

Fort Frederica

National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Fort Frederica National Monument
St. Simons Island, GA



A Brief History

Please Help Preserve Fort Frederica During Your Visit

- Please avoid walking on the ruins
- No metal detecting, relic hunting, or digging

Establishment of Frederica

Frederica town was named for Frederick Louis, Prince of Wales, eldest son of King George II, father of George III [British Monarch during the American Revolution.]

The town was established in 1736 as a frontier post to contest Spanish claim to the land. Frederica strengthened the security of South Carolina and the southern frontier of the British colonies.

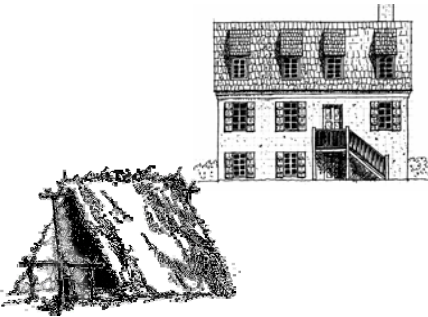
James Edward Oglethorpe (1696-1785)



Oglethorpe was the founder of Frederica, and the only Trustee (out of 96) to reside in Georgia. After settling Savannah in 1733, Oglethorpe selected St. Simons Island as the strategic site for his military headquarters.

Oglethorpe spent much time at Frederica. He had broad authority and was autocratic and visionary. After his battles against the Spanish in the 1740s, he returned to England, to spend most of his life in semi-retirement.

Houses & Lots



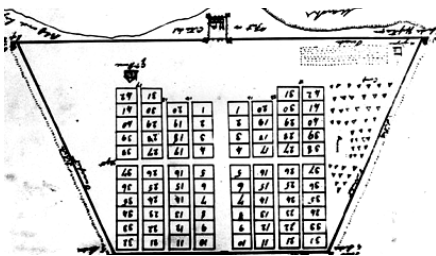
44 men and 72 women and children settled at Frederica in 1736. By 1740 this number increased to 1,000 people.

"Each [lot] had 60 foot in front, by 90 foot in depth...for house and garden... Each family had a bower of palmetto leaves...upon the back street ...the side towards the front street was set out for their houses." Francis Moore

The first dwellings were made of palmetto bowers approximately 20 ft. long and 14 ft. wide. They looked like large tents made with palmetto leaves instead of canvas.

Later, Frederica's houses were made of wood or tabby. Wealthier residents had substantial homes made of imported brick with glass windows.

Frederica: Fort & Town



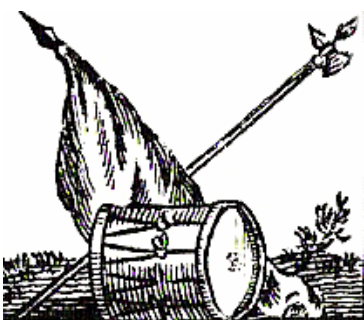
Broad Street, lined with Seville orange trees, divided the town into north and south wards. In 1739 the town was enclosed in a palisade wall and a moat. Outside the town wall was acreage for crops and cattle grazing.

The fort commanded river approaches to town. A square structure with diamond bastions, the fort was built on

the west side of the town. It had a spur battery that projected into the river that served as a cannon platform.

Frederica served as the headquarters for the "old" 42nd Regiment of Foot. However most of the soldiers were actually stationed at Fort Saint Simons on the southern end of the island. Both forts were connected by the military road.

War & Decline



In 1740 during The War of Jenkin's Ear Oglethorpe led a combined force from South Carolina and Georgia to attack St. Augustine. The siege was abandoned as supplies shortened and infighting broke out.

In 1742, Spanish troops led by Florida Governor, Manuel de Montiano, arrived off St. Simons Island. The Spanish captured Fort Saint Simons, and then sent a reconnaissance party up military road towards Frederica. Within a mile

of the town gates, the party was attacked by Oglethorpe and his men. Oglethorpe pursued the retreating Spanish then laid an ambush to repel reinforcements. The resulting conflict called the "Battle of Bloody Marsh" was a British victory, eventually causing the Spanish to withdraw from the island.

After the war, the 42nd regiment was disbanded in 1749. This loss, plus a fire in 1758 sent Frederica into a decline it couldn't recover from. Eventually it faded away.