

THE CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE

An Occasional Publication

Vol. 6, No. 1

18 East Chestnut Street

Chicago 11, Illinois

9th TOUR, 1959 — TO CHARLESTON and SAVANNAH

Battles . . .

BY COL. ALLEN P. JULIAN

SHOT AT FORT SUMTER OPENS WAR

At 4:30 A.M. on April 12, 1861, a shot was fired at Fort Sumter, in Charleston Harbor, the last outpost of the Federal Union in the seceded state of South Carolina.

That shot, fired from a 10 inch mortar by Capt. George S. James from Fort Johnson, on James Island, was the signal for a general bombardment which, after nearly 40 hours of firing by 30 guns and 17 mortars, reduced Fort Sumter to flaming indefensibility, commenced four years of costly war, and opened wounds between two sections of our country which are not all healed.

Our 9th Battlefield Tour opens April 29 in historic Charleston. It closes May 3 at General Sherman's headquarters in Savannah where, on Dec. 22, 1864, he presented Savannah to President Lincoln as a Christmas gift.

On Harbor Boat

On April 30, after a night at Charleston's Hotel Francis Marion, we visit Fort Sumter by harbor boat. This well preserved fort figured in far more than just the dramatic opening of the War. Restored, strengthened, with a strong, well supplied garrison and more and heavier guns, it withstood determined Union Army and Navy attempts to retake it. It was never abandoned by its defenders until the progress of Gen. Sherman's Campaign of the Carolinas, in 1865, forced the evacuation of Charleston and its defenses.

Facing Fort Sumter on the north side of the bay, and covering the main ship channel into Charleston harbor, Fort Moultrie was the other major work of Charleston's harbor defenses. From Moultrie, on the night of Dec. 26, 1860, Maj. Robert Anderson, First artillery, transferred his small force to Sumter where he felt that his power of resistance would be increased.

To Fort Moultrie

After lunch on April 30, our buses will take us over the Cooper river to Sullivan's island and Fort Moultrie to visit that post which is famous for its part in the attack on Sumter, and its defense by the Confederates, and also for its gallant repulse of a strong British fleet during the Revolution.

Between Charleston and Savannah lies a difficult pattern of rivers and swamps. The passage with troops and trains during a season of unusually heavy winter rains

COST OF TOUR

\$190.00 — INCLUDES: Plane, bus and boat fares; hotel (two to a room with bath); all meals (except where stated); admission charges where required; tour literature; taxes and tips.*

\$125.00 — From Atlanta: same as above except plane from Chicago to Atlanta.

\$83.00 — From Charleston, S. C.: same as above except plane transportation.

*Indicate person with whom you wish to share room when making reservations.

All prices include \$10 registration fee for promotional and overhead expenses.

For single room, add \$12 to above prices.

Individual meals: Evenings, \$5; Noon, \$3.

Ladies are invited on tour.

For portions of the tour or individual meetings, write or phone registrar, Margaret April, 18 East Chestnut Street, Chicago 11, Illinois; Whitehall 4-3085.

made the Campaign of the Carolinas one of the most difficult logistically in military history.

Leaving Charleston by bus on May 1, we travel through a portion of this terrain en route to Beaufort and Port Royal sound.

First settled in 1562, the Port Royal and Parris island areas by 1861 had become the seat of a wealthy aristocracy. More important to the Union cause, Port Royal sound offered the finest fleet anchorage on the South Atlantic coast. Admiral Du Pont described Port Royal bay as "the finest harbor south of Chesapeake bay, which it resembles in capacity and extent."

Seizes Port Royal

On Oct. 29, 1861, an expedition commanded by Brig Gen. Thomas W. Sherman, sailed from Hampton Roads to seize Port Royal for use as a coaling station for the South Atlantic Blockading Squadron and as a base of military operations against Savannah and Charleston. Convoys by a naval squadron under Flag Officer Samuel F. Du Pont, the expedition arrived off Port Royal on Nov. 4, after a stormy passage in which several vessels were lost and the cargoes of others were jettisoned.

A reconnaissance revealed that the entrance to Port Royal bay was guarded by Fort Walker, on Hilton Head, Fort Beauregard, on Phillip's island, and three gunboats. On Nov. 7, leaving the troop transports at anchor well out of range, Du Pont led his fleet of 15 war steamers and gunboats to the attack. Small and lightly armed, the Confederate gun-

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Events . . .

BY GILBERT TWISS

TRAVEL BY PLANE, BUS AND BOAT

Our 9th Battlefield Tour, April 29 to May 3, to Charleston and Savannah, is by plane, bus and boat. The main party leaves Chicago by Delta air liner and will be joined in Atlanta and Charleston by other campaigners.

The morning departure from Chicago will allow arrival in Charleston in time for a Gray Line bus tour of that famed city of South Carolina. Our tradition of Command Post refreshments will be renewed at the Hotel Francis Marion, our headquarters in Charleston. For our first dinner meeting, Author Roy Meredith ("Mr. Lincoln's Camera Man: Mathew Brady") will speak on Fort Sumter.

Has Small Museum

The second day begins with a boat tour of Charleston harbor to Fort Sumter. There is a small museum there. The tour returns to the hotel for lunch.

In the afternoon campaigners will board buses to tour the forts and batteries which opposed Sumter until it fell. Speaker that evening will be Col. Allen P. (Ned) Julian, our guide and lecturer on much of the tour. Ned, director of the Atlanta Historical Society, has done yeoman work in setting up the Charleston and Savannah schedule for us. One needs only to recall Ned's work in the 1956 Chattanooga-Atlanta tour to stir enthusiasm for this one.

We will spend May Day in the Low Country of South Carolina. There should be plenty of camellias, azaleas, and marshland flora and fauna on view. Beaufort and Hilton Head Island are the focal points of this bus jaunt.

After arriving and registering at Hotel De Soto, our Savannah headquarters, and a fast freshening up, the buses go on to the massive Fort Pulaski.

A Barbecue Dinner

Supt. Ralston B. Latimore of Fort Pulaski National Monument will be our host and speaker. The command post will be set up and there will be a barbecue dinner under the stars. We return to Hotel De Soto for the night.

On Saturday, May 2, we cruise the waters of Ossabaw Sound noting the defenses and historic points and have a box lunch aboard. In the afternoon we land at the earthworks of Fort McAllister on the Great Ogeechee River. After the visit

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Founded Dec. 3, 1940

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1959 BATTLEFIELD TOUR

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An occasional publication issued for the benefit of all our membership and all those who treasure the traditions and spirit of the G.A.R. and S.C.V.

CHARLESTON

In 1670 the English settled on Albemarle point. It was Charles Town in honor of King Charles II, of England, but became Charleston when incorporated in 1783. Population of the area now is about 225,000.

Charleston is on a peninsula, the Cooper river on the east and the Ashley river on the west and southwest, the two converging and forming Charleston harbor.

Much of Charleston's history is preserved in its buildings—Dock Street Theater (first one in 1736)—Pringle House (1765), headquarters for British troops, 1781-82; headquarters for Union troops, 1865—Heyward-Washington House (1770), home of Thomas Heyward, signer of the Declaration of Independence; George Washington a guest in 1791—City Hall (1801) erected for a branch of the First Bank of the United States; council chamber houses Trumbull's famous portrait of Washington, as well as portraits of Beauregard, Wade Hampton, and others—"Old Slave Market"—Old Exchange building, where provincial congress met in March, 1776—Old Powder magazine (1711-13), used during Revolution—City Market (1841), houses Confederate museum.

Col. William Rhett's mansion, begun about 1712—Charleston museum, founded 1773, oldest city museum in America—Joseph Manigault mansion (begun in 1802)—Cabbage Row (scene of "Porgy and Bess").

On Broad street there is a marker at the site of St. Andrew's Hall, burned in 1861, where the Ordinance of Secession was passed, December, 20, 1860.

Battles . . .

(Continued from page 1)

boats retired quickly, but the forts opened fire as soon as the range was closed.

Although each fought steadily until their guns were dismantled by Du Pont's superior fire power, by 11 A.M. Fort Beauregard was silenced. By 2 P.M. Fort Walker was ordered abandoned and its garrison removed to the mainland.

Port Royal, Beaufort, and Parris island were occupied quickly. For the remainder of the war, Port Royal sound served as a Union base of operations and supply. On March 15, 1862, a Department of the South was created with headquarters at Hilton Head, Maj. Gen. David Hunter, commanding.

Leaving Port Royal sound, our party proceeds to Savannah and the De Soto hotel. After freshening up, we leave for Fort Pulaski, at the mouth of the Savannah river.

Mighty Monument

Fort Pulaski stands as a mighty monument to the era of the masonry fortress. Upon Georgia's secession, the fort, seized earlier by the governor of Georgia, was transferred to the government of the Confederacy. It was considered impregnable, a belief soon shattered by the yet untested fire of heavy rifled guns.

Early April 10, 1862, after days of heartbreaking labor bringing ponderous guns ashore through heavy surf and moving them over a mile of deep sand and marsh, 11 heavy Union batteries were ready to open fire. A demand for surrender was rebuffed by Col. Charles H. Olmstead, Fort Pulaski commander. A 30 hour bombardment began. About 2 P.M., April 11, the fort gave up and the day of brick fortifications was done. Heavy rifled cannon had opened a new era.

On May 2, our party boards the river boat Visitor, drops down the Savannah river past Fort Jackson, and enters the Wilmington river. Passing the sites of Fort Bartow on Causton's bluff, and the Bonaventure, Thunderbolt and Turner's Rocks batteries, we pass through skidaway Narrows into Ossabaw sound. Passing near the site of the seizure of the Union Ship Water Witch by Confederate boat parties on the night of June 2, 1864, we enter the Great Ogeechee river and follow the course of the Union naval vessels on their several attempts to reduce Fort McAllister, several miles upriver.

Built of Packed Earth

Unlike Fort Pulaski, Fort McAllister was built of sand and packed earth. The parapets absorbed heavy shells with little damage. After seven attempts to reduce it, including eight hours of shelling by 11 inch and 15 inch guns on March 3, 1863, the Union naval vessels were withdrawn. Little was accomplished other than the destruction of the CSS Nashville (Rattlesnake) by the USS Montauk while she lay fast

aground in Seven Mile Reach across a narrow point from the fort.

Fort McAllister guarded the Great Ogeechee river—the back door to Savannah—without further challenge until Dec. 13, 1864, after General Sherman had completed his March to the Sea and was closing in on Savannah. His immediate need was to resupply his army and to bring up heavy guns for a siege.

The Great Ogeechee river was the only route by which Union supply vessels could bring their cargoes within wagon-haul of his lines. To open it, he detached Hazen's division, 15th corps (his old division at Shiloh), to assault Fort McAllister from the rear. Unprepared to withstand an infantry assault in force, the fort's garrison of 230 officers and men was overpowered after a hand-to-hand struggle. The river was open.

Built Wharves, Warehouses

Details from the 17th corps built wharves and warehouses at King's Bridge, on the Ogeechee Plank road and supplies began rolling to the troops as fast as the vessels could come upstream and be discharged.

Leaving the Visitor at Fort McAllister, our party proceeds by bus up Bryan Neck on the route used by Hazen in his approach. We cross Great Ogeechee river at King's Bridge and return to Savannah on the Plank road, the axis of operations of Sherman's right wing (15th and 17th corps, Maj. Gen. O. O. Howard.)

On Sunday, May 3, those who desire to attend church will find many of all faiths within a few blocks of the hotel. A bus tour will be available for those who wish to see Civil War and Revolutionary points of interest. After lunch at the hotel, our party will wind up its tour with a visit to points in the zone of operations of Sherman's left wing 914th and 20th corps, Maj. Gen. H. W. Slocum and in the Confederate defenses of Savannah. This tour will end at the airport where we of the Georgia delegation must say goodbye until the next Battlefield Tour on which I hope some of us can join you again.

Events . . .

(Continued from page 1)

there, buses will pick us up for the return to Savannah, noting historic sites on the way. Dinner is at the Hotel De Soto and speaker is Alexander A. Lawrence ("Storm Over Savannah").

Sunday will offer the opportunity to attend one of the historic churches. Much of the day can be devoted to visiting Savannah's historic places.

The return flight to Chicago will be pleasantly interrupted for a social hour at Dobbs House at Atlanta Airport.

Folders in the tour packet will be informative of places to see in Charleston and Savannah.

A number of members of the Atlanta Civil War Round Table will join us for much of the tour. W. G. Ryckman, Atlanta program chairman, has been making arrangements for their group.

FORT SUMTER

Archaeologists are uncovering parts of Fort Sumter unseen in this century, a National Geographic news bulletin reported.

The National Park Service plans to restore the parade ground and 12 gun rooms of the pentagonal fortification which stood guard over the main ship channel to Charleston harbor. The work requires removal of 18,000 tons of protective fill, first placed inside the fort in 1894, after a hurricane.

Planned in 1827, and named for Thomas Sumter, South Carolina's "Gamecock of the Revolution," the fort was still unfinished when Maj. Robert Anderson occupied it on Dec. 26-27, 1860.

Anderson, with 73 men and a few civilian workmen, had to defend a fort intended for a garrison of 650 men and an armament of 135 guns. Only the bottom and topmost of the fort's three tiers of gun rooms were useable. Several months later, 60 guns had been mounted, the largest being 15,000 pound Columbiads hurling 128 pound shot.

A German born carpenter named Wittyman, ordered to build a spiked fence, or "cheval-de-frise," as an added defense, produced such an odd contraption that onlooking Confederates thought it was a secret weapon. The Union defenders called it "Wittyman's Masterpiece."

Fort Sumter, containing about 2.4 acres, was erected on a shoal about 3½ miles from Charleston Battery. Four sides, 170 to 190 feet long, were designed for three tiers of guns; the gorge, designed for officers' quarters, supported guns only on the third tier. Enlisted men's barracks paralleled the parade side of the flank gun rooms. A sally port pierced the gorge and opened onto a quay and a wharf. The 5 foot thick walls rose 48.4 feet above low water.

BEAUFORT

Beaufort (pronounced BEWFORT) is one of a group of 64 islands ranging in size from 40 square miles to a few rods-length of sand and marshweed. Branches of the Inland Waterway wind around them.

The approach to Beaufort threads through marshlands, across shining rivers, with far vistas of wooded islets, unpeopled and unapproachable across the high-waving reeds. Entry to the town is between a long double row of royal palmettos.

In the town are belvedere mansions, the old arsenal, now a museum, and older slave quarters, "tabby" buildings built of a unique amalgam of oyster-shell mortar. The noble architecture of St. Helena's church (1724) is set in the bowered luxuriance of its churchyard, its spreading live oaks, and a profusion of flowers.

Old Sheldon parish church (1746) has three foot thick brick walls, surrounded by centuries old oaks and evergreens, shrouded in gently swaying gray and mournful Spanish moss. In the churchyard are marble sarcophagi.

Early settlers raised indigo, rice,

TOUR SCHEDULE

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 29, 1959

(All times Local time)

9:00 a.m. (Daylight Saving Time) — Check in with registrar at booth, Delta Airlines, Midway Airport, Chicago, for tickets and tour packet. Group picture will be taken.

9:40 a.m. — Depart on Delta DC-7B day coach (Flight 519).

11:52 a.m. — Arrive at Atlanta. Change planes immediately to Delta 44 passenger Super Convair and depart (Lunch Aloft).

2:48 p.m. — Arrive Charleston, S. C.

Register — Hotel Francis Marion.

3:30 p.m. — Bus tour of city.

6:00 p.m. — Command Post at Francis Marion.

7:00 p.m. — Dinner at Francis Marion.

Speaker — Roy Meredith, author, on Fort Sumter.

Taps — At Command Post.

THURSDAY, APRIL 30

8:00 a.m. — (or earlier) — Breakfast (pay for your own).

9:30 a.m. — Bus to dock to take boat for Fort Sumter.

Noon — Lunch at Hotel Francis Marion.

2:00 p.m. — Bus to Sullivan's island, Fort Moultrie, and other sites.

6:00 p.m. — Command Post at Hotel Francis Marion.

7:00 p.m. — Dinner at hotel.

Speaker — Col. Allen P. (Ned) Julian, Director Atlanta Historical Society.

Taps — At Command Post.

FRIDAY, MAY 1

8:00 a.m. — (or earlier) — Breakfast (pay for your own).

9:00 a.m. — Buses through South Carolina's Low Country by way of old Beaufort and Hilton Head island.

Noon — Lunch at Beaufort.

1:30 p.m. — Buses to Hilton Head.

5:00 p.m. — Arrival at Hotel De Soto, Savannah, Ga.

6:00 p.m. — Buses to Command Post at Fort Pulaski.

7:00 p.m. — Barbecue at Fort Pulaski, Under the Stars.

Speaker — Ralston B. Lattimore, Superintendent, Fort Pulaski National Monument.

Taps — At Command Post.

SATURDAY, MAY 2

7:30 a.m. — Breakfast (pay for your own.)

8:30 a.m. — Buses to landing for cruise through Confederate defenses, Ossabaw sound to Great Ogeechee river.

Noon — Box lunch on board, refreshments available.

2:00 p.m. — Land at Fort McAllister.

4:00 p.m. — Depart Fort McAllister for Savannah (Historic Points en route).

6:30 p.m. — Command Post at De Soto hotel.

7:30 p.m. — Dinner at hotel.

Speaker — Alexander A. Lawrence, author.

Taps — At Command Post.

SUNDAY, MAY 3

Breakfast — Where and when you will.

Morning — For church and visits to historic places of Savannah.

Noon — Lunch at De Soto hotel.

Afternoon — Continuation of visits to historic places.

3:00 p.m. — Board buses for airport.

4:15 p.m. — Leave Savannah on Delta 44 passenger Super Convair (Flight 442).

5:26 p.m. — Arrive Atlanta.

Social hour at Dobbs House (Atlanta Airport)

6:55 p.m. — Depart Atlanta on Delta DC-7B coach Flight 518 (dinner aloft, pay for your own).

9:15 p.m. — Arrive Chicago, Midway airport.

(Any changes in schedule will be announced at lunch or dinner meetings.)

and finally cotton—all abandoned now. From the coast of Africa were brought the Gullah slaves to St. Helena island. Their descendants are perhaps the purest blooded strain of American Negroes. The area is the home of the "praise spiritual." The area has tropical flora and fauna—camellias, chinaberry trees, wild jasmine, barrier cacti—terrapin,

snowy egrets, mockingbirds, marsh hens, godwits, willets, skimmers, water turkey, pileated woodpeckers, herons, black buzzards, quail, dove, ten varieties of duck, and snipe.

Parris island, a base of the United States marines, is 4 miles south of Beaufort. Other towns near Beaufort are Port Royal, Bluffton and Yemassee.

SUGGESTED READING

BY E. B. LONG

There is a quantity of literature available on Charleston, its past, present and Civil War days. This is not quite so true of Savannah and other Civil War coastal operations. The following list is by no means a complete bibliography, but merely intended as an aid to pre-trip reading.

For the general picture of these two fascinating southern cities and the areas in which they are located, the *Georgia and South Carolina State Guides of the American Guide Series* are highly recommended. More specifically for the Civil War period, of course, the *Official Records*, both *Army* and *Navy* in this case, and *Battles and Leaders* may well be consulted.

Charleston—Fort Sumter

In addition to the National Park Service booklet on *Fort Sumter* and other brief guide books, here are a few of the leading sources on the area where the war began:

Chestnut, Mary Boykin, *A Diary From Dixie*; often used, but still a brilliant eyewitness.

Crawford, Samuel W., *The Genesis of the Civil War; The Story of Sumter, 1860-1861*; written by a surgeon who was an officer in the federal garrison.

Doubleday, Abner, *Reminiscences of Fort Sumter and Moultrie in 1860-61*. Another eyewitness.

Heyward, DuBose and Sass, Herbert R., *Fort Sumter, 1861-65*.

Jones, Samuel, *The Siege of Charleston*; an earlier volume which covers not only the opening blows of the war, but the later actions of Charleston, as well as Port Royal and other coastal operations.

Johnson, John, *The Defense of Charleston Harbor, 1863-65*; an older book concerned mainly with the sometimes neglected later actions in the harbor.

Molloy, Robert, *Charleston: A Gracious Heritage*; a good source on the city itself.

Ravenal, Mrs. Harriott H., *Charleston; The Place and the People*.

Rhett, Robert Goodwyn, *An Epic of Carolina*; another general book on the area.

Swanberg, W. A., *First Blood; The Story of Fort Sumter*.

Williams, T. Harry, P.G.T. Beauregard, *Napoleon in Gray*.

In addition there are numerous other recent volumes on the political, and military crisis of 1861 by Earl Schenck Miers, Otto Eischenschiml, Roy Meredith and others.

Covering the naval operations which were so vital on the Atlantic coast there are T. R. Soley, *The Blockade and The Cruisers*, and Daniel Ammen, *The Atlantic Coast*.

Savannah

Coulter, E. Merton, *Georgia; A Short History*.

Cox, Jacob D., *The March to the Sea*.

Hart, B. H. Liddell, *Sherman, Soldier, Realist, American*; a fine military analysis.

Hitchcock, Henry, *Marching with Sherman*.

SAVANNAH

Georgia, last of the 13 original colonies, dates from Feb. 12, 1733, when Gen. James Edward Oglethorpe landed with 120 followers from England at an Indian Village called Yamacrow, 18 miles upriver from the Atlantic. Here today is Savannah, a city of 132,000 population.

This is the first planned city in America. Oglethorpe had under his arm a design prepared in England. It was checkerboarded with squares surrounded with wooden fences—refuges for the settlers in case of attack. The central thoroughfare is Bull street.

Oglethorpe made a friend of the Indian Chief, Tomo-chi-chi—now memorialized by a granite boulder over his grave in Wright square. And Oglethorpe sent the Spaniards packing at the Battle of Bloody Marsh on St. Simon's Island in 1742.

The squares, adorned with statues, are surrounded by early American architecture. Gen. W. T. Sherman, completing his March to the Sea, settled down in relative quiet for five weeks in 1864-65 in the Green-Meldrim house on Madison square, now the parish house of St. John's Episcopal church.

During the Revolution the British came in force and stayed from 1778 to 1782. Among the heroes who tried to dislodge them—and gave his life in the attempt—was Count Casimir Pulaski, Gen. Lafayette's Polish friend. Lafayette was a guest of the city in 1825.

John Wesley, founder of the Methodist church, was a clergyman at Christ's Episcopal church and wrote the first hymnal used in Georgia. The hymn, "From Greenland's Icy Mountains" was first sung to the music of Lowell Mason, organist of the Independent Presbyterian Church.

Savannah Chamber of Commerce is in a building where for many years the world price of naval stores was set. The U. S. Customs house, erected in 1850, is on the site of a little house in which Oglethorpe lived.

Juliette Gordon Low founded the Girl Scouts in Savannah in 1912 and the coach house of her later home is now headquarters.

At City Hall tablets commemorate the sailing in 1819 of the S.S. Savannah, first steamship to cross the Atlantic, and the launching in 1843 of the S.S. John Randolph, first ironclad in American waters.

Tybee light, a modern light standing 144 feet high, guides vessels to the mouth of the Savannah river. It replaced an earlier light of 1791.

Jones, Charles C., *History of Savannah, Ga.*

Jones, Charles C., *The Siege of Savannah in December, 1864*.

Lewis, Lloyd, *Sherman, Fighting Prophet*; outstanding biography of Sherman.

Sherman, W. T., *Memoirs, Vol. II*.
Wilson, Adelaide, *History and Pictures of Savannah*.

CHECK-IN-TIME

The tour will leave from Chicago's Midway Airport at 9:40 a.m., Wednesday, April 29. The flight is Delta 519, DC-7B day coach. Check-in begins at 9:00 a.m. (Daylight saving time), with Registrar Margaret April, who will have a booth near the Delta desk. On the tour, be prompt at all stated departure times. This is necessary, because in many cases we will be traveling on scheduled carriers. Any changes in schedule will be announced at lunch and dinner meetings.

FORT McALLISTER

Fort McAllister constituted the right of the exterior line of earthworks which were designed and held for the sea defense of Savannah.

Begun early in 1861, the fort was constructed by slave labor, leased from plantation owners. First designated as "the battery at Genesis Point," it was later named for the nearby McAllister plantation.

By September, 1861, Fort McAllister mounted 4 heavy guns, which commanded the channel, and was garrisoned by 2 officers and 74 men. In March, 1862, Gen. Robert E. Lee, commander for the southeast, stated that "an obstruction on the mouth of the Ogeechee has been proposed, and the planters on the river have offered to furnish the necessary labor." A row of heavy piles was driven from bank to bank, immediately below the fort. There was a narrow passage commanded by the fort's guns. The piles obstructed the river until they were removed by Gen. Sherman's forces in December, 1864.

FORT PULASKI

About 25 million bricks were placed in the massive walls of Fort Pulaski in a building period of nearly 20 years. It is a memorial to the valor of Count Casimir Pulaski, Polish friend of America in the Revolution, who fell at the siege of Savannah in 1779.

The war of 1812 showed the weakness of American coastal defenses. In 1816, congress created a military board of engineers for seacoast fortifications. Brig. Gen. Simon Bernard, a military engineer for Napoleon, was associated with the new fortifications board from 1816 to 1831. He made preliminary plans in 1827 for the fort on Cockspur, a small marsh island. Work was begun in 1829 under Maj. Samuel Babcock. Robert E. Lee's first appointment after his graduation from West Point, in 1829, was to Cockspur. He remained until 1831.

Fort Pulaski's armament was to include about 140 cannon, but at the beginning of the Civil War only 20 cannon had been mounted. In November, 1861, Gen. Robert E. Lee, then commanding southeastern coast defenses, inspected Fort Pulaski and Fort McAllister. Pulaski's casemates served as a military and political prison in 1864-65.