

advanced and, after finding one bridge destroyed, started before dawn on March 6 to attempt to cross the river at Natural Bridge. The Union troops initially pushed Rebel forces back, but not away from the bridge.

Sailors from USS Hendrick Hudson also participated, and two were awarded the Medal of Honor for their part in this battle: Seaman John Mack and Coxswain George Schutt.^[2]

Confederate forces under Brig. Gen. William Miller, protected by breastworks, guarded all of the approaches and the bridge itself. The action at Natural Bridge lasted most of the day, but, unable to take the bridge in three separate charges, the Union troops retreated to the protection of the fleet.

Based on the involvement of the students from the Florida Military and Collegiate Institute, the Florida State University Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC) program is one of only four Army ROTC programs to have a battle streamer for their actions in the Civil War.^[3] Since it was originally part of the Army, FSU's Air Force ROTC unit also displays the same battle streamer.

Monument



Secretary of State Tom Adams showing battle flag of Natural Bridge (1961)

The site of the battle is now Natural Bridge Battlefield State Historic Site, a Florida State Park, and contains a monument with the inscription:

“

Company A, Milton Light
Artillery
Barwick's Company
Reserves
Hodges' Company
Reserves
Companies A, B, and F;
Florida Reserves
Reinforcements from
Georgia

Strength

700

1,000

Casualties and losses

148 total

26 total

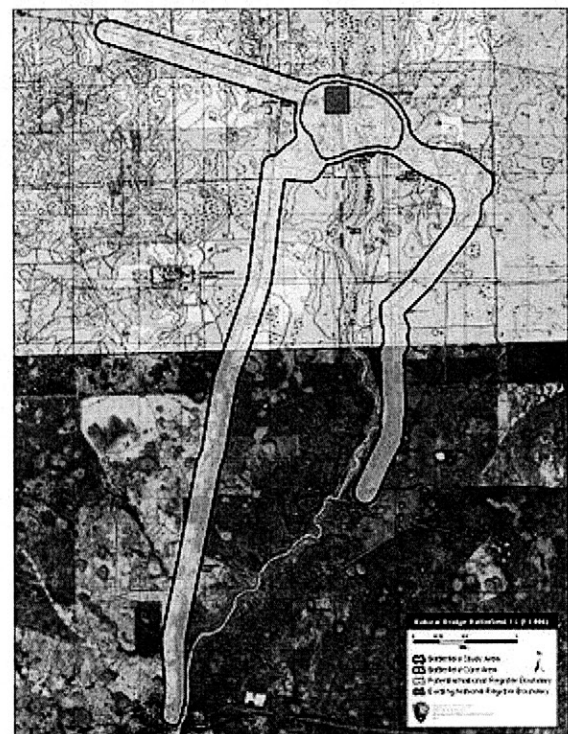
21 killed

3 killed

89 wounded

23 wounded

38 captured



Map of Natural Bridge Battlefield core and study areas by the American Battlefield Protection Program.

”

This monument erected under authority of an act of the legislature of Florida of 1921 as a just tribute of the people of Florida to commemorate the victory of the battle of Natural Bridge. March 6, 1865. And to keep in cherished memory those brave men and boys who, in the hour of sudden danger, rushed from home desk and field and from the West Florida Seminary and joining a few disciplined troops by their united valor and patriotism saved their capital from the invaders. Tallahassee being the only capital of the South not captured by the enemy during the War between the States.

Annual Memorial Service and Battle Reenactment



First reenactment of the battle in 1974

A ceremony honoring the combatants on both sides of the Battle of Natural Bridge, followed by a reenactment of the battle featuring Union, Confederate, and civilian reenactors, is held at the park the first weekend of March every year. The event is free and open to the public.^[4]

The site is now called Natural Bridge Battlefield Historic State Park.^[4]

See also

- Military history of African Americans in the U.S. Civil War
- United States Colored Troops
- Historical reenactment
- List of Florida state parks
- List of Registered Historic Places in Leon County, Florida

Notes

1. "Natural Bridge Battlefield Historic State Park" (http://www.stateparks.com/natural_bridge_battlefield_historic_state_park_in_florida.html). StateParks.Com. Retrieved August 27, 2016.
2. "Civil War Medal of Honor Recipients (M–Z)" (<http://www.history.army.mil/html/moh/civwarmz.html>). *Medal of Honor Citations*. United States Army Center of Military History. 26 June 2011. Retrieved 9 September 2011.
3. The other three programs are: the Virginia Military Institute (VMI) for the Battle of New Market, The Citadel, for the defense of Charleston and other engagements, and The University of Mississippi for the defense of Vicksburg.
4. State of Florida official website for Natural Bridge Battlefield Historic State Park "Archived copy" (<https://web.archive.org/web/20080109003704/http://www.floridastateparks.org/naturalbridge/default.cfm>). Archived from the original (<http://www.floridastateparks.org/naturalbridge/default.cfm>) on 2008-01-09. Retrieved 2008-03-01.

External links

- [Natural Bridge Battlefield Historic State Park - Florida State Parks](https://web.archive.org/web/20080109003704/http://www.floridastateparks.org/naturalbridge/default.cfm) (<https://web.archive.org/web/20080109003704/http://www.floridastateparks.org/naturalbridge/default.cfm>)
- [Photos of the annual Battle of Natural Bridge reenactment](http://www.floridastateparks.org/history/parkhistory.cfm?parkid=37) (<http://www.floridastateparks.org/history/parkhistory.cfm?parkid=37>)
- [Natural Bridge Historical Society](http://www.nbhscso.com/) (<http://www.nbhscso.com/>)
- [Union Account by Captain Thos. Chatfield](http://www.churbuck.com/wordpress/?page_id=504) (http://www.churbuck.com/wordpress/?page_id=504)
- [Map of the Battle - Civil War Trust](http://www.civilwar.org/battlefields/naturalbridge/natural-bridge-maps/battle-of-natural-bridge.html) (<http://www.civilwar.org/battlefields/naturalbridge/natural-bridge-maps/battle-of-natural-bridge.html>)
- <http://m.palmbeachpost.com/news/news/local/post-time-the-civil-war-battle-of-natural-bridge/nkH5w/>

References

This article incorporates public domain material from the National Park Service document "[1] (<https://web.archive.org/web/20070815185240/http://www.nps.gov:80/history/hps/abpp/battles/floo6.htm>)".

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