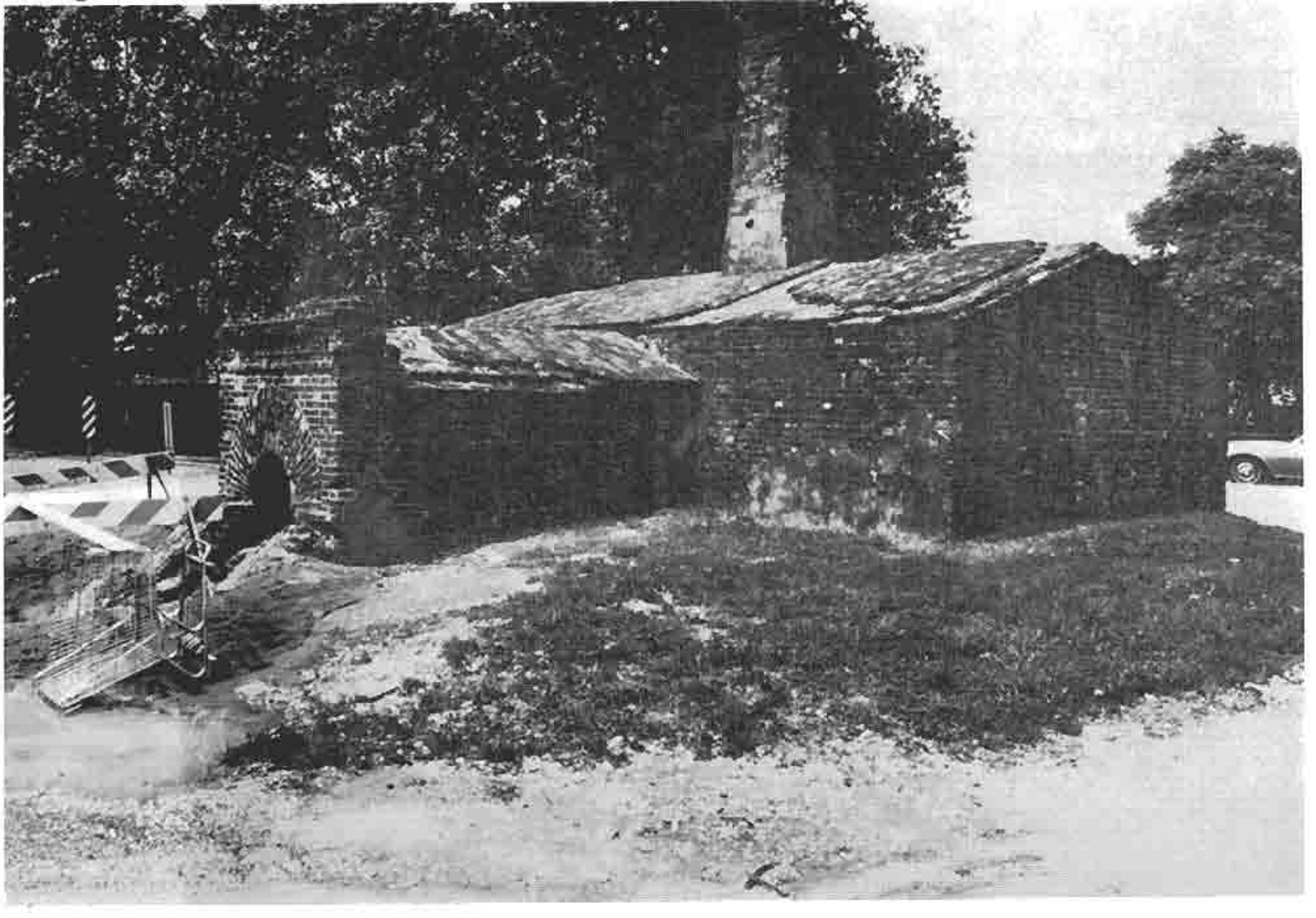


Illustration 117.

Entrance to the powder magazine, Main Redoubt, Camp Parapet.

Photograph by Jerome A. Greene, 1980.

Illustration 118.

Camp Parapet fortifications. Overview, 1864.

National Archives.

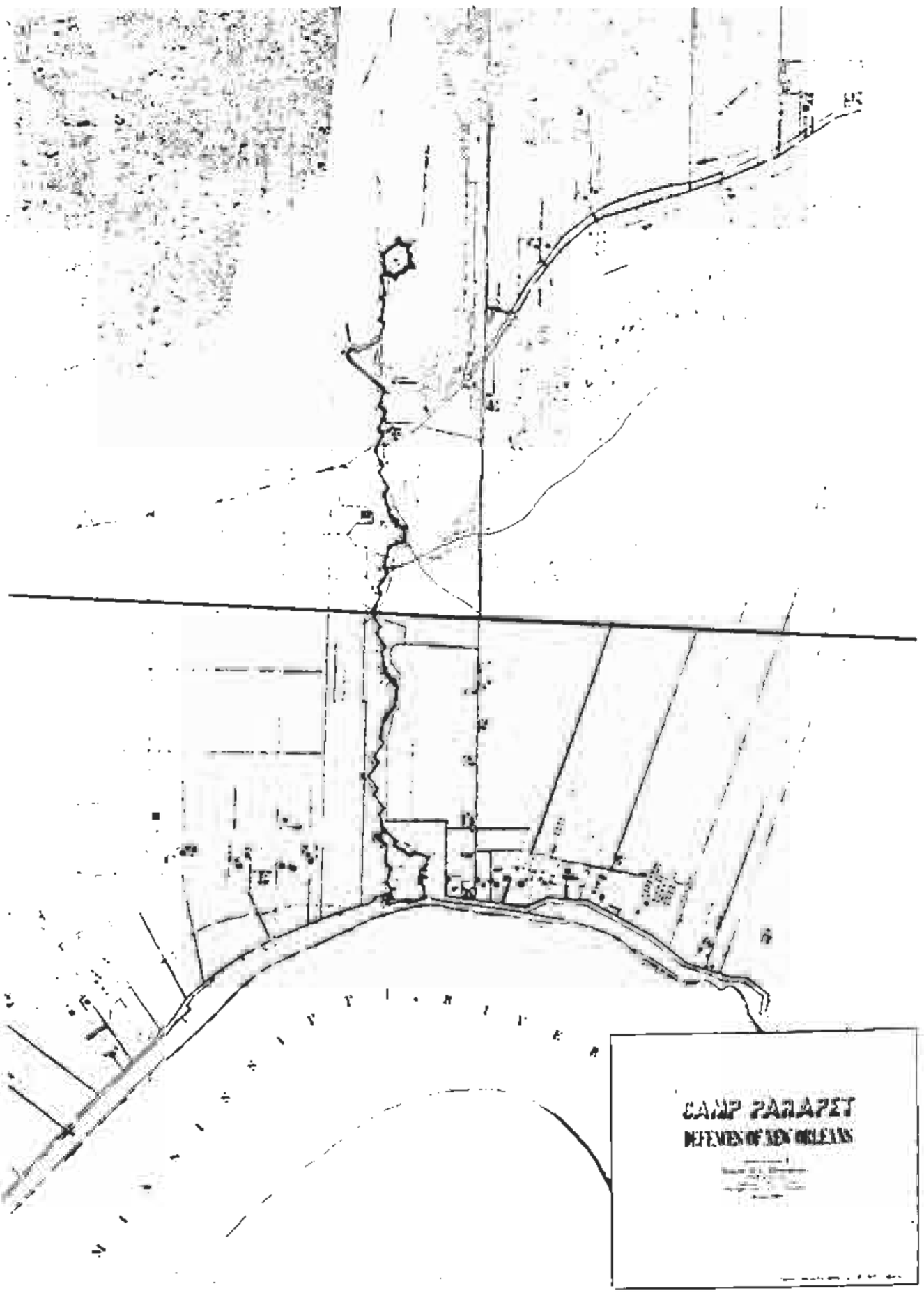

CAMP PARAPET

Illustration 119

Main Redoubt, Camp Parapet, 1864.

National Archives.

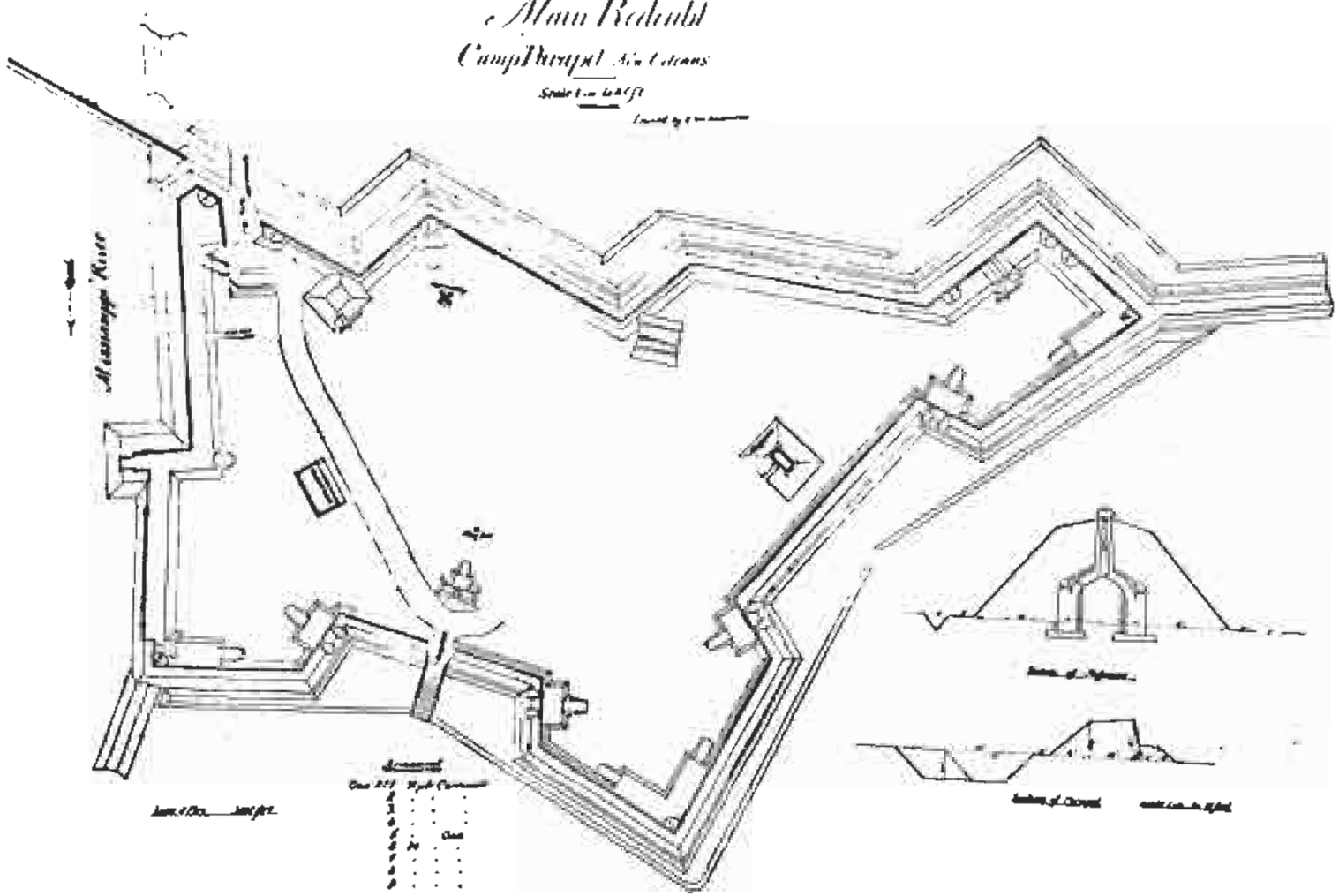

Main Redoubt
Camp Parapet
Mississippi River

Illustration 126

Cavalier Battery, Camp Paraget, 1864.

National Archives.

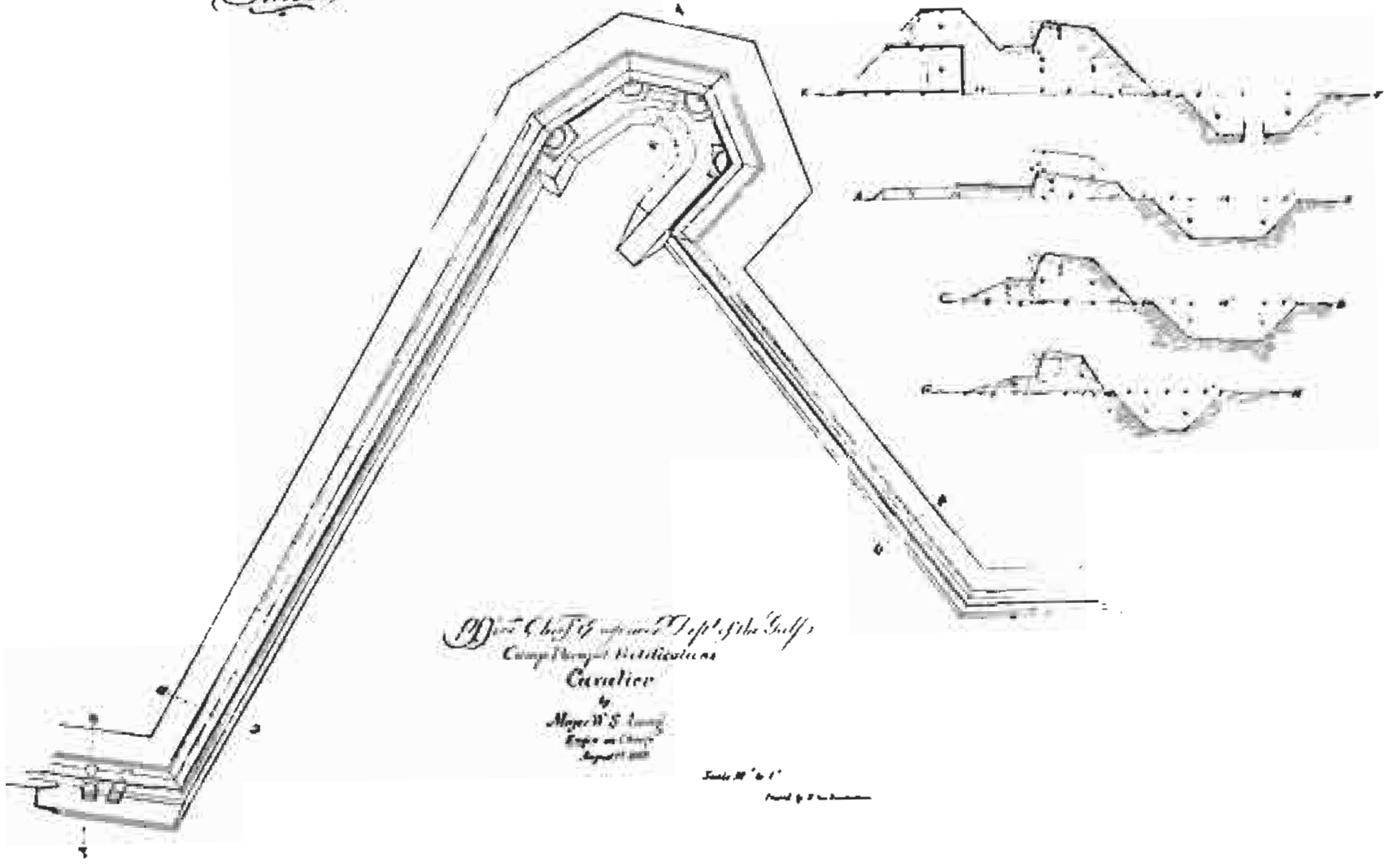

Profiles
Cavalier

Illustration 121

Star Redoubt, Camp Parapet, 1864.

National Archives.

Rec'd at Engr Dept
Jany 20, 1860
(H. 1820)

Office Chief Engineer Department of the Gulf
Star Redoubt
at
Camp Parapet Nro Orleans

Red Line shows Crest of the present work

Copied from the Original of J. Deutsch, Civ Eng by [illegible]

Scale 3 in. to 100 ft.

Aug 1st 1861

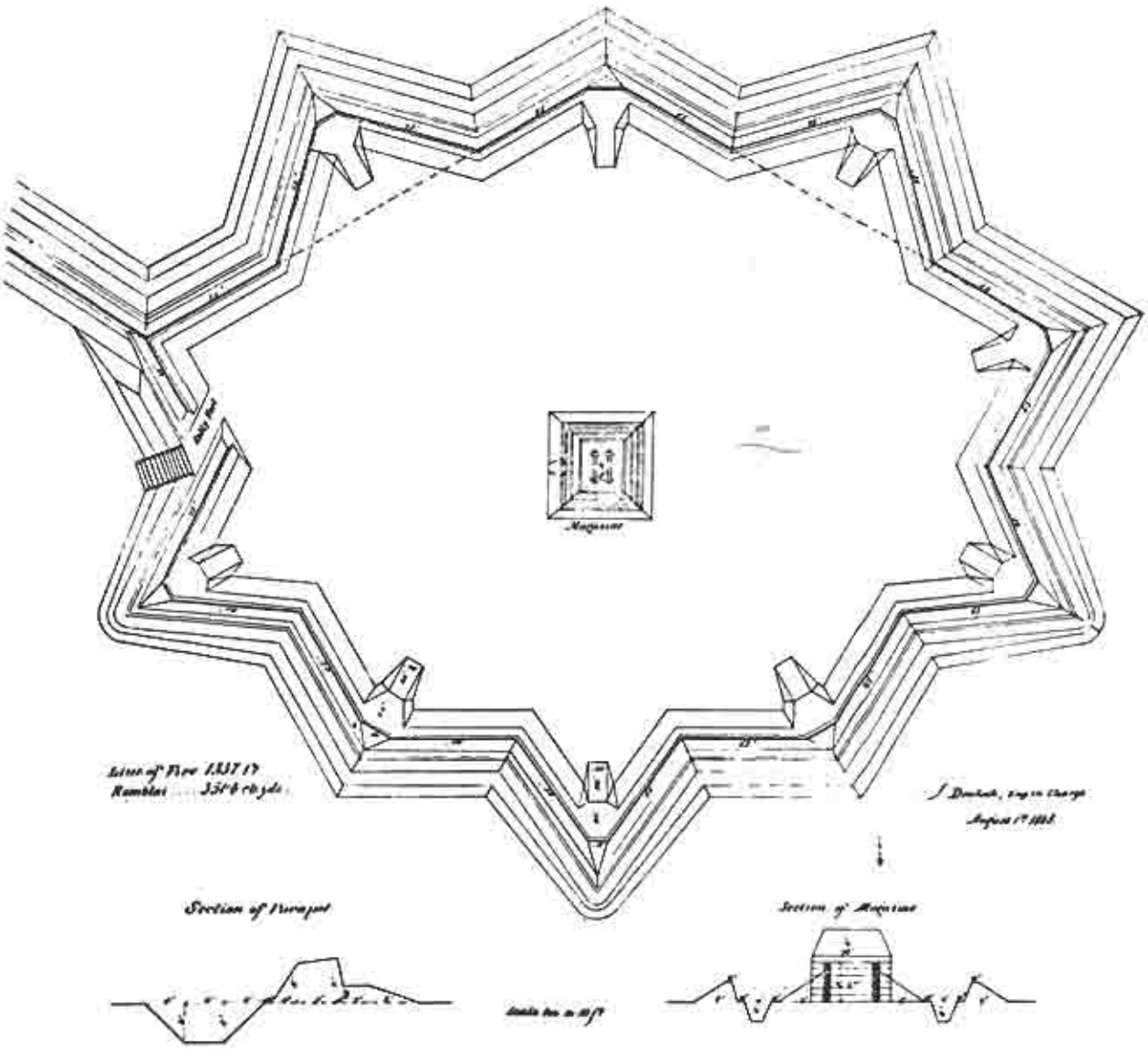


Illustration 122.

Loopholed tower at Jackson Barracks, one of four originally built at the corners of the post.

Photograph by Jerome A. Greene, 1980.

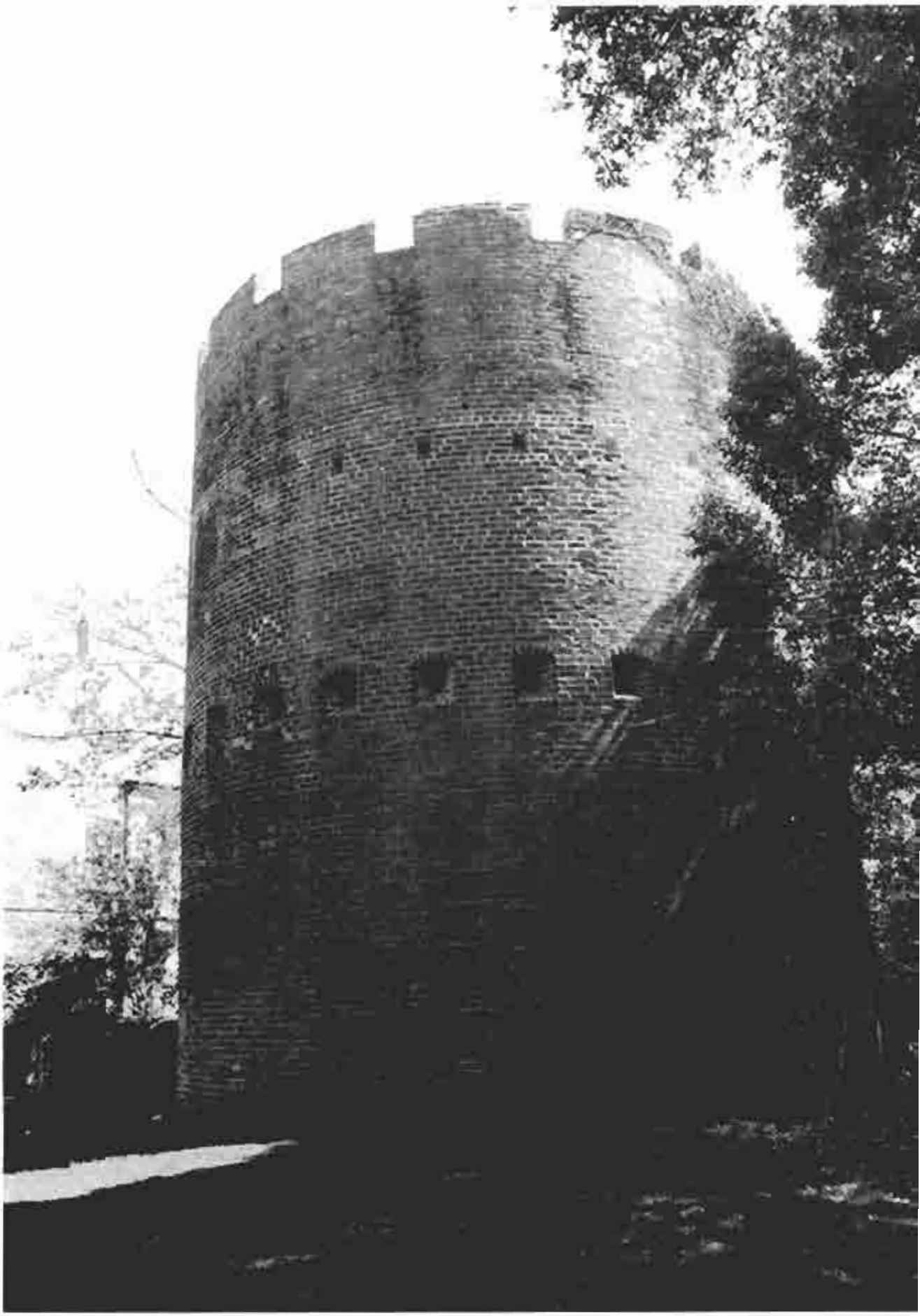


Illustration 123.

Top: View of the parade at Jackson Barracks. Levee is in the distance.

Bottom: Officers' quarters at Jackson Barracks.

Photographs by Jerome A. Greene, 1980.

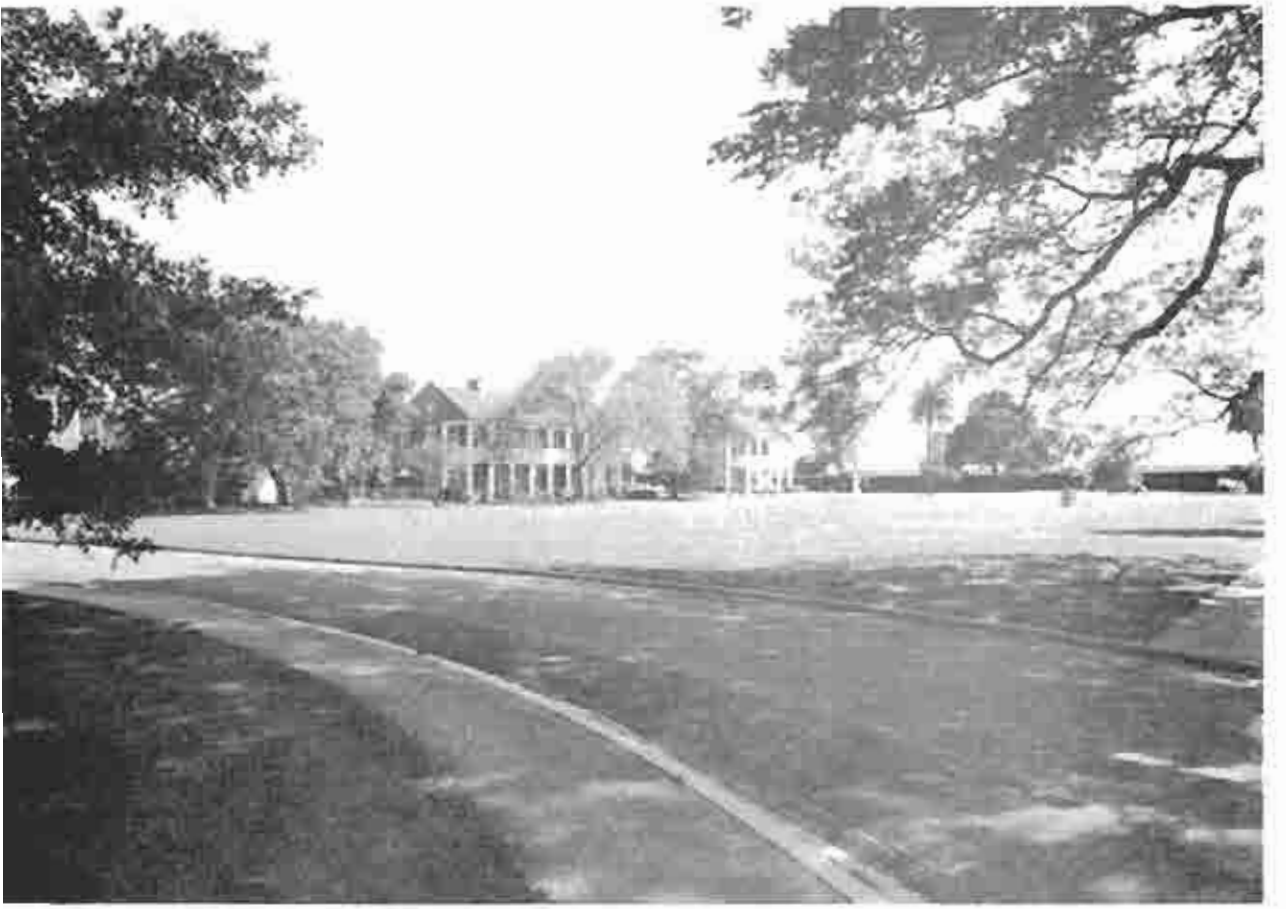
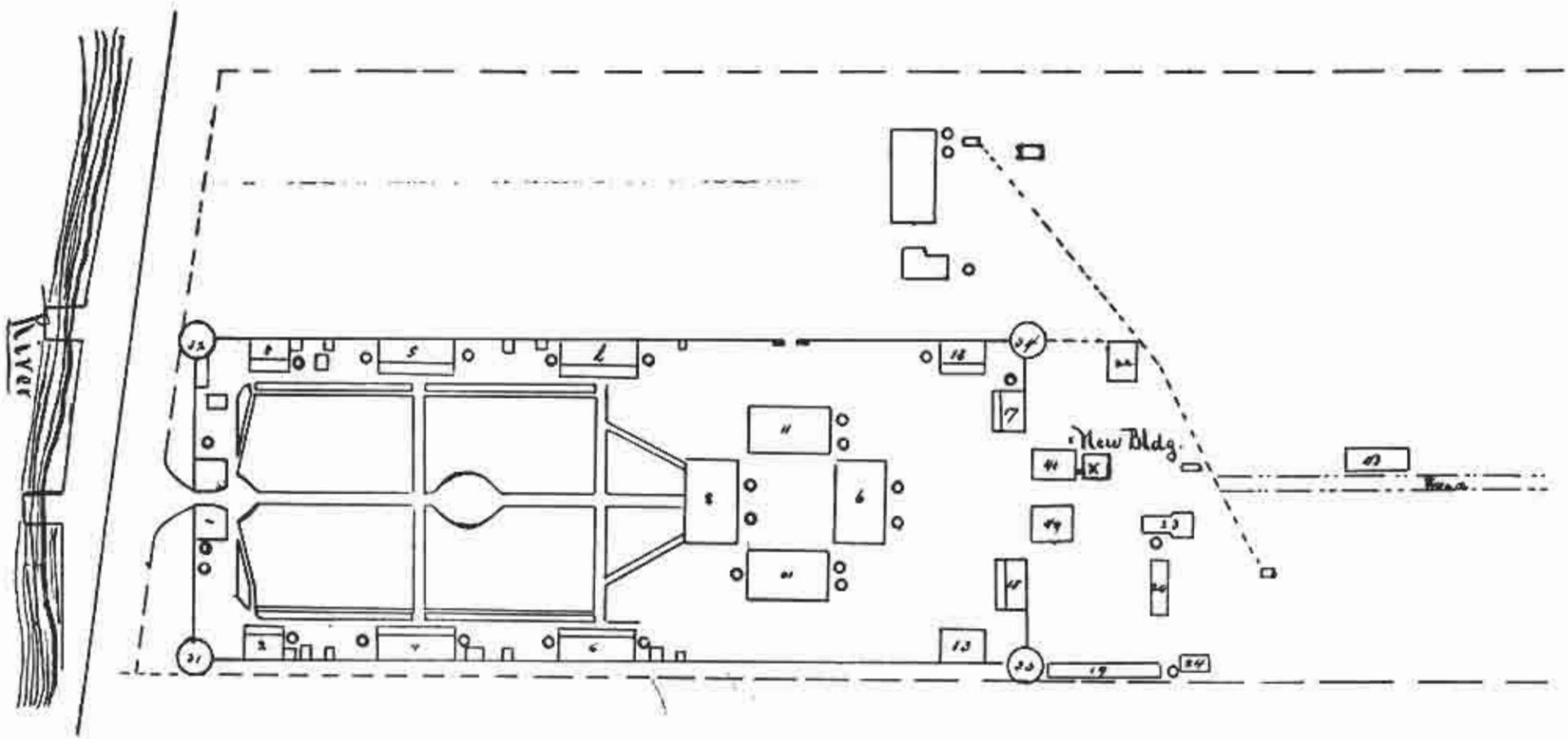


Illustration 124.

Jackson Barracks, 1896.

National Archives.

Jackson Barracks
Louisiana



As the nation's principal conservation agency, the Department of the Interior has basic responsibilities to protect and conserve our land and water, energy and minerals, fish and wildlife, parks and recreation areas, and to ensure the wise use of all these resources. The department also has major responsibility for American Indian reservation communities and for people who live in island territories under U.S. administration.

Publication services were provided by the graphics staff of the Denver Service Center. NPS 1873

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