



 1861 Fort Green

 1862 Fort Edgar

# Dirt-and-Log Forts

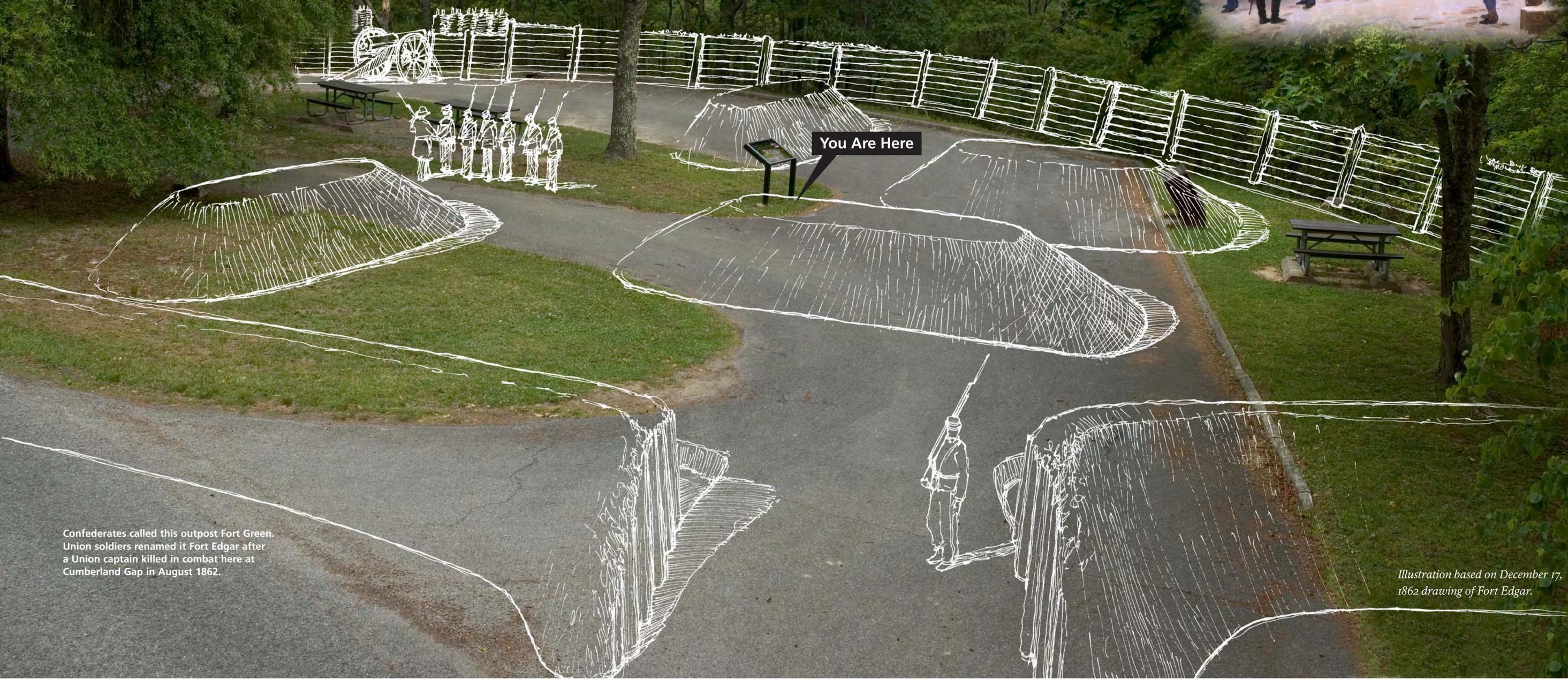
*[Cumberland Gap] is the roughest place in the world, but we are going to stick the mountain full of cannon to prevent the Lincolmites from crossing.*

 Letter of Confederate soldier, November 1861

Where you see a picnic ground today, imagine a Civil War fort the size of four football fields side-by-side atop this knoll. The outer walls, made of packed earth faced with logs, rose 10 feet high. Like the other batteries, forts, and rifle pits here in the Gap, this outpost was continuously garrisoned by Confederates or Federals from 1861 until 1865. Troops posted here guarded the Harlan Road, the best way up Pinnacle Mountain.

*It sickens one to the heart to witness the waste of war. The rebels left standing 400 to 500 tents, but...all but four or five were slit to ribbons. Flour, meal, rice, and beans were strewn all over the surface of the fortifications and hill-sides....Tons of shot and shell were thrown over the cliffs into the ravines below...*

 Benjamin F. Stevenson, surgeon, 22nd Kentucky Volunteer Infantry Regiment, June 19, 1862



Confederates called this outpost Fort Green. Union soldiers renamed it Fort Edgar after a Union captain killed in combat here at Cumberland Gap in August 1862.

*Illustration based on December 17, 1862 drawing of Fort Edgar.*



# American Camp

*[Colonel Casey's camp] is very strongly placed in the most commanding position in this end of the island, well sheltered in the rear and on one side by the forest and on the other side by a commanding eminence.*

Captain Prevost, HMS *Satellite*, August 1859

This location was the third and final site of the American Camp. It was selected by Colonel Casey on August 17, 1859, 21 days after U.S. Army infantry arrived on San Juan Island to protect American settlers from the British. Occupied by U.S. soldiers from 1859 to 1874, the camp reminds us that nations and individuals can resolve disputes without resorting to violence.

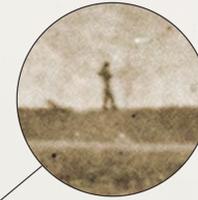




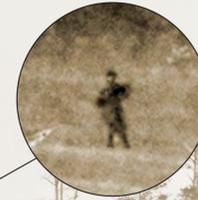
# A Unique Photograph

On November 28, 1864, photographer T. C. Roche stood atop the Great Traverse, behind you, and took this remarkable photograph. He produced a rare unposed view of Union and Confederate fighting men in the field, seen together while at war.

A Confederate soldier stands atop Fort Beauregard in the distance, in plain sight of pickets from the 7th United States Colored Troops. In the foreground other members of the regiment relax beside their winter quarters. Just two months earlier the 7th suffered terribly in the failed attack against Fort Gilmer, a mile north of here.



Confederate soldier stands atop Fort Beauregard



Union picket of the 7th United States Colored Troops

Fort Beauregard

You Are Here





# Confederate Futility

*“Entering the field at the point where our artillery had been posted, I came upon numbers of dead and dying horses, who, with the drivers and gunners, laid in a pile together; their several dismantled guns, their caissons, fired and blown up by the enemy’s balls—all presenting an aspect of desolation and ruin.”*

John S. Hard, 7th South Carolina Infantry

Poindexter Farm

West House

Crew House

Parsonage ruins

Willis Church Road

Carter’s Mill Road

You Are Here

The Confederate plan called for dozens of cannon to gather here and on the Poindexter Farm, nearly a mile to the east (your left). Their combined fire, directed at the Union batteries atop Malvern Hill, would clear the way for an infantry assault up the hill.

But everything went wrong. Officers failed to collect enough cannon. Batteries came up to this ridge one at a time, were pounded by stronger and more numerous

Union guns, and left the field in disarray. A similar scenario played out a short distance to the east on the Poindexter farm. The Confederate infantry attack went forward anyway, many of the soldiers marching directly through the smoking debris on this high ground and coming under direct, short-range fire for the first time.



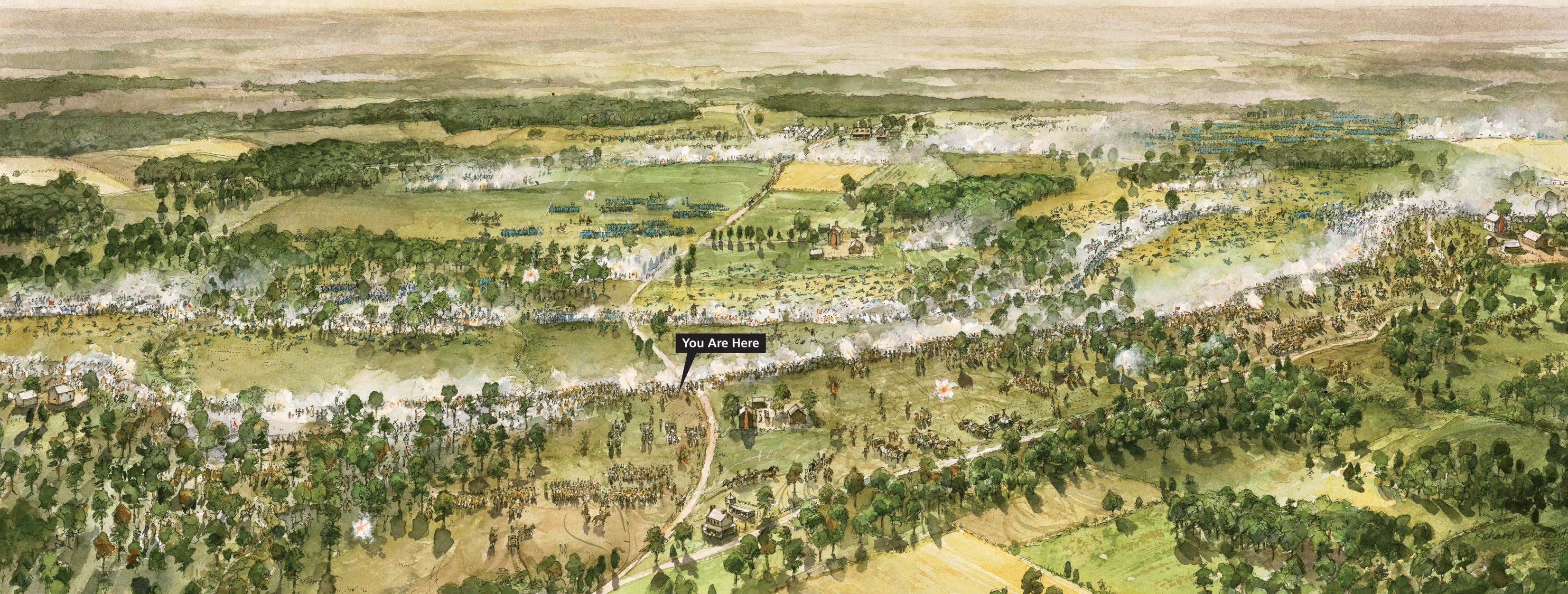
# High Stakes Gamble

*“The men bent down as they pushed forward, as if trying . . . to breast a tempest, and the files of men went down like rows of blocks or bricks pushed over by striking against each other.”*

John L. Piper, 12th New Hampshire Infantry

At first light on June 3, 1864, over half of the Army of the Potomac rushed forward across a wide front. Theirs was a high stakes gamble. The risk: a frontal attack against well-fortified Confederate defenders. The reward: the prospect of driving Robert E. Lee’s army into the Chickahominy River. On the Confederate and your right, a brief Union breakthrough produced hand-to-hand fighting. In the center, the

attackers barely left the cover of their trees. On the left, brave Federal soldiers charged across open ground, only to fall by the hundreds. The Confederate line stood unbroken and remained intact until June 12, when the Union army slipped away. Cold Harbor produced numbing casualty figures: 13,000 for the Federals and approximately 5,000 for the Confederates during the two weeks of combat.





# Field of Battle

This photograph, taken from the heights to your right-rear, shows the landscape in front of you as it appeared the year after the Battle of Fredericksburg. The town of Fredericksburg sits atop the ridge in the distance; the spire of St. George's Episcopal Church dominates the skyline (and it still does).

Before the war, much of the open ground in this view had been Fredericksburg's fairgrounds. Fences that once enclosed them and sheds that once dotted the fairgrounds were swept away during the December 1862 battle.

For eight hours on December 13, 1862 these open fields became a killing ground. After the war, the dead buried here were disinterred, and slowly the town grew westward. The neighborhood that now stands in front of you was built between 1890 and 1930.



Stratton House

You Are Here

stone wall

Sunken Road

St. George's Episcopal Church

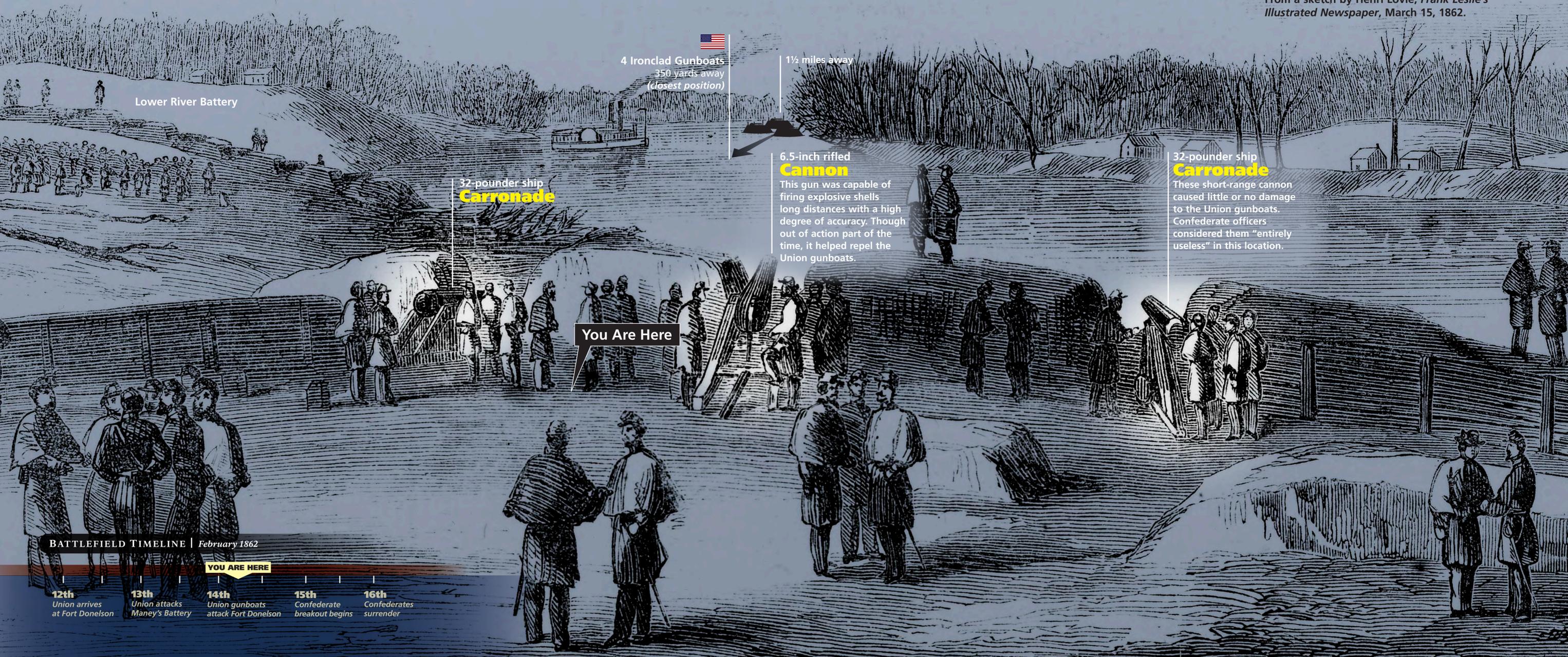


# With Admirable Precision

This is the smallest of the two river batteries built by Confederates in 1861 to protect the Cumberland River, a strategic transportation and supply route to Clarksville and Nashville. Semicircular in design and set some 30 feet above the river, the battery mounted one 6.5-inch rifled cannon and two 32-pounder ship carronades, all

protected by sandbags and a strong parapet. The battery was manned by the Maury Light Artillery Battery commanded by Capt. Reuben R. Ross. Portions of Captain Ross's command were also assigned to serve the 10-inch Columbiad in the nearby Lower River Battery. Though inexperienced in handling heavy artillery, Ross's

gunners were praised for exhibiting "admirable precision" against the Union ironclads on February 14, 1862. The collapsed remains of the powder magazine used by the Confederates to store ammunition for the cannon during the battle can be seen in the hillside behind you.



Upper River Battery after Union occupation. From a sketch by Henri Lovie, *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper*, March 15, 1862.

  
4 Ironclad Gunboats  
350 yards away  
(closest position)

1½ miles away

32-pounder ship  
**Carronade**

6.5-inch rifled  
**Cannon**

This gun was capable of firing explosive shells long distances with a high degree of accuracy. Though out of action part of the time, it helped repel the Union gunboats.

32-pounder ship  
**Carronade**

These short-range cannon caused little or no damage to the Union gunboats. Confederate officers considered them "entirely useless" in this location.

You Are Here

BATTLEFIELD TIMELINE | February 1862

YOU ARE HERE

- 12th Union arrives at Fort Donelson
- 13th Union attacks Maney's Battery
- 14th Union gunboats attack Fort Donelson
- 15th Confederate breakout begins
- 16th Confederates surrender