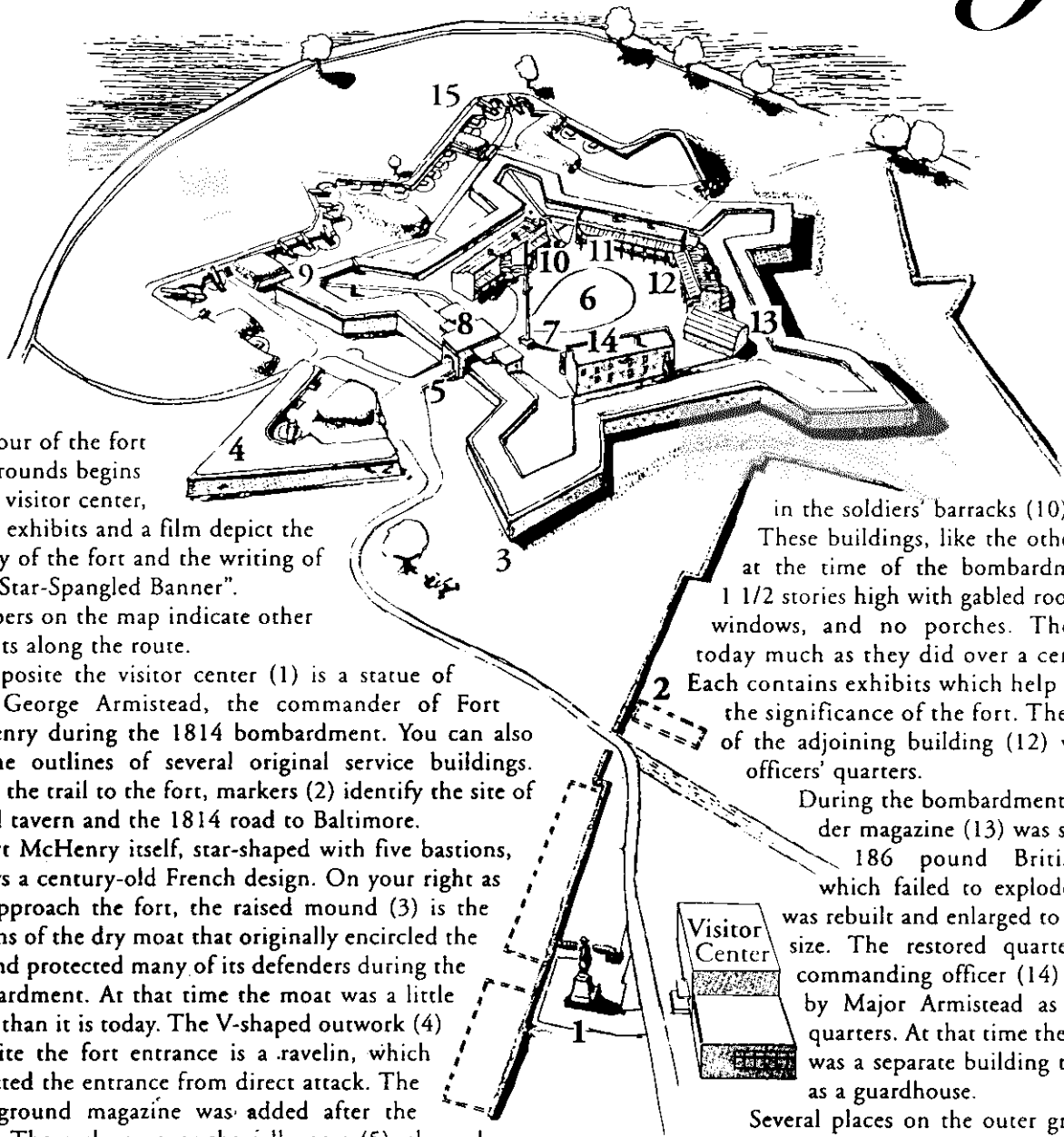


D I S C O V E R

Fort McHenry



The tour of the fort and grounds begins at the visitor center, where exhibits and a film depict the history of the fort and the writing of "The Star-Spangled Banner". Numbers on the map indicate other exhibits along the route.

Opposite the visitor center (1) is a statue of Maj. George Armistead, the commander of Fort McHenry during the 1814 bombardment. You can also see the outlines of several original service buildings. Along the trail to the fort, markers (2) identify the site of an old tavern and the 1814 road to Baltimore.

Fort McHenry itself, star-shaped with five bastions, follows a century-old French design. On your right as you approach the fort, the raised mound (3) is the remains of the dry moat that originally encircled the fort and protected many of its defenders during the bombardment. At that time the moat was a little larger than it is today. The V-shaped outwork (4) opposite the fort entrance is a ravelin, which protected the entrance from direct attack. The underground magazine was added after the battle. The archway over the sally port (5), through which you enter, was also constructed later. The underground rooms on either side were originally bombproofs, but during the Civil War, they served as powder magazines. Just beyond the sally port on the parade ground (6) is the site of the flag pole (7) from which the original 30 by 42 foot battle flag flew, inspiring Francis Scott Key to write "The Star-Spangled Banner".

The guardhouses (8) on both sides of the entrance date from 1835. From one of the five bastions (9) you have a view of the Patapsco River, where the British fleet lay at anchor in 1814.

In a semi-circle around the parade ground are the several buildings that served as living quarters for the soldiers of the fort. The regular 60-man garrison was housed

in the soldiers' barracks (10) and (11). These buildings, like the other quarters at the time of the bombardment, were 1 1/2 stories high with gabled roofs, dormer windows, and no porches. They appear today much as they did over a century ago. Each contains exhibits which help to explain the significance of the fort. The first floor of the adjoining building (12) was junior officers' quarters.

During the bombardment, the powder magazine (13) was struck by a 186 pound British bomb which failed to explode. Later it was rebuilt and enlarged to its present size. The restored quarters of the commanding officer (14) were used by Major Armistead as his headquarters. At that time the end room was a separate building that served as a guardhouse.

Several places on the outer grounds are of interest. The Civil War batteries (15) replaced the earlier battery near the waterfront. The Civil War powder magazine is near the entrance to the grounds. The statue of Orpheus, a mythological Greek hero of music and poetry, was erected in 1922 to honor the memory of Key and the soldiers and sailors who participated in the defense of Baltimore.

The National Park Service administers Fort McHenry.

*Preserving The Past;
Managing The Present;
Investing In The Future.*



Fort McHenry Map

