

Rivers and Rifles: The Role of Fort Heiman in the Western Theater of the Civil War

Timothy A. Parsons

Abstract

Between 1861 and 1864, a triumvirate of Forts – Henry, Donelson, and Heiman – played a pivotal role in the western theater of the Civil War. Of the three, Fort Heiman changed hands most often, and despite its relative obscurity was a keystone for the Union and Confederacy in regulating military transport and commerce on the Tennessee River. In late 2010, archaeologists from the National Park Service Southeast Archeological Center investigated Fort Heiman to distinguish between Confederate and Union landscape features, and to shed light on the role of African American Freedmen living at the fort during its Northern occupation. Ultimately, the landscape surrounding Fort Heiman was found to be highly disturbed by relic collectors. And, although impossible to distinguish between Union and Confederate forces based on the artifact assemblage, the identification of several earthworks and landscape features sheds new light on the occupation of the area during the Civil War.

Introduction

Early in the Civil War, control of navigable waterways was of paramount strategic concern. The Cumberland and Tennessee Rivers, as part of the Mississippi River drainage, were important transportation and trade routes flowing directly into the heart of the Confederacy. This paper recounts the importance of maritime superiority in the western theater of the Civil War prior to 1864, and focuses on the roles of three Confederate

forts in the defense and control of the rivers – Forts Heiman, Henry, and Donelson. The subject is approached through the lens of Phase I and Phase II archaeological survey at the Fort Heiman unit of Fort Donelson National Battlefield, as part of the National Park Service’s National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) Section 110 site inventory and evaluation obligations.

Controlling the Cumberland and Tennessee Rivers, 1860-1863

Kentucky was strategically important to both the Union North and Confederate South. Demographically, the state ranked ninth in population by 1860 and produced important agricultural commodities such as tobacco, corn, wheat, hemp, and flax; its neutral status at the outset of the war thus made it desirable territory for both the North and the South. Even more importantly, the transportation role of the Tennessee River was recognized and coveted by both parties. The Confederate rush to fortify this

vital transportation and potential invasion route is demonstrative of the region’s role as a linchpin during the early days of the Civil War (Figure 1). Indeed, western Kentucky was of such strategic value to both sides that President Abraham Lincoln wrote, “I think to lose Kentucky is nearly the same as to lose the whole game...We would as well consent to separation at once, including the surrender of the capital” (Harrison and Klotter 1975:3).

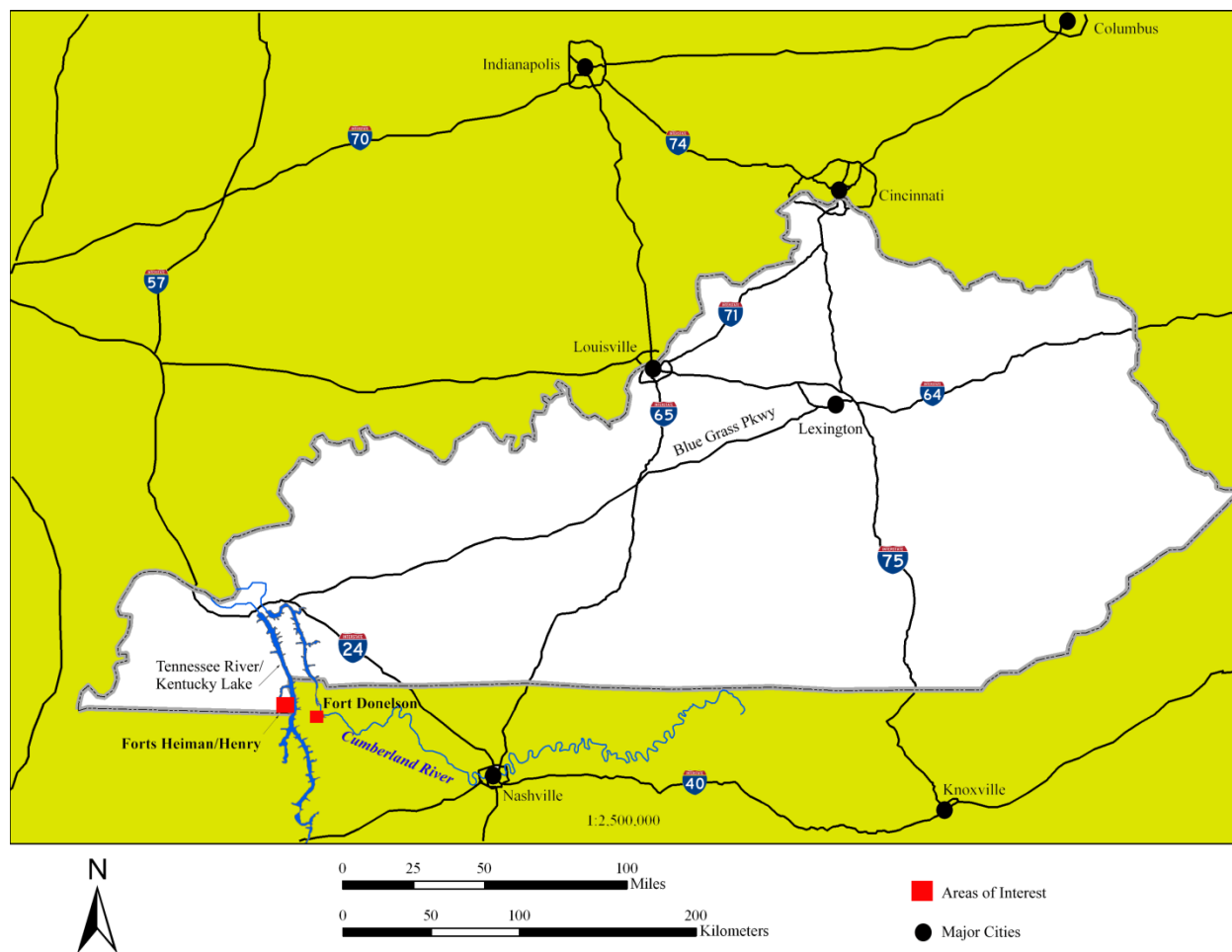


Figure 1: Locational map of Fort Heiman, Fort Henry, Fort Donelson, and relevant rivers and lakes.

Though this series of battles on the Cumberland and Tennessee Rivers is often glossed over in summaries of the Civil War, the fights for control of these important waterways greatly affected momentum and strategy early on in the conflict. Fort Heiman, especially, is often left out of narratives of the Battle of Fort

Defending the Rivers

The Civil War in the Lower Tennessee-Cumberland region of western Kentucky and Tennessee was defined by the positions played by three forts along the Tennessee and Cumberland Rivers: Forts Henry, Heiman, and Donelson (Figure 2). Indeed, the extreme

Henry. Despite the relatively small role played by Fort Heiman in defense of Fort Henry and the Tennessee River, it nonetheless saw several subsequent occupations by Union and Confederate forces during the war, and shaped the conflict in the western theater for years to come.

western portion of the state was extremely important due to the Mississippi, Cumberland, and Tennessee Rivers—all the modern equivalent of highways to the heart of the Confederacy if they came under Federal control.

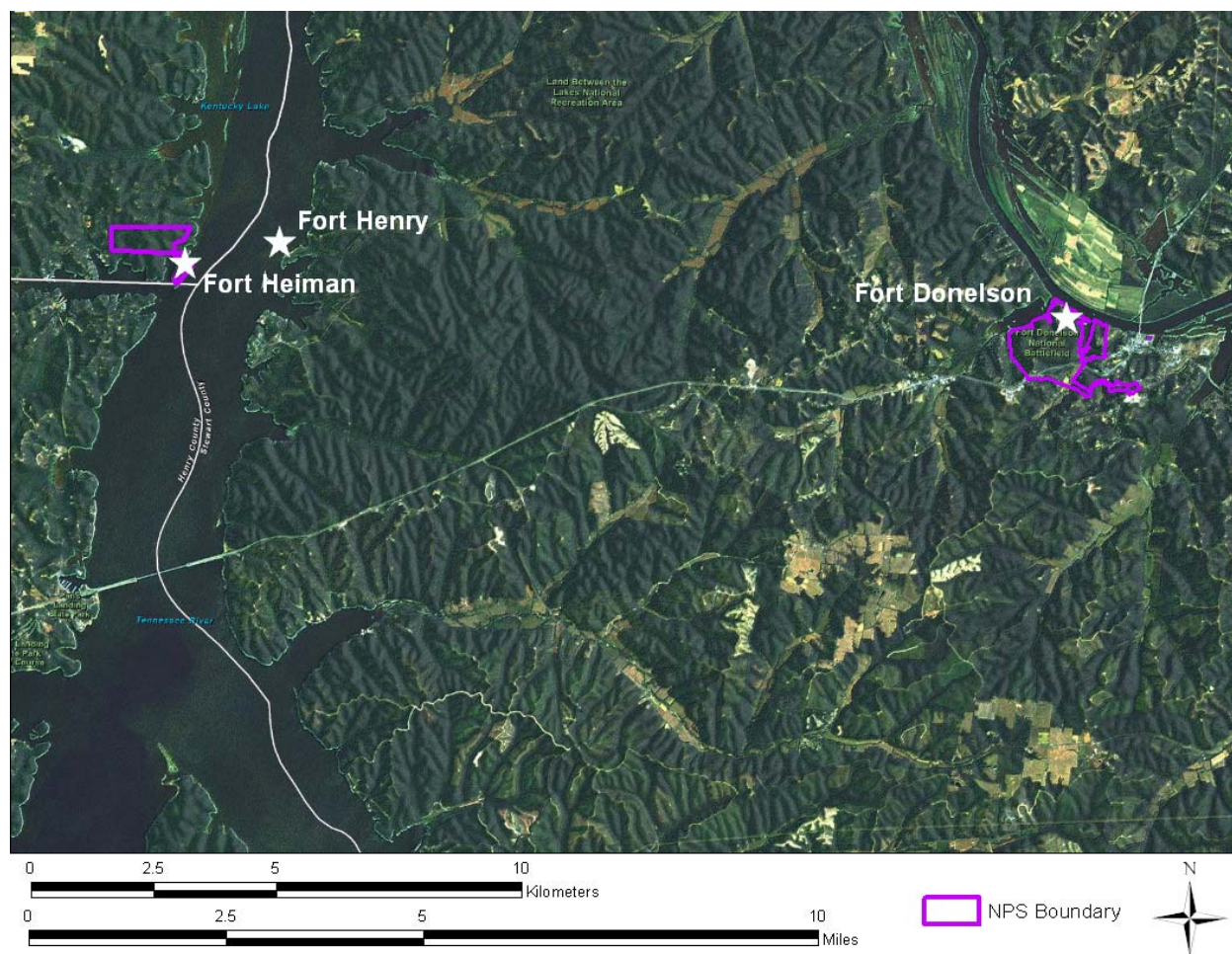


Figure 2: The locations of Forts Heiman, Henry, and Donelson along the Tennessee and Cumberland Rivers. Note that Fort Henry is submerged beneath Kentucky Lake in this modern satellite imagery (imagery from ESRI 2011).

In order to prevent a Union invasion along these key transportation arteries, the Confederacy constructed Fort Donelson on the Cumberland River at Dover, Tennessee, and Fort Henry on the eastern bank of the Tennessee by June of 1861 (Cooling 1987:48). Despite there being a more appropriate battery location on the elevated bluffs overlooking the western bank of the river, due to Kentucky's neutral status, Fort Henry was placed upon low-lying ground in Tennessee. Its proximity to Kentucky

and its command over a long, straight stretch of the Tennessee River also contributed to its strategic placement. Two months later, in September 1861, Confederate forces under General S.B. Buckner seized and occupied Bowling Green, Kentucky in order to impede Union railroad operations in the region (Eisterhold 1974:43). This opened the door for further Confederate military inroads and the building of fortifications in the state.

The Construction and First Confederate Occupation of Fort Heiman

Upon Brig. Gen. Lloyd Tilghman's arrival as commander of Forts Henry and Donelson in late 1861, he immediately recognized Fort Henry's susceptibility to floodwaters (Lampley 2008). Indeed, Fort Henry's position was described as "wretched" by both Major J. F. Gilmer, a Confederate engineer who arrived at the fort after its construction and would select the location for Fort Heiman (United States War Department 1882:131), and by Tilghman himself, as shown in his report of the battle and Confederate surrender. Tilghman understood what Confederate engineers apparently had not—nature was more certain to destroy Fort Henry than any Union gunboat, and wrote that "the history of military engineering records no parallel to this case" (Tilghman 1882:139). Thus understanding the fort's precarious situation, Tilghman sent Colonel Adolphus Heiman, commander of the Tenth Tennessee Regiment, and his chief engineer Major Gilmer, to the high bluffs on the Kentucky bank of the river to determine if the land could accommodate heavy artillery and suitably protect Fort Henry. Gilmer selected a location approximately one-and-a-half miles from the existing fort, on the opposite side of the Tennessee River (Figure 3).

Construction began in December 1861 with the arrival of the Twenty-seventh Alabama and Fifteenth Arkansas infantry regiments who, along with some 500 slaves, were tasked with building the works. Its suitable defensive position—protected by 150 foot bluffs in front and impassible roads and rough terrain in the rear—stood in marked contrast to the poor placement of Fort Henry (Eisterhold 1974:45).

Tilghman had hoped to place large Parrott rifles overlooking the Tennessee River by the second week of February (Eisterhold 1974:45; Lampley 2008). On the morning of February 3, General Tilghman made an inspection of the incomplete works at Fort Heiman. Satisfied with the progress, the General subsequently left for Fort Donelson to make a similar inspection (Tilghman 1882:137), with work to continue on the bluffs of the Tennessee River. Unbeknownst to Tilghman, U. S. Grant's army of 17,000 Federal troops on gunboats and transports, commanded by Commodore Andrew Hull Foote, had been moving toward the forts from the north since February 1 (Eisterhold 1974:43; Force 1881). Though not yet formally named, this army eventually became known as Grant's Army of the Tennessee.



Figure 3: The only known contemporary map showing the location of Fort Heiman, along with Fort Henry and Union and Confederate military positions. The map is contained in the Robert Knox Sneden Scrapbook (Mss5:7 Sn237:1 p. 437) curated at the Library of Congress. Courtesy of the Virginia Historical Society.

The Battle of Fort Henry

By February 4, Grant's army had arrived three miles downstream from Forts Henry and Heiman at Bailey's Ferry. This prompted Tilghman to order a retreat from the unfinished and unequipped Fort Heiman to reinforce Fort Henry across the river. By this time, Fort Henry was partially inundated by the Tennessee River following heavy rains. Tilghman, in recognition of the difficult situation, ordered the majority of the soldiers to assist in the defense of Fort Donelson. He later rationalized this decision in his after-action report, saying "I deemed it proper to trust to the fact that the extremely bad roads leading to that point would prevent the movement of heavy guns by the enemy, by which I might be annoyed [at Fort Henry]" (Tilghman 1882:138). Furthermore, Tilghman reasoned that a centralization of troops at Fort Donelson might allow it to be held, while Fort Henry was a likely loss regardless of troop number due to its precarious placement and flood waters that continued to rise. Ironically, it fell to Colonel Adolphus Heiman to lead the troops away from the fort that bore his name, leaving only one garrison of between 54 and 90 soldiers to man Fort Henry's few guns (Heiman 1882:152).

Following the Confederate evacuations from Forts Heiman and Henry, the dismal situation failed to improve for Tilghman and the soldiers under his command. During the night of February 5, Union General C. F. Smith crossed the Tennessee River from Bailey's Ferry to occupy the abandoned Fort Heiman, and General McClernand's ground troops (under Colonel Oglesby) began their approach to Fort Henry from the northeast. This left the skeleton crew of Confederate forces at Fort Henry with few options.

The Battle of Fort Donelson

The fall of Forts Heiman and Henry opened the door for General Grant's troops to march the 12 miles overland to Fort Donelson beginning on February 12, 1862 (McPherson 1883:161). In his confidence, and perhaps haste, after his

On the morning of February 6, 1862, at 11:45 a.m., Commodore Foote's seven gunboats engaged Fort Henry from the north. The river's high winter floodwaters had reached the banks of Fort Henry's earthworks, allowing the approaching Union gunboats to direct fire on nearly level flight at the fort's parapets and guns. By 1:00 p.m., only four of Tilghman's guns remained operational, with the General himself operating a 32-pound rifle to relieve the exhausted soldiers. Even worse, only nine of 17 guns remained above water and could serve as defense (Gott 2003:88-89). Several of the guns experienced mechanical problems during the battle, with the 10 inch Columbiad vent accidentally spiked and making it unusable, and one of the 32 pound guns loaded with improper ammunition exploding and killing two of its operators (Heiman 1882:151). The undermanned and ill-protected Confederate forces managed to disable at least one boat, the Essex, killing 32 Union sailors, but ultimately fatigue and equipment failures led Tilghman to surrender at approximately 2 o'clock on the afternoon of February 6. Though accounts conflict, Confederate casualties are estimated as high as 15 killed and 20 wounded—ironically being less than half of the 32 Union soldiers lost aboard the Essex by the victorious Army of the Tennessee (Gott 2003). Tilghman himself reported two soldiers killed in his after-action report (1883:142).

victory at Fort Henry, Grant ordered his troops under General McClernand to quickly advance on Fort Donelson's position, bringing with them only what would fit in their rucksacks and two days worth of provisions (Gott 2003:132).

Though bothered by the Confederate cavalry screen led by Nathan Bedford Forrest, Grant and a significant portion of his force arrived on the 12th, as did the USS Carondelet, whose crew probed Fort Donelson's defenses before the impending naval battle (Cooling 1987; Gott 2003:144). On February 13, small skirmishes and probing attacks commenced against the Confederate forces, despite General Grant's orders to avoid engagement. C. F. Smith sent two brigades to test the strength of the opposing defenses, and McClernand also advanced against the fort. These advances made no gains, though the Forty-eighth Illinois under Colonel W. H. L. Wallace managed to silence a battery that had been firing upon Union positions (Cooling 1987; Gott 2003:157-164).

By February 14, Confederate commanders had determined that a continuing standoff at Fort Donelson was untenable and commenced with a plan to push through the Union forces to mount a breakout attempt. General Gideon Pillow, with soldiers ready behind the lines, postponed the attempt due to the death of an aid at the hands of a sniper, under the assumption that their movements had been detected and the maneuvers compromised. This delay proved costly. At midday, Union forces were reinforced by the arrival of more ground troops from Fort Henry, as well as Commodore Foote's flotilla of six gunboats on the Cumberland River and 10,000 reinforcements on transport ships (McPherson 1882:163). The additional troops allowed for the reinforcement of McClernand's right flank, thus making any breakout attempts by Confederate forces unlikely to succeed.

Foote's armada would have more of a challenge at Fort Donelson than they experienced at Fort Henry days earlier. Almost immediately upon their arrival, Foote proceeded to fire upon the fort and move within 400 yards of the lower batteries, following a similar

strategy to the one he had employed at Fort Henry (Foote 1882:166). Unlike Fort Henry, however, Fort Donelson's artillery imparted significant damage to the fleet, landing more than 150 shots and killing a number of Union soldiers. Ultimately, though, the Union retained control of the Cumberland River despite the damages, and maintained the strategic advantage on land.

The superior Federal strategic position prompted Confederate commanders to once again consider a breakout attempt, and this time they followed through with their escape plan. On the morning of February 15, General Pillow launched an assault against McClernand's division on the weaker right flank of the Union line, bolstered by Forrest's cavalry and Buckner's forces from the Confederate right flank, now left weakened. The attack proceeded as planned, opening up an escape route, and pushing back McClernand's force between one and two miles. However, a miscalculation by Pillow shortly after midday led to the nearly victorious Confederate soldiers returning behind the outer works of Fort Donelson, pushed on by L. Wallace's reinforcement of McClernand's forces on the Union right flank (McPherson 1882:163). The weakness in the Confederate right flank remained, which Grant quickly exploited by sending C. F. Smith's two brigades to take the outer works of the fort (McClernand 1882:171). The Federal forces quickly captured the fort's outer entrenchments, and by nightfall Confederate forces had lost all ground gained during the day.

On the morning of February 16, Union forces continued to receive reinforcements. Though initially bolstered by their successes the previous day, Confederate Generals Floyd, Pillow, and Buckner quickly realized that, once again, their position was perilous. Fearing Federal imprisonment upon defeat or surrender,

Floyd and Pillow abandoned their commands (while Forrest and his cavalry escaped via the path opened by Pillow's forces the previous day), leaving Bucker to accept the unconditional surrender offered by General Grant. If the battle at Fort Heiman and Fort Henry took a relatively small toll in terms of lives, the Battle of Fort

Donelson was just the opposite. Between February 11 and 16, Union casualties numbered over 2,600 with 507 killed, and Confederate casualties were nearly 14,000 including prisoners, with 327 left dead (Gott 2003:284-285, 288).

The Consequences of the Battles

The fall of Fort Henry on February 6 alone would likely have been enough to allow Union forces to disrupt shipping and take cities along the Tennessee River, as far as Muscle Shoals, Alabama. Indeed, this took place; however, the subsequent Confederate defeat at Fort Donelson ensured that the two major water transportation routes in the Confederate west—the Tennessee and Cumberland Rivers—became highways for

Union troop movements into the south, and served as supply lines for their support. Furthermore, Grant's victories at Henry and Donelson, and the eventual fall of Nashville to Union forces, threatened the now flanked Confederate forces in Columbus and Bowling Green, Kentucky, and essentially cut off the Confederacy from much of the western theater of the Civil War.

Subsequent Military Occupations of Fort Heiman

After the fall of Fort Donelson, Grant decided that keeping the Fort Heiman position under Federal control was in the best interest of the Union, given Fort Henry's poor placement and the strategic importance placed on control of the Tennessee River. The task of occupying Fort Heiman fell to Colonel W. W. Lowe and the Iowa Fifth Cavalry regiment, also known as the Curtis Horse (Morton and Watkins 1918:411). Although no battles or skirmishes were fought at Fort Heiman during their occupation of the post, the Curtis Horse's time in Kentucky and Tennessee was not uneventful. Union soldiers at Heiman were often bothered by Confederate sympathizing bushwhackers and partisans, not to mention regular Confederate cavalry, while on patrol. And, several times Union forces engaged assembled Confederate troops in Paris, Tennessee, usually suffering numerous casualties. During one particularly deadly exchange that occurred on March 11, 1862, the Fifth suffered nine deaths, among

them Sergeant Major Martin Stowell, Sergeant David H. Geary, Private Patrick M. McGuire, Private John W. Warren, Private C. C. Nicholson, and a Private Dickison (Potter 1993; Baker 1863:565-608; Hays 1865:983). Military records compiled for the Iowa Fifth Cavalry during the war (Baker 1863:565-608) also identify William Birt, William Snyder, Walter Tuttle, Ernst Hukride, John A. Duncan, Winston Garrison, Frank Courtney, James M. Hughes, Lewis Lown, Anton Mayer, Peter Olson, Edward O'Brien, George Stevens, and Franz Werth as being among the men who died while at Fort Heiman.

Though adequately staffed to hold the fort itself, the Curtis Horse was never able to maintain control of the region surrounding Fort Heiman. Ultimately, the Iowa Fifth Cavalry remained at Fort Heiman for one year and four months, leaving on June 25, 1863 (Eisterhold 1974:51; Morton and Watkins 1918:411).

Before they left, they did their best to render the fort unusable, destroying some of the fort's earthworks and parapets.

After remaining unoccupied for over a year, Fort Heiman was reoccupied in autumn of 1864 by Confederate General Nathan Bedford Forrest, his 3,500 soldiers, and a battery of artillery under Captain John Morton. Forrest had been charged with interrupting Federal riverine transport vessels moving supplies to Sherman's army in Georgia. Forrest and Morton placed two twenty-pound Parrott guns and several light field artillery on the bluffs near Fort Heiman, for the same reason that Tilghman's engineers had picked the location to bolster Fort Henry more than two years before—it presented its occupants with a commanding position over the

Tennessee River, and favorable geographic location. His strategy was rewarded with the capture or destruction of five Union supply vessels. Building upon his success, he created the Confederate Tennessee River Navy by outfitting two vessels with the 20-pound Parrots, and then used them as a diversion to draw the Union gunboat fleet away from Johnsonville, Tennessee. While the gunboats gave chase to his small flotilla, Forrest and his cavalry raided the town, destroying a Union supply base. Though his boats were eventually lost, the campaign for the river was successful overall in that it led to the capture or destruction of four gunboats, 14 transports, 20 barges, and 26 pieces of artillery, in addition to the destruction of the Johnsonville supply base (Eisterhold 1974:53).

The African American Story at Fort Heiman

The Union campaign for Forts Henry, Heiman, and Donelson provided new opportunities for African Americans in western Kentucky and northwestern Tennessee to shed the bonds of slavery and live and work, for the first time, as paid laborers. This was a critical turning point in African American history, as many former slaves established churches, built homes and schools, and lived relatively independently and freely for the first time. They were also important to Union success in the western theater of the Civil War, not only as logistical support for troops at the forts, but also as soldiers themselves. Many of the formerly enslaved men who were recruited after Grant's Tennessee River campaign would defend Nashville from Confederate attack in 1864, and also served to guard railroads and supply lines in middle Tennessee and western Kentucky (Hawkins 2002).

The campaign for the forts along the Tennessee and Cumberland Rivers, and the presence of the Union Army, was a turning point for slaves in the region (Hawkins 2002:239; Howard 1982). The African American

experience at Fort Heiman began with its construction, when 500 slaves were assigned, along with Confederate soldiers, to construct the fort's earthworks in late 1861. Following Grant's capture and occupation of Forts Heiman, Henry, and Donelson in February of 1862, thousands of enslaved African Americans abandoned their masters in Kentucky and Tennessee and sought freedom at Union camps surrounding the forts (Hawkins 2002: 223). The migration of slaves to the Union camps was exacerbated by Grant's declaration that slaves would be "employed in the Quarter Master's Department for the Benefit of the Government" rather than returned to their masters, essentially offering wages to men and women who could make it to the camps (Hawkins 2002:225). In fact, Union victories at Forts Henry and Donelson bought "de facto army emancipation" to slaves in parts of Kentucky and Tennessee (Cooling:1987). Escaped slaves travelling to the North or to Canada in hopes of freedom also

made use of the forts as safe havens during their long journeys.

African American Freedmen contributed at Union garrisons at Forts Heiman and Donelson (though little is known of their camp at Heiman) from 1862 to 1863, acting in a variety of support capacities as cooks, laborers and officers' servants. Women often worked as nurses, cooks, and seamstresses. By July 1863, 275 runaways lived in the camp at Fort Donelson, not including women and children (Hawkins 2002), and approximately 300 wintered at the Donelson camp that year (Cimprich 1985). The number of runaway slaves living at Forts Heiman and Henry is unknown.

By August of 1863, African American men were being recruited to serve in the Union Army, many from the camps at Fort Donelson and Heiman. This was a source of consternation amongst Kentucky slaveholders. Slavery was

still legal in Kentucky and would remain so until 1865, though runaway slaves could become emancipated by enlisting. By the end of the year, hundreds of former slaves would be working and serving as soldiers at Forts Donelson, Henry, and Heiman.

Unfortunately, the locations of the Freedmen's camps established at Forts Henry, Heiman, and Donelson, have never been identified. The largest of the three was at Fort Donelson, and was known as the Free State (Hawkins 2002). Since the camps were in large part dependent on the Union army for protection, food, and medical care, they were likely located adjacent to or nearby the military camps at the forts, where occupants would have lived in makeshift huts or shanties. Archaeological and historical research to this point has not recovered any clues as to their location.

Archaeological Research at Fort Heiman

It is only relatively recently that archaeological investigations began at the Fort Heiman unit of Fort Donelson National Battlefield. The first of these involved pedestrian survey and GPS mapping of the site

Lowe 2002

Although not explicitly archaeological, David Lowe's (2002) documentation of historic resources—particularly surviving military earthworks—at Fort Heiman has been invaluable to subsequent archaeological studies. In his

by NPS Historian David Lowe in 2002. This was followed in 2010 by a shovel testing and metal detector survey conducted by New South Associates, and more extensive survey by SEAC late in the same year.

GPS mapping and documentation of the site, Lowe investigated two portions of the unit featuring two distinct sets of earthworks: "Fort Heiman Proper," and what has been termed the "Federal Fort" (2002:1) (Figure 4).

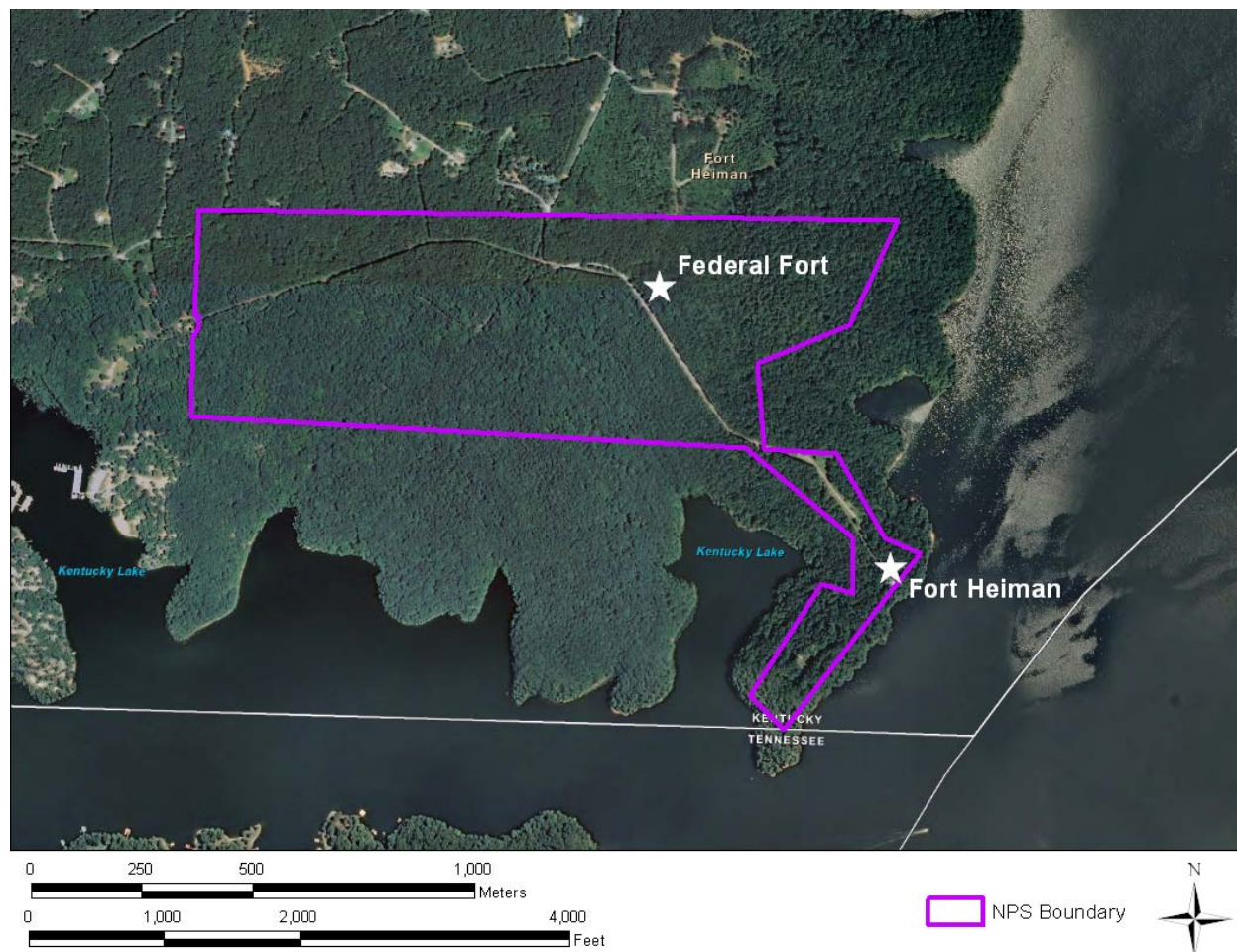


Figure 4: Satellite imagery of the Fort Heiman unit of Fort Donelson National Battlefield depicting the locations of the Federal Fort earthworks and the Fort Heiman proper earthworks (imagery obtained from ESRI 2011).

Lowe described the earthworks at Fort Heiman proper, which lies at the end of Fort Heiman Road and extends along the peninsula of high ground of created by the impoundment of Kentucky Lake, as readily visible and largely intact. The 2002 investigations resulted in the mapping of some 593 meters (648 yards) of surviving military earthworks, with slightly more than half rated as being in good or fair condition. The rest of the earthworks had been damaged during road construction, or perhaps by Union efforts to level portions of the fort closest to the river following its capture in February 1862 (Jim Jobe, Fort Donelson Park Historian, personal communication 2010); a shallow shelf behind the northernmost works that is

incongruous with the rest of the construction may be evidence of this destruction (Lowe 2002:2). Additionally, other portions of the northern earthworks were subject to severe erosion (Lowe 2002:1).

All of the raised earthworks were found to have been constructed with a rear ditch, save for a short portion which is ditched on both sides, and they range in relief from 0.7 to approximately 2 meters (1-6 feet). Lowe noted that without further archaeological investigation, it was impossible to determine the extents of the original Confederate fort or the subsequent Federal defenses, though he suspects that the northernmost earthworks represent a surviving

segment of the original Fort Heiman, due to its double-ditched construction that resembles other Confederate designs, and apparent attempts to level the works (Lowe 2002:2). Additionally, Lowe mapped nine pits at the north end of the site said to be former Union graves from which the human remains were subsequently removed and reinterred at Shiloh National Battlefield. Each pit measured six feet long. Two were nine feet wide, two five feet wide, and the remainder large enough for a single burial. A large rectangular hole strewn with old firebricks is suspected to be the fort's powder magazine (Lowe 2002).

The "Federal Fort," so-named due to its comparable size and construction to Federal forts found in Petersburg, Virginia, and other Tennessee River garrison forts such as

New South Associates 2010

In September 2010, members of New South Associates conducted a systematic metal detecting survey and shovel test survey of approximately 30 acres on the Fort Heiman proper landform (Tankersley and Gregory 2010). Over 500 artifacts were recovered during metal detector survey. The majority consisted of nails, screws, and spikes, and likely resulted from construction both during and after the Civil War occupation. No distinct patterns of nails could be determined, which may be due to the area having been extremely disturbed by Civil War relic hunters and metal detector enthusiasts. Ammunition finds included a variety of types, including musket balls, pistol bullets, 0.58-0.69

Southeast Archeological Center 2010

Between November 27 and December 7, 2011, the National Park Service Southeast Archeological Center conducted metal detecting and shovel testing survey at the Fort Heiman Unit of Fort Donelson National Battlefield, pursuant to the Park Service's NHPA Section

Johnsonville, sits just over 800 meters inland from Fort Heiman proper. Lowe described the fort as "an irregular redoubt designed to support 3 or 4 guns with an inner perimeter (along the parapet) of 258 meters and an outer perimeter (outer edge of the ditch) of 308 meters...[enclosing] 2,766 square meters" (2002:2). The fort was in good condition, to the point where Lowe mapped two likely gun emplacements suited to command road access to the northwest and southwest and a sally port in the northeast angle of the redoubt. However, some of the earthworks along the northern face appear to have been purposefully damaged by vacating Federal troops. Based on the presence of several rectangular dugouts measuring approximately 4 meters square, Lowe suggested that garrison camps may have been placed in the ravine to the southeast of the fort.

caliber Minié balls, 0.50 caliber Gallagher carbine bullets, 0.54 caliber Sharps carbine bullets, buck shot, a copper cartridge, and an artillery shell fragment. Most of this assemblage reflect munitions used in the early period of the war, when both Federal and Confederate troops used similar weapons. However, Tankersley and Gregory (2010) pointed out that Sharps' carbine bullets are typically associated with only Federal cavalry and naval units (Thomas 2002), while the 0.50 caliber Gallagher was utilized by mounted troops of both armies. These finds thus represent the presence of both Confederate and Union cavalry during their various occupations of Fort Heiman during the Civil War.

110 obligations. Shovel tests were conducted along transects at 20 meter intervals in areas of less than 20% slope. Metal detecting survey was conducted in areas of greater slope, in addition to the area included in the shovel test survey. Research objectives included the location and

documentation of new archaeological sites and the mapping and assessment of known landscape features. Ultimately, the survey aimed to differentiate between Union and Confederate occupations of Fort Heiman and to locate a documented but unfound African American Freedman's camps near the earthworks of Fort Heiman.

The SEAC survey was an unfortunate reminder of the impact that relic hunters can have on Civil War landscapes (see Tankersley and Gregory 2010), but enough material was recovered to provide a general characterization of the area during the war. An area of 17 hectares (29.7 acres) was intensively surveyed with metal detectors. A total of 169 metal detector finds (MDETs) were collected within the surveyed area (Figure 5, Table 1). The survey resulted in the recovery of 242 artifacts (in many cases, multiple artifacts were recovered within each MDET). Cut nails composed the overwhelming majority of the assemblage (n=172, see Table 2). Two wrought nails were also recovered as were two brass percussion caps, a fragment of canister shot, one 1856 silver half-dime, six musket balls, and six Minié balls (Table 3). Shovel testing resulted in the excavation of 156 tests to the depth of sterile soil or until bedrock was encountered and further digging became impossible. A total of 12.2 hectares (20.57 acres) were surveyed in this manner. Artifacts recovered during shovel testing consisted primarily of non-diagnostic prehistoric lithic material. This material is beyond the scope of the current paper, but further description of the prehistoric component of the area including Fort Heiman can be found in Parsons 2011.

In addition to the artifacts described above, previously undocumented features of the cultural landscape were encountered during the course of the survey. These include previously undocumented earthworks, segments of historic

road traces, and hut pads dug into the face of the slope near the Federal Fort. Although portions of the historic roads and road traces were previously mapped by Lowe (2002), they deserve mention here because of their association with both the Federal Fort and newly documented earthworks. Each of these will be discussed in turn.

Earthworks

Three sections of previously undocumented earthworks were recorded during the course of SEAC field investigations at Fort Heiman (Figure 6). The first runs for 55 m (180 ft) paralleling Fort Heiman Road approximately 350 m (1,150 ft) southeast of the Federal Fort, and has suffered from heavy erosion. The second earthwork sits 230 m (750 ft) due east of the Federal Fort, and for a distance of 100 m (330 ft) roughly parallels a historic road trace (see below) that follows a hollow leading toward the Tennessee River. This appears to be a double row of earthworks, and has also been negatively impacted by heavy erosion. The third earthwork is located roughly 350 m (1,150 ft) northwest of the Federal Fort on a relatively flat area (less than 10% slope) and runs 115 m (375 ft) southeast to northwest, then turns at a right angle to the northeast and runs a further 40 m (130 ft). The feature is dug out on either side and mounded in the middle. These works have not been as negatively impacted by erosion as the others, and while low in relief in some places are approximately 1.2 m (four ft) high at their tallest point.

No artifact concentrations are associated with any of these earthworks. However, the roughly central position of the Federal Fort in relation to the earthworks and their distance from the Confederate Fort Heiman proper suggests that the newly documented features are a component of the Union occupation.

Historic Roads

Previously discussed by Lowe (2002), several historic roads and road traces are associated with the Civil War component of the Fort Heiman Unit. They were remapped as part of the SEAC survey due to their proximity to known earthworks, and their various spatial associations with sections of the previously undocumented earthworks described above (Figure 6). Lowe (2002:2) specifically mentions an “Old Wagon Road” that diverges from Fort Heiman Road, runs east past the northern

earthworks of the Federal Fort, then turns slightly south running through a hollow to the shoreline (culminating historically at the river landing). This road roughly maintains a 5% grade, and is the most well defined of several road traces in the area observed previously by Lowe and more recently by the SEAC survey team. Furthermore, a portion of this road between the Federal Fort and the river parallels a segment of previously undocumented historic earthworks.

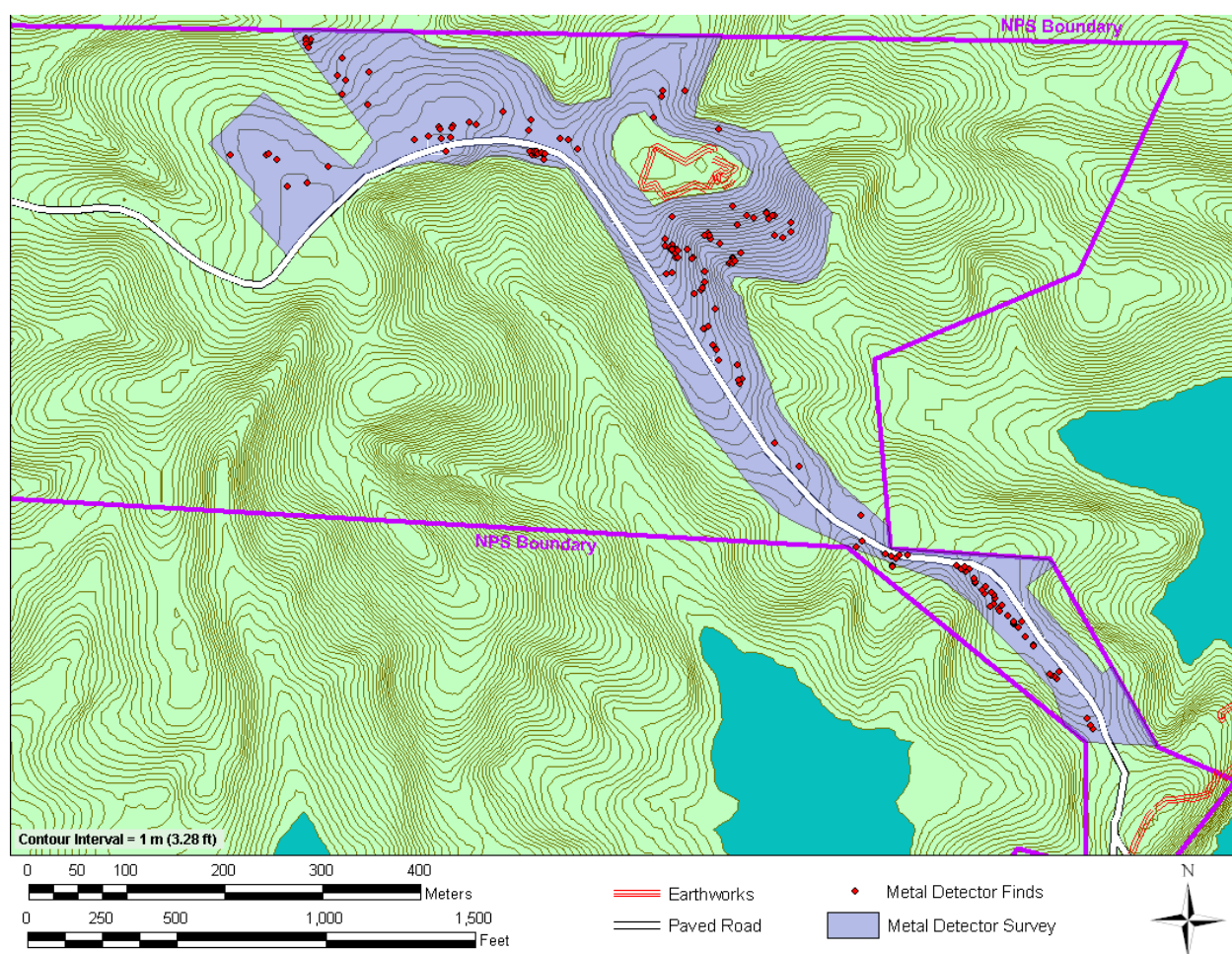


Figure 5: Map depicting the metal detector survey area and locations of metal detector finds. Contours obtained from USGS National Elevation Dataset (NED) 1/3-arc-second dataset (2011).

Table 1. Summary of metal artifacts recovered from Fort Heiman, Fort Donelson National Battlefield.

Metal Object	Count	Weight (g)
Ball, Musket	6	137.40
Bridle	1	133.20
Buckle	1	23.30
Bullet, Minié	6	181.00
Can	2	39.80
Cap, Percussion	2	1.40
Coin	1	1.20
Hardware	5	359.70
Horseshoe	13	2,522.80
Knife, Pocket	1	43.10
Spark Plug	1	11.40
Metal Fragment	11	42.58
Nail, Cut	172	601.47
Nail, Wrought	2	7.50
Nail, Wire	3	11.50
Nail, Ind.	4	16.60
Ornament	1	52.90
Pot	1	86.50
Firearm mainspring	1	23.90
Ring	1	2.00
Screw	2	21.90
Shell, Artillery	2	65.20
Shot	2	100.73
Spike	9	163.70
Wire	1	6.50
Total	251	4,657.28

Table 2. Summary of nails recovered from Fort Heiman, Fort Donelson National Battlefield.

Type	Count	Weight (g)
Nail, Cut	172	601.47
Nail, Wrought	2	7.50
Nail, Wire	3	17.90
Nail, Ind.	4	10.20
Total	181	637.07

Table 3. Civil War-era munitions recovered during metal detector survey in the study area.

Munition Type	Caliber	Condition	Count
Musket Ball	0.65	Unfired	1
Musket Ball	0.65	Unfired	1
Musket Ball	0.68	Unfired	1
Musket Ball	0.50	Unfired	1
Musket Ball	0.65	Unfired	1
Musket Ball	0.68	Unfired	1
Minié Ball, three ring	0.69	Unfired	1
Sharps carbine with tie ring base	0.52	Fired	1
Carved Enfield bullet	0.69	Unfired	1
Minié Ball, three ring ogival	0.57	Unfired	1
Minié Ball, three ring concave	0.60	Fired	1
Minié Ball, three ring ogival	ind.	Fired	1
Artillery Shell	ind.	Fired	2
Shot, iron (buckshot)	1.20	ind.	1
Shot, lead (canister shot)	ind.	ind.	1
Total			16

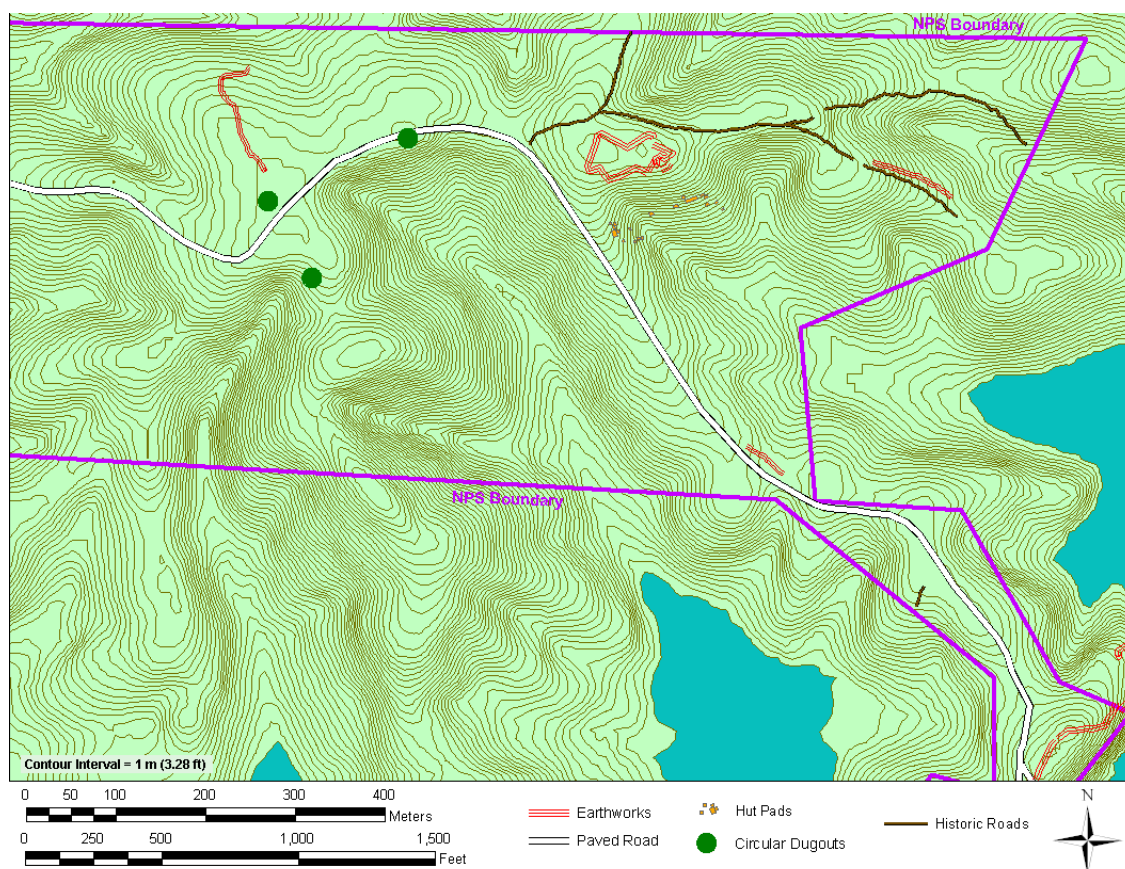


Figure 6: Map depicting the locations of mapped earthworks at Fort Heiman, along with historic roads. The indicated circular dugouts are of unknown origin, but appear to be associated with a nearby 20th century homestead. Contours obtained from USGS National Elevation Dataset (NED) 1/3-arc-second dataset (2011).

Hut Pads

Several rows of hut pads were located approximately 100 m (330 ft) to the south-southeast of the Federal Fort (Figure 7). Hut pads are flat areas formed from the side of a slope that serve as platforms for tents, huts, or other structures. A total of 19 hut pads were measured and mapped during survey. The rectangular hut pads are generally between 2.50-4 m² (8-13 ft²) in size and dug into the side of the slope to create a flat surface. Some of the measured hut pads were much larger (approximately 14 m wide by 4 m deep, or 46 by 13 ft) and are interpreted as hut rows where

multiple tents or structures would have been placed in a line. Undoubtedly, more hut pads would have been created and utilized during the occupation period of the fort; unfortunately, however, the slope on which the hut pads were placed has been subject to erosion, and a thick leafy overburden covers the hillside, making subtle landscape modifications difficult to observe. A rough spatial correspondence between cut nails and hut pads exists. Several of the features were initially located upon excavating metal detector hits and the discovery of cut nails, while others were visually identified during the course of survey.

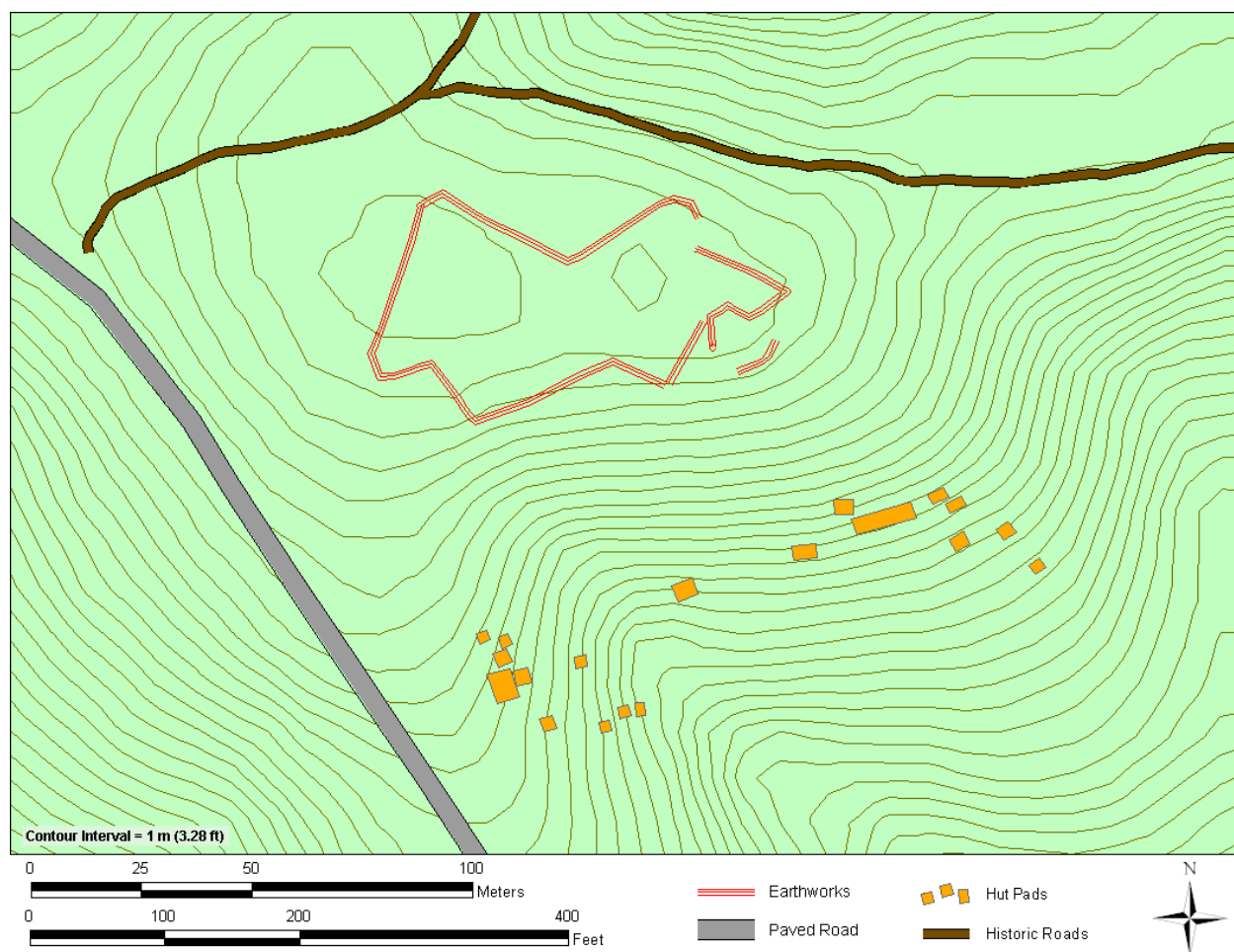


Figure 7: Map depicting the locations of mapped hut pads on the hill slope south of the Federal Fort earthworks. Contours obtained from USGS National Elevation Dataset (NED) 1/3-arc-second dataset (2011).

Discussion and Conclusions

Of the historic artifacts recovered by SEAC investigators at Fort Heiman, only material dating to around the time of the Civil War was numerous enough to warrant detailed interpretation. This is unsurprising, as Union and Confederate forces intensively and almost continuously occupied the area between 1861 and 1865, and since that time the entire area has remained relatively undeveloped. Unfortunately, as Tankersley and Gregory (2010) have discussed in detail, there has been a significant impact on the Civil War component of the site by metal detecting relic hunters, and it is likely that a great deal of material and information is irrecoverably lost.

The most frequently encountered artifacts—machine cut nails—could have resulted from building activities associated with the various occupations of the fort. The same can be said for the variety of screws, spikes, and other metal hardware recovered during metal detecting survey. Clusters of nails were found associated with the rectangular earthen platforms interpreted as hut pads, although no distinct patterns in nail locations suggested structural footprints. Tents or other small structures that served as quarters for soldiers at the fort would likely have been placed on top of these flat areas. Bergeman (2004:49) described these huts as variously sized buildings crudely constructed of scavenged materials from building ruins in the area. This interpretation is supported by the presence of an 1854 half dime (Figure 8) and four unfired (dropped) musket balls (Figure 9) the recovered from the area.

Unfortunately, the munitions assemblage recovered during metal detecting survey did not

provide much information regarding use areas, or different areas of Confederate and Union occupation. Since the immediate area around Fort Heiman did not witness any significant engagements between opposing forces, this is not a surprise. The musket balls and Minié balls recovered during the investigation are associated with muskets and rifles used by both sides during the early phases of the War, though the 0.52 caliber Sharps carbine tie-end bullet is often associated with Union cavalry (Figure 10). This is not definitive, however, as Confederate cavalry were also known to use captured Sharps carbines.

Since the diagnostic munitions recovered during the investigation were of kinds used by both Union and Confederate forces during the Civil War, it is difficult to determine which side left the most significant footprint on the landscape. This difficulty is exacerbated by the fact that the area changed hands multiple times during the war, beginning in 1861 with the Union victory at the battles of Fort Henry and Fort Donelson. However, based on the design of the Federal Fort and the known history of occupation, both Lowe (2002) and Bergeman (2004:49) attributed these earthworks to the Union Fifth Iowa Cavalry occupation between 1861 and 1863, both having noted that the Confederate works on the Fort Heiman peninsula were minimal and incomplete at the time of Union arrival. It is therefore likely that the newly documented earthworks to the northwest of Fort Heiman proper were also constructed during the two year Union occupation.



Figure 8. Obverse and reverse of a United States 1854 Seated Liberty half dime recovered during metal detecting survey in the area of the hut pads south of the Federal Fort earthworks.



Figure 9. Buckshot and musket balls from the Fort Heiman Unit: a. Lead buckshot, b. 0.50 caliber musket ball, c. 0.65 caliber musket ball, d. 0.65 caliber musket ball, e. 0.68 caliber musket ball, f. 0.68 caliber musket ball, g. 0.65 caliber musket ball.

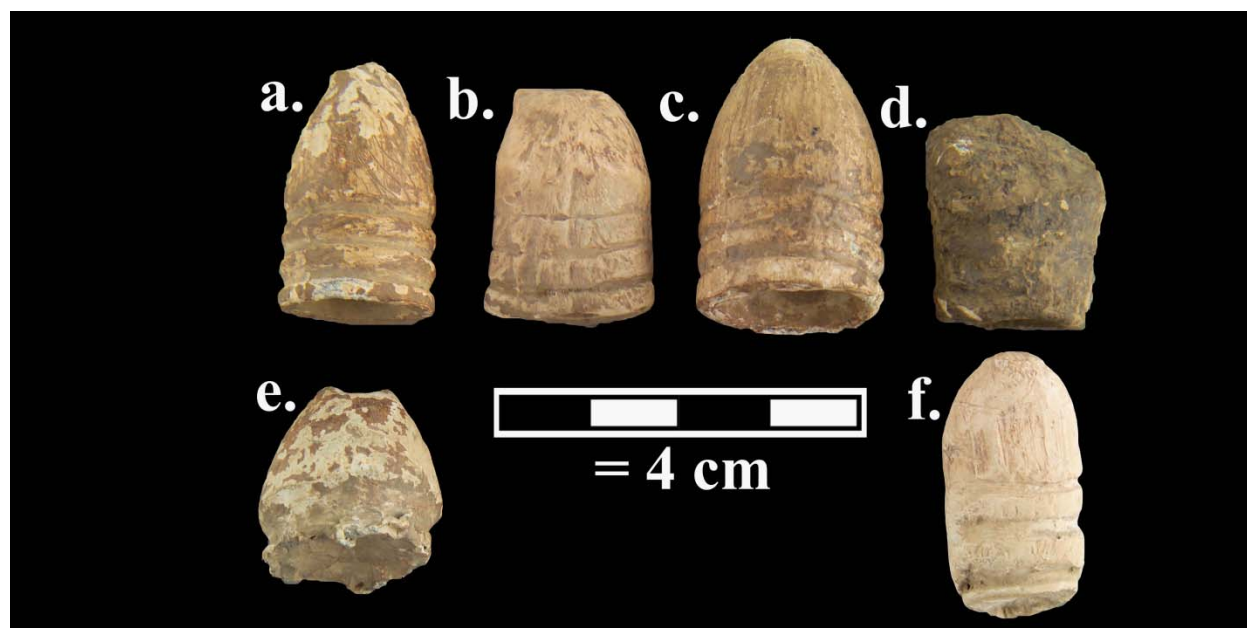


Figure 10. Minié balls from the Fort Heiman Unit: a. 0.60 caliber unfired, b. Ind. Cal 3 ring fired, c. 0.57 caliber unfired, d. 0.69 caliber unfired, e. 0.69 caliber carved Enfield, f. 0.52 caliber fired Sharps tie-end.

Though Confederate cavalry under Nathan Bedford Forrest reoccupied Fort Heiman in October 1864, approximately one year after Union forces left their tumultuous two year post, SEAC investigations did not discover any material evidence directly related to Forrest's occupation. This chapter in the history of Fort Heiman is perhaps one of the most provocative, since Forrest's cavalry led raids throughout western Tennessee and eventually attacked a Union supply depot in Jackson, Tennessee. During this campaign, Forrest captured several Union vessels on the Tennessee River and temporarily blockaded it to Union supply traffic.

Although further archaeological research could provide evidence specifically addressing each of the Union and Confederate occupations of the Fort Heiman area, two factors may complicate future research. First, the significant impact of relic hunters on the area's archaeological record is unfortunate and undeniable (see Tankersley and Gregory 2010, Appendix B). Second, both the SEAC and New South Associates investigations of the Fort

Heiman Unit recovered Civil War materials utilized by both sides during the early phases of the War. This makes distinguishing items left behind during the various occupations difficult. However, more directed archaeological research toward specific features on the landscape would be worthwhile. For example, systematic excavation of one or more of the recently discovered hut pads could definitively determine if they were constructed by Union or Confederate forces, and may thus shed more light on their specific period of use and confirm their actual function.

No evidence of a Freedmen's camp was discovered during the investigation. In identifying such a component on the landscape, archeologists might reasonably expect to find common household items such as dishes, pots, pans, and so on, as evidence of a non-military settlement near the fort, though an archaeological signature is difficult to characterize with any certainty since no camps in the area have been investigated archaeologically. Furthermore, very little

historical documentation exists discussing the Freedmen's settlement, and nothing has been recorded indicating the location of the settlement

in relation to either Fort Heiman proper or the Federal Fort.

Acknowledgements

This paper was presented at the 68th annual Southeastern Archaeological Conference meeting, and resulted from the combined efforts of National Park Service archaeologists Dr. Timothy Parsons, Dr. Guy Prentice, and Dr. Meredith Hardy, who cumulatively produced a much larger research report on the Civil War story of the Fort Heiman unit of Fort Donelson National Battlefield and the prehistory of southwestern Kentucky. SEAC archeologist Julia Byrd provided thoughtful revisions to the draft of this paper. Credit is also due to Jessica

McNeil, the Principal Investigator of the Fort Heiman field investigation, and Michael Seibert and Hayley Singleton who along with the author comprised the field crew. Two volunteers, Kevin Wells and Mark Owens, provided their metal detecting expertise to the project. Special thanks go to the staff of Fort Donelson National Battlefield for their expertise and cooperation, especially Superintendent Steven McCoy and park historian Jim Jobe for their help in ironing out the finer details of the battles of Fort Henry and Fort Donelson.

References Cited

Baker, Nathaniel B.

1863 Report of the Adjutant General and Acting Quartermaster General of Iowa, In Accordance with the Laws of the State, To Hon. Samuel J. Kirkwood, Governor of Iowa, by Nathaniel B. Baker, Adjutant General and Acting Quarter Master General, January 1, 1863, Vol. II. F. W. Palmer, State Printer, Des Moines, IA.

Bergeman, Kurt D.

2004 The Minnesota Cavalry in the Civil War and Dakota War. Borealis Books, St. Paul, MN.

Cimprich, John

1985 Slavery's End in Tennessee. The University of Alabama Press, Tuscaloosa.

Cooling, Benjamin Franklin

1987 Fort Donelson's Legacy: War and Society in Kentucky and Tennessee, 1862-1863. The University of Tennessee Press, Knoxville.

Eisterhold, John A.

1974 Fort Heiman: Forgotten Fortress. The West Tennessee Historical Society Papers 38.

Foote, A.H.

1882 Reports Report of Flag Officer A.H. Foote, U.S. Navy, of Engagement February 14. In United States Congressional Serial Set, 47th Congress, 1st Session. Government Printing Office, 1882.

Force, Manning Ferguson

1881 From Fort Henry to Corinth. Charles Scribner's Sons, New York.

Gott, Kendall T.

2003 Where the South Lost the War: An Analysis of the Fort Henry-Fort Donelson Campaign, February 1862. Stackpole Books, Mechanicsburg, PA.

Harrison, Lowell H., and James C. Klotter

- 1975 The Civil War in Kentucky. The University Press of Kentucky, Lexington.

Hawkins, Susan

- 2002 The African-American Experience at Forts Henry, Heiman, and Donelson. Tennessee Historical Quarterly 61(4):222-241.

Hays, William T.

- 1865 Reports and Histories. Fifth Cavalry. History of the Regiment. In Report of the Adjutant General and Acting Quartermaster General of the State of Iowa, January 11, 1864 to January 1, 1865, pp. 977-1010. F. W. Palmer, State Printer, Des Moines, IA.

Heiman, A.

- 1882 Report of Col. A. Heiman, Tenth Tennessee Infantry. In United States Congressional Serial Set, 47th Congress, 1st Session. Government Printing Office, 1882.

Howard, Victor B.

- 1982 The Civil War in Kentucky: The Slave Claims His Freedom. The Journal of Negro History 67(3):245-256.

Jobe, Jim

- 2010 Personal Communication. Fort Donelson National Battlefield Park Historian. Regarding the construction of earthworks at the Fort Heiman Unit of Fort Donelson National Battlefield.

Lampley, Dennis Joe

- 2008 Adolphus Heiman, a Brief Biography. Powder and Lead Newsletter 1(5):1-3.

Lowe, David W.

- 2002 Fort Heiman and Fort Henry GPS Survey, June 2002. Cultural Resources GIS, National Park Service.

McClermand, John. A.

- 1882 Reports of General John Alexander McClermand, U.S. Army. In United States Congressional Serial Set, 47th Congress, 1st Session. Government Printing Office, 1882.

McPherson, James B.

- 1882 Reports of Lieut. Col. James B. McPherson, U.S. Army, Chief Engineer. In United States Congressional Serial Set, 47th Congress, 1st Session. Government Printing Office, 1882.

Morton, Julius S. and Albert Watkins

- 1918 History of Nebraska from the Earliest Explorations of the trans-Mississippi. Western Publishing and Engraving Company, Lincoln, NE.

Potter, James E.

- 1993 A Nebraska Cavalryman in Dixie: The Letters of Martin Stowell. Nebraska History 74:22-31.

Tankersley, Wm. Matthew, and Danny Gregory

- 2010 Archaeological Characterization of the Fort Heiman Landform, Calloway, Kentucky. New South Associates, Technical Report 1940, Stone Mountain, Georgia.

Thomas, D.S.

- 2002 Round Ball to Rimfire: A History of Civil War Small Arms Ammunition: Part One. Thomas Publications, Gettysburg, PA.

Tilghman, Lloyd

1882 Reports of Brig. Gen. Lloyd Tilghman, C.S. Army, commanding Fort Henry. In United States Congressional Serial Set, 47th Congress, 1st Session. Government Printing Office, 1882.

United States War Department

1882 The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies. Vol. 7. Government Printing Office, Washington.

Editor's note: This paper was accepted after Tier II review (see Author's Guidelines).