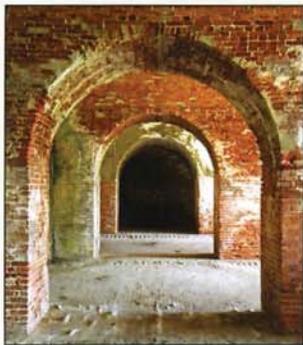


ALABAMA HERITAGE



PUBLISHED BY THE UNIVERSITY OF ALABAMA, THE UNIVERSITY OF ALABAMA AT BIRMINGHAM,
AND THE ALABAMA DEPARTMENT OF ARCHIVES AND HISTORY

ALABAMA HERITAGE



Cover: Fort Morgan's timeless casemate arches are showing the ravages of age. See article page 8. (Photo by Robin McDonald.)

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TABLE OF CONTENTS



FORT MORGAN: GUARDIAN OF THE BAY

8

By Jessica Fordham Kidd

Strategically located at the entrance of Mobile Bay, Fort Morgan served American military interests in war and peace for many generations.



RUBY PICKENS TARTT: CITIZEN OF THE WORLD

20

By Philip Beidler and Elizabeth Buckalew

Had Ruby not existed, someone might have had to create her as the central character in a novel.



RICHARD COE'S BIRMINGHAM

28

By Lynn Barstis Williams

Forgotten moments in Depression-era Birmingham come to life in the works of Richard Coe.



WILLIAM STANLEY HOOLE: A MAN OF LETTERS

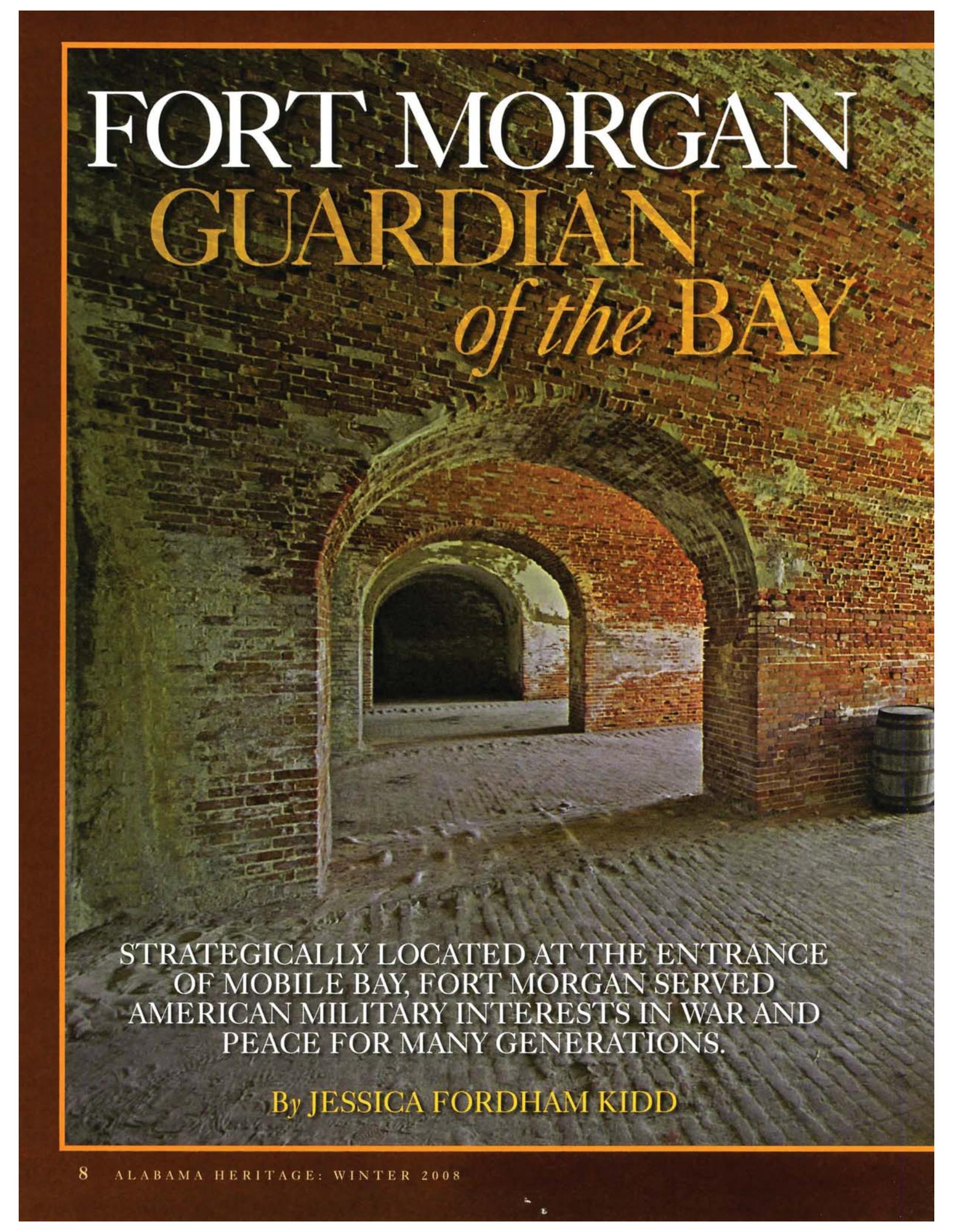
36

By Elizabeth Hoole McArthur

Although his days of walking the University of Alabama campus are long past, William Stanley Hoole's contributions to the world of academia are known throughout Alabama, the nation, and beyond.

DEPARTMENTS

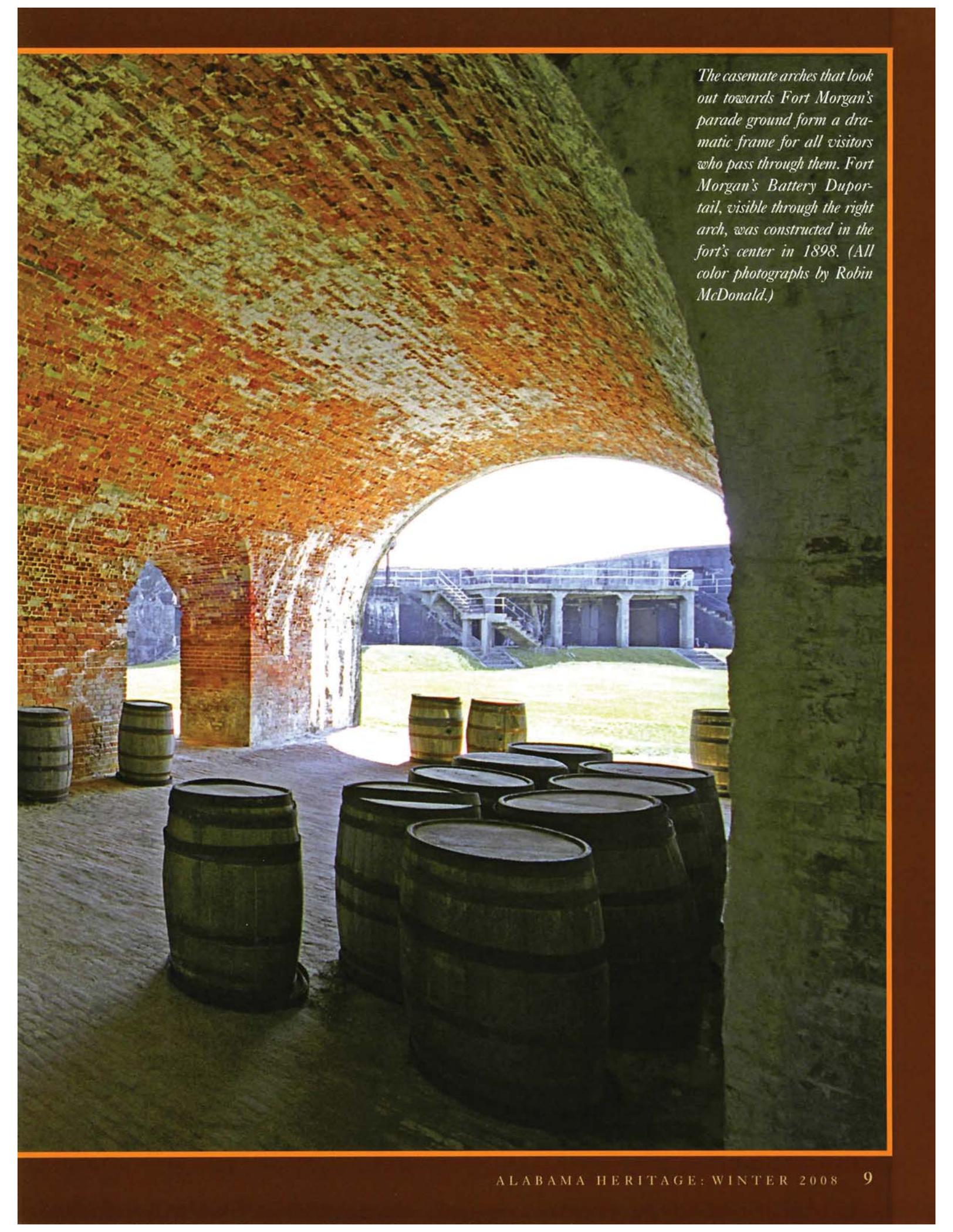
Southern Architecture and Preservation: <i>Function Marries Form: Stairways of the Early Tennessee Valley</i>	4
Alabama Mysteries: <i>Murder on Chandler Mountain</i>	47
Nature Journal: <i>Lessons in Morelity</i>	51
Reading the Southern Past: <i>Two New South Girlhoods</i>	53
Contributors, Sources, and Suggested Readings	56

The background of the page is a photograph of the interior of Fort Morgan. It shows a series of brick arches leading into a dark tunnel. The walls are made of red brick, some with peeling plaster. The floor is paved with cobblestones. A wooden barrel is visible on the right side.

FORT MORGAN GUARDIAN *of the BAY*

STRATEGICALLY LOCATED AT THE ENTRANCE
OF MOBILE BAY, FORT MORGAN SERVED
AMERICAN MILITARY INTERESTS IN WAR AND
PEACE FOR MANY GENERATIONS.

By JESSICA FORDHAM KIDD

The photograph captures the interior of a large, vaulted brick structure, likely a casemate. The ceiling and walls are made of reddish-brown bricks, showing signs of age and weathering. A series of arches are visible, creating a sense of depth and perspective. In the foreground, several dark wooden barrels are arranged on the floor. Through the arches, a bright outdoor area is visible, featuring a concrete structure with stairs and a railing, identified as Battery Dupontail. The overall atmosphere is one of historical significance and architectural grandeur.

The casemate arches that look out towards Fort Morgan's parade ground form a dramatic frame for all visitors who pass through them. Fort Morgan's Battery Dupontail, visible through the right arch, was constructed in the fort's center in 1898. (All color photographs by Robin McDonald.)

A STALWART GROUP OF AMERICANS ADOPTED THE MOTTO “DON’T GIVE UP THE FORT.”

NOT FAR FROM THE MYRIAD OF pastel houses lining Alabama’s white sand beaches sits historic Fort Morgan, a symbol of Alabama’s embattled, patriotic past. The stronghold has stood guard at the entrance to Mobile Bay for more than 170 years and was party to one of the Civil War’s most important battles. From the Civil War onward, the fort and the men who garrisoned it through the years witnessed all the major military eras in the history of the state of Alabama.

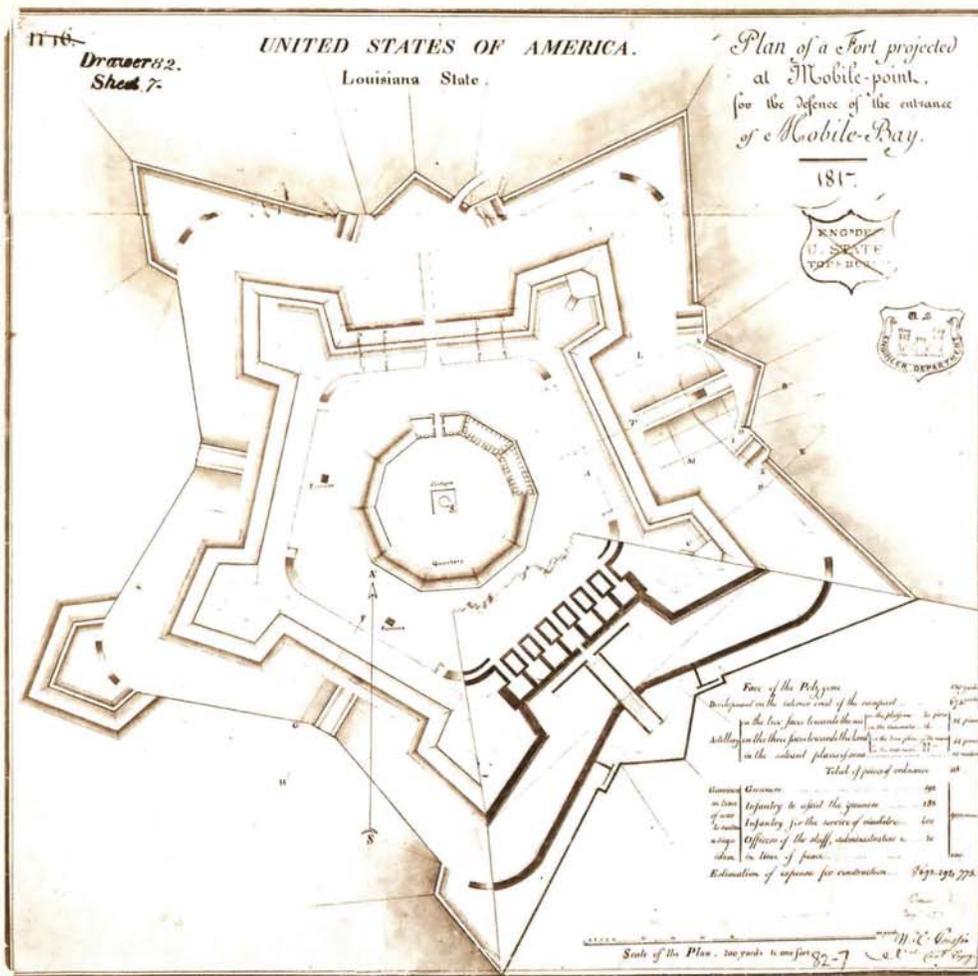
From its position at the farthest reaches of Mobile Point, the fort commands views of Mobile Bay, the Gulf of Mexico, and Dauphin Island. Its strategic location made the site an indispensable military asset long before it became Fort Morgan’s home.

International wrangling ensured that the sovereignty of the Mobile region remained in perpetual flux for more than a century. The French had first settled the area in 1702, establishing a capital just up the Mobile River from the bay. The British took the territory as a spoil of the Seven Years War in 1763, but lost it to Spain in the American Revolution. In 1803 the U.S. claimed to have purchased the Mobile area as part of the Louisiana Purchase. This claim, disputed by Spain, nearly drove the two nations to war. During the War of 1812, President Madison ordered Mobile Point to be taken from Spanish control. The weak Spanish forces relinquished control of the bay and surrounding areas, unable to stand up against an American attack. Holding the territory would prove a much more formidable task for the Americans.

After taking Mobile Bay, American forces chose Mo-

bile Point as their primary defensive position. There, they erected the first Mobile Bay fort—a small structure of sand and logs named Fort Bowyer—to watch over the entrance to the bay’s waters. All too soon, this earthworks fort was tested. British forces attacked on September 15, 1814, but faced a stalwart group of Americans who had adopted the motto “Don’t Give Up the Fort.” Fire from Fort Bowyer was so fierce, the British had to abandon and destroy their own warship *Hermes* to keep it from enemy hands. They temporarily retreated.

The Treaty of Ghent, signed in Europe on December 24, 1814, ended the war on paper. But word had not reached the distant colonial outposts by February of 1815, when the British returned for a second engagement at Fort Bowyer. In spite of heavy fire from the fort, British land forces established artillery fire that the small Fort Bowyer could not withstand. In order to save the lives of his men, commanding officer Major William



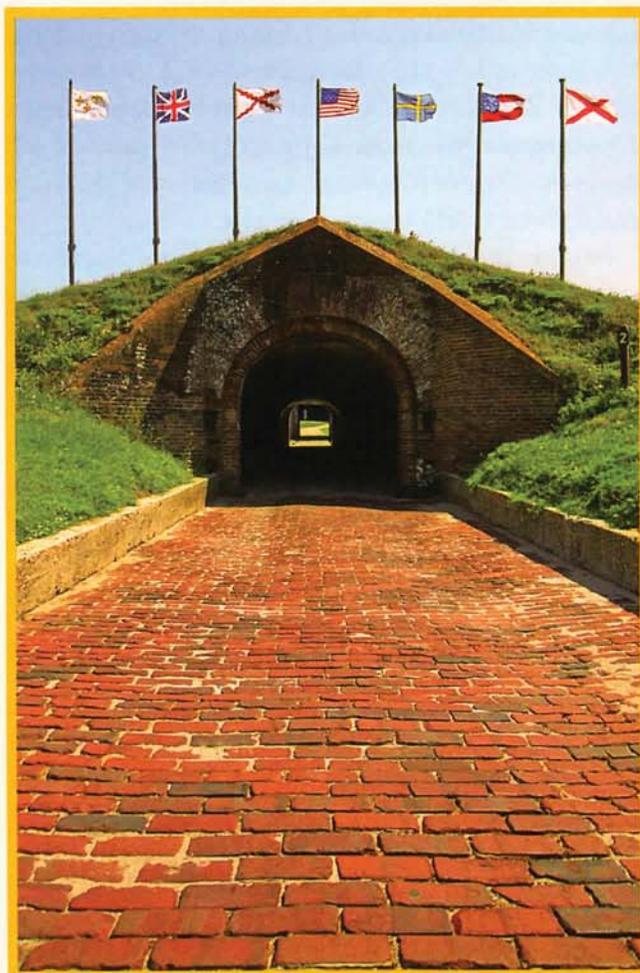


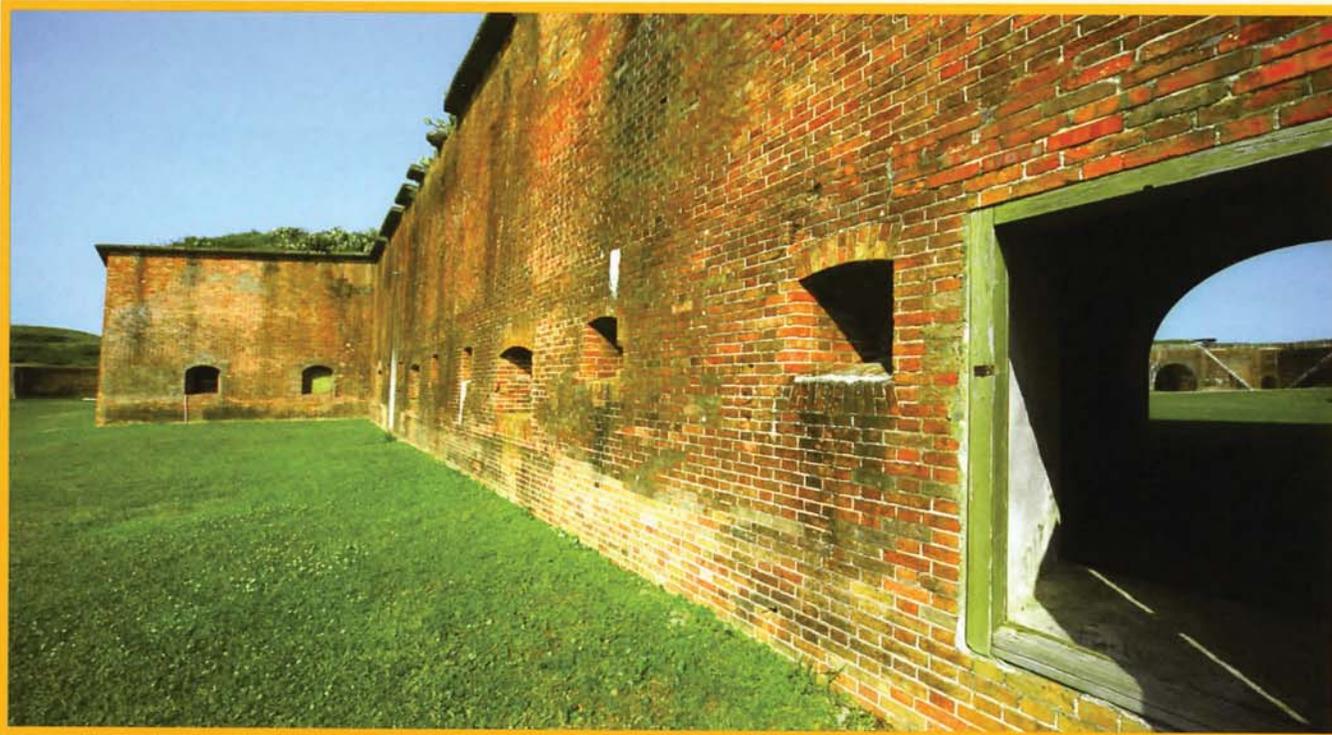
Opposite page: This nascent 1817 plan of Fort Morgan would not be actualized until 1834. (Courtesy Library of Congress.) Above: A view from atop the wall allows the stunning expanse of Fort Morgan's parade ground to be seen. Right: The regal entrance through Fort Morgan's glacis allows visitors to walk in the footsteps of former soldiers.

Lawrence took the offered opportunity of surrender. But the British occupation of Mobile Point was short-lived. The Treaty of Ghent rendered the engagement invalid; Fort Bowyer returned to American hands and became the location for a more ambitious, modern structure.

In 1816 Congress funded construction of a series of forts as a peacetime measure to guard America's long, unprotected shoreline and hopefully to avert foreign attacks. A survey by the United States War Department determined the need for a permanent fortification at Mobile Point. Begun as a peacetime project, its construction would prove to be anything but a peaceful endeavor.

The desolate location at Alabama's farthest reaches, scarce supplies, oppressive summer weather, and funding issues combined to make the construction on Mobile Point a grueling, drawn-out task. Benjamin W. Hopkins of Vermont was the first contractor hired to build the brick fort. After one year of frustrated efforts, he succumbed to yellow fever. His successor Samuel Hawking





of New York fared even worse, dying in debt less than a year after being hired for the job. Original plans for the proposed fortification called for work to begin October 1818 and end July 1821. By spring of 1821, two contractors were dead, and the fort was still in the earliest stages of construction. When the Army decided to hand the job over to the Corp of Engineers, construction of the fort at Mobile Point finally began in earnest.

Simone Bernard, an aide-de-camp to Napoleon, was the fort's designer. With a star shape and casemate arches, the structure was to be a fine example of French military architecture. Cannons and guns mounted at each of the star's five corners (bastions) would allow soldiers to direct maximum fire power at enemy ships or even to fire into the fort's dry moat. This moat separated the glacis—a clear slope that could act as a buffer against enemy fire—and the outer walls of Fort Morgan.

Inside the fort, the casemate arches provided bomb-proof shelter for supplies and vital fort operations. These arches looked out over the parade ground in the fort's interior and at the ten-sided citadel in the middle of these grounds. The citadel would be home for soldiers as they weathered their hot and isolated stay at Mobile Point.

The same issues with supplies, labor, and weather plagued the Corps of Engineers, but the group was able to prevail at last, thanks in large part to slave labor. With the end of the project in sight in 1833, the new structure was named Fort Morgan, in honor of legendary Revo-

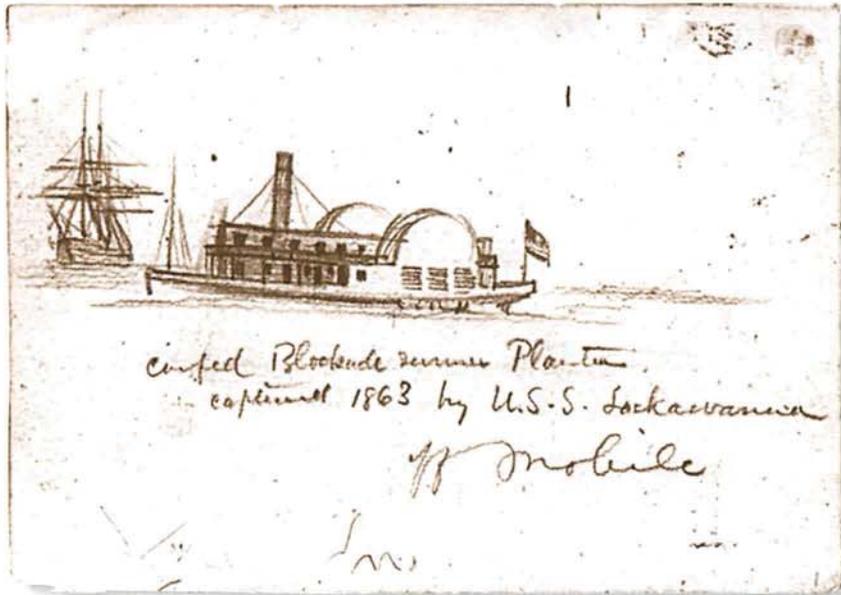
Above: Fort Morgan's dry moat (grassy area on left) distanced the fort's brick outer walls from the glacis (mound on far left), which absorbed enemy fire. Opposite page: Famous Civil War artist A. R. Waud sketched the capture of the Confederate blockade runner Planter off the shores of Mobile on May 13, 1862, by the USS Lackawanna. (Courtesy Library of Congress.)

lutionary War General Daniel Morgan. One year later, Fort Morgan was garrisoned by Captain F. S. Belton and Company B, 2nd U.S. Artillery.

By 1834 Fort Morgan stood ready to do its job of keeping Mobile Point from enemy occupation, protecting Alabama rivers from blockade, and ensuring continued communication between Mobile and New Orleans. However, the fort was only garrisoned for a short time after completion before being put in "caretaker status," meaning the fort was non-operational and overseen by a minimal number of soldiers.

During this first caretaker period, Fort Morgan participated in the expulsion of Alabama's native populations. After Company B, 2nd U.S. Artillery, left to fight the Seminoles in Florida, Alabama militiamen and federal forces tried to stem the violence that resulted from the Creek removal. The Cusseta Treaty had included provisions to reserve land for individual Creeks who wished to remain in Alabama. But land speculators and overzealous white settlers wrested lands from them. In the War of 1836, tensions came to a head. Bands of Creeks

FORT MORGAN GAVE SECESSIONIST ALABAMA CONTROL OF AN IMPORTANT CONFEDERATE PORT.



attacked white settlers, Alabama militia quelled the uprising, and remaining Creeks were captured and forced to relocate west. In 1837 Fort Morgan acted as a jail to three thousand Creeks who awaited a perilous journey to reservations in Oklahoma.

The fort saw little activity over the next few decades. Companies D and H of the 7th U.S. Infantry returned from fighting the Seminoles to garrison Fort Morgan for its second period of active occupation from July 1842 to December 1843. After their departure, the fort was left in caretaker status again until the eve of the Civil War.

The Alabama of 1860 simmered in a hotbed of secessionist politics and unrest. Governor Andrew B. Moore called delegates for a secession convention, and the majority of those elected came from a secessionist platform; Alabama and the South were on the verge of upheaval. Anticipating events to come, Governor Moore activated six companies of the state's volunteer corps on January 3, 1861. The next day he issued General Order #1, which called for Alabama troops to seize Fort Morgan on Mobile Point, along with Fort Gaines on Dauphin Island. On January 5, 1861, Fort Morgan was taken from federal hands, and the state of Alabama had control over Mobile Bay.

Almost one week later, Alabama's secession convention voted 61 to 39 to secede from the United States. Because of Governor Moore's quick action, Alabama already had control of one of the Confederacy's most important ports

and was prepared for defense. When Alabama joined the Confederacy in March, Fort Morgan became a Confederate fort and began the most famous chapter in its history.

As the Union's Anaconda Plan squeezed supply lines to the Confederacy tighter and tighter, blockade runners became an indispensable part of the Confederate war effort. The Anaconda Plan stationed U.S. naval vessels throughout Southern waters to prevent the import of any supplies, but the success of the Union's plan depended on its ability to completely close Southern ports and harbors. Though the blockade of Mobile Bay was established in 1861,

the Southern port remained a thorn in the Union's side as it continued receiving blockade runners with contraband goods. Fort Morgan and Fort Gaines, along with a Confederate-placed minefield at the mouth of Mobile Bay, thwarted Union blockade ships while maintaining an open channel for blockade runners.

Although Fort Morgan helped undermine the blockade, the fort and its men still felt the effects of the Anaconda Plan, especially as they tried to prepare for possible battle. By the spring of 1861, Fort Morgan housed a garrison of over one thousand men who needed enough provisions to withstand a possible siege. The blockade made it difficult to procure even the most basic goods.

Soldiers garrisoned at Fort Morgan went about their preparations as Confederate gunboats and blockade runners navigated the torpedo-strewn bay, and federal blockade ships kept watch in gulf waters. In 1862 the Union gunboat *Winona* dared to come within reach of Fort Morgan's guns. It attacked a Confederate ship in the bay, but the soldiers at Fort Morgan quickly repelled the gunboat with fierce fire and asserted their authority over Mobile Bay.

That same year, a Fort Morgan crew helped strike one more victory for Mobile blockade runners. A lighthouse on Sand Island illuminated ships trying to break through the Union blockade in the cover of night, thwarting the efforts of many covert suppliers to slip past undetected. One night, a small group of soldiers stealthily left Fort



Morgan to avoid Union attention and sailed to Sand Island armed with powder and a fuse. Their successful mission left the lighthouse in ruins and gave hope to blockade runners trying to gain entrance into one of the last remaining Confederate ports.

Because Mobile remained in Confederate hands and was a successful destination for many blockade runners, the area was a sore spot for Union forces. While the attack on the *Winona* and the destruction of the lighthouse kept Mobile Bay out of federal hands for a time, Fort Morgan knew its defenses would soon be tested.

Letters sent home from men stationed at Fort Morgan indicate the intense work that went into strengthening the fort for battle. Private W. C. Walker wrote on June 26, 1864, "Passes to Mobile are stopped. We cannot get a leave of absence for a longer period than 12 hours. We just stay here and work, work every day. Mount cannons, dismount cannons, unload boat loads of wood and lumber and carry it on our shoulders from the wharf to inside the fort." The tone of this letter and letters from other soldiers indicate that the men garrisoned at Fort Morgan grew weary of waiting at their isolated location. But as Union forces gathered in the waters off Fort Morgan, the men knew it would be only a matter of time before they were called to action.

Above: The Battle of Mobile Bay, fought on August 5, 1864, meant the fall of the last remaining Confederate port besides Savannah. (Courtesy Museum of Mobile.) Opposite page: Admiral David Farragut was a staunch opponent during the Battle of Mobile Bay. When tethered naval mines, known as torpedoes, began sailing at federal ships, Farragut cried, "Damn the torpedoes... full speed!" (Courtesy Library of Congress.)

Another letter from W. C. Walker dated August 1, 1864, describes the mounting Union forces. Walker writes, "There are twenty Yankee vessels lying off the Fort. One monitor, 2 iron clad gun boats & 14 wooden vessels of war. The monitor and iron clads are lying in range of our guns & no telling how soon they will commence the attack." Walker continues in his letter to say that "there is no unnecessary excitement at all although the bombardment may commence at any moment." He concludes by asserting the resolve of Fort Morgan's soldiers to "stand to their posts of duty until the foe shall leave our land & we all die in the attempt." The men would have to display this bravery all too soon.

For days, Fort Morgan's soldiers watched Union forces amassing in the nearby gulf waters. When this large fleet of eighteen ships began its approach in the morning hours of August 5, 1864, neither the men nor their com-

FORT MORGAN WATCHED AS ADMIRAL DAVID FARRAGUT'S FLEET CLOSED IN ON MOBILE BAY.

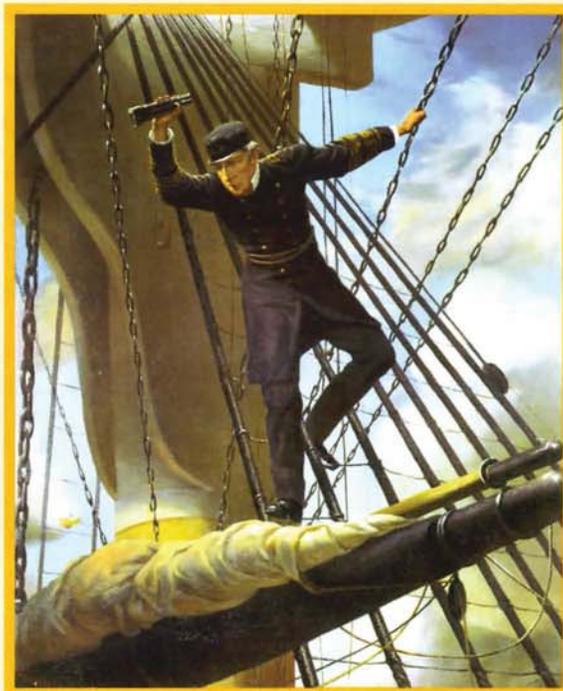
manding officer, Brigadier General Richard L. Page, was surprised. But Page, first cousin to General Robert E. Lee, also realized that Fort Morgan employed guns and defenses that were outdated and inadequate compared to Union arms. Page and his men had to rely on the torpedoes in the bay and the fact that the only mine-free channel ran close beside Fort Morgan's guns.

Fort Morgan watched as Admiral David Farragut's fleet closed in on Mobile Bay. Farragut clearly intended to brave close contact with the fort rather than risk the underwater torpedoes. He divided the fleet into pairs to pass through the channel while keeping warships on the fort side of the channel to protect less-equipped ships and to bombard Fort Morgan in passing.

Almost as soon as the Union fleet forced its way into Mobile Bay, the *Tecumseh*, a Union monitor leading Farragut's forces, hit a torpedo. The men of Fort Morgan watched the *Tecumseh* quickly sink, taking most of its crew down with it. In spite of this tragic loss, federal forces persevered. Warships fired relentlessly on Fort Morgan as the Union fleet poured into Mobile Bay. By late morning, the waters of the bay belonged to the Union, but Fort Morgan still stood strong.

Fort Morgan had survived one of the most important naval battles in the war, but its struggle was far from over. Page and his men had to prepare themselves for the impending siege. They focused most of their energy on strengthening the casemate hollow mouldings. Page also ordered troops evacuated from structures outside Fort Morgan's walls so they could be destroyed. A telegraph message alerted Page and his men that nearby Forts Gaines and Powell had already fallen. Fort Morgan was the last remaining stronghold.

On August 9, just days after the Union had taken Mobile Bay, federal troops and guns landed a little over



two miles east of Fort Morgan. Before commencement of a siege, monitors, sloops of war, and gunboats engaged Fort Morgan and demanded its surrender. Adopting the old Fort Bowyer motto, the Confederates refused to give up the fort. Page had been angered by the surrender of Fort Gaines. This time, he responded to the surrender demand by saying that he was "prepared to sacrifice life, and [would] only surrender when [he had] no means of defense." He followed his edict to the letter, and days of unrelenting siege followed.

Sand dunes and trenches protected federal troops and batteries from Fort Morgan's guns. But, being at the remote western end of Mobile Point, Confederates were cut off from supplies and relief. While ground troops built batteries, monitors took turns firing almost ceaselessly on Fort Morgan. Land batteries, Union sharpshooters, and naval guns impeded Fort Morgan's attempt to return fire effectively.

On August 15 two cannon shots breached the fort walls. Yet, Fort Morgan fought on. By August 22 Union troops were within two hundred yards of Fort Morgan, and the citadel was set on fire. Page desperately gave orders to destroy the fort's artillery and stores of powder. The fort that had survived almost the entire war was falling. Page had to make the decision either to hold Fort Morgan until it fell around him or surrender and spare the lives of his men. Around 2:00 PM on August 23, 1864, Fort Morgan was under federal control.

Surprisingly, the siege had cost the life of only one Fort Morgan soldier, and the surrender had spared an untold number. It was a civilized affair. The 2:00 PM deadline for abandoning the fort gave soldiers time to pack their belongings, which, except for weapons, would be respected as personal property. United States steamers then transported the captured garrison to New Orleans. From August 23, 1864, until December 31,

THE YEARS LEADING UP TO AND DURING WORLD WAR I SAW A PEAK OF ACTIVITY AT FORT MORGAN.

1867, United States troops garrisoned Fort Morgan. In 1868 the fort settled yet again into caretaker status, where it would sit idle for another generation.

Toward the end of the nineteenth century, United States involvement in international disputes, such as the conflict between Spain, Cuba, and the Philippines that escalated into the Spanish-American war, caused U.S. policymakers to fret over the nation's outdated coastal defenses. President Cleveland assigned Secretary of War William C. Endicott to lead a defense board in examining the matter of seacoast protection. The Endicott board saw the dire need for a massive construction project to modernize American coastal artillery. This building initiative ushered in the Coast Artillery era—the longest active period in Fort Morgan's history.

To update Fort Morgan, personnel constructed massive concrete batteries on site with one—Battery Dupontail—being built right across the old fort's walls. These structures used some of the most advanced technologies available at the time. Their amenities included electricity, telephone, a plotting system, and a telautograph, which was a precursor to the fax machine.

Battery construction started in 1895 and continued during the reactivation of Fort Morgan for the Spanish-American War, finally ending in 1905. But the end of the construction did not mean the end of the Coast Artillery era. On the contrary, America knew that any formidable enemy would have to come from overseas, so maintaining coastal defenses was a major military policy at the time. Fort Morgan determined to be prepared for possible battle. Its soldiers manned and maintained each of the fort's five batteries, training by firing on targets towed out in gulf waters.

Each of the fort's batteries had a specific mission to guard against foreign foes. The light batteries, called Thomas and Schneck, guarded the minefields in Mobile



Above: Soldiers pose on Battery Dupontail's disappearing rifle. Opposite page: These 1914 soldiers-turned-fishermen proudly display their catch for the camera and for two interested puppies. (Both courtesy Fort Morgan Historical Museum.)

Bay while batteries Dupontail, Bowyer, and Dearborn fired long-range at different areas of the gulf. Dupontail's disappearing rifles—so called because they sunk below fort walls for loading—could shoot a 1,046-pound shell over eight miles. But this impressive artillery never saw battle. Fort Morgan itself saw no more combat after the Civil War; its soldiers did, though.

The years leading up to and during World War I saw a peak of activity at Fort Morgan. The site became a training ground in addition to a location for Endicott program defenses. Over one hundred buildings occupied the surrounding region, and many soldiers and their families called the area home. Fort Morgan became the largest permanent military base in Alabama, and a vibrant base life developed on Alabama's Gulf Coast.

The bustling world of Fort Morgan existed in spite of its extreme isolation at the western edges of Mobile Point. In the present day, a road leads from Gulf Shores to the furthest reaches of Mobile Point, but during the Coast Artillery era, no such road existed. Soldiers, their families, and civilians employed at the fort had to rely on boats to travel between Fort Morgan and the rest of the world.

Keeping up morale at such an isolated outpost was no easy task, but the Army tried by organizing recreational



activities for soldiers and their families. Photographs of Fort Morgan during the era show soldiers boxing and playing football and baseball. Fort Morgan residents also enjoyed dances, a library, and a school. Its grounds were home to a hospital with a surgical ward, a theater, a tennis court, and a bowling alley. In fact, a *Washington Post* article from 1912 announced the entry of a Fort Morgan team in the “twelfth annual tournament of the American Bowling Congress” held in Chicago. By 1915 Fort Morgan operated much like a modern base by providing such amenities and entertainment to its soldiers and their families. But this bustling community was not to last much beyond World War I.

By January 1924 the Coast Artillery era at Fort Morgan came to an end; the Army closed its operations at Mobile Point. From 1924 to 1942, the fort was in caretaker status again, but this time, caretaker status involved the fort’s use as a historic site. It operated as such from 1927 until the start of World War II.

As World War II escalated, the U.S. Navy purchased Fort Morgan from the Army. In 1942, one year after the purchase, the attack on Pearl Harbor forced American entry into the war, and Fort Morgan was reactivated for use by the Coast Artillery, the Navy, and the Coast Guard to deal with the immediate threat of German U-boats lurking in the Gulf of Mexico.

A May 1942 article from the *Christian Science Monitor* reported that the U-boat attacks were a crisis, noting that merchantmen ships were being sunk as quickly as the

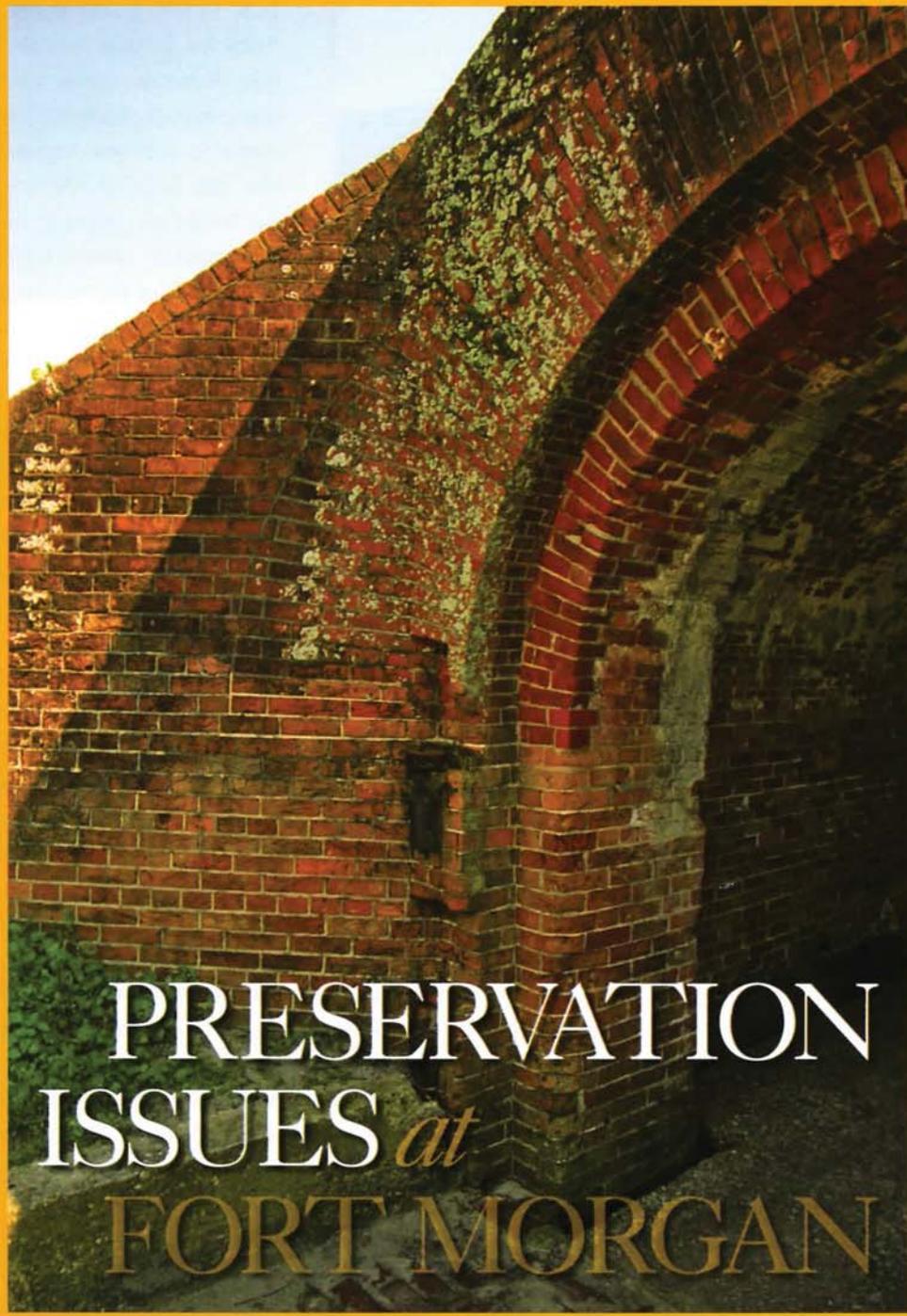
U.S. could build them. Attacks began on the mid-Atlantic coast and unexpectedly spread their terror to remoter regions like the Gulf of Mexico. As Mobile’s population blossomed, along with the growth of the wartime shipbuilding industry, protecting Mobile Bay and nearby areas of the gulf became increasingly important. Although they were up against a hidden foe, the troops at Fort Morgan stood ready to protect Mobile Bay again.

The United States was ill prepared, however, to

deal with the threat of submarines, and U.S. forces were only able to sink two U-boats during this time. Historians now know that fourteen such vessels operated in the Gulf of Mexico between May and September 1942, but at the time, Americans were dealing with a terrifying unknown. One vessel in particular—a submarine called U 106—terrorized Alabama’s coast, lurking in the vicinity of Mobile Bay and sinking several ships as they left that safe harbor. In an effort to guard against such attacks, men stationed at Fort Morgan patrolled the beaches on horseback and in jeeps to look for signs of the underwater menace.

This period of activity ended in January 1944 when Fort Morgan’s troops were sent overseas. Patrolling beaches turned out to be ineffective against the technologically advanced U-boats, and the fort’s men were better employed elsewhere. The fort was deactivated, and by the middle of the year, the Navy declared Fort Morgan “surplus.” One year later, Fort Morgan was given to the state of Alabama to be used as a historic site.

It is in this capacity that Fort Morgan continues to serve the people of Alabama. The fort’s existence as a historic landmark allows it to tell and retell its story to the many visitors who walk its grounds each year. Its remnants tell the story of colonial struggle, secession, reconstruction, and industrialization. The site is rich not only in military history but also in human history. Today, faced with its greatest enemy yet—time—the old embattlements cry out to a new generation of Alabamians: “Don’t give up the fort.”



PRESERVATION ISSUES *at* FORT MORGAN

FROM ITS DAYS OF PROTECTING THE blockade runners slipping in and out of Mobile Bay to its days of scanning the beach for stealthy U-boats, Fort Morgan has earned its title “Guardian of the Bay.” But now it is Fort Morgan that needs protection—protection from time, the elements, and battle scars received long ago.

The fort is 173 years old, but its structure has seen no substantial maintenance since the Civil War era. This lack of maintenance is due to the fort’s obsolescence

working its way through the fort’s structure carries the lime with it. Once the lime is washed away, only disintegrating sand will remain.

On top of these same left-side casemates, the surface rolls up and down like a series of tiny brick hills on top of the fort. These uneven surfaces are evidence that the sand fill is washing out from the fort’s top. One only need walk the upper perimeter of the fort to see that this rolling is not part of the original architecture; other parts of the fort are contrastingly even.

after the concrete batteries were built during the Coast Artillery era. The massive, old fort was seen as obsolete in the face of modern warfare and artillery. However, now the fort is relevant in a whole new way—as a National Historic Landmark—and a large scale preservation plan is needed.

Major action is required to stabilize the fort. Once inside its walls, visitors can see firsthand the need for restoration by turning to the left casemate arches. These arches have become cracked, and the faces of the arches that look out onto the parade grounds are steadily separating from the rest of the arch. What exactly is moving and why remains unknown.

Inside the arches, stalagmites hang overhead. Although these ghostly white formations add to the mysterious and ancient atmosphere of the fort’s dim interior, they indicate a serious threat to the landmark’s existence. The dripstones are caused by lime leaching out of the mortar that holds the fort’s bricks together. Water

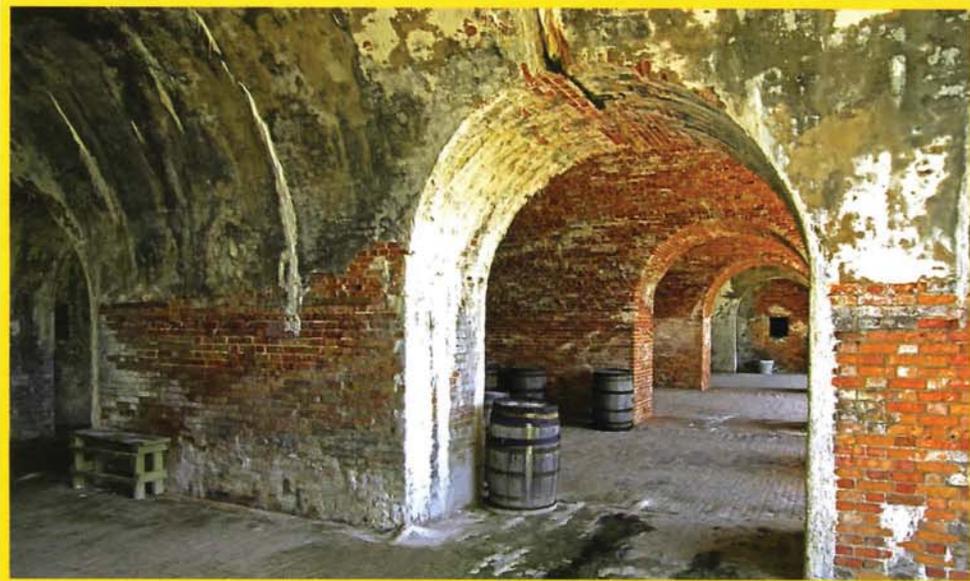
While the exact cause and mechanics of the casemate arch cracks are unknown, some parts of the fort's history may help architects and preservationists solve and fix the problem. The left side of the fort took the brunt of the bombardment when Union forces laid siege to the Confederate stronghold. Afterwards, when the fort was back in U.S. control, the real structural damage was never addressed; only cosmetic restoration was completed.

Another possible cause of the fort's weakened state is the construction and firing of the concrete battery that runs across the middle of Fort Morgan. Battery Duportail used 268 pounds of explosive to fire its guns. Such force would have been transferred throughout the fort's walls whenever the battery was tested. Combined stresses of both the Civil War and Coast Artillery eras may have taken their toll.

The fort was built on wooden footing to keep it stable in its sandy location on Mobile Point. This wooden grill is likely getting spongy with age and contributing to the walls' instability. Any plan to protect Fort Morgan will have to consider the building's architecture and materials along with its military past.

Other issues to contend with are the small changes that have been made to the fort over its long history. In addition to changes and damages during the Civil War, the '20s and '30s brought alterations to Fort Morgan. In the 1920s, the wooden faces of the casemate arches were burned while still in place. Such an action may have been damaging to the surrounding brickwork in ways no one considered at the time.

In the 1930s, the WPA worked to restore Fort Morgan as a park; its projects changed aspects of the fort and its obvious repair work can be easily discerned today. Repaired brickwork in the sallyport, the fort's main entrance, is a different color than the surrounding original brick, and the mortar that was used in repairs was too hard for the original brick. Seasonal expansions of the older brick against the newer, harder mortar have resulted in much fractured brickwork throughout the fort. Visitors who pry the broken brick loose increase the damage. With one



Opposite page: Mismatched bricks reveal the spotty patchwork of the repairs to the glacis entrance. Above: Water seepage and leaching lime cause slippery floors and arch decay.

hundred thousand people visiting the fort each year, the wear and tear to the historic structure is substantial.

WPA workers also ripped out drainage systems in order to reuse the brick in other parts of the fort. For a structure so close to the sea and so vulnerable to hurricanes, adequate drainage is an integral feature. Although the WPA program at Fort Morgan was an attempt to preserve the area's history, it wrought changes that now need to be addressed for continued preservation.

The large number of fort visitors attests to the importance of maintaining Fort Morgan; it is a monument to Alabama's past, a past that deserves to be remembered. Visitors can stand on the bastions and look out over Mobile Bay. They can imagine the firepower as Fort Morgan tried to prevent Farragut's forces from passing through the channel, and then they can imagine the Admiral's famous (and disputed) command to "Damn the torpedoes! . . . Full speed!" Present-day Alabamians can walk through the casemate arches and across the parade ground, treading the same paths that soldiers from many wars also tread. As they walk these grounds, most visitors probably do not consider the vulnerability of the fort they are exploring. But the damages are there, and time and weather are constantly wearing away at Alabama's legacy. To combat these forces the Alabama Historical Commission is working on a plan to stabilize Fort Morgan. With luck and matching state and federal funds, Fort Morgan will be preserved for many more generations to come.

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CONTRIBUTORS, SOURCES, AND SUGGESTED READING

FORT MORGAN: GUARDIAN OF THE BAY

By Jessica Fordham Kidd

JESSICA FORDHAM KIDD is a native of Coker, Alabama. Assistant director of the First Year Writing program and instructor in the English department at the University of Alabama, Jessica holds a BA in geology and a MFA in creative writing, both from the University of Alabama. Her article "Privation and Pride: Life in Blockaded Alabama" appeared in *Alabama Heritage* # 82. The author sends many thanks to Blanton Blankenship and Michael Bailey, who provided invaluable information on the fort's history and its preservation concerns.

RUBY PICKENS TARTT: CITIZEN OF THE WORLD

By Philip Beidler and Elizabeth Buckalew

PHILIP BEIDLER is a professor of English at the University of Alabama, where he has taught American literature since receiving his PhD from the University of Virginia in 1974. His publications over the years in *Alabama Heritage* include essays on Caroline Lee Hentz, Johnny Mack Brown, legal codes in early Alabama, and Alabama soldiers in the Vietnam War and the American Civil War. His most recent book is *American Wars, American Peace: Notes from a Son of the Empire* (University of Georgia Press, 2007).

ELIZABETH WADE BUCKALEW is an assistant editor at *Alabama Heritage*. A graduate of Davidson College, she is currently pursuing a PhD in English at the University of Alabama. Her poetry and nonfiction have appeared in such journals as *Harpur Palate*, *Cream City Review*, and *Spoon River Poetry Review*. She would like to thank Allen and Mary Tartt for their generous assistance with this article.

RICHARD COE'S BIRMINGHAM

By Lynn Barstis Williams

LYNN BARSTIS WILLIAMS is Librarian Emerita at Auburn University Libraries. She is the author of *Imprinting the South: Southern Printmakers and Their Images of the Region, 1920s-1940s* (University of Alabama Press, 2007), various journal articles on southern art, and the compiler of *American Printmakers: An Index to Reproductions and Biocritical Information, 1880-1945* (Scarecrow, 1993). She has authored other articles on Alabama artists for *Alabama Heritage*. Williams would like to thank John McCall for sharing his collection of Coe works for this article. She would be interested in hearing from people who have more knowledge of and works by Richard Coe (heritage@bama.ua.edu).

WILLIAM STANLEY HOOLE: A MAN OF LETTERS

By Elizabeth Hoole McArthur

ELIZABETH HOOLE McARTHUR, a Phi Beta Kappa graduate of the University of Alabama, earned BA and MA degrees in history. She holds the EdD from University of Georgia. Following a successful thirty-year career as a secondary school teacher/administrator she now writes for magazines, has published a history (*Bound for Glory*), and is completing another. She resides with her husband Hugh in Dalton, Georgia.

McArthur has many wonderful childhood memories of "assisting" her father, Dr. Hoole, with his writings and eagerly accompanying him on searches for historic sites, relics, and stories as she grew older. With him she co-authored *The Yankee Invasion of West Alabama, March-April, 1865*.

She would like to thank Mrs. Addie Shirley Hoole and Martha DuBose Hoole.

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