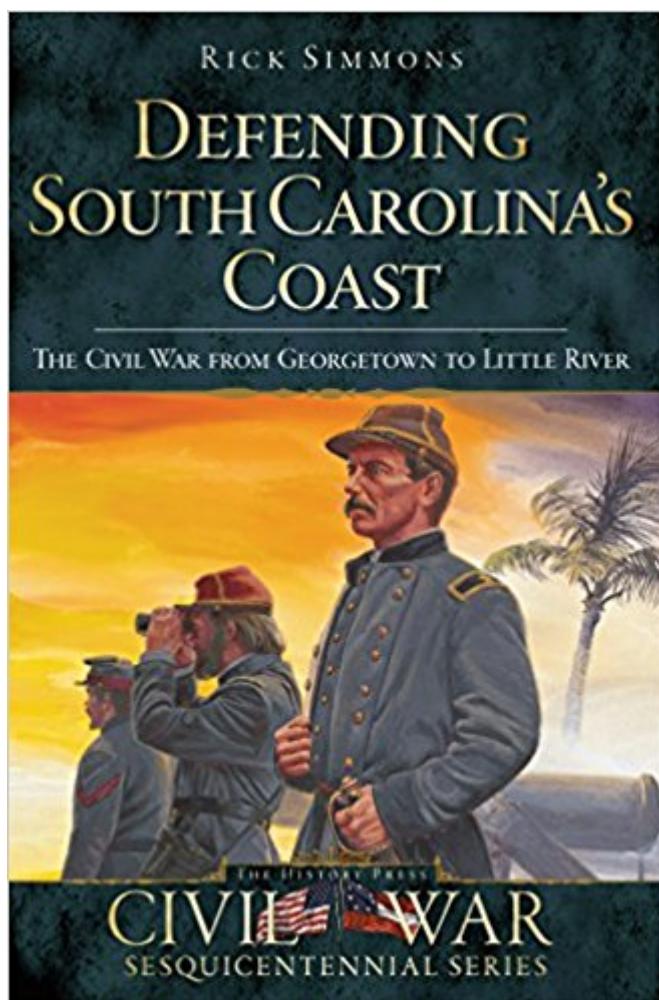


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# Defending South Carolina's Coast: The Civil War From Georgetown To Little River (Civil War Series)



## **Synopsis**

In Defending South Carolina's Coast: The Civil War from Georgetown to Little River, area native Rick Simmons relates the often overlooked stories of the upper South Carolina coast during the Civil War. As a base of operations for more than three thousand troops early in the war and the site of more than a dozen forts, almost every inch of the coast was affected by and hotly contested during the Civil War. From the skirmishes at Fort Randall in Little River and the repeated Union naval bombardments of Murrells Inlet to the unrealized potential of the massive fortifications at Battery White and the sinking of the USS Harvest Moon in Winyah Bay, the region's colorful Civil War history is unfolded here at last.

## **Book Information**

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## **Customer Reviews**

Rick Simmons, Ph.D., has written a book that is very readable for those interested in this topic. He included many photographs, often taken by himself. He did his research and put together an excellent glimpse into the events in this area at that time. Defending South Carolina's Coast educates well, without boring, and offers many little-known facts about events at the Coast during

The War. It offers not only information regarding military defense, but also information about the economy, industries in the area, residents, and how all these things interacted with the War. If you have not been a student of South Carolina's history during this period, and want something that will provide you with a great basic understanding, I highly recommend this book. My congratulations to the author.

I am about halfway through the book and find it excellent for its purpose. It is written for the casual history reader not the doctoral level historian. Since I live in the immediate area about which the book was written and have ancestors who probably fought in some of the skirmishes cited, it has filled in some gaps in my historical perspective. I recommend the book highly.

I live in the area this book was written about and seeing education of the confederacy is slim to none its refreshing to sit and learn what made this country so great.

#### Well documented

Dr. Simmons' provides an excellent examination of a little studied theater in America's Civil War. Although no major land engagements occurred on the Grand Strand, this lack of notable events should not be confused for inactivity. Through exhaustive research, Dr. Simmons succinctly explores the importance of the region to the Confederate economy and the efforts by the Union to choke off this vital lifeline for the Southern cause. Dr. Simmons research is both comprehensive and truly impressive. The exhaustive efforts of Dr. Simmons are evident throughout the entire book as he draws upon a diverse range of sources to color the complex goings of the region throughout the war. At times, the narrative surrounding events, such as individual confrontations between Union ships and blockade runners, can seem a bit scant on detail. While this lack of a more thorough narrative is unfortunate it is also emblematic of the challenges faced by a good historian. Rather than tackling a topic with bountiful accounts, Dr. Simmons clearly draws upon the scant materials available, such as barebones naval reports, and does his best to provide a window into a long neglected topic. Ultimately, a historian is a slave to the material available, and Dr. Simmons' handling of the issue speaks highly of him personally if engendering a wish that more information survived. While this effort by Dr. Simmons is indeed praise worthy, it is not without fault. The first major issue is the absence of a map of the region that places the historical site covered and labels the various waterways. Although several maps from the period are included, none provide the clear

and comprehensive overview of the region that would be of tremendous assistance to the reader. Likewise, though I am generally familiar with the Grand Strand, I found it difficult to keep straight the various inland rivers that feature prominently in the book. The second and far more substantive issue with this volume is the author's pension for repetition. In every chapter, the Author often repeats the same points and stories that have been previously addressed in other chapters. For example, the first chapter of the book concerns the Confederate abandonment of positions at the mouth of Winyah Bay early in the war. Yet, this point is repeated, often with the same quotes, in essentially every subsequent chapter. Nor is this an isolated incident as a similar repetition occurs with action near Little River, the blockading of Murrell's Inlet and the construction of Battery White. Although each of these topics has its own chapter, they still receive extensive coverage in other parts of the book. While some repetition is need given Dr. Simmons' decision to organize the book topically rather than chronologically, the net effect is that approximately 1/3rd of the book is simply restating material covered elsewhere. Even with these concerns, for any resident or visitor to the Grand Strand interested in the Civil War this is simply a must read.

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