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SURVIVORS AND THEIR FATES (JULY 28, 1816)

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(<http://exploresouthernhistory.com/mobile/2016/07/28/survivors/#comments>)
The number of survivors from the explosion at Prospect Bluff continued to dwindle 200 years ago today as more of the badly wounded died from their injuries.

This is the final article in a series marking the 200th anniversary of the U.S. campaign to destroy the Fort at Prospect Bluff, Florida. Please click here to access the entire series (<http://exploresouthernhistory.com/mobile/category/prospect-bluff/>).

Estimates of the number killed outright in the explosion range from around 80 to 270. The prior number probably referred to men only while the latter number included women and children. Most estimates place the number of people in the fort at the time of the blast at 300-320. The former number appears to refer to the maroons only while the latter number includes the Choctaw warriors known to have been present.


Most estimates indicate that around 50 people survived the blast, although most were badly wounded and died within a matter of days. In the end, it is known that the following people were taken prisoner as Creek warriors and U.S. troops moved into the fort following the explosion:

1. Garcon (Sergeant Major, executed after explosion)
2. Garcon's wife (name unknown, beaten to death after explosion)
3. Abraham (captured, taken to Fort Scott)
4. Bature (captured, taken to Fort Scott)
5. Charles (captured, taken to Fort Scott)
6. Elijah (captured, taken to Fort Scott)
7. Jacob (captured, taken to Fort Scott)
8. Jo (captured, taken to Fort Scott)
9. Lamb (captured, taken to Fort Scott)
10. William (captured, taken to Fort Scott)
11. Fernando (badly wounded, captured again in 1818)
12. Castalio (captured, taken to Pensacola)
13. Tom (captured, taken to Pensacola)




Dale Cox, historian and preservationist, explains details of the fort's history to Sherry Sherrod Dupree of the UNESCO-TST Florida Center.


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14. Dolly (captured, taken to Pensacola)
15. Crepy, child of Dolly (captured, taken to Pensacola)
16. Flora, child of Dolly (captured, taken to Pensacola)
17. Beck, child of Dolly (captured, taken to Pensacola)
18. Cimpthia, child of Dolly (captured, taken to Pensacola)
19. Neron (Nero?), child of Dolly (captured, taken to Pensacola)
20. Mary Ashley (captured, taken to Pensacola)
21. Choctaw chief (Taulolcy?) (captured and executed)



Rhonda Kimbrough of the U.S. Forest Service looks out at the site on the 200th anniversary of the explosion.

There may have been and probably were other survivors. Other than their leader, for example, none of the Choctaw men, women and children at the fort were mentioned in post-battle reports. Some of them undoubtedly survived. It should also be noted that only captives from the United States and Pensacola appear on post-battle lists of prisoners. There likely were a few survivors from other places as well.

The list above does not include individuals captured by McIntosh's Creek warriors during their approach to and operations around the fort. One account lists the final number of people taken back to the Creek Nation against their will as around 100. These men, women and children, however, were not inside the fort at the time of the attack.



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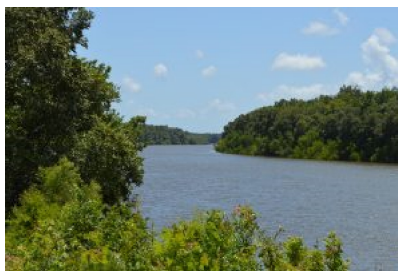
Some writers believe that only a few dozen people died in the explosion but this theory in no way reflects the size of the fort or the determined manner of its defense. It would have been impossible for 50 or 60 men, women and children to even man the cannon, let alone defend the walls and stockades of the inner defenses. U.S. troops and Creek warriors had maintained a siege of the fort for seven days prior to the explosion of July 27, 1816. A mere 50-60 defenders could never have kept them at bay for so long.

The story of Prospect Bluff will continue to be studied and more information will continue to emerge. The results of a major archaeological project from this spring will add much to our knowledge of the site and new documentary evidence emerges each year as well. It is a place worthy of our collective memory as a nation and hopefully the third century that has passed since its destruction will bring a better recognition of its role in our history.

The U.S. Forest Service will host an event to mark the 200th anniversary of the Fort at Prospect Bluff on October 22nd. More information will be coming soon.

Watch in September for the book *The Fort at Prospect Bluff* for a detailed study of the story as outlined in this series. It will be available through all major online booksellers.

This concludes our series marking the 200th anniversary of the U.S. campaign against the Fort at Prospect Bluff, Florida. Please click here to access the complete series (<http://exploresouthernhistory.com/mobile/category/prospect-bluff/>).



The Apalachicola River as seen from the crest of Prospect Bluff on July 27th, the 200th anniversary of the explosion.

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