I29.88:14

Clemson University
3 1604 019 674 979

CHALMETTE

GOVERNMENT
PUBLICATIONS
JUL 23 1958
CLEMSON
LIBRARY





UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
Fred A. Seaton, *Secretary*

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
Conrad L. Wirth, *Director*

HISTORICAL HANDBOOK NUMBER TWENTY-NINE

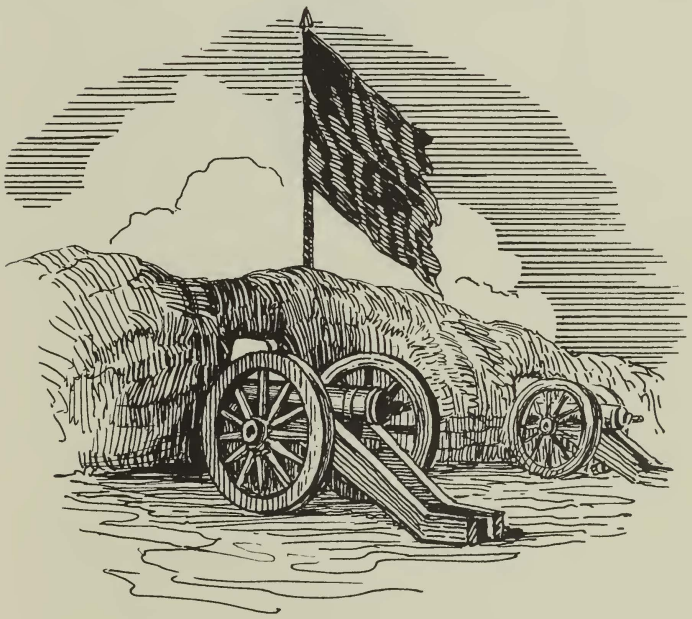
This publication is one of a series of handbooks describing the historical and archeological areas in the National Park System administered by the National Park Service of the United States Department of the Interior. It is printed by the Government Printing Office and may be purchased from the Superintendent of Documents, Washington 25, D. C. Price 25 cents.

CHALMETTE

National Historical Park

LOUISIANA

by J. Fred Roush



NATIONAL PARK SERVICE HISTORICAL HANDBOOK SERIES NO. 29
Washington, D. C., 1958

The National Park System, of which Chalmette National Historical Park is a unit, is dedicated to conserving the scenic, scientific, and historic heritage of the United States for the benefit and inspiration of its people.

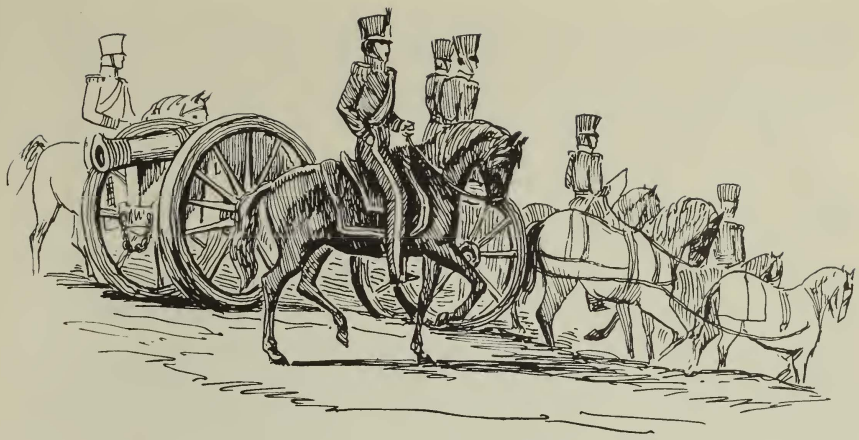


Contents

	Page
THE WAR OF 1812	2
OLD HICKORY	3
LOUISIANA IN 1814	5
BRITISH PLANS AND PREPARATIONS	10
THE PENSACOLA AFFAIR	11
PREPARING TO DEFEND NEW ORLEANS	13
THE BATTLE OF LAKE BORGNE	14
THE NIGHT BATTLE OF DECEMBER 23	17
THE MUD RAMPART	28
THE "GRAND RECONNAISSANCE"	29
THE ARTILLERY DUEL, JANUARY 1, 1815	30
PREPARING FOR THE DECISIVE BATTLE	32
THE BATTLE OF NEW ORLEANS, JANUARY 8, 1815	33
MILITARY ACTIVITY AFTER JANUARY 8	40
NEW ORLEANS AFTER THE VICTORY	41
THE NEWS ON THE EAST COAST	42
WHAT THE VICTORY MEANT TO THE UNITED STATES	42
THE CHALMETTE MONUMENT AND THE PARK	45
GUIDE TO THE AREA	47
NEARBY POINTS OF INTEREST	53
HOW TO REACH THE PARK	53
ABOUT YOUR VISIT	53
RELATED AREAS	54
ADMINISTRATION	54
SUGGESTED READINGS	55



Gen. Andrew Jackson, painted from life in 1817 by Samuel Lovett Waldo. Courtesy, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.



THE LAST WAR *between the United States and Great Britain was fought from 1812 to 1815. It ended in a draw, neither side gaining its objective. Yet the Battle of New Orleans, the last big battle and greatest American land victory of that war, had important results in American history.*

This is true even though it was fought on January 8, 1815, after the peace treaty between the two nations had been signed at Ghent, Belgium, on December 24, 1814. Even if news of the signing had reached them, the British might have attacked New Orleans. They had orders to fight until the treaty was ratified, which was not done until February 1815. After Gen. Andrew Jackson's victory at New Orleans, the British could only withdraw. The Lower Mississippi Valley was saved for the United States.

Coming at the end of an unsatisfactory war, victory restored the confidence of Americans in their ability to win battles. It particularly gave the "Westerners" of that day—the people of the Ohio and Mississippi Valleys—a chance to assert themselves in national affairs. Their leader, Andrew Jackson, the conqueror of British and Indians, became President.

The news of this victory helped to break up a movement for disunion in 1815. Without the national pride stemming from the Battle of New Orleans, the Union might not have survived the Civil War 50 years later.

The New Orleans Campaign of 1814–15 was a spectacular clash between picturesque fighters from many parts of the globe. The anniversary of the crowning victory on January 8, 1815, is still celebrated in New Orleans. On that day, a motley group of frontiersmen,

regulars, Creoles, sailors, pirates, Indians, and Free Men of Color was pitted against the flower of the British Army. A group of mainly irregular troops, inferior in numbers, overwhelmingly defeated a force of recognized valor and proven ability.

The War of 1812

France and Great Britain were at war most of the time from 1793 to 1815. During this conflict, the two nations often violated American neutrality. The French seized American ships and goods; but the British did worse—they stopped American ships at sea and removed American sailors. President Thomas Jefferson tried by economic means to force other nations to respect neutral rights. He persuaded Congress to pass an embargo on American export trade with foreign nations. This action aroused so much opposition in this country that Jefferson at length yielded. Shortly before leaving office in 1809, he signed a bill which prohibited trade only with France and Great Britain until these nations changed their practices. These restrictions failed to protect American commerce.

In his tangled relations with the French and British, James Madison, the next President, was no more successful in settling American maritime grievances.

Despite maritime insults, the demand for war did not come primarily from the shipowners. It came from the men of the "West" of that day—the men living on the frontier curving from Vermont, around through western New York, Ohio, Kentucky, and Tennessee, to Georgia. Shipowners made profits in spite of seizures, and conservative Easterners felt England to be the preserver of order. By contrast, hostility toward the former mother country persisted among the "Westerners" who believed that British intrigue was behind their Indian and frontier land troubles. These frontier grievances led to demands for territory in both Canada and Florida. The "Western" attitude was intensified by economic hard times on the frontier from 1807 until war broke out. The frontiersmen believed that these conditions were caused by British restrictions on American shipping. The West furnished most of the troops for the defense of New Orleans.

In spite of the prowar sentiments of the frontier, the war might not have started had there been faster ways of communication. On June 16, 1812, the British Orders in Council were suspended in belated reaction to Jefferson's embargo. These orders barred American ships from continental European ports and were to be given as one of the major reasons for declaring war. On June 18, 1812, before the news could cross the ocean, Congress declared war against Great Britain.

The war that followed was fought rather half-heartedly. Trading between enemies continued. Peace negotiations began shortly after hostilities broke out and continued intermittently throughout the struggle. Great Britain, still fighting Emperor Napoleon of France, did little more in the first 2 years than help defend Canada. The unprepared United States tried to invade Canada, but was repelled and attacked on its own soil. Detroit and Fort Dearborn (on the site of Chicago) were soon lost, and the Americans were repulsed at Niagara. On the ocean, Americans usually won in duels between ships, but their navy was outnumbered. The British remained masters of the seas and could land troops where they chose.

The situation in the spring of 1814 was ominous for the Americans. The defeat of Napoleon released British troops, who soon took the offensive. Their government planned a triple thrust in the United States by way of Lake Champlain, the Chesapeake Bay, and, later, the Gulf Coast. In September 1814, the Battle of Plattsburg, N. Y., ended the first invasion when Commodore Thomas MacDonough defeated the British fleet on Lake Champlain, forcing the British Army to retreat. After burning the White House and the Capitol, the second expedition withdrew when it failed to pass Fort McHenry, the main defense of Baltimore. The third invasion was met by Andrew Jackson at New Orleans.

Old Hickory

Andrew Jackson came from the frontier. He was born in the Waxhaw section near the boundary between North and South Carolina on March 15, 1767. The parents of Andrew Jackson were Scotch-Irish immigrants. His father had died shortly before his birth.

Known as a boy who was always ready to fight, regardless of the size of his foe, young Jackson saw the horrors of war during the British invasion of the Carolinas in the American Revolution. At 13 he did active duty as the armed and mounted messenger for an uncle who was a major in the Continental Army. Later during this war, he lost both brothers and his mother.

Though never studious, Andrew Jackson gained admittance to the North Carolina bar in 1787. The next year he moved to Nashville, at that time a wilderness settlement beyond the frontier. He was public prosecutor for several years—a position that only a man of extraordinary nerve and courage could fill in those wild parts. In 1796, Tennessee was admitted to the Union, and Andrew Jackson was sent to the Constitutional Convention. Tradition holds he suggested the name Tennessee for the new state. Jackson was chosen Tennessee's first representative in Congress as a man popular with the people and



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

one who would support their claims with spirit and effect. His term was short, however, as was his later service in the United States Senate. He then served as judge of the State Supreme Court for 6 years, resigning because of pressure of other affairs.

Known for his boldness in forays against the Indians, Jackson had become the militia major general commanding the western district of Tennessee in 1802. In the next 10 years, he won the loyalty of his officers and inspired enthusiasm throughout the command.

When the War of 1812 broke out, Jackson led 2,000 Tennessee volunteers on an expedition to the Gulf Coast. At Natchez, in 1813, orders came to disband the men, many of them hardly more than boys, where they would be left without provisions. Defying his official superiors and using his personal credit for supplies, Jackson held his army together and marched them back home over the Natchez Trace. His care for his men and the way he shared their hardships in the march through the wilderness gained for him the enduring nickname "Old Hickory."

Jackson's next campaign was against the Creek Indians in Alabama, then part of Mississippi Territory. He was recovering from wounds received in a "private fight" when news came of the massacre of white settlers at Fort Mims by the Creeks in August 1813. This massacre roused the frontier to fury. Jackson's personality was so commanding that, despite his wound and his bent for quarreling, he was chosen to lead the youth of Tennessee to war.

He started out with his arm in a sling. Overcoming the wilderness, the weather, the lack of supplies, and the handicap of militia who went home when their term was up, he broke the power of the Creeks in a series of battles ending on March 27, 1814, with the victory at Tohopeka or Horseshoe Bend. Later in the year, he became a major general of the Regular Army, with command of all the forces in Tennessee, Mississippi Territory, and Louisiana. The new regular major general had his work cut out for him.

Louisiana in 1814

Louisiana was founded by the French, and its early growth was under their rule. Then followed a period of Spanish domination. In 1803, it was French again briefly before becoming American as part of the Louisiana Purchase. Even under American rule, many French refugees from the wars in the West Indies and Europe kept New Orleans, Louisiana's chief city, predominately Latin. Also, the city had all the elements of a cosmopolitan seaport. Although Louisiana was admitted as a state in 1812, it still seemed like a foreign country to people from Kentucky or Tennessee.

W. C. C. Claiborne, a Virginian by birth, was Governor of Louisiana in 1814. As head of the militia, he could not find enough reliable troops to defend the state. Only a few regulars were stationed at New Orleans. Many planters, remembering the slave uprising of 1811, did not want to leave to defend the frontiers. In spite of all this, the spirit of the militia strengthened as the danger of British invasion came closer.

In the early years of "American domination" there was enmity between Americans and Creoles (white Louisianans of French or Spanish descent); however, Claiborne wrote Jackson that the majority of Creoles and Europeans in New Orleans were loyal, but that many favored Spain or England.

In this connection, the British believed that the inhabitants of Barataria, who lived on the Louisiana coast about 50 miles south of new Orleans, would aid them in their conquest of Louisiana. The Baratarians admitted smuggling and privateering, and were accused of piracy. They were led by the mysterious Lafitte brothers, Jean and



W. C. C. Claiborne, Governor of Orleans Territory, 1803–12; Governor of the State of Louisiana, 1812–16; Commander-in-Chief, Louisiana Militia, 1814–15. Courtesy, Louisiana National Guard, T. J. Harrison, State Military Historain.

Pierre, but Barataria existed before their arrival about 1810. After 1804, when the importation of slaves became illegal in Orleans territory, smuggling them in was another line of "business" for these privateers. In the year before the British invasion, the Baratarians were having more trouble than formerly with both State and Federal authorities.

On September 3, 1814, British officers appeared at Barataria and offered Jean Lafitte land in British North America, protection of his property and person, $30,000 in cash, and the rank of captain in their navy, if he would join them. Lafitte asked for time to consider their offer, and promptly wrote to the Governor and to a member of the legislature. He told them of the British offer, enclosed documents to prove his story, and offered to help the Americans in return for a pardon for himself and his men.

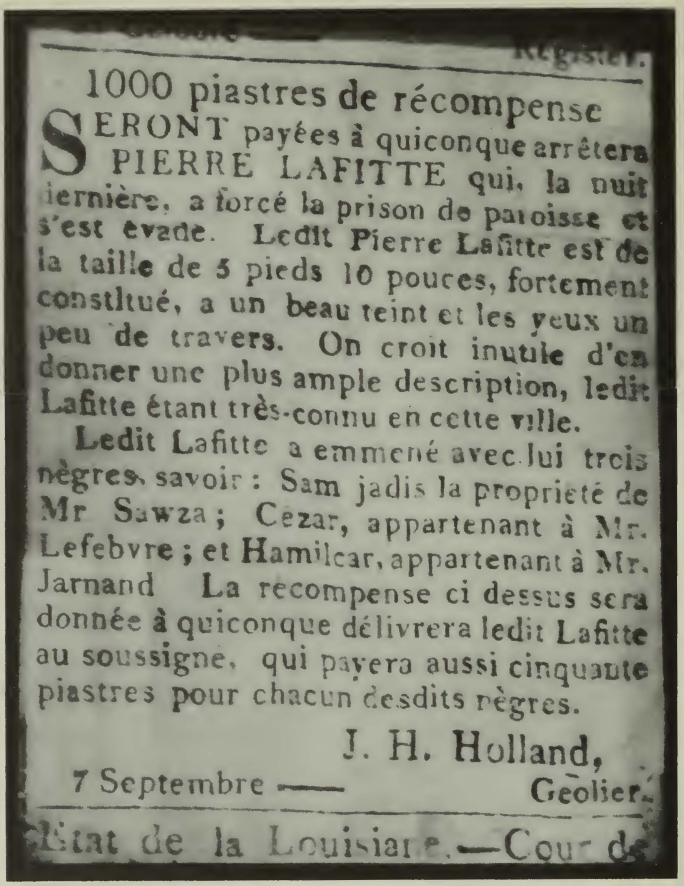
These letters were received in New Orleans on September 5. On advice from his military committee, Governor Claiborne declined Lafitte's offer, but he wrote soon after that the privateers might become



This interesting sketch reputedly shows Louisiana pirate leaders drinking in a cafe in New Orleans in 1812. From left to right, the men are traditionally identified as Renato Beluche, Jean Lafitte, Pierre Lafitte, and Dominique You. Courtesy, Louisiana State Museum.

useful to the United States. Pierre Lafitte, who had been arrested and jailed in New Orleans, escaped about this time, possibly with help from those in high places.

Barataria was destroyed by United States forces under Col. G. T. Ross and Commodore D. T. Patterson, between September 16 and 19. The Baratarians fled to the swamps rather than resist. Their avoidance of conflict, following Jean Lafitte's offer of help, was making some impression on the American authorities. On October 30, Claiborne wrote to the United States Attorney General, recommending clemency for the smugglers. The Americans and Baratarians were gradually coming together as the British prepared their grand assault.



1000 piastres de récompense

SERONT payées à quiconque arrêtera PIERRE LAFITTE qui, la nuit dernière, a forcé la prison de paroisse et s'est évadé. Ledit Pierre Lafitte est de la taille de 5 pieds 10 pouces, fortement constitué, a un beau teint et les yeux un peu de travers. On croit inutile d'en donner une plus ample description, ledit Lafitte étant très-connu en cette ville.

Ledit Lafitte a emmené avec lui trois nègres, savoir : Sam jadis la proprieté de Mr Sawza ; Cezar, appartenant à Mr. Lefebvre ; et Hamilcar, appartenant à Mr. Jarnand La recompense ci dessus sera donnée à quiconque délivrera ledit Lafitte au soussigné, qui payera aussi cinquante piastres pour chacun desdits nègres.

J. H. Holland,
Geôlier.

7 Septembre ——

État de la Louisiane.—Cour de

Translation:

$1,000 Reward

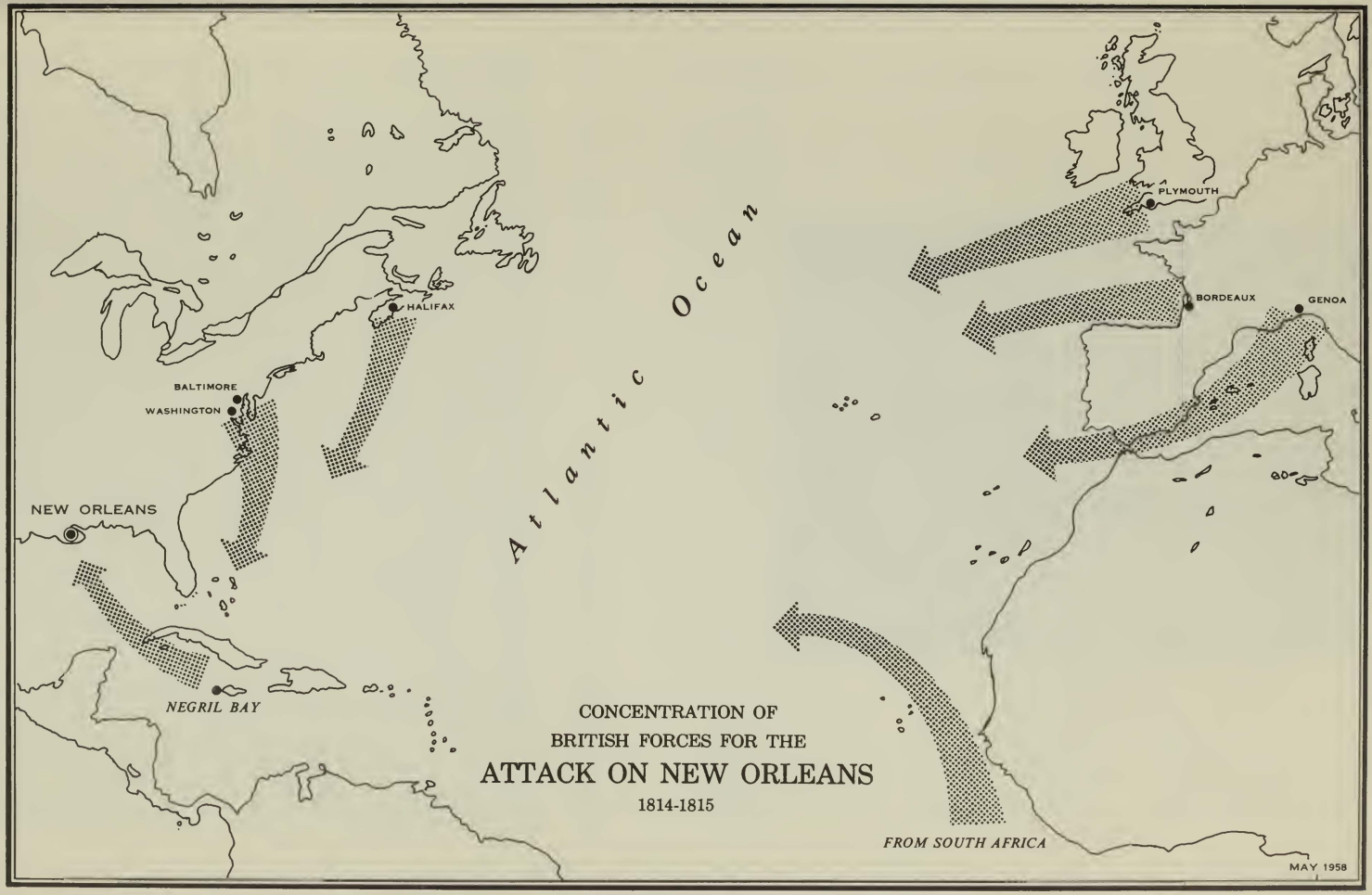
WILL BE paid to whomever will arrest PIERRE LAFITTE, who last night forced the Parish Prison and escaped from it. Said Pierre Lafitte is 5 feet 10 inches tall, strongly built, has a light complexion and is somewhat cross-eyed. Further description is believed unnecessary, the said Lafitte being well known in this city.

The said Lafitte took with him three negroes, to wit: Sam, formerly the property of Mr. Sawza; Caesar, belonging to Mr. Lefebvre; and Hamilcar, belonging to Mr. Jarnand. The above reward will be given to whomever delivers the said Lafitte to the undersigned, who will also pay $50 for each of the aforesaid negroes.

J. H. Holland
Jailer

September 7.

This handbill tells its own story about one of the Baratarian leaders. It also shows that French was the language of New Orleans in 1814.


Atlantic Ocean
PLYMOUTH
BORDEAUX
GENOA
HALIFAX
BALTIMORE
WASHINGTON
NEW ORLEANS
NEGRIL BAY
FROM SOUTH AFRICA
CONCENTRATION OF
BRITISH FORCES FOR THE
ATTACK ON NEW ORLEANS
1814-1815
MAY 1958



Portrait of Sir Edward Michael Pakenham, after a lithograph of an original painting in England.

British Plans and Preparations

In September, 1814, the British Secretary of War, Lord Bathurst, sent orders to Maj. Gen. Robert Ross, commander of His Majesty's Army in the Chesapeake Campaign, to prepare an attack on the Gulf Coast. Bathurst believed that, with help from the inhabitants, it would be easy to take New Orleans and make serious trouble for the United States in nearby territory. He was sending 2,150 rank and file as reinforcements, thus making sure of the success of this expedition, to which His Majesty's Government attached great importance. West Indies troops would join the force when it reached the rendezvous in Jamaica. Friendly Indians in the Southern United States would also be armed and equipped.

The expedition would first secure the mouth of the Mississippi, thus depriving inland Americans of access to the sea. It would secondly occupy a place important enough to increase British bargaining power in the peace negotiations. The details of the plan were left to General Ross and Adm. Sir Alexander Cochrane, commander of the British fleet. Bathurst felt that the people of Louisiana wanted to become independent or to return to Spanish rule, thus making it unnecessary

to maintain a large British occupation force there. To keep the white population on the British side, no encouragement was to be given to a slave revolt.

The easy capture of Washington encouraged the British to proceed with the Gulf Coast phase of their offensive. Before General Ross received his instructions for the campaign on the Gulf Coast, however, he was killed in the unsuccessful attack on Baltimore. Maj. Gen. Sir Edward M. Pakenham was chosen to take his place. With Maj. Gen. Samuel Gibbs, he was sent on a fast frigate to America.

The choice of commander shows the importance the British attached to this invasion. Sir Edward Michael Pakenham was the brother-in-law of the Duke of Wellington, but he did not owe his prominence to that connection alone. Known as the "Hero of Salamanca," he had literally fought his way up. There was a coincidental connection between Sir Edward and his final opponent: Pakenham and the parents of Andrew Jackson were all born not far apart in County Antrim, Ireland.

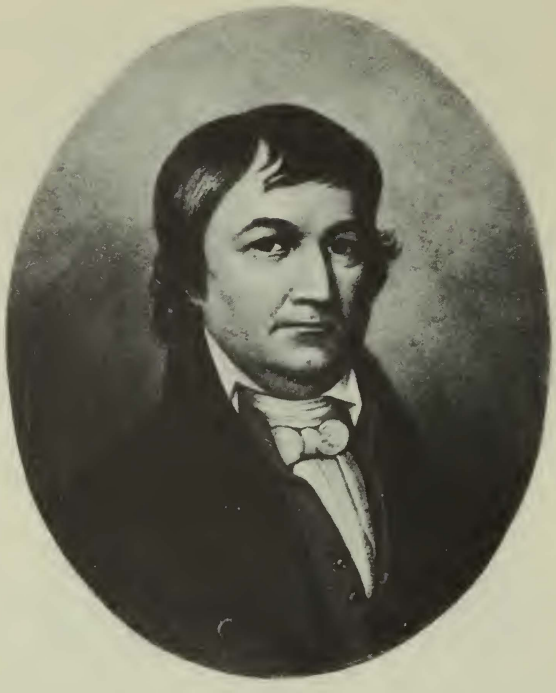
In 1814, General Pakenham was 36 years old and in vigorous health—his opponent was 47 and in poor health. Pakenham had learned the art of war by fighting against the best armies in the world—Jackson had fought only savages. Pakenham had under him veterans of the wars against Napoleon—Jackson had mainly recruits and militia. It seemed there could be only one outcome of a contest between these two.

The Pensacola Affair

Meanwhile Jackson, busy with Creek Indians in the summer of 1814, began to hear of British activity on the Florida coast. The same Britishers who in September, would offer Lafitte money and a captaincy to join them were now landing soldiers and furnishing supplies to Indians hostile to the United States. Disturbed by these developments, Jackson dictated a treaty to the Creeks and marched to the Gulf Coast in August 1814.

At Mobile he learned that the British under Col. Edward Nicholls had taken Pensacola from the Spaniards, at that time the nominal rulers of Florida. Nicholls issued a proclamation calling on those whom he supposed to be dissatisfied with American rule—Creoles, Kentuckians, and others—to support the British. Jackson replied with *his* proclamation urging the inhabitants of Louisiana to resist the invaders.

Although he commanded 5 regiments and 350 artillerymen in Military District No. 7, Jackson's forces were scattered. He appealed to Secretary of War James Monroe for more men and materials, but the successful British attack on Washington tied Monroe's hands.



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 on December 23, 1814.

Adding to Jackson's problems were repeated letters from Governor Claiborne requesting more regular troops and a personal visit by the general to New Orleans to boost lagging morale.

The general felt, however, that affairs near at hand needed attention first. He believed that the enemy wanted to seize Mobile, and thence go to New Orleans by land. Jackson strengthened Fort Bowyer, at the entrance to Mobile Bay. Fort Bowyer beat off a British attack, but the American commander continued to build up the defenses of Mobile.

His forces there were much strengthened by the arrival of Brig. Gen. John Coffee's Brigade of Tennessee mounted infantry. In response to a letter from Jackson to the Governor of Tennessee, these volunteers had gathered at Fayetteville in that State. From there, they rode through Chickasaw and Choctaw lands and reached Mobile on October 25.

Now Jackson could take the offensive and give some attention to New Orleans. A quick march to Pensacola in November and a surprise attack drove out the British. Sending an expedition to keep the

Seminoles in check, and leaving another part of his force at Mobile, Jackson at last departed for New Orleans.

Preparing to Defend New Orleans

Andrew Jackson arrived in New Orleans for the first time on December 2, 1814. In his history of the campaign, Maj. A. Lacarrière Latour, Jackson's military engineer, said: "It is scarcely possible to form an idea of the change which his arrival produced on the minds of the people." That such a man was needed is shown by these words of Charles E. A. Gayarré, the distinguished Creole historian of Louisiana:

> Where (Jackson) was as chief, there could be . . . but one controlling and directing power. All responsibility would be unhesitatingly assumed and made to rest entirely on that unity of volition which he represented. Such qualifications were eminently needed for the protection of a city containing a motley population, which was without any natural elements of cohesion, and in which abounded distraction of counsel, conflicting opinions, wishes and feelings, and much diffidence as to the possibility of warding off an attack.

Jackson commenced work with a minimum of formalities. He immediately reviewed the Battalion of Uniform Companies of the Orleans Militia. He then chose aides from among the promient local citizens, and established headquarters at 106 Royal Street. From there he issued orders for the disposition of troops for the defense of New Orleans.

In 1814, the city, about 105 miles from the mouths of the Mississippi, was almost an island surrounded by swamps and marshes, lakes, and the river. Most of the firm ground was along the banks of the Mississippi. A mile or so from the river, the almost impenetrable cypress swamps began. These gradually gave way to marshes that were filled with tall, razor-edged reeds. The marshes became more watery as the shores of shallow lakes were reached: Maurepas, Pontchartrain, Borgne, and many smaller ones. Lake Borgne, was an arm of the Gulf of Mexico. The only practicable ways from the lakes to the river were along the bayous. The marshes and swamps were crisscrossed by many of these sluggish streams, some navigable by small boats. The banks of the bayous were the only partly firm ground in the extensive morass.

It seemed likely that the British would come by way of Lakes Borgne and Pontchartrain, and Bayou St. John, or up the Mississippi itself. Jackson kept some troops on the alert in New Orleans, and sent others to guard the water approaches. A fleet of gunboats watched the entrance to the lakes. Some of the bayous were blocked with logs and earth. These arrangements having been completed within 48 hours of his arrival, Jackson inspected the defenses down the Mississippi, where he ordered the strengthening of Fort St. Philip. On his return,

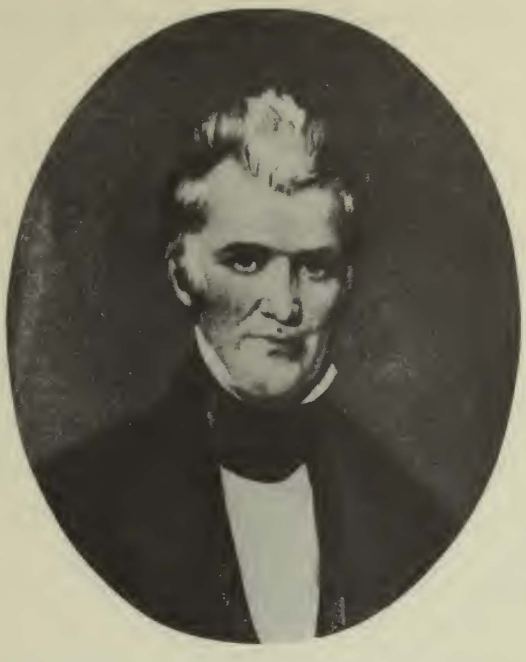


The Battle of Lake Borgne, December 14, 1814. In this view the British barges are closing in to board the American gunboats. Courtesy, The Mariners' Museum. Newport News, Va.

he inspected the defenses of the lakes, Chef Menteur, and the Plain of Gentilly, these being north and east of the city. With his defenses in order, Jackson awaited the next move by the British.

The Battle of Lake Borgne

The Americans began receiving warnings as the British fleet approached Louisiana. One of these, an anonymous letter from Pensacola dated December 5, 1814, was directed to the American naval commander, Commodore D. T. Patterson. When the British forces arrived off the Louisiana coast on December 9, Patterson sent Lt. Thomas Ap. Catesby Jones with 5 gunboats, 1 tender, and a dispatch boat to watch the enemy. These boats played a sort of grim, nautical hide-and-seek with British warships among the islands along the coast until December 13. On that date, the Americans in the gunboats saw a British flotilla approaching. The Americans tried to withdraw to Petit Coquilles, an entrance to Lake Pontchartrain, where a fort could help them defend themselves. Unfortunately the tide was against them and the water was shallow. The wind died down about 1 a. m. on the 14th; so they had to anchor in open water near the west end of Malheureux Island in Lake Borgne. There they remained.



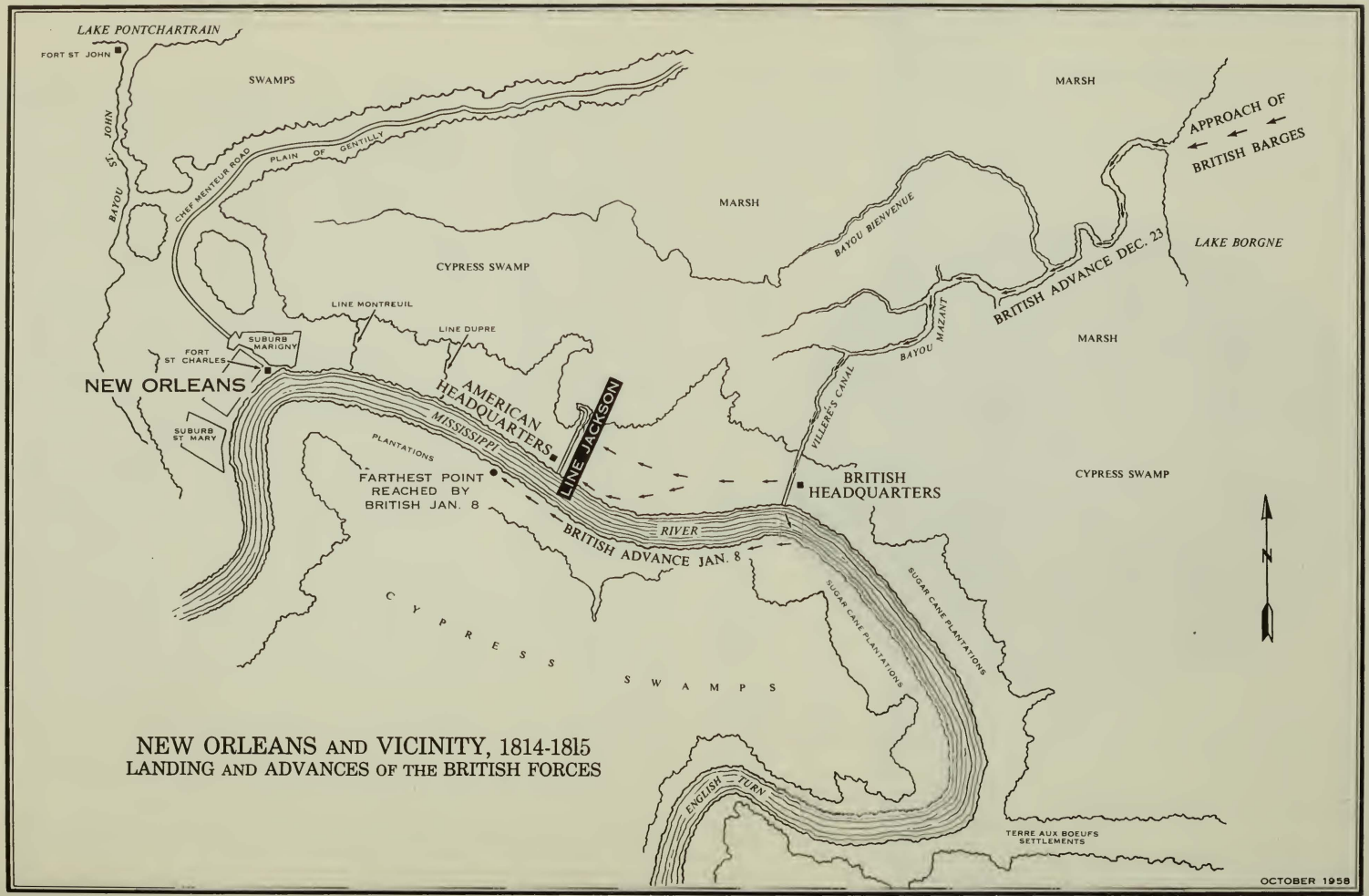
Maj. Gen. William Carroll, commander of the Tennessee Militia in the Battle of New Orleans. Courtesy, Louisiana State Museum.

Four of the gunboats in the American squadron had 5 guns each and the fifth had 3. They had crews of 31 to 41 men. At dawn on December 14, 1814, the Americans saw the British barges carrying about 1,200 men lined up to attack them. Each barge had a carronade, or short cannon, in its bow.

When the becalmed gunboats opened fire, the barges were out of reach. As they came within range, the barges separated into three divisions, pushed forward, and began a lively return fire with their carronades. Closing in, the British boarded the American gunboats. In hand-to-hand fighting with muskets and bayonets, pikes and cutlasses, the greatly outnumbered Americans were overpowered.

The British lost 17 killed and 77 wounded; the Americans lost 6 killed and 35 wounded. In this battle, the British won control of the lakes. Jackson's "eyes" for watching them were lost. New Orleans became panic-stricken.

If people had formerly been surprised at Jackson's energy in spite of his illness, they were now astounded. He was on the Plain of Gentilly when news of the loss of the gunboats reached him. He galloped to his headquarters on Royal Street and dictated orders steadily for a day and a night, even though his illness forced him to lie on a sofa much



NEW ORLEANS AND VICINITY, 1814-1815
LANDING AND ADVANCES OF THE BRITISH FORCES

OCTOBER 1958

of the time. Express letters to Generals William Carroll, John Coffee, and John Thomas ordered them to hasten to New Orleans with their forces. The militia went into active service and moved to the threatened points. Every able-bodied man, British subjects only excepted, was called to do his duty. When the legislature hesitated to suspend the writ of *habeas corpus,* Jackson proclaimed martial law. Panic subsided. The city became an armed camp.

Up to now, the American commander had stubbornly refused to accept the services of the Baratarians, whom he called "hellish banditti." Several prominent Louisianans had tried in vain to persuade him that the pirates would be useful allies. Now Jean Lafitte called on Jackson and offered his services. Though what passed between the two probably never will be known, Jackson accepted Lafitte's offer. Artillery detachments were formed under Dominique You and Renato Beluche. Other Baratarians joined various units of the defending forces. For the time being, the pirates became patriots.

When the news that the gunboats had been captured reached him, General Coffee's Brigade was encamped a few miles above Baton Rouge. Leaving most of the brigade's baggage, Coffee selected the stronger men of his command. They traveled 135 miles in a little more than 3 days and arrived in New Orleans on the 20th.

Other reinforcements were arriving almost daily from the militia of Louisiana, Mississippi, and Tennessee. On the way down the rivers from Nashville, General Carroll's Tennesseans had overtaken some of the boats carrying arms and munitions. Taking this material, Carroll armed and drilled his men on the flatboats. When they reached the threatened city on December 22, they were well enough trained to defend it against the approaching British forces.

The Night Battle of December 23

After getting control of Lake Borgne, the next British problem—finding a way to New Orleans—was solved by Capt. R. Spencer of the Royal Navy and Lt. John Peddie of the Quartermaster Department. Disguised as fishermen, these officers reached the Mississippi and found that small boats could go through the bayous most of the way to the great river. They had penetrated by way of Bayou Bienvenue and found no sign of American preparation. The British spies had seemingly found the only unguarded bayou. Their commanders decided to advance along this route.

Before reaching the mouth of Bayou Bienvenue, however, British seamen and soldiers were driven to tremendous exertions and suffered great hardships. To cross the shallow Lake Borgne, the troops on the heavy ships had to load into vessels that drew less water. They then



Jacques Philippe Villeré, Major General in the Louisiana Militia and owner of the plantation on which part of the action at Chalmette took place in 1814–15. Courtesy, Louisiana State Museum.

went to Pea Island, near the mouth of Pearl River, for regrouping. The shortage of shallow-draft boats made the British divide their land force into two brigades. The Light Brigade, composed of the 85th and 95th Regiments, rocket troops, sappers, and miners, with the 4th Regiment as support, formed the advance commanded by Col. William Thornton. The 2d Brigade, under Col. Arthur Brooke, was made up of the 21st, 44th, and 93rd Regiments, with much of the artillery.

From Pea Island the invaders went in open boats to the mouth of the bayou. Even the lighter boats sometimes grounded. Many seamen were at the oar for the greater part of 4 or 5 days. During these journeys, the British had no fires or warm food and they were exposed to drenching rains. Once, after a heavy rain, the skies cleared and the night became bitter cold. Ice formed before morning. Many of the West Indian Negroes, unused to such a climate, died of exposure.

Pushing on despite these hardships, the invaders captured the small American detachment at the mouth of Bayou Bienvenue about midnight of December 22, before other Americans could be warned of the attack. Joseph Ducros, a native of Louisiana, was among the captives. When questioned by Admiral Cochrane and Maj. Gen. John



The plantation house of Maj. Gen. Jacques Villeré was used by the British as headquarters from December 23, 1814, to January 19, 1815. This drawing shows the old house as it was about 1860. Photocopy by Dan Leyrer from Lossing's *Pictorial Field Book of the War of 1812.*

Keane, he told the British officers that there were 12,000 or 15,000 American soldiers in New Orleans and 5,000 more farther down the river. Cochrane and Keane were impressed, though not convinced, and continued to move forward cautiously.

The British advanced along the bayous—some in boats, and some marching along the banks—until they reached firm ground at the edge of the Villeré plantation. Late in the morning of the 23rd, they rushed the plantation house, where they surprised and captured a militia detachment. The British had scored a tremendous tactical advantage: they had reached, almost unopposed, a spot within 9 miles of their goal.

But their presence was soon made known. Maj. René Philippe Gabriel Villeré had escaped in a clatter of musketry, and other Americans had seen the invaders. That morning, Jackson had received a message from Col. Pierre Denis de La Ronde saying that the British fleet was in a position that suggested landing. The American commander had sent Majors Howell Tatum and A. L. Latour to reconnoiter. Before



Maj. J. B. Plauché, commander of the Orleans Battalion of Uniform Militia Companies. His battalion fought in the Night Battle of December 23 and afterward held a section of the line on the Rodriguez Canal. From the portrait by Vaudchamp. Courtesy, Louisiana State Museum.

they came back, Augustin Rousseau galloped to headquarters on Royal Street with astounding news. He had barely delivered his message when others, including young Villeré, arrived muddy and nearly out of breath.

According to an oft-repeated story, Jackson, still not well, was lying on a sofa in his headquarters about 1 o'clock in the afternoon when the news came that the enemy was in force only 9 miles below New Orleans. He jumped up from the sofa, and, "with an eye of fire and an emphatic blow on the table" cried:

"By the eternal, they shall not sleep on our soil."

Then, quickly becoming calm, Jackson called his aides, and said, "Gentlemen, the British are below. We must fight them tonight."

Jackson's decision to attack at once was as important as any ever made by a commander. The British could have entered New Orleans easily at this time, for there were no important forces or defensive works between them and the city.

Jackson's move was more than the impulse of a man who at last could attack an enemy hated since boyhood. The British troops were tired, his were fresh. He had the advantage of darkness and surprise.

He hoped also that action would improve morale, especially of the civilian population.

When Jackson learned that the British had landed, Carroll's and Coffee's men were 4 or 5 miles above the city, Maj. J. B. Plauché's Battalion was at Fort St. John on Lake Pontchartrain, Daquin's Battalion of San Domingo Men of Color and the Louisiana Militia under Claiborne were on Gentilly Road, and the regulars were scattered about the city. The naval commander, Commodore Patterson, was also some distance away.

Orders to assemble brought quick action. The first troops arrived in the narrow streets of the Old French Quarter by midafternoon. Plauché's Battalion ran to the city (a feat which is commemorated yearly by a race from the old Spanish fort to Jackson Square). The Tennesseans under Carroll and Coffee arrived less than 2 hours after orders were issued.

Carroll and his men were ordered to join Governor Claiborne in case the landing at Villeré's was a feint. The others started about sunset on their way along the road toward the enemy. Col. Thomas Hinds' Dragoons, recent arrivals from Mississippi Territory, and Coffee's Brigade of mounted infantry formed the advance. They were followed by the Orleans Rifle Company under Capt. Thomas Beale, Jugeat's Choctaws, Daquin's Battalion, two pieces of artillery commanded by Lt. Samuel Spotts, the 7th Regular United States Infantry under Maj. Henry D. Peire, a detachment of United States Marines under Lieutenant F. B. Bellvue, the 44th Regular United States Infantry under Maj. Isaac L. Baker, and Plauché'e Battalion. Altogether, some 2,000 men marched with Jackson along the Mississippi River in the winter twilight.

Meanwhile the schooner *Carolina* went to take position opposite the British encampment. Capt. John D. Henly commanded and Commodore Patterson was on board.

About 4 p. m. a reconnoitering party on land had clashed with a British outpost. This party returned without a good estimate of the enemy's numbers. They had picked up copies of a proclamation to the Creoles, however, telling them that if they remained quiet, their property and slaves would be respected. It was signed by Vice Admiral Cochrane and General Keane.

At nightfall, Jackson's forces reached the spot where the De La Ronde Oaks stand today. (These trees, probably planted about 1820, are often miscalled "Pakenham Oaks" or "Versailles Oaks.")

There the little army divided. General Coffee commanded one division, consisting of part of his brigade of Tennessee mounted infantry, the Orleans Rifle Company, and the Mississippi Dragoons. The other division, under command of Jackson himself, consisted of the artillery on the road along the levee, then, on a line almost perpendic-



De La Ronde Ruins. The remains of what was once the finest mansion in the Chalmette vicinity. The British used it as a hospital in 1814–15. Photograph by Kay Roush.

ular to the river, the marines, the 7th and 44th Infantry, the battalions of Plauché and Daquin, and the Choctaws. By then it was dark, except for the light of a dim moon.

Coffee, guided by Colonel de La Ronde, a plantation owner familiar with the terrain, was to circle to the left and attack from that side. Every man was to keep quiet until the *Carolina's* opening volley—the signal for the battle to begin.

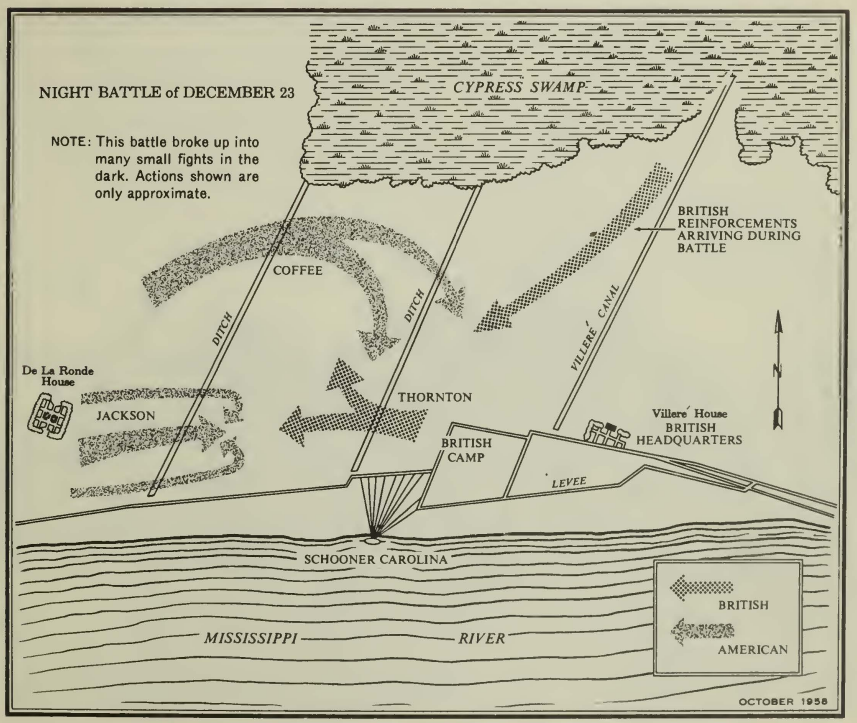
While all this was happening, such of the British as were already encamped had been enjoying food and wine from the plantations, and getting their first rest in several days. Campfires showed plainly the position of those between Villeré's house and the levee. Outposts and sentinels had been posted, including a detachment not far from Jackson's army. Only part of the British land forces were there when the fighting began—about 1,680 men. Others were on the way.

At 7:30 p. m., the *Carolina's* opening broadside hit the unsuspecting

foe. Recovering from their consternation like the veterans they were, the British put their campfires out, and began to shoot at the schooner. Their muskets and rockets were of even less effect than their 3-pounders—the biggest guns they had. The noise of the battle was heard by their troops on Lake Borgne, and by the people in New Orleans. The British troops under the schooner's fire could only lay close to the levee or hide behind buildings, while they listened to the moans and shrieks of the wounded. They were so impressed by the volume of cannon fire that their commander mistakenly reported "two Gunvessels" besides the *Carolina.*

For 10 minutes, "which seemed thirty," Jackson let the little ship carry on the fight alone. Then he ordered his division to advance. The accounts of what followed, on both sides, are confused and contradictory. In the darkness, troops in both armies became separated from each other, and the battle broke up into many small fights. Men were captured because they did not know where they were. Troops fired into other units of their own forces. Such things happened to both armies as the battle swayed back and forth.

The infantry under Jackson got off to a bad start, some advancing in column and others in line. A company of the 7th Infantry was the first to clash with the enemy. Its advance met with a discharge of



musketry. The Americans drove the invaders back; the British were reinforced, and the two forces continued to shoot at each other in the dark. This action was typical of the battle.

The main body of the 7th Infantry, coming on, engaged in a brisk fire, followed by the 44th Infantry, which also began to fire as the action became general. The artillery and marines advanced with the regulars. The two cannon were placed and began to fire in the direction of the enemy. Flashes from the *Carolina,* and later from Coffee's men, showed other actions of the battle. In Jackson's Division, the militia apparently lagged at first and seems to have fired into the more advanced regulars. The British tried to turn the line by attacking the militia, but Plauché's and Daquin's Battalions returned the fire and drove them back.

Then larger units of the British 85th and 95th Regiments under Col. William Thornton came into the fight, and the Americans had to give ground. The two American fieldpieces were threatened. Jack-

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.





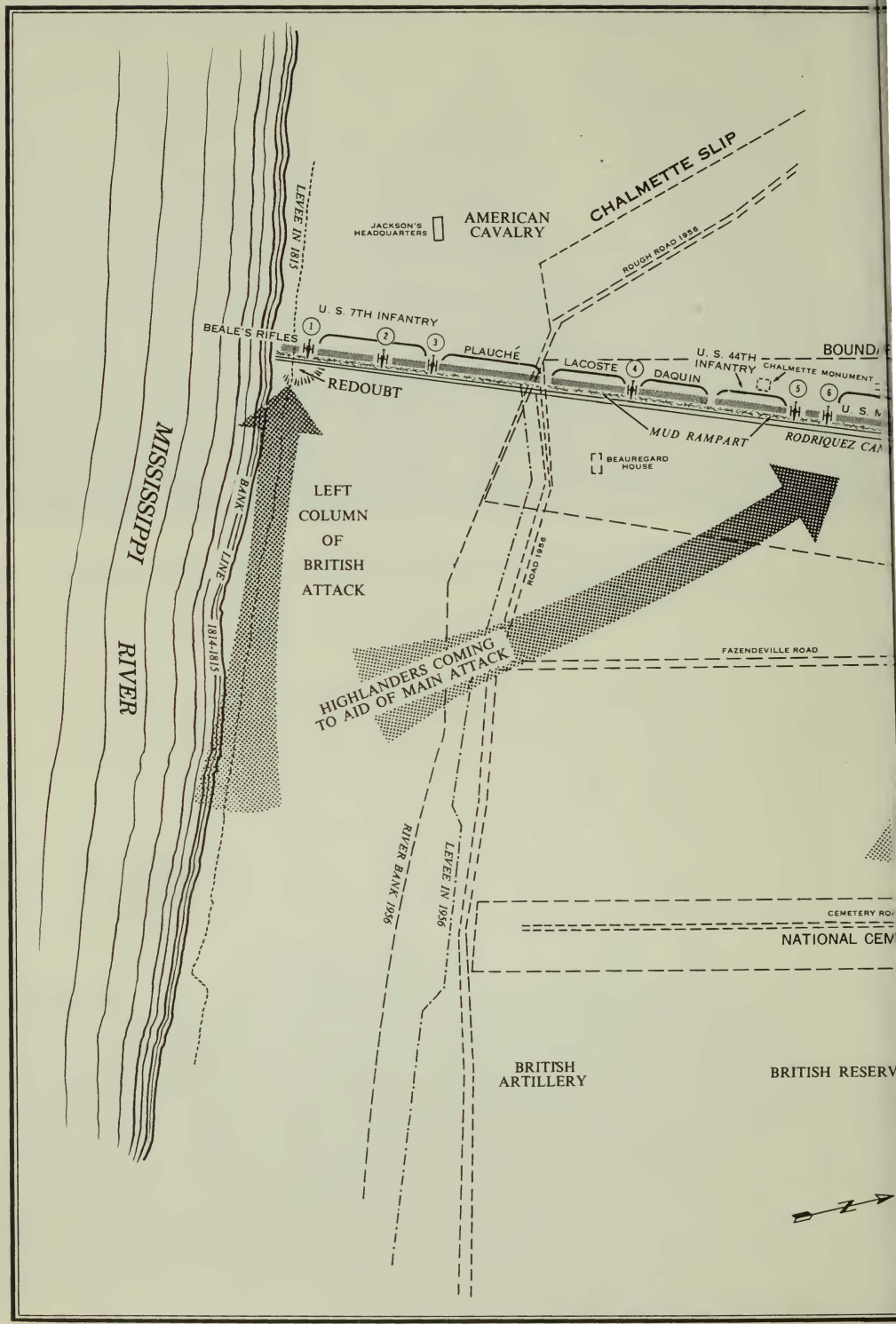
Confused fighting and marching in the dark, illuminated momentarily by flashes of gunfire—such was the battle of December 23. Photocopy by Dan Leyrer from Frost's *Pictorial Life of Andrew Jackson.*

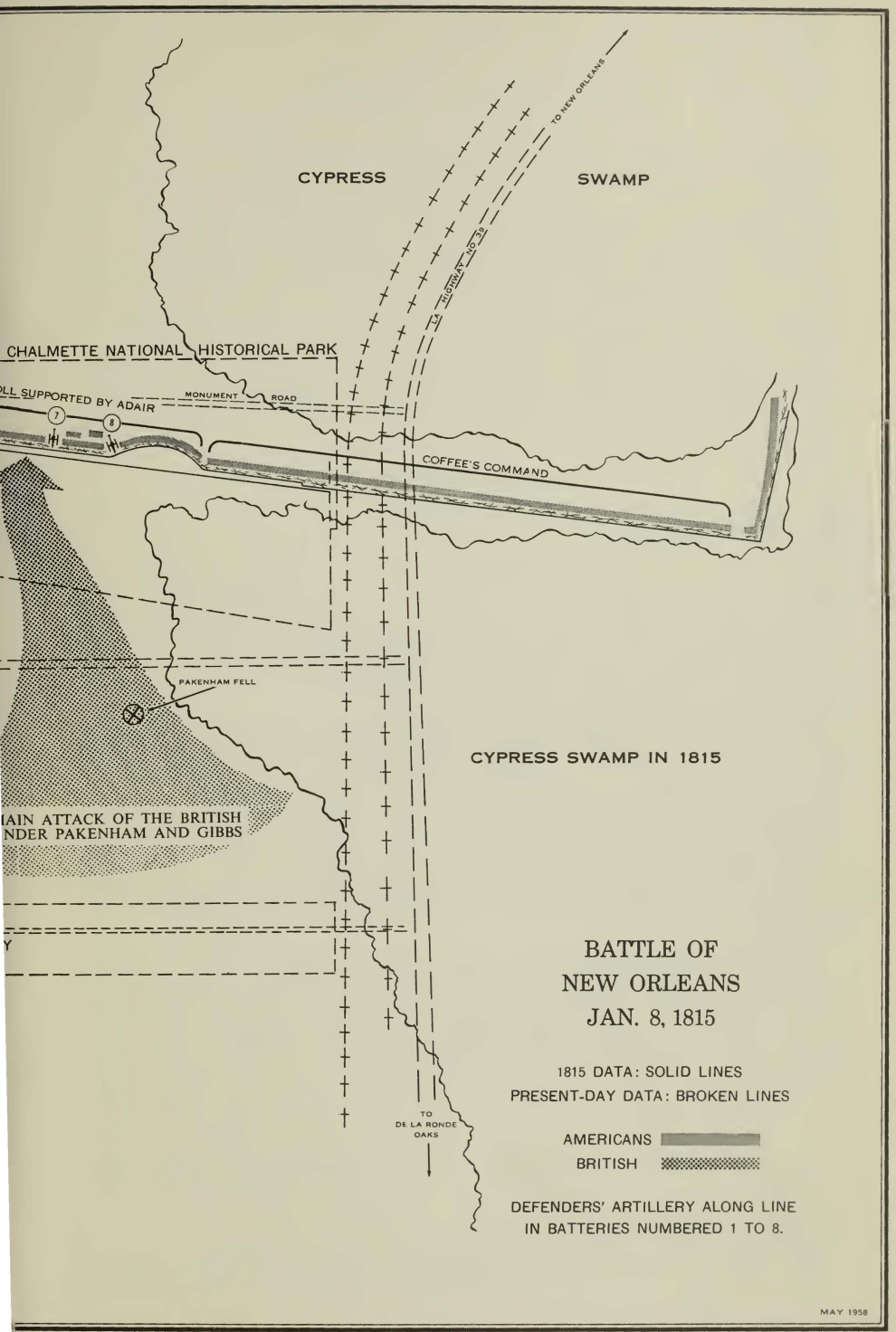
son himself is said to have saved them. Reorganized somewhat, the Americans drove the enemy back again. The 93rd Highlanders arrived to reinforce the British. The *Carolina* ceased firing as a fog made all further action impossible.

In the meantime, Coffee and his men had moved to the left to attack the British flank. The Tennesseans dismounted and turned their horses loose because the canefields where they fought were cut by ditches. Coffee's men were almost in position when the *Carolina* opened fire. Then they advanced, firing rifles and muskets into the British camp. Experienced in Indian warfare, and accustomed to night battles, the frontiersmen drove the British back. Fighting as individuals, they cut their way through the British camp. "In the whole course of my military career I remember no scene at all resembling this," a British officer wrote later. "An American officer, whose sword I demanded, instead of giving it up . . . made a cut at my head." Friend and foe were confused in the dark.

British reinforcements from Lake Borgne arrived, and their army found a position behind an old levee. Coffee's men could not dislodge them, although these Tennesseans kept on shooting after Jackson's immediate command had ceased. Both wings of the American army withdrew to a place near the De La Ronde mansion and waited for daylight.

468593 O-58—4


MISSISSIPPI RIVER
LEVEE IN 1815
BANK LINE 1814-1815
JACKSON'S HEADQUARTERS
AMERICAN CAVALRY
CHALMETTE SLIP
ROUGH ROAD 1956
BEALE'S RIFLES
U. S. 7TH INFANTRY
1
2
3
PLAUCHÉ
LACOSTE
4
DAQUIN
U. S. 44TH INFANTRY
CHALMETTE MONUMENT
5
6
BOUND
REDOUBT
MUD RAMPART
RODRIQUEZ CA
BEAUREGARD HOUSE
LEFT COLUMN OF BRITISH ATTACK
ROAD 1956
FAZENDEVILLE ROAD
HIGHLANDERS COMING TO AID OF MAIN ATTACK
RIVER BANK 1956
LEVEE IN 1956
CEMETERY RO
NATIONAL CEM
BRITISH ARTILLERY
BRITISH RESERV


CYPRESS
SWAMP
TO NEW ORLEANS
LA. HIGHWAY 39
CHALMETTE NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK
MONUMENT
ROAD
COFFEE'S COMMAND
PAKENHAM FELL
CYPRESS SWAMP IN 1815
AIN ATTACK OF THE BRITISH
NDER PAKENHAM AND GIBBS
TO
DE LA RONDE
OAKS
BATTLE OF
NEW ORLEANS
JAN. 8, 1815
1815 DATA: SOLID LINES
PRESENT-DAY DATA: BROKEN LINES
AMERICANS
BRITISH
DEFENDERS' ARTILLERY ALONG LINE
IN BATTERIES NUMBERED 1 TO 8.
MAY 1958

The Americans lost 24 killed, 115 wounded, and 74 missing. The British commander reported 46 killed, 167 wounded, and 64 missing. Among the prisoners taken by the Americans was Maj. Samuel Mitchell, who was supposed to have set fire to the Capitol in Washington.

New Orleans was saved for the time being. Although Jackson had not driven the enemy from American soil, the results were important. The invader's surprise had been met by a countersurprise. The British had been given a bad fright by the hitherto despised Americans. The invaders had been thrown off balance, and did not recover during this campaign. The Night Battle of December 23 went far toward making the British cautious, when they might still have captured their prize by moving fast.

It had been a close call. Jackson himself wrote that had the British arrived a few days sooner, or had the Americans failed to attack them in their first position, the invaders probably would have taken New Orleans.

The Mud Rampart

Jackson and his officers knew that their men, mostly militia and recruits, could not stand up to a bayonet attack by the British veterans in daylight and in the open. Leaving cavalry to watch the enemy, they withdrew soon after dawn on December 24 to the Rodriguez Canal, the best defensive position in the vicinity.

The Rodriguez Canal formed the boundary between the Chalmette and Macarty plantations. Years before, this shallow ditch on the shortest line between river and swamp had been used as a millrace. When the river was higher than the land, river water had operated a small mill and had drained into the canal. Directly astride the British route of advance across the Chalmette plantation, it was 2 miles from the scene of the Night Battle and 6 miles from the center of New Orleans.

Along the Rodriguez Canal, Jackson's men began to build the mud wall behind which a motley army would defend New Orleans against three attacks. City and surrounding country were ransacked for tools and men. The ground was much too wet for trenches. Fence rails were driven into the soil along the canal and dirt piled against them. By nightfall, the mud wall had the semblance of a field fortification, but the work went on, one shift relieving another. Jackson himself was seldom out of the saddle, day or night. (Nearly 5,000 miles away, in Ghent, Belgium, the British and American envoys signed a treaty of peace on that Christmas Eve.)

On the morning of the 24th, the *Louisiana* came down stream and anchored about a mile from the *Carolina.* Whenever redcoats showed

that day, their appearance was followed by cannon fire from the ships. The British advance was effectively pinned down. During the day, troops from the British fleet landed at the Villeré plantation, and the advance withdrew after dark to join them out of range of the American ships' guns.

In the days following, Americans cut the levee below the Rodriguez Canal. This flooded the plain between their army and the British, but the river soon subsided and left the plain dry. Work continued on the mud wall. A threat of attack on New Orleans from the northeast proved false, so General Carroll and his men moved to Jackson's line on the 26th. Pierre Lacoste's battalion also moved here.

Meanwhile, General Pakenham had arrived to take command of the British. His arrival on Christmas Day brought a momentary lift to the spirit of his depressed troops, but the situation of Pakenham and his second in command, Sir Samuel Gibbs, was not good. The terrain made it hard to reinforce and supply their troops, and this difficulty was increased by the shortage of pack animals. The Americans held a wall of mud, men, and artillery across the only dry ground on the way to the city which Pakenham had come to take. He must either break through that line or try another route. He decided to try for a break-through.

First, however, Pakenham felt he must rid himself of that intolerable nuisance, the *Carolina,* that kept shooting at the flanks of his army. So heavy guns and howitzers were brought from the fleet, and a hot-shot furnace was built. Early on the morning of the 27th, British gunners began firing red-hot balls into the *Carolina,* which caught fire and blew up. Now Pakenham was ready.

That evening, the British drove in the American outposts by a show of superior force, and established artillery within range of the American lines. In withdrawing, the Americans blew up the buildings of Chalmette's plantation to give their own artillery a clearer field of fire.

The defenders had been strengthening their position in other ways. The crew of the *Louisiana* had towed that vessel out of range, thus saving for a few days the only remaining armed ship on the river. Some guns from the *Carolina* had been saved and mounted on Jackson's line. Expert gunners from Barataria manned a battery. Two regiments of Louisiana Militia had been added to the force behind the mud wall.

The "Grand Reconnaissance"

As soon as the mist cleared next morning, December 28th, Pakenham sent his troops forward in close-packed ranks across the cane stubble. The Britishers marched in two main columns, one near the river and

the other on the edge of the cypress swamp. Skirmishers were deployed between the two columns. A British subaltern later wrote of the approach:

> On we went for about three miles, without any let or hindrance from man or inanimate nature coming our way. But all at once a spectacle was presented to us, such indeed as we ought to have looked for, but such as manifestly took our leaders by surprise. The enemy's army became visible. It was posted in rear of a canal, and covered, though most imperfectly, by an unfinished breastwork.

The artillery of the British fired at the unfinished mud wall and at the *Louisiana.* The Americans returned the fire, and in the artillery duel the British cannon were silenced. Then missiles from the ship and from American artillery on land broke up the attacking column along the river.

At the swamp end of the line, a detachment of Carroll's troops under Colonel Hutchinson was ordered to skirt the edge of the swamp and dislodge the invaders. When the colonel was killed by the first British fire, the detachment withdraw in confusion.

The British column along the swamp advanced toward the left of the American line, which was not as strong as the right. On seeing his other column broken, however, Pakenham ordered all his forces back. His officers were bitter at the thought that they could have turned the American left if permitted to continue the attack. Said the subaltern quoted earlier: "There was not a man among us who failed to experience shame and indignation."

This second land battle for New Orleans, called by the British a "reconnaissance in force," did not last long. The Americans lost 7 killed and 10 wounded. British losses were 9 killed and 8 wounded.

The Artillery Duel, January 1, 1815

Between battles, the Americans harrassed their enemy by day and by night. The *Louisiana* dropped downriver each day to bombard the English position, until the invaders placed howitzers to reach her. After that, she had to stay out of enemy range, and some of her guns were added to those the defenders were mounting on the right bank of the Mississippi. From there these guns continued to annoy the invaders.

Night after night, individual Tennesseans slipped through the woods and underbrush, frontier fashion, to kill British sentinels. Three men in one outpost were killed by unseen Americans in a single night. Frequent shots in the dark kept the others in the British camp awake. The invaders were not used to this kind of war. It got on their nerves.



This is from an old photograph of the now destroyed plantation home of Augustin Francois Macarty, used by Andrew Jackson as his field headquarters. From the collection of Stanley Clisby Arthur.

American defense preparations continued. More cannon were placed behind the mud rampart. Other lines, manned by militia, were established between the Rodriguez Canal and the city. These troops were short of weapons and, New Orleans being under martial law, Jackson directed the mayor to have houses searched for arms. More Louisiana Militia prepared to defend the right bank of the Mississippi in case the enemy should cross the river.

Then, elated by their successes, the Americans planned a review and celebration for New Year's Day, 1815. Something quite different was planned by the enemy.

With great labor the British had transported heavy artillery from their fleet to batter the American breastworks. All through the night of December 31, 1814, the camp of the invaders resounded with the noise of hammering, as gun platforms were constructed.

New Year's morning was foggy. Back of Jackson's line, soldiers in their best uniforms were preparing for a parade. A band was playing. Civilian visitors, including women, gathered for the celebration. Suddenly there was a tremendous explosion, followed by shells and rockets. Spectators fled in every direction. The troops dashed to the mud rampart.

The first discharges of the British batteries near the river were directed mainly against the American headquarters. This was in a planter's residence, the Macarty house, back of the line near the Mississippi. The commanding general and his staff were in the building when the firing began. Bricks, splinters, rockets, and balls were sent flying through the place in all directions, but no one was hurt.

Soon American artillery answered the British. The cannonading continued all morning. Cotton bales had been placed around the openings in the mud wall for the cannon. Now the bales were blown out of place and set on fire. On the other side, the British were finding that hogsheads of sugar did not make good breastworks. Their cannoneers were killed by balls that went through the barrels, and the sugar ran down into the mud. Someone said that this was the first battle fought in "molasses."

An attempted assault by the British infantry during a lull in the cannonading was thrown back by Coffee and the Tennesseans. Although considerably damaged, the American guns kept up their accurate fire. Dominique You and the other pirates showed their skill as cannoneers on this New Year's Day. The American fire had greater precision and effect. By noon the British fire slackened and at 1 p. m. it ceased. The American losses were 11 killed and 23 wounded. The British lost 32 killed, 44 wounded, and 2 missing.

Preparing for the Decisive Battle

After the artillery duel of January 1, Pakenham decided to await reinforcements. This delay gave scattered American forces time to converge on New Orleans and reinforce Jackson's defenses. Maj. Gen. Philemon Thomas with 500 Louisiana Militia arrived from Baton Rouge. These manned one of the lines between the Rodriguez Canal and New Orleans.

And on January 4, some 2,250 Kentucky Militia under Generals John Thomas and John Adair arrived and encamped in the rear of the line. Only 550 of these, however, were armed. Many wore rags. Jackson wrote a blistering letter to the Secretary of War on the failure of expected supplies to arrive. A subscription taken in New Orleans and the surrounding country raised money to buy woolens which the women of the city made into clothes for the Kentucky soldiers. The city was searched again for arms. Skirmishing, patrolling, and intermittent cannonading went on between battles.

Despite the shortage of supplies and an unfinished redoubt in front of the fortified line at the river end, the defenders were well prepared for the coming battle. The Rodriguez Canal was from 10 to 20 feet wide and from 4 to 8 feet deep. The mud wall behind the canal,

though irregular in height and thickness, could withstand the enemy's cannon balls as far as the cypress swamp. In the swamp, the wall was only thick enough to resist musket balls. It was a double log wall, with earth between. On the advice of Jean Lafitte, it is said, the line had been extended at a right angle in the swamp to prevent that end of the American line from being turned.

This line was defended by 8 batteries of artillery in 4 groups. The first 3 batteries were near the river. Battery No. 4 was by itself, Batteries 5 and 6 were near the center of the line, and Batteries 7 and 8 were near the swamp. The guns ranged in size from 4-pounders to 32-pounders. The gun crews included regular artillerymen, militia, seaman, pirates, and Napoleonic veterans.

The infantrymen defending New Orleans were as varied as the artillerymen. The New Orleans Rifle Company was at the river end. Next was the 7th Infantry. Then came the Orleans Battalion, the Louisiana Free Men of Color, the San Domingo Free Men of Color, and the 44th Infantry, in that order. A company of United States Marines was near the center of the line. The remainder of the defenders, about half the line, consisted of Kentucky and Tennessee troops. From Battery No. 6 to the swamp, the infantry was Carroll's Tennesseans, supported by Adair's Kentuckians. The line in the swamp was held by Coffee's men, who suffered great hardships, even sleeping in the mud.

Capt. Peter V. Ogden's Cavalry, the Attakapas Dragoons, Lt. Louis Chauveau's Horse Volunteers, and Hinds' Dragoons were stationed at various places in the rear to pounce on any of the enemy who broke through.

The British were not idle during this lull. Their leaders decided to attack on both sides of the Mississippi at the same time—now that American warships were no longer on the river to hinder a crossing. To bring their boats from the bayous to the river, the British with immense labor cut a canal across Villeré's plantation. This was finished on January 6. On the same day, Gen. John Lambert arrived from England by a somewhat roundabout route with the 7th and 43rd Regiments as reinforcements. The British worked all through the day and night of January 7 to prepare the attack. From observation of this activity, the American officers expected action the next day.

The Battle of New Orleans, January 8, 1815

Jackson had about 4,000 men on the line on January 8. Pakenham had about 5,400 in his attacking force. Half of Jackson's men on the line had spent the night at the breastworks, taking turns occasionally. Their commander was awakened shortly after 1 a. m., and from then

THE OPPOSING FORCES*

British Invaders

Infantry Regiments

- 4th (King's Own)
- 7th (Royal Fusileers)
- 21st (Royal North British Fusiliers)
- 43rd (Monmouth Light Infantry)
- 44th (East Essex)
- 85th (Bucks Volunteers)
- 93rd (Argyll & Sutherland Highlanders)
- 95th (Rifle Corps; 6 companies)
- 1st & 2nd West Indian (colored)

Staff

14th Dragoons dismounted

Artillery, drivers, engineers, rocket troops, sappers & miners

Sailors and marines from the fleet

(Some of the English regiments already had long and glorious histories, and were to serve with distinction on many a later battlefield.)

American Defenders

7th and 44th Regular United States Infantry

Coffee's Tennessee Mounted Infantry

Louisiana Militia, including
- Orleans Rifle Company (Beale's Rifles)
- Orleans Battalion of Uniform Companies
  - Carabiniers
  - Dragons à Pied
  - Francs
  - Chasseurs
  - Louisiana Blues
- Baratarians
- Other Louisiana Militia in reserve

Tennessee Militia

Kentucky Militia

Two battalions of Free Men of Color

Detachment of United States Marines

Company of Choctaw Indians

Cavalry:
- Hinds' Mississippi Dragoons
- Attakapas Dragoons
- Chauveau's Horse Volunteers
- Feliciana Troop of Horse
- Ogden's Cavalry

* Reliable figures not available on the numbers of these troops. One authority is quoted as estimating that Jackson and Pakenham each had about 10,000 in all—others say 15,000 or 20,000.

on was going up and down the line, inspecting, encouraging the men, and dictating orders.

One thing after another went wrong with British plans on the night of January 7–8. The banks of the freshly dug canal caved in before all the boats for the attack across the river got through. The 24 boats that made the passage were late starting and were carried by current farther downstream than expected. Consequently they were not ready when the main battle began.

Preparations did not start off well in front of Jackson's line either. Pakenham had divided the attacking force into 3 groups. General Gibbs, with 3 regiments, and 3 companies of another, was to attack near the cypress swamp, hitting the American line in the vicinity of Batteries 7 and 8. General Keane was to attack along the river with a smaller body of men. General Lambert was to remain in reserve with 2 regiments.

The 44th Regiment had been chosen to lead the predawn attack. They were to carry bundles of cane stalks (called fascines) to throw in the Rodriguez Canal and ladders for scaling the mud wall. In the darkness, regimental commander Lt. Col. Thomas Mullins led his men past the redoubt where the ladders and fascines were stored without picking them up. (After the battle, the British would blame Mullins for their defeat.) It is uncertain whether he or General Gibbs sent part of the regiment back for the ladders and fascines. In any case, the column was thrown into confusion and the attack delayed past the most favorable moment. Pakenham, it is said, dared not change his plans at the last moment because of taunts from Admiral Cochrane about the army's incapacity.

About daylight, a rocket shot up from the British forces near the woods, followed by another from their ranks near the river. These signals to attack were answered almost instantly by a shot from the American artillery. Gibbs' column gave three cheers and started forward in close order. American Batteries 6, 7, and 8 began to pour round shot and grape into the column. In spite of gaps torn by missiles from the artillery, the British veterans continued to advance in fairly good order until they came within musket range of the Tennessee and Kentucky troops. Small arms fire from 1,500 pieces added to that from the artillery soon broke the advancing column.

The defenders stood 3 and 4 deep behind the protective mud wall. An infantryman fired his gun, stepped down from the rampart to reload, and was instantly replaced by another. A witness wrote later of ". . . that constant rolling fire, whose tremendous noise resembled rattling peals of thunder." One surviving British officer said that the American line looked like a row of fiery furnaces.

After 25 minutes of this hail of lead, the attackers broke and ran. Though they were rallied by their officers, it was the same story over



American regulars and frontiersmen firing at the British from behind the mud rampart during the battle of January 8.

Highlanders and other British forces storm the American line and are repulsed with devastating losses.



again. Only seasoned troops would have stood so long, and only such troops could have been rallied. Gibbs was mortally wounded trying to drive his soldiers forward. Pakenham soon met the same fate, dying on the way to the rear after being hit a second time. Many of the lower ranking officers were already dead or seriously wounded. Numbers of the rank and file had lain down on the field—the only way to escape the murderous fire.

Keane, commanding the British near the river, saw Gibbs' plight and obliqued across the field with the kilted 93rd Highlanders. (Forty years later, this regiment was to be the "thin red line" at Balaclava.) According to legend, their commander, Col. Robert Dale, handed his watch and a letter to a surgeon, saying, "Give these to my wife. I shall die at the head of my regiment." On the Highlanders came, in spite of a volume of fire such as even these veterans had never known before. Their colonel was killed and Keane was seriously wounded. A few men reached the mud rampart, but they were all quickly killed or captured. Confusion and terror became panic.

The command of the column along the river had fallen to Col. Robert Rennie. Under protection of the fog, lasting longer there, Rennie stormed the American lines. Driving out defenders in hand-to-hand fighting, Rennie and some of his men seized the redoubt at the right of the American line. Then, mounting the breastwork, he called on the "Yankee Rascals" to cease firing, and cried, "The enemy's works are ours." But he barely said this when rifle fire smote him down. American muskets and cannon ended the British attack along the river as disastrously for the attackers as they had at the other end of the line.

Pakenham's last order was for Lambert to bring up the reserve, but, deciding that the battle was hopeless, General Lambert withdrew the army from the field. The infantry action had not lasted more than 2 hours.

The joy of Jackson and his men turned to consternation when they beheld the Americans across the river fleeing from the enemy. Although late in landing, Colonel Thornton's force had found little to oppose it along the west bank of the Mississippi. First to be reached was an outpost manned by militia, many of them tired and hungry and poorly armed. After firing a few volleys, the militia fled to an unfinished line that ended in an open field. There they formed a short distance from the other Americans manning the line. The entire force was under the command of Brig. Gen. David B. Morgan.

The strongest part of this line was along the river where Commodore Patterson had mounted several naval guns. These, firing across the river, had helped to repel the attacks on Jackson's line, including that which had just been defeated. The remainder of the line, according to one description, was only a waist-high wall of dirt



This unusual perspective drawing of the Battle of New Orleans, January 8, 1815, was made in 1815 by Hyacinthe Laclotte, an engineer in Jackson's army. The Mississippi River is seen in the foreground. Just beyond is the American redoubt in front of the main line. It is being stormed by British troops under Colonel Rennie. Jackson's line can be traced from the river bank to the point where it disappears in the heavily wooded swamp. Back of the American line, near the river at the left, is the Macarty plantation house. Here Jackson had his headquarters. The ruins of the Chalmette plantation buildings are at 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 by P. L. Debucourt. Courtesy, Prints Division, New York Public Library.

behind a shallow ditch. Even this did not extend all the way to the swamp. There were also gaps between the various units defending it.

By attacking next to the swamp, and between the two groups of defenders, Thornton broke this line, in spite of some losses from cannon fire. The defenders fled after efforts of their officers to rally them were unsuccessful.

Thornton's plan included seizing the cannon mounted along the river. If Patterson had not succeeded in spiking his guns, the British might have raked the rear of the line on the Rodriguez Canal and undone the American victory. Even as it was, they were soon on their way to New Orleans with little to stop them.

Then came the order to withdraw. The army opposite Jackson had been shot to pieces so badly that the British victory across the river was of no use to them.



The impact of the Battle of New Orleans on Americans in 1815 and the following years is partly shown by the many popular prints of it, two of which are shown here. They are of course products of the artists' imaginations rather than the results of careful study of the battle. In the upper view, for instance, the river from the British side should be on the left. So far as we know, on January 8 there were no boats on the river near the battleground. But it was from pictures like these that many of our ancestors obtained their impressions of historic events. Photocopy by Dan Leyrer, courtesy of Boyd Cruise.



Estimates of British casualties on January 8 vary widely. One of their reports gives a total of nearly 2,000 killed, wounded, and missing. (According to the official regimental history, the 4th Regiment lost over 400 on this day—more than 3 times as many as they were to lose at Waterloo a few months later.) The official American estimate of the enemy's loss was 2,600. Others guessed 3,000 or more.

The defenders found it hard to believe that their own losses were only 7 killed and 6 wounded.

Rarely have first-rate soldiers been defeated in so one-sided a battle.

Military Activity After January 8

After defeating their enemies in front of Jackson's line on January 8, some of the Americans wanted to attack them in the open. This was prevented by the higher officers. They knew that the British still had many soldiers able to use bayonets, and that it would be only a waste of lives to try to destroy the rest of their army. There were truces to bury the dead, and the usual tedious and tricky negotiations over such matters as the exchange of prisoners. Between truces, the American artillery annoyed the enemy.

On January 19, it appeared that the British had gone. This was confirmed when one of their doctors approached the American lines with a letter from General Lambert informing General Jackson that the British had given up the attempt against New Orleans. The letter asked for care for 80 men wounded too badly to be taken home. Several spiked cannon and some other war materials were also left behind.

Meanwhile a small British fleet began to bombard Fort St. Philip, about 60 miles below New Orleans on a bend in the river. They soon found they could hit the fort and yet stay out of range of its guns. They continued to bombard it at intervals for more than a week, doing little damage and killing only two men. On January 16, supplies for the fort arrived from New Orleans, including fuses for the 13-inch mortars that the defenders had not been able to use. The next day they hit the ships with projectiles from the mortars. On the 18th the British gave up this rather half-hearted attempt.

Still not knowing that the peace treaty had been signed, the British forces showed their determination by attacking Fort Bowyer on Mobile Bay for a second time in this campaign. The fort was weak in comparison with the force now sent against it, and surrendered on February 11. Two days later, news of the peace reached the fort, and the fighting in America ended.

New Orleans After the Victory

After the British departed, Jackson redistributed his army and permitted some of the men to return to their homes in New Orleans. An enthusiastic Latin celebration of the victory followed. There were parades, a triumphal arch, and, as the climax of the celebration, a *Te Deum* at the cathedral, when the crowd outside joined in singing hymns of thanksgiving.

Even though Americans celebrated, their troubles were not over when the enemy left. The troops had long been exposed to every kind of weather, and now disease began to take a toll far heavier than the battle. Mrs. Jackson, arriving in February, wrote to a friend that nearly a thousand had thus died.

In those days, Jackson's task was not made easier by the rumors of peace that reached the city. Suspecting a ruse, he refused to believe anything until he had a fully confirmed official notice. He kept the militia under arms and New Orleans under martial law. The raising of the blockade boomed prices, and many of the citizen-soldiers were more anxious to speculate than to do irksome duty. Once the immediate danger was past, the Governor and the legislature resented Jackson's high-handed ways. Out of this situation grew a series of unpleasant incidents, culminating in a fine of $1,000 imposed on Jackson by a Federal judge for contempt of court. Jackson bore himself with dignity in the courtroom, and paid the fine. He quelled a popular demonstration in his favor, advising his friends to recognize the supremacy of the law.

At long last, indubitable news of peace came. Martial law was lifted on March 12, and Jackson began to release the troops.

Many of the fighters in Jackson's temporary army returned to their usual civilian ways. The Tennessee troops marched back over the Natchez Trace to their homes. General Carroll, their commander, later served six terms as Governor of his State. Others of Jackson's commanders were later prominent in civil life, including John Adair, who became Governor of Kentucky.

Some of the defenders, however, were adventurers with no civil occupation. Among these were the Baratarians. Because of their part in the battle, President Madison pardoned them for their early offenses, and they behaved for a while. Dominique You tried to be a New Orleans ward politician and died in poverty. Renato Beluche became an admiral in the Venezuelan Navy. Others returned to piracy and set up an "establishment" on Galveston Island. It was destroyed by the United States Navy after outrages had been committed by the pirates. Of Jean Lafitte's life after this incident, we can only say that he ". . . sailed away into the legendary realms from which he had come."

The News On the East Coast

In January 1815, people in the cities of the East knew only that a large British force had landed and that fighting was going on. An editor of *Niles Register,* a Baltimore newspaper, wrote that "great interests" in all the Nation were anxiously awaiting news. Some leaders of the New England States, meeting in Hartford, were strongly suspected of planning to secede from the Union. The Capitol in Washington was in ruins. The Federal Government was in bad financial condition. Men feared that the negotiations at Ghent would fail or that the resulting treaty would not be ratified. It was possible that one of these outcomes, coupled with probable defeat at New Orleans, could have broken up the Union.

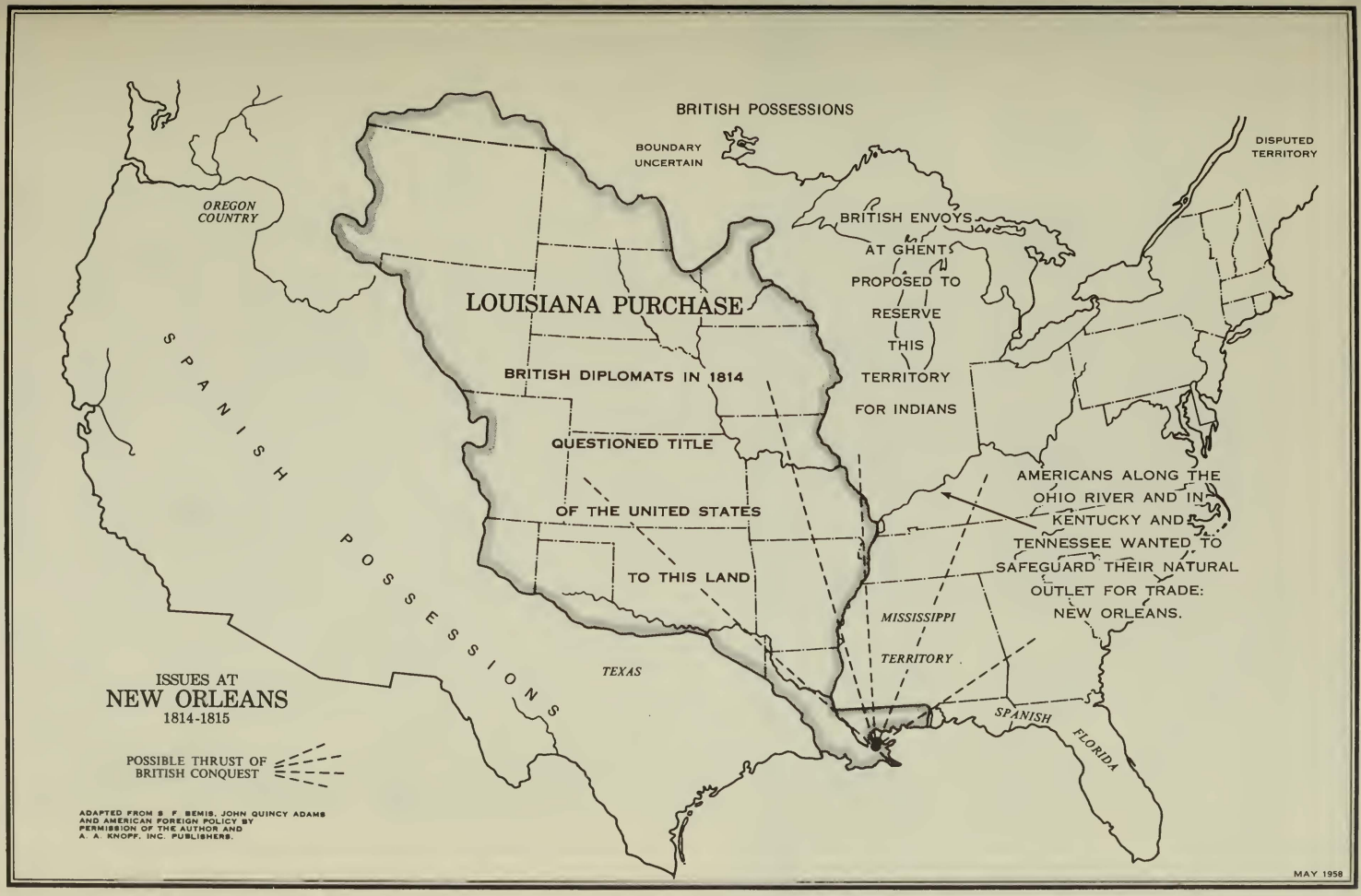
The relief of the Government was extreme when the news of victory at New Orleans finally reached Washington on February 4. The *National Intelligencer* used its largest type for the headline: ALMOST INCREDIBLE VICTORY ! ! ! People went wild with delight. A heavy fall of snow did not dampen the celebration in Philadelphia. All over the East the fireworks and rejoicing were greater than for any other victory of the War of 1812.

Nine days later, news of the signing of the Peace Treaty at Ghent completed the people's happiness. The envoys to Washington from the Hartford Convention were glad to slip back to their own States without presenting their demands to the Federal Government. Even the Massachusetts Legislature gave thanks for the victory—to God if not to Andrew Jackson.

What the Victory Meant to the United States

The Battle of New Orleans was fought between the signing and the ratification of the Treaty of Ghent, ending the War of 1812. It cannot be stated whether the British, if they had won, would have insisted on changing the peace treaty. Partly because of the American victory in Louisiana, however, the treaty was promptly ratified by both sides.

Much of the significance of the Battle of New Orleans is found in its effect on political thinking. From its founding, many men doubted that the new United States would endure. Conservative Europeans pointed to many examples, from the failure of the Roman Republic to the excesses of the French Revolution, which seemed to prove that republics could not govern large territories. In the United States too, men often questioned whether the young nation would last. Even after the Constitution had been adopted, many regarded themselves as primarily citizens of their respective States. We have seen that news


BRITISH POSSESSIONS
BOUNDARY UNCERTAIN
DISPUTED TERRITORY
OREGON COUNTRY
BRITISH ENVOYS AT GHENT PROPOSED TO RESERVE THIS TERRITORY FOR INDIANS
LOUISIANA PURCHASE
BRITISH DIPLOMATS IN 1814 QUESTIONED TITLE OF THE UNITED STATES TO THIS LAND
SPANISH POSSESSIONS
AMERICANS ALONG THE OHIO RIVER AND IN KENTUCKY AND TENNESSEE WANTED TO SAFEGUARD THEIR NATURAL OUTLET FOR TRADE: NEW ORLEANS.
MISSISSIPPI TERRITORY
TEXAS
SPANISH FLORIDA
ISSUES AT NEW ORLEANS 1814-1815
POSSIBLE THRUST OF BRITISH CONQUEST
ADAPTED FROM S. F. BEMIS, JOHN QUINCY ADAMS AND AMERICAN FOREIGN POLICY BY PERMISSION OF THE AUTHOR AND A. A. KNOPF, INC. PUBLISHERS.
MAY 1958

of the British defeat helped to end a secession movement in New England. Partly because of the victory's unifying effect, the United States endured as a republic. Its success belied the prophesies of the skeptics, and its form of government became a model for the new nations of Latin America.

The victory meant much to the people of the United States as a nation. It helped them to forget earlier defeats in the War of 1812—such as Detroit, Niagara, and the burning of Washington—and it helped them to feel pride in their country as a whole. This national feeling was shown in the following years by the establishment of the Second Bank of the United States, protective tariffs, increased army appropriations, and acceptance of the nationalizing opinions of Chief Justice John Marshall.

Before 1815, American leaders had watched with anxiety every political and military move in Europe. After the New Orleans victory they stood on their own feet.

With other military events of those years, the New Orleans campaign cleared the way for a wave of migration and settlement along the Mississippi. The battles helped to advertise the West. Jackson's soldiers, coming and going, marked and built roads and trails, and made people better acquainted with water routes. More important possibly than all, was that European and Indian threats to the Mississippi River were now ended, and the outlet for Western products was open at last.

Finally, from the smoke and glory of New Orleans, Andrew Jackson emerged as a national hero. For the first time, a Westerner arose to challenge the power of the Eastern "aristocracy" which, until then, had dominated the national politics of the United States. Soon after the battle, he was mentioned for the Presidency. He became a candidate in 1824. Although Jackson received a plurality of popular votes in this election, he lost in the Electoral College in a four-cornered race. His winning of the next election, in 1828, was hailed as a triumph of the people.

This is not the place to tell the story of Andrew Jackson's 8 years in the White House. His outstanding characteristics as President were his devotion to the Union, his faith in the plain people, and his courage. He was as unafraid of any opposition in politics as he had been on the battlefield.

Out of office, the old warrior became an "Elder Statesman" and adviser to Presidents. As such, he was influential in the annexation of Texas. In 1840, he visited New Orleans for the 25th anniversary of the battle. At that time he laid the cornerstone of the monument to him in downtown New Orleans' Jackson Square, as the old Place D'Armes is now called.

In 1843, Congress refunded with interest the fine that Andrew Jackson had paid in New Orleans in 1815.



The René Beauregard House, traditionally called "Bueno Retiro." The original structure was apparently built in the early 1830's and probably later altered considerably in the 1850's and 1860's. It is located in front of the American defense line of 1815. This view shows the structure before it was rehabilitated as the visitor center for the park. Photograph by Kay Roush.

The Chalmette Monument and the Park

When Jackson came to New Orleans in 1840, he visited the battlefield. On January 13, 1840, a few days after Jackson's visit, the cornerstone was laid for a battlefield monument.

Apparently little was done in the next 15 years. The Jackson Monument Association continued to campaign for the proper commemoration of the heroes who had fought and died here. In 1855 the State of Louisiana bought a small tract of land, which included the American defensive position behind the Rodriguez Canal, and began to build the monument.

The work proceeded slowly, with many interruptions. In 1894, the ground was placed in the custody of the United States Daughters of 1776 and 1812, who cared for it until 1929. That society continued to urge completion of the monument. In 1907, the land was ceded to the United States by the State of Louisiana, and the Federal Government completed the structure the following year.

The monument and grounds were transferred to the United States Department of the Interior in 1933. In 1939 Chalmette National Historical Park was created, including the National Cemetery and the land around the monument. The René Beauregard House and surrounding land were added in 1949.



The Chalmette Monument, begun by the State of Louisiana in 1855, was completed by the United States Government in 1908. Photograph by Kay Roush.

Facts About the Monument:

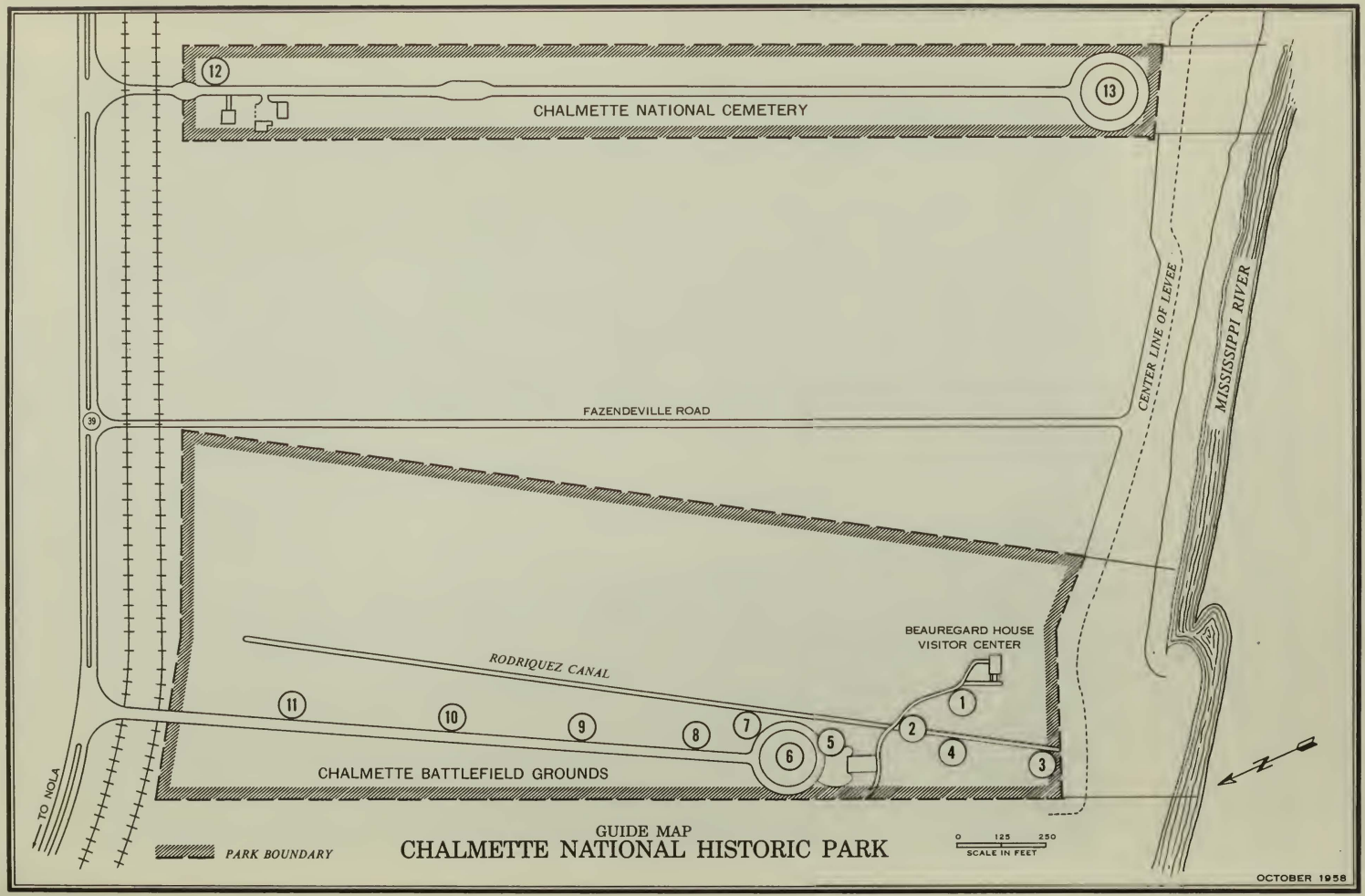
Material: Marble sheathing over brick
Spiral iron staircase winds around brick center support
Height: 100 feet 2½ inches from ground to base of lightning rod
Thickness of walls: 2 feet 5 inches
Widths: 48 feet square at bottom of base
14 feet 4 inches square at base of shaft
14 feet 2 inches square at base of vertex
Vertex: 9 feet high
Damaged by lightning, for third time since completion, in May 1937. Lightning protection system installed soon after.
Plaque installed by United States Daughters of 1812, Chalmette Chapter, October 19, 1947.

Guide to the Area

The information which follows is offered to enable you to make your own tour of Chalmette National Historical Park, including both the Monument (American Line) Section and the National Cemetery. The points of interest are numbered as they appear on the map (page 48) and we suggest that you follow them in order, starting with:

1. VISITOR CENTER. Here, by means of models, pictures, historic objects in story-telling arrangement, and a "talking map" with electric lights showing the action, you are introduced to the highlights of the Battle of New Orleans. Its importance in the War of 1812 and in later American history is also described. These exhibits are housed in a building which was not on the field at the time of Jackson's great victory over the British veterans in 1815. Just when it was built is not definitely known, but it certainly was one of the fine ante-bellum houses on the Louisiana shores of the Mississippi in the halcyon days before the Civil War. The name given it today is that of its last private owner, René Beauregard, son of Confederate Gen. P. G. T. Beauregard. René lived here from 1880 to 1904. In later years the house was abandoned and fell into ruinous condition. In 1957, it was restored outside and remodeled inside by the National Park Service under Mission 66, to serve its present purpose as a visitor center.

2. RODRIGUEZ CANAL. As you walk the footbridge at this point you are crossing the Rodriguez Canal, a former millrace which, even as early as 1815, had been abandoned. Using the canal as a moat, Jackson's men constructed a mud rampart back of it. From that strong position, the oddly assorted fighting force of Americans hurled back



GUIDE MAP

CHALMETTE NATIONAL HISTORIC PARK



The Rodriguez Canal today. The view is away from the river. The reconstructed section of the mud rampart is on the left. At the time of the fighting in 1814–15, most of this land was in fields of sugar cane, and the trees, fence, and buildings did not exist. A cypress swamp covered the area in the background of the present view. Photograph by Dan Leyrer.

three British attacks. The Rodriguez Canal is the only trace of any manmade feature remaining on the battlefield.

3. LOST BATTERY SITES. We cannot show you the position of Batteries 1, 2, and 3 of the 8 batteries of the American Line. Since 1815, the Mississippi River has claimed some 800 feet of the land on which the guns stood; the sites are now under 40 to 60 feet of muddy river

water. However, the text of this handbook and the marker in place here may help you to get a picture of the situation as it was on January 8, 1815.

"Lost" Battery 1, consisting of 2 long 12-pounders and a 6-inch howitzer, near the river, helped smash the British attack at that point in the final assault on January 8.

"Lost" Battery 2, had only 1 gun, a 24-pounder served by sailors from the *Carolina.* The *Carolina* had been sunk before the main battle by British gunners firing "hot shot" (solid shot heated red hot) which set the ship on fire and caused her to blow up.

"Lost" Battery 3 had perhaps the most colorful crew on the field. The two 24-pounders were manned by the Baratarian pirates under the command of Dominique You and Renato Beluche. In the fierce artillery duel on New Year's Day, the rough-and-ready pirates outgunned the British artillerists.

4. AMERICAN LINE—BATTERY 4. Like Battery 2, this 1-gun (38-pounder) battery was served by crewmen from the ill-fated *Carolina.* Between this battery and pirate-manned Battery 3, the Battalion of Louisiana Free Men of Color held the line.

5. VICTORY MARKER. Here is described the importance of the victory in American history.

6. THE CHALMETTE MONUMENT. This shaft commemorates the great American victory on the Plain of Chalmette, known as the Battle of New Orleans. The cornerstone was laid January 13, 1840, but the project then entered a slumber almost as deep as Rip Van Winkle's. Revived and promoted by the Jackson Monument Association, work on the monument was started in 1855 by the State of Louisiana and, over a period of years, it rose to a height of 55 feet. In 1894 the battlefield was placed in the custody of the United States Daughters of 1776 and 1812 (later called United Daughters of 1812) who took care of it until 1929. In 1907 the land was ceded to the United States by the State of Louisiana, and the monument was completed the following year.

The plaque was installed on October 19, 1947, by the Chalmette Chapter of the United Daughters of 1812.

7. MUD RAMPART AND BATTERY 5. The pile of earth which you see is a reconstruction of a very small section of the mud rampart, or wall, which Jackson's men hurriedly constructed, by the general's orders, on Christmas Eve of 1814. The 1814–15 version of this crude fortification, with the Rodriquez Canal in front of it, proved a most effective

barrier to the British advance. Extending, as it did, from the Mississippi River on the right to the great swamp on the left, it gave the British no alternative but to make direct frontal attacks upon the American Line, or "Jackson Line" as it is sometimes called. The American sharpshooters and gunners, relatively secure behind the mud rampart, wrecked terrible execution in the British ranks charging across the Plain of Chalmette.

Near the present marker, Battery 5 challenged the British.

8. BATTERY 6. This battery, together with Batteries 7 and 8, was particularly effective on critical January 8 as it poured round after round of shot and grape into British General Gibb's advancing column. The battery was commanded by Gen. Garrigues Flaujeac, veteran of Napoleon's army and a member of the Louisiana Legislature.

It was supported magnificently by musket fire from a nearby company of United States Marines and by the deadly accurate, if relatively undisciplined, fire delivered by Kentucky volunteers.

9. BATTERY 7. Professional soldiers—regular artillerymen of the United States Army—manned this battery. Supporting the battery were Tennessee Militia under command of Maj. Gen. William Carroll, later elected Governor of that State six times. This part of the American Line bore the brunt of the decisive action on January 8. Cannon fire tore holes in the red-coated ranks and the unerring aim of the Tennessee frontiersmen completed the execution. A few British soldiers reached the mud rampart only to perish there. The supreme effort for a breakthrough was made here and at Batteries 6 and 8. It failed and the British attempt to capture New Orleans was defeated.

10. BATTERY 8. Kentucky troops supported the one gun here which was commanded by a regular-artillery corporal. The name of the corporal and the type of gun are not known and so the marker is entitled "The Mysterious Gun." It is known, however, that this small "battery" joined with the two to its right to break the last desperate British charge in the final phase of the Battle of New Orleans.

11. GENERAL COFFEE'S POSITION. The holding of the left end of the American Line, which lay in the swamp, was the disagreeable assignment of the Tennessee volunteers under Brig. Gen. John Coffee, veteran commander of "mounted infantry" and friendly Indians in the Creek Indian War. Coffee's men at Chalmette had raided the British camp in the night attack of December 23, 1814. On New Year's Day, from their position behind the rampart, they had broken the only British charge of that day. On decisive January 8, they held the

same position with a determination not chilled by the cold water and mud which all but engulfed them.

Leaving the Monument Section of Chalmette National Historical Park, you may turn east (right) on the highway to reach:

12. CHALMETTE CEMETERY. Established as a National Cemetery in 1864, this hallowed ground holds, in honor, the remains of more than 15,000 veterans of our Nation's wars. Of these, 6,700 are unknown. The cemetery was closed for burials in 1945 but is open for visitation by those wishing to pay respects to the defenders of our Country who have their last resting place here.

13. G. A. R. MONUMENT. In 1874, the Grand Army of the Republic (a society of Union veterans of the Civil War) erected this monument to the memory of their comrades-at-arms buried in Chalmette National Cemetery. It was originally placed in the center of the cemetery, but was moved, in 1956, to its present location at the River Terminal Circle of the cemetery's magnolia-lined drive. Notice the inscription, DUM TACENT CLAMANT ("While They Are Silent, They Cry Aloud")—the Federal soldiers' last salute to their comrades in the graves at Chalmette.

The De La Ronde Oaks. Probably planted about about 1820, they grew where Jackson formed his men for the Night Battle of December 23, 1814. They are often miscalled "Pakenham Oaks" or "Versailles Oaks" and are located on private property near the park.



This concludes the self-guiding tour. We hope that you have received, from your visit to Chalmette National Historical Park, real inspiration and a greater understanding of a part of the American story.

Nearby Points of Interest

About 2 miles east on State Route 39, the ruins of the De La Ronde mansion stand in the center of the divided highway. Between the ruins and the Mississippi River is a magnificent avenue of moss-grown live oaks. Near this site the Americans formed for the night attack on December 23. The British camped here later in the campaign.

An oil refinery is now on the site of the Villeré plantation, the British headquarters, about 1½ miles east of the De La Ronde Oaks. The Night Battle of December 23 was fought over much of the ground between these two places.

The exhibit on the Battle of New Orleans in the Cabildo of the Louisiana State Museum on Jackson Square should also be seen.

How to Reach the Park

The park is 6 miles from the junction of Canal and Rampart Streets, in the center of New Orleans. The Cemetery Section of the park is one-third mile east of the Monument Section. State Route 39 follows St. Claude Avenue, a continuation of North Rampart Street. Both park entrances are on this highway. State Route 47 is a short cut from U. S. 90 to State Route 39 for those approaching from the east. Close study of street maps and careful observation of signs are recommended for newcomers to New Orleans.

About Your Visit

You may obtain further information about this and other areas of the National Park System at the Visitor Center in the René Beauregard House, located in the Monument Section of the park. With the exception of Christmas and New Year's Day, the visitor center is open every day of the year. Visiting hours, Monday through Saturday, are from 8 a. m. to 5 p. m.; and on Sunday, from 9 a. m. to 6 p. m. Park personnel are available at the visitor center to give you information and assistance. Literature explaining the park can also be obtained here. Special service for groups can be secured if arrangements are made in advance with the superintendent.



Equestrian statue of Andrew Jackson, by Clark Mills, in Jackson Square, New Orleans. Photograph by Kay Roush.

Supplementing the explanatory exhibits in the visitor center, you will find in the Monument Section of the park a series of historical markers identifying important positions along General Jackson's line and the historic remains of the Rodriguez Canal in front of the American position. Here also is situated the imposing Chalmette Monument.

Related Areas

The National Park Service administers two other areas commemorating the War of 1812. They are Fort McHenry National Monument and Historic Shrine, Baltimore, Md.; and Perry's Victory and International Peace Memorial National Monument, Put-in-Bay, Ohio.

Administration

Chalmette National Historical Park is administered by the National Park Service of the U. S. Department of the Interior. A superintendent, whose address is Box 125, Arabi 16, La., is in immediate charge.

Suggested Readings

Contemporary Accounts

GLEIG, G. R., *Campaigns of the British Army at Washington, Baltimore and New Orleans in the Years 1814 and 1815.* N. Carey and Sons, Philadelphia, 1821. (Recently reissued in an Everyman's Library edition.)

NOLTE, VINCENT, *Memoirs* or *Fifty Years in Both Hemispheres.* G. H. Watt, New York, 1934. Good on general conditions at New Orleans.

Other stories of the New Orleans Campaign by men who participated in it are in rare books.

General Histories

ADAMS, HENRY, *History of the United States in the Administrations of Jefferson and Madison.* 9 vols. Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, 1921.

ROOSEVELT, THEODORE, *Naval War of 1812.* G. P. Putnam's Sons, New York, 1910.

Biographies

JAMES, MARQUIS, *Andrew Jackson, Border Captain.* Bobbs-Merrill Co., Indianapolis, 1933.

————, *Portrait of a President.* Bobbs-Merrill Co., Indianapolis, 1937.

The first volume contains vivid descriptions of the part Jackson played in the War of 1812. The latter continues his life as President.

SAXON, LYLE, *Lafitte the Pirate.* Century Co., New York, 1930. Much local color.

U. S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE : 1958 OF—468593

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

HISTORICAL HANDBOOK SERIES

FOR SALE BY THE SUPERINTENDENT OF DOCUMENTS, U. S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE, WASHINGTON 25, D. C.

Bandelier (No. 23), 25 cents

Chalmette (No. 29), 25 cents

Chickamauga and Chattanooga Battlefields (No. 25), 25 cents

Custer Battlefield (No. 1), 20 cents

Custis-Lee Mansion (No. 6), 25 cents

Fort Laramie (No. 20), 25 cents

Fort McHenry (No. 5), 25 cents

Fort Necessity (No. 19), 25 cents

Fort Pulaski (No. 18), 25 cents

Fort Raleigh (No. 16), 25 cents

Fort Sumter (No. 12), 25 cents

George Washington Birthplace (No. 26), 25 cents

Gettysburg (No. 9), 25 cents

Hopewell Village (No. 8), 25 cents

Independence (No. 17), 25 cents

Jamestown, Virginia (No. 2), 25 cents

Kings Mountain (No. 22), 25 cents

The Lincoln Museum and the House Where Lincoln Died (No. 3), 20 cents

Manassas (Bull Run) (No. 15), 25 cents

Montezuma Castle (No. 27), 25 cents

Morristown, A Military Capital of the Revolution (No. 7), 25 cents

Ocmulgee (No. 24), 25 cents

Petersburg Battlefields (No. 13), 25 cents

Saratoga (No. 4), 20 cents

Scotts Bluff (No. 28), 25 cents

Shiloh (No. 10), 25 cents

Statue of Liberty (No. 11), 25 cents

Vicksburg (No. 21), 25 cents

Yorktown (No. 14), 25 cents


PEACE SPREADS HER INFLUENCE O'ER THE ATLANTIC SHORE
CONCORD
BETWEEN
GREAT BRITAIN
AND
AMERICA