Form No. 10-300 (Rev. 10-74)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

DATA SHEET

FOR NPS USE ONLY
RECEIVED APR 29 1975
DATE ENTERED MAY 21 1975

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC
Star of the West - C.S.S. St. Philip

AND/OR COMMON
Star of the West

2 LOCATION

W of Greenwood on Tallahatchie River

STREET & NUMBER
Fort Pemberton

__NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN
Tallahatchie River Greenwood vic.

X VICINITY OF Greenwood

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT
Second

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
Mississippi	28	Leflore	083

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE	
__DISTRICT	X PUBLIC	__OCCUPIED	__AGRICULTURE	__MUSEUM
__BUILDING(S)	__PRIVATE	X UNOCCUPIED	__COMMERCIAL	X PARK
X STRUCTURE	__BOTH	__WORK IN PROGRESS	__EDUCATIONAL	__PRIVATE RESIDENCE
__SITE	**PUBLIC ACQUISITION**	**ACCESSIBLE**	__ENTERTAINMENT	__RELIGIOUS
__OBJECT	__IN PROCESS	__YES: RESTRICTED	__GOVERNMENT	__SCIENTIFIC
	__BEING CONSIDERED	__YES: UNRESTRICTED	__INDUSTRIAL	__TRANSPORTATION
		X NO	__MILITARY	__OTHER:

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME
General Services Administration

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN
Washington

__ VICINITY OF

STATE
D. C. 20405

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.
General Services Administration

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN
Washington,

STATE
D. C. 20405

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

DATE

__FEDERAL __STATE __COUNTY __LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
__EXCELLENT	__DETERIORATED	__UNALTERED	X ORIGINAL SITE
__GOOD	X RUINS	X ALTERED	__MOVED DATE_____
__FAIR	__UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

When the Star of the West was built in 1852, she was designed for the sole purpose of ferrying passengers between the California coast and New York. The vessel was never intended to be a war ship. She is described as being brigantine-rigged side-wheeler of 1,172 tons; length, 228 feet, 4 inches; breadth, 32 feet, 8 inches; depth, 24 feet, 6 inches; speed, 11.5 knots. During her period of Confederate ownership the vessel was changed only slightly. On January 16, 1862, the firm of N. & A. F. Tift, New Orleans, Louisiana, wrote Secretary of the Navy (Confederate) Stephen R. Mallory:

> Sir: We have examined the Star of the West. She is in good order and is now occupied as a receiving, recruiting, and hospital ship, and would be invaluable as a transport. We would not advise the alteration, (into an ironclad gunboat) on account of the expense and difficulty of protecting the machinery. Commander Hollias concurs in the opinion.
>
> N. & A. F. Tift

However, the vessel was armed at New Orleans with two 68-pounder and four 32-pounder guns. It is possible that her masts were shortened for operation on inland rivers.

The guns were removed from the Star of the West while she was at Yazoo City and were probably either taken to Greenwood for Fort Pemberton, sent to Grenada, or emplaced in Yazoo City. When the vessel settled on the bottom of the Tallahatchie she still had her machinery on board. John Locke, a naturalized Englishman, in a statement given to Brigadier General Hugh T. Reid, reported that "the old Star of the West is sunk alongside of the raft at Greenwood to keep it from going downstream. She had never been converted into an ironclad, as some of our naval officers supposed, and the machinery is all in her still." On February 15, 1864, Lieutenant Commander Elias K. Owen, U.S.A., commanding an expedition in the Yazoo River, reported: "The Star of the West is still in the channel in the Tallahatchie with her wheels and upper works out" (Official Records of the Union and Confederate Navies, ser. 1, vol. 24, p. 296).

There are no parts of the Star of the West - C.S.S. St. Philip above water today. It is probable that the above-water section was salvaged after the war by individuals or simply removed to clear the passage, and that all that remains in the watery grave is the lower section, which is deep enough to allow for safe navigation.

8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
__PREHISTORIC	__ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	__COMMUNITY PLANNING	__LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	__RELIGION
__1400-1499	__ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	__CONSERVATION	__LAW	__SCIENCE
__1500-1599	__AGRICULTURE	__ECONOMICS	__LITERATURE	__SCULPTURE
__1600-1699	__ARCHITECTURE	__EDUCATION	X MILITARY	__SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
__1700-1799	__ART	__ENGINEERING	__MUSIC	__THEATER
X 1800-1899	__COMMERCE	__EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	__PHILOSOPHY	X TRANSPORTATION
__1900-	__COMMUNICATIONS	__INDUSTRY	__POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	__OTHER (SPECIFY)
		__INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES 1852 BUILDER/ARCHITECT Jeremiah Simonson

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Star of the West, sunk in the Tallahatchie River to provide an obstacle to navigation in front of Fort Pemberton, had the unique distinction of being the recipient of the first shot fired in the American Civil War. During her brief, but colorful history she served both the United States and the Confederate States in different capacities and under different names.

Originally built as the San Juan at a cost of $250,000 by Jeremiah Simonson at Greenspoint, New York in 1852, the vessel's name was changed to the Star of the West before she was placed in service. The Star of the West operated for nine years as a passenger steamer between the California coast and New York (Civil War Naval Chronology, p. VI-297).

On January 5, 1861, as the clouds of war gathered, the Star of the West departed New York, under charter by the United States government with a detachment of 250 men and four officers on board, bound for the Federal garrison of Fort Sumter in Charleston Harbor, South Carolina. Major Robert Anderson, Federal commander of the fort, had refused the state of South Carolina's demands that he abandon the fort and surrender all public property to the state. The Federal government had also been notified that any attempt to supply or reinforce Fort Sumter would be regarded as an act of war.

At 1:30 A.M. on the morning of January 9, 1861, the Star of the West arrived off the Charleston bar. All coastal navigation lights had been extinguished and the marker buoys had been removed, so rather than risk running aground, the Star of the West anchored in 4 1/2 fathoms to wait until daylight. At dawn the Star of the West was spotted by a small inshore vessel which signaled the coastal defenses with one blue and two red lanterns that the Star of the West was loaded with troops and was not there to remove the garrison (History of the Confederate States Navy, p. 495).

The Star of the West steamed into the channel until she was about two miles from Fort Moultrie and Fort Sumter, when a battery on Morris Island flying a red Palmetto Flag belonging to the Citadel cadets opened fire on the steamer. She continued under fire for about ten minutes, while she progressed closer to Sumter. Several of the shots passed over her; one shot passed just clear of the pilot house, another passed between the smokestack and the walking beam of the engine. Another struck the ship just aloft of the fore

(continued)

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Dictionary of American Naval Fighting Ships. Vol. 2 C-F Carriers; Confederate Forces. Washington: Navy Department, Office of Chief of Naval Operations, Naval History Division, 1963.

Scharf, J. Thomas. History of the Confederate States Navy from its Organization to the Surrender of its Last Vessel. New York: Rogers & Sherwood, 1887.

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 9

UTM REFERENCES

	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
A	15	756950	3713460	B			
C				D			

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE
William C. Wright, Historian

DATE
April 18, 1975

ORGANIZATION
Mississippi Department of Archives and History

STREET & NUMBER
P. O. Box 571

TELEPHONE
(601) 354-6218

CITY OR TOWN
Jackson,

STATE
Mississippi

12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL X STATE ____ LOCAL ____

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

FEDERAL REPRESENTATIVE SIGNATURE Elbert R. Hilliard

TITLE State Historic Preservation Officer

DATE April 22, 1975

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

Robert A. Connally

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

DATE MAY 21 1975

ATTEST:

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE 5/20/75

(continued)

rigging and stove in the planking, while another nearly took away the rudder. At the same time two steamers, one towing an armed schooner, were seen moving to intercept the Star of the West, and, fearing capture, she recrossed the bar outward at 8:30 A.M. and returned to New York (ibid., p. 496).

The repulse of the Star of the West with needed supplies and men subsequently caused the surrender of the garrison at Fort Sumter and resulted in the War Between the States. Several historians have speculated that the Star of the West was deliberately sent into the harbor with troops on board to test the intentions of South Carolina.

Three months later the United States again chartered the Star of the West to the Texas coast to remove the Federal soldiers who had been stationed there prior to the secession of Texas. The vessel lost an anchor on the way, and was standing offshore awaiting troops to be ferried out by the Fashion, when seventy-one men under the command of Colonel Earl Van Dorn using the General Rusk boarded her by force. Van Dorn placed a crew on board to take the Star of the West to New Orleans, where she was assigned to the Confederate States Navy, which in turn changed her name to the C. S. S. St. Philip and armed her with two 68-pounder and four 32-pounder guns. (Official Records of the Union and Confederate Navies, ser. 1, vol. 16, p. 534. Hereafter referred to as O.R.N.) Although the Star of the West lost her designation, she did not completely lose her identity. Often in Confederate records she was still referred to as the Star of the West in official correspondence.

While in New Orleans, the ship served as a receiving ship until April 1862, when the Federal fleet passed the forts below the city and New Orleans was in imminent danger of capture. The C. S. S. St. Philip was assigned the task of transporting the Confederate government specie up the Mississippi River to the safety of the interior (O.R.N. ser. 1, vol. 18, p. 350). The vessel delivered her cargo to the Confederate authorities safely inland and proceeded up the Yazoo River to the Naval Yard at Yazoo City where she remained until the Federals broke through the levee into the Yazoo Pass in an effort to gain a footing north of the Confederates at Snyder's Bluff (Mills) twelve miles north of Vicksburg. On order to counter the Federals, the Confederates fortified the narrow strip of land between the Yazoo and Tallahatchie Rivers west of Greenwood, and named the site Fort Pemberton. In front of the fort, in the Tallahatchie River, the Confederates constructed a large raft, which was chained to the banks and anchored. Behind this raft they placed the Star of the West and the John Walsh, which were scuttled as soon as the Federal fleet apeared. (O.R.N. ser. 1, vol. 24, p. 269).

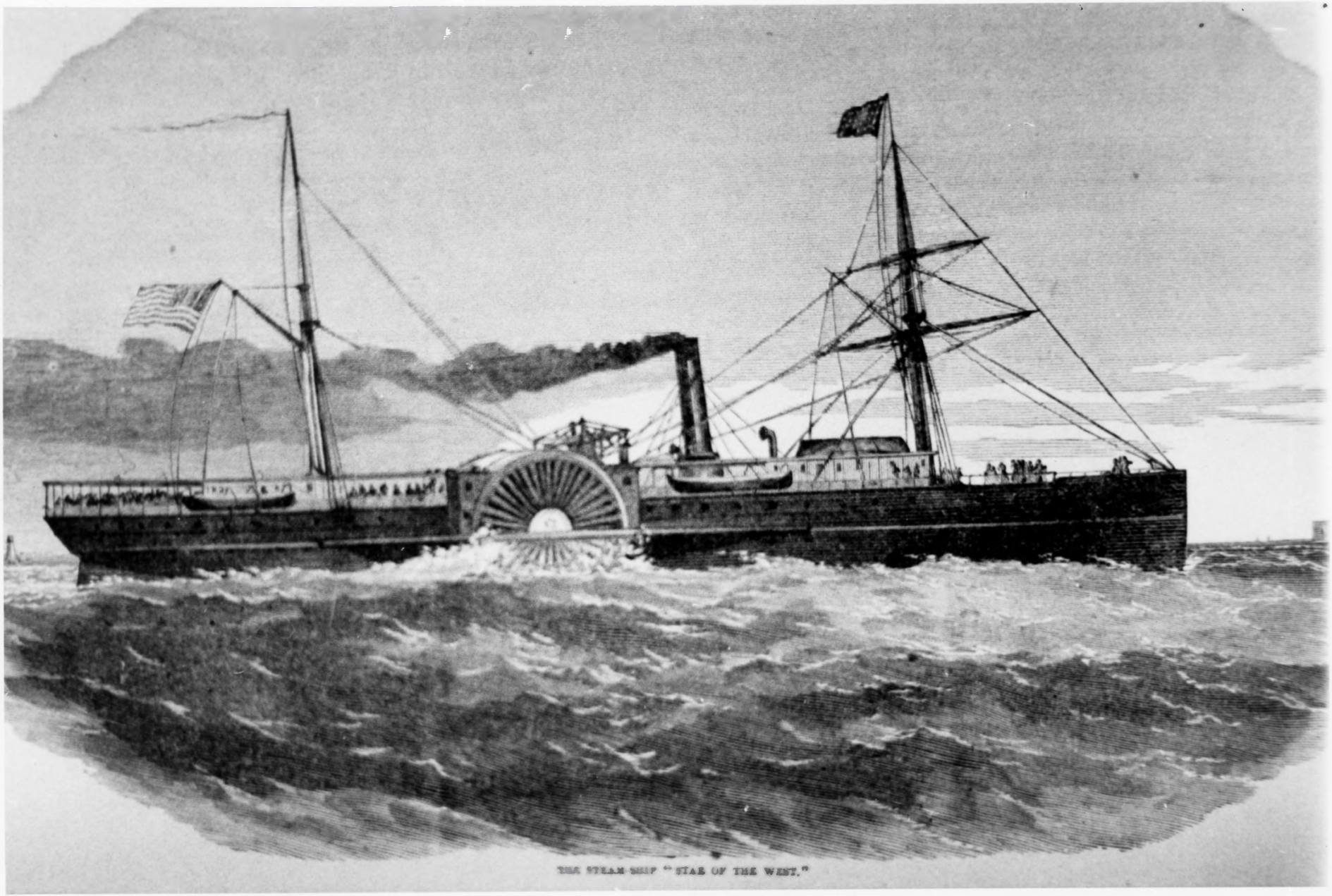
(continued)

The Federals made repeated attacks against the fortifications, but were prevented from training their heavy guns by the obstructions in the channel. After nearly a month of trying to pass the guns of Fort Pemberton and remove the obstructions, the Federal fleet gave up and returned to the safety of the Mississippi River. The sacrifice of the Star of the West to the muddy bottom of the Tallahatchie proved to be the most significant and certainly the most successful event of the ill-fated vessel's history.

9. Bibliography (continued)

United States. Navy Department. Naval History Division. Compiled Civil War Naval Chronology, 1861-1865. Washington: Navy Department, Naval History Division, 1971.

United States. Navy. Office of Naval Records and Library. Official Records of the Union and Confederate Navies in the War of the Rebellion. Series 1, Vols. 4, 16, 18, 19, 24, 25. Series 2, Vol. 1. Washington: Navy Department, 1895-1921.



THE STEAM SHIP "STAR OF THE WEST."

Form No. 10-301a
(Rev. 10-74)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
PROPERTY PHOTOGRAPH FORM

FOR NPS USE ONLY
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SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*
TYPE ALL ENTRIES --ENCLOSE WITH PHOTOGRAPH

1 NAME

HISTORIC
Star of the West - C.S.S. St. Philip

AND/OR COMMON

2 LOCATION

CITY, TOWN Fort Pemberton
X VICINITY OF Greenwood
COUNTY Leflore
STATE Mississippi

3 PHOTO REFERENCE

PHOTO CREDIT Harper's Weekly
DATE OF PHOTO 1861 sketch

NEGATIVE FILED AT Mississippi Department of Archives and History, Jackson, Miss.

4 IDENTIFICATION

DESCRIBE VIEW, DIRECTION, ETC. IF DISTRICT, GIVE BUILDING NAME & STREET

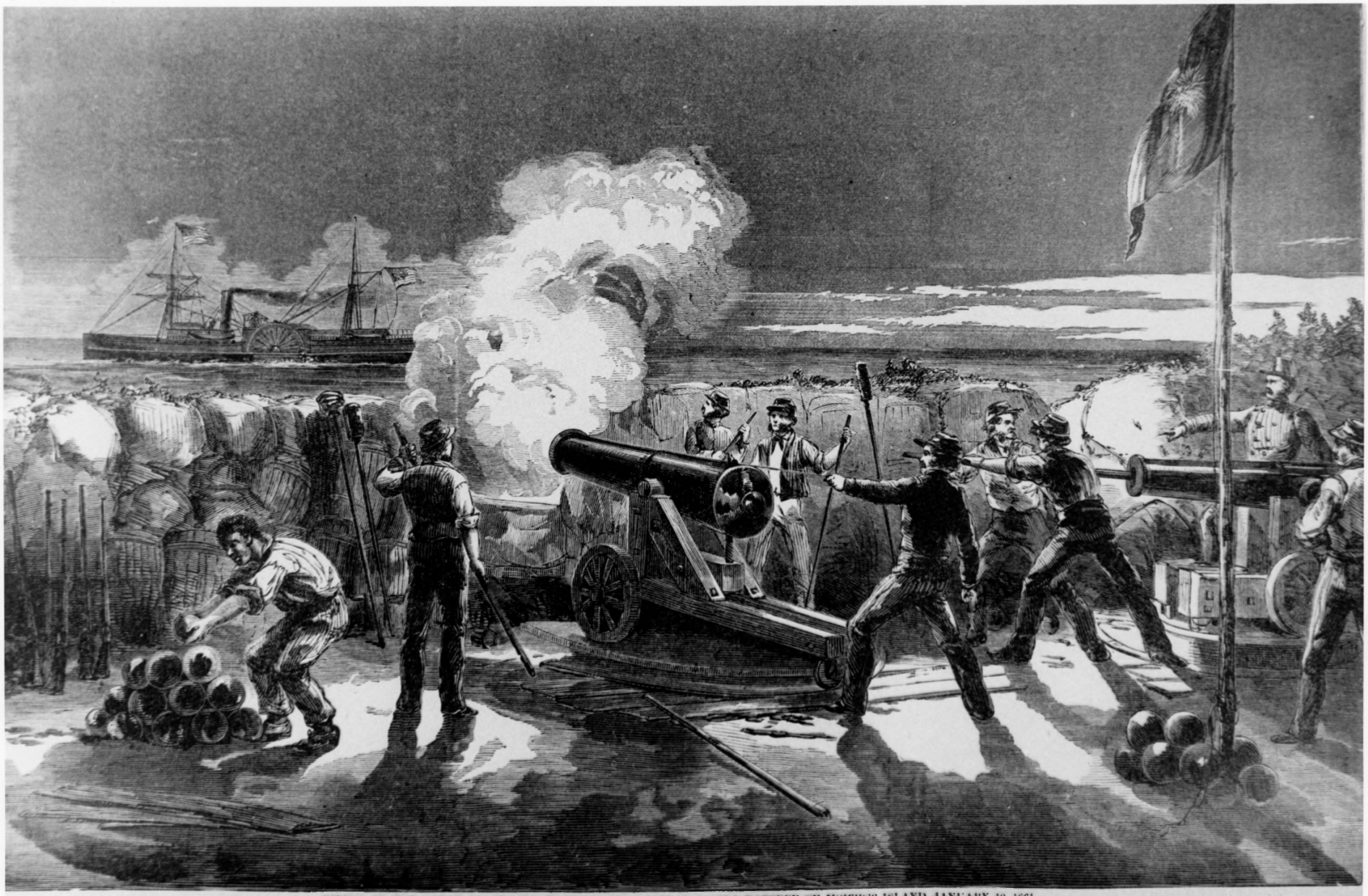
PHOTO NO

#1 of 2

Mp7

(4)

INT: 2983-75



FIRING ON THE "STAR OF THE WEST" FROM THE SOUTH CAROLINA BATTERY ON MORRIS'S ISLAND, JANUARY 10, 1861.

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3 PHOTO REFERENCE

PHOTO CREDIT Harper's Weekly | DATE OF PHOTO 1861 sketch

NEGATIVE FILED AT Mississippi Department of Archives and History, Jackson, Miss.

4 IDENTIFICATION

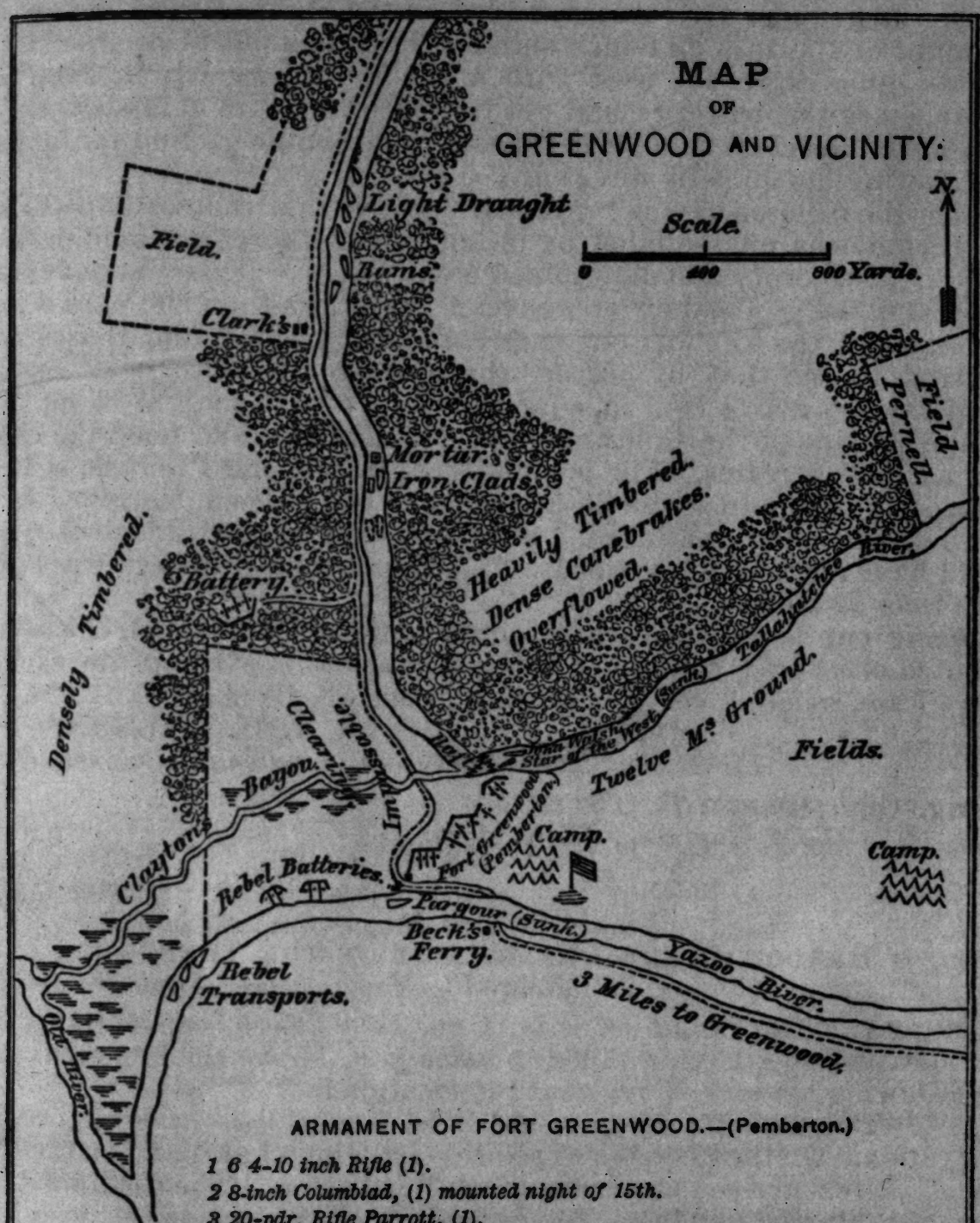
DESCRIBE VIEW, DIRECTION, ETC. IF DISTRICT, GIVE BUILDING NAME & STREET | PHOTO NO

#222

Mp8

5

INT: 2983-75



ARMAMENT OF FORT GREENWOOD.—(Pemberton.)

1 6 4-10 inch Rifle (1).
2 8-inch Columbiad, (1) mounted night of 15th.
3 20-pdr. Rifle Parrott, (1).
One battery of field pieces, rifles and smooth-bores, (1 Whitworth 10-pdr.)
Waul's Legion, 2d Texas, 46th Miss., 20th Miss., all we could hear of, not to exceed 3500 men.

ARMAMENT OF ATTACKING FORCE.

Land Battery, { *2 30-pds. Parrotts.* / *1 8-inch Ship Howitzer.*

De Kalb, { *2 9-inch Guns.* / *1 10 " "*

Chillicothe, 2 11 " "

NOTE.—The Cotton-bale Battery was a partly sunken Redan, 35 feet long, 8 feet relief, composed of cotton bales, (partly covered with earth,) two tiers high, six tiers deep, embrasures one foot splay, revetted with sheet iron, which blew out soon. Cotton did not burn to any hurtful extent; kept wet by pouring water on. The platforms were 9 by 14, one foot below surface, four inches higher on the rear line.

Form No. 10-301
(Rev. 10-74)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
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PROPERTY MAP FORM

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1 NAME

HISTORIC
Star of the West - C.S.S. St. Philip

AND/OR COMMON
Star of the West

2 LOCATION

CITY, TOWN	X VICINITY OF	COUNTY	STATE
Fort Pemberton	Greenwood	Leflore	Mississippi

3 MAP REFERENCE

SOURCE War of the Rebellion, Official Records, Series 1, Vol. 24, Part 1, p. 389.

SCALE 1.5" = 800 yards DATE 1863

4 REQUIREMENTS

TO BE INCLUDED ON ALL MAPS
1. PROPERTY BOUNDARIES
2. NORTH ARROW
3. UTM REFERENCES