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INTERPRETATION

When it became apparent that a major historical site had been uncovered, the original concept of merely outlining the perimeter of the fort was changed. The 25 major features included in the site exhibit not only tell the story of the fort, its times and its people, but also of the archaeological exploration itself.

Because it was not aesthetically desirable or financially possible to reconstruct the fort, with all the attendant problems of maintenance and security, the architect concentrated on relating its story in a very restrained way, counting upon the natural beauty of the site for any dramatic effects.

These objectives are explained and the sponsoring bodies listed in a large sign at the Fort's entry plaza. The history of the major events and a record of those who played roles in them appears on a four-sided monolith.

The original footers, set in concealed concrete bases, mark the location of 160 feet of the perimeter. In order that visitors can grasp the size of the fort, the destroyed extensions of these walls are marked by 18 inch wide granite slabs. When River Road, which cuts through the site, is repaved it is planned to extend these lines across it and the adjacent sidewalk so that two thirds of the fort's boundaries will be delineated.

In the summer of 1981 Beaver Council passed a resolution recommending that, when River Road is repaved, professional

archaeologists be given a limited period of time to locate any footers or fireplaces and recover any artifacts which lie beneath the present paving.

In the center of the site the focal point is a flag plaza overlooking the river. Between the two 30 foot flagpoles an enlarged drawing of the fort as reconstructed by the historical architect is framed in a Nomar panel. This is supported by a stone pedestal containing a manually activated taped narration of the fort's history.

Flanking the original granite DAR marker are two bronze tablets on granite bases. One is a gift of the Georgia Chapter of the Society of Cincinnati in honor of General Lachlan McIntosh, its first president. The other is a roster of the 21 known commanders of the fort.

To tell the story of the archaeology, the 25 features were combined in ten areas, each area having a marker describing the relationships of the structural remains uncovered. This eliminated a proliferation of markers. It is possible for the visitor to follow chronologically the archaeological search and its discoveries.

The markers are Nomar panels on cast aluminum standards 42 inches high, on each of which is a brief text, a photograph of the more important artifacts, and the total number of the latter found in the area. The display is impervious to vandalism and environmental change. The surface itself is impact resistant.

Artillery first appears in the records of Fort McIntosh in 1778, when Lt. Col. Cambray instructed his Conductor of Artillery

concerning the placement and care of the artillery "parc". In 1784, an artillery company was included as part of Pennsylvania's four companies in the 1st American Regiment.

In 1785, this company became part of the history of the oldest unit in the continuous service of the United States. It had begun as Alexander Hamilton's Company of Provincial Artillery in 1776 and its history has been traced through all of America's wars to its present identity as the 1st Battalion of the 5th Artillery Regiment at Fort Riley.

In 1777 it became the 2nd Company of the 2nd Regiment of Continental Artillery under Captain John Doughty. In 1784 it became Captain Doughty's Company of the Corps of Artillery and in July 1785 was redesignated the 1st Company Artillery of the 1st American Regiment, (under now Major Doughty) at Fort McIntosh. In September 1785 it was redesignated the 2nd Company, 1st American Regiment under Captain William Ferguson. In 1787, still at Fort McIntosh under Captain Ferguson, it was designated the 2nd Company Battalion of United States Artillery. Both Doughty and Ferguson were post commanders at Fort McIntosh and became successively the first two commanders of United States Artillery.

Because of this association, authentic reproductions of guns of the day are major elements in the interpretation. A light six pounder on a field carriage was installed in 1980, and a reproduction four pounder on a garrison carriage was acquired in 1982. (Both six and four pound balls were found on the site.) Future plans are to install another six pounder on a garrison carriage and a three pounder on a light "grasshopper" carriage. While no three pound balls have been located, there are reports

of their use in the Indian wars and they probably would have been part of the armament here.

To fulfill the original concept of the project, the Board of Directors of the Beaver Memorial Library have made available two walls in the community room in its new wing for use as a small museum. Supplemented by graphics, the exhibit will be arranged in chronological order to tell the story of the archaeological search and the troops who garrisoned the fort.

In 1981, a reenactment company was organized, uniformed and equipped to provide living history to the restoration. Officially named the 1st Company, Fort McIntosh Garrison, it has the potential of authentically portraying one of the infantry companies of the 8th Pennsylvania or 13th Virginia, a rifle company of the 8th, or of Rawling's Maryland Rifle Regiment, a section of the artillery of the 8th, or a company of the 1st Battalion of the United States Artillery.

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