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## Archeological Investigations at Architectural Fort Dorchester (38DR4): An Architectural Assessment

Richard F. Carrillo

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## Archeological Investigations at Architectural Fort Dorchester (38DR4): An Architectural Assessment

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ARCHEOLOGICAL INVESTIGATIONS AT ARCHITECTURAL  
FORT DORCHESTER (38DR4): AN ARCHITECTURAL ASSESSMENT<sup>24</sup>

by

Richard F. Carrillo

with

Historical Resume

by

Travis L. Bianchi

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## *INTRODUCTION*

The Town of Dorchester, founded in 1696 on the Ashley River in present-day Dorchester County, is one of the earliest major settlements in South Carolina. It was established by a group of Congregationalist settlers from the First Church of Dorchester in the Massachusetts Bay Province and took its name from the Dorchester settlement in Massachusetts. During the eighteenth century it became a center of commerce and trade. By mid-century, a powder magazine protected by a tabby walled fort became a part of the town complex along with the houses, business establishments, and church with an imposing church tower and churchyard. By the time of the American Revolution, Dorchester was the third largest settlement in South Carolina.

The effects of the Revolutionary War were devastating to this settlement. This was not because it became a major battlefield, but because when the British evacuated it in 1781 they destroyed as much of the town as they could. Following the War the emphasis on trade and settlement had shifted inland and Dorchester never recovered. The decline of the town was so rapid that by 1788 it was in ruins (Walker 1941: 55).

The ruins of Dorchester remained a disintegrating rubble, "lost in the woods" for more than a century and a half. Remarkably, agriculture or other development did not encroach upon the town site and its ruins, including the tabby wall of the fort and the huge church tower, were preserved largely by neglect. In the mid-twentieth century the property came under State protection as a park and was acquired as a gift to the State from the West Virginia Pulp and Paper Corporation in 1960, under the protection of the South Carolina Department of Parks, Recreation and Tourism.

In April, 1972 an agreement was reached between the South Carolina Department of Parks, Recreation and Tourism and the University of South Carolina, through its Institute of Archeology and Anthropology, for archeological research to be done at the site of Fort Dorchester. This was planned as the initial step in a long range archeological research program. The first two or three years of this program were planned for excavations at the site of the tabby fort and powder magazine. This was to be followed by excavations at the church and churchyard area with later years of work to be devoted to the excavations of the townsite.

The initial exploratory excavations were conducted in 1972, in and around the tabby fort and powder magazine. This preliminary work was reported (Carrillo 1973) with recommendation for another two seasons of work on the site of Fort Dorchester before beginning work at the church and in the townsite. In April, 1973 a second agreement was negotiated for continuation of the work as planned.

The present report covers the work of the 1973 season and includes a brief historical perspective of the Town of Dorchester from its inception to its demise. Particular emphasis is placed upon the tabby fort and powder magazine, known as Fort Dorchester. The archeological work is then treated incorporating the results of the first season into the results of the fuller archeological excavations of the second season. This is followed by recommendations for future research.

One purpose of this research was to provide a basic body of information upon which plans for development of the site could be formulated. This purpose has been achieved, in large part, but the planned third season would be advisable for any extensive development of Fort Dorchester.

### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

There are many individuals who have contributed their efforts to this project and those efforts are sincerely appreciated.

Dr. Robert L. Stephenson, Director of the Institute of Archeology and Anthropology, and State Archeologist, University of South Carolina, was responsible for the overall supervision and administration of the project. Dr. Stephenson's advice during the course of the excavation and while this report was being prepared and edited is sincerely appreciated. The other Institute archeologists: John D. Combes, Assistant Director; Leland G. Ferguson, Stanley South, Albert C. Goodyear, and Kenneth E. Lewis contributed much to the project through discussions of the work and visit to the site.

Travis L. Bianchi, Research Assistant, was a crewmember during the excavation and, following the field work, conducted the historical research and provided a draft of the historical section which appears in this report. Other Institute personnel who contributed their efforts to this report are: Leslie L. Beuschel, Laboratory Supervisor; Darby Erd, Scientific Illustrator; Gordon H. Brown, Scientific Photographer; Carleen R. Sexton, Administrative Clerk; Maryjane G. Rhett, Research Analyst, and Myra L. Smith, Secretary.

The South Carolina Department of Parks, Recreation and Tourism, whose foresight in attempting to preserve and develop the historic resources of the State of South Carolina, was responsible for the concept of this project. Mr. Janson L. Cox, former Chief Historian, P.R.T., was responsible for initiating archeological research at Dorchester, and Michael Foley, Chief Historian, has carried on Janson's interest in Dorchester State Park.

The crewmembers who served diligently, often under trying circumstances of weather and other conditions, deserve a major share of appreciation for their hard work and cheerful attitude. These crewmembers were: Travis L. Bianchi, Lee R. Chickering, Richard T. Edwards, Emily Green, Alan Hinnant, J. Baird Hoffmire, LeRoy Humphries, Joseph Jay, David Miller, and Patricia Wells.

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## HISTORICAL RESUME OF DORCHESTER

### The Settlement

On November 20, 1676 John Smith, a friend of the Earl of Shaftesbury, was granted 1,800 acres on the peninsula between the Ashley River and Dorchester Creek. The Creek was known at that time by its Indian name of Booshooee and that name or its variation, Booshoo, was given to the immediately surrounding area. John Smith was a merchant in Charles Towne and evidently neither he nor his family took an interest in the grant. There are no accounts of Smith settling or sponsoring a settlement on the Ashley. Smith died sometime prior to the end of 1682. His wife remarried in December of that year and again in 1684 after her second husband died (Salley 1935).

There evidently were no heirs that issued from the marriage of John and Mary Smith and Mary and her later husbands failed to retain the grant, for on July 7, 1696 the same tract of land was granted to a John Stevens (Salley 1935). This grant was not for Stevens' personal use but was obtained by him for a group of religious settlers coming from the First Church of Dorchester in the Massachusetts Bay Province. These colonists were the descendants of a group of Puritans who migrated from England to Massachusetts. Stevens subsequently deeded the land to the individual colonists. The Dorchester settlers obtained another 2,250 acres west of the Booshoo grant. This property had been previously granted in the name of a person named Rose. The Dorchester settlers thus had a total of 4,050 acres on the Ashley River for their settlement (Smith 1905: 71, Stacey 1899: 2).

Upon arriving, the Dorchester colonists had been urged by Governor Joseph Blake to settle at New London on the Edisto River but after visit-

ing the sites on both the Ashley and Edisto Rivers and being entertained by the large landowners near both locations, the group decided to settle on the Booshoo tract. Elder Pratt of the Dorchester church states in his diary that after arriving in Charles Towne on December 20, 1695, and spending a week there, the party went by water up to Mr. Norman's place. William Norman had applied for a survey of the 320-acre tract next to the Rose grant taken over by Stevens on September 22, 1684 and the name William Norman appears on the list of people going from Dorchester to Carolina (Smith 1905: 65, 68, and 69). On January 26, 1696, Mr. Lord; the minister of the Dorchester church, preached a sermon at Mr. Norman's house (Salley 1935). Elder Pratt mentions in his diary that people came from as far as ten miles away to hear Mr. Lord's first sermon in Carolina (Smith 1905: 76). This Norman tract was settled and inhabited prior to the arrival of the Dorchester Congregationalists and Norman himself evidently was a forerunner of the Congregationalist migrants and partial instigator of their move (Stacey 1899: 3).

When the Dorchester colony arrived in Carolina the Ashley River and surrounding lands were in various stages of development. The largest and most influential landowner of a settled tract in that area was Lady Axtell, the widow of Landgrave Daniel Axtell, who lived at Newington Plantation on the Ashley River. Elder Pratt speaks of being entertained by Lady Axtell and states that although two other persons were seeking to receive the grant of the Smith lands by currying favor with Lady Axtell she and her neighbors were more kindly disposed to the church (Smith 1905: 67, 68, and 82).

To the southeast of the Dorchester colony all the land between them and Charles Towne was taken up by grants and settlements. To the northeast

about six miles away was the thickly settled Goose Creek region which had been first settled about twenty years previously. To the west of the colony were the already mentioned settlements of Lady Axtell and William Norman as well as other grants and settlements such as that of Benjamin Waring. Across the Ashley River and to the south lay Lord Shaftesbury's barony with its settlements.

Henry A. M. Smith states in his article "The Town of Dorchester in South Carolina" that the town was located in an "old field" on the bluff over the Ashley River (Smith 1905: 64). This was probably an abandoned Indian field as this area had been inhabited by the Cussee Indians at the time of white settlement and there is no indication that John Smith or his family established any kind of settlement on the site (Salley 1935). Archeological investigation of the area has demonstrated the existence of Indian occupation dating from well before white contact. This archeological record, in conjunction with historic records of Indian occupation, clearly indicates that the peninsula between the Ashley River and Dorchester Creek has long been a desirable location for habitation (Milling 1969: 35 and 38).

In March of 1697 the 4,050 acres were divided by drawing lots and the name Dorchester Township applied to the whole. The site that became the village of Dorchester was set aside as a place of trade near the river. Land was set aside for a commons area next to the place of trade; for a mill at the mouth of the creek; and for a church. There was also to be a public square in the center of the place of trade. The lots were divided into two ranges, the first along the river and the second across the highway, stretching as far as the eastern part of the present town of Summerville. For a period of time the terms Booshoo and Rose's were

applied to the original parts of the Stevens grant. Gradually, as the area grew, these appellations were forgotten and the name Dorchester came to mean the entire area of settlement. Persons other than members of the Dorchester congregation were allowed to draw for lots in the township. This was specifically mentioned by Elder Pratt in his diary so there must have been an early awareness of Dorchester's potential as a settlement location (Smith 1905: 71-73).

The Congregationalists did not locate their church in the place of trade of the village but on a lot in the first range about one and a half miles to the west on the main road or "Broad Path" and facing on the river. The brick structure was erected around 1700 and came to be known as the "White Meeting House" due to its exterior walls being covered with white plaster. Burned by the British in 1781, it was rebuilt after the war and used by the Presbyterians until the mid-nineteenth century. The Charleston earthquake of 1886 caused the structure to collapse and its fragmented walls and cemetery are today being considered for entry on the National Register of Historic Sites and Places (Stacey 1899: 16; Smith 1905: 77-78, 91-93; 1919: 157-158).

The town of Dorchester became a trading and distribution center for the frontier northwest of Charles Towne. It was the farthest point accessible on the Ashley River by boat from Charles Towne and had the added advantage of being easily defensible. Many grants were obtained in the Dorchester area and the Congregationalist group overflowed into the region known as Beech Hill across, and farther up, the Ashley. The village itself in 1708 contained about 350 persons and a number of merchants were established there, some of them connected with London-based firms. The Yemassee Indian War of 1715 did not directly touch

Dorchester but that part of the province south of the Stono River was devastated and the area north of Dorchester at Goose Creek was attacked. The province itself suffered great losses in lives and money. Over 400 persons were killed and a decade of economic despondency ensued. This served to delay further settlement of the province south of the Ashley River and thus kept Dorchester in the position of being on the frontier. In 1723 an Act was passed to settle a fair and markets in Dorchester, referred to as "a frontier in that part of the country" (Wallace 1961: 90; Smith 1905: 79-80).

Not only was the village of Dorchester a Congregationalist settlement but it became the center of the parish for the Anglican Church as well. In 1706 the Act for the Establishment of the Church of England was passed and six parishes were created in the province, Dorchester being included in St. Andrew's. In 1719 St. Andrew's Parish was divided and Dorchester and the area around became St. George's Parish. In the same year a Statute providing money to defray costs of a church building was passed and construction was begun. This new structure, not the "White Meeting House", was located in the village of Dorchester on five lots near the public square and the parsonage was on the north side of the public road about a quarter of a mile west of the church (Smith 1905: 79, 88, and 89).

The parish church of St. George's seems to have expanded in the period between its construction and the Revolution. By 1736 it was being repaired and enlarged and three years later a new parsonage was constructed. In 1752 the parsonage was enlarged, slaves were purchased for the service of the rector, and a steeple was added to the church. A subscription campaign purchased bells for the newly constructed steeple.

The church evidently was heavily damaged as a result of military activities in Dorchester during the American Revolution. This damage is usually attributed to the British, as their forces occupied the town for most of the war but the Council of Safety of the State of South Carolina, at one point in its plans for fortifying Dorchester, included fortifications around the church. The church was repaired in 1811 but the Dorchester area, by that time, contained too few parishoners to keep it active. The town of Summerville a few miles to the north was replacing Dorchester as both a place of trade and a place of worship. By 1820 the church building of St. George's was reported in ruins and there was no rector or congregation. Forest fires destroyed the walls and woodwork and most of the bricks were removed for construction purposes elsewhere. Only the bell-tower remained and the 1886 earthquake left but a remnant of that standing (Smith 1905: 88-89).

By mid-eighteenth century the Congregationalist settlers of Dorchester had overflowed their original grant into the surrounding area and another meeting house was constructed; this one a frame structure at Beech Hill across, and farther up, the Ashley. The Dorchester settlers had found themselves limited by the original grant of 4,050 acres and had tried to expand but land in the immediate area of Dorchester had all been granted. Some land was available in the Beech Hill section but there was not enough. Young people were moving away from the Dorchester area to places where more land was available. Those inheriting land found that their ancestors' lots had been subdivided to the point of not supporting a family. As a result of this overcrowding the Congregationalists began to look elsewhere for land. In 1752 they secured two grants of land totaling 31,950 acres on the

coast of Georgia in what was to become Liberty County. During the years 1752-56 the Congregationalists migrated to Georgia, abandoning their land and church. This was the end of Dorchester as a Congregationalist settlement and no longer did that church maintain a minister there (Smith 1905: 80-81, 1919: 153; Stacy 1899: 2-3).

Although its population was depleted, Dorchester retained its importance as a supply center for the countryside until the time of the American Revolution. The surrounding planters still looked to it as the head of navigation on the Ashley River and, at the outbreak of the Revolutionary War, it was one of that group of villages in South Carolina such as Camden or Beaufort, that was exceeded in size only by Charles Towne and George Town. With the capture of Charles Towne in 1780 Dorchester became a British post occupied by a small garrison. At the close of the Revolution its prominence declined to the point that it ceased to exist. In 1788 Bishop Asbury remarked during his travels that he had passed at Dorchester the remains of a large town in which the church and houses were in ruins (Smith 1905: 81, 83-86).

Dorchester declined after the Revolution because it was no longer a frontier village upon which the surrounding planters depended for merchandise. The population of the state began to shift inland more, roads were improved, and the area around Dorchester declined in importance as an agricultural producer. Charles Towne became more readily accessible than it had been in the past. Dorchester's military significance as a defensive position was reduced with the expansion of the middle and upcountry and the pushing back of the frontier. During this same period the village of Summerville, originally founded as a resort for planters, grew and became the population center of the area.

Summerville provided a healthier setting for a town site than Dorchester had with its nearness to the marshes and swamps; one of the reasons that the Congregationalists had abandoned Dorchester was the succession of complaints regarding the unhealthy climate and Summerville's dry sandy pine ridges provided relief from malarial infestation that Dorchester could not offer (Smith 1905: 85-87; Stacey 1899: 2-3). The ruins of Dorchester were gradually robbed of their bricks to provide construction materials for the new town of Summerville.

*The Powder Magazine and Fort*

On February 17, 1757 the Commissioners of Fortifications of the Province of South Carolina were authorized and directed by Governor William Henry Lyttelton to build a strong, enclosed, powder magazine in the village of Dorchester. The need for such a structure was an outgrowth of the struggle between France and England for control of much of North America. While South Carolina played no direct role in the French and Indian War (1755-1763) being waged farther north on the continent, that territorial struggle was manifested in the province as the Cherokee War (1760-1761). The general feeling of unrest and insecurity preceding the outbreak of the Cherokee War in South Carolina created the need for a fortified powder magazine at Dorchester in 1757. All across the back country of the province at that same time stockades were being erected around homes and trading posts (JCF 1755, Meriwether 1940: 211).

The Dorchester powder magazine was to be constructed of brick. Mr. Humphrey Sommers obtained the contract for the brickwork at a rate of fifteen pounds per thousand brick, plus freight and lime. The Com-

missioners of Fortifications decided to have the wall around the magazine constructed of tabby and Thomas Gordon was placed in charge of that operation. The Commissioners advertised for lime and oyster shell for Fort Dorchester and Fort Johnson. On June 23, 1757 it was agreed by the Commissioners "... to have a large quantity of Bags ready to be filled with Sand in case of an attack." (JCF 1757)

During July, August, September, and October of 1757 the Commissioners paid out money to various persons for brick, surveying services and oyster shell. However on September 29th their Journal states:

... Ordered that the Clerk do write to Mr. Sommers that they expect he will begin the Magazine at Dorchester immediately.

On November 2nd Mr. John Joor was employed by the Commissioners to construct the works, hire overseers and laborers, and purchase materials. His salary was to be forty pounds per month (JCF 1757).

On December 22, 1757 the Journal states that "... it is the Opinion of the Board that as Mr. Joor is unacquainted with carrying on the Tappy Work at Dorchester in a proper manner That Mr. Hume be empowered to discharge him." Again Mr. Thomas Gordon was employed by the Commissioners to construct the tabby walls. Throughout 1758 and 1759 work progressed on the Dorchester powder magazine and its enclosing wall although evidently spasmodically. On May 8, 1760 the Commissioners directed that any funds remaining from the Dorchester project were to be used for the Charleston fortifications (JCF 1760).

As the events of 1770-1775 made it evident that the American colonies were soon to become embroiled in a war with the Crown, preparations were made by the various colonies for this conflict. In South Carolina guns and powder were collected and various fortifications were erected or

strengthened. On July 3, 1775 the Council of Safety for the Province of South Carolina resolved that William Henry Drayton, Miles Brewton, Arthur Middleton, and Thomas Heyward be a committee to survey the village of Dorchester and report back as to the estimated cost of making it an armed post (JCF 1858).

The Second Provincial Congress was informed by Captain Polk on November 4, 1775, that his company of militia Rangers was at Dorchester and awaiting pay and further orders. Captain Polk was sent 500 pounds for his company and ordered to do duty at Dorchester until further notice. On November 9th Captain Polk's Rangers were augmented by two companies from the Provincial Infantry regiments by means of the following letter to Colonel William Moultrie:

In Congress, Charles-Town  
November 9 1775

Sir,

You are to detach two companies from the provincial regiments of foot, under such command as you shall judge most proper for the service, to march immediately for Dorchester, for reinforcing the troops already there, and for effectually guarding the cannon, gun-powder, stores, and public records, at that place, 'til further orders from this Congress, or authority derived therefrom.

You are to give orders that a sufficient number of negroes now in the public service be obtained from the Committee of Dorchester, to remove the cannon now lying near the water side to a spot most safe and convenient near the fort or barracks, with special orders to the centinels to prevent any persons handling or going near them, without proper authority.

By order of Congress

William-Henry Drayton, President  
(JCS 1858)

There was evidently further construction or completion of what had been begun in 1757 at Dorchester, for on November 24, 1775 the Parochial Committee of St. George was empowered to either hire or impress a schooner and hands to carry bricks for the "public works erecting

at Dorchester". The next day it was ordered that a Lieutenant Colonel Roberts go to Dorchester and:

... give directions for putting the magazine fort in such posture as he shall think will best enable it to repel any sudden attack that may be made upon it, and to order the cannon to such places and in such manner as he shall deem the most proper for its defense and then repair to his post at Fort Johnson with all dispatch. And that while the Colonel be at Dorchester, he shall there reconnoitre the ground, and examine the plans projected for the defence thereof; and if he finds them deficient, that he do make such alterations in them as he shall think proper, or to totally reject them, and delineate such a plan as he may think will most conduce to the rendering it a strong armed post.

At the same time the Committee of St. George's Parish was authorized and required to procure and deposit at the Dorchester post provisions sufficient to feed 1,000 men for a month (JCS 1858).

At the end of November 1775 Dorchester was utilized as a rendezvous point with one-third of the Berkeley County regiment of militia, one-third of the Colleton County regiment, and 200 men from Granville County ordered drafted and marched to Dorchester immediately with the remaining two-thirds being held in readiness as reserves (JCS 1858).

The Second Council of Safety, appointed by the Provincial Congress in November ordered that the militia at Dorchester were to be relieved every two weeks (JSCS 1859).

On Christmas Day, 1775 Henry Laurens, president of the Second Council of Safety issued a letter appointing Colonel Glover commander of the post at Dorchester. Laurens mentioned the lack of proper quarters for the troops at Dorchester and that they lacked ammunition. He directed Glover to apply pressure upon the Commissioners for fortifying Dorchester so that these basic necessities might be acquired:

We are, of opinion, that if you were on the spot, you would be urging the commissioners, and by your own application and direction, soon cause such barracks, guard room, and place for confinement of prisoners, to be fitted up, or built as would remove all ground for complaint. A few centry boxes are also wanting (JSCS 1859).

In addition to completing or improving the fortification of the Dorchester powder magazine, the Second Council of Safety was concerned with strengthening the town itself for on December 27, 1775, a Doctor Oliphant was appointed to confer with the Commissioners for fortifying Dorchester and instigate a plan for fortifying the church there. This plan was delivered to the Council on January 6, 1776, and on January 15th, was approved and ordered into execution, although without any mention of the details of the works involved. On that same date the Council issued payment of thirteen pounds to one Zachariah Flurry for construction of the much needed "centry" boxes at Dorchester (JSCS 1859).

In addition to being a magazine for the storage of powder, cannon, flint, and lead; Dorchester was also utilized for the storing of other public supplies such as flour, rice, pork, and forage. Throughout January and February of 1776 the Journal of the Second Council of Safety continues to list a number of payments, some of them very large, "...on account of the fortifications at Dorchester" and on into March for the hiring of laborers on the works at Dorchester (JSCS 1859).

For a period of time certain important public documents were safely stored at Dorchester. It was resolved by the General Assembly on April 1, 1776 that the Acts of the General Assembly and the Journals of the Commons House of Assembly be returned to Charleston from Dorchester. A later entry in the General Assembly Journals states that: "Journals, books, and other papers belonging to the said House" had been ordered secured at Dorchester in October of 1775 (JGAHR 1776).

The defeat of the British fleet off Sullivan's Island in June of 1776 and the concentration of the first campaigns of the American Revolution in the New England and Mid-Atlantic colonies insured for South Carolina a certain temporary isolation from the major aspects of the Revolution. After the Battle of Sullivan's Island, the Revolution was fought almost entirely in vicious and bloody Tory versus Whig confrontations, primarily in the Upcountry. This changed, however, with the capture of Charleston in May of 1780 by General Henry Clinton, bringing full scale military activity to South Carolina. 1780 also saw the defeat of General Gates' army at Camden and the establishment of a string of British garrisons stretching across the province from the coast to the foothills of the mountains. The Whig victories at King's Mountain in October of 1780 and Cowpens in January of 1781 marked the slow beginning of a turn of the tide.

Equally as important as General Greene's Continental Army operating in South Carolina were the forces of the various Partisan leaders: Marion, Sumter, and Pickens. Beginning in the spring of 1781 the Partisans and General Green's army began to force the British across the Province and back towards Charleston, causing them to relinquish their garrisons one by one. This was the period of combined Partisan and Continental victories at Fort Watson, Fort Motte, Fort Granby, and Orangeburg. Ninety Six was evacuated, as was Camden and several smaller posts. Major battles, such as Hobkirk Hill and Eutaw Springs, while battlefield defeats or draws for General Greene, proved empty victories for Rawdon and Stuart as the British continued falling back towards Charleston in the face of increased Whig opposition, broken lines of supply and communication, and Greene's insistence upon advancing even in the face of seeming defeat. With the

recapturing of Dorchester in December of 1781 the British were confined almost entirely to Charleston and its immediate area. Cornwallis had surrendered at Yorktown in October of 1781 but Charleston was not evacuated by the British until September of 1782.

Fort Dorchester, of course, had been captured by the British after the fall of Charleston in May of 1780 and had been garrisoned as an outlying defensive post of Charleston along with Monck's Corner and the Quarter House. During the Partisan campaign against British outposts during the spring and summer of 1781 Dorchester was attacked on July 14th by Colonel Henry "Light Horse Harry" Lee, supported on the east by Colonel Wade Hampton who was to cut off communication with the garrison at Monck's Corner and between that place and Charleston. When Lee arrived at Dorchester he did not encounter the expected resistance due to a greatly reduced garrison which evidently had fled, leaving behind a number of horses and several wagons, one of which contained much-needed ammunition (McCrady 1902: 326-328).

In November of 1781 General Greene with 300 cavalry taken from Lee, Washington and Sumter, Lee's Infantry Legion, and detachments of Maryland and Virginia Continentals and under the command of Wade Hampton struck out to surprise the post at Dorchester. The main part of General Greene's army was marching under the command of Colonel Williams toward Four Hole as a diversionary tactic while Greene hoped to surprise the British garrison composed of 400 infantry, 150 cavalry and some militia. Despite his secretive movements Greene's actions were known to the British by means of their Loyalist informants and the British lay in wait on November 30th. Late on the Day of December 1st, Lee had still not appeared and a scouting party of fifty Loyalists was dispatched from

the fort, only to run into Wade Hampton's advance guard and lose approximately half their number. This resounding defeat evidently caused the garrison to believe that attack by the entire American army was imminent for during the night the garrison destroyed what they could not carry with them, threw their cannons into the Ashley River and fled towards Charleston. Due to the Bridge being taken up, Greene could not pursue even if he had chosen to attack a numerically superior force. The Dorchester garrison marched to the Quarter House, five miles from the city, and prepared for what they believed to be an approaching attack on the city (McCrary 1902: 490-492).

This for all practical purposes ended the tactical importance of Fort Dorchester in the American Revolution. McCrary in his History of South Carolina in the Revolution lists two more actions at or near Dorchester, one on December 29, 1781 and one on April 24, 1782 but both appear to have been skirmishes involving scouting parties hanging about the outskirts of Charleston rather than activities involving the fortifications. In later years the fort was utilized as a tile factory and as a source of bricks for the construction of buildings in Summerville.

## ARCHEOLOGICAL EXCAVATIONS AT FORT DORCHESTER

### Introduction

The second season of archeological research at Fort Dorchester was undertaken from June 7th through August 2nd by the writer and a crew of ten. The 1973 excavations were conducted using the archeological and historical results obtained during the initial season which indicated an initial construction date for the fort of c. 1757, and expanding on the evidence of architectural data seen in various areas within the confines of the structure. In addition, excavations were carried out in the vicinity of the church tower to detect evidence of a palisade which was purportedly constructed during the Revolutionary War.

The results of the excavations conducted during the 1973 season are incorporated in the revised map at the back of this report (Fig. 1).

### Review of the 1972 Excavations

The results obtained during the preliminary exploratory excavations provided the basis from which to proceed with the second season of archeological investigations. The initial phase of archeological excavations conducted in and around the tabby structure provided evidence of architectural features which were examined during the subsequent excavations. The initial results provided data on which to base tentative interpretations subject to possible re-interpretation when the complete architectural sphere of the tested areas is accomplished.

Along the interior areas of the east and south walls, poured lime floors were found. It appeared highly probable that these areas may have served as the living and/or working quarters. The northeast and southwest bastions also contained poured lime floors, but these bastions contained

fill within a few feet of the total height of their respective walls (Fig. 2). An English half-penny dated 1775 was found immediately below tile fragments located near the surface of the northeast bastion. The coin served to indicate that the fill had been placed in the bastion in 1775 or later. The interpretation that was made regarding the poured lime floors is that they were attributable to the Revolutionary War Period based upon the artifacts found upon them or within close proximity above them.

The archeological evidence recovered in the southwest bastion indicated that a post had been set through the tabby floor (Fig. 3). The post was burned which may have been necessary prior to filling. The interpretation which was made relative to the bastions is that sometime during the occupation period of the fort, swivel guns mounted upon a post and platform arrangement were used. Fort Prince George, a fort constructed during the same time period in Oconee County, South Carolina, has a similar arrangement at four bastions (Combes MS). The results of the 1973 excavations tend to add further support to this interpretation.

The brick foundation comprising the south face of the southeast bastion was initially believed to represent the initial phase of construction of the fort, as was noted in the Journal of the Commissioners of Fortifications regarding the initial use of brick, which was later rescinded, and the tabby construction was used instead. It appears that the construction in this area necessitated the use of a buried brick foundation for support as this bastion is located on the slope of the hill which descends into the flood plain of the Ashley River (Figs. 4 & 5).

The northwest bastion was subjected to considerably more testing than its counterparts during the 1972 excavations, as it initially did not



FIGURE 2: Soil Fill in Southwest Bastion. View to the South.

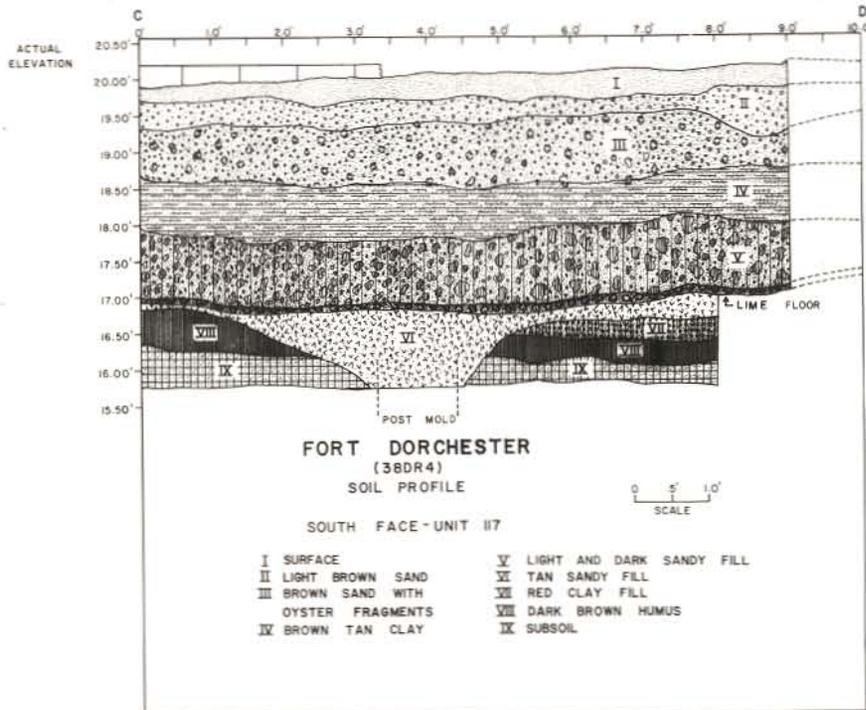


FIGURE 3: Soil Profile Showing Location of Burned Post in Southwest Bastion. Looking South.

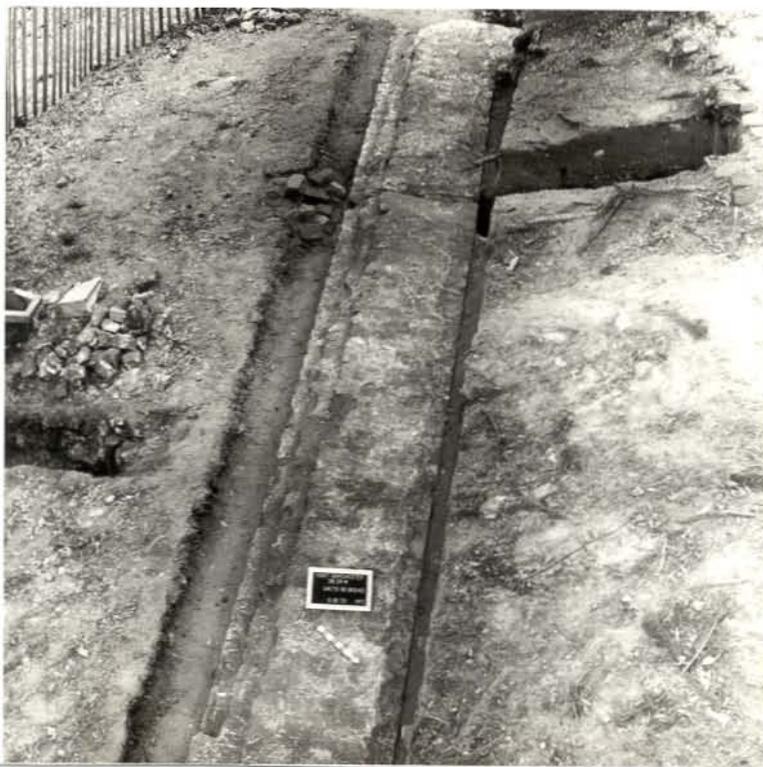


FIGURE 4: Brick Foundation in Southeast Bastion.

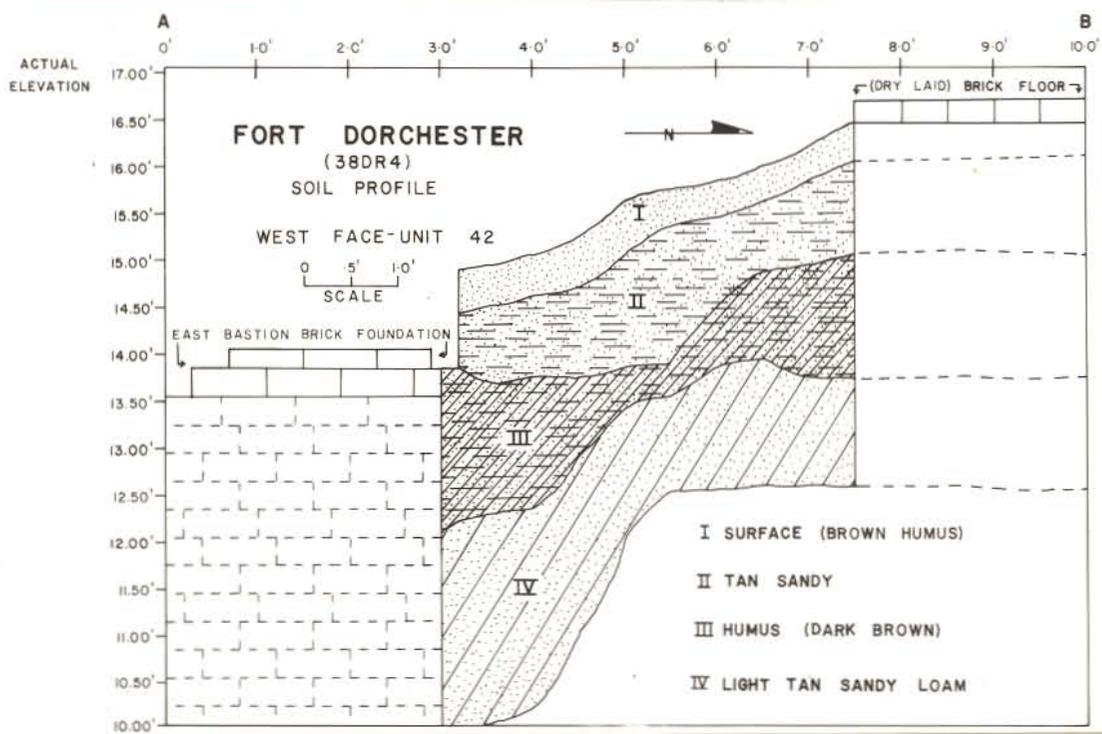


FIGURE 5: Soil Profile of Southeast Bastion. View to the West.

appear to have undergone as much alteration as the other bastions. Portions of a brick floor were found along the west wall, in addition to a brick drain. Two post impressions, one charred, were located in the brick floor paralleling the wall believed to have served as supports for a roof or banquette. The drain also contains two extensions upon which bricks may have been situated (Fig. 1). Several postmolds and a feature resembling a ditch were found below the brick flooring. A new interpretation relative to this area will be discussed in the section dealing with the 1973 excavations.

A brick-filled feature was located along the east wall in Units 15, 29, and 33 (Fig. 1). This feature had been entirely exposed but not excavated during the 1972 season. It was subjected to excavation during 1973.

Another area tested was situated between the northwest bastion and the salleyport. A considerable quantity of artifacts, primarily ceramics, had been recovered in this area, and it was thought to represent a special use area such as an eating or cooking facility.

The most prominent architectural feature is the powder magazine. Historical information relative to Fort Dorchester emphasizes the magazine above all other architectural features associated with the tabby structure. The magazine seems to have been the primary concern of the Commissioners of Fortifications, and the reason for the construction of Fort Dorchester. This is emphasized in a letter dated February 24, 1757 from Governor Lyttleton to the Commissioners directing them to:

... take the necessary measures to construct a Powder Magazine in the Village of Dorchester to be properly Inclosed & Strengthened... (Journal 1755-70).

Its importance was once again manifested during the Revolution as is indicated by the following excerpt dated December 9, 1775 to:

... repair forthwith to Dorchester, and there to take upon him the command of the troops and militia at that post for protection of the magazine of gunpowder, the artillery, and public records (Collections 1859: 370).

A limited excavation of the magazine was undertaken to obtain a cross-section of the structure from which to proceed with further excavation (Fig. 6). From the preliminary excavations, it was determined that the interior of the magazine had two interior buttresses along the east and west walls, in addition to two raised brick platforms, which were tentatively interpreted as representing post supports.

Test excavations were also conducted on the exterior of the structure during the initial exploratory phase (Fig. 1). The excavations revealed ditches which may have contained a wooden stockade and served additional defense purposes (Fig. 18). Several other features were recovered, but did not reveal sufficient information from which to make interpretations.

The exploratory excavations, in addition to establishing a base from which to proceed with further archeology, served to place the structure within its proper temporal period. Prior to initiation of historical and archeological research, it was thought that the construction of the fort had occurred during the Revolution. Subsequent historical documentation revealed a construction date c. 1757 although its principle use appears to have occurred during the Revolution. The archeology served to substantiate the historical record through the recovered artifacts.

Based on the results obtained during the 1972 excavations, the areas to be subjected to detailed archeology were laid out:

1. The Powder Magazine: This structure represents the purpose for the construction of Fort Dorchester, and is believed to have high interpretive potential. The plans consisted of completely exposing the structure to reveal all architectural features, and stabilization would be effected.

2. The Bastions: Two bastions would be extensively tested in an effort to determine the architectural function of each. The exploratory archeology indicated that the southwestern and northwestern bastions appeared to differ in architectural content possibly indicative of functional differences. The northeastern bastion, appearing to have served a similar function as the southwestern bastions, was not excavated. The southeastern bastion was not subjected to archeology at this time due to the fact that it was thought to have served a similar function to that of the northwest bastion.
3. East and South Interior Areas: Extensive excavations would proceed along the east and south areas of the interior portions of the structure where a poured lime floor had been located. It was thought that these areas represented locations where living or working occurred and as such should reveal substantial architectural data.
4. The North Wall: Although no architectural features were found in this area, a considerable quantity of artifacts, primarily ceramics, were recovered. It was thought that this may be indicative of a specific use area.
5. Cellar Ruins: A brick-filled cellar, located along the east wall would be excavated as it held strong potential for interpretation.
6. Church Area: In addition, test excavations would be conducted in the area of the church tower to substantiate historical references which indicated that a palisade ditch had been built around the church during the Revolution.

### 1973 Archeological Excavations

During the initial phase of archeological excavations the dimensions of the structure were taken and a ten-foot grid system was established within the interior of the structure. The resulting map (Fig. 1 contained in the back of this report) provides a precise record of the dimensions of the existing structure, and includes all relevant architectural details that have been located. In addition, the grid system establishes a horizontal control for the artifacts recovered.

A total of nine datum points was used. Datum Number 1 serves as the basic point from which all dimensions were initiated and was used as a

temporary bench mark upon which all elevations were based. Datum Number 1 was tied into the permanent U.S.G.S. Bench Mark Pt. 54, Number 1 (1935) located approximately 150 feet north of T.B.M. Number 2 and having an elevation of 19.27 feet above sea level.

The grid units which had been established the previous year were used during the 1973 excavations. These were subsequently broken down into four five-foot square units within each 10 foot grid to allow for a finer control of recovered material.

#### East Wall Area

An area measuring 20 by 90 feet encompassing 56 five-foot grid units was excavated along the east area (Figs. 1 & 7). A considerable amount of fill had occurred within the northeast bastion and sloped towards the magazine. This fill encompassed approximately one-third of the northern portion along the east wall (Fig. 8). The excavations revealed that in the area adjacent to the northeast bastion a considerable amount of fill had been deposited over the poured lime floor found during the previous excavation. In this area (Units 7 & 8), four levels were defined. The surface level was composed of a dark grey humus situated upon a brown-tan sandy fill (Level A). Level B consisted of a mixture of mottled yellow-brown grey fill, brown clay soil, and mottled yellow-brown clay fill. This fill overlay a dark brown humus zone comprising the fill immediately above the poured lime floor (Level C). Below the poured lime floor is another dark brown humus zone comprising Level D (Fig. 9).

The above levels, based on the artifact content, were assigned accordingly to the following historical periods: Level A comprises the period after the Revolution to the present. In this level the primary



FIGURE 8: Profile Showing Sloping Fill. View to the Northeast.



FIGURE 9: Profile Showing Stratigraphic Sequence in Northeast Area of Fort. View to the North.

artifacts found were tile fragments which resulted from the period following the Revolution in which the fort was used as a tile factory (Minutes 1799). Level B represents fill which is post-Revolution. Level C comprises the Revolutionary War Period, and Level D is associated with the initial occupation c. 1757+. The material underlying Level D is aboriginal, and was not excavated.

The excavations along the east wall area revealed 20 posts and postmolds within Level C (Fig. 1), most of which were encompassed within the poured lime floor. The floor was badly deteriorated in some areas, possibly due to leaching, making it impossible to define its specific limits. The posts appear to be distributed in a random fashion. No definite patterns are evident from which to extract information regarding structures. The posts may represent scaffolding for a walkway along the wall, but this can only be conjectured. The wall shows no evidence to suggest structures being abutted against it.

Within the units of excavation, a feature was located, but not excavated. This feature, located in Units 23 and 24, comprises a rectangular outline, 6' by 12', and having a postmold along the north side. This feature is contemporaneous with the poured lime floor.

At the south end of the excavation in Units 15, 27, and 39, a brick-filled feature had been uncovered during the previous year (Fig. 10). Excavations were initiated within Unit 39, but were halted because artifacts comprised of tin cans and other recent material were found at the bottom of this unit. This feature was completely filled with brick rubble, and portions of brick wall, possibly from the powder magazine. It seems that the feature was excavated at a later date for use to dispose of the brick rubble.



### Southwest Bastion and South Wall Area

The 1972 excavations evidences portions of a poured lime floor in this area which resulted in further excavations. The stratigraphic sequence in this area is similar to that of the northeast bastion and east wall. As was the case along the east wall, the floor was badly deteriorated in some areas (Fig. 1). Only two postmolds were found, these in Unit 101, along with a shallow circular depression in the lime floor (Fig. 1). It was in this area, near the southeastern corner of Unit 111, that a Porto-Bello medallion was found (Figs. 11 & 12). The medallion is one of several kinds struck to commemorate the Battle of Porto-Bello in Panama in 1739. The obverse side depicts a figure of Admiral Vernon, commander of the fleet. The reverse side depicts the battle scene (Fig. 12). As is evidenced by Figure 13, the medallion was found at approximately .15' above the poured lime floor.

The southwest bastion, like its northeastern counterpart, had been subjected to filling to within two feet from the top of the wall. Initial exploratory excavations had revealed a large postmold protruding through the lime floor located approximately two feet from the present surface (Fig. 3). A series of two linear brick rows oriented parallel to the south wall were initially thought to represent a remnant of a brick floor. Subsequent excavations in this bastion revealed a brick structure situated within the confines of Units 113, 114, 116, and 117 (Figs. 1 & 14). The structure had dimensions of 9' by 12', and 2.4' in height. The walls were 1.5' thick. Approximately one-half of the dry-laid brick floor was still intact. Evidence of heavy burning was apparent on the brick floor and in the area where the brick had been removed. Fortunately, this structure was situated on the fill, and no disturbance occurred to the



FIGURE 12: Porto-Bello Medallion.



FIGURE 13: Porto-Bello Medallion *In-situ*.

lime floor and features below. A large quantity of material, primarily roofing tile fragments, was found throughout the entire fill within the structure. This structure is believed to have served as a tile kiln. Two areas located immediately adjacent to the southwest bastion along the south wall and in the corner between the north bastion wall and west wall contained many roofing tile fragments. (Further discussion will follow in the interpretive section of this report.)

In Units 117 and 120 (Fig. 1), where previous excavations had revealed a large burned post in Unit 117, four postmolds were found situated in the lime floor. The floor in this area is located at 3.0' from the present surface. It was initially postulated that the post represented a station for a swivel gun. The purpose of the 1973 excavation was to determine if further evidence could be found to substantiate this assumption. It is thought that the four postmolds found in Unit 120, and which form a partial circular pattern, do represent satellite posts used in supporting a platform.

#### Northwest Bastion

Further excavations were conducted in this bastion due to the fact that several features in the form of brick and postmolds had been found during the previous excavation. In addition, this bastion had not been subjected to filling, and as a result it was initially thought that it may have functioned differently than those which had been filled. The excavations revealed further postmolds, and uncovered the remainder of the brick floor (Fig. 1). The stratigraphic sequence in this bastion does not conform to that along the east and south wall areas. The surface zone consists of portions of brick floor and drain which encompasses most of the west half of the bastion. The eastern half of

the bastion is composed of a brown humus zone overlying a light tan sandy soil barely distinguishable from the soil beneath which contains aboriginal artifacts. It appears, in this area, that the light tan soil comprises the 1757+ occupation, as do the postmolds situated in this zone. The brick floor either represents the Revolutionary War occupation, or evidence of the Revolutionary War occupation was destroyed by the brick floor constructed during the time the fort was used as a tile factory. There is no indication, in any other part of the fort, to suggest a utilization of brick to the extent that it was used during the tile factory period.

#### North Wall

Limited excavations were conducted in Units 64 and 74 located between the north wall and the powder magazine in an attempt to locate the possible source of the heavy concentration of artifacts which had been found the year before. A series of features, resembling a cluster of irregular postholes was located, in addition to artifacts, but at this time no interpretation is possible as to their meaning or significance. As is the case with the northwest bastion, the stratigraphy in this area is very shallow and homogeneous making it impossible to determine distinct occupations. A thorough analysis of the artifacts will help to determine the period or periods of occupation represented in this area.

#### The Powder Magazine

From all historical references found relative to Fort Dorchester, considerable mention is made of the powder magazine (see Historical Section). Prior to excavation, the powder magazine was represented by a large mound (Fig. 15). The 1972 excavations of this structure consisted



FIGURE 14: Brick Kiln Located in Southwest Bastion. Looking East.



FIGURE 15: Powder Magazine Prior to Excavation. Looking North.

of a cross-section through the structure which revealed some information regarding its interior composition (Fig. 6). The 1973 excavations totally revealed the structure (Fig. 1). The magazine was found to have exterior dimensions of 20' by 24' and interior dimensions of 12' by 18'. The east and west walls are slightly over three feet thick. The north and south walls are four feet in thickness. These dimensions contradict those agreed to by the Commissioners of Fortification in which they indicated:

... that the Magazine to be Build at Dorchester  
be made 22 by 18 feet in the Clear ... (Journal 1755-70).

The phrase "in the Clear" indicated in the above quotation refers to the interior dimensions (Henry Boykin, personal communication). The excavation of the magazine revealed significant information. The fill throughout the entire structure was basically composed of brick rubble and roofing tile fragments. The floor had been subjected to burning and a thin layer of ash was found throughout the floor. The floor contained three raised brick platforms oriented on the long axis of the structure (Fig. 16). It was initially thought that the two brick protrusions in the interior of the structure represented interior buttresses, but the subsequent excavations revealed that they were not integrated into the wall and may have served another function. The north and south walls of the magazine had been removed (Fig. 17), and it is thought that the feature (15, 27, 39) located along the east wall was dug to dump the brick rubble removed from the magazine. Historical reference (Walker 1941: 85) indicates that in 1836, the Congregationalist Church at Dorchester authorized removal of brick from the fort to be used to construct a parsonage in Summerville.



FIGURE 16: Powder Magazine. Looking North.

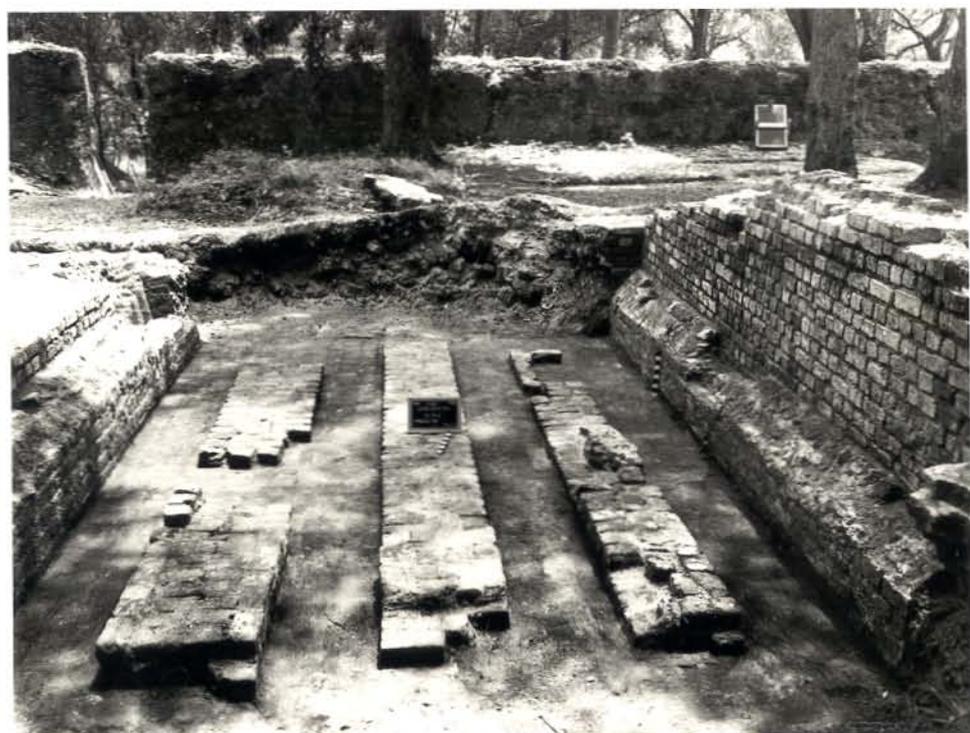


FIGURE 17: Powder Magazine. View to the South.

Along the west wall of the magazine, being in a further stage of deterioration than the east wall, evidence was found for a wooden beam, .5' wide, built into the entire length of the wall. In addition, four postholes were found on the wall (Fig. 1). The east wall does not have a similar configuration. The function of the beam and posts is not known.

The three linear raised brick platforms may have been used to house a wooden floor, or possibly used at a later date when the magazine was converted for use as a kiln for firing roofing tiles. The north and south walls were removed for this purpose. The brick structure located in the southwest bastion is similar in configuration to the powder magazine. (A further discussion is presented in the interpretive section of this report.)

#### Church Area

Limited test excavations were carried out in the vicinity of the church tower in an effort to substantiate an historical reference dated January 15, 1776 concerning:

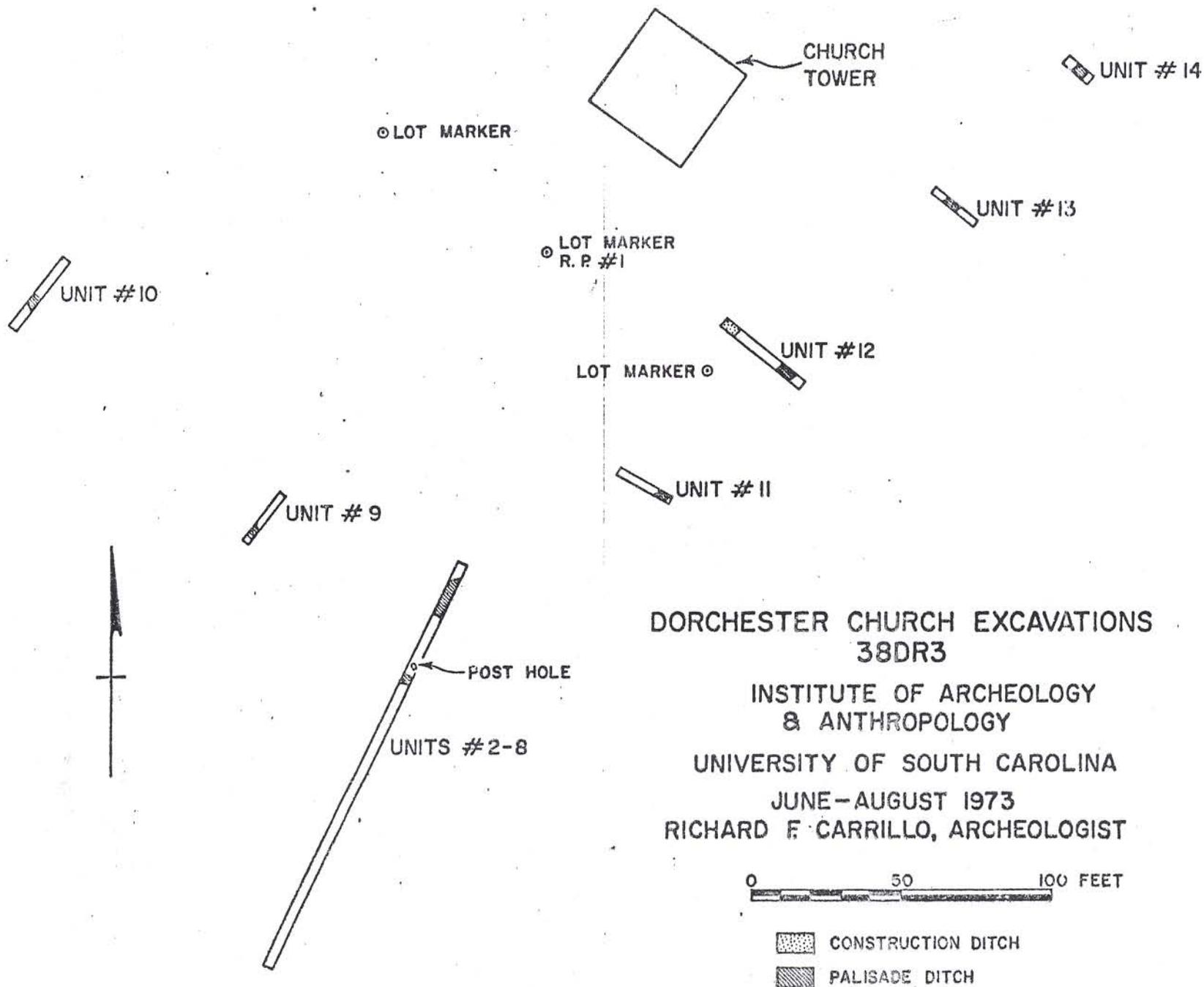
... a proper plan for fortifying a Church there...  
(Collections 1859: 184).

The excavations revealed evidence of a probable palisade ditch in the vicinity of the church in the south and west areas (Figs. 18 & 19).

#### *INTERPRETATIONS OF ARCHEOLOGICAL DATA*

The following interpretations based on the combined results of the 1972 and 1973 excavations are presented. Some of the tentative interpretations made following the 1972 exploratory excavations have changed, and a considerable amount of new information has been found on which to make new interpretations. It must be stressed at this point that although

FIGURE 18: Map of Church Area Excavations.



DORCHESTER CHURCH EXCAVATIONS  
38DR3

INSTITUTE OF ARCHEOLOGY  
& ANTHROPOLOGY

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH CAROLINA

JUNE-AUGUST 1973

RICHARD F. CARRILLO, ARCHEOLOGIST

0 50 100 FEET

CONSTRUCTION DITCH  
PALISADE DITCH



IAA FORT PRT  
DORCHESTER  
38 DR 5 9  
CHURCH  
73I 73

FIGURE 19: Palisade Ditch in Unit 9. Church Area. Looking South.

this report presents the architectural aspects relative to Fort Dorchester, a thorough artifact analysis will be conducted which will reveal considerably more information. The information which will be revealed will not necessarily be of an architectural nature, but will entail information regarding the activities which occurred within the structure regarding how the fort was used.

#### The East Wall Area

The excavations conducted in this area revealed further evidence of a poured lime floor, overlying an earlier occupation zone believed to represent the initial period of occupation c. 1757 to sometime prior to the Revolution. Artifacts found within the confines of the poured lime floor serve to indicate that the floor was used, and possibly poured during the Revolution. Several postholes and postmolds were found on the floor, but no definite pattern was discernible. In addition, a rectangular feature was located.

A brick-filled feature located in Units 15, 27, and 39 was partially excavated, but due to evidence indicating a late disposal, was not totally excavated. The brick rubble found in this feature is believed to represent the brick waste from the powder magazine.

#### The South Wall Area and Southwest Bastion

This area appears to be similar to the east area, and is thought to have served a similar function since a poured lime floor was also found here during the 1972 excavations. In addition, this area has been subjected to considerable filling as with the east area and northeast bastion. Only two postmolds were found along the south wall, along with a circular depression in the floor (Fig. 1).

In the bastion, the previous year's excavations had revealed a large postmold situated in approximately the center of the bastion. This was interpreted as a probable support for a swivel gun. The 1973 excavations in Units 117 and 120 revealed a series of four satellite posts, presumably serving to support a platform in conjunction with the central post.

After the Revolution, a brick roofing tile kiln was built on top of the dirt fill. The fill within the kiln consisted, for the most part, of tile fragments. The east and west walls of the kiln had either been removed, or were never constructed. The powder magazine evidenced a similar configuration, in that both walls comprising the width had been removed. A considerable quantity of tile fragments are in evidence on the exterior portion of the fort adjacent to the bastion.

#### The Northwest Bastion

The excavations in the northwest bastion revealed further the brick floor and drainage ditch located during the previous exploratory excavations. Portions of the brick floor encompassed nearly the entire west half of the bastion. Some postmolds were located, but as with those found along the east wall, no definite pattern was detected. The stratigraphy in this bastion differed from that of the northeast and southwest bastions in that it had not been subjected to filling. An occupation zone of light tan humus was found below the brick floor, and at this time cannot definitely be determined, but it appears to be similar to the 1757+ occupation zone found along the east and south walls below the lime floor. It seems that the brick may represent alterations made during the tile factory period, and if that is the case, the Revolutionary War

occupation has been destroyed. There is no other evidence to indicate that brick was used for flooring during the initial occupation and during the Revolutionary War.

#### The North Wall Area

In the area between the north wall and powder magazine limited excavations were undertaken. In Units 64 and 74, an attempt was made to recover more artifacts which had been found in large quantity during the initial excavations. The results yielded artifacts in addition to a series of irregular shaped features. The significance of the features is at this time unknown.

#### The Powder Magazine

Of all of the features contained within the confines of the fort, the powder magazine is the most tangible and feasible architectural feature which can be of significant interpretive value. It represents the main purpose for the construction of Fort Dorchester. The initial excavations had presented a limited indication of its appearance (Fig. 6).

The powder magazine was completely excavated during the 1973 field season. The purpose for excavations was that it appeared to comprise the most potential for interpretation. Excavations revealed a high quantity of brick rubble and roofing tile fragments in the fill within the magazine. The magazine represents a substantial structure having walls measuring 3.0' along the linear axis, and 4.0' along the short axis. The floor was completely bricked, with three raised brick platforms extending the entire length of the structure. The west wall revealed evidence for a beam running throughout its entire length,

with four postholes situated in the brick. The west wall did not have a similar construction. The north and south walls had been removed indicating that the powder magazine had been transformed into a kiln for firing roofing tile. Heavy burning was evidenced on the brick floor, in addition to a thin layer of ash.

### Synthesis of Archeological Data

Based on a synthesis of the archeological data, relevant to the architectural features at Fort Dorchester, the following interpretations are presented.

During the period between 1757 and 1770, Fort Dorchester underwent renovation (see Historical Section). The archeological evidence, based on recovered artifacts, indicates that a poured lime floor was added along the east and south walls of the structure. The powder magazine, at this time or at a previous time, was covered with dirt. This was a common practice during the Revolution (Francis A. Lord, personal communication). Sometime after the Revolution, a tile factory began operations. The specific date is not known, but a reference dated September 2, 1799 states that:

... It appearing by the Plan of Dorchester that Lot No. 13 (whereupon a fort has been erected and magazine thereon, now in the possession of John Carr and Isaac Walter by them converted into a Tile-yard or Manufactory)... (Minutes 1799).

Based on this evidence it is conjectured that the fill which encompasses both the northeast and southwest bastions, in addition to portions along the east and south walls represents the additional protective soil covering used on the powder magazine. A documentary source relative to the construction of powder magazines indicates that:

Powder magazines must be constructed in a peculiar manner; the barrels of powder must be arranged in them in the most convenient and safest manner; and they must be defended from any dampness, and vaulted perfectly bombproof (O'Connor 1817: 65).

The bombproofing indicated in the above reference applies to the use of soil as an additional protective covering (Francis A. Lord, personal communication). Since the magazine was converted into a tile kiln, the protective covering was removed and placed in the areas indicated above within the fort. Archeological evidence conducted in the northeast bastion during the initial excavations (Carrillo 1972: 27) revealed that the uppermost layer commencing at the surface, and extending 1.0' was composed of a midden of tile fragments. At the base of the tile concentration, an English half-penny dated 1775 and bearing the head of King George III was recovered. The coin was well-worn, and serves as a temporal indicator, that the fill between the poured lime floor and the base of the tile midden is post-1775.

The overall interpretation which can be derived from the archeological research conducted during 1972 and 1973 indicates that activity in the sense that is usually attributed to the functions that forts performed does not appear to have occurred at Fort Dorchester. The archeological evidence serves to show that the activity which occurred within the confines of the fort regarding architectural structures does not appear to be present. A limited quantity of postmolds recovered do not provide sufficient evidence for substantial living quarters being present. This is not surprising due to the close proximity to the town, which had the facilities for housing troops, etc. It appears that the function of the tabby fort was primarily to protect the powder magazine, possibly occupied by a small garrison of troops.

## *SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS*

The continued archeological and historical research conducted during the 1973 season, in conjunction with the results obtained during the 1972 season, has served to reveal relevant information regarding the tabby structure of Fort Dorchester. The information obtained during the 1973 excavations substantiates the historical evidence of three historical episodes in which the fort participated. The initial period concerns that of the French and Indian War. Prior to undertaking the initial archeological and historical research it was commonly accepted that Fort Dorchester was constructed during the Revolution. Historical research revealed that the structure was built as a direct result of the French and Indian War. The initial archeological research served to substantiate the documentary record regarding the construction period utilizing the recovered artifact content. The historical record indicates that although the fort was constructed during the 1757+ period, the principle use of the structure occurred during the Revolution.

The historical record further indicates that renovation occurred during the Revolution, and the archeological record served to reveal that the poured lime floors represent, in part, aspects of the renovation. The artifacts recovered in relation to the lime floors denotes its use during the Revolution.

The third period of use for the fort, but for which documentation is sparse, revealed itself significantly through archeology. This period following the Revolution evidenced major renovation which greatly affected the powder magazine, the northeast and southwest bastions, and possibly the northwest bastion. During this time, the fort was transformed

into a tile factory utilizing the powder magazine for a kiln. An additional smaller kiln was built on the fill of the southwest bastion. The protective soil cover of the magazine was removed and the northeast and southwest bastions, in addition to adjacent portions of the areas along the east wall and south walls, were subjected to fill. The filling of these areas aided in preserving the earlier architectural features. With regard to architectural features, with the exception of the magazine, little information remains from which to base interpretations as to the fort being used as living quarters. It seems that the principle reasons may be two-fold; (1) the fort's proximity to the town, and (2) the fact that the historical record indicates its main use was designed to protect the powder magazine.

The information derived during this archeological investigation was primarily aimed at defining architectural features and their relationships. The interpretations made relevant to this report have been based primarily on these results. It must be stressed that an artifact analysis will be undertaken which will add considerably more information, and may alter some of the present interpretations.

#### *RECOMMENDATIONS*

The results of the second season of archeological research at Fort Dorchester were discussed with Dr. Robert L. Stephenson, Director and State Archeologist, Institute of Archeology and Anthropology, University of South Carolina, and Mr. Michael Foley, Chief Historian, South Carolina Department of Parks, Recreation and Tourism. It was decided that although relevant architectural features have not been recovered, to date, with the exception of the powder magazine, archeological research should proceed

in order to arrive at a complete understanding of the architectural sphere and their relationships within the structure. It is felt that considerable relevant data, especially in the form of material culture, has been yielded. At the present time research will continue through a planned artifact analysis. This will further allow for definitive statements to be made regarding the actual utilization of the fort on a day-to-day basis.

The two seasons of archeological research have served to yield considerable information. It is felt that completion of the project is necessary in order to arrive at a complete understanding of the function of Fort Dorchester.

If the South Carolina Department of Parks, Recreation and Tourism deems further archeological research necessary to accomplish their interpretive goals, a proposal entailing the extent of further research will be submitted by the Institute.

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