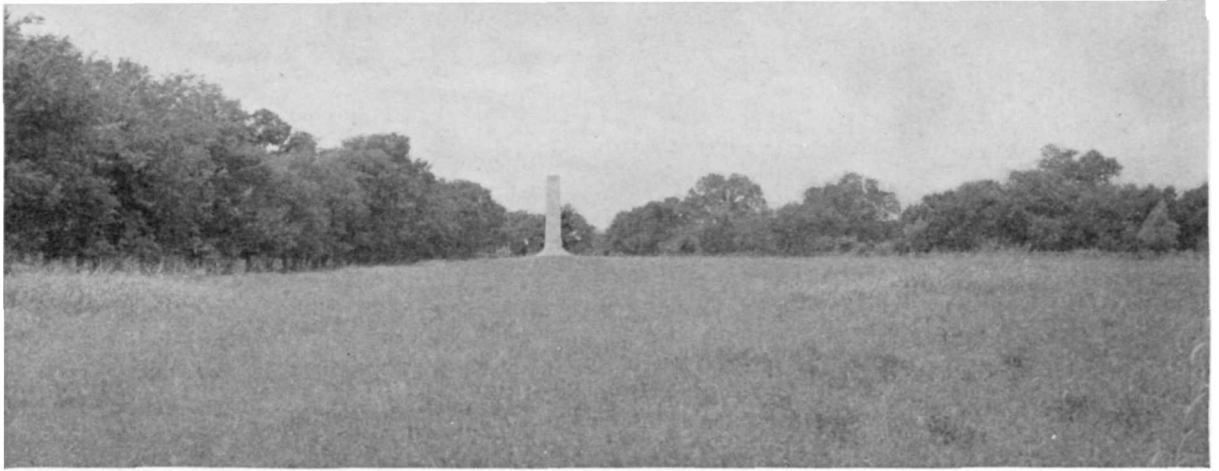


CHALMETTE

National Historical Park ★ Louisiana

COMMEMORATING THE BATTLE OF NEW ORLEANS



Looking down the field on which the American defensive line was constructed in December 1814; the line of trees at the left marks the old Rodriguez Canal; Chalmette Monument in the far background.

THE COVER

This unusual perspective drawing of the decisive Battle of New Orleans on January 8, 1815, is from a water color painted in 1815 by Hyacinthe Ladotte, an engineer of Jackson's army. The Mississippi River shows in the foreground; just beyond is the American redoubt in front of the main line which is being stormed by the British troops under Rennie. Jackson's line can be traced from the river bank to the point where it disappears in the wooded swamp in the background. Back of the American line, near the river at the left, are seen the Macarte plantation mansion and buildings. Here Jackson had his headquarters. The ruins of the Chalmette plantation buildings are at the lower right. Even the levee is shown, with British soldiers advancing on either side, but few on top of it. Gibbs led the British troops near the woods. Pakenham was mortally wounded while trying to rally the troops massed in the center of the picture.

This reproduction is from a copy of an engraving made in France by P. L. Debucourt, after the original water color, now in the print room of the New York Public Library and used here with the permission of that institution.

Contents

	<i>Page</i>
The War of 1812	4
The New Orleans Campaign:	
The Treaty of Ghent and the Campaign	6
The British Expedition Organizes	7
Jackson Gathers His Forces	7
Advance of the British	8
Engagement of December 23-24, 1814	9
Engagement of December 28, 1814	10
Engagement of January 1, 1815	11
The Final Engagement, January 8, 1815	12
The Park:	
How To Reach the Park	14
Facilities for Visitors	15
Administration	15
Related Points of Interest Outside of the Park	15
Other War of 1812 Areas	15



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

HAROLD L. ICKES, *Secretary*

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE · NEWTON B. DRURY, *Director*

CHALMETTE *National Historical Park*

SCENE OF THE BATTLE OF NEW ORLEANS BETWEEN AMERICANS AND BRITISH, JANUARY 8, 1815, IN WHICH ANDREW JACKSON WON THE GREATEST AMERICAN LAND VICTORY OF THE WAR OF 1812, GIVING IMPETUS TO AMERICAN NATIONALISM

THE LAST WAR in which the people of the United States and Great Britain fought against each other was waged between 1812 and 1815. It was a contest that ended in a stalemate, neither side gaining its objective. And yet the Battle of New Orleans, the last battle of that war, fought on January 8, 1815, had important results in American history.

The true significance of the Battle of New Orleans is to be found not in the fact that it affected the outcome of the war—for it did not change the terms of the Treaty of Ghent, signed on December 24, 1814, and ratified by the British and American Governments after the battle was fought—but rather in its influence on the course of American nationalism. In saving New Orleans from possible conquest, a brilliant victory for American arms, there was built up in the western people, who bore the brunt of the American defense, a new self-confidence and unity. As a climax to nearly half a century of western expansion, during which time the American Revolution had been fought, a new government had been set up, the size of the Nation

Andrew Jackson as portrayed in 1815 by John Wesley Jarvis, present at the time of the battle. From the collection of Stanley Clisby Arthur.



had been nearly doubled with the purchase of the Louisiana Territory, including New Orleans, in 1803, and the western movement of population had continued. The Battle of New Orleans was fought by the people of the new west, and it was a victory of frontier democracy. As a result it indelibly stamped the effect of frontier democracy upon the American social and political order.

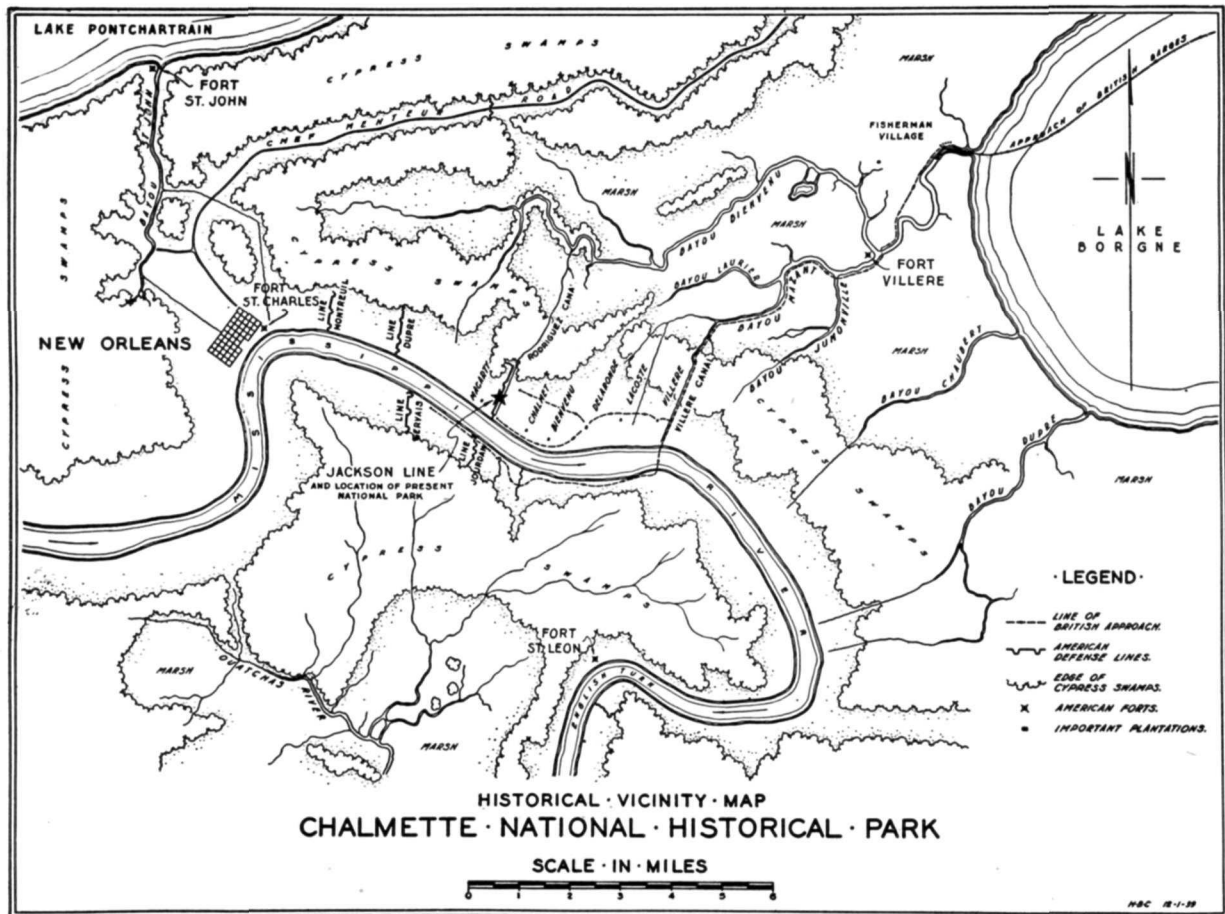
Its political effect may be seen in the fact that Andrew Jackson, the hero of New Orleans, was President of the United States within 15 years, the first westerner to secure the office. As a military conqueror of Indians and of British, and as the leading proponent of the equalitarian democracy of the frontier, he had an irresistible appeal.

The social effect of the victory is evident in the history of the years following the battle, when, with the Mississippi River still open to the sea, the western movement was accelerated. The people surged over further west, and in so doing they broadened the form of the earlier social order.

The victory, moreover, meant much to the American people as a whole. It enabled them to

Portrait of Sir Edward Michael Pakenham, after a lithograph of an original painting in England. Pakenham, a veteran of many wars, was only 36 years old when he met his death at Chalmette.





Map showing the territory around New Orleans and the route the British took in their march from Lake Borgne past the Villere plantation to the American defensive line behind the Rodriguez Canal.

forget the sting of earlier defeats in the war—at Detroit, Niagara, and Bladensburg—and the sack of Washington, and helped to increase pride in their country. It materially helped to stem the tide of disaffection in New England, where a small group of Federalists were openly advocating disunion. The threatened dissolution was ended when news of the New Orleans victory and the signing of the Treaty of Ghent reached these shores. It increased the self-confidence of American statesmen and encouraged them in the determination to free American diplomacy from its former dependence on that of Europe.

The War of 1812

HAD THERE BEEN speedier modes of communication—radio or telegraph—the war probably never

would have started. For on June 16, 1812, the British Orders in Council, which were used as one of the reasons for supporting the declaration of war in the United States, were suspended. On June 18, 1812, before news of this action could reach the United States, Congress had declared war against Great Britain.

For many years before the actual declaration there had been a series of incidents creating friction between the two Nations. Most of these stem from the Napoleonic wars, the lengthy contest between France and Great Britain for supremacy in Europe. President Thomas Jefferson had discovered what effect a foreign war could have on this country when he faced the problems of impressment of American seamen into the British Navy and of the rights of neutrals on the high seas. But his answer had not been war. He declared an unsuccessful



This reproduction of W. A. C. Pape's painting, "The Night Battle of New Orleans," depicts a scene during Jackson's surprise attack on the British at the Villeré plantation on the night of December 23, 1814. In the light cast by burning British supplies Jackson is seen arriving at the point where the capture of his guns was being threatened in the general confusion of the night fighting. (Courtesy St. Charles Hotel, New Orleans.)

embargo on all shipping, which lasted from the end of 1807 until just before his retirement from office in March 1809. President James Madison was no more successful in dealing with these problems.

The motive power pushing the United States toward war was supplied, not by the commercial and trading interests of the seaboard States which had suffered most from the foregoing measures, but by the western expansionists. The frontiersmen, who wanted Indian and British land, were represented in Congress by a group of statesmen led by Henry Clay and dubbed the "War Hawks." It was they who encouraged the belief that the British were behind the Indian uprising that sprang from Tecumseh's Confederacy, which was defeated in the Battle of Tippecanoe at the end of 1811. It was they who stirred the lust for Canada, held by England, and for Florida, which was in weak Spain's hands. The frontier States voted almost unanimously for war; a majority of the Congressmen from the maritime States voted against war. But the die was cast.

A curious sort of war it was. Generally unpopular, except among the frontiersmen, it was fought in a desultory fashion. Great Britain, still en-

gaged in the struggle with Napoleon, did little more in the first 2 years than help Canada to wage a defensive war. Unprepared, the United States not only could not penetrate into Canada but was even pushed back and attacked on its own soil. Detroit and Fort Dearborn at Chicago were soon lost, and the repulse at Niagara, N. Y., was ignominious.

To be sure, on water the Americans gained victories. The *Constitution*, the *Wasp*, and the *United States* showed the maritime mettle of the country; but the United States Navy was outnumbered and thus was virtually overpowered on the high seas before the end of the war. On the Great Lakes in the late summer of 1813, at the close of the battle of Lake Erie, Oliver H. Perry's terse "We have met the enemy, and they are ours" stirred the Nation and made possible the American victory in the Battle of the Thames in Canada.

At the turn of the new year, 1814, there were still no American troops in Canada, even though they had been successful in retaking Detroit. A worse sign for this country lay in the defeat of Napoleon in the spring of 1814, thus releasing British troops for active participation in this second Anglo-American war.

Great Britain was not slow in taking the offensive. Three major expeditions were planned: the first would invade New York from Canada by way of Lake Champlain; the second would attack the Atlantic Coast at Chesapeake Bay; and the third would come through the Gulf of Mexico against Mobile and New Orleans. The naval Battle of Plattsburg (New York) in September, when Commodore MacDonough defeated the British fleet and forced the British Army to retreat to Canada, ended the first expedition. Meanwhile, the second had penetrated to Washington, burned the White House and the Capitol, but had failed to pass Fort McHenry, the principal defense of Baltimore. It was there on the morning of September 14 that Francis Scott Key saw "by the dawn's early light" that "our flag was still there." And so ended the Chesapeake campaign, for the British decided to withdraw.

The New Orleans Campaign

THE TREATY OF GHENT AND THE CAMPAIGN

THE THIRD EXPEDITIONARY FORCE was intended to break the Americans' vital communications with the sea at the mouth of the Mississippi River. Here the British would be striking a blow at the western people whose representatives had forced the issue

in regard to war. For the Mississippi was their life line, and the ultimate British goal, New Orleans, controlled the fate of the Mississippi Valley.

The underlying purpose behind all these military expeditions was to gain some material possession in order to improve the conditions of peace or to be used as a lever as a price for peace. Early in 1814, the British Government offered to discuss peace terms, and President Madison accepted. It was not until June, however, that the commissioners met at Ghent, at that time in the kingdom of the United Netherlands. Meanwhile, the three campaigns had gotten under way, so the British commissioners temporized until November in order to take advantage of the material possessions that might be won. Then came the news of the failure at Plattsburg, the expression of a pessimistic view of the war by the famed Duke of Wellington, and a renewal of the crisis in Europe. The result was a change of mind regarding the peace terms, and the negotiations were speeded. Even while the third expeditionary force was pushing toward New Orleans, the conditions of peace were being ironed out, and it was on Christmas Eve 1814 that the commissioners signed the Treaty of Ghent, subject to ratification by their respective Governments. The news was "rushed" to the United States by swift sailing vessel. By the time it reached these shores, the Battle of New Orleans had already been fought and won by the Americans.

Conseil, the plantation house of Gen. Jacques Villeré, was used by the British and General Pakenham as headquarters from December 23, 1814, to January 19, 1815. Since destroyed, it is preserved photographically in the collection of Stanley Clisby Arthur, as it appeared in 1915.



Historians will continue to study and argue over the relationship of the Battle of New Orleans to the Treaty of Ghent. There are always "ifs" in American history—for example, if the British had been successful in their third 1814 campaign, would the Treaty of Ghent have been ratified? The fact remains that the British failed, and the treaty was ratified in due course.

THE BRITISH EXPEDITION ORGANIZES

The expedition against New Orleans was prepared at Negril Bay, Jamaica, British West Indies. At that point there was collected a great armada—10,000 seamen for 50 ships and transports, 1,500 marines, and more than 9,000 troops. The soldiers included veterans of the Napoleonic campaign as well as participants in the Chesapeake expedition. Well equipped, the expedition set sail at the end of November under the command of Maj. Gen. John Keane, a young and dashing officer who had joined the army when only 18 and had seen 15 years of service in Egypt, Malta, Ireland, and Spain since that time. Confidently, he decided to attack New Orleans directly instead of marching from Mobile after that town had been taken.

JACKSON GATHERS HIS FORCES

As the ships beat through the waters of the Gulf of Mexico at the end of November, the commander

of the Seventh Military District of the United States, embracing Tennessee, Louisiana, and the Mississippi Territory, viewed his small scattered force as he moved leisurely along the coast toward the city of New Orleans. The man was Maj. Gen. Andrew Jackson, better known to most of his men as "Andy" or "Old Hickory." Born in South Carolina, he had fought in the Revolutionary War as a boy of 13. After the war he studied law and then moved to the frontier State of Tennessee. Lawyer, judge, Congressman, merchant, speculator, and officer in the State militia, he was one of the most prominent men in Tennessee at the outbreak of the War of 1812. Appointed major general of United States Volunteers, he suffered the difficulties of uncertain command when he moved into Mississippi against the Creek Indians. Finally receiving the Regular Army Command in May 1814, he was successful in his campaign and signed a treaty with the Creeks in August. He then turned to the coastal defenses, invaded Spanish Florida, and captured Pensacola, fortified Mobile, which he believed to be the natural point of British attack, and turned his steps toward New Orleans just 5 days before the British sailed from Jamaica.

The heterogeneous population of New Orleans, which had passed through Spanish, English, and French hands before becoming a part of the United States, was alarmed. They had heard of the Brit-

This old photograph of the now destroyed plantation home of Augustin Francios Macarte, used by Andrew Jackson as his field headquarters, is from the Collection of Stanley Clisby Arthur.





The remains of the old dry millrace, known as the Rodriguez Canal, behind which the Americans erected their mud earthwork, may still be seen at Chalmette National Historical Park. The course of the ditch is just beyond the fence which it parallels.

ish armada en route to their well-beloved city. Frantically they looked to Jackson for relief, and, although they found little in this democratic frontiersman to impress them, they were encouraged by his decisive energy when he came into the city on the first day of December.

"Old Hickory" surveyed the situation, and there must have been moments when even his boundless confidence was low. He discovered as soon as he came into the city that he had no easy job confronting him. New Orleans was about a hundred miles above the mouth of the Mississippi River, and there were many points along the coast where the British might attempt to land their force. Moreover, Jackson had too few men to cover all of these points, despite the fact that the local militia augmented the size of his small regular force. Still believing that the British would approach by way of Mobile and thence overland, he nevertheless began to prepare against an attempt to land near the city. After sending out parties to obstruct the many small streams that led toward New Orleans, he himself went down the Mississippi to plan and

start the erection of suitable defenses on the banks of that stream. He then turned his attention to Lake Pontchartrain, that huge body of water just north of the city.

ADVANCE OF THE BRITISH

The first half of December passed, and then Jackson's problem was suddenly simplified. On December 14, the water of Lake Borgne, an arm of the Gulf of Mexico lying east of the city, was churned by 45 boats carrying 1,200 British. They were trying to catch five small American gunboats that were being maneuvered skillfully by Lt. Thomas Ap. Catesby Jones. Lieutenant Jones might have succeeded in opposing or escaping the enemy had not the wind died down. Becalmed, the American force was defeated after a short battle, and General Keane began to look for some spot on the shore of Lake Borgne where he might land his men.

Jackson acted with energy immediately despite an illness that kept him prostrate. He gathered



These hoary, moss-covered live oaks at Chalmette National Historical Park are on the field where the American defensive line was constructed behind the Rodriguez Canal. The levee of the Mississippi River is in the background.

his small force of several thousand men; he sent for portions of his troops scattered throughout the territory; he declared martial law in the city and calmed the inhabitants; he even accepted the services of Jean Lafitte and his Baratarian pirate crew, including brother Pierre and Frederick Youx (better known as Dominique You). By the twentieth, after the arrival of his Tennessee friends, John Coffee and Billy Carroll, with their men, a motley American army was preparing itself hastily for the blows that were certain to fall soon.

ENGAGEMENT OF DECEMBER 23-24, 1814

There was not just one "Battle of New Orleans;" there were four. The term is generally applied to the final engagement on January 8, 1815, but the story is incomplete unless consideration is given to the three engagements that preceded it.

The route by which the enemy was to attack the city from Lake Borgne was not discovered until December 22. Bayou Bienvenue, one of the many small streams that pierced the region east of New Orleans, was the only waterway left unblocked by

the Americans. The British found it, and on December 23, General Keane led about 2,000 men toward the Villeré plantation, less than 10 miles from the city. What is more, they captured Maj. René Philippe Gabriel Villeré himself. At this point they made a mistake for they decided to encamp at the plantation and await reinforcements. And finally, their prisoner escaped.

Major Villeré was but one of the many persons of French descent who lived on the highly cultivated land to the east of the city, near the banks of the Mississippi. The de La Ronde, Lacoste, Dupre, Chalmet, Bienvenu, and Jumonville families had long earned a rich living from their sugar, cotton, and rice on that marshy flat. There they had built their mansions close to New Orleans. And now the fortunes of war decreed that on their estates were to be fought four battles to defend that city.

Major Villeré and several friends rushed to Jackson's headquarters, hard on the heels of another citizen who also had seen the British advance to the plantation. As soon as the facts were laid



Brig. Gen. John Coffee, 1772-1834, who commanded the Tennessee troops in the Battle of New Orleans, and played the most important part in the American night attack on the British during the first battle in December 1814.

before him, Jackson made a quick decision. Before the sun was down he had marched about 2,000 men within striking distance of the British force. Behind the grove of oaks that still stands in front of the ruins of Versailles, the mansion of Col. Pierre Denis de La Ronde, the American force prepared to attack the enemy on the neighboring Villeré place. Down the river floated the American schooner *Carolina* to assist in the assault.

At 7:30 p. m. the *Carolina* opened fire, thus drawing the surprised British troops toward the river. Half an hour later the American infantry moved toward the enemy, while Coffee swept around to the left in order to outflank them. The confused battle that followed lasted for several hours. In the darkness it was often difficult to distinguish friend from foe, but Coffee and his men managed to ride right through the British camp, taking prisoners and spreading the chaos. As British reinforcements came up, the action languished, and Jackson decided to move his small force to a better defensive position. Having lost only 213 killed, wounded, and missing, to the enemy's 277, he was content to retreat while the British made up their minds on their next move.

The first battle in the campaign ended when the Americans in the early hours of December 24

turned back across the de La Ronde, Bienvenu, and Chalmet fields to the Rodriguez Canal on the plantation of Augustin Macarte. The canal was a dry ditch, an old abandoned millrace, about 20 feet wide and 4 feet deep, which ran between the levee at the Mississippi River bank and a cypress woods. Some 30 yards behind this ditch an earth wall high enough to require scaling was thrown up on December 24. Later, at the suggestion, it is said, of Jean Lafitte, it was extended through the woods to an impassable marshy swamp until it was 1,650 yards long. Planks and stakes supported the mud parapet and gave effective protection not only to the defenders but to the cannon that were hastily drawn into place.

ENGAGEMENT OF DECEMBER 28, 1814

Meanwhile the British were recovering from their surprise. New troops were constantly coming up from Lake Borgne, and among them was a new commanding officer to supersede General Keane. Sir Edward Michael Pakenham, only 36 years old, but with 20 years experience in warfare in Ireland and the West Indies, and under the Duke of Wellington on the Spanish Peninsula, arrived on Christmas Day. He brought with him another veteran leader as his second in command, Sir Samuel Gibbs. They surveyed the situation and found it bad. In front of them, not a mile distant, lay the opposing force, holding the only dry ground between the river and the swamp. Unless the British retreated and approached from another direction, they must break through that wall of mud and men in order to take New Orleans. Pakenham decided to bring up his cannon and blast the Americans out of his way.

The young commander had his forces in readiness by December 28. It was shortly after 8 o'clock that morning when he sent his troops forward in the best European tradition. Serried ranks marched across the open fields of Ignace Martin de Lino de Chalmet toward the canal. They came in two main columns, one near the river and the other skirting the cypress woods, and then fanned out into their assault lines. From the American earthworks only five cannons answered the British artillery, but from the schooner *Louisiana*, the lone American vessel on the river since the destruction of the *Carolina* the day before,



The Lafitte Brothers and Dominique You, while imprisoned in the dungeon of the Cabildo at New Orleans. From left to right: Dark figure unknown, possibly Beluche Lafitte, then his brothers, Jean and Pierre, and You. This reproduction is from the unusual original painting on wood, now hanging in the Cabildo, which is attributed to the artist, J. W. Jarvis, in 1812. (Courtesy of Louisiana State Museum.)

there came a round of shot which raked the British lines. The assaulting party near the river faltered, eventually stopped. Their failure caused Pakenham to halt the other column, which had pierced the woods and was threatening the left of the American defensive line. The second battle in the campaign was soon over, and the British moved back to the de La Ronde and Villeré plantations to plan a new assault.

ENGAGEMENT OF JANUARY 1, 1815

The Americans were jubilant, so jubilant that they decided to celebrate their success with a New Year's Day festival. To be sure, they continued to drag up more cannon and strengthen their defenses, but they planned to herald the advent of the New Year with a formal review of the heroic defenders.

It may have been a fine idea had not the British other plans for January 1, 1815. Laboriously,

they had continued to haul up more cannon, and, on New Year's Eve, 17 of them were emplaced not 700 yards away from the Rodriguez Canal. Shortly after 8 o'clock that morning they ended all thoughts the Americans may have had for a formal review.

The third battle in this campaign was hardly more than an artillery duel. The British blasted the American line for more than 5 hours. They plunged their shot through the Macarte house, where Jackson had his headquarters behind the canal; they set fire to some of the few cotton bales used along the ramparts. But their fire was met by the defenders, who stood to their 12 guns whether amateur artillerymen or veterans like swarthy Dominique You and his pirate crew. The one experimental infantry thrust through the woods on the American left was thrown back by Coffee and the Tennesseans. Again the mud line had held.



This magnificent avenue of live oaks was planted by Pierre Denis de La Ronde on his twenty-first birthday, April 20, 1783, fronting the plot where he erected his mansion, Versailles, in 1805. On privately owned property, the trees may be seen near Chalmette National Historical Park, fronting the ruins of Versailles. The avenue of live oaks extends between the Mississippi River and the ruins of Versailles.

THE FINAL ENGAGEMENT, JANUARY 8, 1815

Disheartened, Pakenham waited for further reinforcements. When General Lambert reported with a fresh brigade on January 4, the British began to prepare for another attempt to break the line. Carefully, they laid their plans for a full-scale attack before dawn on January 8. All through the night of January 7 they labored to set the stage. Gibbs would lead 2,200 men near the swamp against the American left, supported by 500 blacks of the First West Indian Regiment who would skirmish at the edge of the swamp. Keane

would move with 1,200 men against the right, where the Americans had erected a bastion or small fortress. More than 200 artillerymen serving the cannons would assist both these columns, while Lambert held 1,200 men in reserve to come to the aid of either. Crossing the river that night, in order to attack the Americans on the west side of the river, went another force of 1,200 men under Colonel Thornton.

But Pakenham's luck had completely deserted him. In order to get Thornton's force across the Mississippi, boats had to be dragged up the bayou for transportation, and the difficulty attendant upon this operation delayed the attack until the



The ruins of Versailles stand on State Highway No. 1 near the park. This is all that remains of the two-storied cement-covered brick building erected in 1805 by one of the wealthiest planters in the neighborhood and used by the British during the campaign in 1814-15. Owned by the Southern Railroad, the ruins are under the custody of The National Society of Colonial Dames.

morning sun coming over the horizon had erased all the darkness of night. It was 6 o'clock before the first half of the assaulting force reached the western side of the river, and not until then did Pakenham order the advance.

"Andy" Jackson and his 5,000 men were ready. They had spent their time since New Year's Day strengthening their own line, even building the bastion near the river at the far right end of the canal. On the night of January 7, well knowing that the British had been preparing for another assault, the American camp was alert. Early on January 8, Jackson was up viewing his arrangements and comforting and joking with his men. Gaunt, lean, almost cadaverous, he walked through the fog that lay over the ground before sunup talking not only to his old friends from Tennessee, Kentucky, Louisiana, and Mississippi but also to his new friends—the regular soldiers, sailors, and marines, the French, and Creoles, and the Baratarians pirates. He could understand them all, and they looked to him with confidence.

Gibbs and Keane led their men, 3,400 strong, against both flanks. Near the swamp, in close order of 60 men abreast, the British received the fire of three American batteries. Still they advanced in their ranks, bearing left only to avoid

the direct cannon fire. Men fell, but on they came; 150 yards, 100 yards, and then accurate American musketry and rifle fire began to take its toll. Fifty yards, and frantically they tried to answer the murderous hail as they neared the edge of the ditch. But this was more than men could stand. As General Gibbs was killed, they began to fall back in confusion. When Pakenham gallantly advanced to stem the retreat, he too was mortally wounded.

On the American right the men in the bastion had watched the cannons on the other side of the river as well as their own batteries pour shot into Keane's advance. As the British came closer, the defenders opened fire. Still the enemy came on. A few even sprang over into the work, but they died in the attempt. They were not supported by the other men, who were retreating from the storm of lead. Keane was carried off the field severely wounded, and four of every seven men in this attack on the right were killed or wounded.

Meanwhile, the British were more successful on the other side of the river. The Americans there, under Brig. Gen. David Morgan, were pressed back from their defensive line, and the artillerymen, who had been so effective in the aid they had given against the attack on the other bank, were forced to spike their guns and retreat. The way was now clear for the British to outflank Jackson, enfilading

This interesting old ante bellum mansion stands on ground immediately in front of the American defense line at Chalmette. It is on land now privately owned, just below the present park boundary. The house is said to have been built in the 1840's after a plan by the architect Gallier for a Spaniard, the Marquis de La Trava, and was named "Bueno Reposito." The mansion, now vacated, is known as the Beauregard House, because it was long the home of Rene Beauregard, a nephew of Confederate General Pierre Beauregard.





The monument at Chalmette National Historical Park was begun in 1855 to commemorate the brilliant American victory in the Battle of New Orleans, January 8, 1815. It was completed in 1908 under a Congressional act of March 4, 1907, which appropriated \$25,000 for the purpose.

his whole line from across the river. The danger was momentarily great, until the advance was halted because of the British failure against the main line.

The day was saved, and the embattled Americans surveyed the damage that had been done. On the plain in front of them lay thousands of dead and wounded. They later discovered that the British reported 291 killed, 1,262 wounded, and 484 missing on both sides of the river. Incredulously they checked and rechecked their own losses: on the main defensive line only 7 Americans were killed and 6 were wounded. When the casualties were finally reported from the west bank, the total was 13 killed, 39 wounded, and 19 missing. This was indeed a great American victory.

For more than a week after the defeat of the British on the plains of Chalmette, Admiral Cochrane tried to bring his ships up the Mississippi past the river forts to cooperate with the land troops in the conquest of Louisiana. But his bomb vessels failed to silence Fort St. Phillip, 50 miles below the battlefield, and after 9 days of bombardment they withdrew under cover of darkness.

Dispirited, the invaders prepared to leave the country. Unmolested by Jackson, who had accomplished his mission of saving New Orleans and the

Mississippi Valley, they marched to the shores of Lake Borgne and embarked silently on the waiting ships.

The Park

UNDER THE ENCOURAGEMENT of the Jackson Monument Association, an organization that had been urging for some years the proper commemoration of the Battle of New Orleans, the State of Louisiana, in 1855, purchased a small tract of land enveloping the American defensive position behind the Rodriguez Canal. Among the objectives of the association was the erection of a monument, 100 feet high, to be dedicated to the memory of the American soldiers who had fought and died there.

But progress was slow. In 1894, the ground was placed in the custody of the United States Daughters of 1812, and that society encouraged the completion of the monument. Finally, in 1907, the land was ceded to the United States by the State of Louisiana. The act of Congress authorizing this transfer provided that \$25,000 should be made available for completion of the monument, which was accomplished in 1908.

In 1930, the United States Daughters of 1812 relinquished their custody of the area to the War Department, which was administering nearby Chalmette National Cemetery. In August 1933, both areas were transferred to the jurisdiction of the National Park Service, United States Department of the Interior. In August 1939, the holdings were designated as Chalmette National Historical Park by act of Congress.

The park embraces only a portion of the ground on which the Battle of New Orleans was fought, and is composed of 2 plots of land, totaling about 31 acres, separated from each other by private land. One tract is the original land purchased in 1855. The other comprises Chalmette National Cemetery, which was set up after the War between the States for the burial of Federal soldiers who died during that war. It is still used for the interment of members of the armed forces of the United States.

HOW TO REACH THE PARK

The park is situated about 7 miles below the heart of New Orleans on State Highway No. 1. In leaving the city, this highway follows Rampart Street across Canal Street and merges into St. Claude Avenue, which leads directly to the park.



Two views of the National Cemetery at Chalmette National Historical Park, set aside after the War between the States. Over this ground the British advanced to attack the American defensive position in the Battle of New Orleans.

FACILITIES FOR VISITORS

A series of historical markers identifying various sites along the line of the old Rodriguez Canal presents information about some of the outstanding phases of the battles that took place there and interprets the significance of Andrew Jackson's great victory. It is important to note that since 1815 the course of the Mississippi River has shifted to the northeast, cutting away that portion of the bank where the bastion and the first three batteries on the American line stood during the battles. Other exhibits are planned to provide additional information on the field.

ADMINISTRATION

The park is administered by the National Park Service of the United States Department of the Interior. Communications should be addressed to the Superintendent, Chalmette National Historical Park, Chalmette, La.

Related Points of Interest Outside of the Park

VISITORS should not miss the opportunity to see several nearby points of interest. About 2 miles east of the park, on State Highway No. 1, the startling ruins of Versailles, the magnificent residence of Col. Pierre Denis de La Ronde, bisect the roadway. Only a few vine-covered columns stand today, but it takes little imagination to visualize the scene as it was in 1814-15, for south of the ruins and the highway there stretches toward the Mississippi River one of the most magnificent avenues of moss-

bedecked live oaks in the South. These giant trees are mute living witnesses to the Battle of New Orleans, since they were planted in 1783 on the twenty-first birthday of young Pierre de La Ronde. Under these branches the Americans prepared for the night attack of December 23, and the British Army camped there later as the men prepared for their several unsuccessful attacks against the American position back of the Rodriguez Canal.

Innumerable exhibits of the period remain in New Orleans, but special mention should be made of the Cabildo of the Louisiana State Museum. Its collection of material on the Battle of New Orleans is the finest in the city, and visitors may view swords, muskets, drums, and other relics of the engagements, as well as innumerable portraits of the participants. Outstanding is the painting of the battle by Eugene Lami, which hangs in the Sala Capitulare. This painting is said to be the most accurate reproduction of the battle on January 8, 1815.

Other War of 1812 Areas

THE NATIONAL PARK SERVICE administers two other areas dealing with phases of the War of 1812: Fort McHenry National Monument and Historic Shrine at Baltimore, Md., and Perry's Victory and International Peace Memorial National Monument at Put in Bay, Ohio. At Fort McHenry, the star fort which prevented the British from succeeding in the Chesapeake campaign in 1814 is preserved as the birthplace of the immortal "Star Spangled Banner." The 352-foot shaft commemorating Perry's victory stands on a small reservation on South Bass Island in Lake Erie, the site of the famed naval engagement of September 1813.

TO DELARONDE OAKS
1 MILE

FOUR OAKS
BIENVENU PLANTATION

HISTORICAL MAP CHALMETTE NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE



BRITISH ASSAULT JAN 8 1815

PRESENT NATIONAL CEMETERY

HERE PAKENHAM FELL

PRESENT FAZENVILLE ROAD

LIMITS OF CYPRESS SWAMP 1815

RODRIGUEZ CANAL

PRESENT PARK ENTRANCE

PRESENT MONUMENT

MACARTYS PLANTATION
JACKSONS HEADQUARTERS

AMERICAN RESERVES

TO CANAL & ROYAL STREETS
NEW ORLEANS
10 MILES

-LEGEND-

- ⦿ BATTERIES
- ▬ BRITISH TROOPS
- ▬ AMERICAN TROOPS
- BUILDINGS EXISTING 1815
- PRESENT ROADS
- ⋯ PRESENT PARK PROPERTY LINE

401075 U. S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE