

Join the Friends of Fort Duffield

Friends of Fort Duffield is a volunteer support group dedicated to the preservation, interpretation and maintenance of Civil War Fort Duffield under the supervision of the Fort Duffield Heritage Committee, City of West Point, Kentucky.

Members assist with fund raising, educational programs, special events, tours, maintenance and the very future of Fort Duffield.

MEMBERSHIP FORM

Friends of Fort Duffield membership is effective January 1 of year joined.

Support is renewable January 1 each year.

- ☐ \$10.00 - Individual
- ☐ \$15.00 - Family
- ☐ \$20.00 - Organization
- ☐ \$25.00 - Business

Please indicate areas of interest:

- ☐ Special Events
- ☐ Living History
- ☐ Educational Programs
- ☐ Fund Raising
- ☐ Maintenance and Restoration

Name(s) _____

Address _____

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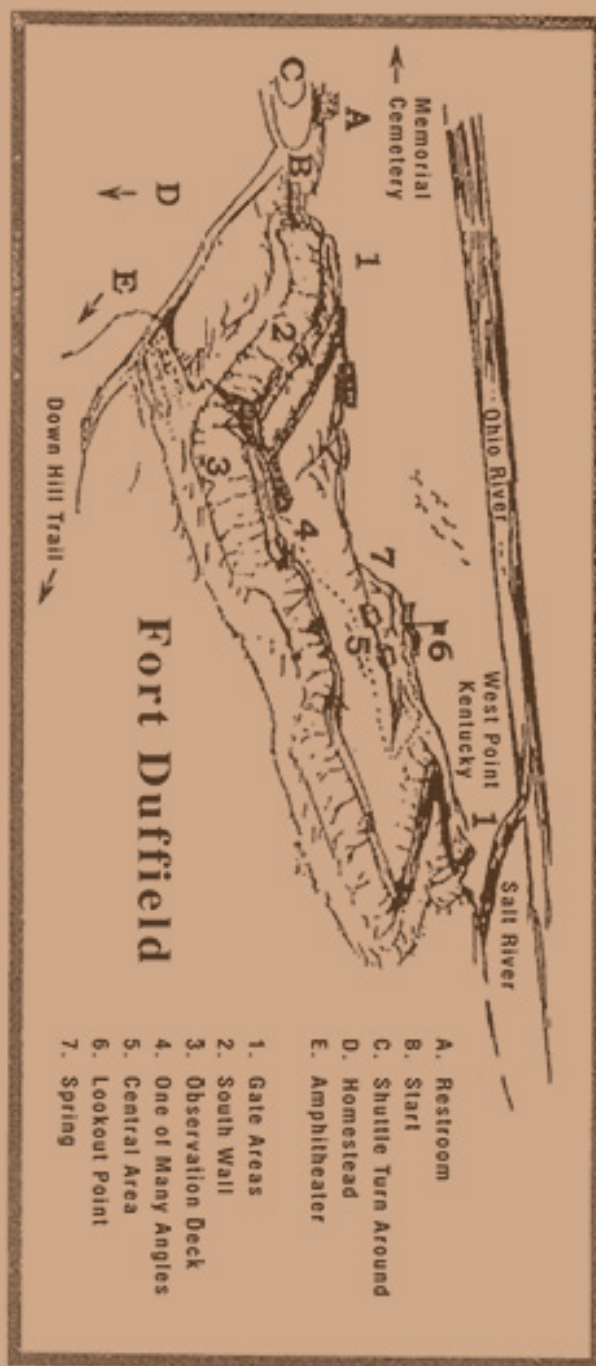
Make check payable to and mail to:

Friends of Fort Duffield
16706 Abbott's Beach Rd
West Point KY 40177

502-922-4574- info@fortduffield.com

Visit Fort Duffield Online:
fortduffield.com or

www.facebook.com/CivilWarFortDuffield



- 1. Gate Areas
- 2. South Wall
- 3. Observation Deck
- 4. One of Many Angles
- 5. Central Area
- 6. Lookout Point
- 7. Spring
- A. Restroom
- B. Start
- C. Shuttle Turn Around
- D. Homestead
- E. Amphitheater

Property of the City of West Point, Kentucky
502-922-4260 <http://www.westpoint.ky.gov>

Walking Tour U.S. Civil War Fort Duffield

West Point, Kentucky
"Mouth of Salt River"



General William Tecumseh Sherman ordered the construction of a fort at this site on Pearman Hill, 300 feet above West Point, to protect: his supply base; the arrival and departure of U.S. Soldiers; and the City of Louisville, via the Louisville-Nashville Turnpike and Ohio River.

Work began on the fort on November 3, 1861 and took less than two months to complete.

This impregnable fortress was never challenged. However, its strategic position no doubt played an important role in the Civil War in Kentucky.



Property of the City of West Point, Kentucky
<https://westpoint.ky.gov>

Welcome to Fort Duffield

As you follow the numbers on the map, please read the corresponding text to give you a better understanding of the history behind the fort and the City of West Point.

1. A large timbered gate was located both here and at the other end of this 1000 ft. long earthen fort. Both gate areas hugged the cliff so as to allow maximum protection for the defenders. The fort was so secure that when the request was made for locks for the gates, the quartermaster sent two toy locks as a joke. Captain Charles Victor DeLand, Commander of Co. C, 9th Michigan Infantry, stated in a letter home that they felt *"as secure as a nest of young eagles in our new fort."*

2. The most common cannon used at the fort was the 6 pound smooth bore. At least one cannon would have to be positioned behind each of the ten angles of the fort walls for all around covering fire in the direction of many back roads to the south of the fort. At first, the 9th Michigan Infantry manned their own cannons, but by March of 1862, Captain Charles H. Lamphere's Battery G, 1st Michigan Light Artillery, along with Battery F, had arrived to garrison the fort.

3. From this observation point, one can see how impregnable the fort must have been. The forest has reclaimed the area but at that time there was at least a one mile clearing in every direction. With such a commanding view and garrisoned with a thousand men, it is no wonder that this massive fortification was never attacked. Take notice of the walls in both directions. According to a letter by Capt. Charles V DeLand, the distance from the top of the wall to the bottom of the ditch was 17 ft. The top of the wall was 9 ft. wide. Time has eroded the walls to today's present height and thickness.

4. Civil War fortifications were precisely designed. Every angle, mound of earth, and slope you see

here had a specific purpose. The ten angles of the fort were designed to allow infantry and artillery to sweep every inch of ground in front of the fort. There were no dead spaces where an attacking foe could take refuge. As Capt. DeLand wrote, *"every gun in the fort will sweep the turnpikes and rivers with shot and shell for three miles."*

5. The central area of the fort, which contains the bulk of the ruins, was the command center of the fort. From the elevated vantage point at this location, a commander would have a full view of the interior of the fort and surrounding outposts on the adjoining hills.

The men were ordered to *"hut themselves by their own labor."* There are depressions, in the woods below the fort, that were leveled out of the side of the hill to provide a base for simple log cabins with stone fireplaces. Several of these depressions can be seen on today's hiking trails.

By Dec. 23, 1861, Col. William W. Duffield, Commander of the 9th Michigan, wrote to Brig. Gen. John Robertson, Adjutant Gen. of the State of Michigan, *"I have placed the entire command [about a thousand men] in log huts."* The reproduction log cabins, inside the fort, represent the construction style of the Civil War.

6. From this lookout, the troops that garrisoned Fort Duffield could see all the military activities that were taking place in the town of West Point below. Early in the war, the town was a major supply base for Gen. Sherman's Army which was about 40 miles south, astride the Louisville-Nashville Turnpike. West Point was a bee-hive of activities. By November of 1861, seven regiments of infantry and a cavalry regiment occupied the town and furnished support to the troops in the fort. A correspondent for a Detroit newspaper described the scene in the village as one of complete turmoil, with hundreds upon hundreds of wagons being loaded with supplies from the steamboats, for transfer to the Union Army to the south.

Three houses in West Point were commandeered for military hospitals and several hundred men were treated. Many of them died. One of the houses is identified as the Ditto-Lansdale House located at 4th and Elm Streets.

On the adjacent hill, to the west of the fort, you will find the **Fort Duffield Memorial Cemetery**, near the site where 29 Soldiers were originally buried, along with a display and interpretive signs.

On the ridge, on the Indiana side of the Ohio River, two small fortifications were built and occupied by Capt. Knapp's Battery of Indiana Home Guard Artillery.

At one time, gunboats patrolled the Ohio River. In February of 1862, a newspaper reported that Major D. M. Fox, 9th Michigan Inf. was ordered to build a bridge across the Salt River. His Soldiers completed the bridge in two and a half days.

7. This spring was dug and blown out of the hillside by the Soldiers of Fort Duffield. Note the drill hole markings in the stone. A hand cut channel in the stone brings the overflow water from one basin to the next. The spring provided fresh drinking water year round and would have been invaluable to the men of the fort especially if it had been brought under siege.

Capt. DeLand, 9th Michigan, wrote on Dec. 5, 1861, *"Our new camp upon the mountain is a paradise to what we have enjoyed for the past four weeks, and pure air and water are showing their invigorating effects upon the men daily, almost hourly."*

However, this spring was inadequate for the routine camp life of a regiment and their compliment of horses, mules, and other livestock. The men of the fort made daily trips to the Salt and Ohio Rivers to fill their needs for additional water. This spring is untested by today's standards.

PLEASE DO NOT DRINK!