

Holding
 CHARLESTON
 by the Bridle



Castle Pinckney and the Civil War

W. Clifford Roberts, Jr.
and Matthew A. M. Locke



Savas Beatie
California

© 2024 W. Clifford Roberts, Jr. and Matthew A. M. Locke

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted, in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording, or otherwise, without the prior written permission of the publisher.

First edition, first printing

ISBN-13: 978-1-61121-714-8 (hardcover)

ISBN-13: 978-1-954547-65-0 (ebook)

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Names: Roberts, William Clifford, Jr., 1958- author. | Locke, Matthew A. M., 1974- author.

Title: Holding Charleston by the Bridle: Castle Pinckney and the Civil War / W. Clifford Roberts, Jr. & Matthew A. M. Locke.

Other titles: Castle Pinckney and the Civil War

Description: El Dorado Hills : Savas Beatie LLC [2024] | Includes bibliographical references and index. | Summary: "This is the first book on the subject, from the fort's innovative design as part of America's "Second System" of coastal fortifications to the modern challenges of preserving its weathered brick walls against rising sea levels. It uses primary research and archaeological evidence to tell the full story of the Castle for the first time. Given its importance to America's history, it is a history long overdue"-- Provided by publisher.

Identifiers: LCCN 2024012292 | ISBN 9781611217148 (hardcover) | ISBN 9781954547650 (ebook)

Subjects: LCSH: Castle Pinckney (Charleston, S.C.) | Fortification--South Carolina--Charleston--Design and construction--History--19th century. | Charleston (S.C.)--Buildings, structures, etc. | Castle Pinckney National Monument (Charleston, S.C.) | Charleston (S.C.)--History, Military.

Classification: LCC F279.C48 C373 2024 | DDC 975.7/915--dc23/eng/20240321

LC record available at <https://lcn.loc.gov/2024012292>



Savas Beatie

989 Governor Drive, Suite 102

El Dorado Hills, CA 95762

916-941-6896 / sales@savasbeatie.com / www.savasbeatie.com

All of our titles are available at special discount rates for bulk purchases in the United States. Contact us for information.

Jacqueline Locke and Abigail Locke—wife and daughter
for their patience and support.

Vicki Roberts and Trey and Katy Roberts—wife and children
for their benevolence.

Friends and family for their support and encouragement.

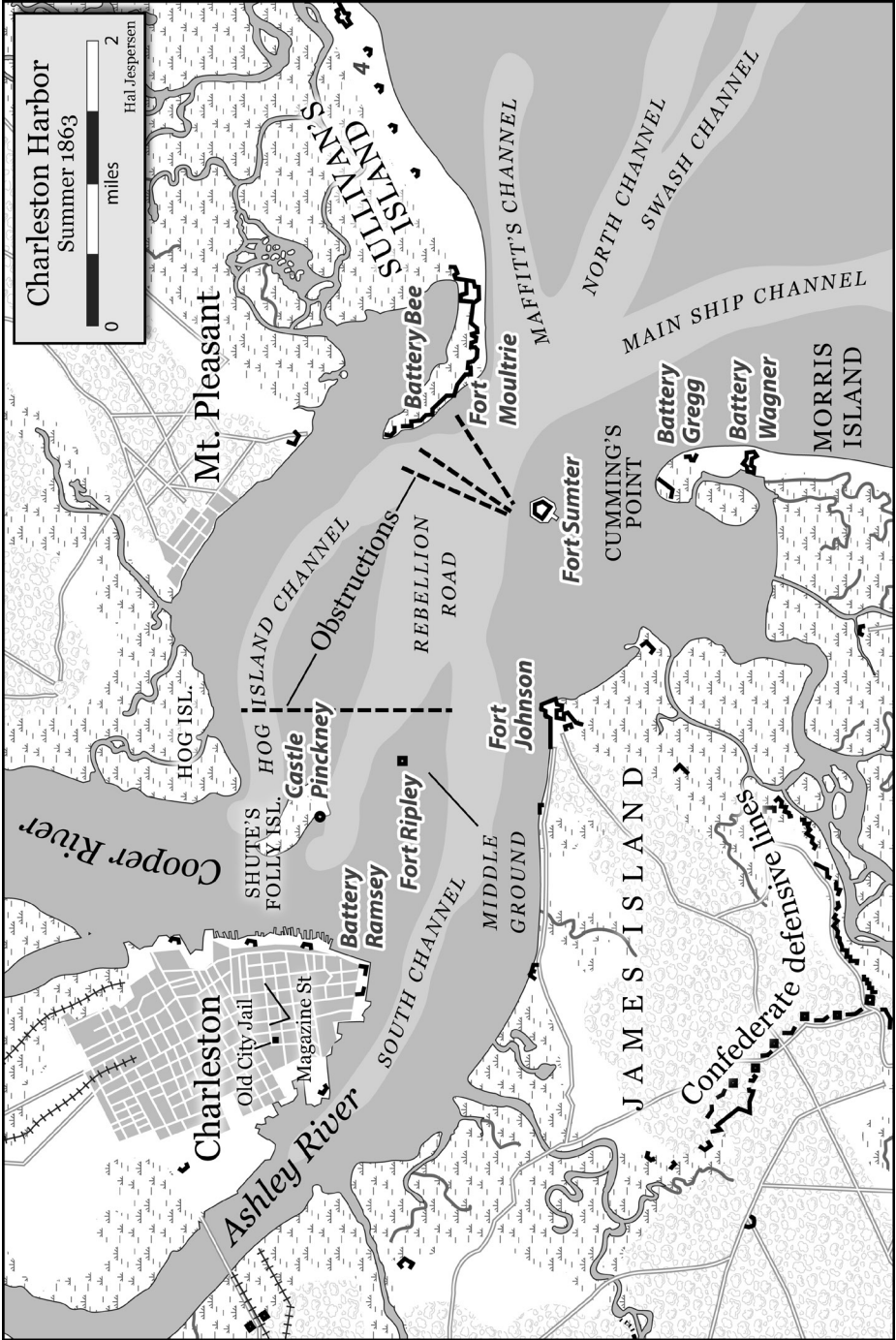


TABLE OF CONTENTS

Foreword	ix
Acknowledgments	xi
A Glossary of Significant Fortification Terms	xiii
Castle Pinckney Biographies	xvii
Chapter 1: Before There Was a Castle on Shute's Folly	i
Chapter 2: Building a Castle (1807–1828)	13
Chapter 3: Lynchpin of the Nullification Crisis (1829-1834)	25
Chapter 4: A Convenient Repository (1835-1859)	37
Chapter 5: Scaling Ladders (1860)	53
Chapter 6: Declaring Southern Independence (1861)	69
Chapter 7: A Prison by the Sea (1861-1862)	89
Chapter 8: A Small Artillery Garrison (1862)	113
Chapter 9: Circles of Fire (1863)	125
Chapter 10: The Middle Ground (1863-1864)	137
Chapter 11: Lowering the Stainless Banner (1864-1865)	149
Chapter 12: American Bastille (1865-1875)	161
Chapter 13: Lighthouse Depot (1876-1916)	175
Chapter 14: Holding the Hot Potato (1916 -2011)	191
Epilogue	201
Appendix 1: Patriotic Toasts Given at the Naming Ceremony	207
Appendix 2: 1814 Resolution Written from Castle Pinckney	207
Appendix 3: Clothing Received at Castle Pinckney	208
Appendix 4: An 1834 "Memorial" Petition	209
Appendix 5: Field & Staff Officers of the 1st Rifles, South Carolina Militia	210
Appendix 6: 1858 Returns of Officers and Privates in the Meagher Guard	210

TABLE OF CONTENTS

(continued)

Appendix 7: Roster of the Washington Light Infantry	211
Appendix 8: A Newspaper Description of Castle Pinckney	215
Appendix 9: Confederate Signal System	215
Appendix 10: Record of the Baltimore Volunteers	216
Appendix 11: 1861 Castle Pinckney Armaments Inventory	219
Appendix 12: List of Union Prisoners of War	220
Appendix 13: Muster Roll of the Charleston Zouave Cadets	222
Appendix 14: Roster of 1st Regiment South Carolina Artillery Officers	223
Appendix 15: 1st South Carolina Artillery Companies	225
Appendix 16: List of Prisoners from the 54th Massachusetts	231
Appendix 17: Record of Prisoners Confined at Military Prison	232
Appendix 18: 1895 Memoir of Jane E. Chichester	234
Bibliography	239
Index	249
About the Authors	260

Photos have been placed throughout the text for the convenience of the reader.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ARLHB	Annual Report of the Light-House Bureau
ASP	American State Papers, 1789-1819
CSS	Confederate States Ship
CWSR	Civil War Service Records
DFJP	David Flavel Jamison Papers
OAG	Letters Received by the Office of the Adjutant General, 1822-1860
OR	Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies
RG	Record Group
RMP	Returns from Military Posts, 1806-1916
SCHM	<i>South Carolina Historical Magazine</i>
SCHS	South Carolina Historical Society
TBGD	Thomas Butler Gunn Diaries
USLHT	United States Lighthouse Tender
USCI	United States Colored Infantry
USS	United States Ship

Foreword

Charleston Harbor is imbued with history. Its natural features of depth, location and climate have made it instrumental to the founding of Charleston and to the successful economies that have supported the rise of the city and the state. Defending the harbor from foreign invaders has been and continues to be a major consideration. We tend to forget that protecting coastal seaports in the 19th century was instrumental to the success of the United States. Castle Pinckney was a major component of this military strategy to secure this magnificent Southern harbor and provide safety for the inhabitants of Charleston.

It is a truism that we tend to forget those things that are not immediately a factor in our lives. A corollary to that idea is that, for those things that are not immediately apparent, it is a requirement that repetition of presentation or the tie-in to a seminal event will raise the visibility of those things to at least a level of nodding acquaintance. Unfortunately, much that is repeated, either through curriculums or commemoration of historic events, is overly simplified. These accounts lack context, leave off important actors, and do not provide a meaningful framework for integrating the event, place, concept, or people into a richer understanding of one's community or society.

Castle Pinckney is one such place. It is attached to a series of events and personages that has until now fallen through the cracks. Most people are aware of Fort Sumter, but far fewer are aware of Castle Pinckney. This is unfortunate. These two harbor fortifications share a timeline, a series of political landscapes, and many of the same social and economic issues. They weren't produced in isolation but as a tactical and strategic solution to an existential problem.

The chapters of this volume are presented thematically and chronologically. The first chapters cover the founding of Castle Pinckney as the second fortification

on the island of Shute's Folly. The next chapters leading to the outbreak of the Civil War firmly cement Castle Pinckney into the economic difficulties and political landscape that defined this antebellum period. Special note should be taken of the use of the Castle as a prisoner of war camp in 1861. It was the creation of the Lieber Code during the American Civil War that eventually led to the Geneva Conventions. Fortunately, Castle Pinckney was a humane prisoner of war camp. This is noteworthy as camps of this form were in short supply on both sides of that terrible conflict. The final chapters deal with Castle Pinckney's new life as a depot for the Lighthouse Service, and, after 1916, its waning importance and its eventual slipping away from the thoughts of the general public.

The preservation of forts such as Castle Pinckney and their connecting threads to both the past and present are essential. They are the physical manifestation of the past decisions, people, and events that underpin our present.

Jonathan Leader, PhD

South Carolina State Archaeologist

South Carolina Institute for Archeology and Anthropology

Acknowledgments

We are indebted to several great people and institutions that have shared their time, expertise, and collections with us. We wish to acknowledge Edward Blessing, South Caroliniana Library, The University of South Carolina, Giles Dawkes, UCL Institute of Archeology, Byron Faildey, Washington and Lee University, John Fisher & Dr. John Leader, South Carolina Institute for Archeology and Anthropology, Lisa Hayes, Charleston Library Society, James M. Holland, Fort Sumter SCV Camp 1269, Joe Long, Confederate Relic Room, Robert D. Mikell, Castle Pinckney Historical Preservation Society, Melissa Murphy, Harvard Business School, Terese M. Murphy and Sara Quashnie, Clements Library, University of Michigan, Jill Hunter Powell, Confederate Museum at Market Hall, MG Henry I. Siegling, Sr., The Washington Light Infantry, Rebecca Schultz, City of Charleston Historical Records, and Karen Stokes and Molly Silliman, South Carolina Historical Society.

Many veteran scholars and professionals also gave us their valuable insights and access to their private collections and research. They include Richard W. Hatcher, III, William “Bill” E. Lockridge, Thomas Pinckney Lowndes, Jr., Jack W. Melton, Jr., & Peter Milne.

Those who helped us refine our manuscript were Thomas P. Lowndes Jr., Danielle C. Elum Smith, Grace V. Foster, Richard Horres, Edward “Ebbie” Jones III, & Alice (Torie) Jones. Katy Roberts was instrumental in enhancing the photographs used in this book.

We would be remiss if we both failed to thank the staff at Savas Beatie for taking this book from rough manuscript to finished product: Richard Holloway for his editing expertise; Veronica Kane for her keen eye in designing the layout and overall incredible support; Hal Jespersen for his cartography services. We both also deeply

appreciate the assistance and support of Donna Endacott, Sarah Keeney, and Sarah Closson at Savas Beatie who have helped turn our aspirations into reality. A final word of that thanks must of course be for Ted Savas's commitment to publishing historical works and for recognizing the importance of Castle Pinckney and Shute's Folly Island to the history of not only Charleston but to South Carolina and the nation. Thank you.

Finally, we wish to praise the many Charlestonians who continue to volunteer their time, money, and labor to the ongoing preservation of Castle Pinckney. They include Steven A. Earnhardt, Tharin R. Walker, Michael S. Sarvis, William L. Snow Sr., Yale M. Huett, Samuel W. Howell IV, Esq, Phillip A. Middleton, Esq, Ronald C. Plunkett, Robert M. Baldwin, Richard P. Moore, John J. Mahoney, Robert D. Oswald, Thomas R. Campbell & Thomas C. Salter, and the board members, past and present, of The Castle Pinckney Historic Preservation Society. The Carolina Yacht Club has helped this endeavor by allowing the use of their facilities and their gracious support.

A Glossary of Significant Fortification Terms

Adapted primarily from Frederick Augustus Griffith's 1859 *Artillerist's Manual* and John R. Weaver's *A Legacy in Brick and Stone*.

24-pounder: A heavy smoothbore gun, firing a solid shot weighing just over 24 pounds.

42-pounder: Capable of firing a solid shot weighing 42.5 pounds as well as shells, this smoothbore cannon was among the largest guns employed during the first half of the 19th century.

Banquette: A wooden platform or step a soldier would use to fire over the parapet. The platforms could also be utilized by artillerymen to help with loading and firing of their elevated cannons.

Barbette: The platforms behind the parapet where guns are mounted. Guns mounted on these platforms are mounted en barbette.

Barbette Carriage: A carriage, on which a gun is mounted to fire over a parapet.

Barracks: A permanent structure for the accommodation of soldiers, as distinguished from tents or huts.

Bastion: The Corner of a fort that projects outward, usually in the shape of an arrow, thereby providing defenders with the ability to enfilade besiegers attempting to attack an adjoining wall. The rear bastions of Castle Pinckney are curved, however, and have more in common with the bastion towers of a medieval castle.

Battery: A broad term used to describe any emplacement of guns or mortars under the direction of a single officer.

Bombproof: A portion of a fortification designed to provide overhead protection to the garrison from enemy artillery and mortar fire. Bombproofs were built with heavy timbers and their roofs covered with dirt.

Carriage/Gun Carriage: A supportive base used to carry a cannon barrel so that it may be moved around the battlefield. The carriages for heavy seacoast artillery-pieces had triangular bases made of thick wooden timbers and were not designed to be mobile. They had a single forward-axis for wheels so that the weapon could slide up and down its inclined iron-rails while being loaded, aimed, and fired. The combination of the carriage and the chassis that it sat upon was referred to as a barbette-carriage.

Cascabel: A protrusion of metal extending from the breech of any muzzle-loading cannon. Cascabels were a permanent design-feature that allowed a rope to be wrapped around it to help hoist the barrel onto its carriage.

Casemate: A bombproof vaulted chamber of reinforced masonry generally located under the rampart. Designed to protect a single artillery-piece and crew as they fired the cannon through an embrasure in the scarp wall. Casemates were also used as quarters, magazines, and storage rooms.

Cistern: A masonry, metal, or wood containment area designed to catch and store fresh rainwater. Castle Pinckney had brick cisterns in its two bastions.

Embrasure: An opening made in a scarp wall through which a cannon could be fired. The sides of an embrasure known as cheeks would typically splay outward from the throat. An embrasure gave protection to the artillerymen and their gun, but it had the adverse effect of limiting the field of fire.

En-barbette: A type of artillery emplacement, originating in France, where cannons were raised behind a protective wall so that only their gun-barrels protruded above the parapet. This afforded the gun crew some limited protection from counter fire.

Exterior Slope: A steep slope on the exterior of the parapet, usually of earth or sand, designed to absorb artillery fire.

Fraise: Stakes or palisades placed horizontally along the berm or at the top of the counterscarp to stop or slow a climbing attacker. They prevented the earthworks from being taken by a surprise assault.

Garrison: A collective term for a body of troops stationed in a fort, castle, town, or city.

Guard Room: A room that guards the main sally port and has loopholes facing the sally port.

Hot-Shot Furnace: A free-standing brick structure within a fortification with iron grates and racks where solid cannonballs are heated to red-hot intensity and then fired into wooden ships, sails, & rigging.

Howitzer: A shorter barreled gun with a chamber for smaller powder charges, designed to fire shells at higher elevations over less range than guns of the same caliber.

Limber chest: An artillery box or chest that held ammunition and other artillery implements.

Loophole: A narrow opening in a wall which allowed a rifle to fire through it.

Lunette: A defensive military field work or outwork of half-moon shape without walls on either side.

Machicoulis Gallery/Tower: A protruding enclosure that extended over the edge of a rampart or a wall that was like a balcony. Soldiers in the gallery utilized an opening in the floor to fire downward or to drop explosives on assaulting troops.

Magazine: The place for storage of gunpowder inside a fort. They were designed to produce a dry atmosphere and prevent sparks.

Martello Tower: A round tower of three or more floors with one to three artillery pieces mounted en barbette on the top level.

Moat: Another name for a ditch around a fortress or castle that is often filled with water.

Mortar: An artillery piece, primarily intended for siege work, with a short, thick iron barrel designed to throw hollow projectiles packed with powder at great angles of elevation beyond or behind enemy walls.

Ordnance: A military term used to describe cannon, ammunition, and weaponry, as well as the tools and equipment required to operate, store and repair armaments.

Palisade: A wooden fence of vertical and sharpened stakes that formed a defensive wall. Driven into the ground, the stakes typically stand about ten feet tall.

Parade Ground: An open area in the center of the fort reserved for drilling soldiers.

Parapet: A low sloping wall of masonry and/or earth that formed a protective barrier on top of a rampart. The parapet provided some degree of protection for the en barbette artillery and their artillery crews.

Pintle: The pin around which a gun carriage rotates. Guns mounted en casemate sit on a front-pintle carriage with the pintle at the narrowest part (throat) of the embrasure. Center-pintle carriages are used on barbette emplacements and can allow a full 360-degree traverse of the guns.

Rampart: Designates a stone or earth wall surrounding a castle or fort, erected for defensive purposes. Griffiths' Manual declares that a rampart consists "of an interior slope, terreplein, banquette, parapet, and an exterior slope or escarp."

Sabot: Meaning "wooden shoe" or clog, it was a conical piece of wood or metal attached to the of base of canister- or spherical-case shells, so that they sat snugly in the chamber at the back of a cannon-bore in order to receive the full effect of the powder-cartridge and help guide an explosive shell.

Sally Port: A gate or passage usually under the rampart, with a vaulted ceiling. Elements of a garrison could "sally" forth from this entrance and make a sudden attack on their besiegers.

Scarp: The slope of the ditch next to the walls of the fort. A counterscarp is the slope on the ditch opposite the fort.

Sentry: A soldier standing guard. The term is used interchangeably with picket.

Shell: A projectile fired from a cannon that has a hollow interior that has been filled with explosives and has a timed fuse.

Shot: A solid iron projectile fired from a cannon. A shot has more momentum than a shell, but does not explode upon impact, and does its damage only through momentum.

Terreplein: A French expression meaning "level ground." The term describes the flat area atop the inner portion of a rampart. It is closest to the interior parade ground and is not protected by the raised parapet.

Trunnion: The protrusions on either side of a cannon-barrel, that allows it to be rested evenly and swiveled up and down atop a gun carriage. The trunnion was often stamped with foundry casting information.

Wicket Gate: A small door in the main wooden gate of a fortified place, allowing free passage to and fro, without having to open the main gate.

Castle Pinckney Biographies

Alfred O'Neil Alcock (1823-1864) was a member of the 11th New York Fire Zouaves and a prisoner at Castle Pinckney in Oct. 1861. Born in England, Alcock contributed articles to a New York newspaper about his ten months of captivity in Southern prisons. As a member of the 10th New York Infantry, he was mortally wounded at Laurel Hill in the battle of Spotsylvania Courthouse. He is buried at the Soldier's Home in Washington, D.C.

John Julius Pringle Alston (1836-1863) was transferred to Castle Pinckney for rest after displaying immense courage fighting at Battery Wagner. He grew up in the Edmondson-Alston mansion at 21 East Bay Street and was educated at Cambridge College in Massachusetts. Lt. Alston succumbed to typhoid fever complicated by exhaustion while on leave in Greenville. He is buried in Christ Church Cemetery in Greenville.

Addison Bowles Armistead (1768-1813) was the commander of Castle Pinckney at the beginning of the War of 1812. His brother Walker was a general in the same war and the father of Gen. Lewis Addison Armistead, who was killed leading Confederate troops atop Cemetery Ridge at the battle of Gettysburg.

Pierre Gustave Toutant Beauregard (1818-1893) commanded the Confederate defenses of Charleston Harbor during the April 12-13, 1861 bombardment of Fort Sumter, which formally started the Civil War. After commanding troops at First Manassas and Shiloh, Beauregard returned to Charleston to command the Department of SC, GA and FL. Beauregard finished the war commanding Southern troops in Virginia. After the war, he served as adjutant general of the Louisiana State Militia and Commissioner of Public Works in his native New Orleans.

Ormsby DeSaussure Blanding (1823-1889) was commanding Castle Pinckney when Gen. Beauregard visited the post for the first time in March 1861. Blanding was the Sergeant

Major of the Palmetto Regiment in the Mexican War. He served as captain of Company E, 1st South Carolina Artillery and was severely wounded at the battle of Averasboro. He was a farmer in Sumter County after the war.

Theodore Gaillard Boag (1833-1895) was the Confederate quartermaster with the Charleston Zouaves who supplied the Federal prisoners on Castle Pinckney with rations. He later served in the Gist Guard Artillery. Boag was a cotton broker and city alderman after the war. He is buried in Magnolia Cemetery.

Henry Brown (1828-1907) was the captain of the USLHT *Wisteria* from 1882 until his death. Born in Drobab, Norway, he served in the Civil War under Adm. Farragut and was assigned by the Lighthouse Service to Charleston in 1869. He is the inventor of the Bell Buoy and is buried in Magnolia Cemetery.

Charles Henry Caldwell (1793-1831) was wounded in a duel with Lt. Taylor fought at Castle Pinckney in 1818. A Connecticut native, he perished in the Pacific aboard the brig *George & Henry*.

Ellison Capers (1837-1908) was second in command when three companies of the 1st Rifles of the Charleston Militia captured Castle Pinckney in 1860. He was a professor of Mathematics at his alma mater, the Citadel, at the time. During the war, Capers was colonel of the 24th South Carolina Infantry and was severely wounded at the Battle of Franklin. After the war, Capers became an Episcopal priest and later the Episcopal Bishop of South Carolina. In 1904, he was elected chancellor of the University of the South in Sewanee, Tennessee. The "Soldier Bishop" is buried at Trinity Episcopal Church in Columbia.

Francis Fishburne Carroll (1828-1903) was a South Carolina plantation owner who conducted torpedo experiments at Castle Pinckney. After the war he became postmaster of the hamlet of Midway near Bamberg.

Charles Edward Chichester (1834-1898) was the commander of the Charleston Zouave Cadets that garrisoned Castle Pinckney in the fall of 1861. As captain of the Gist Guard Artillery, Chichester would be a chief of artillery during the siege of Battery Wagner, where he was severely wounded. Chichester became a Presbyterian minister in 1873 and served as chaplain of Charleston's Port Society. He is buried next to the Confederate Monument at Magnolia Cemetery.

Jane Elizabeth Chamberlain Chichester (1833-1914) lived with her husband Capt. Charles Chichester at Castle Pinckney in 1861 and 1862. A native of Philadelphia, Jane married Charles in 1855. The couple moved to Charleston in 1860 where Charles worked

as a clerk for Walker & Evans. After the war Jane was president of the Ladies Seamen's Friends Society in Charleston.

Frederick Lynn Childs (1831-1894) commanded Castle Pinckney in March and April 1861. Son of Gen. Thomas Childs, Frederick graduated from West Point in 1855. Childs's Light Artillery became Company C, 15th Battalion, South Carolina Heavy Artillery. Childs finished the war as a lieutenant colonel in charge of the Fayetteville Arsenal. After the war, he lived in Charleston working as a purser of a New York steamship company, and later an Inspector of Customs. Childs is buried next to Joel Roberts Poinsett in Stateburg, South Carolina.

George Louis Choisy (1837-1880) commanded Company D, 40th USCI at Castle Pinckney in 1867 and 1868. A native of South Carolina, Choisy joined the 14th U.S. Infantry as a private in 1861 and rose to major. He died of dropsy at Fort Lee, New Jersey.

George Smith Cook (1819-1902) took photographs of the prisoners and guards at Castle Pinckney in October 1861. Born in Stamford, Connecticut and orphaned at an early age, Cook trained under Mathew Brady before opening his own Charleston studio on King Street. He moved to Richmond in 1880.

Michael Corcoran (1827-1863) was a prisoner at Castle Pinckney in October 1861. He commanded the all-Irish 69th New York Militia Regiment and was a founder of the Fenian Brotherhood. After his exchange in August 1862, he dined with President Lincoln, was promoted to brigadier general, and returned to New York City to form the Corcoran Legion of Irish regiments. Assigned to defend Washington, D.C., he died in a horseback accident near Fairfax, Virginia.

George Washington Cullum (1809-1882) was the superintending engineer for the construction of Fort Sumter and repairs at Castle Pinckney, and Forts Moultrie and Johnson from 1855 to 1859. In 1864 he was appointed superintendent of the West Point Military Academy.

William Holding Echols (1834-1909) was a Confederate engineer assigned to Castle Pinckney in the fall of 1863. Echols was an Alabama native and an 1854 graduate of the U.S. Military Academy. After the war Echols was a civil engineer for the Memphis & Charleston Railroad and president of a Huntsville, Alabama bank.

William Alexander Eliason (1800-1839) was the U.S. Army engineer who designed and supervised the construction of the wooden palisade behind Castle Pinckney. Eliason graduated first in his West Point class of 1819 and oversaw the construction of Fort Macon in North Carolina.

Henry Saxon Farley (1840-1927) was commander of Castle Pinckney from April 1862 to August 1863. He was the son of a Laurens County politician and went, as a young man, to prospect for gold in California. Farley was a cadet at West Point when the war began. As a major, he spent the final 15 months of the war commanding the dismounted cavalry corps of the Army of Northern Virginia. After the war, he farmed near Spartanburg and later worked in the motion picture industry.

Daniel Munroe Forney (1784-1847) was an officer in the Lincolnton, NC militia and commissioned as a major at the start of the War of 1812. Forney was given command of the 6th District, which included Charleston, in May 1813. After the war, Forney was a successful planter and served in the U.S. Congress.

John Gray Foster (1823-1874) was the U.S. Army engineer officer superintending the construction of Fort Sumter and repairing the forts in the Charleston Harbor in 1860. An 1846 graduate of West Point, Foster became a career military officer. In 1862 and 1863 he commanded the Department of North Carolina. As Commander of the Department of the South in 1864 he directed the bombardment of Fort Sumter. Foster was a brevetted major general by war's end. Foster died in his native New Hampshire in 1874.

Robert Cogdell Gilchrist (1829-1902) served as first lieutenant of the Charleston Zouave Cadets. Gilchrist would command Battery Gregg at the northern tip of Morris Island in August 1863 and would reach the rank of major. After the war, he took his family to the Southern Adirondacks where he funded the construction of the first suspension bridge across the Hudson River in 1871. He later practiced law in Charleston and, in 1884, published *The Confederate Defense of Morris Island, Charleston Harbor*.

Robert M. Gill (1787-1828) was the controversial captain in the 2nd U.S. Artillery dismissed in 1813 for conduct unbecoming an officer and a gentleman. He became a planter in Wilkinson County, Mississippi.

John Gordon (1787-1835) along with his older brother, James Gordon (1783-1814), were the principal contractors under Lt. Macomb in the construction of Castle Pinckney. John also helped Robert Mills construct the Fireproof Building on Meeting Street in 1823. In later years, Col. Gordon (He was an officer in the Irish Volunteers militia in Charleston) constructed a giant brickmaking facility at Moreland Plantation, his home on the Cooper River.

Charles Carroll Gray (1838-1884) kept a diary as a prisoner at Castle Pinckney. A native New Yorker, he was an assistant surgeon with the 2nd U.S. Cavalry when he was captured at First Bull Run. Gray remained an Army surgeon until his retirement in 1879.

William Heyward Grimball (1838-1864) was the junior 1st lieutenant of Company E when it garrisoned Castle Pinckney in the summer of 1863. From a distinguished Charleston family, his brother John Grimball was an officer on the raider CSS *Shenandoah*. Grimball died of typhoid fever while on detached service at Fort Johnson.

Henry William Griswold (1795-1834) was commanding Castle Pinckney at the time of his death in 1834. A native of New Milford, Connecticut, Griswold had graduated from West Point in 1815.

David Bullock Harris (1814-1864) was the chief Confederate engineer under Beauregard. An 1833 West Point graduate, Harris was a railroad surveyor in Virginia before the war. Despite clashing with R. S. Ripley over the pace of construction, his defensive fortifications proved too formidable for besieging Union forces. Harris contracted yellow fever in the fall of 1864 and died in Summerville.

Theodore Brevard Hayne (1841-1917) led the Maryland volunteers as a Confederate artillery company commander for most of the war. He was the son of South Carolina's Attorney General Isaac William Hayne. After the war, Hayne was a cotton broker in Charleston and Greenville.

John A. Hennessy (1834-1877) rose, over the course of the Civil War, from 1st lieutenant to Lt. colonel of the 52nd Pennsylvania. Hennessy drew fame for being the first Federal soldier to raise the U.S. flag over Forts Sumter, Ripley, and Castle Pinckney. He died in his hometown of Pottsville, Pennsylvania.

Robert Little Holmes (1830-1861) A member of the Carolina Light Infantry, Holmes was killed at the Castle's sally port by a nervous sentinel in January 1861. He was the Republic of South Carolina's first casualty and arguably the first military fatality of the Civil War. Holmes's funeral service was held at the Circular Church in Charleston and his body was buried in Magnolia Cemetery.

William H. Hume, Jr. (1836-1926) was a Charleston civil engineer who oversaw the renovation of Castle Pinckney in the winter of 1863-64. He moved to Asheville after the war.

Jacob Bond I'On (1782-1859) commanded a company at Castle Pinckney from the 2nd Regiment of Artillery during the War of 1812. He would return to state politics in 1816 and serve as president of the South Carolina Senate from 1822 to 1828. Described as a "true Carolina gentleman," I'On died on his Mount Pleasant plantation.

George Izard (1776-1828) was a lieutenant in the U.S. Corps of Artillerists and Engineers when he oversaw the construction of the first Fort Pinckney from 1797 to 1800. In

that year, he was promoted to captain and became an aide-de-camp to Gen. Alexander Hamilton in New York. George Izard went on to become a major-general in the War of 1812 and later Arkansas' second territorial governor.

David Flavel Jamison (1810-1864) witnessed the test firing of a "sabot" at Castle Pinckney in his role as South Carolina's first secretary of war. A lawyer, politician, author, and planter, Jamison was chosen president of South Carolina's Secession Convention in 1860. He died of yellow fever at his Orangeburg plantation.

Jonathan Johnson (1828-1864) was a member of Company F, 1st South Carolina Artillery and the only soldier killed at Castle Pinckney from hostile fire. While visiting his wife and four children in the Georgia mountain county of Fannin, he had been taken into Federal custody and was released in Chattanooga on February 19, 1864 after taking an Oath of Allegiance. He then returned to his Confederate artillery unit.

Abraham Charles Kaufman (1839-1918) promoted turning Castle Pinckney into a sanitarium for Union veterans at the end of the 20th century. A prominent Charleston businessman and Republican, he represented South Carolina at President McKinley's funeral. He is buried at St. Philip's Episcopal Church.

James Crawford Keys (1813-1895) was one of four men held at Castle Pinckney in 1866 for their alleged involvement in the 1865 Brown's Ferry Murders. Keys was a prominent planter from Anderson County.

Edna Maud King (1874-1924) was the stepdaughter of Capt. James Whiteley and raised on Shute's Folly. 13-year-old Maud was one of two Whiteley women to save three stranded boatmen in turbulent seas in 1888. Maud was recognized by the city of Charleston as the "Heroine of Castle Pinckney." She was a bookkeeper for the Lighthouse Service as an adult.

John Gadsden King (1831-1906) was the last Confederate commander of Castle Pinckney. In the final weeks of the war, he was promoted to major. Gadsden King moved to Atlanta around 1870 where he became a fire insurance agent. He is buried in the King Crypt in Atlanta's Oakland Cemetery.

Francis Dickinson Lee (1826-1885) was a Confederate officer who conducted submarine experiments in the Charleston Harbor. A prominent architect before the war, he designed both the Citadel Square Baptist Church and Unitarian Church in Charleston. He resumed his architectural practice in St. Louis after the war.

Robert Edward Lee (1807-1870) led the Army of Northern Virginia from 1862 to its final 1865 surrender at Appomattox. Lee was a career U.S. army officer and engineer before the

war and served as commandant of West Point from 1852 to 1855. Beginning in November 1861, Lee spent four months directing Confederate operations on the South Atlantic coast. After the war, he served as president of Washington College in Lexington, Virginia.

Stephen Dill Lee (1833-1908) was a native of Charleston and an 1854 West Point graduate. As a member of Beauregard's staff, Lee delivered the final ultimatum to Maj. Anderson at Ft. Sumter before the bombardment on April 12, 1861. Lee received numerous promotions in Confederate service eventually reaching lieutenant general commanding a corps in the Army of Tennessee. After the war, Lee was the first president of the Mississippi Agricultural and Mechanical College. He was commander in chief of the United Confederate Veterans at the time of his death.

Henry Russell Lesesne (1843-1865) commanded Castle Pinckney in the winter of 1864-65. The young captain was killed at the battle of Averasboro in 1865. He is buried at St. Philips Church in Charleston.

Thomas Pinckney Lowndes (1839-1899) was a member of the Washington Light Infantry during their time at Castle Pinckney. He was the grandson of Thomas Lowndes who founded the WLI in 1807. Young Thomas spent the war in the Confederate Signal Corps. After the war he was an insurance and stockbroker and active in the Society of the Cincinnati.

Patrick Neeson Lynch (1817-1882) arrived in Charleston from Ireland in 1840 as a Catholic priest. He was consecrated as Bishop of the Charleston Diocese in 1858. The compassionate and intellectual Lynch made several trips in 1861 to Castle Pinckney to preach to and support the Bull Run prisoners held at the Castle.

Alexander Macomb (1782-1841) was the young engineering officer who oversaw the construction of Castle Pinckney in 1809. In 1828, President John Quincy Adams bypassed Winfield Scott and Edmund Gaines to give command of the U.S. Army to Macomb. Maj. Gen. Macomb died while in office.

Edward McCrady, Jr. (1833-1903) was the captain of the Meagher Guards, the Charleston militia unit that was the first to reach the ramparts of Castle Pinckney. McCrady rose through the ranks of the 1st South Carolina Infantry reaching lieutenant colonel by 1863. He was seriously wounded at Second Manassas and Fredericksburg. After the war he was a staunch conservative who helped re-establish "Home Rule" in 1876 and represented Charleston in the state House of Representatives from 1880 to 1890. He is the author of a four-volume history of South Carolina.

John McCrady (1831-1881) was a mathematics professor at the College of Charleston who accompanied his brother's Meagher Guards on their seizure of Castle Pinckney. As a Confederate engineer, Capt. McCrady designed and supervised the ring of defenses around Savannah including Fort McAllister.

Richard Kidder Meade, Jr. (1835-1862) surrendered Castle Pinckney to the South Carolina militia on December 27, 1860. In April 1861 Meade resigned his commission and pledged his allegiance to his native Virginia. Meade was commissioned a major and served on the staffs of Gen. John B. Magruder and Gen. James Longstreet, respectively. He died of disease in Petersburg, Virginia.

Edward Barnwell Middleton (1842-1910) was posted with Company H, 1st South Carolina Artillery at Castle Pinckney in the fall of 1863 and spring of 1864. Educated at the Citadel, he spent the first 18 months of the war as a private in the 46th Georgia. He was appointed a 2nd lieutenant in the 1st South Carolina Artillery upon the recommendation of W. Porcher Miles. Captured at the battle of Avasboro in March 1865, Middleton was not released from the Johnson's Island prison until June 19, 1865. He is buried at Magnolia Cemetery.

James Monroe (1758-1831) was the only U.S. President to visit Castle Pinckney. The Virginian served from 1817 to 1825 in an "Era of Good Feelings."

Carsten Nohrden (1827-1861) of the German Artillery company commanded Castle Pinckney in February 1861. A native of the Kingdom of Hanover, Nohrden reached Charleston in the 1840s and became a successful businessman. He died of hemorrhagic fever in July 1861 on Morris Island. His engraved sword is on display at the Charleston Museum.

Niles Gardner Parker (1827-1894) commanded Company A, 33rd USCI while they garrisoned Castle Pinckney in 1865. After leaving the army, Parker represented Barnwell County in the 1868 State Constitutional Convention and was subsequently elected state treasurer of South Carolina during a period of graft and mistrust. He is buried in Merrimack Cemetery in West Newberry, Massachusetts.

William Henry Peronneau (1823-1874) commanded Castle Pinckney for five months in 1863 as the captain of Company G, 1st South Carolina Artillery. A descendant of French Huguenots, William suffered from poor eyesight and was forced to resign on November 4, 1864. He is buried in Magnolia Cemetery.

James Johnston Pettigrew (1828-1863) led three companies of the 1st South Carolina Rifles militia regiment over the walls to capture Castle Pinckney for the state of South Carolina. A graduate of the University of North Carolina, Pettigrew was a Charleston

lawyer as the war began. At the battle of Gettysburg, he led Heth's Division in Pickett's Charge. He was mortally wounded in West Virginia in the subsequent Confederate retreat.

Francis Wilkinson Pickens (1805-1869) was the governor of South Carolina during the Fort Sumter crisis. The grandson of Revolutionary War hero Gen. Andrew Pickens and a cousin of Senator John C. Calhoun, Pickens was the ambassador to Russia before becoming governor in 1860. In 1865, Pickens called for the repeal of the state's Ordinance of Secession saying, "It doesn't become South Carolina to vapor or swell or strut or brag or bluster or threat or swagger,.... She bids us bind up her wounds and pour on the oil of peace."

Charles Cotesworth Pinckney (1746-1825) was the namesake of Castle Pinckney. From a family of elite Charleston planters, Pinckney was an officer in the American Revolution, a delegate to the Constitutional Convention, and twice nominated as a presidential candidate. He was a cousin of Charles Pinckney who submitted the Pinckney Draft of the U.S. Constitution in 1787.

Thomas Pinckney (1750-1828) oversaw military operations in the Southern states during the War of 1812. The younger brother of Charles C. Pinckney, Thomas was elected governor of South Carolina in 1797 and was the minister to Great Britain from 1792 to 1796.

Joel Roberts Poinsett (1779-1851) headed the Unionist faction in South Carolina during the Nullification Crisis of 1832. He sent detailed reports on the Charleston forts to President Andrew Jackson. The former minister to Mexico would go on to become Martin Van Buren's secretary of war.

Anthony Toomer Porter (1828-1902)) was an Episcopal clergyman who preached to the Washington Light Infantry at Castle Pinckney on Sunday, Dec 30, 1860. Porter was the rector of the Church of the Holy Communion on Ashley Street. After the war he established the Porter Academy for boys orphaned or left destitute by the Civil War. His well-received autobiography *Lead On* was published in 1898.

John B. Porter (1810-1869) was the military surgeon in Charleston during the yellow fever outbreaks in the 1850s. In 1847, Porter assisted Edward Barton in the first use of anesthesia in a military operation, but he became a lifelong opponent of the practice.

James Reid Pringle (1842-1871) was a young 1st lieutenant in the 1st South Carolina Artillery stationed at Castle Pinckney. He came from an aristocratic Charleston family. Pringle was promoted to captain on November 5, 1864 upon the resignation of Capt. Peronneau. After the war he became a member of the San Francisco bar and died at age 29 in Manhattan, New York. He is buried at St. Michael's Church in Charleston.

Alfred Moore Rhett (1829-1889) commanded Fort Sumter during the Union ironclad attack on April 7, 1863 and the first heavy bombardment of the fort by Union forces in August 1863. In September 1863 Rhett was given command of Charleston's inner ring of fortifications. He was the son of U.S. Senator Barnwell Rhett and an 1851 graduate of Harvard. Rhett was captured at the battle of Averasboro in the closing days of the war. He resumed rice planting on his plantation after the war and became chief of police in Charleston under two mayors.

Anthony Wilhelm Riecke (1842-1907) was the son of German immigrants and a young soldier in the Charleston Zouave Cadets in 1861. He went on to serve in the Washington Artillery. In 1879, he completed, but did not publish *Recollections of a Confederate Soldier of the Struggle for the "Lost Cause."*

Roswell Sabine Ripley (1823-1887) was a skilled artillery officer who commanded the coastal defenses of Charleston for much of the war. Born in Worthington, Ohio, Ripley was an 1843 graduate of West Point and a veteran of the Mexican War. He married into a Charleston family and gave his allegiance to the South. Ripley had a volatile temper, was argumentative and stubborn, and accused of excessive consumption of alcohol. After the war, he lived in England for two decades.

Edmund Ruffin (1794-1865) was a leading advocate of states' rights and secession across the South. Ruffin was present on Morris Island for the bombardment of Fort Sumter where he fired one of the first shots of the bombardment. A Virginia native, Ruffin was a noted agriculturalist, writer, and editor of a journal for farmers. Ruffin committed suicide shortly after learning of Robert E. Lee's surrender at Appomattox Court House.

Henry Saunders (1788-1876) commanded Castle Pinckney during the Nullification Crisis. Saunders was a Virginian who served in the U.S. Army from 1813 until 1844. While at Castle Pinckney, he was promoted from captain to major. He farmed near Leesburg, Virginia until his death.

Winfield Scott (1786-1866) provided deft leadership of the military forces in the Charleston Harbor during the Nullification Crisis. In 1847, he led the American military campaign that captured Mexico City. "Old Fuss and Feathers" was the Whig nominee for president in 1852.

Daniel Edgar Sickles (1819-1914) was a controversial Union general who served as the military governor of South Carolina from 1865 to 1869. A New York politician before the war, Sickles was a War Democrat given command of New York's Excelsior Brigade. On the second day of the battle of Gettysburg, Sickles advanced his III Corps into the famous Peach Orchard in defiance of direct orders. The salient he created was overrun by

James Longstreet's assault. Sickles lost his right leg in the fight. President Grant appointed him ambassador to Spain after his service in South Carolina. Sickles is buried in Arlington National Cemetery.

James Skillin (1821-1897) was a career soldier who served as the ordnance sergeant at Castle Pinckney both before and after the Civil War. He and his wife Ruby retired to Lincoln, Maine.

John Caldwell Tidball (1825-1906) was a lieutenant stationed in the Castle in 1852. He was noted for his service in the famed U.S. Horse Artillery Brigade in the Army of the Potomac. After the war, he was made a major in the regular army and served six years as the commander of Alaska. Tidball retired as one of the Army's premier artillerymen.

James Heyward Trapier (1815-1865) was the U.S. Army engineer officer who produced the most detailed drawings of Castle Pinckney in the 1840s. A Mexican War veteran, Trapier would become a Confederate brigadier general.

Robert De Treville (1833-1865) was a young lawyer and member of the Washington Light Infantry who took part in the state seizure of Castle Pinckney in 1860. By the end of the war, Treville was lieutenant colonel of the 1st South Carolina Infantry. He was killed at the battle of Averasboro and is buried in nearby Chicora Cemetery.

James Gilmore Tuttle (1839-1906) was a member of Company F, 4th Michigan. As a Bull Run prisoner at the Castle, his stubbornness landed him in solitary confinement. A native of Ontario, Canada, Tuttle moved to Morristown, Tennessee later in life.

Johann Andreas Wagener (1816-1876) was the commander of the Charleston German Artillery and briefly commander of Castle Pinckney in 1861. Born in the Kingdom of Hanover, "John" Wagener reached Charleston in 1833. A prominent immigrant, he founded the first German-language newspaper of the South. In 1871, he was elected mayor of Charleston.

William Waud (1832-1878) was an English-born architect, illustrator, and correspondent during the American Civil War. In the 1850s, he joined his brother, Alfred Waud, in America and was employed as an artist for *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper* and *Harper's Weekly*. His illustrations of the inauguration of Jefferson Davis and the bombardment of Fort Sumter are widely published.

William Welsh (1835-1912) commanded Castle Pinckney in 1867 as a captain in the 40th USCI and kept a ledger of prisoners kept at the Castle. A career soldier, he retired

in 1891 as a brevet brigadier general. Welsh is buried in Mound View Cemetery in his hometown of Mount Vernon, Ohio.

Edward Brickell White (1806-1882) designed and supervised the improvements to Castle Pinckney in January 1861. A Charleston native and 1826 graduate of West Point, White became one of Charleston prominent architects in the 1840s and 1850s. His noted works include Market Hall, the Huguenot Church, Grace Church, and the steeple for St. Philips Church. He is buried at St. Michael's Church.

James Wilfred Whiteley (1858-1907) was the long serving keeper and resident of the Castle Pinckney Lighthouse Depot from 1880 until his death. He is buried in Magnolia Cemetery.

Orlando Bolivar Willcox (1823-1907) was the colonel of the 1st Michigan Infantry when he was captured at Bull Run and later sent to Castle Pinckney as a prisoner. Born in Detroit and an 1847 graduate of West Point, Willcox led a division in Burnside's Corps at the battle of Antietam. A career military officer, he retired in 1887 as a brigadier general. He is buried at Arlington National Cemetery.

William Herbert Withington (1835-1903) was a Union prisoner at Castle Pinckney. As a captain in the 1st Michigan Infantry at the battle of Bull Run, he would be awarded a Congressional Medal of Honor for his bravery that day. After being exchanged, Withington was appointed colonel of the 17th Michigan. After the war he was a manufacturer in his hometown of Jackson, Michigan, and a state politician.

Joseph Atkinson Yates (1829-1888) of Charleston commanded Castle Pinckney from January through April 1862. He commanded the artillery on Morris Island when Federal troops captured its south end in July 1863. Yates was present for the final parole at Greensboro on April 28, 1865. A mining supervisor after the war, he died in Bessemer, Alabama.

Chapter 1

Before There Was a Castle on Shute's Folly

When the United States of America elected George Washington to be its first president in January 1789, the new republic was comprised of 13 coastal states. It was clear to President Washington that the nation's port cities were lightly defended and vulnerable to attack by a European power.

In 1794, the 3rd U.S. Congress, at Washington's request, approved modest funds to begin fortifying 20 harbor towns along the Atlantic Seaboard. The congressional report recommended that Charleston, the most important port in the South, be given sea-facing defenses second in scope only to New York City. Unfortunately, the small war department under Henry Knox lacked the expertise to do little more than establish a handful of inexpensive and half-completed fortifications.¹

News of the XYZ Affair in 1797 awoke Americans to the possibility of a war with France. Upon their arrival in Paris to negotiate a treaty, South Carolinian Charles Cotesworth Pinckney, along with fellow diplomats John Marshall and Elbridge Gerry, were confronted with demands that bribery money be paid before negotiations could begin. The three Americans indignantly refused as Pinckney was said to have replied, "No! No! Not a sixpence!" Reacting to a possible military threat from the French islands in the West Indies, prominent citizens of Charleston met in St. Michael's Church to raise money to improve their city's defenses. Their

¹ David Weirick, *Castle Pinckney: Past, Present, Future*, Ph.D. dissertation, Clemson University and the College of Charleston, May 2012, 5-6; Arthur Wade, *Artillerists and Engineers: The Beginnings of American Seacoast Fortifications, 1794-1815*, Ph.D. dissertation, Kansas State University, 1977, 21.

contributions would serve as an important supplement to the \$16,212 already appropriated by Congress. Shute's Folly, a small island located in the Charleston Harbor roughly one mile from the city wharves along the Cooper River, was selected as a site for a new fort.²

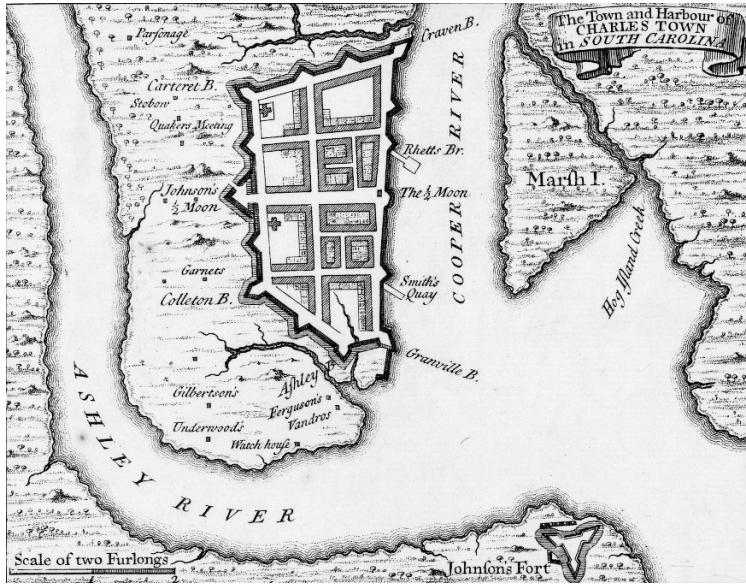
Talk of building a fortification on this marsh island went as far back as 1745 when Capt. Peter Henry Bruce, an experienced military engineer, was dispatched to the Charlestown harbor. Bruce had just completed his work on Fort Nassau in the Bahamas. With the British colony of South Carolina threatened by a Spanish attack from Florida, Bruce recommended that a canal be constructed across the Neck of the peninsula to prevent a surprise attack by land and a battery be built at Rhett's Point (southwest corner of Concord and Pritchard Streets in the Union Pier area) to prevent a surprise landing by sea. Bruce noted that Fort Johnson protected the main harbor channel used by sailing ships to reach the wharves on the Cooper River. Still, he observed that the alternate Hog Island Channel that ran between Mount Pleasant and Shute's Folly was deep and not defended by cannon.

The Scottish engineer recommended building a sizable horseshoe-shaped fort on the part of the marsh island that was "solid and firm, and what is not may be made so by driving piles." Bruce envisioned mounting "thirty pieces of cannon of the largest size, which would not only command Rebellion-road, but also both channels (that of Johnson's Fort and Hog Island)." The defensive plan would, by Bruce's estimates, cost the South Carolina colony £100,000 pounds. This was a tall order indeed and would require a large bank loan from London. Bruce was asked to oversee the construction, but he declined, citing a lack of fortitude among the Governor's Privy Council members. In the end, only modest defensive improvements were made at Rhett's Point and at Anson's House.³

In 1746, a Quaker merchant and land speculator named Joseph Shute bought the 244-acre tidal marsh island from the Parris family. Shute called his new acquisition his "delight," but it would be "folly" that would follow his name and that of the island from 1750 forward. The word folly can be interpreted in several directions. An archaic meaning refers to a verdant thicket of plants and trees, and a bit of local lore maintains that, during Shute's time, a grove of orange trees stood on the island. Another definition describes a folly as an eccentric or whimsical structure built on the grounds of a fashionable 18th-century English garden. A

2 Weirick, *Castle Pinckney: Past, Present, Future*, 10-11; Edwin C. Bearass, *The First Two Fort Moultries: A Structural History* (Charleston, 1968), 40-41. Charlestown changed its name to Charleston in 1783, shortly after the American Revolution.

3 Henry Bruce, *Memoirs of Peter Henry Bruce Esq.* (Dublin, 1783), 512-514; Nic Butler, "The Hard: Colonial Charleston's Forgotten Maritime Center," Charleston Time Machine, Charleston County Public Library, posted May 5, 2023.



“Town and Harbour of Charles Town in South Carolina,” a 1733 map. Marsh Island is directly across the Cooper River from the walled city. *Library of Congress*

small tea house reportedly operated on the island during Shute’s time, and it is possible that Folly was attached to this enterprise, which was unceremoniously washed away by the Gale of 1752. In the end, though, it may simply be that Shute’s purchase of this low-lying tidal marsh island, which had but a sliver of firm ground, was considered a foolish financial investment by the residents of Charlestown. While Shute owned a wharf on the Cooper River, a plantation in Colleton County, and several parcels of land in Charlestown, he was financially overextended by 1750 and forced by Provost Marshall Rawlins Lowndes to sell his slaves, his new city home, and “one half of Shute’s Delight (otherwise known as Shute’s Folly)” at public vendue. His fellow citizens, it seems, could not help but mock Shute’s investment in the marsh island as an ignominious “folly.”⁴

Lacking a fort, Shute’s Folly was best known in colonial times for “Hangman’s Point,” which was a piece of higher ground on the southern tip of the island. Criminals and pirates were said to have been hanged here from a gallows tree as a macabre warning to the crews of ships entering and leaving the harbor. In 1788,

4 Turk McCleskey, *The Road to Black Ned’s Forge: A Story of Race, Sex, and Trade on the Colonial American Frontier* (Charlottesville, 2014), 33-36; “To be Sold at Public Vendue, at Joseph Shute’s New House on the Bay,” *The South Carolina [SC] Gazette*, May 28, 1750, 3; “Sullivan’s Island: No. 3, Castle Pinckney,” *The Rose Bud [SC]*, Dec. 8, 1832, 57.

Capt. William Rogers of New London, Connecticut, and four seamen from the schooner *Two Friends* were the last to be executed at “Hangman’s Point, opposite the city” for murder and piracy on the American Seas.⁵

On January 6, 1773, James Laurens of Charlestown wrote to his brother Henry Laurens, who was across the Atlantic spending the year in London. The 49-year-old Henry Laurens was a wealthy Lowcountry planter, having built a fortune as a partner in the largest slave-trading house in North America. In the coming years, Henry was to become an important Founding Father, succeeding John Hancock as the president of the Continental Congress. In 1773, however, it was the duty of his younger brother James to keep him abreast of his financial affairs and the news from Charlestown. In a postscript to his letter to Henry, James wrote, “I had almost forgot to tell you that I have purchased, a few days since, the North part of Shutes Marsh for you at £795.” It seemed to be an expensive price, but Henry approved of the purchase, as the southern part of the marsh island had an even higher price. The northern part of Shute’s Folly did produce some amount of revenue as ship owners paid for the privilege of “careening on the Hards,” which meant pulling their boat up onto a sandy beach. Once on dry land, the boat or schooner would be turned on its side and the hull cleaned, caulked, and repaired. Henry wrote back that he laughed at himself when he learned of the purchase, writing, “With respect to the Marsh I have often said I would have bought it, if I had not dreaded the sound of Lauren’s Folly.”⁶

As tensions mounted between the colonists and the government of King George III, British engineers in 1775 studied the Charlestown harbor in case the capital of the South Carolina colony would have to be forcibly seized. Maj. Gen. Frederick George Mulcaster of the Royal Engineers, the half-brother of the King, wrote from St. Augustine a 16-page letter outlining British strategy. Mulcaster recommended the silencing of Fort Johnson followed by the placement of a 13-inch mortar on Shute’s Folly that could bombard the nearby city. Mulcaster’s letter was intercepted by the Americans, but he was among the first of many subsequent military men who understood that the military force that occupied Shute’s Folly also controlled the fate of the city of Charleston.

5 Suzannah Smith Miles, “Castle Pinckney: Silent Sentinel in Charleston Harbor,” *Moultrie News, Charleston [SC] Post and Courier*, Nov. 27, 2012, updated Aug. 20, 2020; “Charleston, June 19,” *Norwich [CT] Packet*, Jul. 10, 1788, 1; “Charleston, June 17,” *Charleston [SC] City Gazette*, Jun. 17, 1788, 2.

6 Henry Laurens, *The Papers of Henry Laurens*, 16 vols., George Rogers, David Chesnutt, & Peggy Clark, ed. & trans. (Columbia, SC, 1980) 8:607,613; Henry Laurens, “The Subscriber,” *Charleston Courier*, Aug. 22, 1814, 1.

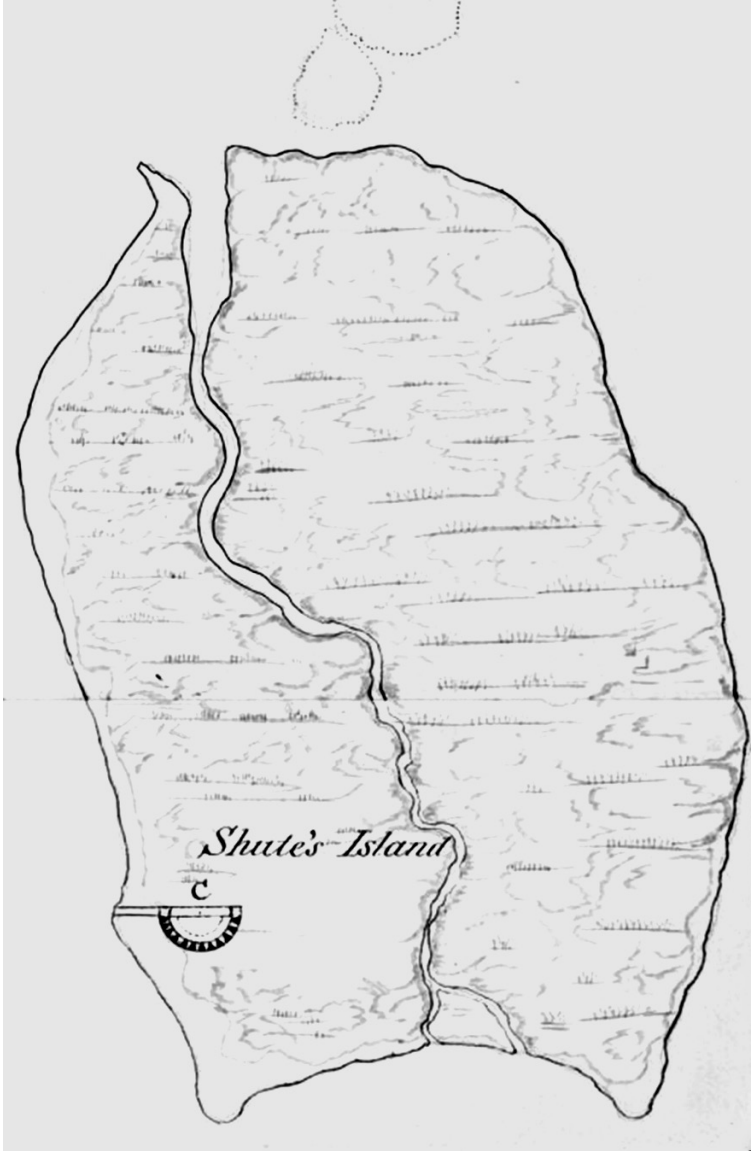
During the Revolutionary War, Charlestown found itself surrounded by British forces in the spring of 1781. After a six-week siege, Gen. Benjamin Lincoln surrendered 2,571 Continental soldiers and about the same number of Patriot militiamen. During the siege, the Americans managed to obstruct the British fleet by sinking eight ships in a long row from the dock by the Exchange Building across the Cooper River to Shute's Folly. Cable chains and spars were lashed and secured to the lower masts of the sunken ships to hold them in place.⁷

In August 1781, America's Southern commander Nathaniel Greene wrote to Gen. George Washington that the British were building a fortification on Shute's Folly that "would have great command of the Town as well as the Rivers." Scottish-born Lt. Col. James Moncrieff, chief engineer to Henry Clinton, had been ordered to put the fortifications of the city and the harbor into "a sufficient state of defense." His labor force was composed primarily of the thousands of runaway slaves who had fled from Lowcountry plantations to Charlestown and were now under the protection of the British Crown. Among Moncrieff's projects was the construction on Shute's Folly of a timber and earth half-moon fort that faced the harbor to the south. "Moncrieff's Battery" was an impressively large structure, roughly twice the size of Charlestown's famous half-moon battery. The north wall alone measured some 231 ft., and there were embrasures for fourteen cannons. The new island fort completed around June 1782 was part of a complex system of forts and defensive works that would, according to Moncrieff, "improve the security of the harbor" against any possible assault by a French or Spanish fleet. After six months of occupation, the British abandoned their new fort with the evacuation of Charlestown on December 14, 1782, more than a year after Cornwallis's surrender at Yorktown.⁸

The new 1798 American fort, to be named for Charleston's favorite son Charles Cotesworth Pinckney, was not built on the abandoned remains of the British fort of 1782 but atop Hangman's Point on the dryer southern extremity of the island. A story survives that President George Washington personally selected the location

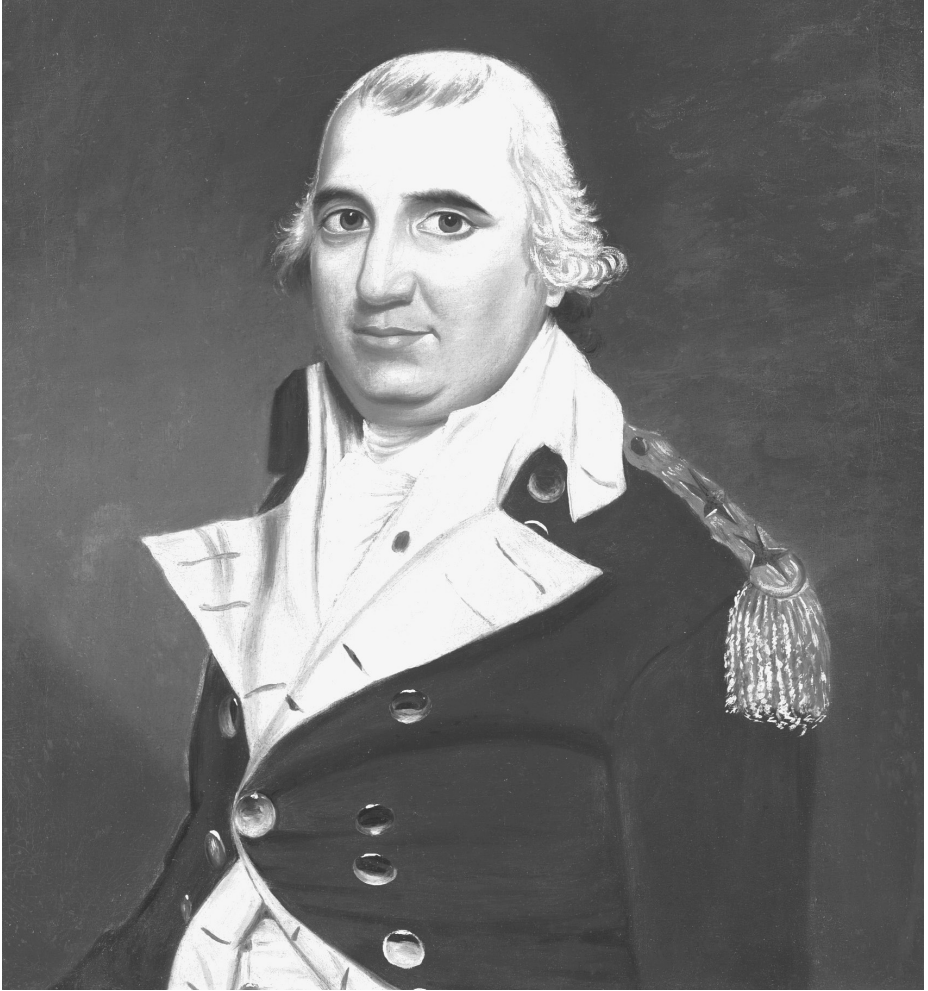
7 Letter, Intercepted Letter of Major General F.G. Mulcaster, Dec. 30, 1775, *Journals of the Continental Congress*, 34 vols. (Washington, D.C., 1904) 2-538.

8 Henry A. M. Smith, "Hog Island and Shute's Folly," *South Carolina Historical Magazine* (Apr. 1918), 19:91-93. Hereafter cited as SCHM; Kenneth Lewis & William Langhorne, Jr., *Castle Pinckney: An Architectural Assessment with Recommendations*, 1978, Research Manuscript, University of South Carolina, 1978, Series 145, 15; William Roy Smith, *South Carolina as a royal province, 1719-1776* (New York, 1903), 200-201; Letter, Nathaniel Greene to George Washington, Aug. 6, 1781, Washington Papers, Founders Online, National Archives; Moncrieff Letter book, Dec. 31, 1780 to Oct. 7, 1782, James Moncrieff Papers, William Clements Library, University of Michigan; William Gratton to James Mercer, Charleston, Aug. 11, 1781, U.S. Continental Congress Papers, 1774-1789, NARA, RG 360, M247, roll 65, 663.



This is a portion of George Taylor's *Plan of Charlestown 1781*, which shows Shute's Folly in detail, including the British fort designed and built by Lt. Col. James Moncrieff in 1781. The island was 244 acres at the time of the American Revolution, and is, today, less than 24 acres.

University of Michigan Library



A 1796 painting of Charles Cotesworth Pinckney done by an unknown artist. Castle Pinckney was named after this Founding Father, diplomat, and South Carolina military figure.

National Portrait Gallery

for Fort Pinckney on his Southern Tour, which included a visit to Charleston in May 1791. Indeed, there may be an element of truth to this as Washington spent two days viewing Revolutionary War battle sites around Charleston, one on horseback around the Neck, and one day by boat. At dawn on May 5th, Washington sailed from the city past Shute's Folly to inspect Forts Johnson and Moultrie with Gen. William Moultrie as his tour guide. They were joined by "gentlemen of great respectability," which probably included South Carolina's two Senators,



Trained in military engineering in France, Lt. George Izard supervised the construction of Fort Pinckney in 1798. As a major general, he led an American Army protecting Lake Champlain in the War of 1812. *Arkansas Secretary of State's Office and the Old State House Museum*

Pierce Butler and Ralph Izard. Only the ruins of the two Revolutionary War forts remained, which should have crystallized to the delegation Charleston's complete vulnerability to a seaward attack in the early years

of the republic. A large late afternoon dinner was then held at the residence of Governor Thomas Pinckney. Two years later, as relations with the French Republic frayed, Gen. Moultrie was writing President Washington requesting funds to mount a handful of cannons at Forts Johnson and Moultrie and he reminded the president of the strategic importance of fortifying Shute's Folly.⁹

French-born engineer Paul Hyacinthe Perrault arrived in Charleston on May 4, 1794, having been appointed by Secretary of War Henry Knox to construct a series of defensive batteries along the South Carolina and Georgia coast. Perrault did work that year rebuilding Forts Johnson and Moultrie with the limited funds at his disposal. He also located a sandbank, 150 fathoms long and 60 fathoms wide, that was largely dry at ebb tide and located off the southeastern tip of Shute's Folly. Perrault took a surprised Governor William Moultrie to the location, and the two military men conceived of building a cannon battery atop the shoal, though Moultrie was weary whether it could withstand "the vehement fury of the waves." Perrault never built the battery, though the Confederates would construct Fort Ripley on this submerged sandbank in 1863.¹⁰

Fort Pinckney was constructed in 1798 under the direction of 24-year-old Lt. George Izard of the 1st Regiment of Artillerists & Engineers in an irregular

9 George Washington, *The Diaries of George Washington*, 6 vol., Donald Jackson and Dorothy Twohig, ed. & trans. (Charlottesville, 1979), 6:126.

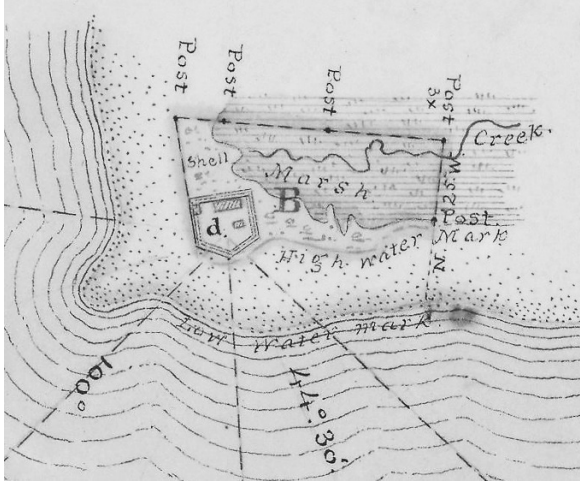
10 Bearss, *The First Two Fort Moultries*, 35-37; Letter, Henry Knox to Paul Perrault, Apl. 14, 1794, *Papers of the War Department, 1784-1800*, digital editorial project; Letter, P. H. Perrault to Henry Knox, May 31, 1794, Military Affairs, 7 vols., *American State Papers, 1789-1819* (Washington, 1832), 1:102-103. Hereafter cited as *ASP*. A fathom is six feet long.

pentagonal layout with earthen walls stabilized by timbers, which were probably palmetto logs, and the ground covered in sod. Its low profile made it a difficult target to strike and ideal for absorbing cannon shots. Lt. Izard was the son of South Carolina U.S. Senator Ralph Izard and had received military engineering instruction in France. He reported for duty with the secretary of war on November 21, 1797. Fort Moultrie was being completely rebuilt at the same time that Fort Pinckney was being constructed, and both fortresses would share similar layouts and dimensions. Each was built atop a foundation of bricks with further brickwork supporting the ramparts. The construction cost was paid for by a subscription of the local citizens combined with grants from the War Department.

On September 27, 1798, with the fort on Shute's Folly declared completed and several cannons mounted, a naming ceremony was performed with the raising of the 15-star flag of the United States and salutes fired from Forts Johnson and Mechanic and from armed ships in the harbor. Izard had managed that day to gather together an impressive collection of Revolutionary War heroes, which included Christopher Gadsden, Edward Rutledge, and William Washington. The formal ceremony concluded with General William Moultrie proclaiming "Pinckney" to the cheering dignitaries. Sixteen Patriotic toasts followed and uplifted all who were present (see Appendix 1).¹¹

During the autumn of 1798, a company of artilleryists recruited from Maryland and Delaware under the command of Capt. Francis Huger arrived in Charleston to garrison the newly built Fort Pinckney. The summer of 1799 proved a medical disaster, as Izard would write in his 1825 memoirs, "These poor fellows suffered sadly during the ensuing summer when more than half of them died of the Yellow Fever." Izard nearly died himself from the same "dangerous malady" but was saved by the efforts of Dr. Jean Louis Polony, a French physician and plantation owner from Santo Domingo. Desertion from Fort Pinckney also became a problem for the 2nd Artillery. In April 1799, Lt. J. White posted several ads searching for Pedro Arezano, a native of Seville, Spain, and a private in the 2nd Artillery. White offered a \$10 reward for the return of Arezano to Fort Pinckney. Commanding officers at Forts McHenry and Warwick reported to the head of the United States military, Maj. Gen. Alexander Hamilton, that deserters from Fort Pinckney had been returned to their respective posts. Despite these issues, Fort Pinckney had joined Fort Moultrie, Fort Johnson, and Fort Mechanic in a defensive network that

11 George Izard and Charlton DeSaussure, Jr., "Memoirs of General George Izard, 1825" SCHM (Jan. 1977), 78:47-48; "Fort Pinckney," *Newport [RI] Mercury*, Oct. 30, 1798, 4; William Simmons, Certification of payment for Fort Pinckney; William Simmons to James McHenry, Jun. 25, 1799, *Papers of the War Department, 1784-1800*.



A map of Fort Pinckney drawn in 1840 by Eng. Edward B. White. The details were taken from an 1807 survey done by John Diamond. The outline of the fort is similar to what was constructed at Fort Moultrie during the same timeframe. Both forts were destroyed by an 1804 hurricane. *National Archives Cartography Division*

surrounded the Charleston Harbor and appeared formidable to incoming ships. These four forts were part of the “first system” of coastal defenses constructed along the Eastern Seaboard on land owned by the respective states.¹²

Fort Pinckney drew national attention in February 1799 as five French spies were captured in Charleston and sent to the new island fortress. Alerted by a January letter from the Secretary of State Timothy Pickering, a staunch Federalist who favored close relations with Britain, Governor Edward Rutledge was ready when the brig *Minerva* arrived in Charleston on February 21st after a 119-day voyage from Hamburg. The ship was boarded by Maj. Simons, the port inspector, and William Crafts, an agent for the War Department. Four men and their female accomplice were arrested. Three of the men were mulattoes, including Matthew Salmon, who was a deputy to the French National Convention, and it was alleged that they had come to America under orders from the French Directorate to ferment a slave rebellion on the island of Santo Domingo (Hispaniola). When

12 Izard and DeSaussure, “Memoirs of General George Izard, 1825” SCHM (Jan. 1977), 78:47-48; “Fort Pinckney,” *The Georgia Chronicle and Gazette of the State*, Oct. 6, 1798, 3; “Deserted,” *City [SC] Gazette*, Apr. 27, 1799, 3; Letter, Staats Morris to Alexander Hamilton, Jun. 18, 1799, Hamilton Papers, Founders Online.

arrested, the French citizens had been attempting to throw tubs of some sort overboard. The tubs turned out to have false bottoms that held secret diplomatic papers enclosed in wood rollers. Names in the documents were written under a cipher. According to the *Augusta Chronicle*, “The horrors of guilt were depicted strongly on the countenances of the guilty wretches, and their bodies shook with fear and trembling.”

Maj. Gen. Thomas Pinckney had the spies confined to Fort Pinckney and their luggage sent to the Customs House for review. In a play on words from the title of a Jonathan Swift satire, the newspaper called the developing incident *Tales of the Tubes*. On February 28th, the Charleston papers reported that the French prisoners had been released from close confinement and were allowed to walk about the fort. Their luggage was also returned to them. Satisfied that the papers found in the tubs were not “hostile to the peace and welfare of the United States,” Gen. Pinckney allowed these French agents to board the brig *Romain* bound for Guadeloupe on March 17th.¹³

On March 12, 1799, Maj. Gen. Charles Cotesworth Pinckney wrote to James McHenry, the Secretary of War, lamenting the condition of Fort Johnson and asking for cannon and carriages for Fort Moultrie. He also praised his namesake, Fort Pinckney, on Shute's Folly, noting that it was “well constructed of brick & the foundations laid upon Piles—The cannon are mounted on double garrison carriages, & fire over the parapet which is not cut with embrasures.” The new fort possessed a reverberating furnace for heating red hot shot that could set afire wooden ships and their canvas sails. All three forts soon received two ten-inch mortars, “at which Ships are greatly alarm'd notwithstanding this uncertainty of their hitting them.”¹⁴

The nation's third president, Thomas Jefferson, was more sympathetic to the French, and tensions, as well as military appropriations, quickly abated. The Virginian disliked the idea of a large federal government, and he had little interest in establishing permanent coastal fortifications. Thus, the four Charleston forts soon stood virtually abandoned, and a furious hurricane all but destroyed them in September 1804. Charleston lay defenseless until 1808, when Congress appropriated \$1,000,000 for a “second system” of coastal defenses. New York,

13 “Beware of French Emissaries,” *Augusta [GA] Chronicle*, Mar. 2, 1799, 3; Letters, Thomas Pickering to Charles Cotesworth Pinckney, 1799, Charles Cotesworth Pinckney letters, University of South Carolina Library; “From a Charleston Paper of February 28,” *Centinel [NJ] of Freedom*, Mar. 19, 1799, 2.

14 Charles Cotesworth Pinckney to James McHenry, Mar. 12, 1799, *The Papers of the Revolutionary Era Pinckney Statesmen*, digital edition, Constance B. Schultz, ed., Rotunda project, University of Virginia Press, 2016.

Norfolk, Charleston, and New Orleans were designated to receive priority attention. This Congressional action was a direct reaction to growing tension between Jefferson's young nation and the British navy. Great Britain was, at the time, fully engaged in a desperate fight with Napoleonic France and, as such, had little respect for American claims of neutrality on the open seas. This English contempt was highlighted in 1807 when the HMS *Leopold*, seeking to impress seamen for the Royal Navy, forcibly boarded an American navy frigate, the USS *Chesapeake*. Many Americans considered Britain's indifference to maritime law an affront to their national pride. Secretary of the Treasury Albert Gallatin added fuel to the fire by predicting the arrival of a British fleet and landing party somewhere along the coast within months.¹⁵

15 Weirick, *Castle Pinckney: Past, Present, Future*, 14; Wade, *Artillerists and Engineers*, 204; "Fortifications & Gunboats," *ASP*, 1:204.