

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY
NOMINATION FORM

Continuation Sheet

Item Number

Page

Name Historic: Fort Trenholm
Common

Location: John's Island Airport
John's Island
Classification: Structure

Owner: Charleston County Airport District
4 Court House Square
Charleston, S.C. 29401

Representation in Existing Surveys: Inventory of Historic Places in South Carolina, 1981

Description: Fort Trenholm is a large bastioned earth fortification on the Stono River on eastern John's Island opposite Fort Pringle. The position is located near a World War II airfield in a rural, agricultural area. The fort is basically three-sided with the northern exposure open to the marsh over a distance of approximately 840 feet. The eastern face, which plays on the Stono River, covers a distance of 870 feet with the main river battery about 375 feet of this distance. The southern face is about 780 feet long with large lunettes at both the southeast and southwest corners. The southeastern lunette was damaged during the construction of the adjacent airfield. The western face is approximately 885 feet long. The parapet of Fort Trenholm is about 45 feet thick at the base and about 15 feet in height. It has emplacements for seventeen guns. Although this position is covered with thick vegetation, it remains in excellent condition.

Significance: Fort Trenholm was built in late 1864 and named for George A. Trenholm, a Charleston cotton factor, blockade runner, and secretary of the treasury for the Confederacy.³⁷ The fort was designed to strengthen the batteries controlling the Stono River, particularly Fort Pringle. Additionally, Fort Trenholm was sited to prevent a flanking movement of the James Island batteries by a land force on John's Island. An important western perimeter defense, Fort Trenholm mounted fourteen heavy cannons on capture.³⁸ This position is unusual because of the overall size and relief as well as the present condition.

Acreage: 3

Verbal Boundary Description: The nominated property is shown as the red line on the accompanying Charleston County Tax Map #319-0-0, scaled at 1" = 400'. The boundary includes all significant structures, while excluding the adjacent airfield.

UTM Reference Point: A. 17/594240/3619250 B. 17/594220/3619038
C. 17/593840/3619038 D. 17/593840/3619237

(James Island quadrangle)

Other Information