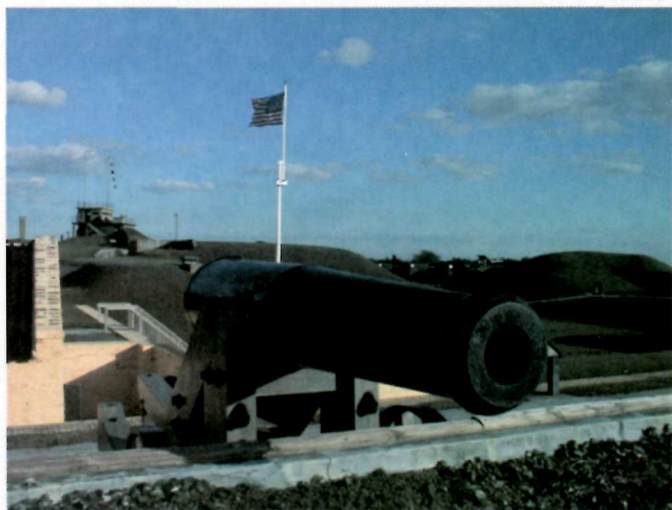




Fort Moultrie

One of the United States' most historic coastal defense sites, Fort Moultrie protected the city of Charleston and its strategically important harbor for more than a century and a half.



The Palmetto Fort

The first fort on Sullivan's Island was built in 1776 to prevent British naval incursions into Charleston Harbor. The palmetto log walls readily absorbed shot and shell when nine Royal Navy warships attacked on June 28, 1776. Colonel William Moultrie and his 400 men fought a day-long battle that ended with the heavily damaged British ships being driven from the area. This decisive American victory galvanized the Patriots' cause for independence.

New Defenses for a New Nation

The second Fort Moultrie was built in 1798 of earth and timber. This fort suffered the same fate as its palmetto log predecessor, being reduced to ruins by a series of coastal storms. The third and present fort was constructed of brick in 1809. Originally fitted with 40 guns, the fort garrison consisted of 500 men.

The Civil War Years

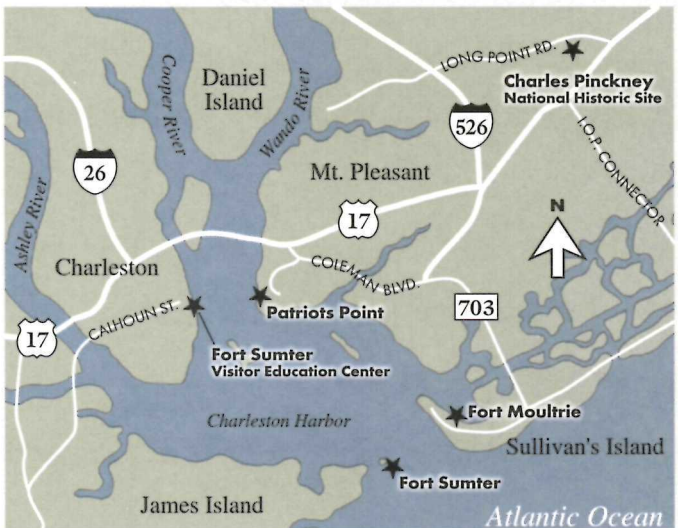
On December 26, 1860, six days after South Carolina left the Union, Fort Moultrie's small Federal garrison abandoned the fort, moving to the unfinished but more defensible Fort Sumter. State militia troops occupied Fort Moultrie the next day. Confederate Fort Moultrie participated in the April 12, 1861 firing on Fort Sumter that began the American Civil War. Heavily damaged by Federal bombardments that commenced in 1863, Fort Moultrie remained in Confederate hands until February 1865.

The End of an Era

During the late 19th and early 20th centuries, Fort Moultrie underwent numerous changes as improving military and engineering technologies added to the complexities of coastal defense. New threats of submarine and aerial attacks ultimately rendered static seacoast defenses obsolete. On August 15, 1947, the army lowered Fort Moultrie's flag for the last time, ending 171 years of service.

Fort Moultrie Today

From the site of the palmetto log fort to the defensive structures of World War II, Fort Moultrie's weapons and fortifications reflect the changes that evolved during the nearly 200 years when coastal forts stood as ready sentinels in the protection of our nation.



For More Information

Fort Moultrie is administered by the National Park Service as a unit of Fort Sumter National Monument. Located at 1214 Middle Street, Sullivan's Island, SC, the Fort Moultrie is open from 9:00–5:00 daily except for New Year's Day, Thanksgiving Day and Christmas Day.

For additional information write to:
Fort Sumter National Monument
1214 Middle Street
Sullivan's Island, SC 29482;
call (843) 883-3123; or visit us online at:
www.nps.gov/fosu
www.facebook.com/FtSumterNPS
www.twitter.com/FtSumterNPS