The Search for the Lost Riverfront

National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Historical and Archeological Investigations at the Chalmette Battlefield, Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve

Parts I and II

Edited by Ted Birkedal
National Park Service

With Contributions By

John Coverdale, Jerome Greene, Gary DeMarcay,
Kenneth Holmquist, Larry Murphy,
Michael Stanislawski, John Stein,
Larry Trahan, and Jill-Karen Yakubik

A Report Prepared for
The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
New Orleans District

2009

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To
The Military Engineers
of the
United States
Both Past and Present

In this wet, sucking place it is easy enough to imagine that everything that ever was here still is—that it is all down there somewhere in the dark, pressed layers, that New Orleans is a giant slowly settling palimpsest.

—Frederick Turner, *Remembering Song: Encounters with the New Orleans Jazz Tradition*

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PREFACE

Often the fate of the world turns on the consequence of little things, and the Battle of New Orleans is one of those "little things" that sets the world spinning off in new and unexpected directions. In comparison to many battles of the Napoleonic Era, it was modest in size. Yet, without the Battle of New Orleans, there would be no United States as we now know it today and probably a very different current world and assemblage of nations. If the battle had not been fought and won by the United States, the Treaty of Ghent would have become one more meaningless slip of diplomatic paper. This small engagement of arms fought on the Plains of Chalmette closed off Britain to further influence in the West; broke the military and political clout of the last powerful Indian tribes, England's indigenous allies; and thereby opened the United States to the opportunity of a westward destiny. The War of 1812 has been called "The Second War of Independence," and the Battle of New Orleans won that war for a very young and fragile United States. Moreover, it is significant that General Andrew Jackson achieved his striking victory at the Battle of New Orleans with an incredibly eclectic and diverse army, one drawn from nearly all the regions and ethnic pockets of the nation. Perhaps no other single event in our history better underscores the lesson that America's strength lies in its diversity.

This report deals with that battle, or more exactly, with the historical geography and archeology of the battlefield itself. It also touches upon how people put the battlefield to use after the War of 1812 as a place for generations of people to live, work, and play. Also covered are some of the things, both bad and good, we have done over the years to commemorate the battle and remember this important event in our nation's past.

This report owes its existence to historic preservation compliance investigations funded by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers prior to the construction of a major levee setback along the riverfront of the Chalmette Unit of Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve. These investigations emerged out of consultations held among representatives of the Corps of Engineers, the National Park Service, and the Louisiana State Historic Preservation Officer under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966. Section 106 essentially requires federal agencies to consider and minimize their impacts on the

significant physical remains of America's past. As has so many times happened since the passage of the National Historic Preservation Act, we learned new and exiting things about our history that may never have come to light without benefit of this enlightened law. We had an opportunity to re-examine what we knew about the Chalmette Battlefield, and it was truly a privilege for me, as Principal Investigator, to have been given this opportunity to conduct work in such a special place, to have been provided a chance to help unravel the strands of history and archeology associated with one of the great events in American history.

But every opportunity can be both a privilege and a curse. And this project proved to be some of each. It was early October in 1983 when I first caught wind of the proposed investigations. I was in the administrative headquarters at the Chalmette Unit where I had just stopped by to pick up some artifacts while en route to the airport. I saw the Unit Manager and some other people heading into a meeting. I asked what was going on. They said, "We are going to discuss your project," and then they shut the door. Perplexed, I returned to the Southwest Cultural Resources Center in Santa Fe, New Mexico. I did not hear more for roughly a month, though I wondered occasionally what was up.

I finally learned about the purpose and specifics of the project in late November and had to move fast to gather the necessary personnel and equipment. Because of a tight construction timeline, the Corps of Engineers wanted us to be in the field no later than early January of 1984. By late December I had recruited the help of Larry Murphy of the National Park Service's Submerged Cultural Resources Unit to conduct the magnetometer survey. In turn, Larry Murphy enlisted the technical and archeological assistance of "Jock" Coverdale of the Tennessee Valley Authority. The Tennessee Valley Authority was very interested in testing their magnetometer capabilities in the pursuit of elusive archeological anomalies, and the Chalmette Battlefield offered that opportunity in deuces. Jake Ivey, a National Park Service historical archeologist with long experience with military sites, and Larry Nordby, one of the National Park Service's most experienced field archeologists, rounded out the archeological team.

Although we had little preparation time, it was apparent to all that we could not enter the field without benefit of at least some prior historical guidance. Luckily, Jerome Greene, a National Park Service military historian with the Denver Service Center, had already begun writing a Historic Resources Study of the Chalmette Unit, and he was recruited by Regional Historian Melody Webb to provide our field crew with the minimum background materials that would be

essential to informed archeology at the Chalmette Battlefield. Similarly, the National Park Service contracted the services of Jill-Karen Yakubik of Christopher Goodwin and Associates, Inc., to supply historical advice and documentation on the post-battle occupation and use of the Chalmette Unit.

Our crew arrived at the Chalmette Battlefield on January 9, 1984, one day after the anniversary of the main engagement of the Battle of New Orleans. As in 1815, it was cold, rainy, and foggy. It continued like that for weeks. Once, in the midst of a constant cold drizzle, a thunderstorm intruded and dropped what seemed like tons of water on the test excavations; our pump struggled vainly to keep up while we just splashed about defeated and impotent in the mud and rising water. The only respite came when it got colder and the water in the test pits froze solid as temperatures plummeted to as low as eighteen degrees Fahrenheit—extremely cold for New Orleans. When it did not rain, we received the gift of cold sleet and a brisk wind to aid our sodden work. We soon came to know something of what it must have been like for those soldiers in 1815 who fought under similar, if not worse, weather conditions. But unlike them, we could go to a warm motel at night and stuff down New Orleans' oyster hoagies.

Originally, this report was scheduled for completion in 1985. Obviously, that schedule was not met. Preliminary reports were prepared for the Corps of Engineers and submitted on time to meet the Section 106 compliance schedule, but progress on the main and final report was interrupted by other National Park Service priorities throughout 1985. The most critical interruption came in December of 1985 when I accepted a career opportunity of a lifetime and transferred to Alaska as the new Regional Archeologist for the National Park Service. Full of promises and false hopes, I took the burden of the report with me and labored fitfully and intermittently on it over the years.

From the beginning, the report "grew like Topsy" when I realized that no part of the story could be understood except in the context of the whole. Despite this tendency toward growth, the majority of the report came together between 1985 and 1988 because my fellow authors did their part and I devoted most of my leave during this period of years to writing the initial drafts of the report sections for which I was responsible. Thereafter, increased family and work responsibilities brought progress, appropriately enough for Alaska, down to a glacial pace. In 1989, I was assigned supervisory and program responsibility for the entire cultural resources team in Alaska, and as each bureaucratic wave of the National Park Service washed in and out, I began to nurture a forlorn hope for a

tomorrow that never came—an open window of time to finish the long-delayed report.

A tomorrow rich in free time never came; I finally realized that I would have to re-set priorities and make the required time, or the report would remain forever uncompleted. I was particularly spurred to action in the fall of 2000 when I was asked for long-distance advice by a new generation of National Park Service archeologists who were planning to use an updated bevy of remote sensing approaches to reveal the historical and archeological mysteries of the Chalmette Unit. I was excited to hear that attention had again refocused on this small but important unit of the National Park Service. An excellent volume by Historical Landscape Architect Kevin Risk, *Chalmette Battlefield and Chalmette National Cemetery: Cultural Landscape Report* (1999), was first to evidence this renewed interest in the New Orleans Battlefield. Still, although I was pleased by this new round of studies, I also felt somewhat shamed and awkward, like a movie director who learns that the sequel to his yet unfinished film has premiered before the original has even been released. As it turned out, the "sequel" research reported in John Cornelison's and Tammy Cooper's *An Archeological Survey of the Chalmette Battlefield at John Lafitte Historical Park and Preserve* (2002)*(2002)* has happily confirmed and reinforced the value and accuracy of our findings of two decades past. This latter-day support for the conclusions of the long-delayed report demonstrated that the volume still retained its relevancy and value as an important and detailed source on the history, historical geography, and archeology of the Chalmette Unit. As my former secretary, Kathy Koenig, succinctly put it, this reaffirmation of the findings was fortuitous, for it meant that we did not have to "hit the delete button" on the report after all these years.

The report is organized into three separate but related parts, (1) "The New Orleans Campaign of 1814-1815 in Relation to the Chalmette Battlefield," (2) "Historical Investigations of the Civilian Occupation of the Chalmette Battlefield," and (3) "Archeological Investigations of the Chalmette Riverfront." The first two studies initially appeared as chapters in Jerome Greene's *Historic Resource Study: Chalmette Unit, Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve.* This study was published in 1985, but only a limited number of copies were ever printed and distributed. It was always the National Park Service's intent from the start to also incorporate these two historical studies as integral components of the present report prepared on behalf of the Corps of Engineers. Corps funds helped to partially cover the costs of writing and researching Greene's military history of the battlefield, and these same funds fully covered the

production of Jill-Karen Yakubik's archival work on the civilian history of the Chalmette landscape. Thus, it is fitting and right that they reappear here as essential components of the present volume.

The third part of the report, "Archeological Investigations of the Chalmette Riverfront," addresses the historical archeology and geography of the New Orleans Battlefield, and it brings the different lines of inquiry together in a final set of conclusions. In this last section of the report, archeology is unabashedly enlisted as a "handmaiden" of history, and rightly so, for history is a worthy pursuit in and of itself. And if archeology can make for better history, then so be it. This historical emphasis, of course, does not preclude others from employing the data presented herein in more anthropological lines of archeological inquiry, but that is for others to do if they so wish. No single study can pretend to serve all masters equally.

Close readers of the report will observe that, although the three main parts of the report agree for the most part with one another in content, there are some unresolved differences that appear from time to time in points of detail. This is necessarily the case with different authors approaching the available evidence each in their own way, and therefore, no attempt was made to dictate seamless consistency throughout the report. Similarly, the report does not adhere to a single style of citation and notation. The two historical works use the traditional historical style of citation and notation; the archeological section employs the usual scientific style. To have imposed one style on each of the three major sections of the report would have gained overall consistency, but betrayed the value that each discipline places on its own, time-honored stylistic approach.

Finally, though the report achieved completion in the first years of the twenty-first century, it primarily remains a product of the 1980's. That is the decade when the fieldwork was accomplished and the bulk of the report was written. Because it is a product of its time, though much delayed, I have not attempted to bring the report kicking and screaming into the present century. In fact, many sections cannot be easily updated because the technologies and methodologies employed in the original investigations preclude meaningful modification. For instance, though the magnetometer research and the computer color maps produced by the Tennessee Valley Authority were at the cutting edge back in 1984, they may now appear somewhat archaic. The only solution would be to redo the work, but that is for future researchers. The other problem is that several of the co-authors of this work have long since moved on to other projects

and employment. They did their part back then and are not anxious to have the study come back to haunt them for updates in their new and present lives. From the start, this report was intended as a new beginning, not as an end to serious historical and archeological research at the Chalmette Unit of Jean Lafitte National Historical Park. There are undoubtedly errors contained in the present study that will need to be corrected by future work and unquestionably much more to learn about the battlefield's history and its environs. Hopefully, this report will help to spur that critical and continued future level of inquiry that the Battle of Orleans and the Chalmette Unit both merit and deserve.

GENERAL ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Nothing that counts very much in this world can be done entirely alone, and the work described in this volume, as well as the report itself, owes a great deal to the contributions of many dedicated and fine people. Their interests often differed, but an amazing number freely gave their help because of their love of the past and their devotion to a postage-stamp-sized piece of real estate known as the Chalmette Unit of Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve. All who assisted with this project, whether specifically named herein or not, have my most sincere thanks as well as my apologies for taking so long to complete the long-awaited report.

First and foremost, I would like to thank the staff members and leadership of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers for their forbearance and patience during the production of this report. I would, in particular, like to thank Tommy Ryan, who, as the Archeologist for the New Orleans District, conceived of the project and sought the National Park Service's partnership in the venture. I would also like to single out Carroll Kleinhans, who, as successor to Tommy Ryan, gave me only encouragement and support when anyone else would have given me grief.

A. Wilson "Will" Greene, then Unit Manager of the Chalmette Unit, Jean Lafitte National Historical Park, deserves thanks as Tommy Ryan's co-conspirator in the conception of this study. The late Jim Isenogle, former Superintendent of Jean Lafitte National Historical Park, merits prominent mention for giving his personal stamp of management approval to the project. This was a brave act. Following "Will" Greene's departure, Tom Tankersley took on the job of Acting Unit Manager of the park area and never hesitated in giving welcome assistance and encouragement.

Barbara Holmes, Ethnographer and Cultural Resource Management Specialist for Jean Lafitte National Park and Preserve in the mid-eighties, demands special mention, for she is the one who recruited me into the cultural resource compliance work in Jean Lafitte and gave me unstinting support. Historian Mike Strock followed in her footsteps to give aid and advice, and he in turn passed the burden of dealing with me to Allison Pena, the present Ethnographer and Cultural Resource Management Specialist for Jean Lafitte National Park and Preserve. Allison's help, together with the support of David Luchsinger, Superintendent; Dave Herrera, Deputy Superintendent, and David

Muth, Resource Manager, Jean Lafitte National Park and Preserve, allowed this report to eventually see the light of day.

Alvin Williams, the Maintenance Foreman at Chalmette in the eighties, shared his Tareytons with me and freely gave me whatever logistic support I required. His staff, including both Charlie Tippen and R.C. Tippen, were always ready to help.

Melody Webb, Regional Historian with the Southwest Region of the National Park Service at the time of the project, after putting my evidence and ideas to critical scrutiny, provided solid support and ran bureaucratic interference for me in close cooperation with my equally supportive bosses during this period: Ron Ice, Regional Archeologist, and Richard Sellars, Chief of the Southwest Cultural Resources Center. Regional Director Bob Kerr of the Southwest Region surprised me with his genuine interest in the Chalmette finds, and his support was more than welcome when I upset the planning applecart for the Chalmette Unit. My current National Park Service bosses in Alaska—Tim Hudson, Associate Regional Director for Resources and Operations; Victor Knox, Deputy Regional Director; and Marcia Blaszak, Regional Director—have continued this tradition of supervisory support. Ralph Tingey, the former Associate Regional Director for Resources and Operations, and my supervisor during much of the writing of this report, also gave me every encouragement with the project.

Archeologist John ("Jock") Coverdale of the Tennessee Valley Authority assisted Larry Murphy, National Park Service Archeologist, with the magnetometer survey. When lightning struck the cables linked to the magnetometer, he and Larry Murphy convinced GeoMetrics to send an instant replacement unit. They succeeded in this endeavor using the ruse that Walter Cronkite of CBS News was coming in two days to report on the work at Chalmette. Walter and CBS would have been surprised to hear of these "plans." A colleague of "Jock" Coverdale's, Kenneth Holmquist, a cartographer and computer specialist with the Tennessee Valley Authority, created the excellent magnetometer maps that are contained in the report. These maps were ahead of their time in 1984, and I am grateful for his devotion to quality work.

Jerome Greene, National Park Service Historian, Denver Service Center, generously shared his knowledge at all times. As one of the many over-committed authors of this report, he even donated his sick leave to finish his account of the Battle of New Orleans. Jill-Karen Yakubik, another co-author, gave her all to the project and wrote the civilian history of the battlefield and the ceramic artifact sections. At the time of the original writing, she was an employee

of Christopher Goodwin and Associates; today she runs her own contract firm in New Orleans, Earth Search Incorporated. Both Jerome Greene and Jill-Karen Yakubik, in their roles as primary co-authors, have their own unique set of acknowledgements to make, and these may be found immediately following these opening remarks of appreciation.

Gary B. DeMarcay of Texas A&M University, under the guidance of Professor Gentry Steele, performed a much appreciated faunal analysis. Michael Stanislawski and John R. Stein, both temporary National Park Service archeologists with the Southwest Cultural Resource Center, provided careful study of the nonceramic artifacts, for which I am very thankful. Larry Trahan and his agency, the Soil Conservation Service, New Orleans, generously supplied the crucial soil auger tests and analyses that appear in the report at no cost to the National Park Service. Park Technican Rex Williams ably assisted Larry in the messy job of digging these augers.

Both Jake Ivey and Larry Nordby of the National Park Service have my sincere thanks for lending their archeological insights and labors to the project. Torn ligaments, lousy weather, and mud led Larry to complain that I had given him the worst archeological experience of his life, but he hung in there and gave 150 percent every day. Jake Ivey's eagle eye for reading stratigraphy proved critical to our success, and I am truly thankful for his wise archeological counsel in the field. I credit Jake with making the difference between failure and success in this investigation.

Bill Fields, both a general with the New Mexico National Guard and a civil engineer in the National Park Service (and for a time my boss), laid the surveying and mapping ground work for our field investigation in the fall of 1983. He and his support crew did a fine job for us and the park. George Neusanger, Chief Ranger at Jean Lafitte National Historical Park, generously helped take follow-up sightings. The inked archeological maps, plans, and profiles are the able product of Lyndi Hubbell, an archeological illustrator noted for her readable and exact schematic style. I thank her for her strong patience with my revisions.

One thing that my experience in New Orleans has taught me is that good historical archeology depends on good archival work. Besides the help of Jill-KarenYakubik mentioned above, I benefited from the active assistance of Rose Lambert of the Louisiana State Museum Library and Betsy Swanson, archival sleuth "extraordinaire." Betsy Swanson, who has written much on the history of the New Orleans area, shared many of her finds and special insights with me during the course of this study. She also shot and prepared the artifact

photographs as a contractor and lent me several earlier landscape photographs that appear in this report. And it is no accident that Betsy Swanson found the inspired epigraph that introduces this report. Her enthusiastic and informed assistance proved truly invaluable and is deeply appreciated. I know of no one who is a better servant of the muse of history than she.

Mike Comardelle, shrimp fisherman and master amateur archeologist, provided welcome technical expertise and labor, all because he cared deeply for the cultural resources of Jean Lafitte National Historical Park. And appropriately, Mike Comardelle is a direct descendant of Ron Ronquille, a Baratarian pirate associated with the notorious Louis "Nez Coupé" Chighizola, one of Jean Lafitte's leading captains.

Ted Mathis, a self-described "blue-shirt preservationist," shared the hard labor of back-filling the tests with me. Why he would do this is beyond me, but I appreciate it; two shovels are always better than one when it comes to back filling. From the ranks of what Ted Mathis would call the "silk-shirt preservationists" in New Orleans, I wish to thank Bill Hyland for his visits and perspectives. And from interested archeological contractors like Christopher Goodwin, I received friendly visits in the field and dedication to the archival work that was the responsibility his firm, R. Christopher Goodwin and Associates, Inc. Another visitor to the tests, Charles E. Pearson of Coastal Environments, Inc., provided welcome tidbits of local advice and guidance.

The unsung heroes of manuscript preparation are the people who type repeated editions of a report in progress. Since this report has been in progress for many years, there are three special people to thank for their devotion to this critically important task. First, I wish to thank Rose Ortiz, who typed the first draft of the manuscript from bits of scribble sent from Alaska to the Southwest Cultural Resources Center (and who zealously guarded my magnetometer illustrations). Next in line for my hearty thanks is Kathy Koenig, who patiently typed and proofed the interim editions of the manuscript and many final chapters, both as an employee of the National Park Service in Alaska and as a Volunteer in the Parks after her retirement to Palmer, Alaska. And last but not least in the lineup of dedicated manuscript preparers is Margarita Stapleton, my Program Assistant, who reformatted both Jerome Greene's and Jill-Karen Yakubik's sections and made many of the finishing touches that brought the report to final.

Among the Alaska National Park Service colleagues who provided welcome advice and guidance with manuscript preparation are Don Callaway, Cultural Anthropologist; Janet Clemens, Historian; Bonnie Houston, Architectural

Historian; Linda Imle, Computer Specialist; Logan Hovis, Mining Historian; Judy Kesler, Computer Specialist; Frank Norris, Research Historian; Thetus Smith, Writer/Editor; and Tyler Tetzlaff, Electronic File Technician. Joy Murphy, a journalist and writer in the private sector, Santa Fe, New Mexico, was similarly helpful with technical editorial assistance. Their combined generosity with stylistic, editorial, and computer expertise is much appreciated.

Curators and museum technicians are another group in the National Park Service who are often forgotten by their archeological colleagues. I received great service from all the following park and regional museum collections specialists over the years: David Brugge, Henry Day, Kathy Lang, Kim McClean, Virginia Salazar, Ron Sheets, Audrey Trauner, Richard Vernon, and Denise Vickers. Walter Wait, Archeologist, Southwest Cultural Resource Center, also did his part by keeping watch over the aging illustrations to this report until their recent transfer to the Southeast Archeological Research Center.

A number of other National Park Service colleagues require recognition for generously sharing their technical expertise with me. William A. Meuse, who had once served as Chalmette Unit's Historian in the 1960's, helped orient me both to the battlefield history and to the park unit's "hidden" administrative history. Former National Park Service Archeologist Rex Wilson shared the insights he gained from his early archeological tests at Chalmette. John Luzader, National Park Service military historian, patiently explained troop maneuvers of the early nineteenth century; Mark Barnes, long-time friend and National Park Service colleague, frequently lent me his professional ear and counsel without complaint. Daniel Lenihan, former Chief of the National Park Service's Submerged Cultural Resources Unit, has my appreciation for lending me the services of Larry Murphy for the magnetometer study. I also wish to thank Dwight Drager, Art Ireland, and Joan Mathien, all of the National Park Service, for their generous advice and assistance with remote sensing applications. And my thanks goes out to Suzy Wooliver and Jane Ahern, Alaska Regional Office, for their help in getting the report in conformance with the National Park Service's "messaging" project.

Other National Park Service colleagues, both past and present, who gave me support and succor, include the following very open-minded historians: Bill Brown, Henry Elliott, Sande McDermott, and Robert Utley. I am similarly grateful to National Park Service Historical Architect Steve Peterson, who helped me interpret problematical architectural data. And I do not want to forget Sandra Brown, Librarian, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers New Orleans District

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(*Note: This list of contributors gives the authors' institutional and business affiliations at the time the study was carried out [ca. 1984-1985]).*

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

Ted Birkedal

This report presents the results of archival and archeological investigations undertaken by the National Park Service on behalf of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. The study site is the Chalmette Unit of Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve, a small Park Service area located in St. Bernard Parish near the eastern edge of the city of New Orleans, Louisiana. Originally established as an independent national monument in 1939, the Chalmette Unit commemorates and preserves the core battlefield where American and British troops clashed during the Battle of New Orleans at the end of the War of 1812. From this engagement, the United States emerged as the clear victor, and although the battle was fought after the official close of the war, it had a major and lasting effect on the course of American history. The victory launched Andrew Jackson on his rise to the presidency, reaffirmed the claims of the United States to the Louisiana Territory, and gave the American people the military confidence to determine their own destiny in world affairs and follow future directions that were largely independent of Europe's shifting power structure and political turmoil (Coles 1965:236, 270-271; Remini 1969:91; Owsley 1981:178, 194-195).

The Setting

The Battle of New Orleans was fought in the rural hinterland of New Orleans, among the elegant plantations and estates of the city's country elite (Map *i-1*). It was undeniably a grand setting—the kind one might encounter in historical romances, but only rarely finds in true accounts of history. Much has changed, however, in the years since 1815, and the battleground now lies in the industrial heartland of St. Bernard Parish. The sole visible reminder of the former rural glory of the Battle of New Orleans period is the eroding brick ruin of the de La Ronde master house. Once the most imposing of all the plantation residences along this section of the Mississippi River, its lower walls and foundation now stand in odd isolation on a small traffic island between the east and west lanes of the St. Bernard Highway. The fate of this important structure is both illustrative and representative of the changes that have forever altered the original historic scene of the battle.

The area that has been set aside by Congress to commemorate the battlefield is very small. In its entirety, the Chalmette Unit encompasses no more than 142.9 acres (57.8 ha) of land; and of this total, 17.3 acres (7 ha) are taken up by the Chalmette National Cemetery, which lies along the east edge of the unit. Located only 6 miles (9.6 km) from downtown New Orleans, the Chalmette Unit is surrounded by the industrial landscape of St. Bernard Parish. The busy St. Bernard Highway runs beside the park area's northern flank. The huge smokestacks and slag heaps of the Kaiser Aluminum Plant visually intrude to the east. To the south, the high embankment of the modern levee interrupts the once clear view of the adjacent Mississippi River. At any time of the day, it is not unusual to see two or more international tankers passing close by the park area. Because the Mississippi is artificially channeled by the levee system, its waters often rise above the neighboring land surface, and the larger ships tower over the battleground as they make their way slowly up and down the river. The St. Bernard Parish Sewage Treatment Plant is another modern intrusion. This working facility, which predates a late National Park Service land expansion, protrudes into the south-central portion of the Chalmette Unit. The Chalmette Slip, a large commercial port, lies just off the southwest corner.

The two most prominent features within the unit are actually historic structures, but both postdate the Battle of New Orleans. One of these, the Chalmette Monument, rises over 100 ft (30.5 m) above the ground surface in the western third of the park area (Figure *i-1*). This is an enormous Egyptian-style obelisk constructed of brick and faced with white marble. Started in 1855 and finally completed in 1908, the Chalmette Monument was built in patriotic memory of the American soldiers who fought in the Battle of New Orleans. The second prominent feature is the Beauregard House, a two-story, columned mansion that sits near the river in the southwestern quadrant of the Chalmette Unit. Originally constructed in the 1830s, this historic building was restored by the National Park Service to its present condition between 1957 and 1958. Until recently, the Beauregard House served as the National Park Service's main visitor contact station and interpretive center.

The Chalmette Unit preserves a semblance of the original rural character of the battlefield. For the most part, it consists of a flat, nearly featureless expanse of grassy terrain (Figure *i-2*). The only relief of any note is provided by two recent interpretive reconstructions. One of these, a reconstructed section of the American military rampart, is located in the west-central part of the unit. Erected in 1964 on top of the actual American defensive position, this low-slung, flat-topped earthwork measures 1378 ft (420 m) in length and 20 ft (6 m) in width, but it averages no more than 5 ft (1.5 m) in height. Several hundred meters to the east of this first feature is an equally low, rectangular mound. This second earthen feature usually sports a British flag and measures 43 ft (13 m) by 31 ft (9.5 m). The mound's presence has no basis in historical fact; it was simply constructed to serve as a convenient observation platform for the interpretation of the British attack on the American line of defense.

The only topographical features of historic origin are a series of partially filled and abandoned ditches which run from the southwest to the northeast across the central portion of the unit (Figure *i-3*). Almost totally filled with silt and covered by grass, they mark the locations of old agricultural drainage ditches. The largest and most visible of these is the Rodriguez Canal. This feature consists of a shallow, linear depression located immediately forward of the American defense line. The other ditches are much smaller and are almost imperceptible from a distance. These occur at various intervals in the central part of the battlefield and run parallel to the Rodriguez Canal.

Trees are relatively few and primarily occur toward the margins of the unit and in the vicinity of structures and visitor support facilities. The majority represent recent plantings, though some of the larger live oaks date back to the first half of the nineteenth century. The most common trees are magnolias, pecans, and cottonwoods. The densest stand of vegetation occupies the northern edge of the unit, where the National Park Service has encouraged a heavy growth of trees and shrubbery in order to mimic a section of forested swampland which historically bordered the central battlefield. This thick stand also doubles as a visual screen against the traffic on the adjacent St. Bernard Highway.

The landform upon which the Chalmette Unit rests is a natural levee of the Mississippi River. Near the river, this natural levee reaches elevations up to 7.8 ft

(2.4 m) above sea level; away from the river and closer to the St. Bernard Highway, the elevations drop to 2 ft (.7m) above sea level as the levee slope approaches the area of the old back swamp. The unit's soils are of the Commerce-Sharkey association (Wicker et al. 1982:11). These soils are locally noted for their agricultural potential, and their occurrence helps to explain why the early land-use history of the Chalmette Unit is predominantly a story of plantation farming. Commerce soils occur at the higher elevations and consist of a dark grayish brown silty loam or silty clay loam underlain by a grayish brown silty clay loam subsoil. These better-drained soils of the Commerce-Sharkey association offered the best conditions for settlement as well as for agriculture. The soils in the Sharkey category are generally found on the far down-slope of the natural levee and are composed of a dark gray clay surface soil and a gray clay subsoil. Though suitable for certain crops, such as sugar cane and indigo, these saturated soils attracted little nonagricultural use until the end of the nineteenth century, when land scarcity forced people to build upon them.

The climate of St. Bernard Parish is no different from the rest of the New Orleans vicinity in that the summers are hot and humid, and the winters are relatively mild. Yet this subtropical climate does not guarantee warm weather. In winter, strong frontal movements frequently produce squalls and steep drops in the temperature gradient. In fact, freezing temperatures are not uncommon, especially at night. Rainfall is typically heavy and averages 63 in (160 cm) per year (Wicker et al. 1982:13). During the summer months, much of the rain falls in the form of afternoon thundershowers; in the winter, large stationary fronts often bring days of constant rain and drizzle. These periods of continuous cold rain are particularly common between mid-December and mid-March. Thick river fogs which spread out over the adjacent land surface are also typical of the area, especially in winter and spring, when the temperature of the Mississippi River tends to drop below the surrounding air temperature. Not to be forgotten are the hurricanes and floods which are a fact of life in the delta country of Louisiana. These two powerful forces of nature have had a tremendous influence on both the natural and cultural landscape of St. Bernard Parish (Cowdrey 1977:xiii-xv).

A high water table is another important attribute of the local environment. The height of the water table fluctuates seasonally, but, as elsewhere in the lower Mississippi Delta, it never remains far from the surface. In even the higher

portions of the Chalmette Unit, water may often be encountered within 12 in (30 cm) of the ground surface. At lower elevations, the water table may reach the level of the topsoil or rise above the surface of the ground. This high water is the nemesis of all who seek to dig in the soil of Chalmette, be they soldier, builder, or archeologist.

History of the Project

By early 1983, the Corps of Engineers, New Orleans District, had reached the unavoidable conclusion that the levee and bank in front of the Chalmette Unit failed to provide an adequate level of flood protection. The foundation stability of this section of the New Orleans levee system was questionable and no longer met accepted federal standards. In response, the Corps of Engineers developed five alternative plans designed to correct the problem. The most extreme of these plans called for the construction of a new levee 140 ft (42.6 m) landward from the center line of the old levee and the acquisition of 3.5 acres (1.4 ha) of additional right-of-way. The least disruptive plan required no more than 0.1 acres (0.04 ha) of additional right-of-way and a minor levee center line setback.

After careful consideration of the various plans, the Corps decided upon the minimal impact alternative as the plan of preference. It guaranteed a satisfactory level of flood control for the least cost and posed the smallest threat to the existing physical, natural, and cultural aspects of the local environment. This plan for levee reinforcement called for a 10 ft (3.05 m) setback of the levee center line, the construction of a concrete "I"-type floodwall along the land-side edge of the levee crown, and a general de-grading of the river bank and levee slope. New ground disturbance on the landward side would be restricted to two small tracts of land. The first of these construction easements, or zones, which was to be located in the extreme southwestern corner of the park unit, would be used to shift the vehicle access ramp to the levee crown 5 to 10 ft (1.5 to 3.05 m) farther to the north. The second easement, located in the eastern third of the park area, would also involve an access adjustment required by the levee center-line change. Here, a section of the shell-paved levee access road would be realigned so that it would run 7 to 10 ft (2.1 to 3.05 m) more to the landward. In both zones, earth-disturbing activity was designed not to exceed 1 ft (30 cm) below the local ground surface.

The only other land-side, earth-modifying activity scheduled under the minimal impact plan was maintenance of the levee road. The entire length of this shell-paved road would be kept in good repair and in a smooth condition to accommodate heavy equipment operation during the life of the project. At most, the work would require regular additions of fresh shell paving coupled with blading and compaction. Since this maintenance activity was not anticipated to extend below the original shell base of the road, it was not seen as a major alteration of the landscape. Nonetheless, the potential for inadvertent exposure of deeper deposits was sufficient to cause some concern.

Alert to the historical importance of the battlefield and the obligations imposed by the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, the Corps of Engineers negotiated an Agreement of Work with the National Park Service for the performance of a cultural resource assessment of the area of effect. The agreement, entitled "Archival Investigations at Chalmette Battlefield," was signed on November 15, 1983, and the investigations outlined by this document were designed to meet three separate, but related, areas of need in historic preservation planning:

1. The findings of the assessment would be used by the Corps of Engineers in its project-specific consultations with the State Historic Preservation Officer and the President's Advisory Council on Historic Preservation.

2. The results were also to be incorporated in a wider environmental assessment of the project in accordance with the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969. This broader assessment would treat the potential environmental effects of all five project alternatives, not just the preferred alternative.

3. Finally, the acquired data was intended for long-term planning use beyond the framework of the immediate project. It was hoped that the results would provide guidance in the design of any future Corps projects slated for the Chalmette Unit riverfront.

The geographical scope of the investigations specified by the Agreement of Work included nearly the entire Chalmette Unit river frontage—from the inner toe of the 1983 levee to an arbitrary project boundary set 200 ft (61 m) to the landward. Its length, a distance of 2150 ft (655 m), was defined by the east and

west borders of the park unit. Only a narrow strip of highly disturbed riverside frontage, which contained the existing levee and bank, was to be excluded. Yet even this zone, where the original land surface had been lost to earlier levee construction and river erosion, was to receive some consideration as an indirect result of the historical investigations called for in the agreement.

Despite the lack of reference to archeology in the work agreement title, the document did emphasize the critical importance of archeological investigations as a key element in the program of research. These on-the-ground investigations were to focus particular attention on the position of the American defense line and the battery emplacements that had once been located along this line. The Corps of Engineers realized that these features would be among the most significant cultural resources under threat by the proposed levee reinforcement project. Further, the Corps understood that the discovery of one or more battery positions would provide a firm, and heretofore missing, geographical link between the battlefield of the past and that of the present. With the aid of this ground-truth, a more accurate reconstruction of the battle geography would become possible and, in turn, guide projections to other features of historical interest that might be located within the assessment zone. The cultural landscape of the Chalmette Unit was for the most part a *terra incognita* prior to the start of the assessment.

Pressed by a tight schedule of planning milestones and construction deadlines, the Corps of Engineers urged the National Park Service to begin the required investigations as soon as possible after the signing of the Agreement of Work. A general plan of research was hastily put together, and background archival research and other preparatory work was under way by December of 1983. Although the National Park Service postponed entry into the field until the last acceptable moment, there was still insufficient advance time. The schedule only allowed enough time for the production of a cursory historical overview of the Chalmette Unit riverfront and a rough prediction of the features and artifacts that might be expected to emerge as important clues in the course of the archeological research. Much of this background effort was devoted to a hypothetical reconstruction of American battery architecture and the associated military activities that would leave a telltale archeological signature within or around a battery remnant.

In view of the fact that the Chalmette Unit had been part of the National Park system since 1939, it might at first seem that the historical preparatory work

would have necessitated little new effort. However, the archeological discovery of the buried ruins of the Rodriguez master house in early April of 1983 had demolished previous and long-standing ideas concerning the physical reality of the battlefield. Evidence of the existence of this prominent battle landmark had unexpectedly come to light during routine archeological clearance investigations in advance of a new visitor contact station. The Rodriguez House, together with a sizable portion of the American defense line and three gun batteries, had originally been thought to have fallen victim to bank changes of the Mississippi River. The National Park Service had even erected a special interpretive sign in the southwestern corner of the Chalmette Unit to tell the story of the "lost" batteries. The discovery of the foundations of the Rodriguez House indicated that only a small segment of the American defense line had been destroyed, and further, that two of the three "lost" battery positions had probably survived. Unfortunately, the exact locations of these two historic features could not be projected with any practical degree of certainty. Contradictions in the available archival maps precluded accurate repositioning on the basis of the Rodriguez House alone. In short, the discovery of the house foundations had forever shattered the traditional historical geography of the Chalmette Unit, but these foundations did not provide sufficient information to rebuild the geography at a tolerable level of precision. As the situation stood in December of 1983, the major historic features of the Chalmette Unit still remained in a perplexing locational limbo.

Archeological field work finally began on January 9, 1984—one day after the 169th anniversary celebration of the Battle of New Orleans—and ended on February 8, 1984, after the expenditure of eighty-two person-days of effort. As fate would have it, the field crew experienced the same order of miserable weather that had plagued Jackson's troops. The rain was close to incessant, the fog frequent, and the winter was one of the coldest in recent memory. In spite of the obstacles of weather and mud, the necessary data capture took place, and a progress report on the findings was submitted to the Corps of Engineers on February 17, 1984 (Birkedal 1984a). The Corps immediately incorporated these preliminary results in a formal environmental assessment of the various project options. This document, prepared in March of 1984, recommended the least-impact, or "preferred," alternative described earlier. To facilitate the Corps of Engineers' consultations with the State Historic Preservation Officer and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, the National Park Service completed a second report on the initial results of the cultural resource assessment on March 9,

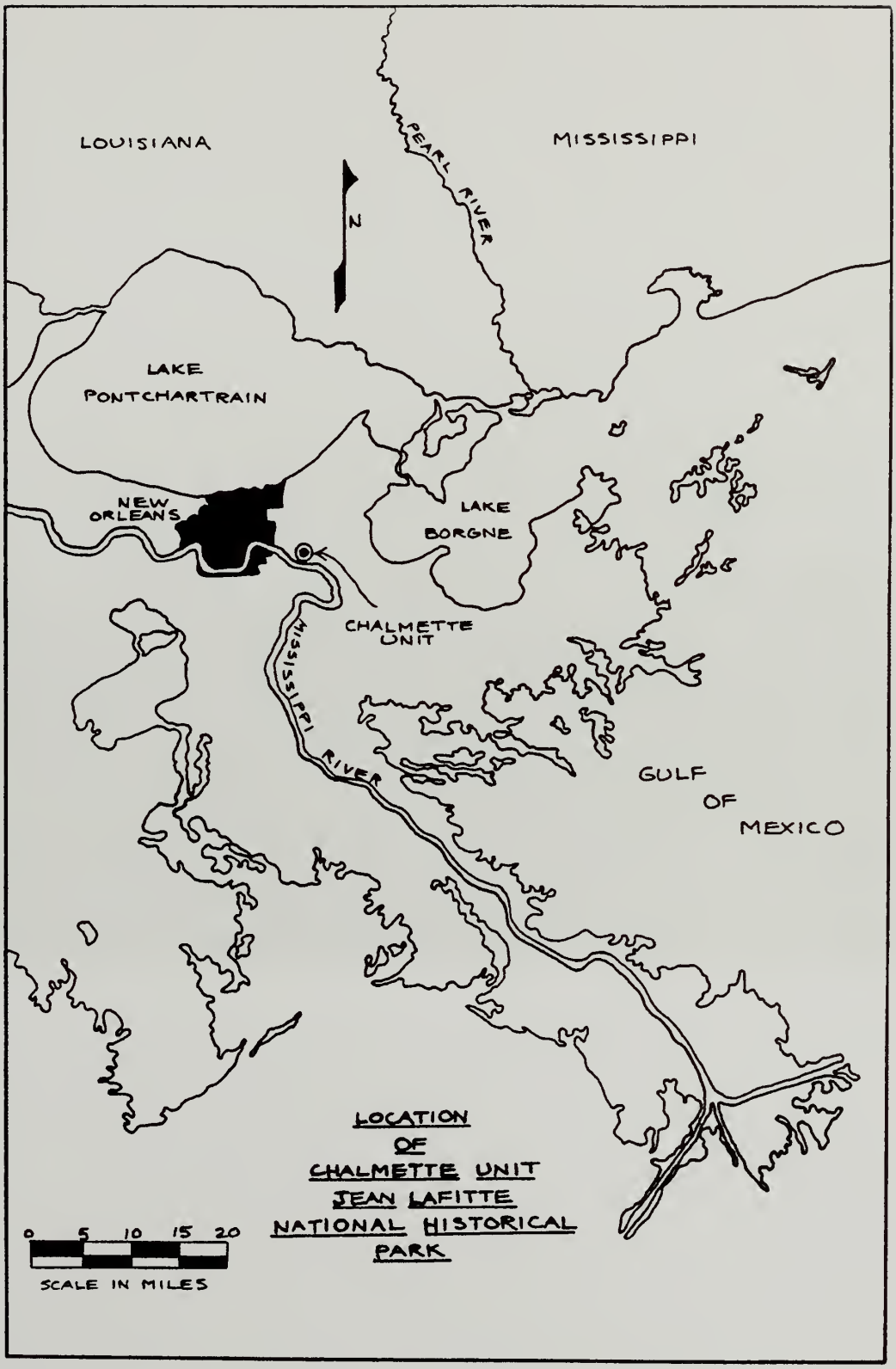
1984 (Birkedal 1984b). This interim report supplied more detail, and later that spring, it provided the documentary basis for a Memorandum of Agreement prepared in accordance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act.

Report Description

The present report documents the full findings of the cultural resource assessment. Divided into three separate parts, it attempts a balanced treatment of the cultural resources of the Chalmette riverfront. Part I, by Jerome Greene, covers the history of the Battle of New Orleans. This account, entitled "The New Orleans Campaign of 1814-1815 in Relation to the Chalmette Battlefield," places particular emphasis on the practical side of the British and American military operations, an aspect of the battle which has often been neglected in previous histories. It draws heavily on primary sources, including some newly discovered archival material, and offers a fresh perspective on the military activities of the combatants that is directly relevant to the purpose of the overall study. Part II, "Historical Investigations of the Civilian Occupation of the Chalmette Battlefield," examines the history of civilian land use and landownership within the assessment zone. This middle section of the report, written by Jill-Karen Yakubik, builds upon the excellent previous scholarship of Samuel Wilson, Jr. (1956, 1965), and, to avoid unnecessary redundancy in historical coverage, it excludes detailed treatment of the Beauregard property and the National Cemetery. The last part of the report, Part III, is a multi-author work edited by Ted Birkedal. Entitled "Archeological Investigations of the Chalmette Riverfront," this final section is devoted to the results of the archeological investigations and their integration with the findings of the historical research. Here, all the various lines of evidence are brought together and given close scrutiny in order to produce a revised historical geography and archeological overview of the Chalmette Unit river frontage.

Map *i-1.* Location of Chalmette Unit, Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve

Drawn by Lyndi Hubbell for the National Park Service.



LOCATION OF CHALMETTE UNIT JEAN LAFITTE NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK

Figure *i-1*. General view across the Chalmette Battlefield to the southwest showing the Chalmette Monument to the right, and the Beauregard House to the left. Battery 3 is at the left edge of the distant, central clump of oaks.

Photographer: Ted Birkedal, National Park Service.

Figure *i-2.* Oblique aerial view to the northeast of the Chalmette Unit (1984). The Chalmette Slip is in the foreground; the Kaiser Aluminum Plant is at the east edge of the park unit. The 1984 levee flanks the Mississippi River bank; the St. Bernard Parish Sewage Treatment Plant sits beside the Levee Road in the eastern quarter of the Chalmette Unit.

Photograph courtesy of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

Figure *i-3.* Vertical aerial photograph of the Chalmette Unit, Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve on March 5, 1981 (1:6500). Note the many ditch lines running landward from the levee edge. The Rodriguez Canal is clearly visible as the large ditch running in a slightly diagonal path from north- northeast to south-southwest in the western third of the photograph.

Chalmette Unit, Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve.

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PART I

THE NEW ORLEANS CAMPAIGN OF 1814-1815 IN RELATION TO THE CHALMETTE BATTLEFIELD

Jerome Greene

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Jerome Greene

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CHAPTER 1

THE HISTORIC SCENE

Southeastern Louisiana is a region composed of myriad waterways and landforms all mutually impacting one another. New Orleans has always been surrounded by wet lowlands fed by closely adjacent rivers, lakes, and canals. Historically, the presence of numerous watery approaches has affected the security of the city, making it ever vulnerable to enemy ships plying the Gulf of Mexico (Map I-1). Several routes have drawn the attention of offensive and defensive strategists, namely Lakes Borgne and Pontchartrain north and east of the city, the Mississippi River, and Barataria Bay south of New Orleans. The fact that the intervening lowlands were intersected by a plethora of canals and bayous of varying depths made the country around the city appear even more accessible for potential enemies.

Especially inviting in 1814 seemed the route via Lake Borgne (Map I-2). Despite the shallowness of the water, a few deep channels existed that promoted navigation, particularly of flat-bottomed craft. Average depth of the lake was nine feet; its shores offered numerous passages in the form of bayous and inlets. Those located on the southeast shore afforded determined adversaries a more or less unobstructed approach to New Orleans. One of these, Bayou Dupré, twisted through the marshlands to a point within two miles of the Mississippi and but ten miles below the city. Yet another, Bayou Bienvenu, came within five miles of New Orleans and approached the property on which the 1814-1815 Battle of New Orleans occurred.[1]

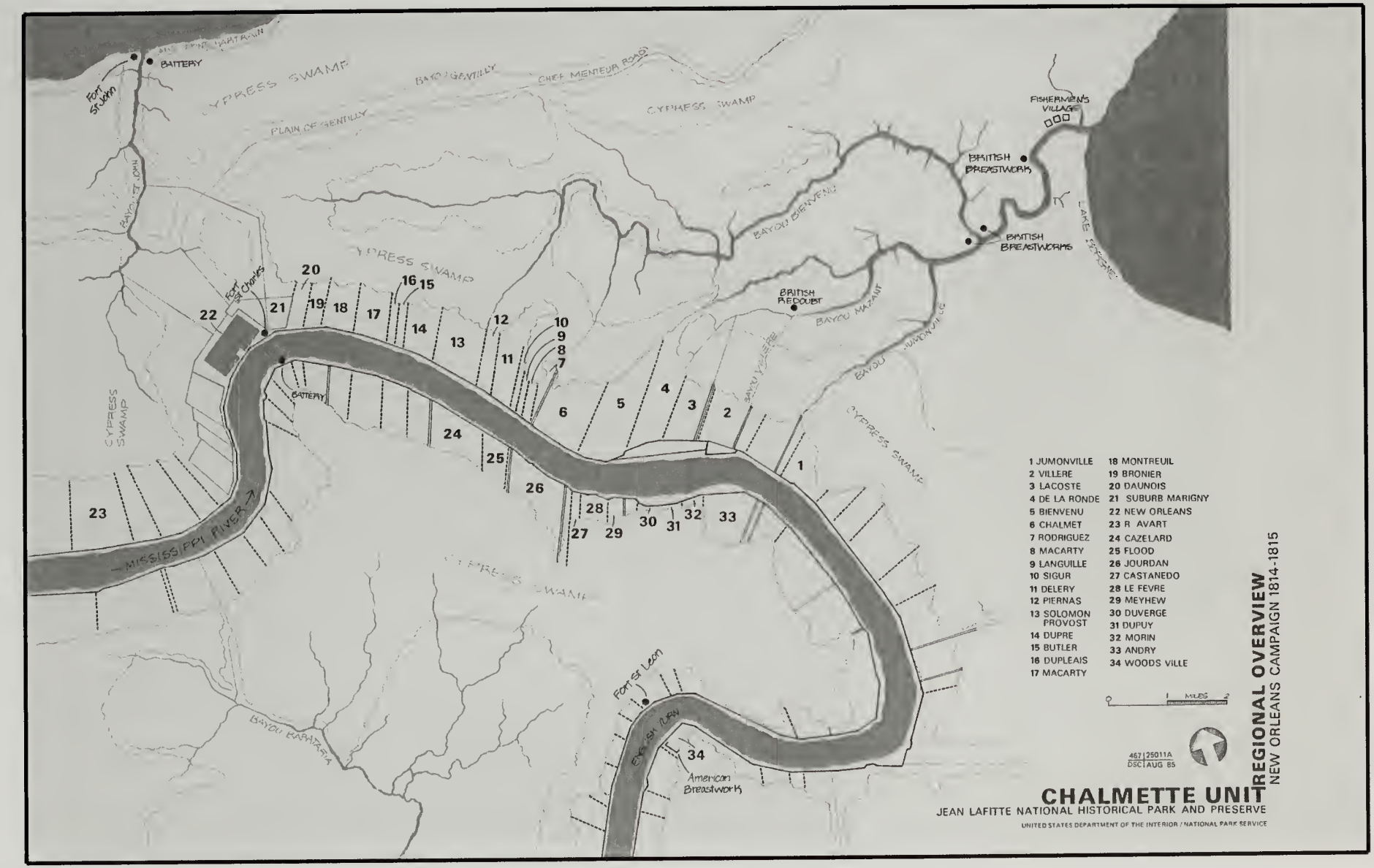
The area encompassing the Chalmette Battlefield represents an old section of Louisiana formed of centuries of sediment as the Mississippi River sought to reclaim the region from the Gulf of Mexico. The cumulative deposits formed natural levees, ridges of terrain that bordered the stream and gently sloped away into swampland. Around Chalmette, the natural levees rose to a height of approximately ten feet, with the ground behind extending for almost two miles—and sometimes farther—before reaching a belt of cypress swamp. At the battleground proper the extent of dry land was restricted to approximately 1,500

1 See Samuel H. Lockett, *Louisiana as It Is: A Geographical Topographical Description of the State*, ed. by Lauren C. Post (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1969), pp. 125-30.

Troop Movement Map, New Orleans Campaign, 1814-1815

Map I-1. Regional Overview

Denver Service Center, National Park Service. Format changes to original map by Judy Kesler, National Park Service.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CYPRESS SWAMP
BAYOU GENTILLY
CHEF MENTEUR ROAD
PLAIN OF GENTILLY
CYPRESS SWAMP
FISHERMEN'S VILLAGE
BRITISH BREASTWORK
BRITISH BREASTWORKS
LAKE BORGNE
BAYOU BIENVENU
BRITISH REDOUBT
BAYOU MAZANT
BAYOU JUMONVILLE
BAYOU VILLERE
CYPRESS SWAMP
BAYOU ST JOHN
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FORT ST CHARLES
BATTERY
MISSISSIPPI RIVER
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FORT LEON
ENGLISH TURN
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2 VILLERE
3 LACOSTE
4 DE LA RONDE
5 BIENVENU
6 CHALMET
7 RODRIGUEZ
8 MACARTY
9 LANGUILLE
10 SIGUR
11 DELERY
12 PIERNAS
13 SOLOMON PROVOST
14 DUPRE
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19 BRONIER
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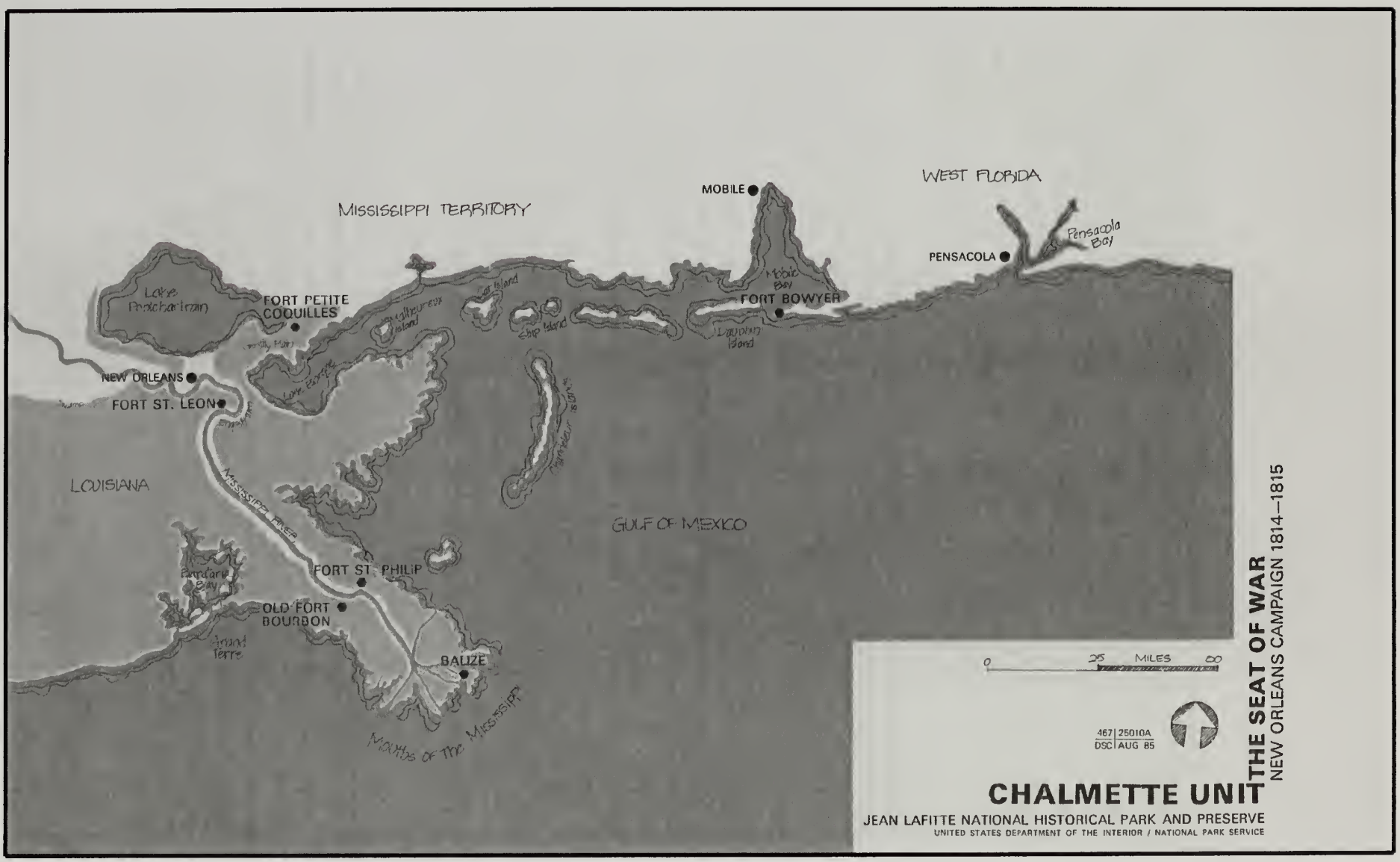
JEAN LAFITTE NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK AND PRESERVE
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR / NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
REGIONAL OVERVIEW
NEW ORLEANS CAMPAIGN 1814-1815

Troop Movement Map, New Orleans Campaign, 1814-1815

Map I-2. The Seat of War

Denver Service Center, National Park Service. Format changes to original map by Judy Kesler, National Park Service.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WEST FLORIDA
MOBILE
PENSACOLA
Pensacola Bay
Mobile Bay
FORT BOWYER
Dauphin Island
Ship Island
Cat Island
Malheureux Island
Lake Pontchartrain
FORT PETITE COQUILLES
NEW ORLEANS
FORT ST. LEON
LOUISIANA
MISSISSIPPI RIVER
GULF OF MEXICO
FORT ST. PHILIP
OLD FORT BOURBON
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JEAN LAFITTE NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK AND PRESERVE
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR / NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
THE SEAT OF WAR
NEW ORLEANS CAMPAIGN 1814—1815

yards, a factor of profound significance in the course of events at that point. Beyond the cypress swamp lay the wet marshlands, or "prairies" bordering Lake Borgne. In 1814 this variegated landscape was intersected by numerous canals and drainage ditches by which means overflow water was conducted from the Mississippi through bayous into Lake Borgne.[2] The sedimentary mass composing the river banks, formed over eons by river deposition, consists of a variety of soils affected ultimately by the proximity of the Gulf of Mexico. Saline deposits, as well as marine fossils, exist in the soil of the area, indicative of the ever-present action of the water through the region. Texturally, the soils run from sands to clays, both possessing the high mineral and organic content conducive to good agricultural production. Geologists have identified six types in the country immediately adjacent to New Orleans. One of these, Yazoo Clay, has been indicated as the predominant soil in the vicinity of Chalmette and the battlefield. Characteristics of Yazoo Clay include its dark brown color and the loamy consistency of its topsoil. Six inches below the surface, the loam turns into brown clay of waxy texture. Because of the relative dearth of sand and silt, the topsoil of Yazoo Clay readily lends itself to being tilled. The soil type seems especially endemic to places where the Mississippi overflowed its banks and the water subsided with no current, making Yazoo Clay well suited for agricultural pursuits.[3] Historical accounts bear out the existence of clay soil in the vicinity of the battleground. The British artillerist Alexander Dickson complained of it, noting that

> after a continuance of dry weather [the clay] becomes quite firm and hard, but the operation of only a few hours of rain, renders it so soft and greasy, that in the fields a man is over the shoes every step. Nor are the roads a bit better, for being all unpaved, the rain renders them deep and boggy.[4]

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2 *Lower Mississippi River Delta. Reports on the Geology of Plaquemines and St. Bernard Parishes,* Geological Bulletin No. 8 (New Orleans: Department of Conservation, Louisiana Geological Survey, 1936), p. 25; Thomas D. Rice and Lewis Griswold, *Soil Survey of New Orleans Area, Louisiana* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1904), pp. 10-11. A. Lacarrière Latour, *Historical Memoir of the War in West Florida and Louisiana in 1814-15* (orig. pub. 1816; reprint, Gainesville: University of Florida Press, 1964), p. 80.

3 Rice and Griswald, *Soil Survey*, pp. 11, 15-16.

4 Alexander Dickson, "Journal of Operations in Louisiana, 1814-1815," *The Louisiana Historical Quarterly* XLIV, Nos. 3 and 4 (January-April 1961), p. 39.

At the place where the Mississippi River fronted the battleground, its stream was between 800 and 1,000 yards wide. In the winter of 1814-15, the river was high so that it approximated the level of the adjoining terrain. Inundation, which occasionally occurred, was partly checked by the presence of a man-made levee, or low embankment of earth, raised along the bank.[5] "Should this yield to the increased pressure of the river," recorded an observer, "its waters rush with impetuosity through the break and sweep away every thing in their course."[6] At least two sources commented upon the presence of great numbers of immense tree trunks entangled along the banks of the Mississippi, these having originated far upstream and been carried down by the current.[7]

In 1814 the tracts bordering the river and encompassing the battleground were used for agricultural purposes. Few roads existed, and these mainly stretched along the high ground near the river. A major artery of land transport lay next to the levee; this road followed the Mississippi southeast to the settlements at English Turn and northwest into New Orleans. Beyond the levee, the terrain was flat, gently sloping downward toward the cypress swamp for a distance of between 1,000 and 1,500 yards. This interval comprised the extent of cultivable ground and was intersected at places with drainage ditches and rail fences.[8] The ditches averaged 5 to 6 feet wide and 4 to 5 feet deep. They generally bordered either side of the small auxiliary roads, or lanes, that separated the plantation properties from each other. More ditches were situated to drain every three or four acres of the sugar cane fields which occupied most of the ground. Like those delineating property boundaries, these ran from the levee to the swamp, a distance of between 1,000 and 1,500 yards. Besides rail fences, some were made of pickets several feet high with points imbedded two or three

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5 John Henry Cooke, *A Narrative of Events in the South of France, and the Attack on New Orleans, in 1814 and 1815* (London: T. and W. Boone, 1835), pp. 167-68; "Sir John Maxwell Tylden Journal, 1814-1815," (Manuscripts and Archives Division, New York Public Library), p. 49; Latour, *Historical Memoir*, p. 81; Major Forrest, "Journal of the Operations Against New Orleans in 1814 and 1815," *The Louisiana Historical Quarterly* XLIV (January-April 1961), p. 116.

6 Abraham Redwood Ellery, "Notes and Comments upon the Subject of a Yankee Song entitled, 'The Retreat of the English,'" (unpublished manuscript dated 1815 in the Manuscripts and Archives Division, New York Public Library).

7 Cooke, *Narrative of Events*, pp. 167-68; "Sir John Maxwell Tylden Journal, 1814-1815," p. 49.

8 Forrest, "Journal of the Operations," pp. 115-16.

feet into the earth. Fences were often raised to border the drainage ditches; along the lanes separating plantations they were erected on either side of the road.[9]

Several properties composed the acreage of the New Orleans Battlefield and its environs. These were, from upstream, the Macarty, Rodriguez, Chalmette, Bienvenu, de La Ronde, Lacoste, and Villeré Plantations (Map I-1). The engagement of December 23, 1814, occurred on the de La Ronde, Lacoste, and Villeré properties, while those of December 28, 1814, January 1, 1815, and January 8, 1815, took place on the Rodriguez, Chalmette, and Bienvenu holdings, although cognate operations occurred on all the tracts. Like most of the others, the Chalmette Plantation occupied a somewhat rectangular piece of ground that stretched more than 1,000 yards along the Mississippi and ranged between 1,000 and 1,500 yards inland to the cypress swamp. The neighboring Rodriguez property was a wedge-shaped tract of small proportion, bordered on the Chalmette side by an old millrace, or canal, that ran from the levee well into the swamp.[10] The flat terrain of Chalmette was interspersed by buildings and groves near the river, but the vast majority of land was given over to sugar cane, which in December, 1814, had been harvested so that most of the broad fields were filled with stubble. Farther downstream the river turned gently to the left, and the structures and groves of adjacent plantations could be seen along the Mississippi. On the north end of the Chalmette property stood the cypress swamp. At the Rodriguez side of the tract, the swamp was closest to the river, about one-half mile distant. As it trended toward the Bienvenu Plantation, the swamp line arced radically inland so that the plain between river and swamp became almost two miles across. Thereafter the line turned back toward the Mississippi, so that at Lacoste's and Villeré's properties, the interval between stream and wood reached a distance of approximately one mile.[11]

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9 "Particulars in relation to Battle of N. Orleans furnished me by a French gentleman, in 1828—Summer," Oran Follett Papers, Box 2, Manuscript Division, Cincinnati Historical Society; Dagmar Renshaw Lebreton, "The Men Who Won the Battle of New Orleans," *Louisiana Historical Quarterly* XXXVIII (July 1955), p. 28; Wilburt S. Brown, *The Amphibious Campaign for West Florida and Louisiana, 1814-1815: A Critical Review of Strategy and Tactics at New Orleans* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 1969), p. 141; Charles B. Brooks, *The Siege of New Orleans* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1961), pp. 180-81.

10 Ignace de Lino de Chalmette (alternatively spelled "Chalmet") owned the main battlefield property. An aged man, he died February 10, 1815, scarcely one month after the Battle of New Orleans. Brooks, *Siege of New Orleans*, p. 38; Powell Casey, *Louisiana in the War of 1812* (Baton Rouge: privately published, 1963), p. 105.

11 Brooks, *Siege of New Orleans*, p. 180.

The Chalmette tract, like the others, was traversed by several wet ditches. Three proved significant in the course of the battles. A double ditch and fence ran perpendicular from Rodriguez Canal to skirt the swamp for 550 yards before the fence turned sharply into the woods. Approximately four hundred yards east of the canal, another ditch ran diagonally from the swamp to the river; 150 yards farther, another ditch paralleled its course to the levee. As indicated, most of the cultivated land contained fields of sugar cane. Part of that land at Chalmette was so planted, particularly the ground lying between the first and second ditches. Between Rodriguez Canal and the first ditch grew an abundance of weeds and sedge grass, most of which had been cut. Some tall sedge grass remained along the ditch as did numerous bushes, serving to partly obscure the view eastward from Rodriguez Canal.[12]

Besides sugar cane, other staples grown in the area included corn, rice, indigo, cotton, and tobacco. Garden vegetables found in the region below New Orleans comprised lettuce, carrots, onions, sweet potatoes, turnips, and cabbages. The cypress swamp encompassed more than cypress trees, and included some of the following: sycamore, poplar, sweet gum, black willow, hackberry, tupelo, persimmon, pumpkin, ash, red maple, box elder, American elm, winged elm, walnut, willow oak, and overcup oak. At least three species were encountered but rarely—American holly, honey locust, and red mulberry. In addition, domestic fruit-bearing trees, mostly peach, orange, and fig, abounded on the plantations.[13]

The Macarty property—that bordering the Rodriguez tract on the north (west)—held a profusion of ornamental garden growth, as several contemporary maps and pictures attest.[14] According to one source, the Macarty garden

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12 *Ibid.*, pp. 180-81; "Particulars in relation to Battle of New Orleans"; "Sir John Maxwell Tylden Journal, 1814-1815," pp. 48-49; Bernhard, Duke of Saxe-Weimar Eisenach, *Travels through North America, during the Years 1825 and 1825* (2 vols.; Philadelphia: Carey, Lea, and Carey, 1828), I, p. 65; Lebreton, "Men Who Won the Battle of New Orleans," p. 28.

13 "Sir John Maxwell Tylden Journal, 1814-1815," p. 52; William Darby, *A Geographical Description of the State of Louisiana, the Southern Part of the Mississippi, and Territory of Alabama* (New York: James Olmstead, 1817), p. 73.

14 See Benjamin Henry Latrobe, *Impressions Respecting New Orleans, Diary and Sketches, 1818-1820*, ed. by Samuel Wilson, Jr. (New York: Columbia University Press, 1951); Abraham Redwood Ellery, "Plan shewing the disposition of the American Troops, when attacked by the British Army, on the morning of the 8th Jany, 1815," Manuscripts and Archives Division, New York Public Library; A. Lacarrière Latour, "Plan of the Attack and Defence of the American Lines below New Orleans on the 8th January, 1815," in Latour, *Historical Memoir*, plate VII; Hyacinthe Laclotte, "Defeat of the British Army, 12,000 strong, under the Command of Sir Edward Packenham [*sic*] in the attack of the American Lines defended by 3,600 Militia commanded by Major General Andrew Jackson, January 8th 1815, on Chalmette plain

> covers not less than 4 acres, is laid out in square walks & flower beds in the old French style. It is entirely enclosed by a thick hedge of orange trees, which have been suffered to run up to 15 or 16 feet high [as of ca. 1818] on the flanks and rear, but which are shorn down to the highth [*sic*] of 4 or 5 feet along the [levee] road. The walks are bordered by very large myrtles cut into the shape of large hay cocks, about 8 feet high & as much in diameter. There are so many of them, and they are so exactly equal in size & form that the effect is curious if not elegant.[15]

The garden fronted the Macarty House, "a mansion surrounded entirely by a portico or gallery of two stories" with an exceptionally large roof.[16] The hedge bordered the front and sides of the Macarty property and, on the south side, ran from the levee road back to the northwest corner of the Rodriguez House, which, judging from the maps, was devoid of such ornamental shrubbery. A few trees stood behind the Rodriguez House, however.[17]

Most of the historical maps do not show what kinds of ornamental vegetation surrounded the Chalmette mansion and outbuildings. The mansion was situated about 140 yards from the levee road. According to a sketch diagram prepared by the British artillerist Alexander Dickson (Figure I-1), the land fronting the house to the levee road consisted of an ornamental garden divided by walkways into squares in a manner similar to that at Macarty's. The whole was encompassed by a "high Laurel Hedge."[18] An illustration of the battlefield by Hyacinthe Laclotte does not show all of the Chalmette buildings and instead

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14 (cont.) five miles below New Orleans, on the left bank of the Mississipi [*sic*]," Prints Division, New York Public Library.

15 Latrobe, *Impressions Respecting New Orleans*, pp. 43-45.

16 *Ibid.*, p. 45. Describing the mansions in the battlefield area, one visitor wrote generically of them: "The mansion-house, commonly, is situated about one hundred paces from the entrance, and an avenue of laurel trees, which are cut in pyramidical form, and pride of China trees, leads to the door. The most of these houses are two stories high, and are surrounded with piazzas and covered galleries. Back of the elegant mansion-house stand the negro eabins, like a camp, and behind [them] the sugarcane fields, which extend to the marshy cypress woods about a mile back, called the cypress swamp." Bernhard, *Travels through North America*, I, p. 65.

17 Ellery, "Plan shewing the disposition of the American Troops"; Latour, "Plan of the Attack and Defence of the American Lines"; Laelotte, "Defeat of the British Army."

18 Dickson, "Journal of Operations in Louisiana," p. 25.

depicts only their ruins after their having been demolished by the American artillery. Nonetheless, Laclotte's drawing shows nothing of the hedge that Dickson reported, only a few trees and bushes near the chimney of the destroyed structure; a few more trees and bushes were depicted on the interval of terrain lying between Rodriguez Canal and the Chalmette complex.[19]

The next plantation below Chalmette was that of Bienvenu, which also stood on the ground occupied by the British army in 1814-15. Little is known about the decorative flora that surrounded it, but it, too, was presumably embraced within hedges of laurel in proximity to numerous orange trees. "We found oranges still on the trees," wrote one British soldier, "and as the store houses which our troops occupied were full of sugar, we converted these oranges into good wholesome Marmalade."[20] Adjoining the Bienvenu Plantation stood that of de La Ronde. Like the others, it consisted of a mansion house behind which were warehouses, outbuildings, and slave quarters. Maps of the de La Ronde property indicate that the plantation house had a garden with hedges bordering its front toward the river in a manner typical of all these houses. The next tract, that of Lacoste, had a similar, though by no means identical, garden arrangement, as did Lacoste's eastward neighbor, Villeré, although the latter's complex of outbuildings stretched rather linearly along the road fronting the Mississippi (Figure I-1).[21]

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19 Laclotte, "Defeat of the British Army."

20 "Aitchison Diary," Historic New Orleans Collection.

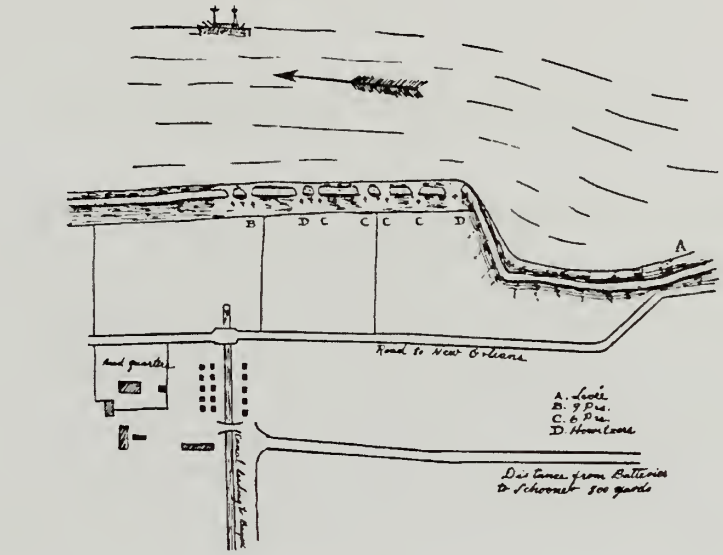
21 For generalized descriptions of this area occupied by the British troops, see Cooke, *Narrative of Events*, pp. 167-68; Forrest, "Journal of Operations," p. 116. For diagrams of these respective properties, see Latour, "Plan of the Attack made by Major Gen. Jackson on a Division of the British Army commanded by Major Gen. Keane, on the 23rd December 1814, at 7 o'clock at night," in *Historical Memoir*, plate VI. A sketch map of the Villeré ground, somewhat at variance with Latour, appears in Dickson, "Joumal of Operations in Louisiana, 1814-1815," p. 11.

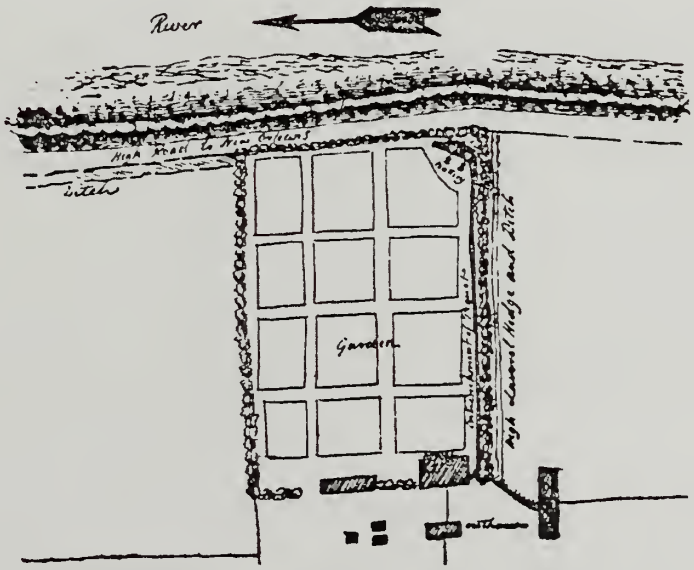
Figure I-1. Sketch Maps prepared by Colonel Alexander Dickson in his "Journal of Operations in Louisiana, 1814-1815."

Top: Location of the battery erected on the river bank by the British during the night of December 25-26, 1814

Bottom: Location of the battery installed by the British along the levee road on the edge of the Chalmette Plantation

By kind permission of The Royal Artillery Historical Trust.


B
D C
C
C C
D
A
Road to New Orleans
A. Locks
B. 9 Pds.
C. 6 Pds.
D. Howitzers
Distance from Batteries to Schooner 500 yards


River
High Road to New Orleans
Garden
High Canal Ridge and Ditch

CHAPTER 2

THE DEFENSE OF NEW ORLEANS, 1814

British strategy against New Orleans in the autumn of 1814 seemed but a natural course of action to complement previous military successes in the War of 1812. After their victory at Washington, the British turned their attention southward as London strategists sought to realize a grand plan for concluding the war that had been waged with the United States over the past two years. The southern design, if successful, would seal off the Mississippi River, thereby destroying interior commerce while simultaneously providing them military occupation of a broad tract to be used for bargaining in any peace negotiations. Capturing the port city of New Orleans, the key to the British strategy, was left to the British military and naval command headquartered in North America.[1]

While the British high command deliberated over the best means to capture New Orleans, United States civil and military officials remained almost oblivious to the foreign threat on the southern coast. There the preoccupation had been with British- and Spanish-incited Indians, notably the Creeks, whose depredations in the region north of the Gulf of Mexico had caused wide-scale destruction in that area of American settlement. Sent to quell the Indian disturbances was Major General Andrew Jackson, formerly of the Tennessee Militia, and then, since May 1814 and his return from subjugating the southern tribesmen, commander of the Seventh Military District embracing Louisiana, Mississippi Territory, and Tennessee. Jackson was not completely ignorant of British objectives, however, despite assurances from his government that British operations in the South posed no threat.[2]

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1 For factors bearing on the British southern strategy, see John K. Mahon, "British Command Decisions Relative to the Battle of New Orleans," *Louisiana History* VI (Winter 1965), pp. 55, 62. For an overview of the war, see John K. Mahon, *The War of 1812* (Gainesville: University of Florida Press, 1972), pp. 22-23.

2 Wilburt S. Brown, *The Amphibious Campaign for West Florida and Louisiana, 1814-1815: A Critical Review of Strategy and Tactics at New Orleans* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 1969), pp. 21, 23; David Lindsey, *Andrew Jackson and John C. Calhoun* (Woodbury, New York: Barron's Educational Series, Inc., 1973), pp. 22-23.

Anticipating military action of some kind, Jackson requisitioned munitions to be shipped to New Orleans during the summer of 1814, though they ultimately were delayed for several months. He also sought men for his command from the states that stood to lose most from an invasion of the lower Mississippi. From Georgia, Kentucky, and Tennessee, Jackson, by late November, garnered 10,000 militia, some of whom went to garrison posts in the Creek country. Nearly 4,000 more were mustered from Mississippi and Louisiana, and Jackson ultimately had more than 2,300 regulars, making his aggregate force more than 16,000 strong.[3] In November 1814, with 4,000 of these men, Jackson struck the Spanish post of Pensacola in Florida, capturing the place which had harbored renegade Creeks and which might yet serve as a point of British assembly preparatory to a strike against New Orleans. Three days after taking Pensacola, Jackson led his army west to defend Mobile and New Orleans.[4]

Most of the militia missed Jackson's victory at Pensacola; many were stationed at remote outposts while others were in the process of mustering in their home states. Tennesseans under Brigadier General John Coffee fought at Pensacola and were en route overland to Mobile despite pervasive sickness in the ranks. Though they were largely unarmed, other Tennessee troops under Brigadier General William Carroll moved south via the Cumberland, Ohio, and Mississippi rivers. Kentuckians, commanded by Major General John Thomas, similarly journeyed south by river, mostly unequipped. The interested regular army complement consisted of troops assigned to the Seventh Military District, notably the Second, Third, Seventh, Thirty-ninth, and Forty-fourth Infantry regiments, besides some artillerymen. In addition to the land forces, Jackson had limited naval resources at New Orleans: six gunboats, a sloop, and a few lesser vessels under Master Commander Daniel T. Patterson. But virtually all lower river traffic, including Patterson's flotilla, remained at a standstill because of a British naval blockade at the mouth of the Mississippi.[5] With such an assortment of men at his disposal, Jackson hoped to thwart the British designs on the southern coast and specifically against New Orleans. There the British army would meet its strongest test, ending, wrote Secretary of War James Monroe, "its

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3 John Spencer Bassett, *The Life of Andrew Jackson* (2 vols.; New York: The Macmillan Company, 1916), I, pp. 163-64; A. Lacarrière Latour, *Historical Memoir of the War in West Florida and Louisiana in 1814-15* (orig. pub. 1816; reprint, Gainesville: University of Florida Press, 1964), p. 66.

4 Latour, *Historical Memoir*, pp. 45, 48-51.

5 Bassett, *Life of Andrew Jackson*, pp. 146-47; Brown, *Amphibious Campaign*, p. 23; Charles B. Brooks, *The Siege of New Orleans* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1961), pp. 36-37.

inglorious career in such a repulse as will reflect new honor on the American army." [6]

New Orleans was particularly vulnerable to attack in the autumn of 1814. Situated near the mouth of the Mississippi, the city held prime importance to the interior states that shipped their produce through its port to the coastal states as well as to a growing world market.[7] These facts had long been known to the British, who as early as the 1770s schemed to block the mouth of the river and attack the city via Lake Pontchartrain and the Mississippi from the north. That plan, never executed, was predicated on the belief that the defenses of New Orleans were weak under the Spanish administration and that the populace would support Britain against Spain. Similarly, a detailed British stratagem prepared in 1773 called for an attack on the city from above, although no defenses on the lower river could impede a naval squadron advancing by that route.[8] In 1782 the city's defenses consisted of "an old and ruinous stockade seven feet high without a ditch" with two dilapidated batteries and a few mounted guns scattered about elsewhere. With Great Britain and Spain at war with each other, New Orleans appeared as an easy target for a British force. Instead, the British post of Pensacola fell before Spain's soldiers and a British counterattack never materialized. Similar, unfruitful plans for assaulting the city were prepared by the British in 1796. Thus, the 1814 British objective was not without precedent.[9]

Added incentives for the British to attack New Orleans included its relatively remote geographical location from the political center of the United States; further, the diverse ethnic population was of doubtful loyalty to the central government and might easily be swayed to support a foreign invasion. By

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6 Monroe to Jackson, Dec. 10, 1814, Andrew Jackson Papers, Manuscript Division, Chicago Historical Society. For a recent treatment of Jackson's performance during the New Orleans campaign as seen against the wider perspective of the War of 1812, see Robert V. Remini, *Andrew Jackson and the Course of American Empire, 1767-1821* (New York: Harper and Row, Publishers, 1977), pp. 246-97.

7 James Stirling, "Memorandum regarding the Condition of Louisiana, 1813," p. 1, Melville Papers, Historic New Orleans Collection, New Orleans.

8 "Plan of Attack on New Orleans," ca. 1770, Manuscript Division, Historical Society of Pennsylvania. For details of the enterprise projected in 1773, see Joseph G. Tregle, Jr., "British Spy Along the Mississippi: Thomas Hutchins and the Defenses of New Orleans, 1773," *Louisiana History* VIII (Fall 1967), pp. 321-26. The author makes a strong argument that the 1773 report provided the basis for the British campaign of 1814. *Ibid.*, pp. 326-27.

9 Jack D .L. Holmes, "Robert Ross' Plan for an English Invasion of Louisiana in 1782," *Louisiana History* V (Spring 1964), pp. 161, 167, 176-77.

capturing the city, the interior states of Kentucky, Ohio, Tennessee, and parts of others might be held hostage to the dictates of Great Britain. In 1812, a British thrust against New Orleans was proposed as a diversion from military activities in Canada. [10] And in 1813, London proposed an assault that would send warships up the Mississippi to act in concert with an army debarking from vessels in Lake Pontchartrain. "The City," wrote an exponent of such an attack, "is not defended by works of any kind, and should our force be proportioned to that of the Enemy and the landing fortunately made good, there can be little apprehension of the consequences."[11]

Yet the Americans were cognizant of the state of the defenses of New Orleans, many of which had been allowed to deteriorate drastically during and following the Spanish administration. In 1813, efforts were geared toward improving fortifications at The Balize near the mouth of the Mississippi, at Fort St. Philip at Plaquemine Turn on the river, and in the bays and lakes around New Orleans. It was generally believed that the British Army would land at Mobile, where existing Spanish defenses might protect a debarkation. A movement up the Mississippi was viewed as unlikely because of the difficulty in holding and supplying a post along its banks. The most direct approach involved crossing Lakes Borgne and Pontchartrain and establishing a foothold on the Mississippi above or below the city, although such a landing "would be attended with great difficulty and inconvenience."[12]

Any such planned approach, of course, had to consider the state of the city's defenses, which were indeed marginal in 1813-14. Little had been done to improve on the derelict fortifications built and maintained by the Spanish and turned over to American authorities in 1803. As of 1813, the permanent works defending New Orleans numbered six: the battery at The Balize, Fort St. Philip, Fort St. Leon at English Turn on the Mississippi, Fort St. John near the city on Lake Pontchartrain, Fort St. Charles at the lower edge of the city, and the partially completed Fort Petite Coquille guarding the Rigolets Pass between Lakes Borgne and Pontchartrain. Most of the works were in disrepair and lacked supplies,

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10 Stirling Memorandum; Mahon, "British Command Decisions," p. 53; Richard K. Murdoch, A British Report on West Florida and Louisiana, November, 1812," *Florida Historical Quarterly* (July 1964), pp. 49-50.

11 Stirling Memorandum.

12 "Lieutenant Carter, relative to the vulnerable points, and means of defense at Orleans, presented by the Hon. Allen B. McGruder, Jan. 26 1813. To the Honorable, The Secretary of the Navy," Manuscript Division, Historical Society of Pennsylvania.

garrisons, and requisite artillery materiel. A flat-bottomed naval frigate designed to mount forty-two cannon and operate in the shallow waters around the city had been under construction, but this work was suspended by the Navy. Only Patterson's gunboats made up the naval defense of New Orleans in 1814.[13]

Fears of British intervention, preceded by fears of British-inspired Indian attack, caused Louisiana Governor William C. Claiborne to petition state citizens for assistance in defense of the state. Only about 470 men protected New Orleans proper in the summer of 1814, a force soon doubled by the arrival of U.S. regulars in the vicinity. In September 1814, a Committee of Defense was organized in New Orleans to cooperate with state and national officials in improving defenses around the city. Fortifications were begun at key strategic points in the surrounding bays and bayous, and Claiborne stationed volunteer troops and artillery at English Turn, Barataria, and Bayou Lafourche, Fort St. Philip, and English Turn.[14] The Governor's preparation of the militia had occurred at Andrew Jackson's urging in response to entreaties made to him at Mobile, where Jackson believed the British planned to land their army. Jackson further directed an inspection of all fortifications in the vicinity of New Orleans. Despite Claiborne's efforts, there arose much disagreement over defensive matters in the legislature, particularly between the memberships of the Committee of Defense and the Committee of Public Safety, and the Governor's attempts to achieve cohesion in purpose remained thwarted.[15] In November, one state legislator nonetheless addressed the issue of defense with renewed urgency, specifying proposals for immediate execution to defend the city against the British.[16] But mere recognition of obvious defensive needs did not ensure their fulfillment; in some instances, undisciplined militiamen refused to do the hard labor needed for improving the works and were more interested in pillaging local inhabitants. Such was the case attending the raising of an earthen parapet at

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13 Bassett, *Life of Andrew Jackson*, I, p. 146; Andrew Jackson, *Correspondence of Andrew Jackson*, ed. by John Spencer Bassett (7 vols.; Washington: Carnegie Institution of Washington, 1926-35), II, p. v; Powell A. Casey, *Louisiana in the War of 1812* (Baton Rouge: privately published, 1963), pp. 12, 13, 19; Brown, *Amphibious Campaign*, p. 72.

14 Latour, *Historical Memoir*, p. 29; Casey, *Louisiana in the War of 1812*, p. 13; Brooks, *Siege of New Orleans*, p. 73; Robin Reilly, *The British at the Gates: The New Orleans Campaign in the War of 1812* (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1974), p. 203.

15 *Ibid.*, p. 210; Marquis James, *Andrew Jackson, The Border Captain* (New York: The Literary Guild, 1933), p. 212.

16 See "Opinion of Mr. Favrot upon the Principal Means of Defense to be Employed for the State of Louisiana Against the English, Nov. 19th 1814," trans. from the French, Louisiana State Museum Library, New Orleans; "Don Pedro Favrot, A Creole Pepys," *The Louisiana Historical Quarterly* XXVIII (July 1945), pp. 724-25.

English Turn on the left bank of the Mississippi, where Governor Claiborne had to personally address the soldiers to achieve their cooperation in erecting the defense.[17] In a series of general orders, Claiborne had further sought to put his militia in readiness and to encourage the organization of veterans' units composed of men whose advanced age would normally exempt them from military duty. Other special units of cavalry were formed, along with a battalion of free men of color composed largely of refugees from Santo Domingo and supplemented by a complement of former Louisiana slaves. But the state militia in November 1814 represented a discordant element of heretofore unknown military potential.[18]

Existing defenses and defenders notwithstanding, Jackson, Claiborne, and others concerned over the prospects of an imminent enemy invasion had to ponder the probabilities of where such an assault would occur. Discounting the likelihood of an approach up the fortified Mississippi, the logical routes to the city from the east remained through Lake Borgne to the Gentilly Plain, a high, dry stretch of terrain that separated impenetrable cypress swamps and afforded a direct road into New Orleans; through Lake Pontchartrain to Bayou St. John, immediately above the city; and across Lake Borgne to dank bayous leading to the Mississippi below the City and navigable only to small boats (Map I-2). Lesser approaches lay to the west, through Bayou Lafourche and the so-called Lake Barataria, the latter feeding into a labyrinth of bayous entering the Mississippi near the city that historically had served the interests of smugglers.[19]

The advantages and disadvantages of these different approaches were in the mind of General Jackson when he arrived in New Orleans from Mobile on the

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17 "Journal of an Officer, 1814-1815," *DeBow's Review* XVI (1854), p. 643; Casey, *Louisiana in the War of 1812*, p. 17.

18 Bassett, Life of Andrew Jackson, I, p. 159; Latour, *Historical Memoir*, pp. 25-28, 51-52, 66-67. See Jackson's proclamation to free slaves of Louisiana, September 21, 1814, in *ibid.*, pp. xxxi-xxxii.

19 Bassett, *Life of Andrew Jackson*, I, pp. 144-146; Jackson, *Correspondence of Andrew Jackson*, II, p. 123; James, *Border Captain*, pp. 221-22; Brown, *Amphibious Campaign*, p. 66; Casey, *Louisiana in the War of 1812*, p. 45; Brooks, *Siege of New Orleans*, p. 86. For a contemporary opinion on the unlikelihood of an enemy ascending the Mississippi, see Howell Tatum, "Major Howell Tatum's Journal While Acting Topographical Engineer (1814) to General Jackson commanding the Seventh Military District," ed. by John Spencer Bassett, *Smith College Studies in History* VII (October 1921-April 1922), pp. 99-100. For a British intelligence report of November 1814 discussing these routes, see "Observations Naval and Military for the benefit of the Commanders of His Britanic Majesties [*sic*] Forces destined for the Reduction of Louisiana," British Public Record Office (BPRO), London, War Office 1, Vol. 143. For the contemporary cartographic appearance of the region, see William Darby, "A Map of the State of Louisiana with Part of the Mississippi Territory from Actual Survey," 1816, copy in the Map Division, Historic New Orleans Collection, New Orleans.

morning of December 2, 1814. Responding to repeated requests for his presence, Jackson had traveled across Lake Pontchartrain to Bayou St. John and so gained familiarity with that access route into the city. From the gallery of his improvised headquarters on Royal Street, the General assured city residents of his determination to protect New Orleans and drive the British away while calling upon them for support during the emergency. Later that day he reviewed five companies of New Orleans militia and, evincing his concern over the city's safety, directed Governor Claiborne to obstruct all adjacent coastal bayous running inland from the sea. He still reasoned that, if an assault came, it would be from Mobile or nearby Pascagoula, resulting in a drive on the city from above, perhaps even from Baton Rouge. Existing defensive conditions of New Orleans worried him. Years later, he recalled that he had found the place "destitute of every means of formidable defense." He particularly lamented the lack of artillery and munitions supplies, a deficiency that could portend disaster if the British struck.[20]

Two days after his arrival in New Orleans, Jackson, plagued by dysentery, descended the river to inspect the defenses. Already he realized the great urgency of raising appropriate field works, and he appointed as his Principal Engineer A. Lacarrière Latour, who had formerly served Brigadier General James Wilkinson in the region. Lewis Livingston was appointed Assistant Engineer. Both men accompanied Jackson down river. At Fort St. Philip, where the river's bend slowed upstream-bound traffic, he directed the placement of more ordnance along the rampart and the razing of an old wooden barracks that could easily catch fire from enemy hotshot. He also ordered work to begin on two new batteries, one across the river from the fort and the other a short distance upstream along the left bank. Each would contain 24-pounder cannon and, with Fort St. Philip, contribute to producing an effective cross fire against ascending enemy craft. Jackson did not visit the works at The Balize, having earlier entrusted their

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20 Jackson to Hugh L. White, February 7, 1827, in *Correspondence of Andrew Jackson*, III, p. 338; Edward Livingston to Jackson, November 21, 1814, in *ibid.*, VI, pp. 443-44; Latour, *Historical Memoir*, pp. 52, 54; Mrs. Dunbar Rowland, *Andrew Jackson's Campaign Against the British, or the Mississippi Territory in the War of 1812. Concerning the Military Operations of the Americans, Creek Indians, British, and Spanish, 1813-1815* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1929), p. 260; James, *Border Captain*, pp. 215-16; Jane Lucas de Grummond, *The Baratarians and The Battle of New Orleans* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1961), pp. 58-60; Brown, *Amphibious Campaign*, pp. 63-64. Most authorities place Jackson's arrival in New Orleans on December 2. However, Jackson wrote that he arrived in the city on December 1, 1814. Jackson to Brigadier General James Winchester, December 11, 1814, Andrew Jackson Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Presidential Papers Microfilm, Series 3, Vols. F-K, Reel 62.

visitation to his inspector general, Colonel Arthur P. Hayne. En route back to the city, he stopped at English Turn where, on the left bank, work on an epaulement between the river and the swamp near Bayou Terre aux Boeufs was proceeding. Back in New Orleans, he proposed that the legislature urge planters to lend their slaves to help raise earthworks to defend the river. With Claiborne's assistance, the request was honored.

On December 11, Jackson took his entourage east to inspect the defenses along Gentilly Plain. Here an enemy advance might easily be thwarted because of the narrowness of the road leading to the city and the dense cypress swampland on either side. At the junction of Bayou Sauvage with Chef Menteur Pass between the lakes, he ordered the erection of a battery to be garrisoned by five companies of militia infantry and supported by one company of dragoons. Word went north to Generals Coffee and Carroll and to Major Thomas Hinds, with a contingent of Mississippi dragoons, to hasten their men toward New Orleans. Other troops were sent to augment the garrison of Fort St. Philip, and Jackson established express procedures for receiving intelligence of British movements off The Balize, accomplished through the strategic positioning of boats and messengers between the river's mouth and English Turn. Command of English Turn was given to Brigadier General David Morgan, who had been placed in charge of Louisiana and Mississippi forces by Governor Claiborne. The commander of the fort at Petite Coquilles was advised to spike his guns and blow up the post should the British threaten to overrun him. Meantime, the obstruction of all bayous leading from the lakes to the Mississippi proceeded according to Jackson's instructions. Under the direction of Colonel Pierre de La Ronde, a local planter and militia commander, and later under Major General Jacques Villeré, who commanded a division of Louisiana militia and was also a plantation owner, trees were felled across the entrances of bayous and earth-filled frames were sunk in the beds of any that appeared navigable for small craft. In some instances, small batteries were erected and guard detachments posted. Finally, to prevent the unlikely approach of the British through Lake Barataria, the bayous reaching the Mississippi from the west were likewise blocked and small batteries placed at prominent points, such as at the shell midden known as The Temple. Despite Jackson's personal direction, much of the construction proceeded slowly and haphazardly, and some details were overlooked altogether. Three important

watercourses running into Lake Borgne—Bayous Sauvage, Terre aux Boeufs, and Bienvenu—remained free of obstruction.[21]

Such oversights could perhaps have been avoided had Jackson obtained all the men and supplies he had earlier requested. As of December 12, the troops at his disposal in the immediate vicinity of New Orleans were placed as follows:

> In Fort St. Charles Capt. Humphrey[’] s Company Corps of Artillery.
>
> In Barracks 7th Regiment U.S. Infantry.
>
> On Marignys Canal. Capt. Gordon’s Company of Volunteer Infantry from Rapide[s].
>
> In the Fauxburgh St. Mary. Capt. Smith[’]s Dragoons and Capt. Griffith[’]s Company of Mounted Volunteer Rangers from Feliciana.
>
> At Declouets house lower Fauxburgh, Captain Dubuchet[’]s Hussars from Tech[e].
>
> At Fort St. John a Detachment from the 7th Infantry of 1 Sub. 1 Sergt, 1 Corporal and 19 privates.

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21 Colonel Arthur P. Hayne to Jackson, December 1, 1814, in Jackson, *Correspondence of Andrew Jackson*, II, pp.107-08; Latour, *Historical Memoir*, pp. 54-57, 64-65, 69, 71, 74; Tatum, “Journal,” pp. 97-104; Jackson to Claiborne, December 10, 1814, Andrew Jackson Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Presidential Papers Microfilm, Series 3, Vols. F-K, Reel 62; Jackson to Monroe, December 10, 1814, *ibid.* ;Jackson to Captain Trudeau, December 20, 1814, *ibid.*; Jackson to Major Reynolds, December 22, 1814, *ibid.*; Reilly, *British at the Gates*, pp. 211-12, 214; John Reid and John Henry Eaton, *The Life of Andrew Jackson*, ed. by Frank Lawrence Owsley, Jr., (orig. pub. 1817; reprint, Tusealoosa: University of Alabama Press, 1974), pp. 252-55, 264-65, 510-11; Brown, *Amphibious Campaign*, p. 90; Rowland, *Andrew Jackson's Campaign Against the British*, pp. 264-65; de Grummond, *Baratarians*, pp. 61, 62-63, 77-78; Brooks, *Siege of New Orleans*, pp. 74-75, 86, 99, 111, 114-15; Robert V. Remini, *Andrew Jackson* (New York: Twayne Publishers, Inc., 1966), pp. 63-64; Bassett, *Life of Andrew Jackson*, I, p. 167; Casey, *Louisiana in the War of 1812*, p. 44; James, *Border Captain*, pp. 223-25. Latour recommended that special attention be paid to the entrance of Bayous Dupré and Bienvenu off Lake Borgne. Latour to Jackson, ca. early December 1814, Andrew Jackson Papers, Manuscript Division, Chicago Historical Society.

On the Lafourche Capt. Hicks[’] Company of Louisiana drafted Militia.

At Barataria Capt. Dupas[’] Company of Louisiana drafted Militia.

At English Turn a Detachment of the Louisiana drafted Militia. Under Col. Alexander Declouet.[22]

In addition, guards composed of various units of local militia were stationed at all bayous determined to be accessible to the British. Most of these men were ill-supplied, some were without arms, and many were undisciplined. Contrary to popular conception, Jackson did not immediately meld the diverse ethnic populations to his support. Many resisted his imposition of new restrictions on free commerce as well as his stubbornness and intolerance of their work performance. The diversity in language and culture was not easily to be overcome, and there existed much resentment toward the free black militia units. Consequently, disciplining and training troops with little inclination to the physical labor required for erecting defenses proved difficult at best. Their numbers, together with those of the available regulars, totaled about 2,000. Still en route to the city were the Tennesseans under Coffee and Carroll and the Mississippi dragoons, four troops commanded by Major Hinds. So, too, were General Thomas and 2,300 Kentuckians. The continued absence of these reinforcements agitated Jackson, as did his lack of arms and ammunition. A supply scheduled to reach New Orleans from Pittsburgh had not yet arrived; in fact, Carroll’s troops descending the Mississippi on flatboats reached Natchez on December 13, to find a keelboat laden with arms for Jackson. He outfitted his command with some of the weapons and ammunition.[23]

Besides these conventional forces, Jackson also attracted unconventional ones in the form of the Baratarian privateers led by the redoubtable Jean Lafitte. Lafitte had his headquarters at Grand Terre Island at the entrance of Barataria

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22 Lieutenant Colonel William MacRea to Jackson, Dec. 12, 1814, in Jackson, *Correspondence of Andrew Jackson,* II, p. 120.

23 Latour, *Historical Memoir*, pp. 68-69; Remini, *Andrew Jackson*, pp. 64-65; Jackson, *Correspondence of Andrew Jackson*, II, pp. v-vi; Tatum, “Journal,” p.103; Rowland, *Andrew Jackson ’s Campaign Against the British*, pp. 298-99; James, *Border Captain*, pp. 230-31; de Grummond, *Baratarians*, pp. 60, 63, 79. See also “Copy of Muster Roll of the Battalion, Orleans Volunteers during the invasion of Louisiana by the English Army in 1814-1815,” (unpublished, undated typescript in the Louisiana State Museum Library).

Bay. From there, he and his followers had managed a lucrative trade in smuggling that only recently had been threatened by a destructive raid led by Commander Patterson. Having spurned a British offer promising reward for his intimate knowledge of the bayou country and for the services of his men and equipment, Lafitte approached a dubious Jackson and succeeded in cementing a working relationship that would end further government action against the Baratarians and would legally absolve them for past wrongs. "Mr. Lafitte [*sic*] solicited for himself and for all the Baratarians," wrote Lacarrière Latour, "the honour of serving under our banners, that they might have an opportunity of proving that if they had infringed the revenue laws, yet none was more ready than they to defend the country and combat its enemies."[24] The Baratarians brought to Jackson's forces knowledgeable, trained, and seasoned fighters, many of whom were skilled artillerists. Some formed units of their own under designated Baratarian leaders; others joined existing companies for service at Petite Coquilles, Fort St. Philip, and Fort St. John. They also furnished valuable munitions and war materiel. In particular, wrote Jackson later, "I procured from them 7500 flints for pistols and boarding peaces [*sic*], which was solely the supply of flints for all my militia and if it had not been for this providential aid the country must have fallen."[25] Lafitte claimed to have had enough ammunition to furnish an army 30,000 strong. During the crisis, he was able to provide powder from his own munitions depot in Barataria.[26]

Jackson's anticipated land forces easily outnumbered his naval component at New Orleans. Only six small gunboats and several smaller craft guarded the waterways. The gunboats, a survival of former President Thomas Jefferson's "Mosquito Fleet" naval policy, were in the charge of Commander Patterson, who on Jackson's advice dispatched one to Fort St. Philip and the remaining five to ply the waters of Lake Borgne. These latter boats mounted twenty-three guns and carried 182 sailors. Two other vessels, presently unmanned, guarded the river

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24 *Historical Memoir*, p. 71.

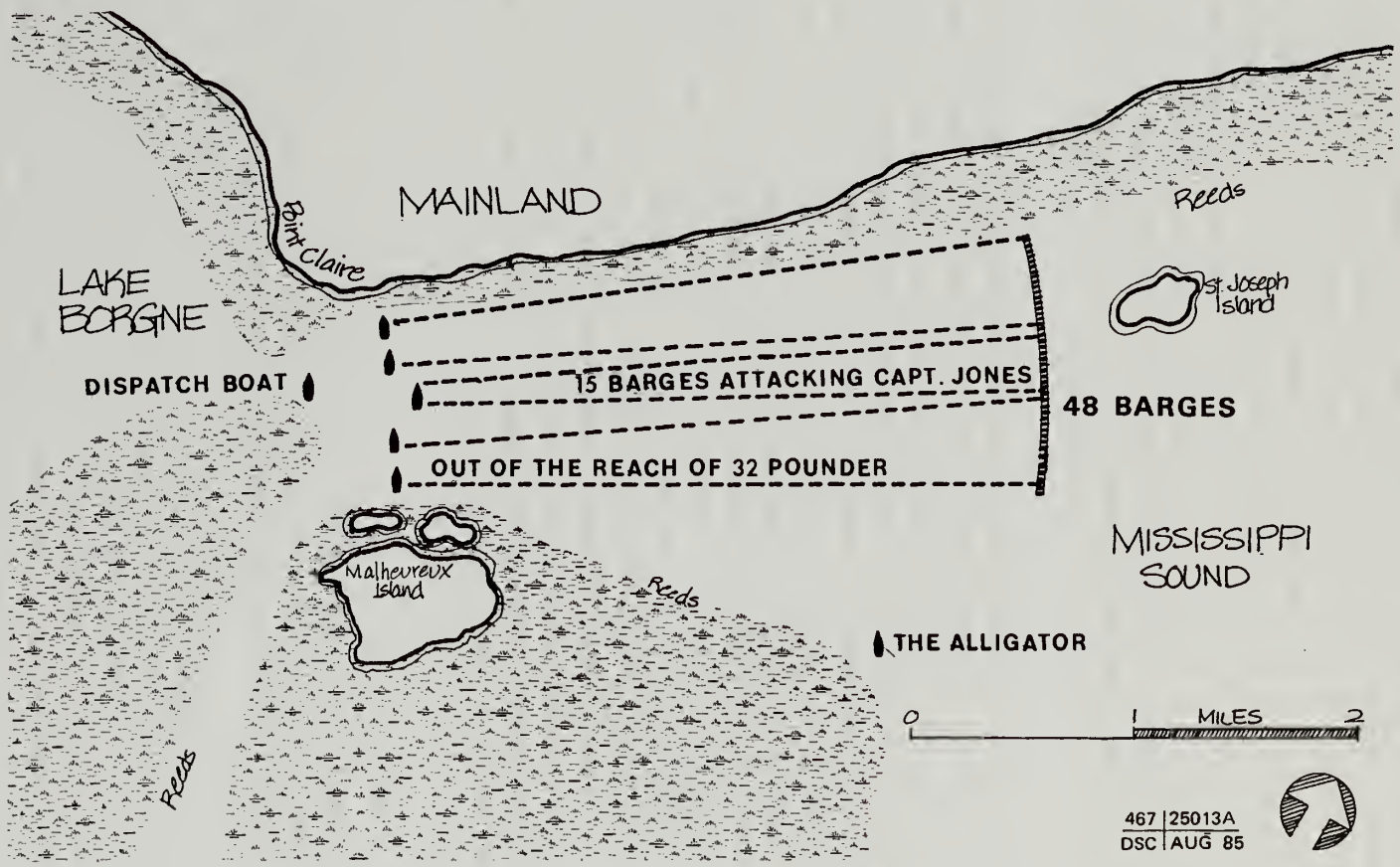
25 Jackson to Hugh L. White, February 7, 1827, in *Correspondence of Andrew Jackson*, III, p. 339

26 For more about Lafitte, the British offer, and the Baratarian situation in 1814, see Latour, *Historical Memoir*, pp. 13-14, 18-20, 22-23, 72, xiii-xiv, 253-55; John Snyder, "Jean Lafitte and the British Offer of 1814," *Louisiana History* XX (Spring 1979), pp. 159-67; de Grummond, *Baratarians*, pp. 81, 82, 122; James, *Border Captain*, p. 229; Brown, *Amphibious Campaign*, pp. 85-86. A biography of Lafitte is in Stanley Clisby Arthur, *Jean Laffite, Gentleman Rover* (New Orleans: Harmonson, Publisher, 1952).

Troop Movement Map, New Orleans Campaign, 1814-1815

Map I-3. Battle of Lake Borgne, December 14, 1814

Denver Service Center, National Park Service. Format changes to original map by Judy Kesler, National Park Service.



BATTLE OF LAKE BORGNE, DECEMBER 14, 1814

NEW ORLEANS CAMPAIGN 1814-1815

TROOP MOVEMENT

CHALMETTE UNIT

JEAN LAFITTE NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK AND PRESERVE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR / NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

before New Orleans—a schooner, *Carolina,* and a ship, *Louisiana.*[27] The gunboats on Lake Borgne formed the first line of defense for the city. The principal mission of the force was one of reconnaissance and intelligence—to discover and report on the approach of the enemy. Secondly, the boats were to defend the post of Petite Coquilles, which in turn guarded the strait from Lake Borgne into Lake Pontchartrain. They were also to guard against British attempts to gain entrance into any of the bayous bordering Lake Borgne's western and southwestern shores. If the gunboats failed, a real possibility in light of their limited capabilities, then the British would assuredly gain a foothold within striking distance of New Orleans.[28]

Although he anticipated the approach of the British presently, Jackson did not know precisely where the enemy fleet was located. He still expected the attack to come via Mobile, but he did not know the size of his opposing army. In fact, nearly 9,000 British soldiers were en route to New Orleans, a force constituted from troops already in service in America, augmented by troops from Ireland and France as well as black regiments brought from the West Indies. Vice Admiral Alexander Cochrane commanded the fleet of well-armed warships and transports bringing the soldiers to Louisiana. Overall command of the New Orleans campaign rested with Lieutenant General, Sir Edward Pakenham, who was en route from London. The original plan of attack, as devised by the British cabinet, called for secretly assembling the troops at Barbados, then striking in diversion at the Carolina coast while the main force converged on New Orleans. But through a variety of circumstances, this strategy changed, and Cochrane's fleet of fifty ships sailed instead from Jamaica, reaching the Chandeleur Islands in Mississippi Sound on December 8.[29]

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27 Latour, *Historical Memoir*, p. 63; Bassett, *Life of Andrew Jackson*, I, pp. 165-66; James Parton, *The Life of Andrew Jackson* (3 vols.; orig. pub. 1860; reprint, New York: Johnson Reprint Company, 1967), II, pp. 34-35; Theodore Roosevelt, *The Naval War of 1812, or the History of the United States Navy during the Last War with Great Britain, to which is Appended an Account of the Battle of New Orleans* (orig. pub. 1882; reprint, New York: Haskell House Publishers, Ltd., 1968), p. 343.

28 Parton, *Life of Andrew Jackson*, II, p. 34; James, *Border Captain*, p. 223.

29 Latour, *Historical Memoir*, p. 25; Bassett, *Life of Andrew Jackson*, I, p. 161; Roosevelt, *Naval War of 1812*, p. 343; James, *Border Captain,* p. 207; Brown, *Amphibious Campaign*, pp. 75-76; Brooks, *Siege of New Orleans*, p. 82. For overview maps showing the location of the British fleet approaching New Orleans, see Latour, "A General Map of the seat of War in Louisiana and West Florida. . . ," in *Historical Memoir*; and Abraham R. Ellery, "Map of the seat of the War in Louisiana in the years 1814 and 1815," Manuscripts and Archives Division, New York Public Library.

Commander Patterson was apprised of the British position, and word went directly to Jackson in New Orleans. As the fleet rested, the British officers weighed the different approaches to the city, finally determining that an ascent of the Mississippi was unfeasible because of the unmanageable current of its high water. Other routes were deemed difficult and time consuming, and defensive works protected the Rigolets and Bayou St. John. Instead, the approach would be made across Lake Borgne and through the bayous to the Mississippi below the city. On December 13, Jackson received news that the British had gun barges with which to maneuver on the lakes and that it appeared they intended to land their troops soon. At the time, the city was defended by less than 2,000 men.[30]

The first action between the British and Americans occurred, not unexpectedly, on Lake Borgne on December 14 (Map I-3). Two days earlier, British sloops and frigates had anchored outside the shallow lake-inlet in preparation for landing troops. That night, forty-two heavily armed launches and three unarmed gigs with nearly one thousand seamen aboard advanced in three divisions into the waters of Lake Borgne. The next morning, the advancing flotilla was sighted by the Americans under Lieutenant Thomas ap Catesby Jones who, on instructions from Commander Patterson, had anchored his gunboats near the Malheureux Islands. Jones's command totaled 182 seamen; his gunboats mounted twenty-three pieces of ordnance. Since the ninth, the American vessels had watched British warships maneuvering near Dauphine Island and between Ship and Cat Islands. Jones at once directed a boat to Bay St. Louis to destroy supplies stored there, but the British attacked and nearly captured the American vessel. The brief diversion allowed Jones to head his gunboats toward the Rigolets to protect the post at Petite Coquilles. But dying winds prevented the passage. Lacking maneuverability, Jones abandoned his plan, taking anchor instead near Malheureux Island Pass.

On the morning of December 14, the British launches closed in on the American position, capturing the tender *Alligator*. Jones aligned his gunboats in the channel, preparing to meet the invaders, but forceful currents caused several to drift away. The British closed to just beyond gun range, then stopped for a time before advancing. At the approach, the American craft unleashed a powerful artillery fire, which the British vessels quickly answered. Within an hour, one

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30 Latour, *Historical Memoir*, p. xxxii; Roosevelt, *Naval War of 1812*, p. 459; Bassett, *Life of Andrew Jackson*, I, pp. 168-69; Brooks, *Siege of New Orleans*, pp. 80, 106-07; de Grummond, *Baratarians*, pp. 64-65. For discussion of the reasons for the British rejection of alternative approaches, see Mahon, "British Command Decisions," pp. 69-71.

British barge collided with an American gunboat, and hand-to-hand combat ensued, with the British suffering severe casualties. Two other barges were sunk in the melee before the British temporarily pulled back. But when Lieutenant Jones received a disabling wound, the enemy pressed the attack and succeeded in capturing all of the boats. American casualties in the Battle of Lake Borgne numbered six killed and thirty-five wounded; the British suffered seventeen killed and seventy-seven wounded, many of whom died later. The capture of the American craft left the coast without naval defense and allowed the British to freely choose their point of debarkation. The defeat also ended Jackson's primary means of gaining intelligence of British movements.[31]

After the Lake Borgne battle, Jackson made judicious distribution of his available forces. He notified Coffee, Carroll, and Thomas of what had transpired, then sent a regiment of militia to bolster the battalion on Gentilly Road, the most likely point, he believed, for the British to strike. He ordered Major Lacoste at Chef Menteur to erect a redoubt with ditch and to arm it with two field guns. Two regiments would stay to defend the city, but another was posted down river on the right bank, while more volunteers took station among the plantations on the left side of the Mississippi. At English Turn, Morgan commanded still other volunteers, while additional militia units were being organized above New Orleans. Two artillery units, one Baratarian, the other composed of volunteers from the city, augmented a garrison at Fort St. John commanded by Major J. B. Plauche. On December 17, three days after the naval defeat, work began on two batteries of 24-pounders along Bayou St. John. At Fort St. Charles, Jackson posted his regulars plus another Baratarian company. On December 17, he

31 Latour, *Historical Memoir*, pp. 55, 57-58, 59-61, 64; Jackson to Secretary of War James Monroe, December 27, 1814, in *Correspondence of Andrew Jackson*, II, pp. 126-27; Brown, *Amphibious Campaign*, pp. 77-81; William James, *The Naval History of Great Britain, from the Declaration of War by France 1793 to the Accession of George IV* (6 vols.; London: Richard Bentley, 1837), VI, pp. 357-60; Roosevelt, *The Naval War of 1812*, pp. 343-46; Alfred T. Mahan, *Sea Power in Its Relations to the War of 1812* (2 vols.; orig. pub. 1905; reprint, New York: Haskell House Publishers, Ltd., 1969), II, pp. 389-90; Rowland, *Andrew Jackson's Campaign Against the British*, pp. 270- 74; Reilly, *British at the Gates*, p. 225. For correspondence relative to the Lake Borgne battle, including a report by Jones, see Latour, *Historical Memoir*, pp. xxxii-xxxvi, cxl-cxliii. Report of a court of inquiry absolving Jones from blame in the defeat is in *ibid.*, pp. cxxxii–cxxxv.

learned that Major Walter H. Overton was progressing with the works at Fort St. Philip, improvements all the more urgent due to news that the British had captured the defenses at The Balize. Overton reported that British spies had been operating on the river around his post.[32]

32 Jackson to Monroe, December 16, 1814, in *Correspondence of Andrew Jackson*, II, p. 116; Tatum, "Journal," p. 113; Latour, *Historical Memoir*, pp. 64, 65, 66; Overton to Jackson, December 17, 1814, Andrew Jackson Papers, Manuscript Division, Chicago Historical Society; Brooks, *Siege of New Orleans*, pp. 113-14; Casey, *Louisiana in the War of 1812*, p. 12. On December 15 two of Patterson's officers were sent under flag of truce to the British fleet to determine the condition of Jones' men taken from the gunboats. The two officers were likewise incarcerated and held until mid-January. Latour, *Historical Memoir*, pp. 74-77.

CHAPTER 3

THE BRITISH ADVANCE AND THE NIGHT BATTLE OF DECEMBER 23, 1814

The British wasted little time in pressing their advantage following the defeat of the gunboats, but they were clearly not interested in approaching New Orleans up the Mississippi. Although British reconnaissance occurred in the area of Chef Menteur, they were advised of an unobstructed waterway along the southwestern shore of Lake Borgne that was navigable for barge-sized craft. Exploring Bayou Bienvenu, British officers aided by local fishermen determined that it proceeded toward the Mississippi, eventually joining several plantation canals that ran near the river. At the river, moreover, was a road leading directly into New Orleans. On this information, Admiral Cochrane and Major General John Keane, the army commander pending Pakenham's arrival, decided to debark their troops at the mouth of Bayou Bienvenu. For reasons then unknown and never since determined, the bayou had been overlooked by Jackson's men and was not blocked, although a small picket guard was posted there. Meantime, the British advance vessels had anchored off Pea Island in preparation for landing the command, and on the evening of December 19, the troops were quartered in makeshift huts on the island. With insufficient craft, plans were made to carry the men in relays from Pea Island, and on the twenty-first, they began boarding launches and barges for the trip to Bayou Bienvenu (called Bayou Catalon by the British). The next morning, the troops pulled out, accompanied by some artillery. Landing was made without incident, and a body of royal engineers prepared the way through the glades and ditches bordering the bayou.[1] Latour offered the following description of Bayou Bienvenu:

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1 A. Lacarrière Latour, *Historical Memoir of the War in West Florida and Louisiana in 1814-15* (orig. pub. 1816; reprint, Gainesville: University of Florida Press, 1964), pp. clx, cxliii-cxlv; Sir Alexander Cochrane, "Narrative of the British Attack on New Orleans, 1814-15," Manuscript Division, New York Historical Society; Jackson to Monroe, December 27, 1814, in *Correspondence of Andrew Jackson*, ed. by John Spencer Bassett (7 vols.; Washington: Carnegie Institution of Washington, 1926-35), II, pp. 126-27; Marquis James, *Andrew Jackson: The Border Captain* (New York: The Literary Guild, 1933), p. 237; Jane Lucas de Grummond, *The Baratarians and the Battle of New Orleans* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1961), pp. 64, 65, 69, 71; Augustus C. Buell, *History of Andrew Jackson: Pioneer, Patriot, Soldier, Politician, President* (2 vols.; New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1904), I, p. 372; John K. Mahon, "British Command Decisions Relative to the Battle of New Orleans," *Louisiana History* VI (Winter 1965), pp. 71-73.

> This bayou, formerly called the river St. Francis, under which designation it is laid down in some old maps, is the creek through which run all the waters of a large basin, of a triangular form, about eighty square miles in surface, bounded on the south by the Mississippi, on the west by New Orleans, by bayou Sauvage or Chef-Menteur on the northwest, and on the east by lake Borgne, into which it empties. It receives the waters of several other bayous, formed by those of the surrounding cypress swamps and prairies, and of innumerable little streams from the low grounds along the river. It commences behind the suburb Marigny, at New Orleans, divides the triangle nearly into two equal parts from the summit to the lake which forms its basis, and runs in a south-easterly direction. It is navigable for vessels of one hundred tons as far as the forks of the canal of Piernas' plantation, twelve miles from its mouth. Its breadth is from one hundred and ten to one hundred and fifty yards, and it has six feet water on the bar, at common tides, and nine feet at spring tides. Within the bar, there is for a considerable extent, sufficient water for vessels of from two to three hundred tons. Its principal branch is that which is called bayou Mazant, which runs towards the southwest, and receives the waters of the canals of the plantations of Villere, Lacoste, and Laronde.[2]

Colonel William Thornton led the first body of British into Bayou Bienvenu, accompanied by General Keane. Crossing the lake, the vessels were crowded and difficult to row, and a heavy rain fell on the men and flooded the bottoms of the boats. By midnight, the wind-tossed craft ferrying the advance of 1,800 troops out of 2,400 comprising the first division reached the mouth of the bayou. The approach alarmed the American picket guard, which was ultimately captured, whereupon the flotilla passed down Bayou Bienvenu six miles to its confluence with Bayou Mazant. Then it bore left down the latter course, passing from the trembling marshlands into the broad cypress swamp and wooded tracts along the high ground bordering the Mississippi. At 4 a.m., the first barges approached Villeré's Canal, which ran to within two miles of the Mississippi. There the men debarked to rest before proceeding, and a Union Jack was

2 Latour, *Historical Memoir*, pp. 78-79.

raised in a tree while the band gave forth with "God Save the King." At 10 a.m., the troops pressed forward, cutting seven-foot reeds as they went to broaden the trail along the canal for those who followed. The advance reached Villeré's plantation house soon after, almost capturing Villeré's son, who escaped across the river to sound the alarm. Several American pickets were apprehended on the plantation, however.

The first British forces to reach the proximity of the Mississippi one-half mile west of Villeré's composed members of the Fourth, Ninety-fifth, and Eighty-fifth infantry regiments. More than 2,500 additional troops of the Twenty-first, Forty-fourth, and Ninety-Third regiments of fusiliers, plus additional artillery, were yet en route and awaiting the return of the barges down the bayou. Advance pickets stretched back over several hundred yards between the river and a dense wood that fell away into swampland to the right. Other pickets assumed posts behind the line. Instead of immediately marching down the road to the city, Keane decided to let his chilled command rest, thereby, according to most opinions, missing an opportunity to boldly strike New Orleans a devastating blow. The troops assumed a leisurely bivouac some three hundred yards behind a four-foot- high levee on the river approximately halfway between the plantation buildings of Villeré and those of Lacoste. As the troops worked to fashion crude huts from sugar cane stubble near the Villeré mansion, some of Thornton's command labored to place two 3-pounder field guns on carriages.[3]

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3 *Ibid.*, pp. 77-78, 84-85, 86-87, 92, 93-94, 230-31, clxi; Cochrane, "Narrative"; "Sir John Maxwell Tylden Journal, 1814-1815," Manuscripts and Archives Division, New York Public Library; Alexander Dickson, "Journal of Operations in Louisiana," *The Louisiana Historical Quarterly* XLIV, Nos. 3 and 4 (January-April 1961), p. 7; Major Forrest, "Journal of the Operations Against New Orleans in 1814 and 1815," *The Louisiana Historical Quarterly* XLIV (January-April 1961), p. 115; Bassett, *The Life of Andrew Jackson* (2 vols.; New York: The Macmillan Company), I, pp. 171, 177-178; Mrs. Dunbar Rowland, *Andrew Jackson's Campaign Against the British, of the Mississippi Territory in the War of 1812. Concerning The Military Operations of the Americans, Creek Indians, British, and Spanish, 1813-1815* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1926), pp. 293, 300-01; Carson I. A. Ritchie, "The Louisiana Campaign," *The Louisiana Historical Quarterly* XLIV, Nos. 1 and 2 (January-April 1961), pp. 34-35; Theodore Roosevelt, *The Naval War of 1812, or the History of the United States Navy during the Last War with Great Britain to which is Appended an Account of the Battle of New Orleans* (orig. pub. 1882; reprint, New York: Haskell House Publishers, Ltd., 1968), pp. 347, 465-68; Powell A. Casey, *Louisiana in the War of 1812* (Baton Rouge: privately published, 1963), pp 44, 45, 46; Charles B. Brooks, *The Siege of New Orleans* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1961), pp 122-23, 124-25, 131-32, 135-36; James, *Border Captain*, p. 239; de Grummond, *Baratarians*, pp. 71-73. See also A. Lacarrière Latour, "Map Shewing the Landing of the British army, its several Encampments and Fortifications on the Mississippi and the Works they erected on their Retreat, also the different posts, Encampments and Fortifications made by the several Corps of the American Army during the whole Campaign," in *Historical Memoir*.

The British position at evening, December 23, was described in some detail by Abraham R. Ellery, a New Orleans attorney:

> Their extreme left rested on the River near which the levee not only served as a strong flanking entrenchment, but from its being also in many places double, left a convenient inter one, for pushing forward advanced parties, & laying ambuscades. Their extreme right was protected by the swamp, & their right partially covered by the standing cane & high herbage of the different plantations, where they could sort of conceal their riflemen & sharp shooters. Their centre occupied the open fields & the road. In front there was ground enough upon which to form & fight an army of twenty thousand men, presenting an area containing about two miles square intersected only by a few small ditches & open fences. There they had a fine field, upon which to form & maneuvre their troops . . . .[4]

Ellery described the cultivable land along the river as frequently being subjected to the flooding of the Mississippi. The ground was inclined toward the swamp and averaged about one mile wide. The ground occupied at Villeré's was depicted as being "unusually wide, and no position upon the river could have been better taken for either defensive or offensive operations."[5]

Andrew Jackson learned of the British position seven miles below New Orleans on the afternoon of their arrival. While initially suspecting the movement as a feint to divert attention from a landing at Chef Menteur, he soon comprehended the reality of the British presence. He wasted no time in bringing all his available forces together, determining to march immediately and strike the enemy before the advance proceeded. Reviewing the troops at old Fort St. Charles, Jackson called out his regulars, the Seventh and Forty-fourth infantry regiments, and also Lieutenant Samuel Spotts's artillery contingent, a party of marines, a corps of New Orleans volunteers, and a corps of freedmen of color. He called in Coffee's recently arrived Tennesseans from above the city and Carroll's brigade camped to the east. Jackson counted on this militia, plus Hinds's Mississippi dragoons and two units of riflemen and Louisiana mounted gunmen,

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4 Abraham Redwood Ellery, "Notes and Comments upon the Subject of a Yankee Song entitled, 'The Retreat of the English'" (unpublished manuscript dated 1815 in the Manuscripts and Archives Division, New York Public Library).

5 *Ibid.*

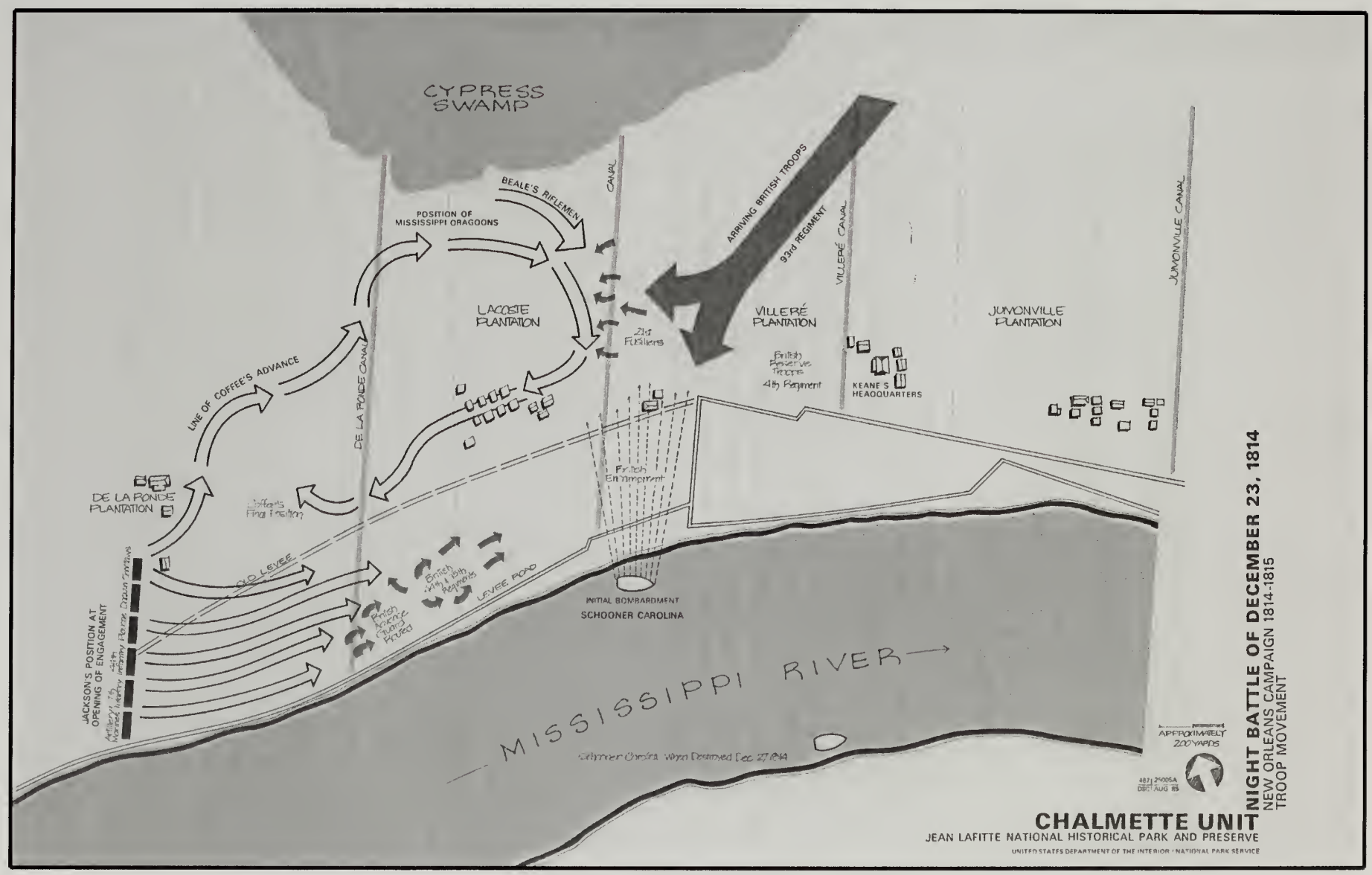
to bolster his command. Still worried lest the British attack on two fronts, Jackson supported his defenses on the Gentilly Plain with three regiments of Louisiana militia commanded by Governor Claiborne. Some of Carroll's Tennesseans were sent to offer additional support. The remaining troops gathered below New Orleans at the Montreuil Plantation. They came from all around the city, from Fort St. John and Fort St. Charles and from camps on the right bank. Once assembled, the army marched downstream along the levee road, Coffee and the van reaching the area of Rodriguez Canal between the Chalmette and Macarty Plantations about 4 p.m. At the approach, General Keane sent a skirmish line forward from Villeré's to protect his front. An American reconnoitering party advanced cautiously, but retired when fired upon by the British, with two of Jackson's men being wounded and a horse killed. The British remained in bivouac, the troops building fires for cooking and for countering the evening chill. A slow fog which enveloped the camp stretched out between an area some distance back from the levee on the left and the cypress swamp on the right. The right of the line angled back from the swamp as if anticipating attack from that quarter. Slowly Jackson's force occupied the de La Ronde Plantation grounds between the canal and the enemy bivouac. Keane's army did not move.

Near six o'clock, Jackson began maneuvering part of his command to flank the British right (Map I-4). He sent Coffee's riflemen, together with the New Orleans sharpshooters under Captain Thomas Beale, and the Mississippi dragoons by a circuitous route to the edge of the swamp behind de La Ronde's where they might turn and charge the British, pressing them toward the river. Coffee's riflemen advanced in the growing darkness, then stationed themselves along the line separating the de La Ronde and Lacoste properties. Meantime, Jackson arrayed his remaining soldiers nearer the river. He placed his artillery, marines, and part of the Seventh regiment along the levee road, with the balance of the Seventh and the Forty-fourth regiments to their left, followed by the militia battalions of Plauche and Daquin across the level ground to the de La Ronde home. He directed the schooner *Carolina*, with Commander Patterson in charge, to pull up along the left bank of the river opposite the British camp, and, at the appropriate time , to deliver broadsides of grapeshot against the bivouac. Once *Carolina* began her barrage, the other forces were to close quickly on the camp.

Troop Movement Map, New Orleans Campaign, 1814-1815

Map I-4. Night Battle of December 23, 1814

Denver Service Center, National Park Service. Format changes to original map by Judy Kesler, National Park Service.



NIGHT BATTLE OF DECEMBER 23, 1814
NEW ORLEANS CAMPAIGN 1814-1815
TROOP MOVEMENT

CHALMETTE UNIT
JEAN LAFITTE NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK AND PRESERVE
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR / NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

Meanwhile, Morgan's command at English Turn was instructed to cause a disturbance downriver during the night to divert the attention of the British.[6]

At dusk on December 23, the opposing forces consisted as follows:

Americans

Third Regular Light Artillery	62
Seventh U.S. Infantry	460
Forty-fourth U.S. Infantry	335
Detachment U.S. Marines	66
Major Jean Baptiste Plauche's Battalion Louisiana Militia	289
Major Louis Daquin's Battalion of Free Colored	212
Captain Pierre Jugeat's Company of Choctaws	52
Brigadier General John Coffee's Mounted Rifles	625
Captain Thomas Hinds' Mississippi Dragoons	118
Captain Thomas Beale's New Orleans Rifles	68
Total	2287[7]

6 Latour, *Historical Memoir*, pp. 87-88, 89-90, 91-92, 97-98; Vincent Nolte, *Fifty Years in Both Hemispheres or Reminiscences of the Life of a Former Merchant* (orig. pub. 1854; reprint, Freeport, New York: Books for Libraries Press, 1972), pp. 210-11; "General Carroll's Expedition to New Orleans" (unpublished manuscript, ca. 1815, Special Collections, Tulane University, New Orleans), p. 49; Howell Tatum, "Major Howell Tatum's Journal While Acting Topographical Engineer (1814) to General Jackson commanding the Seventh Military District," ed. by John Spencer Bassett, *Smith College Studies in History* VII (October 1921-April 1922), p. 107; Buell, *History of Andrew Jackson*, I, pp. 382, 385, 386; James Parton, *The Life of Andrew Jackson* (3 vols.; orig. pub. 1860; reprint, New York: Johnson Reprint Company, 1967), II, pp. 83, 85-86; Bassett, *Life of Andrew Jackson.* Macmillan Company), I, pp.170- 71, 176, 178; de Grummond, *Baratarians*, pp. 83-84, 86, 88-89; Wilburt S. Brown, *The Amphibious Campaign for West Florida and Louisiana, 1814-1815: A Critical Review of Strategy and Tactics at New Orleans* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 1969), pp. 98-99; Brooks, *Siege of New Orleans*, p. 135.

7 These figures are taken from Buell, *History of Andrew Jackson*, I, pp. 376-77, and are based upon the report of Jackson's inspector general, Colonel Hayne. For slight variants on these figures, see Latour, *Historical Memoir*, pp. 104-05; John Reid and John Henry Eaton, *The Life of Andrew Jackson*, ed. by Frank Lawrence Owsley, Jr. (orig. pub. 1817; reprint, Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 1974), p. 303; Rowland, *Andrew Jackson's Campaign Against the British*, pp. 304-305; and Casey, *Louisiana in the War of 1812*, pp. 46-47. The Mississippi dragoons, occupying the rear of the Lacoste tract, took no part in the action. Latour, *Historical Memoir*, pp. 105-06.

British

Fourth Regiment of Foot	916
Eighty-fifth Regiment of Light Infantry	797
Ninety-fifth Regiment (Rifle Corps)	717
Detachment Sappers and Miners	100
Detachment Rocket Brigade	80
Total	2610[8]

As directed by Jackson, *Carolina* and two subordinate gunboats opened the unusual nighttime engagement. The schooner carried ninety men, many of them Baratarians, and fourteen guns. *Carolina* reached a position opposite the British camp when, at 7:30 p.m., Patterson opened his artillery, roaring forth one broadside of grape after another into the bivouacked command. The British responded with confusion, trying to extinguish their fires and throwing forward their artillery and Congreve rocket detachment to meet the threat. But rockets and musketry did no good, the artillery was deemed too ineffective to use, and the troops were forced to pull back beyond range of the vessel's discharges. Some took positions behind the low levee; already many men were wounded by the onslaught.

One-half hour after the *Carolina* began the attack, her guns fell silent. Then the red, white, and blue trail from a rocket dashed across the sky. To the west, Jackson's command began closing, the marines pressing forward along the moonlit road running along the levee, the Seventh and Forty-fourth infantry regiments marching in column to their left. As the river curved to the left, pushing the men of the Seventh farther inland, they pressed Plauche's and Daquin's battalions to the rear of the formation. Approaching the still-flickering campfires of the British, Jackson abruptly brought his force into line and directed the charge (Map I-4). The two 6-pounders on the road began firing, causing the British to try to take them, but troops of the Seventh Infantry responded to save the guns and the marines, although one of the pieces overturned during the melee. The American troops surged ahead toward the British encampment, the Seventh and Forty-fourth regiments making initial contact and routing the British from

8 These figures represent an amalgamation from Buell, *History of Andrew Jackson*, I, pp. 374-75; and Latour, *Historical Memoir*, pp. 103-04. Latour's compilation, made within a year of the battle, was largely based on guesswork; he acknowledged that "the precise amount of the enemy's forces in this action cannot be exactly ascertained . . . ." *Ibid.*, p.103.

behind a hedge and ditch. Once again, *Carolina* opened her guns to rake the levee. Meantime, Coffee's brigade drove swiftly forward from its position 1,000 yards from Jackson's command near the woods and swamp in a movement that caught the right flank of the British unaware and succeeded in capturing the commanding officer of the Ninety-fifth Rifles and about fifty soldiers. Almost simultaneously, Plauche's New Orleans battalion rushed onto the ground and shattered the line held near the river by the newly arrived British Forty-fourth Regiment of Foot. The Fourth Regiment of Foot was held in reserve throughout the conflict.

The swift stroke succeeded and the British fell back, complete in their surprise over the attack. Jackson's Forty-fourth Infantry continued forcing the flank of the British as Plauche's battalion pressed its advantage. In the close fighting, friend and foe became indistinguishable, and reportedly some Americans fell at the hands of their own troops. As Jackson consolidated his position toward the river, Coffee attended to matters on the left with certain difficulty. The British at that end of the field, principally members of the Eighty-fifth and Ninety-fifth regiments, had not been intimidated by the schooner, and they offered keener resistance to the Americans. Coffee's men drove the Eighty-fifth back, but the regiment regrouped and charged forward again and again. Coffee committed several tactical errors, too, that threatened his previous gains. For one thing, he had opened the action somewhat prematurely and found himself having to extend his line farther left, a movement that spread his command thin and permitted gaps in his front through which large numbers of the enemy passed. Meantime, additional reinforcements of four companies of the Twenty-first Fusiliers arrived to help beat the Tennesseans back, finally securing the right flank. Consequently, the British captured nearly half of Beale's riflemen while the fighting under Coffee degenerated into a host of small encounters in the smoky darkness between bayonet-thrusting British soldiers and ax-wielding Tennesseans. Four hours after the struggle began, the British held a line on the Lacoste Plantation bordering Lacoste's Canal. By then, Coffee's command had merged with Jackson's and was pushing toward the levee. Many of the Eighty-fifth had withdrawn behind an abandoned secondary levee from whence they directed a stiff musketry against Coffee's men. Near 11 p.m., the British suddenly closed the encounter, pulling back in the direction of the Villeré mansion. Despite the arrival of General Carroll and his Tennesseans, Jackson decided not to pursue but to reassemble his scattered command. He yet feared the British might strike New Orleans by an alternative approach and did not want to commit his army to a prolonged engagement after dawn. He ordered Coffee to withdraw to the de La

Ronde Plantation, where his troops had first joined the battle. Soon more British reinforcements arrived at Villeré's Canal, notably the remaining men of the Twenty-first and Ninety-third, and Keane ordered them out in skirmish order, advancing toward the former British encampment area. The movement provoked additional shooting between the reinforcements and Coffee's Tennesseans, but the larger engagement was over. The British took up a line consisting of the Ninety-fifth next to the Mississippi, followed by the Eighty-fifth, the Twenty-first, the Ninety-third, and the Forty-fourth, the latter posted in the woods adjoining the swamp. Later, to protect the troops from the still-firing *Carolina*, Keane withdrew some of them to near the debarking point at Villeré's Canal. It became clear that the British must somehow destroy the potent schooner.[9]

Casualties in the December 23 night engagement would probably have been much greater had the event occurred in daylight. Twenty-four Americans died and 115 were wounded, while 74 were declared missing and presumably were captives of the British. The British themselves lost 46 killed,

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9 This account of the December 23 battle is drawn essentially from the following sources: "M. Gen. Keane's Report," December 26, 1815, BPRO, London, War Office 1, Vol. 141; "General Carroll's Expedition to New Orleans," pp. 49-50; Cochrane, "Narrative of the British Attack on New Orleans, 1814-15"; Ellery, "Notes and Comments"; Nolte, *Fifty Years in Both Hemispheres*, pp. 211-12; "Particulars in relation to Battle of New Orleans furnished me by a French gentleman, in 1828—Summer," Oran Follett Papers, Box 2, Manuscript Division, Cincinnati Historical Society; Latour, *Historical Memoir*, pp. 95-100, 106, 107, 108-10, 112; Andrew Jackson, *Correspondence of Andrew Jackson*, II, p. 129; Bassett, *Life of Andrew Jackson*, I, pp. 179-80, 182; Powell A. Casey, "Artillery in the Battle of New Orleans" (unpublished manuscript in the J. Fair Hardin Collection, Department of Archives and Manuscripts, Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge), pp. 4, 6; Tatum, "Journal," pp. 107-11; Theodore Roosevelt, *The Naval War of 1812, or the History of the United States Navy during the Last War with Great Britain to which is Appended an Account of the Battle of New Orleans* (orig. pub. 1882; reprint, New York: Haskell House Publishers, Ltd., 1968), pp. 347, 465-68; Buell, *History of Andrew Jackson,* I, pp. 390-93; Rowland, *Andrew Jackson's Campaign Against The British*, pp. 307-09; Ritchie, "Louisiana Campaign," pp. 35-31, 38; James, *Border Captain*, pp. 242, 243-44; Robin Reilly, *The British at the Gates: The New Orleans Campaign in the War of 1812* (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1974), pp. 244-45; de Grummond, *Baratarians*, pp. 91-93; Casey, *Louisiana in the War of 1812,* pp. 47, 48-49; Brown, *Amphibious Campaign*, pp 101-06. Official reports of the encounter appear in Latour, *Historical Memoir*, pp. xlii-xliv, xlv-xlvii. For historical troop movement maps of the encounter, see Latour, "Plan of the Attack made by Major Gen. Jackson on a Division of the British Army commanded by Major Gen. J. Keane, on the 23rd December 1814 at 7 o'clock at night," in *Historical Memoir*; and "Sketch of an Attack made by Majr. Genl. Jackson on a Division of the British Army commanded by Majr. Genl. Kean [*sic*] on the evening of 23 Decr. 1814," in Reid and Eaton, *The Life of Andrew Jackson.*

167 wounded, and 64 missing, the latter captured by Jackson's command.[10] During the fighting, the American command of General Morgan stationed at English Turn advanced to a point at Jumonville's Plantation just below the British at Villeré's. Some of Morgan's scouts exchanged musketry with British rear-guard pickets on a muddy tract east of the main fighting, but no injuries occurred. After the battle died, Morgan waited until 3 a.m. before turning his 350 troops back toward English Turn.[11]

There was much significance to the battle of December 23. Jackson's surprise attack dulled the British reflexes and inclined their leaders toward caution, giving the Americans the necessary time to assume and consolidate a strong defensive position. Jackson had hoped to bloody the enemy and drive him into precipitate retreat, but in this he did not succeed. The assault nonetheless deluded General Keane and his subordinates into thinking that American troops and resources were far greater than they were. Latour stated that "the result of the affair . . . was the saving of Louisiana," because it stalled a British approach that would likely have marched the next day on New Orleans with highly disciplined troops encountering only what little impediment the militia could provide. Further, the engagement gave confidence to Jackson's command and enhanced their confidence in his leadership.[12] As a contemporary observer noted, "the battle of the eight of Jany was won on the 23d of Dec'r."[13] On the other hand, the British regarded the outcome as a victory for them, since they managed to withstand the shock of Jackson's surprise and ward off his troops under trying conditions. [14]

Following the cessation of firing near midnight, Jackson withdrew his

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10 *Ibid.*, pp. 102-03, lviii-lix; "Diary of a British Officer" in Jackson, *Correspondence of Andrew Jackson*, ed. by John Spencer Bassett (7 vols.; Washington: Carnegie Institution of Washington, 1926-35), II, p. 109; Jackson to Monroe, December 27, 1814, in *ibid.*, p 128; Bassett, *Life of Andrew Jackson*, I, p. 180; Tatum, "Journal," p. 110; John Henry Cooke, *A Narrative of Events in the South of France, and of the Attack on New Orleans in 1814 and 1815* (London: T. and W. Boone, 1835), pp. 196-97.

11 Latour, *Historical Memoir*, pp. 101-02; de Grummond, *Baratarians*, p. 94; Reilly, *British at the Gates*, p. 245.

12 Latour, *Historical Memoir*, p. 112; Buell, *History of Andrew Jackson*, I, pp. 396-97; Bassett, *Life of Andrew Jackson*, I, p. 180; Rowland, *Andrew Jackson's Campaign Against the British*, p. 314; Mahon, "British Command Decisions," pp. 73-74.

13 Benjamin Henry Latrobe, *Impressions Respecting New Orleans. Diary and Sketches, 1818-1820*, ed. by Samuel Wilson, Jr. (New York: Columbia University Press, 1951), p. 73.

14 Ritchie, "Louisiana Campaign," p. 38.

army back to the de La Ronde plantation buildings, where they remained until 4 a.m. Then he pulled back 1½ miles across the plains of the de La Ronde, Bienvenu, Chalmette, and Rodriguez Plantations and took up a position he had occupied the previous afternoon behind Rodriguez Canal next to the Macarty Plantation. The withdrawal was orderly, covered by Plauche's battalion. The artillery was ordered to assume a position on the levee road near its juncture with Rodriguez Canal so that it might sweep the front should the British decide to advance. Jackson left the Seventh Infantry, Hinds's Dragoons, and a unit of Feliciana cavalry posted on the de La Ronde land to keep abreast of developments in the British camp. While desirous of renewing the attack during daylight, Jackson learned of the arriving British reinforcements from his scouts and decided not to risk another encounter. The decision seems to have been made in consultation with Captain Henri de St. Geme, who had earlier made a personal study of the defense of the city. St. Geme advised Jackson not to reopen the battle because Keane's large army would quickly defeat the militia on open ground. He urged Jackson to take up a defensive position behind Rodriguez Canal, the same canal reportedly pointed out to St. Geme years earlier by a French fortification strategist as a most suitable line of defense for inexperienced troops. A natural advantage lay in the fact that at that point the cypress swamp jutted toward the river, thereby narrowing the tract before the canal to about six hundred yards. Furthermore, directly behind the line stood the galleried, two-storied Macarty mansion, providing an excellent vantage point from which Jackson might survey the terrain in all directions. [15]

As the Americans retired onto the Macarty property, Jackson directed his engineers to cut the levee in several places, flooding the open land between his position and that of the British. The high Mississippi waters cascaded through the crevices, overflowing the plantation tracts and furnishing some security for the soldiers beginning their labors at Rodriguez Canal. Indeed, the water quickly filled the canal. In about a week's time, however, the river level fell sharply and the advantage of the inundation proved only temporary, though the affected

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15 Latour, *Historical Memoir*, pp. 100-01, 112-13; Nolte, *Fifty Years in Both Hemispheres*, pp. 212-13; "General Carroll's Expedition," p. 51; Tatum, "Journal," p. 111; Reid and Eaton, *Life of Andrew Jackson*, pp. 300-01; de Grummond, *Baratarians*, pp. 96, 108-09; Casey, "Artillery in the Battle of New Orleans," p. 7; Bassett, *Life of Andrew Jackson*, I, p. 183; Brooks, *Siege of New Orleans*, p. 149. Concerning his reluctance to attack, Jackson wrote: "The nature of the troops under my command, mostly militia, did not allow of offensive movements, in an open country, in presence of a numerous and well despiplined [*sic*] army. . . ." Jackson to Monroe, January 8, 1815, Andrew Jackson Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Presidential Papers Microfilm, Series 3, Vols. F-K, Reel 62.

terrain was thoroughly drenched in the interim. The device successfully retarded British efforts at reconnaissance, although by the evening of December 24, their troops had advanced to occupy the Lacoste Plantation. Moreover, the flooding of the canals enabled the British to transport their heavy artillery more easily. [16] The next day, Jackson ordered Morgan to move his troops across the Mississippi. One hundred were sent to occupy Fort St. Leon while the remainder were directed to ascend the right bank and post themselves opposite Jackson's force on the Flood Plantation. Morgan also received directions to cut the levee at Jumonville's, just below the British camp, similar to the operation conducted upstream. The British later filled in the gap, however.[17]

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16 Tatum, "Journal," p. 112; Latour, *Historical Memoir*, p. 113; Ellery, "Notes and Comments"; James Parton, *The Life of Andrew Jackson* (3 vols.; orig. pub. 1860; reprint, New York: Johnson Reprint Corporation, 1967), II, pp. 111-12; de Grummond, *Baratarians*, p. 110; Ritchie, "Louisiana Campaign," pp. 38-39; Brown, *Amphibious Campaign*, p. 178; Casey, *Louisiana in War of 1812*, p. 52.

17 Dickson, "Journal of Operations," p. 12; de Grummond, *Baratarians*, pp. 100, 111; Edward Livingston to Morgan, December 25, 1814, Andrew Jackson Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Presidential Papers Microfilm, Series 3, Vols. F-K, Reel 62.

CHAPTER 4

JACKSON'S LINE AT RODRIGUEZ CANAL

With his placement of troops behind Rodriguez Canal, coupled with the cutting of the levees to his front, General Jackson practically and philosophically embraced centuries-old tenets of defensive warfare, the realm of siege craft and fortifications theory. The operation of "inundation"—"the art of letting water into a country, so that it shall be overflowed to prevent the approach of an enemy"—had been precisely adopted from the theoretical manuals.[1] Inundation constituted an elementary facet in the practice of "field fortification," the art of throwing up temporary defensive works as security against a foe. Field fortification differed from "permanent fortification," which comprised the erection of elaborate permanent works complete with broad moat and extensive rampart such as was used in masonry coastal fortifications in the United States and in major city defenses in Europe.[2]

Field fortification technique took advantage of natural qualities of the terrain. "Marshes, water courses, wet ditches, precipices, &c., should . . . be regarded as natural obstacles," wrote one theorist, noting that they were "not solely to be relied on."[3] The ground before Jackson possessed several of these qualities, and notably several wet, or drainage, ditches traced across the tract immediately to his front. Theorists argued that such ditches should be filled in or otherwise guarded to make certain an enemy could not ensconce himself there. At Chalmette, Jackson had neither the opportunity with the plain flooded, nor the time to take that precaution. Furthermore, an effort to fill in the ditches using the watery mud at hand would have been fatuous, although the abundance of cane stubble in the vicinity might have been so employed with success. Theorists also recommended that "all trees, underwood, hedges, enclosures, and houses" be

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1 Louis de Tousard, *American Artillerist's Companion, or Elements of Artillery* (2 vols.; orig. pub. Philadelphia: C. and A. Conrad and Company, 1809; reprint, New York: Greenwood Press, Publishers, 1969), I, p. 507.

2 See *Ibid.*, pp. 444-45, 448.

3 Dennis Hart Mahan, *A Complete Treatise on Field Fortification, With the General Outlines of the Principles Regulating the Arrangement, the Attack, and the Defense of Permanent Works* (orig. pub. 1836; reprint, New York: Greenwood Press Publishers, 1968), p. 64.

leveled to ensure a clear field of fire for the artillery. In some respects, this was to be accomplished at Chalmette.[4]

Rodriguez Canal, by its situation, offered Jackson the best means of constructing viable defenses in the shortest amount of time. The position was ideal in that it could be commanded neither from its flank nor from the rear. The canal itself provided a natural ditch beside which an entrenchment might quickly be raised. Moreover, the position could be made difficult of access and still offer security in case a retreat was warranted.[5] An entrenchment was the fundamental component of field fortification, comprising "a continued Obstacle, from behind which Men may Defend themselves with comparative safety."[6] Jackson's finished defenses along Rodriguez Canal might accurately be regarded as an artificial entrenchment formed utilizing natural, or existing, features, in this case the canal.[7]

The entrenchment consisted of several elements, principally the parapet, banquette, berm, ditch, and glacis. The parapet was basically a refined mass of earth, built of a height and thickness to protect the men behind it. The recommended height for a parapet was normally 6 to 7 ½ feet. Thickness varied according to the type of ordnance an enemy was expected to employ against it. If muskets were to comprise the principal opposition, a parapet 3 or 4 feet thick would suffice; if it were to withstand an assault by heavy artillery, a thickness of 18 to 24 feet would be required. Much, too, depended on the quality of soil into which the enemy's projectiles were to bury themselves. If sandy and light or clayey and thick, parapet thickness must be correspondingly adjusted. As the parapet was raised, the earth was rammed to compress it. Since Jackson's line was to withstand an onslaught from British artillery calibered as large as 24-pounders, his workmen might be expected to raise a parapet between 18 and 20 feet thick at the top and between 20 and 24 feet thick at the bottom along the inner edge of the canal. The interior height of the parapet was estimated at 4½ feet.

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4 *Ibid.*, p. 65.

5 J. Jebb, *Practical Treatise on Strengthening and Defending Outposts, Villages, Houses, Bridges, in Reference to the Duties of Officers in Command Picquets, as laid down in the Field Exercise and Evolutions of the Army* (3rd Ed.; London: W. Clowes and Sons, 1848), pp. 10-11. "With a moderate share of luck, some little Slope or Broken Ground will offer itself; and some Hedge or Ditch, Bank, Wall, Road or Wood, will be found, either placed exactly as if it were there on purpose to be Defended, or a Plan could be readily arranged for turning it to some account." *Ibid*, p. 28.

6 *Ibid.*, p. 1.

7 *Ibid.*, pp. 1, 10.

Plunging surfaces were calculated to be 1 foot for each 6 feet of thickness. The interior slope was to equal one-third of the parapet's height, while the exterior slope, facing the ditch, was to equal one-half to two-thirds of that height.[8] At the inside foot of the parapet, running throughout the length of the work, a banquette was raised. Ideally the banquette measured 4½ feet wide and stood 2 feet high, its talus sloping to the interior grade. On the outside of the parapet where it joined the ditch, a berm some 3 feet wide was usually constructed to prevent heavy soil of the work from sliding away. Often, the berm was made with a downward slant to prevent an assaulting foe from gaining a foothold.[9] "In firm soils, the berm may be only eighteen inches to two feet wide; in other cases, as in marshy soils, it may require a width of six feet."[10] Normally, the parapet was raised from earth excavated from the ditch. The ditch for fieldworks was calculated to be at least 9 feet wide, or wider, and 6 to 7½ feet deep. Some theorists urged a width no less than 12 feet. The scarp and counterscarp (inner and outer facing sides of the ditch) sloped inward toward the bottom, the angle of the slope again largely dependent on the type and weight of soil involved and whether the ditch was to contain water. Sometimes the ditch was filled with brambles or trees with sharpened limbs placed forward, termed abatis.[11] Beyond the ditch was the glacis, usually raised slightly at the edge of the ditch, then gradually sloping back to the surrounding grade. The sloping edge of the glacis was arranged to conform to the slight downward angle of the top, or superior talus, of the parapet, so that marksmen might be certain of unobstructed lines of fire into the ranks of an onward rushing enemy. "Want of time," observed one theorist, "often prevents the construction of such glacis."[12]

Ideal fieldworks such as those described were generally erected with precision and dispatch. The works were traced on the ground by engineers using pickets at the necessary distances. Workmen placed at intervals along either side of the area designated for the parapet would then begin to dig, tossing the excavated earth from the ditch and interior area into the staked zone. If

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8 Tousard, *American Artillerists's Companion,* I, pp. 501-502; Mahan, *Treatise on Field Fortification,* pp. 28, 29-30, 31; Horace Fenwick, *Essays on Field Fortification, intended for the Use of the Junior Officers and Non-Commissioned Officers of the British Infantry* (Dublin: Richard Milliken and Son, 1833), pp. 91-93; Jebb, *Practical Treatise,* p. 12.

9 Tousard, *American Artillerist's Companion,* I, pp. 501, 502-03.

10 Mahan, *Treatise on Field Fortification,* p. 33.

11 *Ibid.*; Tousard, *American Artillerist's Companion,* I, pp. 503, 506.

12 *Ibid.,* p. 503.

manpower permitted, often two lines on each side might expedite matters, and the entire labor might be executed quickly. Normally, men were placed at four-foot intervals, and the number of workmen required to raise an entrenchment was determined by dividing its projected length by four. Other workmen were employed spreading and ramming the earth, building and revetting slopes, and laying gun platforms. Tools employed by the laborers consisted of spades, shovels, earth-rammers, mallets, pickaxes, saws, hatchets, and bill hooks. With such implements were the earthworks raised, trees cut down, fences reworked, and abatis and other obstructions manufactured.[13]

When artillery was to be employed along the line or parallel, the entrenchments were modified to accommodate it through the erection of batteries, enclosed fortifications designed to facilitate the operation as well as the protection of the guns by sheltering their positions from the enemy. Batteries could be built either as detached units in advance of the main entrenchment, or they might be built directly into the line, although such incorporation was viewed by certain theoreticians as harmful and disruptive to the functioning of the line. Further, the most effective artillery was considered to be that which was most elevated, and ordnance placed in a defense constructed primarily for infantry use would accordingly have to be raised with much extra labor. Despite that, wrote Louis de Tousard, "the inconvenience which the trenches may suffer from the batteries which are placed there, is not an insuperable obstacle when there is a possibility of doing better." Tousard concluded:

> [Batteries] are constructed sooner there [in the line] than elsewhere, because they may be begun as soon as the parallel be drawn, whereas it would be necessary to wait till the next night to place them without, and would require much more labour.[14]

Different types of batteries were determined by the nature of their anticipated use. Field batteries, for example, contained light weapons to be employed against troops and which could be moved about to meet varying circumstances. Cross batteries were meant to join one another in directing their fire against a particular target, such as an enemy battery, while direct batteries housed guns that frontally played against an opposing target, striking it at almost a right angle. Breach

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13 Jebb, *Practical Treatise*, pp. 14, 21-22; Fenwick, *Essays on the Fortification*, pp. 180-82, 184-86, 187.

14 Tousard, *American Artillerist's Companion*, I, pp. 18-19.

batteries were designed to concentrate the fire of their pieces against a point of the enemy's rampart to batter its face so that an infantry assault might storm the breach.[15]

Battery construction was somewhat similar to that for the ditch and parapet. Location of the structures was especially significant and could contribute greatly to the outcome of the contest.

> The best position . . . for artillery is on the flanks and salients of a work: because from these points the salients are best protected, and the approaches best swept; and the guns should be collected at these points in batteries of several pieces; for experience has likewise shown, that it is only by opening a heavy, well-sustained fire, on the enemy's columns, that an efficient check can be given to them. If only a few files are taken off, or the shot passes over the men, it rather inspires the enemy with confidence in his safety, and with contempt for the defenses.[16]

To determine where to place the batteries, artillery officers prepared prolongations of the enemy positions, a task accomplished through careful observation and calculation. Engineers then traced the structure on the ground, allowing twenty feet of length per anticipated gun and an inside battery width of twenty feet. Once the outline was traced and marked by pickets or tied bundles of sticks called fascines, the fatigue parties began excavating the ditch before the intended structure, tossing the earth into the spot designated for the epaulement. At each end of the battery, traverses, or flanking epaulements, were likewise traced if they were needed to protect the ordnance from an enemy's enfilading fire. Dimensions of the traverse as well as of the epaulement were the same as for the parapet elsewhere on the line. The operation generally occurred at night, with workmen placed three or four feet apart shoveling from the ditch while others rammed the earth and revetted the slopes.[17] Besides the floor of the battery's interior, which must be firm and level to support a platform, the structure's primary difference in construction from that of a simple parapet lay in the cutting of embrasures, the openings through which the heavy ordnance was pointed and

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15 *Ibid.*, pp. 1-3.

16 Mahan, *Treatise on Field Fortification*, p. 79.

17 Tousard, *American Artillerist's Companion*, pp. 8, 26-28; Mahan, *Treatise on Field Fortification*, pp. 91-92.

fired. So-called barbette batteries were designed without embrasures, the artillery pieces being raised sufficiently high to level their barrels across the superior talus of the parapet. Ideally, in embrasured batteries the bottom of the aperture was approximately 3 or 4 feet above the ground, depending on the caliber of the gun to be employed. The bottom sloped outward so that the barrel could be declined if necessary. The interior of the embrasure measured between 18 and 24 inches, again depending on the size of the weapon. The sides, or cheeks, widened toward the exterior to a distance of 7 feet to allow the gun to shift its fire to different targets as necessary. Generally, the cheeks of the embrasures, along with the entire inner face of the battery, were revetted with sod, fascines, or gabions—wicker basket-like contrivances designed to hold earth—all of which helped keep the soil of the epaulement in place.[18] According to one early nineteenth-century manualist, "the advantages of embrasures are that, the men and guns are less exposed than in a barbette battery. Their principal defects are, that they have a very limited field of fire; they weaken the parapet; and present openings through which the enemy may penetrate in an assault."[19] The earthen areas of the parapet between embrasures in batteries fitted for two or more pieces were called merlons. Embrasured batteries could be erected either sunken, when the object of the attack was situated at a lower plain; level, when the terrain was level; or raised cavalier fashion when the object of attack was on higher ground. If situated properly, guns in batteries built at a moderate elevation above the surrounding country should be capable of delivering projectiles with certain accuracy.[20]

To ready the battery for the placement of its component ordnance, it was mandatory that the floor be firm enough to receive platforms. Much depended upon the nature of the terrain, and in marshy ground solidity was difficult to achieve without making special provisions. Tousard urged that in such instances layers of fascines and hurdles be staked into the turf to provide rigidity.[21] Although he does not specify such, it would seem that an excavation to receive the fascines would be in order. Once the floor was firmly prepared, the furniture consisting of platforms for holding the guns was introduced. Platforms made of wooden planks and timbers allowed the artillery to be directed and fired with steadiness and prevented the wheels of the carriages from sinking or wearing ruts in the ground. "It has been attempted to make platforms without sleepers," wrote

18 *Ibid.*, pp. 83-84; Tousard, *American Artillerist's Companion*, I, pp. 1, 22, 23-24, 33.

19 Mahan, *Treatise on Field Fortification*, p. 86.

20 Tousard, *American Artillierist's Companion*, I, pp. 4, 33, 69.

21 *Ibid.*, pp. 53-54.

Tousard, "but those who have done so, always have had to repent of it, from the derangement of them."[22] Sometimes made in a trapezoidal or fan-like shape to facilitate a wider field of fire, platforms usually took a more common rectangular shape. For field artillery such as that employed on Jackson's line, platforms measured 9 feet wide by 15 feet long and consisted of

> three sleepers of six-inch scantling, . . . fifteen feet long, which are laid perpendicular to the direction of the epaulement, and are covered with two-inch plank, twelve inches wide, and cut into lengths of nine . . . feet. Between the ends of the sleepers and the foot of the genouillere [epaulement], a piece of eight-inch scantling nine feet long, termed a heurter is laid; it should project about six inches above the platform . . . . The object of the heurter is to prevent the wheels from being run against the revetment, and also to give the gun its proper direction . . . .[23]

The purpose of the three sleepers was to absorb the weight of the ordnance by placing one under each wheel and one under the trail of the carriage. Sleepers were secured flush in the ground by excavating shallow trenches for them, fastening them together with crosspieces, and then picketing the whole in place. Planks were fastened crosswise to the sleepers using nails or wooden pegs, the latter to preclude the chance of causing sparks. "If the platform is for direct firing, with full charges, the tail may be made six inches higher than the front to break the recoil; in all other cases it should be horizontal."[24]

Once the batteries had been fully prepared, the cannon were brought forward and mounted, usually at night, to be opened against the enemy at daybreak. Cannon tubes, or barrels, were conveyed in traveling carriages usually made from oak, walnut, or chestnut. The large wheels were made from elm,

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22 *American Artillerist's Companion*, I, p. 40.

23 Mahan, *Treatise on Field Fortification*, pp. 86-87. Other theorists, including Tousard, recommended that five sleepers be laid, and that their length be 14 feet. *America Artillerist's Companion*, I, p. 40. For more on the heurter, or hurtoir, see *Ibid.*, p. 41.

24 Mahan, *Treatise on Field Fortification*, pp. 87-88. Once again, there existed slight differences of opinion among theorists regarding measurements. Tousard believed the planks should be "ten or twelve feet long." They were to be arranged "the first against the hurtoir, the second against the first, and so of the others." *American Artillerist's Companion*, I, pp. 41-42.

beech, or hickory, and the piece was transported into the battery pulled by horses. A limber was affixed to the trail, or rear extension, of the carriage, which in turn was harnessed to several of the animals. The sides of the heavy cheeks of carriages contained an assortment of hooks for carrying gunners' equipment, and the whole unit was strengthened by the addition of strip-iron reinforcements at stress points. Sometimes the pieces were brought to the batteries before the platforms were finished, in which case they were shielded behind the epaulement until ready for mounting. Construction of the battery proper, aside from the earlier raising of the epaulement, required at least twenty workmen for each gun to be emplaced, not counting gunners and their assistants who would arrive with the pieces.[25] At some distance back from the batteries, powder magazines were established, usually at intervals along the line so that one magazine might serve several batteries. Often barrels of powder were dispersed in small magazines placed at intervals of 40 or 50 yards on the line so that the contents of a central magazine would not risk destruction by a single bomb. These small line magazines were always situated 12 to 15 yards from the parapet and never opposite an embrasure. They were constructed of gabions or earth-filled bags.[26] Larger field magazines were ideally established 30 or 40 feet behind the parapet. These consisted of holes dug in the ground some 8 or 9 feet square and capable of housing up to two tons of powder. A parapet was thrown up around the magazine, and a roof formed of fascines or planks topped with a thickness of earth covered the whole. "If the ground be wet, a wooden floor must be laid for the barrels to stand on."[27]

Operation of the gun batteries was the task of the gunners and their assistants. Each piece was commanded by an artillery officer who supervised a gun crew differing in number with the size of the gun to be serviced. In field batteries, fourteen or fifteen men accomplished specific functions, from controlling drag ropes and handspikes to cleaning the barrel between shots to loading and finally firing the gun. These tasks were accomplished in a precise, regimented manner. Heavier siege cannon above 24-pounder caliber required fewer men for servicing, since the pieces were generally too weighty to be moved easily. Thus, a 24- or 32-pounder siege cannon required only eight men—two

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25 *Ibid.*, pp. 25, 45-47; Albert Manucy, *Artillery Through the Ages: A Short Illustrated History of Cannon, Emphasizing Types Used in America* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1949), pp. 50, 53, 55.

26 Tousard, *American Artillerist's Companion*, I, p. 48.

27 Fenwick, *Essays on Field Fortification*, pp. 187-88.

gunners and six assistants to work the piece effectively.[28] In fulfilling its duties, a gun crew responded to the following orders of the battery commander:

> Gunners and Matrosses [Assistants]!
> To your posts - march.
> Front - face.
> Prepare - battery!
> To - handspikes!
> Enter - handspikes!
> From - battery!
> To the knob - To the wedge! [depending on whether a metal quoin or an elevating screw was used on the cannon]
> Lay down - handspikes!
> To - spunge! Stop - vent! To - cartridge!
> Spunge - gun!
> Return - spunge! To - rammer!
> Cartridge - gun! Ram - cartridge!
> Shot - gun!
> Ram - shot!
> Return - rammer!
> To - handspikes!
> Enter - handspikes!
> To - battery!
> Point - gun!
> Lay down - handspikes!
> Clear - vent! Prime!
> To - lintstock! To - wedge!
> March!
> Front - face!
> Lintstock - march!
> Make - ready!
> Fire![29]

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28 Tousard, *American Artillerist's Companion*, I, pp. 297-98, 209-10.

29 *Ibid.*, pp. 298-304. Often experienced gun crews managed to reduce the number of commands; indeed, some were proficient enough to get by with only the order "charge!" between rapid successive rounds. William A. Meuse, *The Weapons of the Battle of New Orleans* (New Orleans: The Battle of New Orleans 150th Anniversary Committee of Louisiana, 1965), p. 27.

Handspikes were six-foot wooden crowbars set in iron sheaths used for moving the carriage and for raising the cannon's breech during elevation. Other artillery implements regularly utilized in batteries were the sponge, a brush or a wooden cylinder covered with lambskin and mounted on a long handle for cleaning and cooling the inside of the barrel; the rammer, a wooden cylinder used for seating cartridges and shot, often attached to the opposite end of the handle containing the sponge; the lintstock, a yard-long forked stick for holding slow match, the smoldering cotton rope used to ignite the charge; the portfire, a paper case containing flammable materials often used during the late eighteenth century in place of slow match; the portfire stock, used to ignite the priming powder, made of sheet metal about eleven inches long; drag ropes, used for maneuvering the ordnance back into position after recoil; and the worm, a long-handled cleaning device consisting of a double corkscrew for removing residue from the bore of the piece after discharge. Besides these items there was a host of tools, including hammers, pliers, and gimlets. A number of large nails were kept on hand with which to spike the vents of the ordnance in case it must be abandoned.[30]

The American and British cannon in 1814 encompassed a small variety of calibers based upon the weight of their solid-shot projectiles. These were 4-, 8-, 18-, 24-, and 32-pounders. Dimensions of the shot correspondingly differed, with 12-pounder shot measuring 4.4 inches in diameter; 18-pounder, 5.04 inches; 24-pounder, 5.55 inches; and 32-pounder, 6.1 inches. The American cannon also fired grapeshot and canister, both consisting of clusters of iron balls arranged in unit fashion, and even scrap iron in a round called a "landidage." Such missiles made a cannon function in scattergun fashion and proved an effective anti-personnel weapon, especially against massed frontal infantry assaults. (The British at New Orleans fired wide-ranging Congreve rockets at Jackson's men from special tube-launching devices. The rockets were innovative, though somewhat inaccurate, and were supposed to be psychologically intimidating. Flying through the air, they left a noisy incendiary trail and exploded on impact. Two sizes were used, 12- and 30-pounders.) Artillery also included howitzers, mortars, and carronades. The first was a kind of large-bored truncated cannon that could deliver bombs—hollow cylinders filled with powder and calibrated to explode on reaching the enemy's defenses—at fairly low trajectories. Howitzers were extremely versatile lightweight weapons whose maneuverability made them

30 William Stevens, *A System for the Discipline of the Artillery of the United States of America; or, the Young Artillerists' Pocket Companion* (Albany: Websters and Skinners, 1815), p. 44; Tousard, *American Artillerist's Companion*, I, p. lxxiii.

popular among artillerists. They were useful in ricocheting their missiles over the ground and into enemy positions. They could be used to fire grape and canister shot in addition to bombs. Howitzers were manufactured in two principal sizes, 6 inch and 8 inch, determined by the width of the bore. Mortars sent their bombs in high trajectories to fall with murderous explosion behind enemy lines. Mortars used no carriages, but rather were mounted on heavy wooden beds strengthened to absorb their vertical recoil on firing. Calibers varied, but generally mortars measured either 8, 10, or 12 inches across the mouth.[31]

The effective range of artillery was subject to various conditions, such as precision in aiming, elevation, and powder charge. Guns fired point-blank at a target lacked the distance obtained in elevating them. For instance, a 4-pounder could send its shot 741 feet point-blank, but its greatest range when elevated 45 degrees was 7,419 feet. Similarly, a 24-pounder could discharge shot point-blank a distance of from 1,051 to 1,978 feet, but when elevated 45 degrees, the distance increased from 12,550 to 14,837 feet. Mortar and howitzer range could likewise be regulated by elevating the tube.[32] (Besides artillery, most of Jackson's men were armed with the Model 1795 musket, a .69-caliber piece that fired a ball measuring .64 inches in diameter. Ammunition for the musket consisted of paper cartridges containing powder and solid ball. Buck-and-ball cartridges each contained one large ball plus three smaller balls of .30 caliber and, on discharge from the gun, would spread in shotgun fashion. The British infantrymen employed an India pattern musket of .75 caliber, although the balls fired were actually .69 calibre.)[33]

There exists a relative dearth of information about how faithfully Jackson's officers and soldiers adhered to the tenets of field fortification when they began working on defenses along Rodriguez Canal the morning of December 24, 1814. Certainly there was military discipline and adherence to fundamental fortification procedures, but Jackson lacked a well-defined engineer corps beyond a few capable officers on his staff and perhaps among his artillery complement. Furthermore, the principal component of his army was militia, largely untrained and whose officers probably knew next to nothing of fortification technique.

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31 *Ibid.*, pp. 210-20, 269-70, 276; Meuse, *Weapons of the Battle of New Orleans*, pp. 35-38, 44-48.

32 J. G. Tielke, *The Field Engineer; or Instructions Upon Every Branch of Field Fortification,* trans. by Edwin Hewgill (2 vols.; London: J. Walter, 1789), I, p. 227.

33 Meuse, *Weapons of the Battle of New Orleans*, pp. 39-40.

Nonetheless, an examination of accounts, coupled with certain educated conjecture, provides some overview about how the entrenchments and batteries were raised and how they fared and functioned through the duration of the confrontation with the British. By contrast, the role of the British artillery is quite well documented.

Contemporary descriptions by persons who were on the scene offer clues about Jackson's works. When Jackson withdrew to Rodriguez Canal, he positioned his army behind it in the following manner: The artillery occupied the road, supported by the contingent of marines; to their left were arranged, in respective order, the Seventh U.S. Infantry, Plauche's Battalion of New Orleans volunteers, Lacoste's command, Daquin's Battalion of Free Men of Color, the Forty-Fourth U.S. Infantry, and Carroll's division of Tennesseans. To Carroll's left and running into the swamp along the canal were Coffee's men, six hundred of whom were directed to reconnoiter the British right flank on horseback and attempt to bring back the horses lost the night before. Intending to improve his situation on the canal, Jackson sent an urgent requisition for entrenching tools to the mayor of New Orleans, who delivered "Fifty spades and some mattocks." Other implements were forthcoming from residents and planters in the surrounding country, including wheelbarrows and carts. Jackson finished surveying the canal before finally deciding to fortify it. Shortly after 1 p.m., the works were commenced.[34]

The position was described variously by parties present (Figures I-2 through I-5). Advantageously situated for defensive purposes straddling a narrow defile between swamp and river, Rodriguez Canal was seen as "an old mill canal," "a ditch," or more properly, "a mill race." The mill race was essentially a water chute down which the overflow of a rising Mississippi would be carried to operate a sawmill near the swamp. "The canal on which Jackson's lines were formed, had long been abandoned, having no longer any mill to turn, so that its banks had fallen in and raised its bottom, which was covered with grass,

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34 Andrew Jackson, "Battle of New Orleans" manuscript, Andrew Jackson Papers, Library of Congress, Presidential Papers Microfilm, Series 4, Reel 64; James Parton, *The Life of Andrew Jackson* (3 vols.; reprint, New York: Johnson Reprint Corporation, 1967), II, pp. 109-10. Jackson repeated his request to the Mayor for intrenching equipment and arms on December 29. Livingston to Mayor Girod, December 29, 1814, Andrew Jackson Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Presidential Papers Microfilm, Series 3, Vols. F-K, Reel 62.

Figure I-2. Sketch map from Colonel Alexander Dickson's "Journal of Operations in Louisiana, 1814-1815" showing the locations of British batteries established by January 1, 1815.

By kind permission of The Royal Artillery Historical Trust.

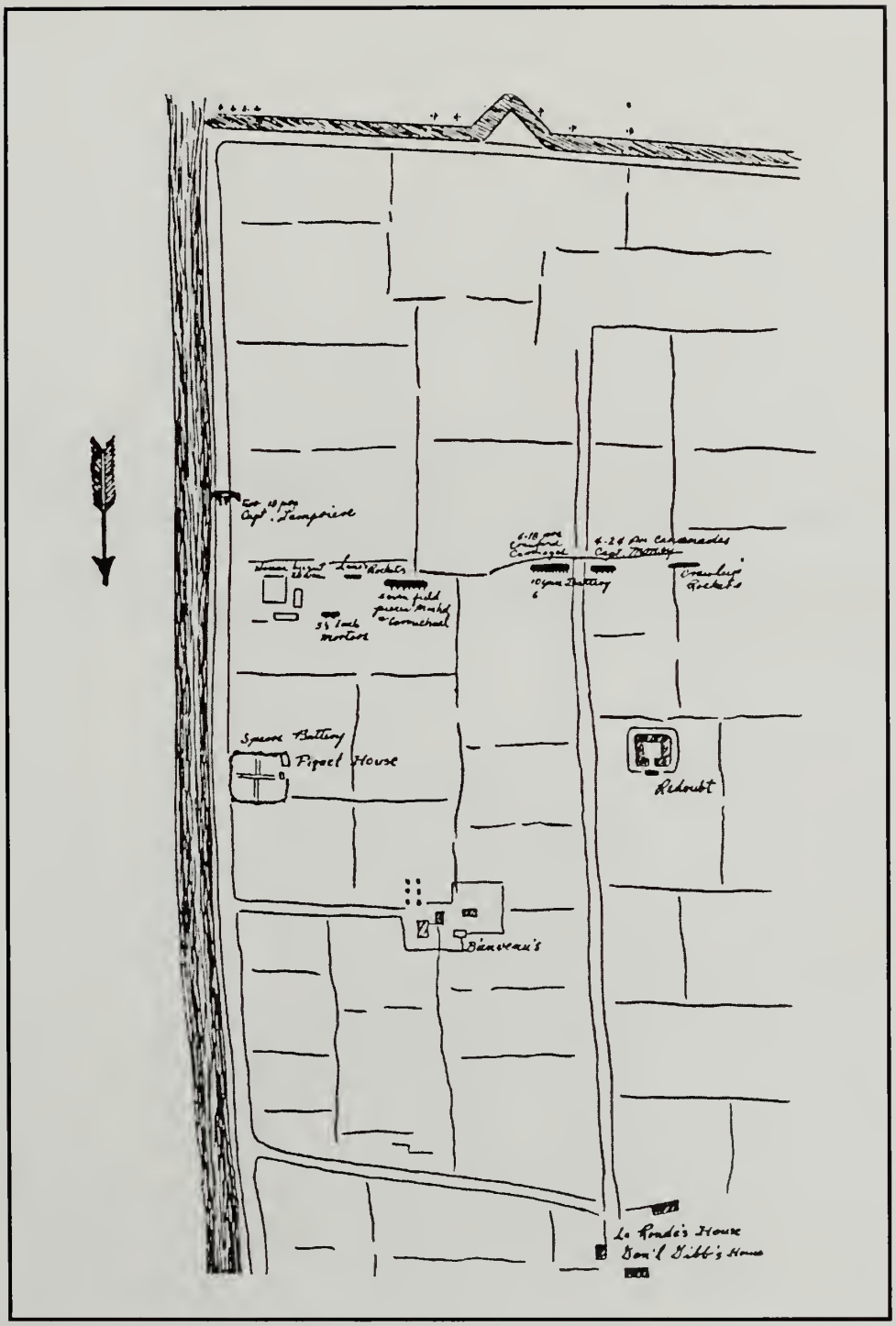

Cap. Lamprière
Rockets
Crawley's Rockets
Square Battery
Piquet House
Redoubt
Bienvenu's
La Ronde's House
Don'l Gibb's House

Figure I-3. "Plan of the Attack and the Defence of the American Lines below New Orleans on the 8th January, 1815." Map drawn by A. Lacarrière Latour.

From A. Lacarrière Latour, *Historical Memoir of the War in West Florida and Louisiana in 1814-15.* Orig. pub. 1816. Reprint, Gainesville: University of Florida Press, 1964.

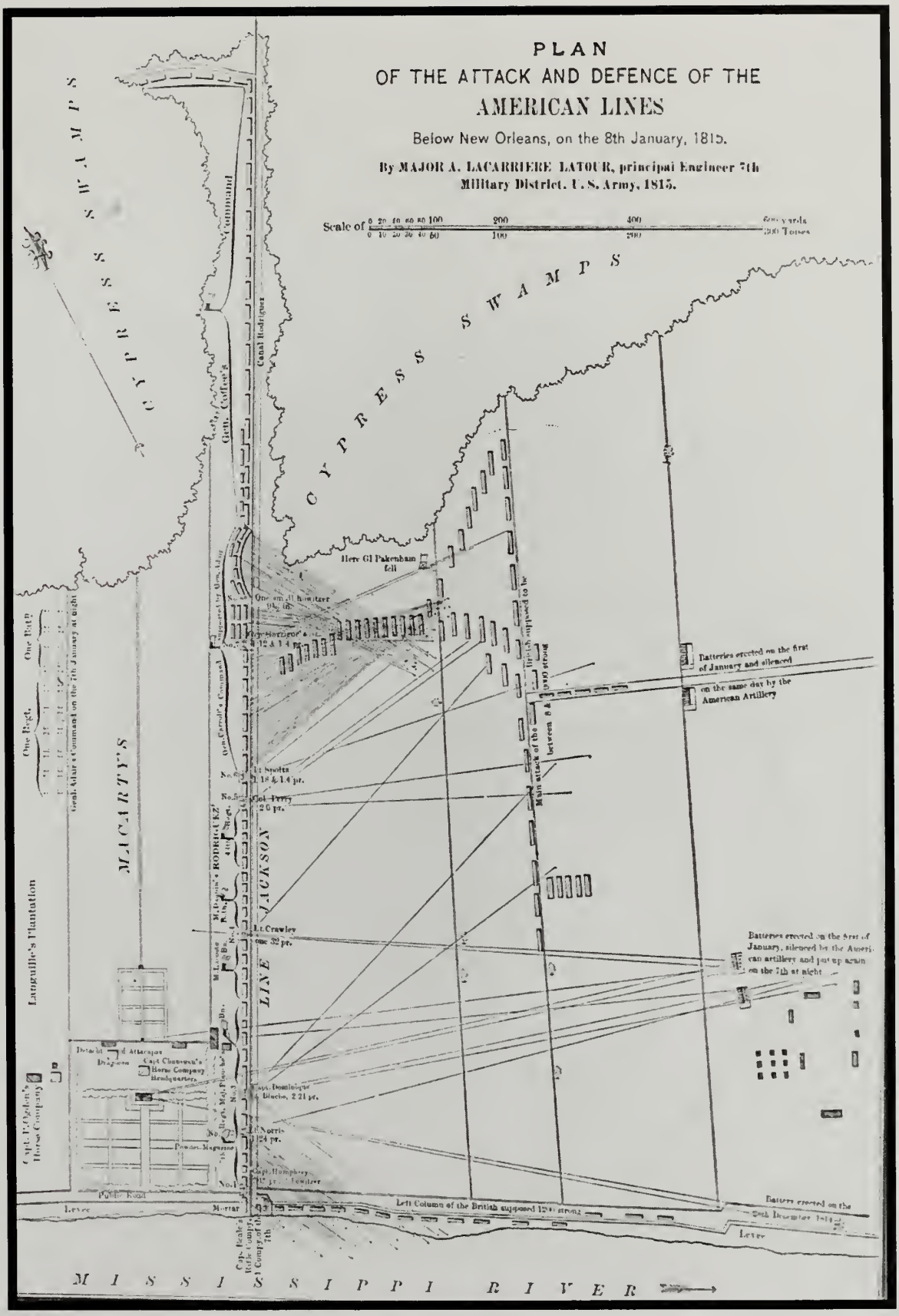

PLAN
OF THE ATTACK AND DEFENCE OF THE
AMERICAN LINES
Below New Orleans, on the 8th January, 1815.
By MAJOR A. LACARRIERE LATOUR, principal Engineer 7th Military District, U. S. Army, 1815.
Scale of
CYPRESS SWAMPS
CYPRESS SWAMPS
MACARTY'S
LINE JACKSON
Gen. Coffee's Command
Canal Rodriguez
Here Gl Pakenham fell
Batteries erected on the first of January and silenced on the same day by the American Artillery
Batteries erected on the first of January, silenced by the American artillery and put up again on the 7th at night
Left Column of the British supposed 1200 strong
Battery erected on the 28th December 1814
Languille's Plantation
Capt. P. Ogden's Horse Company
Capt. Chauveau's Horse Company Headquarters
Powder-Magazine
Public Road
Levee
Mortar
Levee
MISSISSIPPI RIVER

Figure I-4. "Sketch of the Position of the British and American Forces during the operations against New Orleans from the 23d Decr to the 8th of Jany." This map (ca. 1815) was drawn by Major Charles Ramus Forrest, Assistant Quartermaster General, 34th Regiment of Foot.

Courtesy Lilly Library, Indiana University, Bloomington, IN.

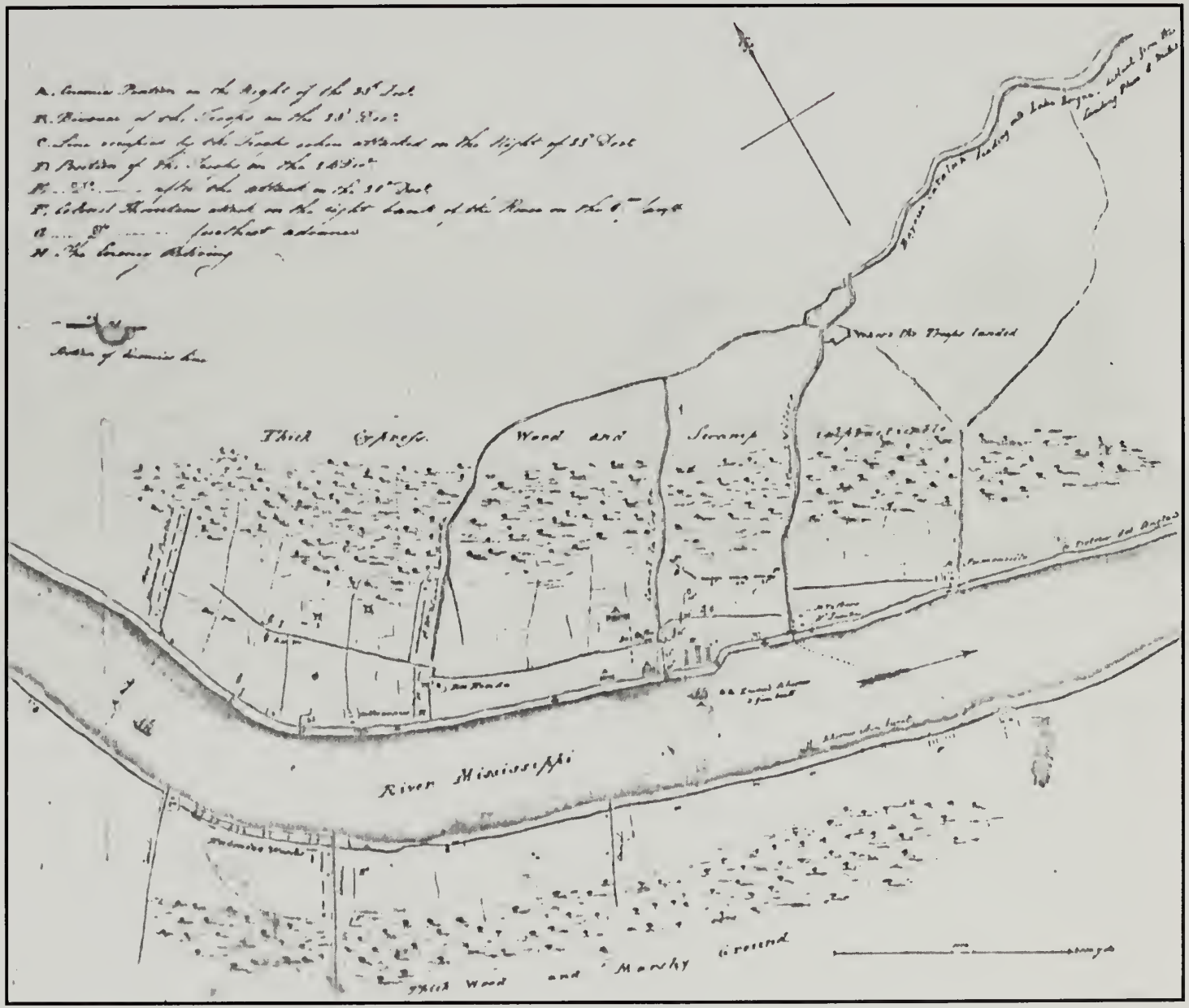
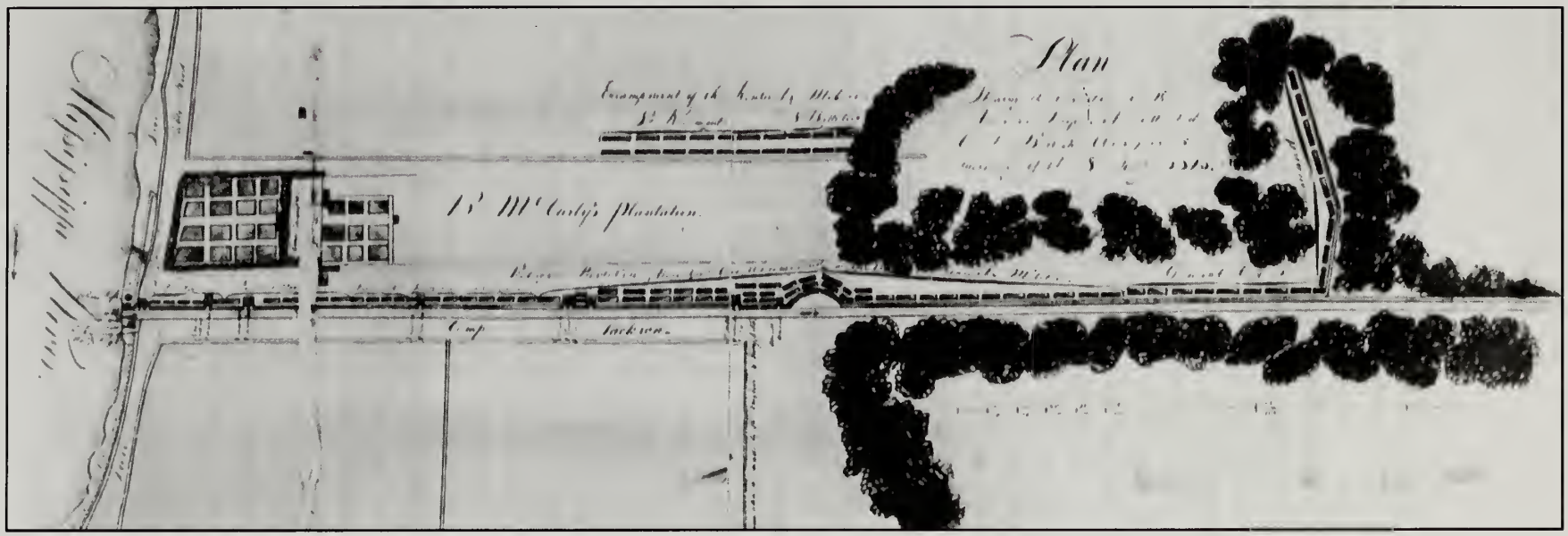

A. Enemies Position on the Night of the 25th Dec.
B. Bivouac of the Troops on the 25th Dec.
C. Line occupied by the Troops when attacked on the Night of 25th Dec.
D. Position of the Troops on the 26th Dec.
E. ... after the attack on the 30th Dec.
F. Colonel Thornton attack on the right bank of the Rivers on the 6th Jany.
G. ... furthest advance
H. The Enemy Retiring
Thick Cypress Wood and Swamp impracticable
Where the Troops landed
River Mississippi
Thick Wood and Marshy Ground

Figure I-5. Abraham R. Ellery's "Plan shewing the disposition of the American Troops, when attacked by the British Army, on the morning of the 8th of Jany (ca. 1815)."

Courtesy of the Manuscripts and Archives Division, The New York Public Library, Astor, Lenox, and Tilden Foundations.


Plan
Mr McCarty's Plantation
Camp Jackson

presenting rather the appearance of an old draining ditch than of a canal."[35] Viewed from the perspective of its fortification value, the position "offered both a natural and accidental advantage; a ditch already dug for a considerable distance in front, the earth of which was easily convertible into a glacis and counterscarp; and also a river on the right, to fill it with water."[36] The lack of any planned outworks signified that Jackson reasoned to take advantage of his militia troops and depend on their musketry precision over artillery. Commented Abraham Ellery:

> It will be recollected that in Europe their lines are principally defended by artillery; hence the necessity of flanking, at certain intervals, their principal line of defense in order to multiply the angles of the artillery fire. But here our lines were almost totally manned by militia, ignorant in a great measure, of the use of great guns and depending entirely upon their skill in shooting a musket or rifle. The artillery defense was therefore rendered subordinate to that of musketry, hence no flanking angles were formed nor auxiliary works erected, lest they should weaken the line for musketry defense, by covering the enemy in his approach and intercepting the direct fire of the troops.[37]

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35 A. Lacarrière Latour, *Historical Memoir of the War in West Florida and Louisiana in 1814-15* (orig. pub. 1816; reprint, Gainesville: University of Florida Press, 1964), pp. 145-46. See also Benjamin Henry Latrobe, *Impressions Respecting New Orleans, Diary and Sketches, 1818-1820*, ed. by Samuel Wilson, Jr. (New York: Columbia University Press, 1951), p. 45. Parton stated that the mill was located on the levee, but this would seem to be an insufficient distance for the requisite water power to accumulate. *Life of Andrew Jackson*, II, p. 109. See also Alexander Walker, *Jackson and New Orleans* (New York: J. C. Derby, 1856), pp. 309-10. Bassett stated that the canal was "twenty-five feet wide and four or five feet deep." John Spencer Bassett, *The Life of Andrew Jackson* (2 vols.; New York: The Macmillan Company, 1916), I, p. 191. The width figure seems to be too great, given the testimony below of British officers and others describing the finished works.

36 Abraham Redwood Ellery, "Notes and Comments upon the Subject of a Yankee Song entitled, 'The Retreat of the English'" (unpublished manuscript dated 1815 in the Manuscripts and Archives Division, New York Public Library). See also *Nile's Weekly Register*, February 4, 1815, p. 360; and Henry C. Castellanos, "The Invasion of Louisiana, Inner History, Gathered from Contemporaneous Sources" (typescript copy in the Louisiana State Museum Library), p. 20.

37 Ellery, "Notes and Comments."

The canal ran back from the river at almost a right angle some 600 yards to the edge of the swamp. When Jackson gave orders to begin improvement, each unit took responsibility for that segment of the line before it, each soldier working to raise a parapet from the sluggish, wet clayey soil.[38] Some sources indicate that a row of pickets was driven some distance from the edge of the canal and that the soldiers shoveled earth into the area between. "A certain situation was assigned each corps, a skreen [*sic*] of pickets was thrown up on the edge of a ditch . . . [and] earth was thrown up and the breast-works commenced . . . ."[39] A British observer noticed that the parapet was made "of earth scraped up from the rear, and . . . revetted with planks supported by stakes."[40] Latour described the construction in some detail:

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38 *Ibid.*; "Particulars in relation to Battle of New Orleans furnished me by a French gentleman, in 1828—Summer." Oran Follett Papers, Box 2, Manuscript Division, Cincinnati Historical Society; Howell Tatum, "Major Howell Tatum's Journal While Acting Topographical Engineer (1814) to General Jackson commanding the Seventh Military District," ed. by John Spencer Bassett, *Smith College Studies in History* VII (October 1921-April 1922), p. 112. Alexander Walker wrote: "Though the great majority of them were unused to manual toil, there was no want of zeal or energy in their work. A rivalry sprung up, which could build the highest mound in front of his position or dig the ditch deepest. Each soldier claimed the mound in his front as his 'castle,' and such was the value attached to these 'castles' that the General was induced to countermand an order he had given for the whole line to incline to the left to make room for a small reinforcement, by the strong remonstrance of the soldiers, who placed a higher value on their own than their neighbor's work." *Jackson and New Orleans*, p. 195. The story is plausible, but is probably apocryphal. Walker gave no sources for it. Moreover, Jackson himself related that many of the men were reluctant to do physical labor almost to the point of mutiny. Wilburt S. Brown, *The Amphibious Campaign for West Florida and Louisiana, 1814-1815: A Critical Review of Strategy and Tactics at New Orleans* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 1969), p. 107. Charles B. Brooks bridged these extremes in attitude in his *Siege of New Orleans* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1961) p. 168.

39 "General Carroll's Expedition to New Orleans" (unpublished manuscript, ca. 1815, Special Collections, Tulane University, New Orleans), pp. 51-52. See also "Diary of Levi Lee," Tennessee State Library and Archives, Nashville. A sketch of a cross section of the American line drawn by a British officer shows a ditch filled with water 8 feet deep and 12 feet wide at the top. On the inside edge of the ditch is what appears to be a line of pickets said to be 4½ feet tall (Figure I-4). Major Charles Ramus Forrest, "Sketch of the Position of the British and American Forces during the operations against New Orleans from the 23d Decr to the 8th of Jany," ca. 1815, Manuscripts Department, Lilly Library, Indiana University. See also what appears to be another version of this map entitled "Plan of Battle of New Orleans" drawn by J. F. Bourgoyne, ca. 1815, Historic New Orleans Collection. Another British source stated that Jackson's men used barrels and sugar casks which were left "standing isolated, the apertures between them being filled up with mud and all sorts of odds and ends placed along the edge of the ditch . . . [a] contemptible expedient . . . ." John Henry Cooke, *A Narrative of Events in the South of France, and of the Attack on New Orleans in 1814-and 1815* (London: T. and W. Boone, 1835), pp. 201-02.

40 Report of Captain H. D. Jones, Royal Engineers, March 30, 1815, quoted in Carson I. A. Ritchie, "The Louisiana

> Earth was fetched from the rear of the line and thrown carelessly on the left bank, where the earth had been thrown when the canal was originally dug. All the pales of the fences in the vicinity were taken to line [the inside of] the parapet, and prevent the earth from falling into the canal. All this was done at various intervals, and by different corps, owing to the frequent mutations in the disposition of the troops. This circumstance, added to the cold and to incessant rain, rendered it impossible to observe any regularity as to the thickness and height of the parapet, which in some places was as much as twenty feet thick at the top, though hardly five feet high; whilst in other places the enemy's balls went through it at the base.[41]

Apparently, to raise an effective parapet, the canal ditch in places had to be widened and deepened, its earth thrown up along the west edge or on the east edge where it might have formed a kind of muddy glacis. The best evidence suggests that the canal contained water, especially at first after Latour and his associates cut the levee and let the river rush in. Governor Claiborne reported such, as did others. A British officer's statement and cross-section view of the American line account for water in the ditch. Statements that the ditch was dry perhaps reflect that, as the Mississippi lowered during ensuing days, the water in the ditch also subsided, especially in the area of the line along the right near the river. The natural declivity of the land (and canal) toward the cypress swamp

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40 (cont.) Campaign," *The Louisiana Historical Quarterly* XLIV, Nos. 1 and 2 (January-April 1961), p. 54. Graphic depiction of this sort of construction using earth bolstered by pickets and palings can be seen in similar, if not identical, procedures employed in erecting the works at Fort St. Leon. See "Plan and Profiles of the Fort St. Leon at the English town. 1817," National Archives, Cartographic Archives Division, Drawer 133, Sheet 13.

41 *Historical Memoir*, p. 146. See also Bassett, *Life of Andrew Jackson*, I, p. 184. Jackson biographer Augustus C. Buell explained that "the mode of constructing the earthwork was to make 'cribs' of small logs, cobhouse fashion, and fill them in with the heavy, damp earth from the old ditch, well packed and rammed in place." *History of Andrew Jackson: Pioneer, Patriot, Soldier, Politician, President* (2 vols.; New York: Charles Scribners's Sons, 1904), I, p. 401. Buell's source for this information is unknown. No other source examined by the present writer contains such a description, although Jane Lucas de Grummond perpetuated it in *The Baratarians and the Battle of New Orleans* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1961), p. 97, and in her *Renato Beluche: Smuggler, Privateer and Patriot, 1780-1860* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1983), p. 109.

would have kept water in the ditch at that end of the line.[42] The work of deepening the ditch went on without intermission, one soldier recalling that "we were not suffered to remain one moment idle, all digging and leveling ditches, raising breastworks, fortifying and intrenching in the water 2 or 3 days together, sleeping on the wet ground without anything to cover us from the rain . . . ."[43] British sources who were questioned months later recollected that the American ditch measured 10 to 12 feet wide and only 3 to 4 feet deep. From their perspective in front of the line, these same sources estimated that the finished parapet behind the ditch reached 8 to 10 feet in height.[44] Given the presence of a banquette, such an estimate conformed relatively well to the theoretical model for a parapet raised 6 to 7 ½ feet high above the grade. American sources generally agreed with the British estimates of the dimensions of the ditch—8 to 10 feet wide and 4 to 6 feet deep. One soldier reported that it contained "about a foot or eighteen inches of water, and . . . a quantity of thornbush had been cut and thrown into it." The bottom of the ditch was not palisaded so that the presence of such abatis in places does not seem unusual.[45] A British engineer stated that "the whole length of the ditch was filled with large brambles."[46]

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42 Ellery, "Notes and Comments"; Tatum, "Journal," p. 112; Alexander Dickson, "Sketch of the Position"; Ritchie, "Louisiana Campaign," pp. 53-54; Alexander Dickson, "Journal of Operations in Louisiana," *The Louisiana Historical Quarterly* XLIV, Nos. 3 and 4 (January-April 1961), p. 21.

43 Frank Otto Gatell, "Letters by John Palfrey and His Sons," *The Louisiana Historical Quarterly* XLIV (January-April 1961), p. 158; Parton, who did not identify his source, wrote that "the canal was deepened and the earth thrown up on the side nearest the city. The fences were torn away, and the rails driven in to keep the light soil from falling back into the canal." *Life of Andrew Jackson*, II, p. 110. Buell states that the labor was performed by slaves impressed for the purpose rather than by soldiers. "About all the soldiers did toward throwing up the lines was to stand guard over the working parties of slaves . . . ." *History of Andrew Jackson*, I, p. 402. While slaves eventually were employed on the entrenchments, the initial work was indeed accomplished by the soldiers.

44 Cooke, *Narrative of Events*, p. 202; *General Court Martial Held at the Royal Barracks, Dublin for the Trial of Brevet Lieutenant-Colonel Hon Thomas Mullins, Captain of 44th Regiment of Foot, . . .* (Dublin: William Espy, 1815), pp. 55, 59. See also Parton, *Life of Andrew Jackson*, II, p. 111.

45 *Ibid.*, p. 59; "A Contemporary Account of the Battle of New Orleans by a Soldier in the Ranks," *The Louisiana Historical Quarterly* IX (January 1926), pp. 12-15; Hector M. Organ to Samuel Mordecai, January 19, 1815, Manuscript Division, Southern Historical Collection, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill. Yet another American account stated that the ditch was about 6 feet wide and the parapet about 4 feet high. Manuscript of M. W. Trimble entitled "Trimble's Account of the Battle of New Orleans" (copy in the library of the Chalmette Unit, Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve).

46 Report of Captain H. D. Jones, Royal Engineers, March 30, 1815, quoted in Powell A. Casey, *Louisiana in the War of*

Despite the lack of engineers to closely guide the construction which, coupled with the emergency of the moment, said one observer, would "excuse any irregularity in the construction of our lines,"[47] it appears that an effort was made to have them conform to the model as much as circumstances would permit. Major Howell Tatum, Jackson's topographical engineer, stated that "proper banquets were erected [*sic*] to every part of this line . . . and batteries constructed at such places . . . as were deemed proper."[48] One major problem appears to have been the shallowness of the soil before encountering water. This made it necessary to pare earth from the surrounding countryside to help raise the parapet, in which case wagons would seemingly have been employed.[49]

At the left flank of Jackson's line, approximately 150 yards from the swamp, the straight entrenchment was interrupted by an inverted redan, a battery-like structure whose 40-foot faces jutted back to form a rentrant angle behind the canal. Little explanation was given for the existence of this anomaly in the otherwise direct line, but it appears on all contemporary maps. While so far as is known no artillery was ever emplaced there, quite possibly the redan was intended to constitute protection on Jackson's left before it was decided to extend the fortifications for a considerable distance into the swamp. There, field guns were to be established; those mounted on the right face could rake the swamp, while those on the left face could sweep the field before the right of the line.[50] Only this indentation for the redan disrupted the line, so straight in fact that it drew criticism from persons present. "The mode of fortifying this position has . . . been condemned," wrote Ellery. "An extended straight line . . . ,

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46 (cont.) *1812* (Baton Rouge: privately published, 1963), p. 72. Another British observer, however, stated that "three deep parallel ditches had been dug across the whole front; in rear of these was a strong loop-holed palisade . . . ." A. B Ellis, *The History of the First West India Regiment* (London: Chapman and Hall, Ltd., 1885), p. 149.

47 Ellery, "Notes and Comments."

48 "Journal," p. 112.

49 Parton, *Life of Andrew Jackson*, II, p. 110; Robin Reilly, *British at the Gates: The New Orleans Campaign in the War of 1812* (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1974), p. 261.

50 See Report of Captain H. D. Jones, Royal Engineers, March 30, 1815, quoted in Casey, *Louisiana in the War of 1812*, p. 72; S. Putnam Waldo, *Memoirs of Andrew Jackson, Major-General of the United States; and Commander-in-Chief of the Division of the South* (Hartford: John Russell, Jr., 1818), typescript copy in the Louisiana State Museum Library. Latour stated that the redan was necessitated by the presence near the canal of "enormous holes in the soil made impassable by their being full of water . . . ." *Historical Memoir,* p. 149.

undeflected by any salient angles, and unflanked by any auxiliary work, being pronounced a solecism in field fortification."[51]

The inverted redan therefore offered but a modicum of relief on the line. From there, Coffee's troops extended into the woods and swamp, so it was only natural that their position be refined with the extension of the entrenchment to support their position. Jean Lafitte seems to have recommended such to Jackson's aide, Edward Livingston, either on December 24 or 25, who in turn urged that the canal also be lengthened "as they may otherwise turn our left . . . . Lafite [*sic*] says the wood may easily be marched thro all the Distance to the cypress swamp which is nearly impracticable and affords as good a point of support on the left as the river on the right."[52] Thus, over the next several days, the parapet was run another 500 yards back into the swamp. For a way the earthworks continued, but grew less thick approaching the lowlands. One soldier described them as being "a little over breast [*sic*] high, and five or six feet wide on the top."[53] Because of the abundance of water, the parapet then became a simple barricade formed of felled trees arranged horizontally in layers along the canal with loopholes between. To maintain a clear field of fire, the woods before the log breastwork were cleared for a distance of 50 yards. Then, again guarding the flank, the breastwork turned sharply west, running somewhere between 100 and 320 yards and forming a slight salient before ending in a grove of trees deep in the swamp. The total length of Jackson's line along Rodriguez Canal from the river to the swamp was approximately 1,700 yards. The total length of the works, to include the westward running segment on the extreme left, was about 1,900 yards.[54] Behind the center of the line—to the left of the inverted redan, probably

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51 "Notes and Comments," p. 12.

52 Livingston to Jackson, December 25, 1814, in *Correspondence of Andrew Jackson*, II, p. 125; James, *Border Captain*, p. 247; de Grummond, *Baratarians*, p. 101, wrote that Lafitte personally suggested the extension to Jackson on the field, a statement not supported by known facts.

53 "A Contemporary Account of the Battle of New Orleans," p. 12.

54 Report of Captain H. D. Jones, Royal Engineers, March 30, 1815, quoted in Casey, *Louisiana in the War of 1812*, p. 72; Waldo, *Memoirs of Andrew Jackson*; Abraham Ellery, "Plan Shewing the disposition of the American Troops, when attacked by the British Army, on the morning of the 8th Jany, 1815," Manuscripts and Archives Division, New York Public Library; *Border Captain*, p. 262; Brown, *Amphibious Campaign*, p. 133. Latour stated that a log walkway, or banquette, was constructed behind the breastwork. *Historical Memoir*, p. 147. Jackson later had the line measured and it was reported to him to be 1,527 yards long, presumably not including the westward extension on the left. Casey, *Louisiana in the War of 1812*, p. 73. Buell's map, in *History of Andrew Jackson*, indicates that the westward extension lay next to an old ditch that emptied into Rodriguez Canal.

in the area of the last battery—stood a tall pole from which flew the United States flag.[55] Facing the works, Jackson's command was apportioned approximately to the left of the levee road held by the marines and artillery: Regulars and Louisiana militia, comprising 1,327 men, 575 yards; Tennessee militia under Carroll, 1,414 troops, 350 yards; and Coffee's command of 2,692 Tennesseans, 613 yards.[56] The soldiers under Coffee, stationed in the woods and swamp, had to sustain the worst conditions, often in mud knee deep, since the ground sloped downward from the river, rendering "the position of the troops stationed in that quarter, wet and uncomfortable." "Excepting on the right of the line," stated Ellery, "little preference of position could be boasted of, as after a rain, from the center to the left, there was presented to the eye, but one continuous sheet of water."[57] Jackson's line was weakest on the left, and probably would have been vulnerable at that point before a well-directed British attack. Once his batteries were established, however, they gave such a new dimension that a British breakthrough on the left might not have been successful.

Little information is available regarding the erection of Jackson's artillery batteries. These units, incorporated into the line, were of such potential significance that their locations were undoubtedly plotted quite early, perhaps even before Jackson's men started digging.[58] Presumably, too, these structures

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55 Parton, *Life of Andrew Jackson*, II, p. 175.

56 *Ibid.*, Walker, *Jackson and New Orleans*, p. 315.

57 "Notes and Comments", Brown *Amphibious Campaign*, p. 133; de Grummond, *Baratarians*, p. 125. Brooks states that the extreme left was occupied by the Second Louisiana militia. *Siege of New Orleans*, p. 180. Since 1815 various forces of erosion, habitation, and levee construction have occurred to impact the historic scene at Rodriguez Canal. Although Jackson's line was never completely filled in after the campaign, the long period of occupation of the surrounding land affected the canal's appearance, and by the start of the twentieth century much of the site had been obliterated. In 1904 the army constructed a road along the east side, apparently utilizing part of the breastworks as fill. Rex L. Wilson, "The Search for Jackson's Mud Rampart," *The Florida Anthropologist* XVIII (No. 3, Part 2), p. 105. In 1957 archeologists tried to determine the precise shape of the canal, placing test trenches across it at intervals, but the project proved inconclusive. Six years later, as part of Jackson's line was being reconstructed by the National Park Service, another archeological project ensued which resulted in the excavation of a cypress log and boards likely used in the fortifications. A 6-pounder cannon ball was also recovered. *Ibid.*, pp. 105-06, 107-08. See also James W. Holland, "Notes on Some Construction Details of 'Line Jackson' at Chalmette" (unpublished report dated May 1963, in the library of the Chalmette Unit of Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve.

58 The incorporation of the batteries into the line is clearly evident in the contemporary engraving by Hyacinthe Laclotte, "Defeat of the British Army, 12,000 strong, under the Command of Sir Edward Packenham [*sic*] in the attack of the American Lines defended by 3,600 Militia commanded by Major General Andrew Jackson, January 8th 1815, on

received more attention from the engineer officers than the rest of the because of their special requirements. Yet details of battery construction remain obscure, even though Latour discussed various structures on the line using terminology that indicates adherence to some of the precepts of fortification. Nevertheless, using conjecture supported by knowledge of period fortification theory and the few known facts about Jackson's batteries, some idea of their appearance may be reached.

Battery No. 1, containing two 12-pounders and a howitzer, straddled the levee road, probably the firmest ground in the vicinity (Figures I-3 and I-5). The embrasured position was situated as part of the entrenchment, raised behind the canal, as were all of Jackson's line batteries. Allowing the specified 20 feet per field piece, the interior of the battery measured around 60 feet long by approximately 20 feet wide. The epaulement, around 7½ feet high, was probably 18 to 20 feet thick at the top, sloping to a base measuring 20 to 24 feet thick. Three embrasures cut into the epaulement reached down to approximately 4 feet from the interior floor. Their width at the inside ran 18 inches and increased gradually toward the outside, where they measured about 7 feet. The cheeks of the embrasures were reportedly lined with cotton bales held in place by unknown means, although Nolte stated that iron rings of an undetermined size were used.[59]

The floor of Battery No. 1 should have been leveled and compacted to receive its platforms and ordnance. Platforms likely measured 9 feet by 15 feet and consisted of heavy planks nailed or pegged to three heavy sleepers laid into the soil. Perhaps the rear of the platform was raised to slow the recoil of a discharging gun. Along the inside of the epaulement, about 2 feet above the surface and on either side of the embrasures, was a banquette some 4 feet wide to permit the occupants to see over the top of the work. It is unknown whether Battery No. 1 contained traverses on either side of the guns. Such devices could have helped protect the ordnance from flanking fire, which in this case might well have been appropriate on the extreme right of Jackson's line and seemingly subjected to diagonally placed British batteries on January 1. Probably the inside of Battery No. 1 was revetted with plank or fence paling, perhaps even with fascines made from sugar cane rubble.

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58 (cont.) Chalmette plain five miles below New Orleans, on the left bank of the Mississipi [*sic*]," Manuscripts and Archives Division, New York Public Library.

59 Holland, "Notes on Some Construction Details of 'Line Jackson' at Chalmette", p. 19.

Situated behind the parapet approximately midway between Battery No. 1 and Battery No. 2, about 73 yards from the river, was a powder magazine, the only one delineated on historical maps for the entire length of Jackson's line. This probably signified the existence of smaller (service) magazines consisting of barrels of powder that were distributed at intervals along the line. The magazine between Batteries No. 1 and 2 was doubtless located near the road for ready accessibility to arriving powder supplies. Specifics of construction for the magazine remain unknown. It likely was built over an area 8 or 9 feet square surrounded with a thick earthen parapet and a roof made of fascines or planks covered with earth. Likely, too, the floor of the magazine was covered with wood to help keep the powder dry.

Battery No. 2, built about 113 yards from the 1814-15 river bank, contained a 24-pounder. Construction of this battery was undoubtedly similar to that of No. 1 except that it possessed but a single embrasure. Of three maps depicting the line, only Latour's indicated that the structure had two embrasures, even though Latour stated in his text that the unit housed but one weapon. Latour also noted that Battery No. 2 was "the most elevated above the soil," probably meaning that its platform was raised higher above the surrounding terrain than those in other batteries. The purpose for this difference was not clearly defined, although it seems possible it was elevated so that its fire could clear the levee at the right front. In fortification terminology, such elevated units were called cavalier batteries. If the construction of Battery No. 2 followed the prescribed methodology, the work measured 20 feet long by 20 feet wide at the interior. The epaulement stood around 7½ feet high in front and was 18 to 20 feet thick at the top and 20 to 24 feet thick at the base (meaning, of course, that the interior of the battery stood at least 20 feet back from the edge of Rodriguez Canal). The embrasure was cut about 3 feet above the floor and measured 2 feet wide at the inside and 7 feet wide at the outside of the epaulement. Probably the cheeks of the embrasure were lined with cotton bales. The floor of the battery, perhaps inclined slightly to the rear, would have been trenched to receive three sleepers each 6 inches by 6 inches by 15 feet long. Atop the sleepers, heavy 2-inch-thick planks were fastened, each measuring 9 feet long. At the front of the platform a heurter, measuring 8 inches by 8 inches by 9 feet, was emplaced for the gun carriage wheels to rest against. Because of the raised floor in Battery No. 2, a banquette was perhaps not required. If a banquette existed, it would likely have been no more than 1 foot high and 4 feet wide. Because of the presumably moist earth that Battery No. 2 was raised from, it seems likely that the structure was revetted with fascines or fence pales obtained locally.

Battery No. 3 and Battery No. 4 together, as of January 8, 1815, contained two 24-pounders. While several sources, including Latour, indicate that only one structure was located at this point 163 yards from the river, a list prepared by Jackson's chief artillery officer, Lieutenant Colonel William MacRea, specifically accounts for two distinct units commanded, respectively, by Captains Dominique Youx and Renato Beluche.[60] It seems probable that these two batteries were separated by a traverse, thereby affording the appearance of a single unit. Batteries No. 3 and 4, like those preceding, each measured 20 feet by 20 feet at the interior and possessed epaulements 7½ feet high, 18 to 20 feet thick at the top, and 20 to 24 feet thick at the bottom. The embrasure in each was 3 feet above the inside floor and measured 2 feet across at the inside, 7 feet at the outside. Benjamin Latrobe specifically stated that the embrasures of this work were lined with cotton bales.[61] The floor in each unit, like in those discussed previously, contained a platform 9 feet wide by 15 feet long arranged on sleepers, and a heurter was laid at the front of each platform. Both batteries were lined with banquettes constructed of earth along the inside of the epaulement and measuring 2 to 3 feet 9 inches high and 4½ feet wide. Like other batteries on the line, Batteries No. 3 and 4 would have been revetted on the inside with planks, palings, and/or fascines. The traverse separating the interiors of the batteries from each other likely measured 18 or 20 feet thick. The remaining five batteries erected on Jackson's line by January 8 would likely have been constructed in a manner almost identical to those discussed here. As in these cases, firsthand evidence concerning the erection and operation of the batteries has not been located, and conclusions necessarily must rest heavily on speculation.

Between the cypress swamp and the river, the land that swept out before Jackson's men toward the British was generally level, the distant landscape dotted by plantation homes and slave quarters interspersed by orchards and broad tracts of sugar cane rubble left from harvest. Eight hundred yards from the right of the line and 150 yards from the levee stood the Chalmette mansion, behind which was located a complex of outbuildings and slave homes, the nearest structures to Jackson's front. The buildings effectively concealed the right of the line from the British. Major Hinds quartered his horsemen there. The cane field was tediously flat, broken only by an occasional bush in the intervening distance. Sedge grass, a

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60 Lieutenant Colonel William MacRea, "List of officers and men serving at the Batteries, with their names, rank, and Corps to which they respectively belong. Also the names of Men killed and wounded up to this date—Camp 16th Jany, 1815," Andrew Jackson Papers, Manuscript Division, Chicago Historical Society.

61 Benjamin Latrobe, *Impressions Respecting New Orleans, Diary and Sketches,1818-1820,* pp. 45-46.

marshy bladed plant associated with low, wet areas, grew in abundance, especially along the several drainage ditches that knifed across the terrain. One of these ditches stretched about 1,000 yards from the levee road 520 yards in front of Jackson's right to a point 400 yards from where his left entered the woods. There the ditch intersected a larger double ditch running in a slight southeastward course perpendicular to the entrenchments. Another ditch ran from the levee 170 yards beyond the first, joining the same double ditch 150 yards farther from Jackson's left. The double ditch was fenced with posts and rails, apparently along its southern side. Where the second drainage ditch connected, the fence diverged from the double ditch and ran at almost a right angle to the swamp. Because of the thick growth of sedge grass, the second ditch was nearly obscured to troops on the line except for the few bushes that grew along it.[62] A plantation road, called the Center Road, traversed the field from east to west, apparently reaching Jackson's position at Rodriguez Canal approximately 150 yards south of the inverted redan and some 700 yards from the river (Figure I-3).[63]

The land immediately adjacent on the upriver side of Rodriguez Canal was owned by Juan (Jean) Rodriguez. Situated approximately 30 yards west of the canal and 170 yards from the river was Rodriguez's house, along with several outbuildings located behind. The Rodriguez House was possibly erected by a previous landowner named Nicholas Roche between 1803 and 1805, when Roche sold the property. By the time of the Battle of New Orleans, the canal bordering the tract behind which Jackson erected his defense had been conveyed to subsequent parties, ultimately forming part of the Chalmette tract. Although the

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62 Tatum, "Journal," pp. 114-15; Parton, *Life of Andrew Jackson*, II, p. 132. See Latour, "Plan of the Attack and Defence of the American Lines below New Orleans on the 8th January, 1815," in *Historical Memoir*. It should be noted that the relative distances given by Tatum and Latour do not agree. The writer has subscribed to Tatum's figures because he was a topographical engineer who seems to have kept a diligent record of such things. Latour, moreover, has been shown to have been prone to error on numerous occasions. (It should be noted that Latour's account, comprising one of the earliest comprehensive treatments of the New Orleans campaign by a participant, must nevertheless be viewed with caution. Although the author was an engineer, he often became confused over details, especially between those in his text and those depicted on his maps. He also exhibited a tendency to be somewhat less accurate in describing events than in relating processes or methodology. Furthermore, it appears that Latour's book was initially sold by subscription and that the author purposefully over-elaborated on the exploits of men and units whose actual service did not warrant such attention. These problems therefore weaken the narrative from a historical standpoint. See Ritchie, "Louisiana Campaign," p. 37.)

63 *Ibid.*

designation "Rodriguez Canal" has been historically applied to it ever since, it is in fact a misnomer.[64]

Rodriguez, a New Orleans attorney, purchased the tract adjoining the canal on September 29, 1808. By 1814, he was operating a farm complete with milk cows, horses, chickens, and gardens. Seven slaves provided labor. Rodriguez's house was a typical structure of the period, a raised plantation house of rectangular shape with two or three rooms inside.

There were two entrances at each end, and the roof was hipped and dormered. A two-level gallery was apparently built of piers and colonettes. Archeological examination has disclosed that the house measured 58 feet in length by 22 feet in width, excluding the gallery. The house stood on a brick basement about one-half story high that was likely used for storage. Plaster-covered square brick piers with molded bases and capitals probably supported the lower gallery. A finished attic, evidently used for living purposes, gave the building an additional half-story. The upper part of the house, that above the basement, was covered with boards arranged horizontally. Contemporary illustrations and descriptions suggest that the house utilized numerous features representative of Louisiana colonial plantation architecture: French doors, colonettes, arched fanlites, a gallery stairway, a double-pitched roof, and storm doors with strap hinges.

Adjoining the main house on the east, or downriver, side about 6 yards distant was an older structure described as a Creole cottage. This building, large enough to serve a family, could variously have served as a guest house, an office, and an overseer's house. Measuring about 30 feet by 40 feet, it had a gabled roof and, like the master house, a gallery in front. It was likely built entirely of brick.[65] Some of the outbuildings of the Rodriguez Plantation were destroyed in the ensuing battles, and claims for the damage specified that Rodriguez lost a stable and coach house, four slave cabins, a kitchen, and a henhouse. In addition, the master house sustained $300 damage and the cottage $150 damage, while a large

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64 Betsy Swanson, "Annotated Archival Source Listing Relevant to the Archaeological, Architectural and Historical Interpretation of the Rodriguez Plantation Buildings, Chalmette Unit, Jean Lafitte National Historical Park" (2 vols.; unpublished report dated October, 1984, in the National Park Service, Intermountain Support Office, Santa Fe Library) I, p. 4-6. Today the site of the Rodriguez House is approximately 20 yards east of the west boundary of the park and 186 yards from the present sea wall.

65 *Ibid.*, II, p. 23-26.

quantity of fence was lost, presumably taken to bolster Jackson's earthworks.[66] Furthermore, it is apparent that, during the occupation of the line, the two Rodriguez houses served as an observation post and tactical center for Jackson's command. While the nearby Macarty residence served as the principal American headquarters, the Rodriguez structures became an important auxiliary headquarters close to the ramparts where unit movements and placement were carefully monitored. Rodriguez later described the occupation of his property:

> During the war, my house became the national house, a military post, the headquarters [of the American command] from the moment of the arrival of the English until their retreat, and for many days thereafter, it was in possession of our army, it was the camp Jackson, the headquarters established at the line. Two very well furnished houses and a well filled wine cellar were seized and put to the use of the army . . . .[67]

66 *Ibid.*, 1, p. 11.

67 J. Rodriguez, *Defense Fulminante contre La Violation des Droits du Peuple* (New Orleans, 1827), pp. 55-56, quoted in Betsy Swanson, "A Study of the Military Topography and Sites Associated with the 1814-15 New Orleans Campaign" (unpublished manuscript dated June 1985, in the National Park Service, Intermountain Support Office, Santa Fe Library), pp. 6-7.

CHAPTER 5

THE AFFAIRS OF DECEMBER 28 AND JANUARY 1

On Christmas Day, Jackson's troops noticed that the enemy had begun erecting their own battery along the road to deal with the *Carolina*, which since the night of the twenty-third had continued to plague the British position. Two days later the British opened a number of field pieces on the sloop eight hundred yards away using hotshot, and in a short time the vessel was set ablaze, the crew abandoning her before the magazine exploded an hour later. The British next turned their shore battery against another craft, the *Louisiana*, but the vessel was promptly towed out of range of the guns and anchored along the right bank.[1] The British battery that had inflicted the damage contained two 9-pounders, four 6-pounders, two 5½-inch howitzers, and a small mortar.[2]

Jackson always kept one-half of his command under arms while construction of the defenses proceeded. Workmen were drawn from his reserves. During the night of December 24, the soldiers had completed the first battery, apparently on the right of the line and scheduled to house two 6-pounder cannon under Lieutenant Samuel Spotts. Two 24-pounders also reached Jackson from

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1 A. Lacarrière Latour, *Historical Memoir of the War in West Florida and Louisiana in 1814-15* (orig. pub. 1816; Gainesville: University of Florida Press, 1964), pp. xlvii-xlviii; Vincent Nolte, *Fifty Years in Both Hemispheres or Reminiscences of the Life of a Former Merchant* (orig. pub. 1854; Freeport, New York: Books for Libraries Press, 1972), p. 214; "General Carroll's Expedition to New Orleans" (unpublished manuscript, ca. 1815, Special Collections, Tulane University, New Orleans), pp. 52-53; John Spencer Bassett, *Life of Andrew Jackson* (2 vols.; New York: The Macmillan Company, 1916), I, p.184; Theodore Roosevelt, *The Naval War of 1812, or the History of the United States Navy during the Last War with Great Britain to which is Appended an Account of the Battle of New Orleans* (orig. pub. 1882; New York: Haskell House Publishers, Ltd., 1968), pp. 347-48, 469-70; Powell A. Casey, *Louisiana in the War of 1812* (Baton Rouge: privately published, 1963), pp. 53-54; Marquis James, *Andrew Jackson: The Border Captain* (New York: The Literary Guild, 1933), pp. 249-50; Charles B. Brooks, *The Siege of New Orleans* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1961), pp. 178-79.

2 Benson Earle Hill, *Recollections of an Artillery Officer* (2 vols.; London: Richard Bentley, 1836), I, pp. 326-27; John Henry Cooke, *A Narrative of Events in the South of France, and of the Attack on New Orleans in 1814-and 1815* (London: T. and W. Boone, 1835), pp. 206-07; Alexander Dickson, "Journal of Operations in Louisiana," *The Louisiana Historical Quarterly* XLIV, Nos. 3 and 4 (January-April 1961), pp.10, 16. See also the sketch map illustrated in Figure 1-1.

New Orleans, but there was no battery finished to accommodate them.[3] On the twenty-sixth, a two-gun battery was established by Lieutenant Henry Latrobe a short distance to the left of the road. Jackson moved Spotts's guns to the center of the line on December 27, replacing them on the right with a 12-pounder and a howitzer commanded by Captain Enoch Humphrey of the artillery. Later that day, a 24-pounder was added to the line. More batteries were finished, notably what was referred to as Battery No. 2 and Battery No. 3, approximately 100 yards and 150 yards, respectively, from the levee. Guns were mounted in most of the completed positions during the evening of December 27, after platforms of "stocks and boards" had been constructed for the pieces. Jackson's artillerists were aided by the crewmen of the destroyed *Carolina*, who availed themselves to serve the newly positioned ordnance. In addition, the Baratarians at Fort St. John were ordered forward to help operate the batteries.[4]

At dawn on December 28, Major General Pakenham, who had arrived on Christmas, conducted an advance, properly a reconnaissance in force, against the Americans (Map I-5). Jackson's pickets withdrew from the Chalmette buildings, after which the structures, along with some on the Bienvenu property, were destroyed by the American artillery. The pickets took up a line extending from the levee to the swamp, between the entrenchments and the first drainage ditch.[5]

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3 Andrew Jackson Papers, "Battle of New Orleans" manuscript, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Presidential Papers Microfilm, Series 4, Reel 64.

4 *Ibid.*, Jackson to James Brown, February 4, 1815, War of 1812 Manuscripts, Manuscript Department, Lilly Library, Indiana University; Benjamin Henry Latrobe, *Impressions Respecting New Orleans. Diary and Sketches, 1818-1820*, ed. by Samuel Wilson, Jr. (New York: Columbia University Press, 1951), sketch map, "Field of Battle"; Powell A. Casey, "Artillery in the Battle of New Orleans" (unpublished manuscript in the J. Fair Hardin Collection, Department of Archives and Manuscripts, Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge), p. 11; Brooks, *Siege of New Orleans*, pp. 179-80; "Particulars in relation to Battle of New Orleans furnished me by a French gentleman, in 1828—Summer," Oran Follett Papers, Box 2, Manuscript Division, Cincinnati Historical Society; James Parton, *The Life of Andrew Jackson* (3 vols.; orig. pub. 1860; New York: Johnson Reprint Corporation, 1967), II, p.132; Bassett, *Life of Andrew Jackson*, I, p.85; Jane Lucas de Grummond, *Renato Beluche: Smuggler, Privateer and Patriot, 1780-1860* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1983), pp. 112-13. For mention of platforms, see Dagmar Renshaw Lebreton, "The Men Who Won the Battle of New Orleans," *The Louisiana Historical Quarterly* XXXVIII (July 1955), p. 28. It is impossible to precisely delineate the arrangement of Jackson's artillery on December 28 given the available evidence. No two primary accounts agree, and some offer only partial descriptions of the types of ordnance and their placement. It is not understood, for example, just what disposition was made of Spotts's two 6-pounders on the twenty-seventh, when Jackson directed them to the center of his line, although Spotts's guns later appeared in Battery No. 6.

5 Alexander Walker, *Jackson and New Orleans* (New York: J. C. Derby, 1856), p. 226; Howell Tatum, "Major Howell

A British officer reported that the American defenses held nine or ten guns, nearly half of which were located on the road to counter British field pieces.[6] Actually, the emplaced guns numbered five—Battery No. 1 contained a 12-pounder and a howitzer; Battery No. 2 held a 6- or 12-pounder howitzer; Battery No. 3 contained two 24-pounders.[7] By now the works were being completed by African Americans acquired from plantations around New Orleans, thereby freeing the soldiers for battle.[8] Most of the men who were armed carried flintlock muskets; each had two flints and twenty-five rounds of buck-and-ball cartridges in their pouches.[9] The British approached Jackson's right in columns marching some distance along the levee road, accompanied by field guns ultimately directed against the *Louisiana* and her subordinate vessels. But *Louisiana's* rounds proved more accurate, and the British road battery, brought up in front of the burning Chalmette House, was soon silenced, a loss also attributed to the guns on the American works and principally a newly mounted 24-pounder. Jackson's artillery further damaged the British battery constructed near the levee. In the advance, Major General Keane led troops of the Eighty-fifth, Ninety-third, Ninety-fifth, and First West India regiments along the river while Major General Samuel Gibbs commanded troops of the Fourth, Twenty-first, Forty-fourth, and Fifth West India regiments moving farther toward the right on a road leading generally from the de La Ronde House. Some 700-800 yards away from the American entrenchments, Gibbs unleashed a fierce rocket attack. Jackson responded with his few guns, but they executed well with grapeshot on the enemy column. Gibbs's soldiers approached the jutting swamp while the Ninety-fifth spread out in skirmish order across the plain from Keane's position. Some of the British led by Lieutenant Colonel Robert Rennie of the Twenty-first (Fusiliers) succeeded in penetrating the

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5 (cont.) Tatum's Journal While Acting Topographical Engineer (1814) to General Jackson commanding the Seventh Military District," ed. by John Spencer Bassett, *Smith College Studies in History* VII (October 1921-April 1922), p. 117; Wilburt S. Brown, *The Amphibious Campaign for West Florida and Louisiana, 1814-1815: A Critical Review of Strategy and Tactics at New Orleans* (Tuscaloosa, Alabama: University of Alabama Press, 1969), p. 117. The advance was originally intended for December 27 but was postponed because of delays in preparing the meat ration of the troops. Dickson, "Journal of Operations in Louisiana," p. 17.

6 Dickson, "Journal of Operations in Louisiana," p. 21.

7 Bassett, *Life of Andrew Jackson*, I, p. 186; Powell A. Casey, *Louisiana in the War of 1812*, pp. 57-58; Jane Lucas de Grummond, *The Baratarians and the Battle of New Orleans* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1961), p. 104; de Grummond, *Renato Beluche*, pp. 112-13.

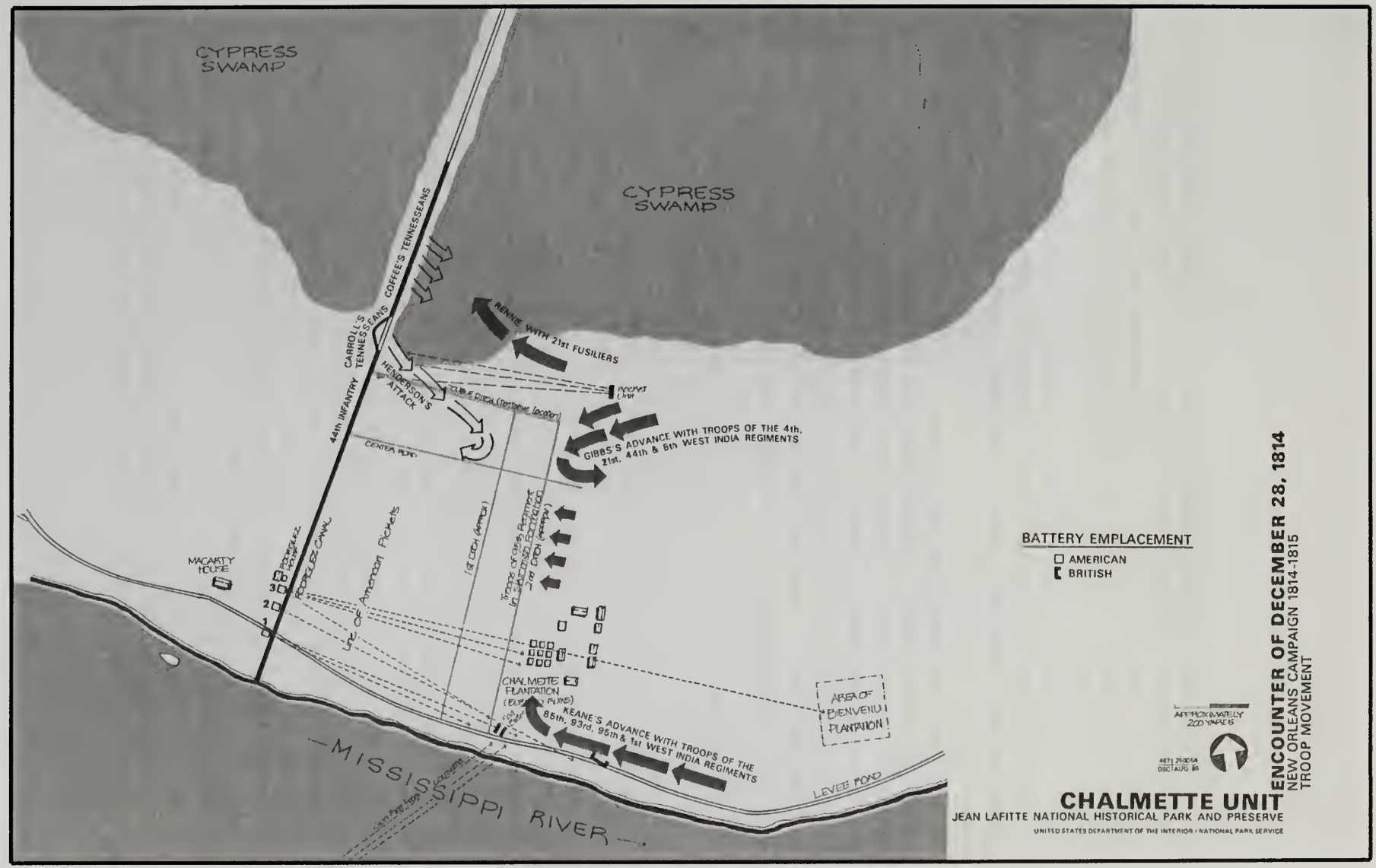
8 Tatum, "Journal," p. 119.

9 "Report of the army accoutrements, and ammunition of the troops, under the command of Major Genl. Andrew Jackson," Andrew Jackson Papers, Manuscripts Division, Chicago Historical Society.

Troop Movement Map, New Orleans Campaign, 1814-1815

Map I-5. Encounter of December 28, 1814

Denver Service Center, National Park Service. Format changes to original map by Judy Kesler, National Park Service.


CYPRESS SWAMP
CYPRESS SWAMP
44th INFANTRY
CARROLL'S TENNESSEANS
COFFEE'S TENNESSEANS
HENDERSON'S ATTACK
RENNIE WITH 21st FUSILIERS
GIBBS'S ADVANCE WITH TROOPS OF THE 4th, 21st, 44th & 6th WEST INDIA REGIMENTS
CENTER POND
MACARTY HOUSE
RODRIGUEZ CANAL
Line of American Pickets
1st Ditch (Approx)
2nd Ditch (Approx)
CHALMETTE PLANTATION
KEANE'S ADVANCE WITH TROOPS OF THE 85th, 93rd, 95th & 1st WEST INDIA REGIMENTS
AREA OF BIENVENU PLANTATION
MISSISSIPPI RIVER
LEVEE POND
BATTERY EMPLACEMENT
AMERICAN
BRITISH
APPROXIMATELY 200 YARDS
CHALMETTE UNIT
JEAN LAFITTE NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK AND PRESERVE
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR / NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
ENCOUNTER OF DECEMBER 28, 1814
NEW ORLEANS CAMPAIGN 1814-1815
TROOP MOVEMENT

swamp on the American left, where they reportedly exchanged fire with Coffee's men until they were recalled. Keane's column, meantime, was forced to seek cover during the artillery exchange with the *Louisiana*. Soon Pakenham recalled all his troops, desirous now of deliberating over the American position before launching an attack.[10]

During the advance, the British had taken cover from the American artillery in the field to the right of the levee road. Dickson stated that they hid in "ditches," Standing Cane trash, etc."[11] The main protection must have been the second major drainage ditch away from Jackson's line, just west of the Chalmette buildings. One soldier reported that "they were hurried into a wet ditch, of sufficient depth to cover the knees, where, leaning forward, they concealed themselves behind some high rushes which grew upon its brink."[12] Some men took refuge behind the burning structures, behind hedges, and in collateral ditches in the vicinity. Later, British sailors joined the artillerymen in manually retrieving the damaged and abandoned 6-pounder guns from the road and pulling them

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10 This account is prepared from materials in the following sources: Latour, *Historical Memoir*, pp. 119-21; Dickson, "Journal of Operations in Louisiana," pp. 20-21; G. R. Gleig, *The Campaigns of The British Army at Washington and New Orleans* (orig. pub. London, 1827; reprint, Totowa, New Jersey: Roman and Littlefield, 1972), pp. 168-69, 170; Cooke, *Narrative of Events*, pp. 207-08; Sir Alexander Cochrane, "Narrative of the British Attack on New Orleans, 1814-15," Manuscript Division, New York Historical Society; "Diary of a British Officer," in *Correspondence of Andrew Jackson*, ed. by John Spencer Bassett (7 vols.; Washington: Carnegie Institution of Washington, 1926-35), II; William Surtees, *Twenty-five Years in the Rifle Brigade* (orig. pub. 1833; reprint, London: Frederick Muller, Ltd., 1973), pp. 359-361; John Reid and John Henry Eaton, *The Life of Andrew Jackson*, ed. by Frank Lawrence Owsley, Jr. (orig. pub. 1817; reprint, Tuscaloosa, Alabama: University of Alabama Press, 1974), pp. 314-15; Norman Pringle, *Letters by Major Norman Pringle, Late of The Royal Scots Fusileers, Vindicating The Character of The British Army, Employed in North America in the Years 1814-15, from Aspersions Cast Upon It in Stuart's "Three Years in North America"* (Edinburgh: William Blackwood, 1833), p. 12; Alexander Walker, *Jackson and New Orleans* pp. 225-26; Parton, *Life of Andrew Jackson*, II, p. 142; Bassett, *Life of Andrew Jackson* I, pp. 185-86; Mrs. Dunbar Rowland, *Andrew Jackson's Campaign Against the British, of the Mississippi Territory in the War of 1812. Concerning The Military Operations of the Americans, Creek Indians, British, and Spanish, 1813-1815* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1926), pp. 324, 326; Casey, *Louisiana in the War of 1812*, pp. 55-58; Brown, *Amphibious Campaign*, pp. 113-14, 116; Robin Reilly, *British at The Gate: The New Orleans Campaign in the War of 1812* (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1974), pp. 274-75; de Grummond, *Renato Beluche*, pp. 113-14; de Grummond, *Baratarians*, pp. 104-05, 106-07, 125.

11 Dickson, "Journal of Operations in Louisiana," pp. 21-22.

12 Gleig, *Campaigns of the British Army*, p. 170. See also Benson Earle , *Recollections of an Artillery* Officer (2 vols.; London: Richard Bentley, 1836) I, p. 332; A. B .Ellis, *The History of the First West India Regiment* (London: Chapman and Hall, Ltd., 1885), p. 151; and Surtees, *Twenty-Five Years in the Rifle Brigade*, pp. 359-60.

several hundred yards to the rear, a task accomplished under exposure to Jackson's ordnance. Pakenham's army withdrew by degrees to a location approximately 2,200 yards from the American works. The General directed that work begin on several forward batteries to support his next approach.[13]

Pakenham's hesitancy to commit his army further testified to the opposition mounted by the Americans. Indeed, since commencing their works, Jackson's men had labored incessantly, and in recent days the left, weakest part of the line had been strengthened enough to resist musket fire. Moreover, the artillery complement was sufficiently strong to do damage to the British. In this duty, the Baratarians, particularly those under Captain Dominique Youx stationed in Battery No. 3, had excelled. These "veteran gunners," wrote Latour, "served their [24-pounder] piece with the steadiness and precision of men practiced in the management of cannon, and inured to warfare . . . ."[14] Lieutenant Charles E. Crawley, late of the schooner *Carolina*, occupied one battery to advantage with his crewmen.[15] Jackson's line received reinforcements in the form of two regiments of the Louisiana Militia. The first regiment arrived on the evening of December 27 and assumed a position on the right, while the second arrived the following morning in time for the British advance and drew up on the left, supporting Coffee.[16] These troops experienced a good deal of action, for the British rockets were directed mainly there, and the red-coated soldiers approached closest in that quarter. Those of Gibbs's soldiers in column on the north near the swamp advanced along the lower side of the double ditch, partly covered by the post and rail fence, to a point about one hundred yards behind the second drainage ditch and nearest the Americans. British troops toward the center of the field advanced to occupy the second ditch. Hoping to cut off part of the former body, a sortie of two hundred riflemen of Carroll's division commanded by Lt. Col. James Henderson pressed ahead through the outskirts of the swamp (Map I-5).

As reconstructed from available evidence, it appears that Henderson was to advance to his front through the woods north of the double ditch. When he reached the place where the fence approached the swamp (about 550 yards away),

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13 Dickson, "Journal of Operations in Louisiana,"., pp. 21-23; Atchison Diary, Historic New Orleans Collection, p. 4; Major Forrest, "Journal of the Operations Against New Orleans in 1814 and 1815," *The Louisiana Historical Quarterly* XLIV (January-April 1961), p.118.

14 Latour, *Historical Memoir*, p. 122.

15 Walker, *Jackson and New Orleans*, pp. 226-27; Rowland, *Andrew Jackson's Campaign Against the British*, p. 329.

16 Latour, *Historical Memoir*, pp. 122-23.

the colonel would pass around it and attack the right flank of the British column moving along the double ditch. Instead, through some apparent confusion in interpreting his orders, Henderson marched forward at a right oblique, passed the fence and crossed the double ditch near its junction with Rodriguez Canal, and continued in that manner until reaching the first drainage ditch. The movement put him opposite another column of Gibbs's soldiers that had meantime occupied the second ditch, thereby exposing his command to British fire from two directions, that from the group immediately in his front and that from the group he had originally intended to attack. Furthermore, Henderson's presence on that part of the field forced the American artillery to withhold its discharges against the British advance at that point.

Major Tatum described the expedition thusly:

> Whether the Colonel properly conceived the order given [verbally] or not, cannot now be ascertained. Certain it is that, instead of advancing under cover, he obliqued to his right and formed his party near the first Ditch and fronting the enemy in the second at least 100 paces to the right of the column he was to have attacked, and immediately in the range of the [supporting] fire intended from the batteries. In this position, he was attacked both in front & flank. This attack was repelled with great bravery but, as may be presumed, with little effect, as his fire was altogether directed against the party covered by the Ditch. The skirmish was short, the Colonel being killed after a few rounds and three of his men cut down nearly at the same time. A retreat was instantly commenced and affected without further loss. One of the men who had fallen in this conflict was discovered to be alive, shortly after the retreat was affected. He arose three times and attempted his escape, on the third attempt he kept on his legs and made towards the lines under a heavy discharge of musketry from the enemy. Major Simpson & Capt. Collins, of the division, discovering this attempt of the wounded man, leaped over the works, crossed the Ditch and ran to his assistance, accompanied by one or two privates. They reached the wounded man and conveyed him to the lines in

> safety under a most tremendous discharge from the enemy's line and the column on the flank. It was as great an act of bravery as was witnessed on the lines during the siege.[17]

Most of the Tennesseans, accompanied by Choctaw Indians, managed to extricate themselves from the encounter, which seems to have occurred almost simultaneously with Coffee's engagement with the British at the far left, in which he successfully repelled the assault.[18] American casualties in the December 28 affair totaled 7 killed and 10 wounded.[19] British losses are unknown, though most estimates put the figure at 200 in killed, wounded, and missing.[20]

In the aftermath of the encounter of December 28, both the Americans and British consolidated their positions, strove to make improvements in their defenses, and planned their further defensive or offensive strategies. Jackson sent his inspector general to check the left end of the line where the British had pressed his flank. A heavy picket guard was posted in the woods to prevent another surprise; many Tennesseans and Choctaws crept through the swampy terrain and took a toll of enemy pickets penetrating from the other side. On December 30, a party of British reconnoitering the woods encountered the American pickets and drew a volley, forcing them to retire with casualties.[21]

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17 "Journal," pp. 116-17. See also Reid and Eaton, *Life of Andrew Jackson*, pp. 317-18; "General Carroll's Expedition," pp. 53-54.

18 Latour, *Historical Memoir*, p. 123; Reid and Eaton, *Life of Andrew Jackson*, p. 318; Augustus C. Buell, *History of Andrew Jackson: Pioneer, Patriot, Soldier, Politician, President* (2 vols.; New York: Charles Scribners's Sons, 1904), I, p. 411; Brown, *Amphibious Campaign*, p. 114-16; de Grummond, *Baratarians*, pp. 105-06,107; Brooks, *Siege of New Orleans*, p. 189.

19 Latour, *Historical Memoir*, p. 123. Elsewhere Latour listed casualties of 9 killed and 8 wounded. Tatum, "Journal," pp. 117-18, stated that 7 were killed and 8 wounded. Roosevelt, citing "official returns," accounted for 18 American casualties. *Naval War of 1812*, p. 470.

20 Latour, *Historical Memoir*, p. 123; Rowland, *Andrew Jackson's Campaign Against the British*, pp. 329-30; de Grummond, *Baratarians*, p. 108. Theodore Roosevelt placed British losses at 58. *Naval War of 1812*, p. 470.

21 Latour, *Historical Memoir*, pp. 127-28; Dickson, "Journal of Operations in Louisiana," p. 28; Gleig, *Campaigns of the British Army*, pp. 171-72. Off the field, Jackson ordered the Louisiana legislature closed on learning that the body was prepared to surrender all to the British, in effect declaring martial law. See *Report of the Committee of Inquiry, of the Military Measures Executed Against the Legislature* (New Orleans: Roche Brothers, 1814); *Report of the Committee of the Senate in Relation to the Fine Imposed on Gen. Jackson: Together with the Documents Accompanying the Same* (New Orleans, 1814).

Meantime, Jackson made additions to his artillery, receiving on the twenty-ninth two 12-pounder guns from the *Louisiana,* which he directed to be placed in the battery behind the levee on the right bank of the river opposite his position. A 24-pounder was later added to this marine battery, which was wholly manned by sailors. This unit was capable of harassing the British left and enfilading their columns should another advance be attempted.

Following the reconnaissance of December 28, Pakenham withdrew his force one and one-half miles (Dickson said 2,200 yards) from Jackson's line, arranging it on the Bienvenu property so that the Fourth and Forty-fourth were near the wood on the right, the Twenty-first on their left, and the Eighty-fifth and Ninety-third on their left but away from the river bank and the destructive fire of the marine battery across the stream. The British threw up small epaulements on their left to protect their troops from these guns, which kept up a steady fire against them. They also constructed a battery made of earth-filled sugar hogsheads near the levee from which to direct fire against the *Louisiana*, but such lightly built units were quickly penetrated by American shot. Another battery so constructed was ordered to be placed on the British left "on the high road" to be mounted with 9-pounders. A half mile ahead of the encampment to the right near the swamp, the British over several days erected two redoubts intended to protect their pickets. Other pickets ranged toward the river, often concealing themselves from view behind houses and in small ditches. These men fired on Jackson's cavalry when they sought to investigate the area between the lines on the evening of the twenty-ninth.[22] Latour later described in some detail the construction of the redoubts on the British right. As can be seen, the fortifications adhered well to theoretical concepts governing the erection of such works:

> The redoubt which stood on Bienvenu's plantation towards the wood, was of a quadrilateral form, its interior dimensions being eighty, sixty-two, one hundred and eight, and seventy feet. Two embrasures were made on the small front opposite our lines, but forming an angle with them. Each of the lateral fronts had likewise an embrasure in the middle, and that on the back had an opening twelve feet

22 Latour, *Historical Memoir*, pp. 126-127; Surtees, *Twenty-five Years in the Rifle Brigade*, pp. 171-72; Hill, *Recollections of an Artillery Officer*, pp. 333-34; Tatum, "Journal," p. 117; Dickson, "Journal of Operations in Louisiana," pp. 23, 26; Rowland, *Andrew Jackson's Campaign Against the British*, p. 311; Buell, *History of Andrew Jackson*, I, pp. 415-16; de Grummond, *Baratarians*, p.112.

> wide, serving as an entrance, and covered by a traverse within the fort. Along the intervals between the embrasures above the ground, ran banquettes raised three feet, for the musketry. The parapet, which was fourteen feet thick at the base, and nine at the summit, had battlements for the musketry on three aspects; a fosse from twelve to fifteen feet wide and three deep surrounded the redoubt . . . . Some days after, the enemy established another redoubt in advance of this, towards our lines, on the ditch separating the plantations of Bienvenu and Chalmette. This latter redoubt was smaller in its dimensions, and had an embrasure in each of the angles towards our lines.[23]

By December 30, the British had begun to place their artillery to target on the American works. Pakenham and Admiral Cochrane saw the necessity for bringing forward heavy guns and ammunition from the ships to blast Jackson's line, breach his entrenchments, and follow with an infantry charge to carry them.[24] Up until that ordnance arrived, the British complement consisted of two 9-pounders, four 6-pounders, four 3-pounders, two 5½-inch howitzers, and three 5½-inch mortars, besides the rocket detachment. Most of this artillery had been placed in the embrasured levee battery directed against the *Carolina*.[25]

By the last day of December, guns had been installed in the right redoubt facing Jackson's left, and they opened briskly on American pickets in the area. The guns of the *Louisiana* again responded, causing some of the enemy positioned nearer the river to take shelter in available buildings. Two naval 18-pounders were now mounted in the hogshead battery by the levee road. Other breaching batteries were under construction. The flimsy units were built of sugar casks filled with earth, only one cask thick by one high, scarcely affording concealment of workers and gun crews. Moreover, some were largely open on

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23 *Historical Memoir*, pp. 136-37. A flesche, or redan, was proposed to be built along the ditch about midway between the redoubt and the levee road. See J. F. Bourgoyne, "Plan of Battlefield, Battle of New Orleans," Map Division, Historic New Orleans Collection.

24 Dickson, "Journal of Operations in Louisiana," p. 24; Gleig, *Campaigns of the British Army*, p. 172; Brown, *Amphibious Campaign*, p. 118; de Grummond, *Baratarians*, p. 112; de Grummond, *Renato Beluche*, p. 114.

25 Dickson, "Journal of Operations in Louisiana," pp. 10-11, 13, 23, 24; Casey, *Louisiana in the War of 1812*, pp. 52-53. For a discussion of amounts of British ammunition used in the New Orleans campaign, see Carson I. A. Ritchie, "The Louisiana Campaign," *The Louisiana Historical Quarterly* XLIV, Nos. 1 and 2 (January-April 1961), pp. 44-45.

the left, thereby exposed to American guns across the river. That night the British traced and constructed two large batteries within 700 yards of the entrenchments. One stood near the drainage ditch west of the Chalmette complex about 350 yards from the Mississippi; the other stood approximately 300 yards farther to the right, also on the ditch. Platforms were quickly built and by dawn two 9-pounders, three 6-pounders, and two howitzers stood in the former and six 18-pounders and four 24-pounders in the latter. The batteries, built hurriedly, lacked sufficient strength to make them impregnable. Furthermore, the platforms were unsteady. As the construction proceeded and the heavy guns were hauled into place, nearly half of Pakenham's army was posted in front to guard the laborers.[26]

On the evening of December 31, Pakenham deliberated with Cochrane, Gibbs and Keane, then issued orders for an assault on the morrow:

> When the Batteries have silenced the Enemys fire and opened his works, the position will be carried as follows.
>
> The Advance of 400 Men divided into a firing party of 100 Men, in Line, and 50 paces in rear of them the remaining 300 three deep, their Arms slung to carry fascines, the fascines are to fill the Ditch opposite the Breach, and the Column will move at close files and throw them in one Spot the fascines being lodged the Men will extend along the ditch, the firing party taking ground also the flanks.
>
> The 2d Brigade to assault in Column of Battalions left in front 50 yards interval, not a Shot to be fired, and no obstruction should impede the head of this Column 'till Master of the Enemy's Line, and Troops as they may hold upon it should be charged by Corps on Entry as quickly as

26 Latour, *Historical Memoir*, p. 131; Surtees, *Twenty-Five Years in the Rifle Brigade*, pp. 363-64; Gleig, *Campaigns of the British Army*, pp. 172-73; Cochrane, "Narrative"; Forrest, "Journal of Operations," pp. 118-19; Hill, *Recollections of an Artillery Officer*, pp. 340, 341-42; Dickson, "Journal or Operations in Louisiana," pp. 24, 25-26, 27, 29, 30; Walker, *Jackson and New Orleans*, pp. 250-51; Parton, *Life of Andrew Jackson*, II, pp.154-55; Buell, *History of Andrew Jackson*, I, pp. 412-13, 416-17; Ritchie, "Louisiana Campaign," pp. 48-49, 52. Apparently Pakenham temporarily entertained the notion of conducting siege approaches against Jackson's line by rolling hogsheads filled with cotton in advance of his forces. This idea seems to have been dropped.

possible—the leading Regiments may attack by Wings, and the succeeding Ones by Battalions, when the Enemy are shaken a new formation will be made.

False attacks will be made on both flanks from the left of the 3d Brigade, and through the Wood on the right of the 2d Brigade. Major General Keanes Demonstration should not amount to a Committal unless an Evidently favourable opportunity presents itself, but every facility to overcome obstacles should be placed at Major General Keanes disposal.

Eighty British, and 100 of the 5th West India Regiment to enter the Wood in front of the redoubt on the right of the Line before day and endeavour by a small circuit to reach the left flank of the Enemy's position; if they fall in with the Enemy's outposts before the hour of assault, they should conceal themselves 'till the general attack, when every exertion should be made (at whatever distance) to be made (at whatever distance) to attract his attention by Firing, Bugling &c., and if circumstances actually permit, to penetrate his Rear.

Three Companies of the 4th Regiment to be formed in Column of half Companies close to the Wood in a Line with the several Columns to prevent the Enemy sortieing from his left at the time of assault, and this will seem a reserve to the flankers detached thro' the Wood.[27]

British ordnance disposed for the attack was as follows:

No. 1. Lieutenant Speer. Two 18-pounders, Levee battery with facility for hot shot. To direct fire against American shipping as required.

27 Charles R. Forrest, *The Battle of New Orleans: A British View. The Journal of Major C.R. Forrest, Assistant Quarter-Master General, Thirty-fourth Regiment of Foot* (New Orleans: The Hauser Press, 1961), pp. 36-37.

No. 2. Captain Lempriere. Battery on levee road, two 18-pounders, to concentrate fire against batteries on Jackson's right and against the Macarty house headquarters

No. 3. Captain Lawrence. At right of Chalmette slave quarters, approximately 350 yards from the river. Three 5½ inch mortars to direct shells into the right side of Jackson's intrenchments, including Batteries Nos. 3 and 4.

No. 4. Captain Lane. Slightly ahead of foregoing unit, rocket battery.

No. 5. Major Michell and Captain Carmichael. At right of No. 3, and approximately 400 yards from the river. Breach battery of two 9-pounders, three 6-pounders, and two 5½-inch howitzers. To direct fire against the center of the American line; also against the Macarty house and Battery No. 5.

No. 6. Captain Crawford and Captain Money. Two units, one on either side of the center road roughly 800 yards from the river and about 550 yards from the American line. Six 18-pounders in one, four 24-pounder carronades in the other. To concentrate fire against Jackson's artillery in general, then direct fire against the line left of center.

No. 7. Lieutenant Crawley. To the right of No.6, rocket battery.[28]

Battery construction and armament was supervised by Col. Alexander Dickson, Pakenham's chief of artillery, and Lt. Col. John F. Bourgoyne, supervisor of fortifications of the royal engineers. The laborious undertaking lasted until 2 a.m., with emplacement of the pieces comprising a wearisome, time-

28 Compiled from Dickson, "Journal of Operations in Louisiana," pp. 30-31; Casey, *Louisiana in the War of 1812*, pp. 59-63; William A. Meuse, *The Weapons of the Battle of New Orleans* (New Orleans: The Battle of New Orleans 150th Anniversary Committee of Louisiana, 1965), pp. 3-35; Brown, *Amphibious Campaign*, pp. 124-26; and Latour, "Plan of the Attack and Defence of the American Lines below New Orleans on the 8th of January, 1815,". For positions of the different batteries, see J. F. Bourgoyne, Plan of the Battle of New Orleans, ca. 1815, Manuscript Division, Historic New Orleans Collection. (A somewhat refined version of this plan has been attributed to Colonel Alexander Dickson. See BPRO, London, War Office, Vol. 141.). See especially Dickson's sketch map in "Journal of Operations in Louisiana," p. 36 (Figure I-2).

consuming process for the sailors from Cochrane's fleet who worked alongside Pakenham's soldiers. [29]

Meanwhile, the American troops had made improvements on their line, too. Jackson had planned to establish five or six redoubts along the entrenchments, but the nature of the soil and the difficulty experienced just raising batteries militated against such an enterprise. There has existed certain confusion over the number of the various batteries on the line, with most sources citing eight structures, and at least one, nine. Latour, moreover, presents several discrepancies between the batteries shown on his map "Plan of the Attack and Defense of the American Lines" and those enumerated in his text.[30] Maps drawn contemporaneously with the battles of New Orleans are essentially in agreement with Latour in regard to Batteries No. 1-4, although in the case of Batteries No. 5, 6, 7, and 8, there exist several variances in types of guns employed and names of battery commanders (Figures I-3, I-5).[31]

Lieutenant Colonel William MacRea's list of men serving in the batteries may come closest to presenting the state of the American artillery on January 1 and 8, 1815 (see Appendix). This document accounts for nine regular batteries on Jackson's line and contains, not only the names of occupants in individual structures, but the casualties suffered in each during the encounters of December 28, January 1, and January 8, suggesting that few personnel shifts occurred among the batteries throughout this period.[32]

Coupled with data drawn from the other aforementioned sources, this document, signed by Jackson's artillery commander, provides data about the

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29 Casey, *Louisiana in the War of 1812*, pp. 61-62. For description of the travail involved in forwarding and emplacing the artillery, see Meuse, *Weapons of the Battle of New Orleans*, pp. 38-39.

30 These are explained in Casey, *Louisiana in the War of 1812*, p. 80.

31 Latour, "Plan of the Attack and Defense of the American Lines . . . "; Abraham R. Ellery, "Plan shewing the disposition of the American Troops, when attacked by the British Army, on the morning of the 8th Jany. 1815," Manuscripts and Archives Division, New York Public Library; Thomas Joyes, "Plan Shewing the Disposition of the American Troops when attacked by the British army on the Morning of the 8th Jany. 1815, at the line Jackson 4 Miles below New Orleans," Filson Historical Society, Louisville, Kentucky.

32 Lieutenant Colonel William MacRea, "List of officers and men serving at the Batteries, with their names, rank, and Corps to which they respectively belong. Also the names of Men killed and wounded up to this date—Camp 16th Jany, 1815," Andrew Jackson Papers, Manuscript Division, Chicago Historical Society. With the exception of this listing, the previously assigned numerical designation for the batteries will be used.

configuration of the American artillery as of January 1, 1815. , the batteries consisted of the following:

No. 1. Captain Enoch Humphrey and thirty men. Two brass 12-pounders, one howitzer. Approximately 20 yards from the river.

No. 2. Lieutenant Otho Norris and seventeen men. One iron 24-pounder. Approximately 75 yards from Battery No. 1.

No. 3. Captain Dominique Youx and twelve men. One iron 24-pounder. Approximately 40 yards from Battery No. 2.

No. 4. Captain Renato Beluche and fourteen men. One iron 24-pounder. Apparently adjoining Battery No. 3.

No. 5. [No. 4 in other accounts] Lieutenant Charles E. Crawley and sixteen men. One iron 32-pounder. Approximately 220 yards from Battery No. 4.

No. 6. [No. 5 in other accounts] Lieutenant Colonel William D. Perry and twenty-one men. One brass 12-pounder and one brass 6-pounder. (The Joyes map indicates that this battery held one 12-pounder; Latour's map indicates that it held two 6-pounders.) Approximately 180 yards from Battery No. 5 (4).

No. 7. [No. 6 in other accounts] Brigadier General Garrigues Flaujeac and ten men. One brass 18-pounder and one brass 6-pounder. Apparently adjacent to Battery No. 6 [5].

No.8. [No. 7 in other accounts] Lieutenant Samuel Spotts and sixteen men. One 18-pounder and one 6-pounder. Approximately 200 yards from Battery No. 7 (6).

No. 9. [No. 8 in other accounts] Lieutenant Harrison and ten men. One small howitzer. Approximately 45 yards from Battery No. 8 (7).

In addition, the MacRea list accounts for a 13-inch mortar in the charge of Lieutenants Gilbert and Jules Lefebvre with three men, although this piece apparently did not fire until January 9 after the main battle was over and then with

but scant effect.[33] No guns were emplaced to the left of Battery No. 8 (No. 9 in some accounts) as the terrain there turned rapidly to quagmire incapable of supporting any type of platform.[34] Across the river, Commander Patterson had mounted one 24-pounder and two 12-pounders.[35]

New Year's Day, 1815, broke over the fog-enshrouded plain. Part of Jackson's command was parading for inspection behind the works when, about nine o'clock, the fog having lifted, Pakenham's artillery opened the battle, sending salvo after salvo of rockets, shot, and grape into the American lines (Map I-6). But Jackson's men were not caught entirely unaware, and within a few minutes his artillerists responded with a strong barrage from both sides of the river, their rounds quickly taking effect among the British. Although Pakenham's guns, positioned on a lower plane, easily targeted on the American artillery, within two hours the advantage shifted as the flimsy British batteries of earth-filled sugar casks were knocked apart by well-aimed rounds from Jackson's line. The seven-gun breach battery under Major Michell and Captain Carmichael was abandoned after American shot perforated its epaulement and damaged a howitzer and several carriages. Further damage was inflicted on other batteries; reportedly, five 18-pounder British guns were dismounted and had to be abandoned, while eight other guns could not be pointed because their carriages had been hit. The levee battery exchanged fire with Patterson's guns across the Mississippi,

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33 *Ibid.*; Joyes, "Plan Shewing the Disposition of the American Troops . . . ."; Ellery, "Plan shewing the disposition of the American Troops . . . ."; Latour, "Plan of the Attack and Defense of the American Lines . . . ."; Tatum, "Journal," p. 133; Casey, "Artillery in the Battle of New Orleans," p. 31. Another contemporary accounting of American ordnance appears in "Key to the Print," published to accompany Hyacinthe Laclotte's "Defeat of the British Army, 12,000 strong, under the Command of Sir Edward Packenham [*sic*] in the attack of the American Lines defended by 3,600 Militia commanded by Major General Andrew Jackson, January 8th 1815, on Chalmette plain five miles below New Orleans, on the left bank of the Mississipi [*sic*]," Manuscripts and Archives Division, New York Public Library; Hyacinthe Laclotte, "Key of the Print," Historic New Orleans Collection. Laclotte, who was present, listed the artillery as follows: Humphrey, two 12-pounders; Norris, one 24-pounder; Dominique (Youx) and Beluche, two 24-pounders; Crawley, one 32-pounder; Perry, two 12-pounders; Garrigues, one 12-pounder; Spotts, one 18-pounder, one 14-pounder, and small howitzer. Variations of the battery complements and positions, generally derived from Latour, appear in Casey, *Louisiana in the War of 1812*, p. 80; de Grummond, *Renato Beluche*, pp. 115-16. Buell stated that the mortar was of 10-inch calibre. *History of Andrew Jackson*, 1, p. 406.

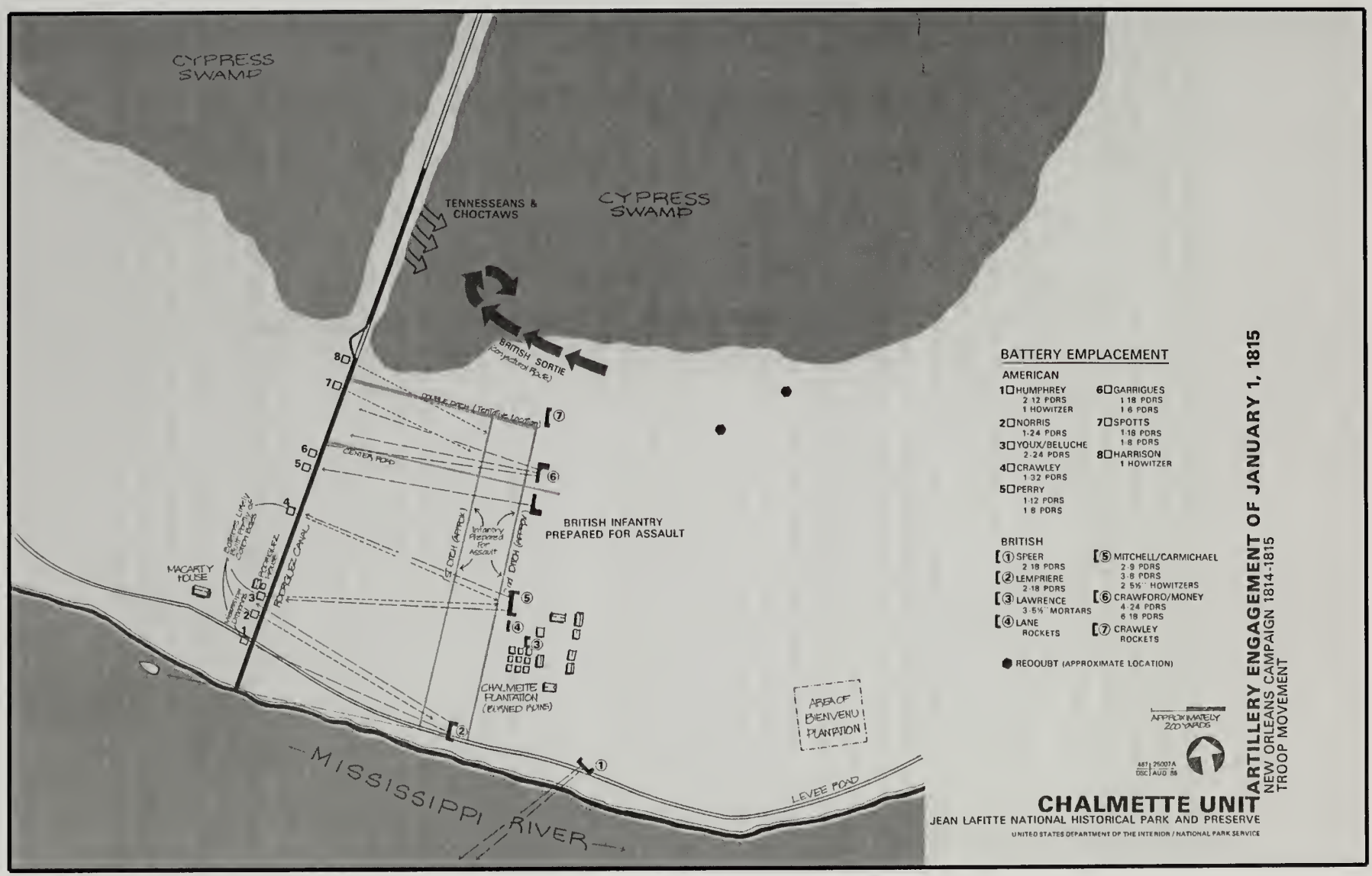
34 Casey, "Artillery in the Battle of New Orleans," p. 32. Brown lists sixteen pieces of ordnance on Jackson's line January 1. *Amphibious Campaign*, p. 126.

35 *Ibid.*

Troop Movement Map, New Orleans Campaign, 1814-1815

Map I-6. Artillery engagement of January 1, 1815

Denver Service Center, National Park Service. Format changes to original map by Judy Kesler, National Park Service.



ARTILLERY ENGAGEMENT OF JANUARY 1, 1815
NEW ORLEANS CAMPAIGN 1814-1815
TROOP MOVEMENT

damaging the American water battery, but doing no harm to its occupants. The *Louisiana* hugged the shoreline out of range of the British weapons and took no part in the battle. After nearly four hours, the British ran low of ammunition and the firing slackened; supplies were sent ahead from the water battery, but by the time they arrived, Pakenham had ordered all firing to cease.

Jackson's command suffered negligibly during the artillery exchange, most of the British rounds flying high over the line and falling harmlessly in the rear. Some reserve troops posted behind the line received injuries; and a keelboat laden with military supplies, located some two hundred yards behind the rampart, was hit by British shot. The Macarty House, Jackson's headquarters behind the line, was struck repeatedly by high-flying rounds from the British river battery, and the structure was severely damaged. Its galleries collapsed, forcing officers inside, including Jackson, to seek refuge in the garden. Those rounds striking the American parapet sank harmlessly into the mud, in effect strengthening the works. The British 24-pounders, moreover, were incapable of maintaining a steady fire because every recoil rolled the heavy naval carriages back off their short platforms. Yet some American guns were damaged: The 32-pounder in Battery No. 4 was struck and silenced, as was the 12-pounder in Battery No. 5. The 24-pounder in Battery No. 3 sustained injury to its carriage. Further, the caissons on the right loaded with black powder were struck by rockets and exploded.

Meantime, Pakenham's infantrymen lay in ditches to the front and rear of their own batteries, prepared to assault in formation once the entrenchments were breached. Fascines and ladders had been placed in the picket redoubt on the right, ready for the soldiers to claim in their advance. With the failure of the British guns, however, the opportunity for advancing never came, and the infantry troops evacuated the ditches. The American artillery fire kept them stationary and removed from combat for the duration of the bombardment, although many were hit by artillery rounds and grape shot during the dueling.[36]

On Jackson's left, a British sortie of two hundred men penetrated the woods and swamp as on December 28, but Coffee's militia and the Choctaws,

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36 Later complaints arose over the fact that the British infantry had not been ordered to advance at the initiation of the artillery barrage and before the Americans could respond. "For more than ten minutes they did not fire a gun . . . and a whole brigade of infantry close at hand, burned to be ordered on to the assault, and with loud words demanded why they were not led on . . . . But to their utter astonishment no such order was given . . . ." Cooke, *Narrative of Events*, p. 211.

supported by the Louisiana militia, easily repelled it (Map I-6).[37] Throughout the battle, Major Hinds posted his Mississippi dragoons to the right rear of the line near the levee. By 1 p.m., most of the British guns had stopped firing; two hours later, the attack ended altogether, and the rising smoke revealed to the Americans the extensive injury their guns had caused Pakenham. That evening, Jackson ordered half a gill of whiskey for each of his men to toast their success.[38]

Casualties for the Americans in the January 1 engagement consisted of 11 men killed and 23 wounded; the British lost 31 killed and 39 wounded.[39] Following the cessation of the bombardment, the British infantrymen stayed in position near the batteries to cover the removal of the guns. The *Louisiana*, which had remained silent through the day, now opened fire on the British troops near the river and on the battery that straddled the levee road. During the night, the weather turned to rain, and the ground became so muddy the soldiers and seamen had a difficult time pulling the heavy ordnance back, and some cannon had to be

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37 Dickson stated that this movement was a "false attack" intended to divert the Americans' attention from the anticipated

37 (cont.) frontal assault. "Journal of Operations in Louisiana," p. 38.

38 This account is based on the following sources: "Diary of a British Officer," in *Correspondence of Andrew Jackson*, II, pp. 109-10; Latour, *Historical Memoir*, pp. 132-36; "Journal of an Officer, 1814-15," *DeBow's Review* XVI (1854), p. 645; Abraham Redwood Ellery, "Notes and Comments upon the Subject of a Yankee Song entitled, 'The Retreat of the English'" (unpublished manuscript dated 1815 in the Manuscripts and Archives Division, New York Public Library); Labreton, "Men Who Won the Battle of New Orleans," p. 29; Cooke, *Narrative of Events*, pp. 210-11; George Laval Chesterton, *Peace, War, and Adventure: An Autobiographical Memoir of George Laval Chesterton* (2 vols.; London: Longman, Brown, Greene, and Longmans, 1853), I, pp. 193-95; Jean Lafitte, *The Journal of Jean Lafitte: The Privateer Patriot's Own Story* (New York: Vantage Press, 1958), p. 60; Dickson, "Journal of Operations in Louisiana, pp. 35, 37-38; Reid and Eaton, Life of Andrew Jackson, pp. 326-29; Tatum, "Journal," pp. 120-22; *General Court Martial Held at the Royal Barracks, Dublin for the Trial of Brevet Lieutenant-Colonel Hon Thomas Mullins, Captain of 44th Regiment of Foot, ...* (Dublin: William Espy, 1815), pp. 90-91, 95; Harry Smith, *Autobiography of Lieutenant-General Sir Harry Smith* (London: John Murray, 1901), typescript copy in the library of the Chalmette Unit, Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve, pp. 4-5; "General Carroll's Expedition," pp. 56-57; "Particulars in relation to Battle of N. Orleans" ; Bassett, *Life of Andrew Jackson*, I, pp. 187-88; Rowland, *Andrew Jackson's Campaign Against the British*, pp. 334-35; Parton, *The Life of Andrew Jackson*, II, pp. 157-58, 159, 161; Buell, *History of Andrew Jackson*, I, pp. 417-20, 422; Casey, *Louisiana in the War of 1812*, pp. 64, 65-66; Casey, "Artillery in the Battle of New Orleans," pp. 22-23; de Grummond, *Renato Beluche*, pp. 115, 117; de Grummond, *Baratarians*, pp. 113-14, 115, 116, 117; Zachary F. Smith, *The Battle of New Orleans*, Filson Club Publications No. 19 (Louisville, Kentucky: John P. Morton and Company, 1904) pp. 58-59; James, *Border Captain*, pp. 257-59; Brooks, *Siege of New Orleans*, pp. 202-03, 204.

39 Tatum, "Journal," p. 122; Latour, *Historical Memoir*, pp. 135, lix; de Grummond, *Baratarians*, pp. 117-18, citing Hill, *Recollections of an Artillery Officer*, II.

abandoned.[40] Some officers blamed the day's setback squarely on the artillery. "Such a failure in this boasted arm was not to be expected," wrote Admiral Sir Edward Codrington, "and I think it a blot on the artillery escutcheon."[41] In truth, the British guns failed because of poorly built batteries and a dearth of ammunition, together with the fact that the American guns were heavier and better trained against the enemy.[42] Pakenham decided to await the arrival of two new regiments, the Seventh and Forty-third infantries, before advancing again[43]

One feature of the January 1 battle deserves more than passing notice since it affected to some degree the performance of Jackson's artillery as well as the construction of his batteries. This was the frequently stated use of cotton bales, an element that since 1815 has assumed inordinate proportion in the folklore surrounding the Battle of New Orleans. That cotton bales were used to a certain extent in Jackson's line has been well established by both American and British contemporary sources. In just what manner they were employed is not uniformly agreed upon, however. Latour, who had an immediate and personal interest in the construction of the batteries, reported the following: "The cheeks of the embrasures of our batteries were formed of bales of cotton, which the enemy's balls [on January 1] struck and made fly in all directions."[44] The use of cotton bales in the construction of embrasures is confirmed by the British artillerist Alexander Dickson, who noted that Jackson's batteries had "the advantage of good embrasures substantially constructed of Cotton bags."[45] These two sources are significant in that they were written by participants close to the event and that each mentions the use of bales only in conjunction with the embrasures. Jackson biographer Augustus C. Buell described the bales as being used in place of gabions in constructing embrasures and traverses in the batteries,

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40 (cont.) Forrest, "Journal of Operations," p. 120; Tatum, "Journal," p. 122; Latour, *Historical Memoir*, pp. cxlviii-cxlix; Hill, *Recollections of an Artillery Officer*, II, p. 5; Surtees , *Twenty-Five Years in the Rifle Brigade*, p. 367. For details of the withdrawal of the guns, see Dickson, "Journal of Operations in Louisiana," pp. 39-40, and Casey, "Artillery in the Battle of New Orleans," p. 25.

41 *Memoir of the Life of Admiral Sir Edward Codrington* (2 vols.; London: Longmans, Green, and Company, 1873), I, p. 334.

42 Ritchie, "Louisiana Campaign," p. 56; Casey, "Artillery at the Battle of New Orleans," p. 24.

43 Dickson, "Journal of Operations in Louisiana," pp. 38-39.

44 *Historical Memoir*, p. 134.

45 "Journal of Operations in Louisiana," p. 35.

and such disposition makes sense, although Buell seemingly concocted conversation between Jackson and Latour concerning the matter.[46]

The first known mention of cotton bales being used extensively in the battery construction appears in the diary of the artist and architect Benjamin Henry Latrobe, whose son had served on the line. During a visit to the battlefield in 1819 accompanied by the merchant Vincent Nolte, Latrobe commented on Battery No.2, which Lieutenant Henry Latrobe had helped build more than four years earlier:

> The battery . . . was strengthened and indeed built, by laying down a mass of Bales of Cotton, covering them with earth, piling others upon them, and thus producing perhaps a much better work than harder materials could have supplied. When the campaign was at an end, the bales were taken up, and in the place of the battery is now a pond and a gap in the line.[47]

Latrobe noted that the other batteries were similarly constructed using two hundred cotton bales confiscated from merchant Vincent Nolte.[48] In 1814-15, bales were not shaped squarely as they were later in the nineteenth century. Rather, they consisted of large round bags of compressed cotton measuring about 9 feet in length and 2 feet in diameter and weighing about 300 pounds each.[49] It is altogether possible that some of the batteries, especially those on the right of the line near the river and thus readily accessible to supplies of cotton, used the bales as described by Latrobe, probably as an expedient during the race to fortify and bring artillery forward around December 25-26. Most likely such use of cotton was experimental; the bales could have been interspersed in an elongated manner with layers of earth to form the epaulement as well as to revet the embrasure cheeks of the batteries.[50] It is indeed possible that after being battered for days by British artillery and exposed to lengthy periods of rain while laden

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46 *History of Andrew Jackson*, I, pp.406-07. See also, Reilly, *British at the Gates*, p. 280, quoting General William Carroll.

47 *Impressions Respecting New Orleans*, pp. 45-46.

48 *Ibid.*, pp. 73-74.

49 Cooke, *Narrative of Events*, pp. 210, 270; George A. Lowry, "Ginning and Baling Cotton, from 1798 to 1898," *American Society of Mechanical Engineers* (1898), p. 819.

50 The British participant Cooke, writing years later, said that "large cotton bags were brought to form epaulements [*sic*], and to flank the embrasures of the American batteries." *Narrative of Events*, p. 210.

down with the mud of the rampart, the bales could be profitably extricated for commercial purposes.

So far as the use of bales in the embrasure construction was concerned, their value proved something less than anticipated, for according to Alexander Walker, who based his narrative largely on the testimony of participants, the bales were not only subject to being knocked out of the embrasures by enemy shot, but they caught fire and, when flying about, posed a danger to the ammunition. "Some of Plauche's battalion volunteered to extinguish the burning cotton, and, slipping over the breastwork, succeeded in doing so . . . . After this no cotton bales were ever used in the breastwork."[51] Jean Lafitte, writing years after the event, also remarked that the bales caught fire and threatened the American stores of gunpowder.[52] Perhaps meaningfully, Lafitte's reference was directed to the large magazine midway between Batteries No. 1 and 2. The combustible nature of the bales, together with their smouldering tendencies that caused blinding smoke, was probably the reason why Jackson ordered all bales removed from the line after the January 1 engagement.[53]

Forty years after the Battle of New Orleans, the story of use of cotton bales on Jackson's line received a new slant. Vincent Nolte reported in his memoirs that Jackson had accepted a French engineer's (Latour?) suggestion for "filling up the hollowed redoubts with cotton-bales, laid to the depth of three or four, one above the other: the wooden platforms . . . were to be placed upon the cotton-bales, and there secured . . . ." Nolte repeated the concept of the use of bales for lining embrasures, adding that the procedure involved "six or eight bales fastened to the main-body of the redoubt [*sic*] by iron rings, and covered with

51 *Jackson and New Orleans*, p. 261.

52 Lafitte, *The Journal of Jean Lafitte,* p. 60. Several participants discounted the use of cotton bales. "The cotton-bale story is positively untrue," remarked Brigadier General Henry W. Palfrey in 1857, more than four decades later. "I was a lieutenant. I fought behind that breastwork and if you will but consider the inflammable quality of cotton you will see how utterly impracticable such a material would be . . . . It is not impossible that a few bales found upon the plantation might have been thrown into the work to help it on; but they would of necessity have to be thickly covered with earth. Cotton - bales would be the very worst material for any work of that kind, and, as an active participant in the battle, I have no knowledge of their use." Quoted in the *Sunday Dispatch* (Philadelphia), February 19, 1877. William Darby also denied the use of bales in Jackson's line. Letter on Battle of New Orleans signed "Verita," January 18, 1855, Manuscript Division, Cincinnati Historical Society. Jackson himself stated many years after the battle that no cotton bales were used in his earthworks. Parton, *Life of Andrew Jackson*, III, p. 633.

53 Walker, *Jackson and New Orleans*, p. 111.

adhesive earth."[54] It is not known what size the rings were or how they fastened the bale revetment to the epaulement; presumably the rings were sufficiently large to encircle a bale (bag) of cotton. Most likely the bales were laid horizontally atop each other along the embrasure walls. Nolte specifically stated that bales were employed in Battery No. 3.[55]

It is indeed unlikely that Jackson used cotton bales beneath his artillery platforms. That such a recommendation was made by a French engineer is equally improbable, for cannon thus mounted would have been unsteady and difficult to manage as the contents of the cotton bags shifted under the great weight of the pieces. Nonetheless, the myth continues, and as recently as 1981, that aspect of the cotton bale story was perpetuated.[56] Evidently, bales were used only to line embrasures and possibly to raise the epaulement in the batteries. Those employed in the former manner were seemingly discarded following the battle on January 1. One participant reported that the bales were "taken off the works and thrown in the rear, where the men broke them open and used the layers of which they were composed for mattresses."[57] Nevertheless, the account of their widespread use continues to flourish in near apocryphal proportion, perhaps because of the appeal of its uniquely Southern quality.

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54 *Fifty Years in Both Hemispheres*, pp. 215-16. See also Smith, *Battle of New Orle*ans, p. 59.

55 *Ibid.*, p. 216.

56 Frank Lawrence Owsley, Jr., *The Struggle for the Gulf Borderlands: The Creek War and the Battle of New Orleans, 1812-1815* (Gainesville: The University of Florida Press, 1981), p. 148. See also Reilly, *British at the Gates*, pp. 279-80; de Grummond, *Baratarians*, p. 104; and Casey, "Artillery in the Battle of New Orleans," p. 21; Ritchie, "Louisiana Campaign," p. 53; Brown, *Amphibious Campaign*, p. 119.

57 John Richard Ogilvy, *Kentucky at New Orleans* (1828), quoted in Buell, *History of Andrew Jackson*, I, p. 409.

CHAPTER 6

FINAL PREPARATIONS

While joyous in his success following the January 1 engagement, Jackson did not allow his men to enjoy a false sense of security. The British gave no sign of retiring to their ships, and Jackson realized their renewal of the attack would be only a matter of time. After the January 1 battle, he received reinforcement of some five hundred men of the second division of Louisiana militia from the northern part of the state. But these troops were unarmed, and Jackson sent them to help raise a new line of fortifications one and one-half miles to his rear. More troops were expected momentarily. On the second, Jackson sent out mounted and foot patrols to ascertain enemy activities in his front.[1] He also continued the strengthening of his works, particularly those on the left where Coffee's men still maintained vigilance. When some soldiers threatened mutiny over toiling on the entrenchments beside several hundred slaves, Jackson managed to impress their officers with the value of the work, and no revolt took place.[2]

The American artillery meantime kept up its play on the British position. Guns mounted on the right bank fired hotshot across the river at the Bienvenu structure while African American laborers on that side worked to open a line of entrenchments from the river back into the woods similar to those at Jackson's position.[3] The major innovation to Jackson's line after the battle of January 1 occurred on the extreme right front where, on the sixth, a small detached flanking redoubt was begun. Tatum referred to this structure as a demi-bastion situated

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1 *Nile's Weekly Register*, February 11, 1815, p. 376; A. Lacarrière Latour, *Historical Memoir of the War in West Florida and Louisiana in 1814-15* (orig. pub. 1816; reprint, Gainesville: University of Florida Press, 1964), p. 136; Augustus C. Buell, *History of Andrew Jackson: Pioneer, Patriot, Soldier, Politician, President* (2 vols.; New York: Charles Scribners's Sons, 1904), I, p. 426.

2 John Spencer Bassett, *Life of Andrew Jackson* (2 vols.; New York: The Macmillan Company, 1916), I, p. 189. Tatum implied that the refinement to the left end of the line occurred after the January 1 encounter. Howell Tatum, "Major Howell Tatum's Journal While Acting Topographical Engineer (1814) to General Jackson commanding the Seventh Military District," ed. by John Spencer Bassett. *Smith College Studies in History* VII (October 1921-April 1922), p. 122.

3 Alexander Dickson, "Journal of Operations in Louisiana," *The Louisiana Historical Quarterly* XLIV, Nos. 3 and 4 (January-April 1961), pp. 47, 48, 50; Colonel Alabranche to Major General Jacques Philippe Villeré, January 4, 1815, Villeré Papers, Historic New Orleans Collection.

across Rodriguez Canal from the entrenchment. "Two Embrasures were constructed in its base to rake the Canal and plane [*sic*] in front of the line, and two others in its face for the purpose of raking the Levee and road."[4] A dry ditch connected to the Rodriguez Canal encircled the work and stood ready to receive water, should the river rise. Two 6-pounder guns, one on a naval carriage, the other on a field carriage, occupied the redoubt and were capable of being shifted from front to flank as exigency dictated. The interior of the work was protected by some of Captain Thomas Beale's New Orleans riflemen posted behind the main line. Access was from the rear via a plank laid across Rodriguez Canal.

Constructed on the advice of the engineers against Jackson's better judgment, the redoubt possessed several deficiencies, notably a very low parapet and no banquette. "It was intended to have raked the ditch, but . . . a discharge of grape or canister [from the line] would both have alarmed and endangered the men placed behind it . . . ."[5] Furthermore, the structure interposed itself between the British and the line, thereby blocking the shots of Jackson's marksmen.[6] The structure remained incomplete by the night of January 7, when it was manned by a company of the Seventh Infantry under Lieutenant Andrew Ross. Lieutenant

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4 Tatum, "Journal," p. 124; Latour, *Historical Memoir*, pp. 144-45. See also "*Battle of New Orleans, 8th January, 1815*," *Blackwood's Magazine* XXIV (September 1828), p. 355; James Parton, *The Life of Andrew Jackson* (3 vols.; orig. pub. 1860; reprint, New York: Johnson Reprint Corporation, 1967), II, p. 172; William A. Meuse, *The Weapons of the Battle of New Orleans* (New Orleans: The Battle of New Orleans 150th Anniversary Committee of Louisiana, 1965), p. 30. Buell stated that the levee formed the river side of the structure. *History of Andrew Jackson*, I, p. 401. Hyacinthe Laclotte, "Defeat of the British Army 12,000 strong, under the Command of Sir Edward Packenham [*sic*] in the attack of the American Lines defended by 3,600 Militia commanded by Major General Andrew Jackson, January 8th 1815, on Chalmette plain five miles below New Orleans, on the left bank of the Mississipi [*sic*]," Manuscripts and Archives Division, New York Public Library. Laclotte's engraving indicates that the work rather straddled the levee,and that furthermore, the side facing the river was lined with fence palings, probably as an outer revetment. Laclotte places this side of the redoubt within but a few feet of the water's edge. Some writers, Walker, for example, describe the fortification as a horn work, which it was not. Alexander Walker, *Jackson and New Orleans* (New York: J. C. Derby, 1856), p. 307. Walker claimed the structure contained three embrasures (*ibid.*), whereas Casey believed it contained two. Powell A. Casey, *Louisiana in the War of 1812* (Baton Rouge: privately published, 1963), p. 79.

5 Abraham Redwood Ellery, "Notes and Comments upon the Subject of a Yankee Song entitled, 'The Retreat of the English'" (unpublished manuscript dated 1815 in the Manuscripts and Archives Division, New York Public Library).

6 Benjamin Henry Latrobe, *Impressions Respecting New Orleans. Diary and Sketches, 1818-1820*, ed. by Samuel Wilson, Jr. (New York: Columbia University Press, 1951), p. 43.

Dauquemeny de Marant commanded its guns with a detachment of the Forty-fourth Infantry.[7]

Some confusion exists over this structure as represented in a sketch of the right of Jackson's line drawn a few years after the battle by Benjamin Latrobe. Latrobe shows a redoubt constructed *in the rear* of the line, indicating that "in order to build the redoubt, the corner of [Macarty's] garden was cut off . . . ." However, the redoubt begun on January 6 was *ahead* of the canal, not behind it. While Latrobe does show some disturbance to the terrain fronting the line, it is clear that his perception was that the redoubt behind the line was the work on the right that played a major role in the action of January 8. It is believed, however, that the structure described by Latrobe was actually a battery erected after January 8 on the road and below the levee, as shown on Abraham Ellery's and Thomas Joyes's maps (Figure I-5). The configuration of this battery/redoubt aligns well with Latrobe's sketch, and it is likely it was this structure that concerned Latrobe.[8]

During the week of comparative inaction that followed January 1, the Americans also took care of routine military matters behind the entrenchments. Jackson had earlier made reassignments of troops, for example, in late December sending two hundred Tennesseans plus the Fourth Louisiana Militia and a unit of Choctaws to man the Chef Menteur defenses, where the British had reportedly made a feint. He also brought Lacoste's battalion from that place to assume a position between Plauche's and Daquin's men on Rodriguez Canal near the First and Second regiments.[9] The position was called by Jackson "Camp Rodriguez," but by the troops it was known as "Camp Jackson." Some distance (about two hundred yards) behind the line the reserve troops, and particularly officers,

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7 "John Coffee Order Book, 1814-1815," John Coffee Papers, Southern Historical Collection, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill; National Archives Record Group 98, Records of U.S. Army Commands, 1784-1921, Entry 73; Parton, *Life of Andrew Jackson*, II, p. 173; Casey, *Louisiana in War of 1812*, p. 79.

8 See Latrobe, *Impressions Respecting New Orleans*, p. 45; Abraham R. Ellery, "Plan shewing the disposition of the American Troops, when attacked by the British Army, on the morning of the 8th Jany. 1815," Manuscripts and Archives Division, New York Public Library; Thomas Joyes, "Plan Shewing the Disposition of the American Troops when attacked by the British army on the Morning of the 8th Jany. 1815, at the line Jackson 4 Miles below New Orleans," Manuscript Division, Filson Historical Society, Louisville, Kentucky. Latour does not show this structure in "Plan of the Attack and Defence of the American Lines below New Orleans on the 8th January, 1815," Latour, *Historical Memoir*.

9 Latour, *Historical Memoir*, pp. 114-16; Marquis James, *Andrew Jackson: The Border Captain* (New York: The Literary Guild, 1933), p. 247; Casey, *Louisiana in the War of 1812*, p. 55; Charles B. Brooks, *The Siege of New Orleans* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1961), p. 175.

occupied what few tents were available and shanties that could be constructed of materials at hand, each one reportedly sporting "any small apology for a flag or ensign that Creole fancy or American ingenuity could hastily devise."[10] Food was in abundance, for Jackson had summarily seized what subsistence stores he needed, as well as transport vehicles, by virtue of his martial law edict.[11] Behind the rows of tents and shelters, a line of sentinels was posted to keep the soldiers from leaving the area without permission.[12] Some idea of the routine and appearance of the area immediately behind the entrenchments was given by a participant from Tennessee:

> The army [was] . . . employed without intermission in strengthening their works, and their time was so taken up with watching and labouring as not to admit them to recruit their bodies which were worn with excessive toil and waking; half of the troops were acting centinels [*sic*] one part of the night, and the other half the other part; indeed their sleep short and interrupted as it was, could hardly have been procured at a less price than all the privations which they daily and nightly endured; for their situation was so low that their beds of earth were inundated, and sometimes entirely overflowed by the rains which fell; and part of the field the works where General Carroll's left was posted, was one continual mire, those spots alone on which the tents were pitched and some small narrow tracks excepted which intersected the mire, and that served as pathways to the breastwork.[13]

The fact that some tents were set up close behind the entrenchments as mentioned above is borne out by Laclotte's depiction of the field of battle. Tents were placed in a line between the levee and the Rodriguez House. Beyond that

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10 Parton, *Life of Andrew Jackson*, II, p. 175; Dagmar Renshaw Lebreton, "The Men Who Won the Battle of New Orleans," *The Louisiana Historical Quarterly* XXXVIII (July 1955), p. 29; Samuel Weller letters in *Courier-Journal:* Louisville, February 5, 1888, Manuscript Division, Filson Historical Society, Louisville, Kentucky; Ellery, "Notes and Comments." Ellery stated that blankets and clothing were lacking. *Ibid.*

11 Buell, *History of Andrew Jackson*, I, p. 404.

12 Parton, *Life of Andrew Jackson*, II, pp. 175-76.

13 "General Carroll's Expedition to New Orleans" (unpublished manuscript, ca. 1815, Special Collections, Tulane University, New Orleans), pp. 58-59.

structure more shelter tents were interspersed along the line all the way to the approximate position of the inverted redan. These tents likely afforded sheltered respite for soldiers stationed at the defenses. More specific data is thus far lacking about activities associated with the area directly behind the line, although reasoned conjecture would indicate that the muddy zone was used for the distribution of powder, rations, and other supplies; the movement of artillery and ordnance materiel by horse and by wagon into battery positions; activities involved with service of the pieces; conferences among officers; the resting of soldiers serving in the entrenchments; and the parading of relief troops into the line. Latrine pits would have been spaced intermittently along the line, perhaps twenty or more yards beyond the tents.

In front of the entrenchments nearly five hundred yards away, Jackson kept mounted pickets stationed to watch the British movements and to alert his command in case of another attack. Hinds's dragoons also assisted in the daily reconnaissance of the enemy when major fighting was not occurring. Occasionally they exchanged fire with the British pickets. During the principal engagements, the dragoons sought a secure position away from the cannonade almost one-half mile behind the entrenchments.[14] On December 26, some American cavalry approached along the edge of the swamp, then rode out on the plain approximately 450 yards away from the British position, igniting the cane stubble before withdrawing—an action that, observed Dickson, "will be to our advantage, as it clears the ground for advancing."[15] On another occasion, Hinds paraded his horsemen within two hundred yards of the British, an action that resulted in several soldiers and horses being wounded.[16] Seeming to be ever the one to challenge danger, Hinds on December 30 led his men in a bold charge on British troops concealed in a broad ditch some distance before the American line. The cavalrymen bounded their horses over the incredulous soldiers, then wheeled

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14 Latour, *Historical Memoir*, pp. 113-14; Parton, *Life of Andrew Jackson*, II, pp.175-76; Mrs. Dunbar Rowland, *Andrew Jackson's Campaign Against the British, of the Mississippi Territory in the War of 1812. Concerning The Military Operations of the Americans, Creek Indians, British, and Spanish, 1813-1815* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1926), p. 321; Letter of James Kempe, January 9, 1815, as published in the *Mississippi Republican*, January 18, 1815, Manuscript Division, Southern Historical Collection; Manuscript of M. W. Trimble entitled "Trimble's Account of the Battle of New Orleans" (copy in the library of the Chalmette Unit, Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve).

15 "Journal of Operations in Louisiana," p. 14.

16 Rowland, *Andrew Jackson's Campaign Against the British*, p. 311.

in front of the British line and jumped back across the ditch, largely escaping a volley from its amazed occupants.[17]

One American, James H. Bradford, described the function of picket duty as well as his personal role in the opening of the episode of January 1:

> In the morning while the fog was yet thick, Brunson, James Shaw, Brashear, . . . Th. Carvey and myself, commanded by Corpl Ch. Johnson, were placed on the extreme left of the advance picket guard. Brunson [was] next [to] the swamp, next Shaw, Brashear, Carvey, and then my humble self, having a distance of about 50 yards each to ride back and forward. In a short time I discovered the enemy watching us, and in about 12 or 15 minutes he commenced . . . firing at about 120 yards distance. The first ball passed so near me as for me to feel the commotion of the air in my face. Mr. Carvey's situation became unpleasant, as all were most positively fired at him. Brashear retired to my right, so did Shaw, and I requested Mr. Carvey to do the same, as I know his mare was very slow of foot. Brunson, who is firm as a block of marble was above on my left. He stood undismayed. By this time the fog had so far cleared away that we could see the enemy's battery erected the proceeding [*sic*] night, about 200 yards in our front . . . . On our left we could perceive about 2000 of the enemy in motion, as we supposed, to turn our left, which was posted in the swamp, and this idea was confirmed, as we could now perceive another strong battery on the levee [road?]. About this moment our pickets on the left commenced firing, and Brunson's horse became so restive that he had to retire on my right. Keeping my eye on the enemy, I did not perceive that our pickets were retiring, until the enemy's battery opened directly over my head. I then turned to the right, when I found Brunson calling on us to retreat. Before I got out, the round shot, shells, and rockets, were falling about me as thick as hail and yet strange as it may

17 "Trimble's Account of the Battle of New Orleans." The same account, with slightly different wording, appears in Rowland, *Andrew Jackson's Campaign Against the British*, pp. 332-33.

> appear, I escaped unhurt, except what arose from my fears.[18]

On January 2, Jackson learned that the long-awaited Kentucky militia under Major General John Thomas was fast approaching on the river. The news was heartening, for it gave the American commander more flexibility in the disposition of his soldiers. Already he feared the British might somehow ascend the bayous and canals to his rear and gain an advantage, and he sent troops back to determine the likelihood of that scenario occurring. More British troops, it was learned, had in fact joined Pakenham's command in front of the Americans, and apprehensions rose that another assault was imminent. Some of Carroll's men on January 2 went forward to reconnoiter the empty enemy batteries on the center road and became involved in a skirmish with British pickets. On January 3, a few hundred Attakapas troops reached Camp Rodriguez. Meanwhile, Jackson's artillery kept up a brisk delivery from both sides of the Mississippi, inflicting additional casualties among Pakenham's command.[19]

The Kentucky troops, more than 2,250 of them, began to reach camp January 4. These men were poorly armed, the majority being altogether without muskets. A third of them, under Brigadier General John Adair, took up a position supporting Carroll's Tennesseans while the balance, all unarmed, were sent to the reserve line upstream at the Dupré Plantation. The Kentuckians at once began breaking up their flatboats, making shelters with the planks to protect them from the harsh, wet environment.[20] With the addition of the Kentucky troops, Jackson on January 5 ordered the Second Louisiana Regiment across the Mississippi to support General Morgan. Still concerned lest the British attack his rear, he also posted a company of dragoons under Captain Peter V. Ogden at the confluence of Bayou Bienvenu with Piernas Canal, which, like Villeré's Canal, approached the river, only closer to the city.[21] Jackson's artillery continued an occasional bombardment on the British posts before the line, but the enemy did not respond.

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18 Bradford to F. A. Browder, January 6, 1815, Department of Archives and Manuscripts, Louisiana State University.

19 Latour, *Historical Memoir*, pp. 138, 139-40, 141, 143; "General Carroll's Expedition," pp. 57-58; Dickson, "Journal of Operations in Louisiana," p. 41; Casey, *Louisiana in the War of 1812*, p. 68.

20 Latour, *Historical Memoir*, p. 141; Thomas Joyes, "Account of Service in War of 1812," p. 6; Thomas Joyes Papers, Manuscript Division, Filson Historical Society, Louisville, Kentucky; Bassett, *Life of Andrew Jackson*, I, p.190; Buell, *History of Andrew Jackson*, I, pp. 423-24. About fifty Indiana volunteers from the area of Vincennes were included among the Kentucky troops. *Ibid.*, pp. 425-26.

21 Latour, *Historical Memoir*, pp. 143-44.

Wrote a Kentucky soldier on first observing the American entrenchments: "It is impossible for me to tell how many troops there is in all, but the levee and away out to the swamps is crowded with troops."[22]

Since shortly after assuming his position on Rodriguez Canal, Jackson had taken measures to guard against surprises to his rear. One and three-quarters miles back toward the city, he established a similar line of defense along Dupré's Canal which ran across Dupré's plantation to the Mississippi. This parapet was seemingly constructed much like that at Rodriguez Canal, although presumably the works, raised largely by hundreds of slaves and civilian laborers, were less crudely built. Like the forward position, that at Dupré's transected the land between the cypress swamp and the river. Construction on the line appears to have begun on December 28, with work directed by the engineer, Lieutenant Henry Latrobe. Tatum described the operation:

> This line . . . progressed with great rapidity and strength. A Demi Bastion on the right (at the Levey [*sic*]) raked the Canal in front of the Breast Works and played obliquely across the plane [*sic*], from the Embrazures in its base; and on the levey and obliquely over the plane from those in its face. Another battery was erected at the commencement of the swamp, at the distance of about 600 paces, which formed a cross fire with that on the Levy. A strong Bridge was thrown over the canal a few paces below the Demi Bastion by which it was protected, as also by another Battery errected [*sic*] on the lower works of the Mill, about 40 paces below the Bridge. The waters on this canal were from 5 to 6 feet deep, with a strong line of defense on its upper side. General Villere's [First Division, Louisiana Militia, soon after] occupied this line, and furnished the necessary Guards in, and along, the swamp for its security and protection.[23]

A British inspector later recorded that Line Dupré had "heavy artillery and a wet ditch . . . . The construction of this line is good and has a banquette parapet

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22 Letter published in *Courier-Journal*: Louisville, February 5, 1888, Samuel Weller Manuscripts, Manuscript Division, Filson Historical Society Louisville, Kentucky.

23 "Journal," p. 119.

revetted with planks."[24] The position was supported after January 1 by additional Louisiana troops. Finally, after January 4, the majority of Thomas's and Adair's unarmed Kentuckians were encamped some distance ahead of Line Dupré and behind Piernas Canal. A picket guard was established on a bayou approximately one-quarter mile to the Kentuckians' left; three other picket guards were stationed on the edge of the swamp in advance of the Kentucky troops and some distance to the left rear of Jackson's main line. Should the British succeed in breaching and carrying his works, the Americans would fall back to Line Dupré and regroup.[25] About one and one-quarter miles behind Line Dupré stood yet a third line of entrenchments constructed between the swamp and the river. Line Montreuil was depicted thusly:

> It is entirely different from the other two having a ditch of 12 feet broad and 6 feet cut expressly. It is well flanked. On the right is an inclined redoubt with its gorge palisaded. At 500 yards from the river is a flat bastion of brickwork for musketry only. The line continues from this to the wood. The redoubt on the right has a good command from being constructed upon the levee. The parapet on this line is in an unfinished state.[26]

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24 Report of Captain H. D. Jones, Royal Engineers, March 30, 1815. Quoted in Casey, *Louisiana in the War of 1812*, p. 72.

25 General information about Line Dupré is from Tatum, "Journal," pp. 114, 122-23; Latour, *Historical Memoir*, pp. 136, 141; "Map Showing the Landing of the British Army its several Encampments and Fortifications on the Mississippi and the Works erected on their Retreat; also the different posts Encampments and Fortifications made by the several Corps of the American army during the whole Campaign," in *ibid.*; Latrobe to Major General Villeré, January 7, 1815, Jacques Philippe Villeré Papers, Historic New Orleans Collection; Vincent Nolte, *Fifty Years in Both Hemispheres or Reminiscences of the Life of a Former Merchant* (orig. pub. 1854; reprint, Freeport, New York: Books for Libraries Press, 1972), p. 217; "Trimble's Account of the Battle of New Orleans"; William James, *A Full and Correct Account of the Military Occurance of the Late War between Great Britain and the United States of America* (2 vols.; London: privately printed, 1818), II, p. 367; Parton, *Life of Andrew Jackson,* II, p.150; Buell, *History of Andrew Jackson*, I, p. 191; Sidney L.Villeré, *Jacques Philippe Villeré, First Native-Born Governor of Louisiana, 1816-1820* (New Orleans: The Historic New Orleans Collection, 1981), p. 54; Frank Lawrence Owsley, Jr., *The Struggle for the Gulf Borderlands: The Creek War and the Battle of New Orleans, 1812-1815* (Gainesville: The University of Florida Press, 1981), p. 152; Brooks, *Siege of New Orleans*, pp. 173, 193, 216-17, 219.

26 Report of Captain H. D. Jones, Royal Artillery, March 30, 1815. Quoted in Casey, *Louisiana in the War of 1812,* p. 72.

Construction of Line Montreuil seems to have started after the January 1 battle; one source indicates that Jackson ordered its erection as early as December 26.[27] The line was never completed.[28] If it were needed, Line Montreuil would have constituted the final defensive bulwark against the British (Figure I-6). Beyond that position New Orleans was guarded only by derelict Fort St. Charles and a new work, raised across the Mississippi by Major Latour. The latter structure, also called a redoubt, was built from an existing brick kiln around which was dug a ditch twenty-five feet wide. Earth from the ditch formed a parapet, while the interior perimeter of the structure was strongly palisaded. Two 24-pounders served by a magazine were placed inside to command the river and the levee road.[29]

Since the December 23 night battle, Jackson had also endeavored to improve his position on the right, or west, bank of the Mississippi across from his position at Rodriguez Canal. On December 25, General Morgan, with troops from English Turn, first assumed a post there, establishing a line on Raguet's Canal several hundred yards ahead of Jackson's line on the opposite bank. On January 4, Morgan began entrenching along the canal for two hundred yards, but the right of the remaining mile or so of intervening terrain between the river and swamp was undefended except for the canal ditch and Morgan's militia. Near the river the line was fortified with a redoubt, a bastion, and a redan a short distance away toward the swamp. These structures were raised to house the small artillery complement of two 6-pounders and one 12-pounder. To reinforce Morgan, Jackson sent the First and Second Louisiana regiments. As on the east bank, there was a backup position, too. Three miles below the city at Boisgervais's Canal, between December 29 and January 4, a parapet and glacis were erected by slaves under Latour's direction for the entire length of the ditch. Line Boisgervais was about one-half mile below Line Dupré on the opposite bank and included redoubts on the levee, at the center, and, apparently, near the swamp. On December 29, Commander Patterson had erected his levee battery for two of the *Louisiana's* 12-

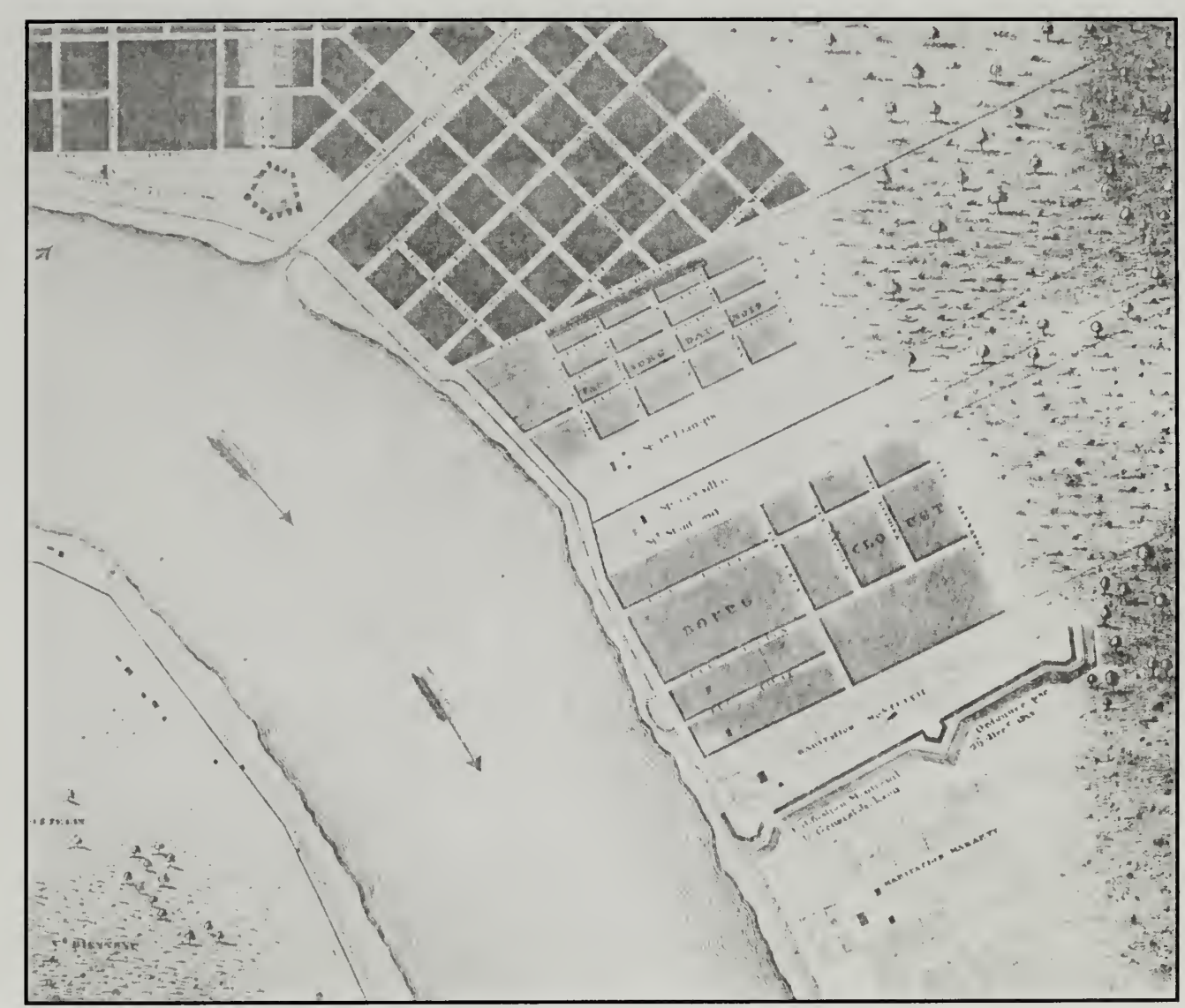
27 J. Tanesse, "Plan of the City and Suburbs of New Orleans," 1815, Louisiana Map Collection, Special Collections, Tulane University, New Orleans. See also B. Lafon, "Plan of the City and Environs of New Orleans," 1816, Library of Congress, Geography and Map Division.

28 Parton, *The Life of Andrew Jackson*, II, p. 167; Buell, *History of Andrew Jackson*, I, pp. 414-15; Bassett, *The Life of Andrew Jackson*, I, pp. 190-91; James, *Full and Correct Account*, II, p. 367; Casey, *Louisiana in the War of 1812*, p. 72.

29 Tatum, "Journal," p. 123; Latour, *Historical Memoir*, p. 125; A. Lacarrière Latour, "Map Shewing the Landing of the British army . . . ," in *Historical Memoir*; Buell, *History of Andrew Jackson*, I, p. 414; Parton, *The Life of Andrew Jackson*, II, p. 150.

Figure I-6. Map showing the location of Line Montreuil, excerpted from "Plan of the City and Suburbs of New Orleans," 1815, by J. Tanesse, City Surveyor

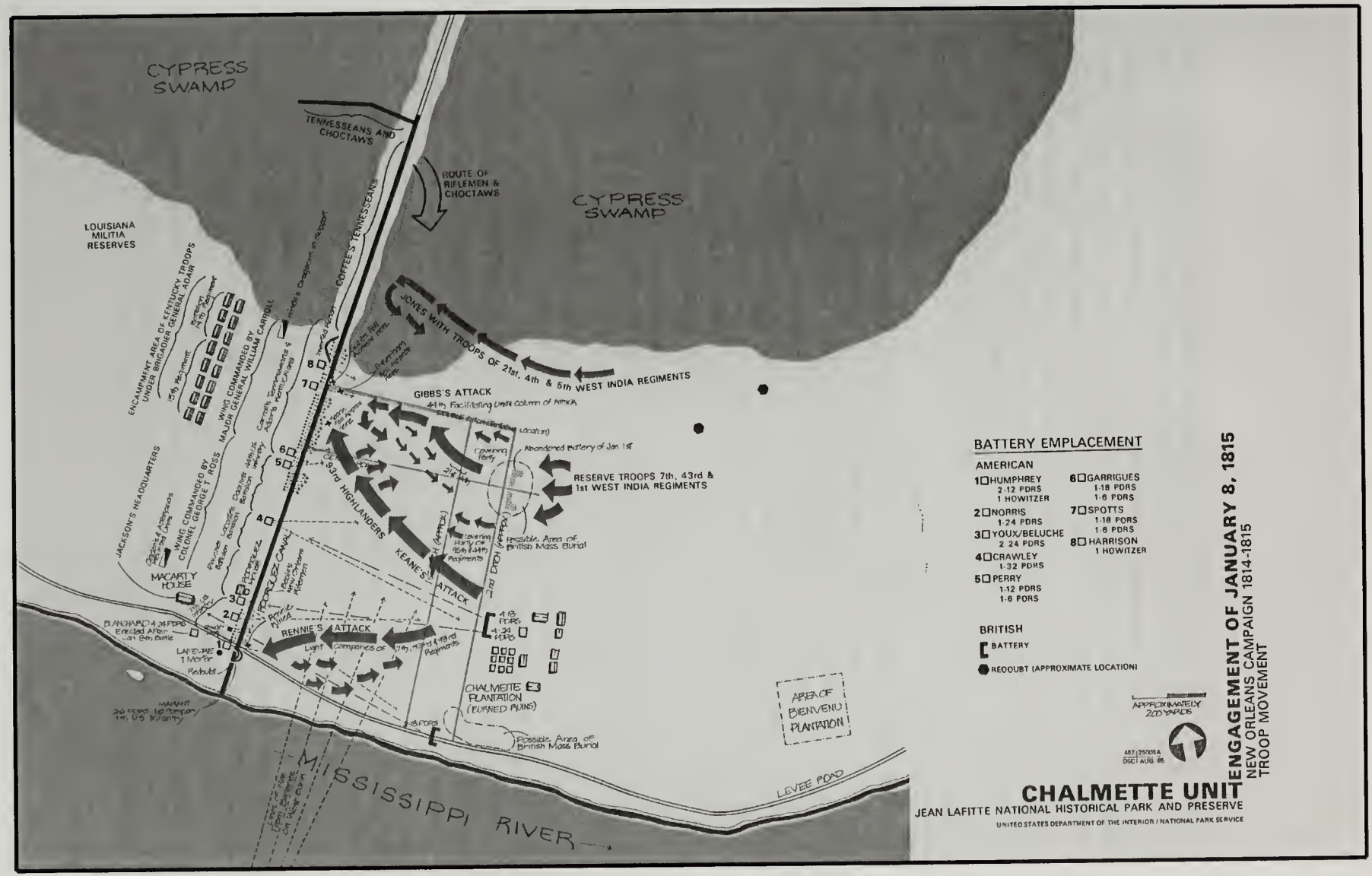
Courtesy Louisiana Map Collection, Special Collections, Tulane University.



Troop Movement Map, New Orleans Campaign, 1814-1815

Map I-7. Engagement of January 8, 1815

Denver Service Center, National Park Service. Format changes to original map by Judy Kesler, National Park Service.


CYPRESS SWAMP
CYPRESS SWAMP
TENNESSEANS AND CHOCTAWS
ROUTE OF RIFLEMEN & CHOCTAWS
LOUISIANA MILITIA RESERVES
COFFEE'S TENNESSEANS
ENCAMPMENT AREA OF KENTUCKY TROOPS UNDER BRIGADIER GENERAL ADAIR
WING COMMANDED BY MAJOR GENERAL WILLIAM CARROLL
WING COMMANDED BY COLONEL GEORGE T. ROSS
JACKSON'S HEADQUARTERS
MACARTY HOUSE
JONES WITH TROOPS OF 21st, 4th & 5th WEST INDIA REGIMENTS
GIBBS'S ATTACK
RESERVE TROOPS 7th, 43rd & 1st WEST INDIA REGIMENTS
93rd HIGHLANDERS
KEANE'S ATTACK
RENNIE'S ATTACK
RODRIGUEZ CANAL
2nd DITCH
Possible Area of British Mass Burial
CHALMETTE PLANTATION (BURNED RUINS)
AREA OF BIENVENU PLANTATION
MISSISSIPPI RIVER
LEVEE ROAD
BATTERY EMPLACEMENT
AMERICAN
1 HUMPHREY 2-12 PDRS 1 HOWITZER
2 NORRIS 1-24 PDRS
3 YOUX/BELUCHE 2 24 PDRS
4 CRAWLEY 1-32 PDRS
5 PERRY 1-12 PDRS 1-6 PDRS
6 GARRIGUES 1-18 PDRS 1-6 PDRS
7 SPOTTS 1-18 PDRS 1-6 PDRS
8 HARRISON 1 HOWITZER
BRITISH
BATTERY
REDOUBT (APPROXIMATE LOCATION)
APPROXIMATELY 200 YARDS
ENGAGEMENT OF JANUARY 8, 1815
NEW ORLEANS CAMPAIGN 1814-1815
TROOP MOVEMENT
CHALMETTE UNIT
JEAN LAFITTE NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK AND PRESERVE
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR / NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

pounders and the next night added a 24-pounder. Two additional 24-pounders and a hotshot furnace were mounted behind the levee beginning December 31 but were never fired against the British. Yet more 12- and 24-pounders were added to the battery before January 6. Patterson's battery stood opposite Jackson's position on Rodriguez Canal and a short distance below. Manned by seamen and some of Morgan's militiamen, the guns in the levee works were successful in enfilading the British position on the east bank and hindered the soldiers in their own attempts to raise batteries. They also successfully destroyed with hotshot several more structures on the Bienvenu property during the evening of January 4.[30]

Morgan's line at Raguet's Canal was eventually, on January 7, bolstered by two hundred Kentuckians spread out between the end of the entrenchments and the swamp on the right. His inadequate protection of his right flank, together with Jackson's condoning of such a breach of common sense, suggests that Jackson hardly considered a British approach by that avenue until it was almost too late. Under this reasoning, the erection of batteries on that side was not to protect that route, but to guard against an enemy advance on the Rodriguez Canal position.[31]

By January 7, Jackson's position at Rodriguez Canal had been strengthened as much as two weeks of concentrated labor would permit. If the fortifications presented an element of sophistication through adherence to the

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30 Jackson to Morgan, December 25, 1814, David B. Morgan Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress; Lieutenant John Peddie, "Sketch of the Position of the British and American Forces near New Orleans." BPRO, London, War Office 1, Vol. 141; Latour, *Historical Memoir*, pp. 117, 124-25, lx-lxi; James, *Full and Correct Account*, II, p. 367; Walker, *Jackson and New Orleans*, pp. 306-07; Buell, *History of Andrew Jackson*, I, p.14; Jane Lucas de Grummond, *The Baratarians and the Battle of New Orleans* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1961), pp. 127-28; Casey, *Louisiana in the War of 1812*, pp. 68-69, 76-77; Brooks, *Siege of New Orleans*, pp. 173-74, 193, 209, 216; Wilburt S. Brown, *The Amphibious Campaign for West Florida and Louisiana, 1814-1815: A Critical Review of Strategy and Tactics at New Orleans* (Tuscaloosa, Alabama: University of Alabama Press, 1969), p. 120. There appears to be some discrepancy among accounts as to the guns occupying Patterson's shore battery. Major Tatum stated that "several batteries [were] erected [*sic*] mounting one and two Guns each some of which were 24 lbr., the balance 18, 12 and 9 lbrs. These batteries were erected [*sic*] at different places and extended near a mile from the upper to the lowest." "Journal," p. 118. There occurred considerable dispute over the propriety of Morgan's selection of Raguet's Canal against Latour's recommendations. See *Historical Memoir*, pp. 166-68.

31 *Correspondence of Andrew Jackson*, II, pp. vii-viii; Casey, *Louisiana in the War of 1812*, p. 77. For a description of the perceived ill-preparedness of Morgan's militia by one who was there, see Thomas Joyes, "Defense of Kentucky Troops in War of 1812," Manuscript Division, Filson Historical Society, Louisville, Kentucky.

tenets governing such construction, it probably occurred in the artillery batteries which had been laid out and supervised by engineer and artillery officers. The balance of the entrenchments were likely somewhat less than refined in the theoretical sense, giving credence to their historical image. Because of the great success of the defenses, wrote a battle participant, "This departure from the prescribed rules of field fortification in the construction of our lines may be excused . . . ."[32]

Jackson's artillery, with the exception of the advanced redoubt on the right of the line, was situated basically the same as it had been on January 1 (Map I-7). Battery No. 1 under Captain Humphrey still contained two 12-pounders and one howitzer; U.S. artillerymen served the guns while the howitzer was manned by members of Captain Henri de St. Geme's Company of Orleans Volunteers. Battery No. 2 contained one 24-pounder mounted on a high platform and commanded by Lieutenant Norris; this unit was served by crew members of the *Carolina*. Battery No. 3 held two 24-pounders, one manned by Baratarians under Captain Youx and the other likewise served by Baratarians under Captain Beluche. Battery No. 4, under Lieutenant Crawley, contained the 32-pounder manned by *Carolina* crew members. No. 5 held either a 12-pounder and a 6-pounder, two 6-pounders, or a single 12-pounder under Captain Perry; regular U.S. artillery soldiers handled the pieces. Battery No. 6 was commanded by Brigadier General Garrigues Flaujeauc and consisted of one 18-pounder and one 6-pounder served by Captain Jean Hudry's company of Orleans Volunteers. Battery No. 7, under Lieutenant Spotts, contained one piece, possibly a 24-pounder, while Battery No. 8 held a 9½-inch howitzer and was commanded by Lieutenant Harrison of the artillery. Behind the right of Jackson's line was the 13-inch mortar under Captain Lefebvre, although it is unlikely this weapon was used until after the battle of the 8thJanuary 8.[33] Including the two guns mounted in the

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32 Ellery, "Notes and Comments."

33 Laclotte apparently employed artistic license in showing the mortar being discharged during the battle. "Defeat of the British Army . . . ." This recapitulation of the artillery is drawn from the maps cited in the earlier accounting, plus Lieutenant Colonel William MacRea, "List of officers and men serving at the Batteries, with their names, rank, and Corps to which they respectively belong. Also the names of Men killed and wounded up to this date—Camp 16th Jany, 1815," Andrew Jackson Papers, Manuscript Division, Chicago Historical Society. See also Casey, *Louisiana in the War of 1812*, pp. 79-80; Latour, *Historical Memoir*, pp.147-49, 150-151; Powell A. Casey, "Artillery in the Battle of New Orleans" (unpublished manuscript in the J. Fair Hardin Collection, Department of Archives and Manuscripts, Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge), pp. 31-32; Meuse, *Weapons of the Battle of New Orleans*, pp. 28-30; Walker, *Jackson and New Orleans*, pp. 312-14; Parton, *Life of Andrew Jackson*, pp. 173-74; Brooks, *Siege of New Orleans*, pp. 214-15. One

advance redoubt on the right, the artillery complement presented to the British numbered fifteen or sixteen pieces. This armament was targeted in three groups, one on the levee road, one on the plain in front, and one on the edge of the swamp.[34]

Ammunition for the variety of weapons posed a problem for the Americans. For example, there was no round shot available for the 32-pounder, so that grape and scrap metal—"landidage"—had to be fired from it. Round shot for the 18- and 24-pounders was also scarce, and the guns had to use grape. Canister was also used with a more distant effect than grape which tended to scatter more quickly on leaving the muzzle of the piece.[35]

Besides the artillery, hundreds of musket-armed troops also graced Jackson's line interspersed between the battery positions. At the extreme right were nearly 40 members of Beale's New Orleans volunteer company of riflemen. Between Batteries No. 1 and 3 stood about 440 members of the Seventh Infantry. From there to Battery No. 4 was Major Plauche's battalion of New Orleans uniform companies, 315 men strong, and Lacoste's battalion of Free Men of Color, 282 strong. Between Battery No. 4 and Battery No. 5 stood 180 men of Major Daquin's battalion of St. Domingo colored troops. Between Battery No. 5 and Battery No. 6 were 350 troops of the Forty-fourth Infantry under Captain Isaac L. Baker. All of the above forces comprised a division commanded by Colonel George T. Ross. From Battery No. 6 to the left side of the inverted redan stood Carroll's 800 Tennesseans, supported by almost 700 Kentuckians under General Adair. Fifty-eight marines occupied the line near Battery No.7. The balance of the entrenchment on the left and into the swamp was manned by about 550 of Coffee's militia plus 62 Choctaw Indians. Carroll was placed in overall command of the left two-thirds of the line. Some distance behind the line,

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33 (cont.) account states that the mortar was still in place behind the entrenchment more than three months after the battle. "Diary of Samuel Mordecai," March-June 1815, Manuscript Division, Southern Historical Collection, University of North Carolina. For a discussion of the numerous discrepancies among sources concerned with enumerating Jackson's artillery strength, with a focus on problems with Latour's account, see J. Fred Roush, "Preliminary Report of Cannon and Carriages at Chalmette, 1815" (unpublished manuscript dated June 1955, in the library of the Chalmette Unit of Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve), pp. 1-3, 5-7.

34 Bassett, *Life of Andrew Jackson*, I, pp. 191-92.

35 Buell, *History of Andrew Jackson*, I, p.406; Casey, *Louisiana in The War of 1812*, p. 81; Meuse, *Weapons of the Battle of New Orleans*, p. 46.

stationed behind and beside the Macarty House were Captain Chauveau's Company of Orleans Calvary, Captain Ogden's Orleans Troop of Dragoons, and a detachment of Captain Dubuclet's Troop of Hussars, as well as 250 Louisiana militia stationed at intervals back to Piernas Canal. Major Hinds's dragoons were posted on Delery's Plantation far to the rear. A line of sentinels, including Captain Griffith's Company of Mounted Riflemen and Captain Smith's Feliciana Troop of Horse, guarded the rear approaches 400 yards behind the entrenchments, while, as before, a strong line of pickets remained 500 yards out in front. The total number of troops on Jackson's line, including 36 Baratarians and 78 regular light artillerymen in the batteries, amounted to about 3,900 men. Those in close support to the immediate rear of the line numbered approximately 700.[36] The breakdown of Jackson's available strength on both sides of the Mississippi was as follows:[37]

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36 Latour, *Historical Memoir*, pp. 149-52; Ellery, "Notes and Comments"; Walker, *Jackson and New Orleans*, pp. 314-15; Parton, *Life of Andrew Jackson*, II, pp. 173-74; Bassett, *Life of Andrew Jackson*, I, p. 192; Theodore Roosevelt, *The Naval War of 1812, or the History of the United States Navy during the Last War with Great Britain to which is Appended an Account of the Battle of New Orleans* (orig. pub. 1882; reprint, New York: Haskell House Publishers, Ltd., 1968), p.478; Rowland, *Andrew Jackson's Campaign Against the British*, pp. 340-42, 344; Brooks, *Siege of New Orleans*, p. 216; Brown, *Amphibious Campaign*, p. 137; Casey, *Louisiana in the War of 1812*, pp. 72-78. For a discussion of apparent discrepancies regarding troop disposition in Latour's account, see Robin Reilly, *The British at the Gates: The New Orleans Campaign in the War of 1812* (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1974), pp. 290-91. Ellery, who was present, praised the abilities of the Kentucky and Tennessee troops over the regulars. "Accustomed from their infancy to hunting, they become expert marksmen, and feeling safe behind their lines, freely exert their skill. Taking their own time, choosing their distance and selecting their objects, their shots generally tell; while regular troops, firing generally by platoons, in straight lines, at the word of command, and without aim, lose most of theirs. From the firing therefore of militia with correct aim, at selected objects, and of course in various directions, a multiplied cross-fire is necessarily produced." "Notes and Comments."

37 From Buell, *History of Andrew Jackson*, I, pp. 247-48; and Casey, *Louisiana* in the War of 1812, pp.21-26, 72-78. These figures do not include the 500 Kentucky and Louisiana troops at Line Dupré. Buell, I, *History of Andrew Jackson*, I, p. 428. According to Casey, *Louisiana in the War of 1812*, pp. 21-22, Captain Joseph's Dubuclet's Volunteer Troop of Hussars of the Teche-Attakapas operated in two separate detachments on January 8. One detachment served with like units of horsemen in close reserve behind the Rodriguez Canal; the other part of the troop, personally led by Captain Dubuclet, assisted in the defense of Morgan's line on the west bank. The exact numbers assigned to these two detachments are unknown. The estimates given herein assume a roughly equal division of the troop's total strength of 41 because the presence of each of the two detachments of this small body of horsemen was sufficiently substantial to receive separate notice in battle accounts. Thus, it is estimated that approximately 20 were with Jackson on the east bank and 20 men plus Dubuclet (for a total of 21) were on the west bank with Morgan. This estimate is in keeping with Latour's observation that

In the Main Lines of Chalmette

Captain Enoch Humphrey's Corps of Artillery	78
Seventh U.S. Infantry	436
Forty-fourth U.S. Infantry	352
United States Marines	58
Total Regulars	924
Louisiana Militia (Plauche's Battalion)	315
Louisiana Militia (Lacoste's Battalion)	282
Beale's City Rifles	36
Daquin's Battalion of Free Negroes	180
Total Louisiana Militia	813
Carroll's Tennessee Riflemen (11 co's.)	806
Coffee's Tennessee Riflemen (9 co's.)	546
Adair's Kentucky Riflemen (10 co's.)	680
Total Riflemen	2,032
Baratarians (Artillery)	36
Jugeat's Choctaws	62
Total Baratarians/Choctaws	98
Grand Total Front Line	3,867

37 (cont.) Ogden's Troop of Dragoons (27 men) and Dubuclet's Troop of Hussars ("Attakapas") totaled nearly 50 men. Latour, *Historical Memoir,* p. 106; Henry Elliott, memorandum to Ted Birkedal, December 21, 2004. Another Louisiana unit, Captain Jedediah Smith's "Feliciana Troop of Horse"served as part of Major Hinds's Mississippi Mounted Rifles. However, Andrew Jackson, in acknowledgement of its special contribution to the success of the battle, gave this formerly overlooked Louisiana contingent a separate commendation after the war. In keeping with Jackson's independent recognition of this unit, the 47 men counted in the muster role for this troop of mounted riflemen are given separate listing herein. Casey, *Louisiana in the War of 1812*, p. 21; Henry Elliott, memorandum to Ted Birkedal, December 21, 2004.

Troops in Close Reserve

Chauveau's Company of Orleans Calvary	44
Detachment of Dubuclet's Troop of Hussars	20
Griffith's Company of Mounted Riflemen	72
Hinds's Mississippi Mounted Rifles	150
Smith's Feliciana Troop of Horse	47
Ogden's Orleans Troop of Dragoons	27
Harrison's Battalion, Kentucky Militia	306
Total Close Reserve	666

On the Right Bank of the River.

Naval Battalion, Com. Patterson (Sailors from *Louisiana* and gun-boats)	106
Kentucky Militia, Lieutenant Colonel John Davis	320
Louisiana Militia, Major Paul Arnaud	250
Detachments sent under General Jean Joseph Amable Humbert from left bank	300
Detachment of Dubuclet's Troop of Hussars	21
Total Right Bank	997

Recapitulation	3,867
	666
	997
	5,530

During the watch from the line, half the troops usually stood by the parapet while the other half rested in the rear. On the evening of January 7, however, Jackson ordered all his men forward, and they arranged themselves in ranks four deep, the first two ready to fire while the last two loaded muskets.[38] The soldiers were enjoined by their officers not to fire at the British until they could see the whites of their eyes.[39]

38 Thad Mayhew to "Dear Susan," January 26, 1815, Department of Archives and Manuscripts, Louisiana State University (see also "A Massachusetts Volunteer at the Battle of New Orleans," *The Louisiana Historical Quarterly* IX [January 1926], p. 31); John A. Fort to "Dear Brother," January 28, 1815, in "Historical Documents," *The Louisiana Historical Quarterly* XXXII (January 1949); Latour, *Historical Memoir*, p. 154; Rufus King to unidentified recipient, February 11, 1815, Rufus King Collection, Manuscripts Division, New York Historical Society.

39 Nolte, *Fifty Years in Both Hemispheres*, p. 221; Samuel Luce to parents, January 19, 1815, Manuscript Division, Filson Historical Society, Louisville, Kentucky.

CHAPTER 7

THE LAST BATTLE, JANUARY 8, 1815

British plans, indeed, called for the main thrust to be made against Jackson's line, and preparations for that assault went on accordingly. Since the encounter of January 1, repair to the damaged artillery carriages had been under way, and additional ammunition supplies were forwarded from the ships. A broad field cleared of cane refuse was used to store shell and shot, and tents arrived with which to preserve powder. Meantime, a battery for six 18-pounders (later four 18-pounders) was started on January 5 on the road below the British water battery for use against American vessels moving downstream as well as to support British troops crossing the river.[1] For the latter movement, the British had begun extending Villeré's Canal across the plain to the river, enlarging it by digging so that barges loaded with soldiers might obtain passage into the Mississippi for an attack against American defenses on the west side. Apparently Pakenham's design was to attack on January 7, but delays in widening and lengthening the canal necessitated a change in plan. British carpenters labored to build a system of locks to regulate the level of water in the canal, but repairs to these mechanisms prompted further delays. It was the intelligence of the operation on Villeré's Canal that motivated Jackson to send reinforcements of Kentucky militia to Morgan on the right bank.[2]

Besides the new battery on the river, British artillery preparations included the renovation of former works facing Jackson's position at Rodriguez Canal.

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1 Alexander Dickson, "Journal of Operations in Louisiana," *The Louisiana Historical Quarterly* XLIV, Nos. 3 and 4 (January-April 1961), pp. 42, 47, 48; Powell A. Casey, *Louisiana in the War of 1812* (Baton Rouge: privately published, 1963), p. 68.

2 *Ibid.*, pp. 49, 51, 53; A. Lacarrière Latour, *Historical Memoir of the War in West Florida and Louisiana in 1814-15* (orig. pub. 1816; reprint, Gainesville: University of Florida Press, 1964), pp. 144, lxi; Harry Smith, *Autobiography of Lieutenant-General Sir Harry Smith* (London: John Murray, 1901), typescript copy in the library of the Chalmette Unit, Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve, pp. 6-7; Com. Patterson to Jackson, January 7, 1815, in *Correspondence of Andrew Jackson* ed. by John Spencer Bassett (7 vols.; Washington: Carnegie Institution of Washington, 1926-35), II, p. 132; Carson I. A. Ritchie, "The Louisiana Campaign," *The Louisiana Historical Quarterly* XLIV, Nos. 1 and 2 (January-April 1961), pp. 64-65.

Old Battery No. 5 was re-opened to receive four 18-pounders and four 24-pounder carronades for pounding the American artillery. Former Battery No. 2 on the levee road was likewise reconditioned.[3] Most of the work to rebuild and outfit the batteries took place during the night of January 7. It was a grueling and uncertain task, as often roads were easily missed in the darkness, and the heavy ordnance had to be moved across ditches to the batteries.[4] In the case of British Battery No. 2, wrote a participant, "as the water sprang up at the depth of a foot or nine inches below the surface of the soft ground, the men were obliged to pare the surface for a great extent round, and to bring the shovels and spades dripping with mud to plaster on the queerest entrenchment I ever saw."[5] When this work was completed, the British artillery consisted of three river-bank batteries with a total of six 18-pounders and two 24-pounders; four field guns positioned on the levee road; two 24-pounder carronades in the battery on the levee road at or near the site of former Battery No. 2; and former Battery No. 5, four hundred yards from the river and containing four 18-pounder and four 24-pounder cannon (Map I-7).[6]

Thus prepared and newly reinforced by 2,000 troops under Major General John Lambert, on the evening of January 7 Pakenham issued his order of attack:

> The Troops to fall in tomorrow morning at 4 o'clock the 2d. and 3d. Brigades will move before day break to the ground now occupied by the Picquets, an advanced Guard to consist of the 44th. Regiment, and 300 of the 95th. Regiment to occupy the old Batteries.
>
> This force is to be divided into 400 to fire, 300 of who are to be of the 44th. Regiment, and 250 to carry fascines if required. The chief attack will be made by the 2d. Brigade, advancing from the left in Column of Companies covered by the firing party, and preceded by the Soldiers who bear the fascines, when the fascines

3 Dickson," Journal of Operations in Louisiana," pp. 48, 55; Howell Tatum, "Major Howell Tatum's Journal While Acting Topographical Engineer (1814) to General Jackson commanding the Seventh Military District," ed. by John Spencer Bassett, *Smith College Studies in History* VII (October 1921-April 1922), p. 129; John Henry Cooke, *A Narrative of Events in the South of France, and of the Attack on New Orleans in 1814-and 1815* (London: T. and W. Boone, 1835), pp. 224-25.

4 Dickson," Journal of Operations in Louisiana,". p. 58; Cooke, *Narrative of Events*, pp. 224-25.

5 *Ibid.*, p. 225.

6 Casey, *Louisiana in the War of 1812*, pp. 69-70.

are lodged the Men who carry them will join the 44th. Regiment and commence fire.

The Light Companies of the 2d. Brigade are to be formed into a Battalion, having attached to them 100 of the 1st West India Regiment, this Corps will skirt the Woods as a protection to Genl. Gibbs' Right and for his after disposal, 'till possessed of the Enemy's Lines when it will be used as a Corps of pursuit.

The Light Companies of the 7th. Royal Fusileers, 43d. and 93d. Regiments, and, 100 of the 1st. West India Regiment, under Colonel Creagh, to be formed on Major General Keane's left, and considered as belonging to his Command.

The first Brigade will compose the Reserve, to which the 1st. West India Regiment will be attached, as also the dismounted Dragoons off duty.—The Reserve will form in front of the Huts occupied by the 93d. Regiment.

Should the Enemy be enabled to hold his ground on the Right, the attack must be to our left, of that of the 2d. Brigade, where our impression will answer both Columns, and it will be impossible for the Enemy to oblique the fire of his flanks sufficiently to enable his injuring the Columns from his whole front when close up to his works.

When the position is carried, the flank Battalion is to press the Enemy's Rear for half a Mile on the Receipt of instructions; A Detachment of Sappers to accompany each Column.

The Advance Guard is to carry forward with it six long ladders with planks on them, and ten small ladders as well as the fascines, the Officer Commanding the 44th. Regiment will ascertain where these requisites are this Evening, so that there may be no delay in taking them forward tomorrow to the Old Batteries; whatever the Soldiers get in charge they must not separate from without orders.

> A Rendezvous must be given to the Detachments ordered to join the 44th. Regiment on the advance—When the advance has taken up its ground and placed a few Sentries, the Picquets should join their Corps.
>
> E.M. Pakenham
> M Genl.[7]

While the employment of ladders for bridging the ditch and gaining Jackson's parapet was acknowledged, the British plan, in fact, placed much reliance on their use. The practice was known as escalading and involved the attack of a fortified line in compact column formation rather than in an extended line facing the opponent's works. Once an advance party with fascines and ladders succeeded in surmounting the ditch and parapet, the troops following would attempt to carry the defenses with musket and bayonet.[8] In the matter of Jackson's line, the British intended to use plank ladders "by raising them on end, and letting them drop across the ditch . . . for the assailants to run over them."[9] The fascines were to be thrown into the ditch to provide a firm base for the ladders. According to plan, both fascines and ladders were stored in the advanced redoubt on the right front and were there to be picked up en route to the attack by designated troops of the Forty-fourth Infantry. Clearly, under the plan, Pakenham was not to rely upon his artillery to open the way for his infantrymen as he had on January 1. His guns now were to help knock out Jackson's artillery while the British infantry forged ahead in a charge that would carry them beyond the entrenchments.[10]

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7 Charles R. Forrest, *The Battle of New Orleans: A British View. The Journal of Major C. R. Forrest, Assistant Quarter-Master General, Thirty-fourth Regiment of Foot* (New Orleans: The Hauser Press, 1961), pp. 40-42. Slight differences appear in the orders presented in Major Forrest, "Journal of the Operations Against New Orleans in 1814 and 1815," *The Louisiana Historical Quarterly* XLIV (January-April 1961), pp. 121-23.

8 J. Jebb, *Practical Treatise on Strengthening and Defending Outposts, Villages, Houses, Bridges, in Reference to the Duties of Officers in Command Picquets, as laid down in the Field Exercise and Evolutions of the Army* (3rd Ed.; London: W. Clowes and Sons, 1848), pp. 71, 87-88.

9 Cooke, *Narrative of Events*, p. 169.

10 *General Court Martial Held at the Royal Barracks, Dublin for the Trial of Brevet Lieutenant-Colonel Hon. Thomas Mullins, Captain of 44th Regiment of Foot. . . .* (Dublin: William Espy, 1815), pp. 49-50; Charles B. Brooks, *The Siege of New Orleans* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1961), p. 212.

According to Pakenham's plan, Major General Samuel Gibbs with 2,150 men would lead the principal assault on the right center of Jackson's line where Carroll's Tennessee militia lined the parapet behind Batteries No. 7, 8, and 9. While this strike occurred, Major General Keane would conduct a feint toward the river with 1,200 soldiers with a demonstration intended to attract the fire of the heavier American guns. Some of Gibbs's men, meantime, would advance through the woods on Jackson's left flank, keeping Coffee's attention diverted from the attack in Carroll's front. Reserve troops numbering 1,400 men, of the Seventh and Forty-third regiments under General Lambert, would be posted in the rear center of the field.

Leading Gibbs's column would be 250 men of the Forty-fourth charged with conveying the fascines and ladders to the ditch. They would be followed by the balance of the Forty-fourth, besides the Twenty-first and Fourth regiments (comprising the attack column), with light infantry companies from these units and men of the First West India Regiment guarding Gibbs's right flank. If Colonel Thornton across the river succeeded in turning Patterson's guns against Jackson's right, Keane's column was to bear left; otherwise, he was to move to his right in support of Gibbs's main thrust. Several companies of the Seventh, Forty-third, Ninety-third, and Twenty-first (Fusiliers) under Lieutenant Colonel Rennie were to advance simultaneously along the river bank below the levee and spike the guns in the redoubt on the American right. Much rested on good timing and coordination in the attack. And for complete success, the plan required Pakenham's command to move decisively, surprising the Americans at their ditch before any firing occurred.[11]

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11 William Surtees, *Twenty-five Years in Rifle Brigade* (orig. pub. 1833; reprint, London: Frederick Muller, Ltd., 1973), pp. 370-71; John Spencer Bassett, *Life of Andrew Jackson* (2 vols.; New York: The Macmillan Company, 1916), I, pp. 192-93; John Buchan, *The History of the Royal Scots Fusiliers (1678-1918)* (London: Thomas Nelson and Sons Ltd., 1925), p. 176; "Battle of New Orleans, 8th January, 1815," *Blackwood's Magazine* XXIV (September 1828), p. 355; Marquis James, *Andrew Jackson: The Border Captain* (New York: The Literary Guild, 1933), p. 263; William Surtees, *Twenty-five Years in Rifle Brigade* (orig. pub. 1833; reprint, London: Frederick Muller, Ltd., 1973), p. 29; Ritchie, "Louisiana Campaign," p. 60; Brooks, *Siege of New Orleans*, pp. 220-21; Jane Lucas de Grummond, *The Baratarians and the Battle of New Orleans* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1961), pp. 130-31. At the time of the battle, rumors circulated among Jackson's men that Pakenham had inspired his soldiers with the prospect of unrestricted looting in New Orleans. The matter incited a major debate over the presumed British watchword on January 8, "Beauty and Booty," a charge that British officers resolutely denied. Jackson himself believed that it was true. Nonetheless, it has survived as, if nothing else, a sample of the rich folklore surrounding the Battle of New Orleans. See Latour, *Historical Memoir*, pp. 255-56; Vincent Nolte, *Fifty Years in Both Hemispheres or Reminiscences of the Life of a Former Merchant*

British troops arrayed on the evening of January 7 consisted of the following:[12]

Column of First Attack.
Major General Sir Samuel Gibbs.

Forty-fourth (Essex) Foot	816
Twenty-first (Royal Scots) Fusiliers	790
Fourth (King's Own) Foot	796
Total First Attack Column	2,402

Column of Support or Second Attack.
Major General Sir John Keane.

Ninety-third (Sutherland) Highlanders	1,008
Seventh Royal Fusiliers	780
Forty-third (Monmouth) Light Infantry	862
Total Second Attack Column	2,650

Column of Reserve.
Major General John Lambert.

Eighty-fifth (Bucks) Light Infantry	560
Eighty-ninth (Dublin) Foot (Wing)	390
Twenty-seventh Foot en route from the landing-place (Wing)	360
Forty-first Foot (Landing), 5 companies	340

11 (cont.) (orig. pub. 1854; reprint, Freeport, New York: Books for Libraries Press, 1972), p. 220; Carroll to Jackson, August 4, 1833, in *Correspondence of Andrew Jackson*, VI, p. 518; Sir Charles R. Vaughn to Jackson, July 14, 1838, in *ibid.*, VI, pp. 129-30; Jackson to George Barstow, February 19, 1814, in *ibid.*, VI, p. 265. See also the discussion in Robin Reilly, *The British at the Gates: The New Orleans Campaign in the War of 1812* (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1974), p. 265.

12 From Augustus C. Buell, *History of Andrew Jackson: Pioneer, Patriot, Soldier, Politician, President* (2 vols.; New York: Charles Scribners's Sons, 1904), I, pp. 431-32. These figures include all troops, "actually on the field or in striking distance of it," but do not encompass troops and seamen aboard British transports in the region. *Ibid.* For more on the British strength question, see Theodore Roosevelt, *The Naval War of 1812, or the History of the United States Navy during the Last War with Great Britain to which is Appended an Account of the Battle of New Orleans* (orig. pub. 1882; reprint, New York: Haskell House Publishers, Ltd., 1968), p. 476.

Royal Marines (Battalion)	600
Royal Artillery (2 batteries and 1 Rocket Battery)	318
Ninety-fifth Rifles, 3d Battalion	546
First West India Foot (negroes)	912
Fifth West India Foot (negroes)	796
Fourteenth Light Dragoons (4 troops)	210
Total Reserve	5,032
Grand total	10,084

Some modification of this alignment evidently occurred before the attack began, Gibbs's final command consisting of the Forty-fourth, Twenty-first, and Fourth, while that of Keane essentially comprised the Ninety-third plus the light companies of the Forty-third, Seventh, and First West India regiments.

During the night of the January 7, the British moved their barges into the Mississippi from Villeré's Canal. The procedure was complicated by the fact that the new channel was not deep enough for some of the larger craft, particularly at the cut in the levee, necessitating construction of a dam to raise the water level. Pakenham succeeded in getting but a portion of his intended troops to the other side before morning, mainly the Eighty-fifth regiment under Thornton. Originally, this force was to reach the west bank three miles below Morgan's line, march up, take the works, and seize Patterson's guns, turning them against Jackson's right during the main assault.[13]

The plan proved easier to conceive than to execute. Nor was it entirely undetected by General Jackson. Latour described the increasing intimations that the British were preparing for an assault:

> With the assistance of a telescope in the upper apartment of head-quarters, we perceived soldiers on Laronde's plantation, busy in making fascines, while others were working on pieces of wood, which we concluded must be scaling ladders. The picket guards

13 Dickson, "Journal of Operations in Louisiana," pp. 57-58; "Sir John Maxwell Tylden Journal, 1814-1815," Manuscripts and Archives Division, New York Public Library, p. 58. See also Harry Smith, *Autobiography of Lieutenant-General Sir Harry Smith* (London: John Murray, 1901). typescript copy in the Library of the Chalmette Unit, Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve, pp. 7-8; James Parton, *The Life of Andrew Jackson* (3 vols.; orig. pub. 1860; reprint, New York: Johnson Reprint Corporation, 1967), I, p. 193.

> near the wood had moreover been increased and stationed nearer each other. Officers of the staff were seen riding about the fields of Laronde's, Bienvenu's and Chalmette's plantations, and stopping at the different posts to give orders. Finally, on the 7th, shortly after night-fall, we distinctly heard men at work in the enemy's different batteries; the strokes of hammers gave "note of preparation," and resounded even within our lines; and our out-posts informed us that the enemy was re-establishing his batteries: his guards were re-enforced about sunset, probably with a view to cover the movements of the troops.[14]

But Pakenham's timing was amiss. Delays in getting the barges through the canal into the Mississippi thwarted that part of the plan for attacking the west bank simultaneously with the attack on Jackson's defenses. Consequently, Thornton's west bank command was smaller than anticipated and out of position for coordinating any movement with British forces across the stream. Nevertheless, on the foggy, dark morning of January 8, Pakenham directed his forces against the Americans entrenched along Rodriguez Canal. Jackson's pickets were first to discover the advance and fell back before the surging British. A flaming Congreve rocket sent from near the river signaled the attack, which opened with the British batteries facing the right of the American line, sending forth roaring salvos against the Macarty House and the center of the defenses. Rockets burst overhead, but Jackson was not unprepared, and his own artillery returned the salute, led by the guns in Batteries No. 6 and 7. Patterson's artillery on the west bank likewise opened an enfilading fire of grape against the red-coated columns moving in semi-darkness across the plain. Batteries No. 1, 2, and 3 directed their guns against a British column quickly moving forward on the right. Only when the British came within a few hundred yards of the American position did gusting winds lift the fog and make them visible to Jackson's men. At one point, as they came closer, Jackson ordered his right batteries to cease firing so that the smoke could clear for his riflemen to take aim. At the outset of the action, amid the distant blare of British bugles, the band of the Battalion d'Orleans began playing "Yankee Doodle" and other patriotic airs as the British pressed forward. Most action on the American line seems to have occurred at either end of the entrenchment; troops posted on the center often had little fighting to do. "The battalions of Plauche, Dacquin [*sic*] and Lacoste, the whole of the forty-fourth regiment, and one-half of Coffee's Tennesseans, had nothing to

14 *Historical Memoir*, pp. 153-54.

do but stand at their posts, and chafe with vain impatience for a chance to join the fight."[15]

The British column facing Jackson's right was slightly ahead of the others in the advance. Led by Colonel Rennie, it pressed forward in close order along the left of the levee, driving in the American pickets so rapidly that Humphrey's guns in Battery No. 1 had to hold back firing for fear of hitting them. As the light infantry companies of the Forty-third, Ninety-third, and Seventh regiments, along with units of the West India regiment, charged into the ditch around the advance redoubt, the muskets of Jackson's men on the main line kept up a steady fire. But the redoubt was so positioned as to prevent the marksmen from having a clear field of fire, a factor that contributed to the British success in gaining the work. The rush was so complete that the American defenders in the redoubt were forced after a brief hand-to-hand struggle to withdraw into the main line, having spiked the two guns. As Rennie, now slightly injured, led his men across the canal and up the parapet of the line, he and several others were shot and fell mortally wounded. More British tumbled into the ditch, either killed and wounded by Beale's riflemen or bayoneted by the marines. Others were captured. American militiamen and regulars of the Seventh Infantry leveled volleys of musketry from the right and left until the British occupants of the redoubt were forced to secure themselves in the ditch awaiting relief by Keane. Other members of the column retreated back down the levee road, many taking cover in the drainage ditches as Patterson's shore batteries and Humphrey's Battery No. 1 began a heavy fire directed at them. Meantime, Batteries No. 2, 3, 4, and 5 sent discharges at the British field guns, hoping to dismount them (Figures I-3, I-7, I-8, I-9).

Rennie's detachment actually comprised the advance of Keane's column of most of the Ninety-third. This column, assembled on the levee road at the

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15 Parton, *Life of Andrew Jackson*, II, p. 206. However, Tatum recorded in his "Journal" (p. 125) that the Forty-fourth Infantry played a role in repelling the initial British assault. This account of the opening action is drawn from Latour, *Historical Memoir*, pp. 158-59, cl-cli; Dickson, "Journal of Operations in Louisiana," pp. 59-60; Nolte, *Fifty Years in Both Hemispheres*, p. 221; *General Court Martial*, p. 41; Tatum, "Journal," p. 125; John Reid and John Henry Eaton, *The Life of Andrew Jackson*, ed. by Frank Lawrence Owsley, Jr. (orig. pub. 1817; reprint, Tusealoosa, Alabama: University of Alabama Press, 1974), pp. 338-39; "Battle of New Orleans, 8th January, 1815," *Blackwoods Magazine*, p. 355; Parton, *Life of Andrew Jackson*, II, pp. 206-07; Buell, *History of Andrew Jackson*, pp. 9-11; Mrs. Dunbar Rowland, *Andrew Jackson's Campaign Against the British, of the Mississippi Territory in the War of 1812. Concerning The Military Operations of the Americans, Creek Indians, British, and Spanish, 1813-1815* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1926), pp. 348-50; Casey, *Louisiana in the War of 1812*, p. 82; Brooks, *Siege of New Orleans*, p. 232.

Figure I-7. Map of the Battle of New Orleans, January 8, 1815, redrawn from Colonel Alexander Dickson's sketch in his "Journal of Operations in Louisiana, 1814-1815," with action as follows (From Colonel Alexander Dickson's "Journal of Operations in Louisiana, 1814-1815," *Louisiana Historical Quarterly* XVIV, Nos. 3 and 4 [January-April 1961], p. 62):

1. Flank battalion led by Lieutenant Colonel Jones attacking through the wood.

2. Major General Gibbs's column.

3. Major General Keane's column.

4. Reserve under Major General Lambert advancing in support.

5. Flank battalion of Colonel Rennie attacking the redoubt.

By kind permission of The Royal Artillery Historical Trust and the Louisiana Historical Society.

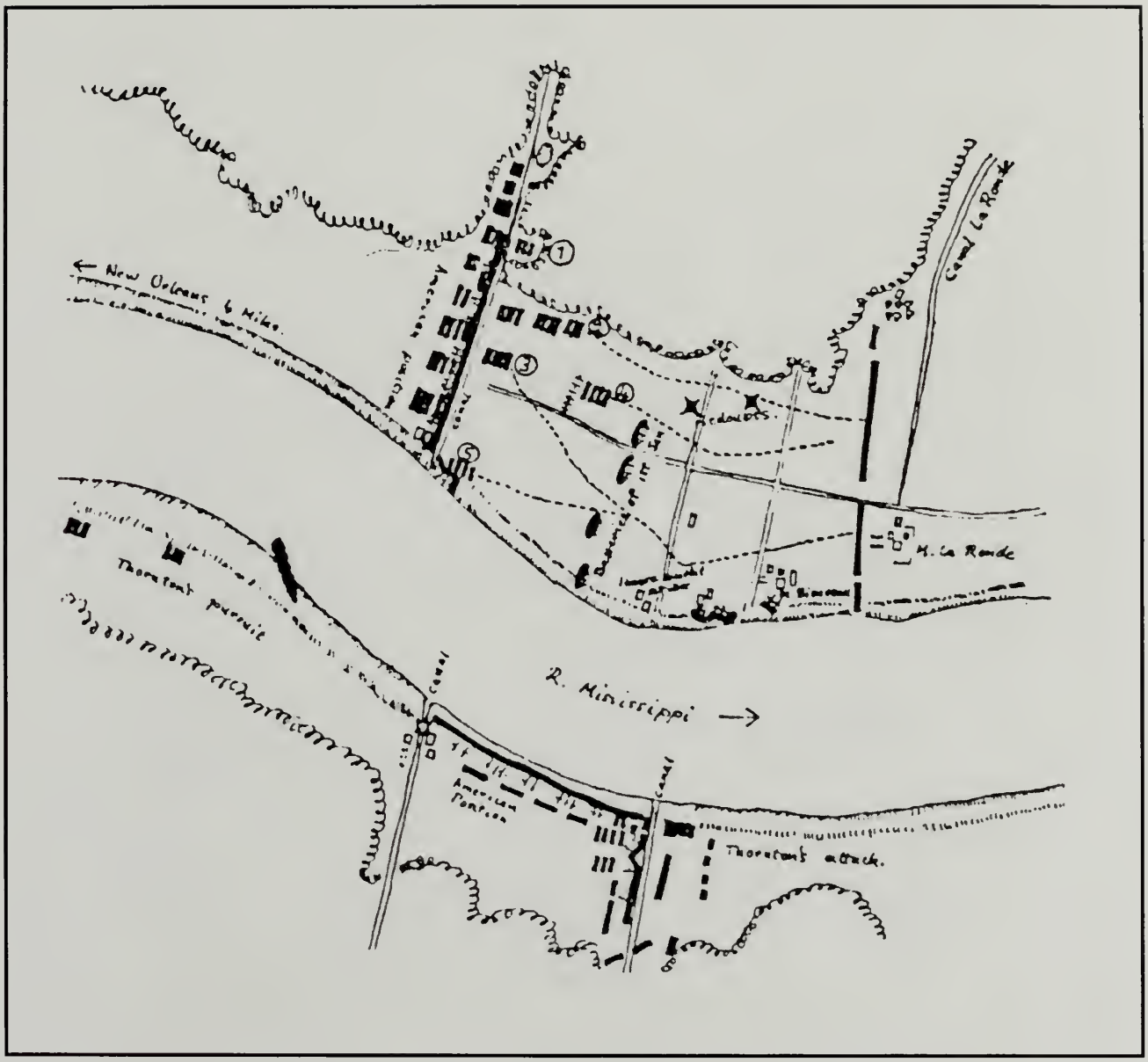
New Orleans 6 Miles
Canal La Ronde
H. La Ronde
Thornton pursuit
R. Mississippi
Canal
American Position
Thornton's attack.

Figure I-8. Jean Hyacinthe Laclotte's "The Defeat of the British Army 12,000 strong under the Command of Sir Edward Packenham [*sic*] in the attack of the American Lines defended by 3,600 Militia commanded by Major General Andrew Jackson, January 8^{the} 1815, on Chalmette plain, five miles below New Orleans, on the left bank of the Mississipi [*sic*]." Aquatint etching by P. L. Debucourt, Paris, Defaite de L Armee Anglais, 1817, after painting or drawing by Laclotte.

Courtesy of the Print Collection, Miriam and Ira D. Wallach Division of Art, Prints and Photographs, The New York Public Library, Astor, Lenox, and Tilden Foundations.

Figure I-9. "Key to the Print." Jean Hyacinthe Laclotte's key to his etching of the Battle of New Orleans (see preceding figure).

Courtesy of The Historic New Orleans Collection, accession no. 1946.1.

Key of the Print

Representing the attack made by the British troops under Sir Edward Pakenham on the lines of Intrenchment of the American Army commanded by Major General Andrew Jackson, in the plain of Chalmette plantation on the left bank of the Mississippi, two miles east of New-Orleans.

Extract from the Report of the American Army

On the 8 January 1815 at day-break the British Army, 12000 strong, attacked our 10 redoubts the Intrenchment of Camp Jackson, defended by 1500 men. The right of the enemy was moved down by a continual fire of artillery and musquetry, the left reached the lines, a few officers and soldiers penetrated into the unfinished redoubts on the head of the lines and there found their graves. That day decided the fate of New-Orleans. The enemy then experiencing the loss of their commander in chief part of their General Staff and a large number of their soldiers killed, wounded and prisoners abandoned most heavy artillery and retreated their wounded to the generosity of the Conqueror.

American Army

N° 1 to 2. Line of Intrenchment of 1500 yards long prolonged in the wood to the distance of four yards.

3. Advanced redoubt at the head of the line, on the bank of the river, defended by two pieces of artillery supported by the riflemen and a company of the 7th regiment.

4. Company of riflemen Captain Beale and 2 companies of the 7th regiment.

5. Captain Humphrey, two 12 pounders.

6. Major General Andrew Jackson, commander in chief and his Staff.

7. Lieutenant Norris, one 24 pounder. Major Plauche battalion composed of the company of grenadiers, Captain Roche, of the chasseurs Captain Lassus of the battalion, Captain Major St. Cosme, of the Irons Captain Hadry, and of Captain Blanc's company.

8. Captain Dominique and Bouche two 24 pounders. Major Lavaud battalion formed of the men of colours of New-Orleans and Major Baquet's battalion formed of the men of colours of St Domingo under Major Savary served to encourage.

9. Lieutenant Crawford, one 32 pounder of the 44th regiment. Colonel Ross.

10. Colonel Perry, two 12 pounders.

11. General Carrigue, one 12 pounder.

12. Lieutenant Spotts, one 18 pounder one 24 pounder and a small howitzer.

13 to 24. Detachments of Lawrence Carroll and Coleman Militia composed of Tennessee and Kentucky militia, and further to the wood General Coffee's division.

25. Captain Chaumont's cavalry and the dragoons of the Attakapas.

26. The house of Marante's plantation head quarters.

27. The house of Rodrigues plantation.

British Army

A. B. The British Army, divided in two columns during the attack made on the line of Intrenchment of General Jackson.

C. The right column of the British Army, principal attack commanded by the General in Chief.

D. Death of the General in Chief, Sir Edward Pakenham.

E. F. Left column of 1500 men strong commanded by Colonel Rennie.

G. Colonel Rennie killed upon the Intrenchments.

H. Batteries opened on the 1st of January 1815, answered by the American Artillery and opened again on the 7 to the night.

I. Batteries broken by the right column.

L. Redoubt made with earth 400 yards further a similar redoubt.

M. Ruins of the buildings of Chalmette plantation.

N. 400 yards from the line on the public road was an unfinished battery.

Orleans

(Scale 300 toises 1 pouce)

The subscribers certify that M. Hassard's Sketch of the Battle of the 8th of January 1815 gives an accurate plan of the ground and of the attack and defence and the different local objects in the View are delineated with the greatest fidelity and therefore remarks has further as highly valuable not only for the grace and spirit of the representation but for the accuracy of the plan.

G. J. Ross Colonel 44th Regiment.
Weatherby Macarty Lieut. Colonel of Artillery
H. H. Pierce Major 44th Regiment.
J. B. Pierce Major
St. Cosme Capt. Major
P. Lacoste Major
Louis Daniel Major
A. Lacoste Inspector Lavaud principal Engineer
Hennet Major General
Lawrence Lewis
A. Dupeyre de Lavergne
A. L. Duvergé
L. A. Gaudin
Aide de Camp to Major General Andrew Jackson

The above name were the only Superior Officers of the Army residing at New-Orleans at the time the Engraving was completed.

Clef de la Gravure

Représentant l'Attaque faite par l'Armée Anglaise, sous le commandement de sir Edouard Packenham, sur la ligne de Retranchement de l'Armée Américaine, commandée par le Major General Andrew Jackson, dans la plaine de l'habitation Chalmette, sur la rive gauche du Mississippi, à deux milles est de la Nouvelle-Orleans.

Extrait du Bulletin de l'Armée Américaine

Le 8 Janvier 1815, au point du jour l'Armée Anglaise, forte de 12,000 hommes, attaque nos dix redoutes le Retranchement du camp Jackson occupées de 1500 hommes, le côté de l'ennemi fut criblé par un feu continuel d'artillerie et de mousquetterie, la gauche attaquant la ligne, un petit nombre d'officiers et de soldats pénétrèrent dans les redoutes au bord du fleuve, et y trouvèrent leur tombeau. Cette journée décida du sort de la Nouvelle-Orleans. L'ennemi après avoir éprouvé la perte de son Général en chef, d'une partie de son état-major, et d'un très-grande quantité de soldats tués, blessés, ou prisonniers, se sauva plus qu'à fuir, abandonnant son grosse artillerie, et recommandant les blessés à la generosité du Vainqueur.

Armée Américaine

N° 1 et 2. Ligne de Retranchement de 1500 toises de long prolongée de 300 toises dans le bois.

3. Redoute avancée à la tête de la ligne au bord du fleuve, défendue par deux pièces d'artillerie, soutenue par les carabiniers et une compagnie du 7e regiment.

4. Compagnie des carabiniers, Capitaine Beale, et une compagnie du 7e regiment.

5. Capitaine Humphrey, deux pièces de 12.

6. Le Major-General Andrew Jackson, Commandant en chef, et son Etat-Major.

7. Lieutenant Norris, une pièce de 24; le bataillon du Major Plauche, composé de la compagnie des grenadiers, Capitaine Roche, des chasseurs, Capitaine Lassus; des boulons, Capitaine Major St. Cosme; des francs Capitaine Hadry, et de la compagnie du Capitaine Blanc.

8. Capitaines Dominique, et Bouche, deux pièces de 24. Bataillon du Major Lavaud, composé des hommes de couleur de la Nouvelle-Orleans, et le bataillon du Major Baquet, composé des hommes de couleur de Saint-Domingue, commandé en second par le Major Savary.

9. Lieutenant Crawford, une pièce de 32 du 44e regiment. Colonel Ross.

10. Colonel Perry, deux pièces de 12.

11. General Carrigue, une pièce de 12.

12. Lieutenant Spotts, une pièce de 18, une de 24, et un petit obusier.

13 à 24. Detachements des Tennessees Carroll et Adair, composées des milices du Tennessee et Kentucky, et, dans la profondeur dans le bois la division du General Coffee.

25. Compagnie de cavalerie du Capitaine Chaumont, et des dragons des Attakapas.

26. Maison de l'habitation Marante servant de quartier-general.

27. Maison de l'habitation Rodrigues.

Armée Anglaise

A. B. Armée Anglaise, divisée en deux colonnes, au moment de l'attaque sur la ligne de Retranchement défendue par le General Jackson.

C. Colonne droite des Anglais, et principale attaque commandée par le General en Chef.

D. Mort du General en Chef sir Edouard Pakenham.

E. F. Colonne de gauche, forte de 1500 hommes, commandée par le Colonel Rennie.

G. Le Colonel Rennie tué en montant à l'assaut.

H. Batterie ouverte le 1er Janvier 1815, démontée par l'Artillerie Américaine, et rouverte dans la nuit du 7 au 8.

I. Batterie enlevée par la colonne droite.

L. Redoute construite en terre, à 400 toises plus loin une pareille redoute.

M. Ruine des établissements de l'habitation Chalmette.

N. A 400 toises de la ligne, sur le chemin, étoit une batterie découverte.

Orléans

(Echelle de 300 toises 1 pouce)

Les soussignés certifient que le Vue de la Bataille du 8 Janvier 1815 par M. Hassard, Lithographe, est un Tableau exact du Champ de Bataille et de l'Attaque et Défense, et que tous les objets locaux marqués sur le Tableau sont rapportés avec la plus grande fidélité; ce remarquer ils considérent ce Tableau comme très-important, non-seulement pour le talent qu'il a à montrer mais aussi pour l'exactitude du plan.

G. J. Ross Colonel du 44e regiment.
H. H. Pierce Major du 44e
Weatherby Macarty Lieut. Colonel d'Artillerie
J. B. Pierce Major
St. Cosme, Capitaine Major
Pierre Lacoste Major
Louis Daniel Major
A. Lacoste-Lavaud Ingénieur principal
Hennet Major-general
Lawrence Lewis
A. Dupeyre de Lavergne,
A. L. Duvergé,
L. A. Gaudin
Aide-de-Camp du General Andrew Jackson

Les noms ci-dessus sont ceux des seuls Officiers Supérieurs qui se trouvaient à la Nouvelle-Orleans lorsque le Tableau fut achevé.

British left, was supposed to support Thornton's attack across the river. When that failed to occur on schedule, Pakenham directed Keane to lead his men in support of the column on the right under General Gibbs. The survivors of Rennie's assault force therefore had no further support but for the artillery.[16]

Pakenham's main impetus lay with the attack by Gibbs's 2,500-man column against the left center of Jackson's line. But this strike also failed. Gibbs's column was composed of the Forty-fourth, Twenty-first, and Fourth regiments, in that order, plus three companies of the Ninety-fifth rifles to lie down in front as a covering party. The assault, intended to be carried out close to the woods and out of range of Patterson's guns on the far shore, was led by the Forty-fourth, a reputedly undisciplined Irish unit whose commander, Lieutenant Colonel Thomas Mullins, neglected to have his men pick up the required fascines and ladders at the advanced redoubt along the swamp for bridging the ditch and scaling the American works. Instead, the regiment moved five hundred yards forward three or four abreast through the road gap in the old ten-gun battery of January 1.[17] When the mistake was realized, three hundred men went back to retrieve the fascines and ladders, a time-consuming operation at the critical moment the attack was supposed to begin. Furthermore, part of the troops got lost returning to the front, so that those farthest in advance had ladders instead of fascines, which were needed first. This produced hesitancy and confusion.[18]

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16 Tatum, "Journal," pp. 126-27; Latour, *Historical Memoir*, pp. 157-58; Dickson, "Journal of Operations in Louisiana," pp. 63-64; "Battle of New Orleans, 8th January, 1815," pp. 355-56; Alexander Walker, *Jackson and New Orleans* (New York: J. C. Derby, 1856), pp. 333-35; Organ to Mordecai, January 19, 1815, Manuscript Division, Southern Historical Collection, University of North Carolina; Cooke, *Narrative of Events*, p. 228; Parton, *Life of Andrew Jackson*, II, pp. 200-01; Brooks, *Siege of New Orleans*, pp. 234-36; Casey, *Louisiana in the War of 1812*, p. 83. At least one account denied that British troops with Rennie ever reached the main line. Cooke, *Narrative of Events*, p. 254.

17 See Ted Birkedal, "The Advanced Battery and the Gap" (unpublished report dated April 1984, National Park Service, Intermountain Support Office, Santa Fe Library).

18 Mullins was later court-martialed for his oversight regarding the fascines and ladders. The trial testimony disclosed that the confusion at the head of the column was not caused by the American counterattack, but by the impromptitude and negligence of Mullins. "It is my opinion," remarked one officer, "that the whole confusion of the column proceeded from the original defective formation of the 44th; the fall of Sir Edward Pakenham deprived the column of its best chance of success, and had the column moved forward according to order, the enemy lines would have been carried with little loss." *General Court Martial*, p. 43. For other details of the advance of Gibbs's command, and specifically that part composed of the Forty-fourth, see *ibid.*, pp. 38-41, 43, 45-49, 51-52, 58, 61, 62, 69, 73-74, 81-83, 85-86, 88-89, 96-97, 100-01, 105. On the matter of Mullins's confusion over the location of the ladders and fascines, it is entirely plausible that the terms "battery" and "redoubt" meant the same to an officer not directly concerned with the distinctions. "This mistake," wrote

Consequently, the British advance failed to approach the Americans closely enough before daylight revealed their presence. The soldiers also had to traverse the several water-filled drainage ditches, each four or five feet wide, although this was apparently accomplished with ease. But as the soldiers of the Twenty-first and Fourth moved forward in column, they became confused at seeing Mullins's disorderly men coming on their flanks from the rear bearing the implements that should have been well ahead. Before they could recover, the American cannon, particularly those in Batteries No. 6 through 8, poured forth its grape and canister into the uncertain ranks. Gibbs's column began lying down, then doubled back on itself as the shelling and musketry opened from Jackson's entrenchments. Rather than storm the works, the British obliqued left to avoid Battery No.8, then halted, trying to fire at the line. Finally, within about one hundred yards from the works, the column wavered. As Mullins's men tossed aside the ladders and sugar cane fascines, the British troops began stumbling frantically toward the rear. To add to the confusion, an acoustical illusion took place when "the roar of musketry and cannon seemed to proceed from the thick cypress-wood . . . , whilst bright flashes of fire [on Jackson's line] . . . were not apparently accompanied by sound."[19] An officer of the Twenty-first later recollected the assault:

> The Column advanced, composed, and perfectly steady, until we were within about 40 yards of the enemy's lines; during the time between our leaving the advanced Battery and getting to within 40 yards of the enemy's works, several individuals of the 44th Regiment passed to the front, on our Flank, in an hurried and irregular manner, bearing Facines and Ladders, particularly our left flank, in groups of 3 or 4, and others individually. When we were within 40 yards of the enemy's lines, several straggling shots were fired on bothe Flanks, and I particularly saw one man of the 44th,

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18 (cont.) Cooke, "might easily have been made . . . , as redoubt and battery are synonymous." *Narrative of Events*, p. 248. For example, an officer sent to check on Mullins's task wrote that he arrived to find "the regiment just as day dawned . . . taking them [fascines] from the Battery [*sic*] . . . ," "Sir John Maxwell Tylden Journal," p. 59. Such imprecise use of the terms occasionally appeared in period literature about the battle. For further explanation of this critical miscommunication, see Daniel Abeel to the writer, March 10, 1984, National Park Service, Southeast/Southwest Team, Denver Service Center.

19 Benson Earle Hill, *Recollections of an Artillery Officer* (2 vols.; London: Richard Bentley, 1836), II, p. 11. For additional information relating particularly to the formation and location of Gibbs's column during the advance, see Mullins, *General Court Martial*, pp. 36, 51 , 93 , and *passim*; Dickson, "Journal of Operations in Louisiana," p. 63; Tatum, "Journal," p. 125; and Cooke, *Narrative of Events*, pp. 249, 251.

> throw away his Facine, and take his firelock and fire. Cheering at this time had also commenced; I went to the rear of the 21st Regiment, in order to prevent men joining them, either in cheering or firing, several musket shots passed over while I was in the rear, and the men complained of being fired on very much by the rear; I returned in a few minutes to the head of the column and found it checked, and a great many men of the 4th and 44th intermixed with the head companies of our Regiment, which they said had fallen back on them; the head of the column was at this time in considerable confusion . . . .[20]

Fearful at the turnabout, Gibbs saw his commands go unheeded, and he sought out Pakenham, who was in the rear. The commander rode out on a charger, hat in hand, and tried to encourage the troops to turn back. As he reached a point at the head of the column near the woods, Pakenham's horse was shot out from under him and he received a wound. Mounting another, he was struck immediately by a round of grape and was conveyed to the back lines, dead or dying. The spot where Pakenham fell was probably between 20 and 40 yards from the American fortifications, based upon knowledge of how close the British advance reached before withdrawing. Contemporary reports stated that the British did not proceed much farther after Pakenham was shot.[21] In any event, the attack now collapsed, the men staggering in disorganized rout back across the plain. Some of the Fourth and Twenty-first men sought shelter in the ditches and swamp or lying flat in the sedge grass. The Forty-fourth was severely damaged in the attack, which lasted all of twenty minutes. Back at the first ditch, Gibbs managed to rally the troops of the Fourth and Twenty-first infantry regiments and they moved ahead, now without the encumbrance of their knapsacks. This time some British soldiers reached the canal before the American works, but could not surmount the defenses. Again the Americans filled the air with grape and canister, cutting huge swaths through the oncoming ranks while the riflemen

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20 *General Court Martial*, pp. 55-56.

21 *General Court Martial*, pp. 42-43; Dickson, "Journal of Operations in Louisiana," pp. 62-63. General Lambert wrote that Pakenham was hit "on the crest of the glacis." Lambert's account quoted in Latour, *Historical Memoir*, p. cli. Latour's map, however, indicates that Pakenham fell 250 yards from Jackson's line (Figure I-3). Another account stated that Pakenham was killed about 100 yards from the American works. "A Contemporary Account of the Battle of New Orleans by a Soldier in the Ranks," *The Louisiana Historical Quarterly* IX (January 1926), pp. 12-15. See also Abeel to the writer, March 10, 1984, which makes a case for both Pakenham and Gibbs being wounded 50 yards from the American works.

delivered volley after volley of fire into the flanks of the advance. The cannon resounded across the field like thunder as the guns and rockets blazed forth, a furious spectacle of light. Wounded British soldiers writhed in agony on the ground, their screams punctuating the morning air. Many soldiers died before the precision musketry of Carroll's Tennesseans. Gibbs himself received a mortal wound but twenty yards from the ditch. Major Tatum described the destruction:

> He [the enemy] approached the lines almost in the face of our 18 lb. battery, and gave to that battery and another, containing a Howitzer, still further to our left, an opportunity of raking the right of his column completely; and also a favorable opportunity to rake him on his left with a 12, 4 [?] & 6 lbr., and at a greater distance, by a 32 lb. battery. As he approached with this column a tremendous fire was opened upon him from these batteries, the militia and part of the 44 U.S. Infantry. The effect was astonishing. The enemy were broken three, several times, halted, closed column and advanced again and finally entered the canal with their front platoons. Such destruction of men, for the time it lasted, was never before witnessed.[22]

When the confused advance of Gibbs's command became apparent to General Keane, that officer determined against moving to support the force of Colonel Rennie attacking Jackson's right. He instead put his troops, principally the Ninety-third Highlanders, 950 strong and commanded by Lieutenant Colonel Robert Dale, in motion to bolster Gibbs's left flank. From his covered position in the second ditch between the British batteries, Keane led his men in a gentle oblique movement toward Gibbs's column that was then approaching the right center of Jackson's line. The maneuver was disastrous because the American artillery, especially Battery No. 5, unleashed heavy barrages into the diagonally moving force, and Keane's men began falling in droves. Colonel Dale was hit and killed immediately. The failure of the highlanders to turn the battle seems to have further caused the advance to collapse altogether. After Keane was badly wounded in the neck near the American ditch, the men of both commands began falling back amid a rain of grape and musket balls. Dickson recalled the event:

22 Howell Tatum, "Journal," p. 125.

> At first the Musquetry fire was scattered along the [American] line, it then became more general, but not so great, and incessant as might have been expected from a line so well manned, the fire of Artillery was heavy, and kept up with the Utmost vigour. When I got near the Old 10 Gun Battery the Musquetry fire slackened and seemed to recede on the Enemies left, from which I thought the line was carried, but the occasional discharge of a Gun from that quarter convinced me I was deceived in my hopes, although I still was inclined to think some impression had been made, but on going a little further I heard Sir Edward Pakenham was badly wounded, and immediately after-wards I met the troops coming back in numbers and in great Confusion, the first Brigade at the Same time however advancing in good order. At this period I saw the Field Artillery on my left slowly retiring, I immediately rode up to them and learnt from Capt. Carmichael that he had moved forward agreeable to the order, taken up a position, and opened as soon as the Musquetry fire Commenced, but that he had Scarcely fired five Rounds a Gun, when the Columns that attacked broke at the head, and such numbers of men came in front of his Guns, that he was obliged to cease firing, and being under a Most heavy fire without the power of returning it, he had thought it best to fall back.[23]

The battle was over in little more than two hours, the field littered with hundreds of dead and dying while numbers of British deserters entered Jackson's line.

During the fighting Jackson maneuvered his support troops to be ready in case the British succeeded in carrying his works. Hinds's cavalry moved from behind Macarty's house to the rear of Coffee's command near the swamp at the time of the second British assault to make certain the left could not be turned. Jackson had also moved six hundred Kentuckians into position between Coffee's right and Carroll's left, thereby adding substantially to his complement of veteran marksmen. Some of the Kentucky troops had to be ordered to remain behind the parapet, so eager were they to take risks that many of them rashly stood atop the defenses exposing themselves to the foe. While the main attack raged in front, Coffee's men successfully repelled another attempt by the British, this time by the

23 "Journal of Operations in Louisiana," pp. 60-61.

light infantry units of the Second Brigade with one hundred men of the Fifth West India regiment, to turn to the left by penetrating the swamp.[24]

During the fighting, Major General John Lambert had stayed in the rear with the reserve First Brigade, consisting of the Seventh Fusiliers and the Forty-third regiment besides the First West India regiment. Cautiously, Lambert now advanced to a point 250 yards from the American works, where he was met by the

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24 Numerous sources were drawn upon for the essentials of the main British attack. For additional details, see Report of Major General Lambert, January 10, 1815, BPRO, London, War Office 1, Vol. 141; Latour, *Historical Memoir*, pp. 154-57 (Latour stated that the attack lasted one hour. *Ibid.*, p. 157); Tatum, "Journal," pp. 125-27; Dickson, "Journal of Operations in Louisiana," pp. 60-61, 63, 64; Cooke, *Narrative of Events*, pp. 221-22; *General Court Martial*, pp. 39, 41, 83; James Kempe letter in *Mississippi Republican*, January 18, 1815, Southern Historical Collection, University of North Carolina; *Nile's Weekly Register*, February 11, 1815, p. 378; Norman Pringle, *Letters by Major Norman Pringle, Late of The Royal Scots Fusileers, Vindicating The Character of The British Army, Employed in North America in the Years 1814-15, from Aspersions Cast Upon It in Stuart's "Three Years in North America,"* (Edinburgh: William Blackwood, 1833), p. 4; Gab Winter to William Willis, January 12, 1815, Department of Archives and Manuscripts, Louisiana State University; Louis de Tousard to John Clement Stocker, January 9, 1815, Manuscript Division, Historic New Orleans Collection; "A Contemporary Account of the Battle of New Orleans," p. 11; "Sir John Maxwell Tylden Journal, 1814-1815"; Buchan, *History of the Royal Scots Fusiliers*, p. 176; A. B .Ellis, *The History of the First West India Regiment* (London: Chapman and Hall, Ltd., 1885), p. 155; "Battle of New Orleans, 8th January, 1815," p. 356; Benson J. Lossing, "Defense of New Orleans," *Harper's New Monthly Magazine* XXX (December 1864; May 1865), pp. 168-86; Bassett, *Life of Andrew Jackson*, I, pp. 194-96; Buell, *History of Andrew Jackson*; II, pp. 20-21, 25-26, 427-28, 429-30; Parton, *Life of Andrew* Jackson, II, pp. 189-91, 194-99; Rowland, *Andrew Jackson's Campaign Against the British,* pp. 350-53, 355-56; Casey, *Louisiana in the War of 1812*, pp. 83ff; Wilburt S. Brown, *The Amphibious Campaign for West Florida and Louisiana, 1814-1815: A Critical Review of Strategy and Tactics at New Orleans* (Tuscaloosa, Alabama: University of Alabama Press, 1969), pp. 140-59; Ritchie, "Louisiana Campaign," p. 71; Brooks, *Siege of New Orleans*, pp. 232-37, 241; Reilly, *British at the Gates*, pp. 298-305. See also previously cited maps by Latour, Ellery, and Joyes. A. Lacarrière Latour, "Plan of the Attack and Defence of the American Lines below New Orleans on the 8th January, 1815," in *Historical Memoir*; Abraham Ellery, "Plan shewing the disposition of the American Troops, when attacked by the British Army, on the morning of the 8th Jany, 1815," Manuscripts and Archives Division, New York Public Library (Figure 1-5); Thomas Joyes, "Plan Shewing the Disposition of the American Troops when attacked by the British army on the Morning of the 8th Jany. 1815, at the line Jackson 4 Miles below New Orleans," Filson Historical Society, Louisville, Kentucky. Plus, see Alexander Dickson's sketch plan in "Journal of Operations in Louisiana," p. 62 (Figure 1-7). Laclotte's "Defeat of the British Army . . ." engraving is also useful in showing optimum British troop movements. Hyacinthe Laclotte, "Defeat of the British Army 12,000 strong, under the Command of Sir Edward Packenham [*sic*] in the attack of the American Lines defended by 3,600 Militia commanded by Major General Andrew Jackson, January 8th 1815, on Chalmette plain five miles below New Orleans, on the left bank of the Mississipi [*sic*]," Manuscripts and Archives Division, New York Public Library (Figure 1-8).

reeling commands of Gibbs and Keane falling back without order. Seeing that there was no possibility of pressing ahead, Lambert ordered the army back to a position of security beyond range of the American guns.[25]

As the smoke cleared following the retirement of the British, the men in the American entrenchments were greeted by a bloody spectacle. The entire plain on the left front of the line lay strewn with the dead and wounded. Some of the latter managed to stand up and run to the rear or into the American position, where they surrendered. "A space of ground," wrote Latour:

> extending from the ditch of our lines to that on which the enemy drew up his troops, two hundred and fifty yards in length, by about two hundred in breadth, was literally covered with men, either dead or severely wounded. About forty men were killed in the ditch, up to which they had advanced, and about the same number were there made prisoners.[26]

Despite the retreat of the enemy with severe losses, Jackson continued an artillery bombardment until 2 p.m. Able British troops now posted themselves in the several drainage ditches to guard against a sortie by the Americans.[27]

While the attack on the east bank of the river proved disastrous, the British achieved some success across the Mississippi despite initial delays. Having reached the opposite bank, Colonel Thornton advanced his 560-man column upstream along the levee in the direction of General Morgan's line. The British boats, hugging the shoreline, moved upstream, protecting Thornton's right flank while sending loads of grape shot toward the American position. The British encountered the badly armed Louisiana command of Major Paul Arnaud, driving them back from their front until they fell in with 170 Kentuckians under Colonel John Davis situated about a mile before Morgan's line at Mayhew's Canal. Arnaud drew up his command in line with the Kentucky troops, and together the soldiers sent a volley into Thornton's men, causing them to open ranks in line

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25 Lambert's report in Latour, *Historical Memoir*, p. cli; Dickson, "Journal of Operations in Louisiana," pp. 64-65; "Sir John Maxwell Tylden Journal, 1814-1815," pp. 61-62. Cooke believed that ultimate success would have been assured had Lambert attacked with the reserve troops. *Narrative of Events*, p. 255.

26 Latour, *Historical Memoir*, pp. 159-60.

27 *Ibid.*; Jackson to Monroe, January 13, 1815, in *Correspondence of Andrew Jackson*, ed. by John Spencer Bassett (7 vols.; Washington: Carnegie Institution of Washington, 1926-35), II; in *ibid.*, pp. liv-lvi.

formation and charge the American advance post. Morgan, seeing this attack, called on his men to fall back. Arnaud's command dashed into the woods on their right, while the Kentuckians retired toward Morgan's line on Raguet Canal (Map I-8).

Thornton pressed the attack, directing the Eighty-fifth to extend over the field and sending troops to skirt the woods. The seamen were ordered to move ahead on the road fronting the river bank, while the marine unit formed in reserve behind the Eighty-fifth. In that formation, Thornton advanced amid a shower of grape and canister from the river battery. Commander Patterson hastened to turn his six 12-pounders and three 24-pounders toward the advancing British, and Morgan readied his command of seven hundred to meet the enemy from behind the inadequate defenses. The General then ordered his soldiers to shoot, but the volley was uneven, and Thornton's troops quickly responded with their own. At this, the Kentucky militia pulled away from the canal and began a headlong retreat up the river, followed shortly by the Louisiana troops of Colonels J. B. Dejan, Alexander DeClouet, and Zenon Cavalier posted near the stream. Before long the retreat became a disorganized rout, many Kentucky soldiers charging into the woods and swamps to escape the onrushing British. Unable to fire for fear of hitting Morgan's men, Patterson quickly ordered his guns spiked and batteries abandoned by the sailors, who moved after the retreating command. During the fighting, a number of the British were killed and wounded, Colonel Thornton among the latter. But the troops pushed on toward New Orleans, routing Morgan again at Jourdan's Canal and yet again at Flood's Canal. The Americans finally stopped at Boisgervais Canal, where the earthen defenses were improved and where Morgan had found some dragoons to help him stem the retreat. Other reinforcements under General Jean Humbert began to arrive from the east bank. Most of the Kentuckians had by this time, however, fled into the woods, leaving the Louisianians to defend the Boisgervais works. The British decided against assaulting this position and awaited instructions from across the river. Besides taking the flag of the First Louisiana, Thornton's command captured Patterson's spiked weapons and the armament of Morgan's line, including a howitzer taken from the British at Yorktown thirty-four years earlier.[28]

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28 British records accounted for one 10-inch howitzer, two 4-pounder cannon, three 24-pounders, three 12-pounders, six 9-pounders, and one 12-pounder carronade captured by Thornton's command. "Return of the Ordnance taken from the Enemy by a Detachment of the Army acting on the Right Bank of the Mississippi under the Command of Colonel Thornton," BPRO, London, War Office 1, Vol. 141.

Jackson, meanwhile secure in his victory on the opposite shore, feared that the British success over Morgan on the west bank would jeopardize his position once Patterson's guns should be unspiked and trained against the American right at Rodriguez Canal. But that eventuality never occurred, for Lambert, unable to provide reinforcements, ordered the west bank command to withdraw. That night the Americans regained their west bank lines, and Patterson unspiked his artillery. But the retreat of the Americans, and particularly the Kentuckians, reportedly enraged Jackson, who told the Secretary of War that those troops "ingloriously fled" from the enemy. The episode precipitated a lively debate in the press that lasted for years and cast a shadow over the role of the Kentuckians at New Orleans. A court of inquiry, convened shortly after the battle, cleared most of the militia leaders of blame and laid much criticism on Morgan for his defenses and troop disposition, which contributed to the defeat. Yet the stigma haunted the Kentuckians, and they remained bitter toward Jackson ever after.[29]

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29 For further details of the west bank action, including the controversial performance of the Kentuckians, see Latour, *Historical Memoir*, pp. 164-66, 168-76, 231-32, cxxxii, clii, clvi-clix, clxii-clxiii, xliv-xlvi, lxi-lxiv; Tatum, "Journal," pp. 127-28; Dickson, "Journal of Operations in Louisiana," pp. 65-67; William James, *A Full and Correct Account of the Military Occurance of the Late War between Great Britain and the United States of America*, (2 vols.; London: privately printed, 1818) II, p. 549; Brigadier General Robert McCansland to Jackson, January 28, 1815, Ferdinand J. Dreer, Autograph Collection, Manuscript Division, Historical Society of Pennsylvania; Morgan to Jackson," January 8, 1815, Jackson Papers, Manuscript Division, Chicago Historical Society; Thomas Joyes, "Defense of Kentucky Troops," Joyes Papers, Filson Historical Society; Joyes, "Account of Service in War of 1812," pp. 6-7, in *ibid.*; "Report of Colonel Thornton," January 8, 1815, BPRO, London, War Office 1, Vol. 141; G. R. Gleig, *The Campaigns of The British Army at Washington and New Orleans*, (orig. pub. London, 1827; reprint, Totowa, New Jersey: Roman and Littlefield, 1972), pp. 180-81; Nolte, *Fifty Years in Both Hemispheres*, p. 223; Jackson, in *Correspondence of Andrew Jackson*, ed. by John Spencer Bassett, (7 vols.; Washington: Carnegie Institution of Washington, 1926-35), II, pp. 180-81; Nolte, *Fifty Years in Both Hemispheres*, p. 223; Jackson, *Correspondence of Andrew Jackson,* II, p. 135; Morgan to Jackson, January 8, 1815, in *ibid.*; *Orleans Gazette and Commercial Advertiser*, May 31, 1817, quoting Morgan, letter to editors of the *Lexington Reporter* (Kentucky); "An Account of the Battle by New Orleans by John Nixon, Adjutant of the First Regiment of La. Militia" (typescript copy in the Louisiana State Museum Library); Bassett, *Life of Andrew Jackson*, I, pp. 198-201; Roosevelt, *The Naval War of 1812,* pp. 478-79, 483-85; Buell, *History of Andrew Jackson,* II, pp. 36-39; William A. Meuse, *The Weapons of the Battle of New Orleans* (New Orleans: The Battle of New Orleans 150th Anniversary Committee of Louisiana, 1965), pp. 32-33; Ritchie, "Louisiana Campaign," pp. 68-69; James, *Border Captain*, pp. 267-68; Jane Lucas de Grummond, *The Baratarians and the Battle of New Orleans* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1961), p. 138; Reilly, *British at the Gates*, p. 288; Brown, *Amphibious Campaign*, pp. 150-51; Casey, *Louisiana in the War of 1812*, pp. 77, 81, 84, 86; Brooks, *Siege of New Orleans*, pp. 238, 242-43, 246.

With the refusal of General Lambert to commit his rescue forces or to provide reinforcements to the west bank column, Jackson's victory was assured. After the American guns fell silent over the plain before Rodriguez Canal, hundreds of the prostrate British rose from among the dead and wounded to descend on Jackson's line in surrender. With no time to pull back his artillery, Lambert decided to wait until night when his men might spike the 18- and 24-pounders in the front batteries and dump the powder and shot into the water-filled ditches. Meantime, most of his command edged closer to the woods or took cover in the ditches, some remaining for as long as five hours, until some orderly withdrawal could take place, usually by rising in squad formation and retreating in a crouch while on the run. Some of the Ninety-third troops, along with the Fifth West India regiment, were sent to the left to cover that exposed flank. Jackson refused to accept Lambert's request for a truce as long as the British operation proceeded across the river. Flags passed between the commands through the afternoon until 4 p.m., after which Jackson renewed his cannonade, shortly to include mortar fire from the weapon on his right, besides that of five new gunboats placed under cover of the river bank.[30]

Many of Jackson's men went over the parapet after the retreat to assist the wounded British into their lines, often using planks and discarded ladders to transport the injured soldiers. The operation was attended with certain risk, for British marksmen in the first ditch tried to dissuade the Americans from removing the wounded. During the afternoon, a company of Daquin's Free Men of Color advanced to rid the ditch of these British, a mission that succeeded despite several casualties.[31] Some Americans now ventured over the plain, picking up muskets and other articles scattered over the ground. Reported one observer:

> When we first got a fair view of the field in our front, individuals could be seen in every possible attitude. Some

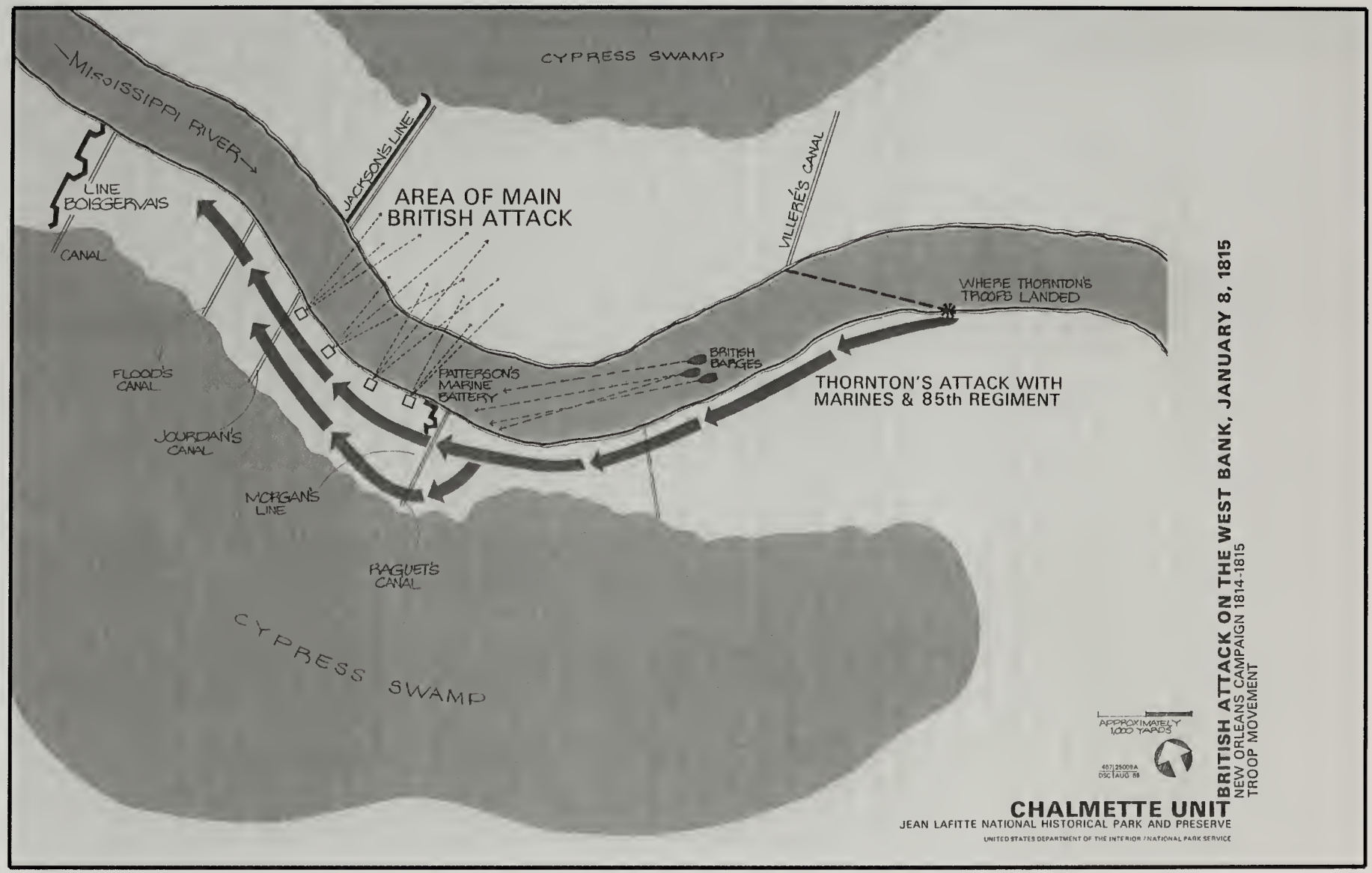
30 Latour, *Historical Memoir*, pp. 176-78, lii-liv; Dickson, "Journal of Operations in Louisiana," pp. 69-70, 71; "Sir John Maxwell Tylden Journal, 1814-1815," pp. 62, 64; Cooke, *Narrative of Events*, pp. 238, 240-41; Nolte, *Fifty Years in Both Hemispheres*, p. 222; "Battle of New Orleans, 8th January, 1815," p. 357; James, *Border Captain*, p. 267; Rowland, *Andrew Jackson's Campaign Against the British*, pp. 364-65; Casey, *Louisiana in the War of 1812*, p. 84; Brooks, *The Siege of Orleans*, pp. 247, 249-50. For the exchange of notes between Jackson and Lambert, see *Correspondence of Andrew Jackson*, II, pp. 133-34, 138-39. Whereas most sources cited here indicate that Lambert identified himself to Jackson on January 8 as commander-in-chief of the British forces, Jackson's own correspondence indicates that final determination of Lambert's status occurred on the eleventh. *Ibid*, p. 139.

31 Tatum, "Journal," pp. 127, 130; Latour, *Historical Memoir*, pp. 163-64.

Troop Movement Map, New Orleans Campaign, 1814-1815

Map I-8. British Attack on the West Bank, January 8, 1815

Denver Service Center, National Park Service. Format changes to original map by Judy Kesler, National Park Service.



BRITISH ATTACK ON THE WEST BANK, JANUARY 8, 1815
NEW ORLEANS CAMPAIGN 1814-1815
TROOP MOVEMENT

> lying quite dead, others mortally wounded, pitching and tumbling about in the agonies of death. Some had their heads shot off, some their legs, some their arms. Some were laughing, some crying, some groaning, and some screaming. There was every variety of sight and sound. Among those that were on the ground, however, there were some that were neither dead nor wounded. A great many had thrown themselves down behind piles of slain, for protection.[32]

British losses had, indeed, been exceedingly high. Jackson's inspector general, Colonel Arthur P. Hayne, accounted for 700 killed, 1,400 wounded, and 500 captured.[33] The Medical Director of the British Army later reported that 381 British soldiers had been killed on the field and that 477 others died of wounds received, making a total of 858 killed. Total wounded numbered 2,468, bringing the grand total of British casualties to 3,326.[34] Yet another estimate placed British losses at 1,971 killed and wounded.[35] These casualties, moreover, included "one lieutenant general, two major generals, eight colonels and lieutenant colonels, six majors, eighteen captains, and fifty-four subalterns."[36] On the right bank of the Mississippi, British losses stood at 120 killed and wounded.[37]

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32 "Contemporary Account of the Battle of New Orleans," pp. 14-15. See also Parton, *Life of Andrew Jackson*, II, pp. 208-09.

33 Hayne to Jackson, January 13, 1815, in Latour, *Historical Memoir*, p. lvi.

34 Buell, *History of Andrew Jackson*, pp. 40-41.

35 Rowland, *Andrew Jackson's Campaign Against the British*, pp. 365-66; Bassett, *Life of Andrew Jackson*, pp. 196-97; de Grummond, *Baratarians*, p. 139. On the question of British casualties, never satisfactorily resolved, see also Tatum, "Journal," p. 130; Buchan, *History of the Royal Scots Fusiliers*, p. 177; Roosevelt, *Naval War of 1812*, pp. 483, 485-86; Casey, *Louisiana in the War of 1812*, p. 103.

36 Bassett, *Life of Andrew Jackson*, p. 197.

37 Latour, *Historical Memoir*, p. 175. While the commonly accepted folklore of the battle credits the huge British casualties to the performance of Carroll's, Coffee's, and Adair's militia; analytical evaluation of the evidence strongly suggests that it was Jackson's artillery rather than the backwoodsmen who won the day. This includes knowledge of high casualties in British units known to have been beyond musket range during the fighting. Most accounts stated that Coffee's men actually fired little during the battle, and Latour noted that the units under Plauche, Daquin, Lacoste, plus most of the Forty-fourth Infantry, withheld fire; furthermore, although British medical personnel mentioned few instances of casualties caused by artillery fire, they had no knowledge that the Americans were firing grape and canister whose wounds resembled those from musket balls and buckshot. See Reilly, *British at the Gates*, p. 307; Powell A. Casey, "Artillery in the Battle of New Orleans" (unpublished manuscript in the J. Fair Hardin Collection, Department of Archives and Manuscripts,

American casualties in the main British attack were remarkably low, reportedly 6 killed and 7 wounded. Across the river, 1 man had been killed and 5 wounded, making the total American loss that day 7 killed and 12 wounded.[38] The most practical explanation for these light casualties is that the British were unable to penetrate the fortifications and that their artillery was once again trained too high to seriously threaten the troops behind the line. The British guns, wrote an American, "have done no harm to our troops, the bursting of their bombs in our works has been of no effect."[39]

Burial of the British dead proceeded on the early afternoon of January 9 following Lambert's accession to Jackson's demand that reinforcements from neither army should be sent to the west bank. Indeed, Lambert informed Jackson that his troops across the Mississippi had been recalled. Under an arrangement worked out with Jackson at the time of the armistice, all of the dead lying between Rodriguez Canal and the first drainage ditch about four hundred yards away would be delivered by the Americans to the upper side of the ditch "at the edge of the sedge grass." Those dead found in the swamp above a prolongation of the ditch were likewise turned over by the Americans. The British were responsible for burying all these dead, plus those lying below the ditch, in two hours' designated time, although the burials in fact lasted well into the evening. More than three hundred dead British were thus turned over at the demarcation line by the Americans, and Jackson's officers tending to this duty noticed that many dead also existed across the ditch. At the same time, some wounded British prisoners were escorted across the ditch and into the enemy lines, there to be exchanged for American prisoners. After dark, a torchlit ceremony was held during which the British fatalities were interred in shallow muddy graves.[40]

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37 (cont.) Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge), p. 36.

38 Latour, *Historical Memoir*, p. 175; Rowland, *Andrew Jackson's Campaign Against the British*, pp. 365-66; de Grummond, *Baratarians*, p. 139. Tatum wrote that Jackson lost 11 men killed and 23 wounded on the left bank and 2 killed, 16 wounded, and 19 missing on the right bank. "Journal," p. 130. See also Latour, *Historical Memoir*, pp. lix-lx; Jackson's papers account for 13 killed, 39 wounded, and 19 missing in action, these figures including losses on both sides of the river. Jackson, *Correspondence of Andrew Jackson*, p. 143.

39 Stuart O. Landry, *Side Lights on the Battle of New Orleans* (New Orleans: Pelican Publishing Company, 1965), p. 50. See Claiborne to Kentucky Governor Shelby, January 9,1815, Miscellaneous Manuscripts, Manuscript Division, New York Historical Society.

40 Tatum, "Journal," pp. 130-32; Parton, *Life of Andrew Jackson*, II, p. 233; Reid and Eaton, *Life of Andrew Jackson*, pp. 354, 356-57. The consensus among historians is that the British buried most of their fatalities. At one point, however, Jackson wrote Lambert, January 8, that "the dead on the field beyond the line [ditch] . . . you can inter. Those within that

Location of the burial places of the British dead has never been precisely determined, except that they occurred somewhere beyond the first drainage ditch. One source stated that the bodies were "Buried in the Battery . . . hastily erected on New Year's Eve," probably meaning the position straddling the center road (British Batteries No. 6 and 7).[41] Such a location seems logical since it required transporting the dead only a short distance directly to the rear. Another source, however, while noting that "the ditch along the levee was the grave of numbers," also remarked that he did not visit "that part of the field where the British buried (nominally) the greatest number of their dead . . . ."[42] There were accounts, too, that indicated that the dead were "thrown by dozens into shallow holes, scarcely deep enough to furnish them with a slight covering of earth."[43] And an officer reported preparing a mass grave into which he threw about two hundred bodies.[44] It is clear that the burials were slight gestures because of the nature of the terrain. The bodies were straightened "and the great toes tied together with a piece of string."[45] Most were barely covered with earth, and during the ensuing weeks as the weather turned warm, the bodies putrefied and their stench pervaded a broad area. "Every light puff from the eastward which passes over the field brings evidence with it that the bodies are still here," wrote one chronicler.[46] By summer the situation concerned residents of New Orleans, who feared an outbreak of pestilence brought on by the moldering British dead.[47] Probably periodic flooding did much to alleviate such concerns, along with the passage of time. It seems

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40 (cont.) line shall be interred [*sic*] by my troops." Andrew Jackson Papers, Manuscripts Division, Library of Congress, Presidential Papers Microfilm, Series 3, Vols. F-K, Reel 62.

41 Gab Winter to William Willis, January 12, 1815, Department of Archives and Manuscripts, Louisiana State University.

42 Diary of Samuel Mordecai, March-June, 1815, Manuscript Division, Southern Historical Collection, University of North Carolina.

43 Gleig, *The Campaigns of The British Army at Washington and New Orleans*, p. 182.

44 Smith, *Autobiography*, p. 12. Yet another likely location for British burials was in the area of the headquarters at Villeré's mansion. Here many of the wounded British died and, reportedly, were interred. Some confirmation of this place as a burial site appeared in *The Daily Picayune* (New Orleans), January 18, 1891. According to the paper, a drainage ditch excavated in the immediate vicinity a few years previous had disclosed numerous artifacts. "Belts and swords were brought up by the spades, and more relics are constantly being found. A year ago a sword came back from the grave. Bullets, around which the bodies have turned to dust, are shaken from the sides of the [ditch] stream . . . ."

45 *Ibid.*

46 *Niles' Weekly Register*, July 15, 1815, p. 348.

47 Parton, *Life of Andrew Jackson*, II, p. 233.

likely that most of the original burials were made in the part of the battlefield adjoining the woods, indeed in the area of the aforementioned British batteries.[48]

While the interments proceeded on January 9, British naval vessels on the lower Mississippi tried to make their way past Fort St. Philip to assist Pakenham's operation below New Orleans. Since early December, British craft plied the waters at the river's mouth and had occupied the works at The Balize. Fort St. Philip had been refurbished according to Jackson's specifications, and, during the middle of December, Major Walter Overton took command of the garrison, composed of approximately four hundred men of the regular artillery and infantry, plus several units of local militia. One gunboat took station in the river near the post. On January 9, several British craft, including two mortar vessels, approached Fort St. Philip and initiated a long-range bombardment that lasted the next eight days, killing two Americans and wounding seven (Map I-9). Overton fired back with his artillery consisting of twenty-nine 24-pounders, two 32-pounders, one 6-pounder, two howitzers, and one 13-inch mortar, but the British stayed out of range. On the seventeenth, the Americans opened an effective mortar fire that prompted the British to give up the attempt and sail downstream to the Gulf. Throughout the encounter, the guns on the lower river instilled certain apprehension among Jackson's men. "We have heard a heavy cannonade to day in that direction," wrote a soldier. "If they should pass that fort, all our efforts here I am afraid, will be unavailing . . . ."[49] As a precaution, Jackson caused a new water battery to be erected about fifty yards behind the right of his line at Rodriguez Canal. This battery mounted four 24-pounders and was completed under the supervision of an engineer named Blanchard. Across the stream, Morgan undertook a new line of defense while Patterson began work on another battery on the levee, this one higher up than his earlier batteries, though armed with the weapons removed from them. With the withdrawal of British

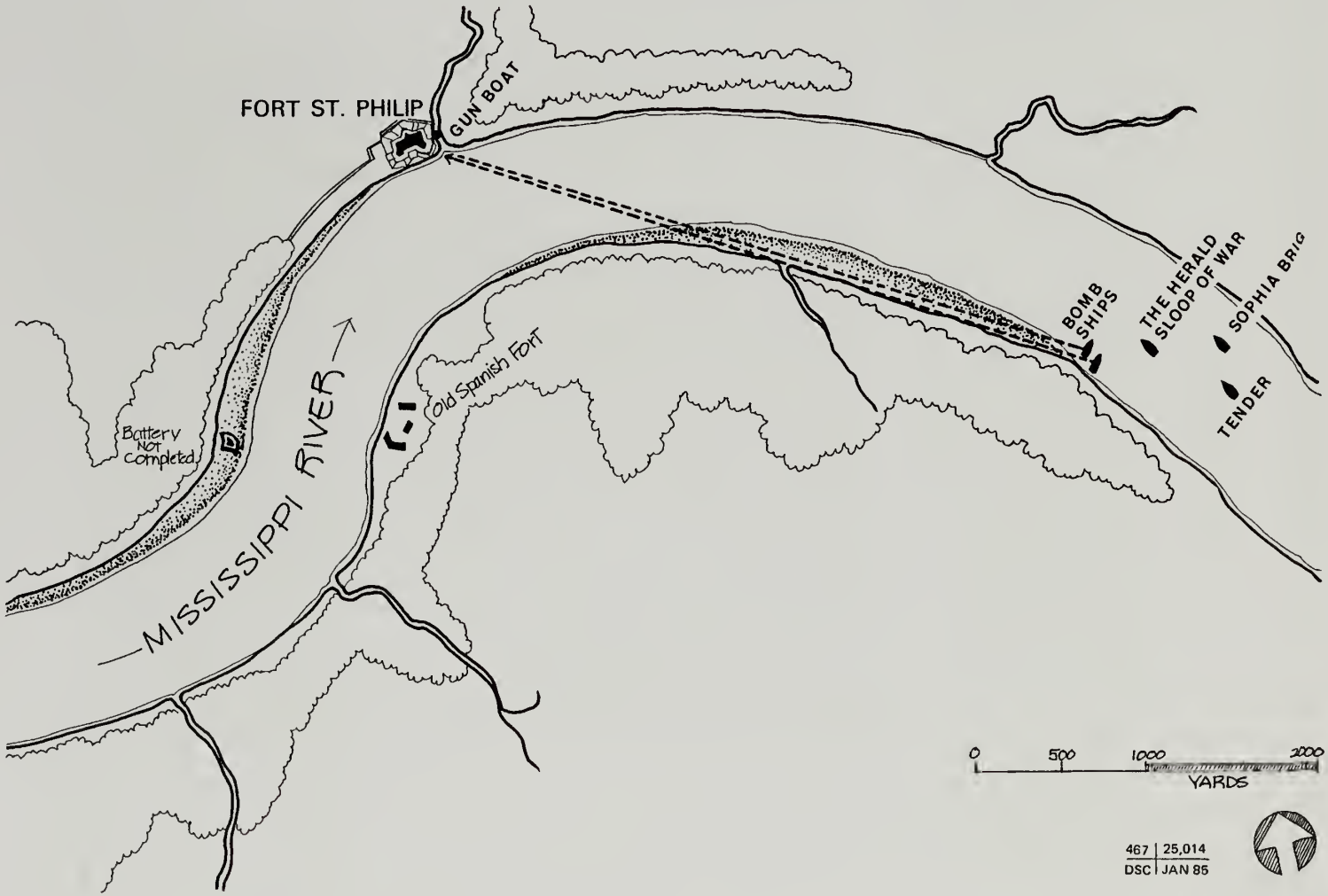
48 Brooks stated that the dead soldiers were placed in ditches on Bienvenu's property and that the officers' remains were taken to the rear and buried at Villeré's plantation. General Coffee's men had already buried some British in the vicinity of their line position before word of the general plan reached them. Those interred were not exhumed. The bodies of Pakenham, Gibbs, and Rennie were disemboweled and interred in barrels of rum for conveyance to England. *Siege of New Orleans*, pp. 253-55; de Grummond, *Baratarians*, p. 139. In 1933, archeological excavations were conducted along what was believed to be the drainage ditch, in search of the British burial ground. More excavations took place in the area between the British and American positions, but no evidence of the interments was found. Rex L. Wilson, "The Search for Jackson's Mud Rampart," *The Florida Anthropologist* XVIII (No. 3, Part 2), p. 110.

49 Dudly Avery to Mary Ann, January 16, 1815, Avery Family Papers, Folder #1, 1796-1815, Manuscript Division, Southern Historical Collection, University of North Carolina.

Troop Movement Map, New Orleans Campaign, 1814-1815

Map I-9. Bombardment of Fort St. Philip, January 9-17, 1815

Denver Service Center, National Park Service. Format changes to original map by Judy Kesler, National Park Service.



467 | 25,014
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BOMBARDMENT OF FORT ST. PHILIP, JANUARY 9-17, 1815
NEW ORLEANS CAMPAIGN 1814-1815
TROOP MOVEMENT

CHALMETTE UNIT
JEAN LAFITTE NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK AND PRESERVE
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR / NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

shipping from in front of Fort St. Philip, however, the need for these new batteries passed.[50]

50 Latour, *Historical Memoir*, pp. 188-91; lxix-lxxi; Tatum, "Journal," pp. 132-33; Casey, *Louisiana in the War of 1812*, pp. 92-93. Rumors circulated among the British army that Fort St. Philip was destroyed by an explosion and that the British navy would soon arrive up the river. Dickson, "Journal of Operations in Louisiana," p. 74; "Sir John Maxwell Tylden Journal, 1814-1815," p. 76. The battery erected behind Jackson's right contained thirty-one men, according to Lieutenant Colonel MacRea, "List of officers and men serving at the Batteries, with their names, rank, and Corps to which they respectively belong. Also the names of Men killed and wounded up to this date—Camp 16th Jany, 1815," Andrew Jackson Papers, Manuscript Division, Chicago Historical Society. Ellery indicated that this battery faced its embrasures landward rather than toward the river. "Plan shewing the disposition of the American Troops . . . ." The battery is also depicted on the Joyes map.

CHAPTER 8

AFTERMATH

Even while the battle raged on the river below, the British army under Lambert was making preparations to leave. Following the battle of January 8, the army withdrew one and one-half miles back from Jackson's position, but the American guns, radically elevated, continued their harassing fire. Commander Patterson mounted 12- and 24-pounders at his batteries between the tenth and thirteenth of January, and soon he began erecting levee batteries opposite Lambert's encampment. As Cooke reported:

> Thus, night and day, we were harassed by danger against which there was no fortifying ourselves. Of the extreme unpleasantness of our situation it is hardly possible to convey any adequate conception. We never closed our eyes in peace, for we were sure to be awakened before many minutes elapsed, by the splash of a round shot or shell in the mud beside us. Tents we had none, but lay, some in the open air, and some in huts made of boards, or any materials that could be procured. From the first moment of our landing, not a man had undressed excepting to bathe; and many had worn the same shirt for weeks together. Besides all this, heavy rains now set in, accompanied with violent storms of thunder and lightning, which lasting during the entire day, usually ceased towards dark, and gave place to keen frosts. Thus were we alternately wet and frozen: wet all day, and frozen all night. With the outposts, again, there was constant skirmishing. With what view the Americans wished to drive them in I cannot tell; but every day were they attacked, and compelled to maintain their ground by dint of hard fighting. In one word, none but those who happened to belong to this army can form a notion of the hardships which it endured and the fatigue which it underwent.[1]

1 John Henry Cooke, *A Narrative of Events in the South of France, and of the Attack on New Orleans in 1814-and 1815* (London: T. and W. Boone, 1835), pp. 185-86.

The British Forty-fourth regiment meanwhile began preparations to retire altogether, including the laying of a fascine-corduroyed road from the head of Villeré's Canal to and along Bayous Mazant and Bienvenu to expedite the passage of troops, ordnance, and equipment over the marshy terrain. This labor was completed by the royal engineers and three hundred men. Bridges also had to be built over the numerous subsidiary streams emptying into the principal bayou. On January 11, a rainstorm accompanied by thunder and lighting impeded the work. The road was finished on the night of January 17. Previously, on the eleventh, the wounded had left, and on the thirteenth, fourteenth, and fifteenth, the West India regiments, the Forty-fourth regiment, and the Marines departed. During the night of January14, a party of Americans came through the woods, took some slaves from de La Ronde's, and caused an alarm among the British pickets, but no engagement ensued.[2]

Throughout this post-battle period, the British sent a stream of flags into Jackson's line. In some instances the enemy's approaches were unwarranted, and on January 15, Jackson issued strict guidelines affecting future communications with Lambert's command:

> The Major General has observed the irregularity, with which the Guards in front of the line have done their duties, particularly of late when on approach of a flag from the enemy, the officers of the Guards have on different occasions received the flag without the authority or knowledge of the General in Chief. Such proceedings, if not at once removed, will produce difficulties and defeat of the Genls view should he have determined not to have received the flags received by the officers of the Guards.
>
> The Major General directs that in future when a flag make its approach it shall be the duty of the officer of the Guard

2 "Sir John Maxwell Tylden Journal, 1814-1815," Manuscripts and Archives Division, New York Public Library, p. 70; Alexander Dickson, "Journal of Operations in Louisiana," *The Louisiana Historical Quarterly* XLIV (January-April 1961), p. 74; Powell A. Casey, *Louisiana in the War of 1812* (Baton Rouge: privately published, 1963), p. 94; Major Forrest, "Journal of the Operations Against New Orleans in 1814 and 1815," *The Louisiana Historical Quarterly* XLIV (January-April 1961), pp. 124-25; Sir Alexander Cochrane, "Narrative of the British Attack on New Orleans, 1814-15," Manuscript Division, New York Historical Society. The last two sources are practically identical in phraseology respecting the British preparations for departure.

> nearest it, to advance and prevent it from approaching too near our line, and wait for one of the Generals Staff officers who will receive any communications—at which time the officer of the Guard will return to his post, and the Guards should not be dismissed until the departure of said flag. No persons shall be permitted to pass the Guard without leave from the Major General, for the execution of this order the officers of the Guard shall be held responsible.[3]

On January 16, amid the daily American bombardment, Lambert prepared for his imminent departure, reportedly requesting Jackson to care for the seriously wounded British soldiers he was forced to leave behind. On the seventeenth, he and Jackson, through their intermediaries, agreed on provisional articles, shortly ratified, for effecting the release of American prisoners held aboard British ships in exchange for British prisoners held by the Americans. Sixty-three Americans were turned over at the demarcation ditch on January 18, most of who had been captured during the night battle of December 23.[4] On January 17, the withdrawal began, and by the following night when most of the infantry pulled out, the road constructed by the engineers had deteriorated into a muddy recess. "Every step sank us to the knees," wrote one soldier, who watched a comrade completely disappear in the muck.[5] Thus, under a dense fog on a dark night, Lambert's army stole away, covered by a rear guard of pickets who stayed behind until just before dawn of January 19. The British had been forced to spike six 18-pounders on the levee that they were unable to transport to the ships. The order of the regiments' withdrawal was as follows: Twenty-first, Fourth, Ninety-third, Eighty-fifth, Ninety-fifth, Forty-third, and Seventh. At the confluence of Villeré's Canal with Bayou Mazant, the engineers had erected a redoubt to guard the retreat.

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3 General Order, January 15, 1815, National Archives, Record Group 98, Records of U.S. Army Commands, 1784-1921, Entry 73.

4 A. Lacarrière Latour, *Historical Memoir of the War in West Florida and Louisiana in 1814-15* (orig. pub. 1816; reprint, Gainesville: University of Florida Press, 1964), pp. 179-80, 207, lxiv, lxxxii, clxvii; Dickson, "Journal of Operations in Louisiana," p. 77; "Sir John Maxwell Tylden Journal, 1814-1815," p. 77; Howell Tatum, "Major Howell Tatum's Journal While Acting Topographical Engineer (1814) to General Jackson commanding the Seventh Military District," ed. by John Spencer Bassett, *Smith College Studies in History* VII (October 1921-April 1922), p. 133; James Parton, *The Life of Andrew Jackson* (3 vols.; orig. pub. 1860; reprint, New York: Johnson Reprint Corporation, 1967), II, p. 260.

5 G. R. Gleig, *The Campaigns of The British Army at Washington and New Orleans* (orig. pub. London, 1827; reprint, Totowa, New Jersey: Roman and Littlefield, 1972), p. 188.

Jackson had no certain knowledge of the British retirement until the fog lifted about 8 a.m. the next morning. He sent detachments of Hinds's cavalry and light troops to watch and report on the enemy movement and to harass the rear guard. But the British had reached the head of the canal by then and were protected by the swampland as well as by the redoubt on Bayou Mazant. Other works had been erected farther on. At the junction of Bayous Jumonville and Mazant stood an epaulement. Three-quarters of a mile ahead, at the confluence of Bayous Mazant and Bienvenu, was another breastwork occupied by rear guard pickets. Near the fishermen's huts a mile from Lake Borgne, yet another work had been started to contain some 1,000 troops. This work was left incomplete. On visiting the vacated British camp, Jackson's staff found numerous damaged cannon as well as the wounded men, who were conveyed to New Orleans.[6]

With the British withdrawal, there was no further need to keep all of Jackson's men at Rodriguez Canal, and on January 19, the majority moved back closer to New Orleans, leaving a picket guard in the old defenses. The next evening a brief action took place on Lake Borgne, where a party of American soldiers and seamen succeeded in capturing fifty-four British army and navy personnel. Over the next few days the Americans captured a schooner and several small boats.[7] Despite such inconveniences, Lambert's army continued its withdrawal to the fleet some sixty miles away, finally completing the operation on the twenty-seventh. But bad weather kept the British vessels at anchor for more than a week. On February 7, the fleet anchored off Dauphin Island and the army disembarked for a needed recuperation. Shortly the British moved on to Mobile, ending their disastrous southern campaign on a note of success with the capture of Fort Bowyer on Mobile Point, which surrendered February 12. Soon thereafter,

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6 For the British withdrawal see Gleig, *Campaigns of the British Army*, pp. 185-87; Dickson, "Journal of Operations in Louisiana," pp. 79-81; Tatum, "Journal," pp. 134-35; Latour, *Historical Memoir*, pp. 184-86, lxvii, clxvi-clxvii; Latour, "Map Shewing the landing of the British army, its several Encampments and Fortifications on the Mississippi and the Works they erected on their Retreat, also the different posts, Encampments and Fortifications made by several corps of the American army during the whole Campaign," in *Historical Memoir*; Vincent Nolte, *Fifty Years in Both Hemispheres or Reminiscences of the Life of a Former Merchant* (orig. pub. 1854; reprint, Freeport, New York: Books for Libraries Press, 1972), p. 224; "Sir John Maxwell Tylden Journal, 1814-1815," pp. 78-79; Augustus C. Buell, *History of Andrew Jackson: Pioneer, Patriot, Soldier, Politician, President* (2 vols.; New York: Charles Scribners's Sons, 1904), II, pp. 46-47; Mrs. Dunbar Rowland, *Andrew Jackson's Campaign Against the British, of the Mississippi Territory in the War of 1812. Concerning The Military Operations of the Americans, Creek Indians, British, and Spanish, 1813-1815* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1926), pp. 368-69.

7 Buell, *History of Andrew Jackson*, II, p. 47; Latour, *Historical Memoir*, pp. 180-82.

news of the end of the war arrived, and all hostilities between the British and Americans ceased.[8]

With the final withdrawal of the British from before New Orleans, an air of celebration gripped the region and the city. On January 21, Jackson issued an appreciative address to his forces, and two days later a general thanksgiving was held in New Orleans with Jackson feted with parades and festivities for his triumph.[9] The revelry did not signal an end to vigilance and defensive efforts, however. Besides the new breastwork begun on the tenth by Morgan's men across the river on Jourdan's plantation, Jackson had directed Morgan to destroy all homes and fences in his front that potentially could interfere with troop movements should another attack occur. Morgan was also warned to keep his men from ravaging the neighborhood "to the disgrace of our country."[10] On the fourteenth, reinforcements of militia reached the west bank command. Across the river, Jackson's men remained in position on Rodriguez Canal, the batteries continuing their daily cannonading of the British encampment. Many American soldiers, having been exposed to the cold wetness for weeks, came down with dysentry and fever, and some deaths occurred. To keep his men in a military posture, Jackson gave orders against "spiritous liquors" being allowed in camp.[11]

Two days after the British army retired via Bayous Mazant and Bienvenu, Jackson began disposing his forces to prevent its return. He directed his officers at Bayou Lafourche, at the Temple in Barataria, and at the junction of Bayou Tigauyon with Lake Pontchartrain to keep alert for signs of the enemy. He placed the Second Louisiana on Villeré's plantation while a detachment of Kentuckians occupied Lacoste's tract. On January 21, most forces were withdrawn from Rodriguez Canal, leaving only the Seventh Infantry to guard the artillery and

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8 Latour, *Historical Memoir*, p. lxxxvii; John Spencer Bassett, *Life of Andrew Jackson* (2 vols.; New York: The Macmillan Company, 1916), I, p. 203; Theodore Roosevelt, *The Naval War of 1812, or the History of the United States Navy during the Last War with Great Britain to which is Appended an Account of the Battle of New Orleans* (orig. pub. 1882; reprint, New York: Haskell House Publishers, Ltd., 1968), p. 488.

9 Latour, *Historical Memoir*, pp. 198-99, clxxxii-clxxxv.

10 Thomas Joyes, "Account of Service in War of 1812," p. 7; Thomas Joyes Papers, Manuscript Division, Filson Historical Society, Louisville, Kentucky; Jackson to Morgan, January 10, 1815, Louisiana State Museum Library; Butler to Morgan, January 11, 1815, David B. Morgan Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress; Latour, *Historical Memoir*, pp. 179, 204; "Journal of an Officer, 1814-1815," *Debow's Review* XVI (1854), p. 646.

11 National Archives, Record Group 98, Records of U.S. Army Commands, 1784-1921, Entry 73; Buell, *History of Andrew Jackson*, II, p. 52.

ammunition. Most of the remaining Kentuckians retired to Line Dupre, where they assisted in the completion of a battery and parapet. The Tennesseans encamped above the city at Avart's plantation. The field artillery at Rodriguez Canal, except for the two guns in the forward right redoubt, was removed along with the Forty-fourth Infantry to New Orleans. Plauche's volunteer battalion returned to the city, too. Jackson also caused a battery, called Fort Villeré, to be erected at the head of Villeré's Canal and at the junction of Bayous Mazant and Bienvenu. Construction was supervised by Lieutenant Latrobe. Bayou Bienvenu was also to be obstructed. Pickets were stationed in a redoubt at Bayou Phillepon above Piernas Canal near where the Kentucky troops pitched their tents. Still more works were erected on Regio's Canal at Terre-aux-Boeufs at English Turn and on Bayou Boeuf near Lake Levy. Work on the redoubt at Chef Menteur and Bayou Sauvage continued. Reinforcements of 450 Mississippi volunteers also arrived. On the twenty-second, a party of Thomas's Kentuckians under Colonel de La Ronde encountered British pickets at Bayous Mazant and Jumonville, whose cannon mounted on barges sent grape into them without effect. Colonel de La Ronde and his men prudently retired, however.[12]

Still security conscious despite his preparations, Jackson on January 24 directed his engineers, Latour and Tatum, to range over the country and determine "fit points for establishing forts or placing obstructions."[13] Skirmishing with British outposts continued over the next few days, and on the twenty-fifth, one of Hinds's dragoons was killed and two more wounded in an action near Bayou Bienvenu. The defensive precautions lasted into February. Work proceeded on the fortifications on the Chef Menteur Road, near LaBretoniere's plantation, where the ditches had to be deepened. One hundred African American slaves from Orleans Parish were employed in the task, with their owners receiving payment for their labor. One hundred more were recruited to help finish Line

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12 Latour, *Historical Memoir*, pp. 197-98, 202-04, 224-25; John Coffee Order Book, 1814-1815, Coffee Papers, Southern Historical Collection, University of North Carolina; General Order, January 20, 1815, N. A., R. G. 98, Entry 73, Records of U.S. Army Continental Commands, 1784-1921, National Archives, Washington, D.C.; Joyes, "Account of Service in War of 1812," p. 9; "Journal of an Officer," p. 646; "General Carroll's Expedition to New Orleans" (unpublished manuscript, ca. 1815, Special Collections, Tulane University, New Orleans), pp. 71-72; Diary of Levi Lee, 1813-31, Tennessee State Library and Archives, Nashville; Jane Lucas de Grummond, *The Baratarians and the Battle of New Orleans* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1961), p. 146;

13 Jackson to Latour and Tatum, January 24, 1815, Jackson Papers, Manuscript Division, Chicago Historical Society.

Montreuil below the city.[14] In the aftermath of the fall of Fort Bowyer and with news of the end of the war, however, work on these defenses ceased.

There were several reasons for the American victory at New Orleans. Perhaps the overriding factor was the execution of Jackson's artillery, although this explanation may detract too much from the contributions of his various militia units and especially those from Kentucky and Tennessee. Jackson himself believed that the ultimate victory rested with the night battle of December 23, which impeded the British approach sufficiently to allow him ample time to erect fortifications. "Heaven," he wrote, "interposed on our behalf."[15] Perhaps, too, British mistakes brought on Pakenham's disaster more than did American firepower. Admiral Cochrane specified several contributory problems, including the vast distances over which supplies had to be routed from the ships, the difficulty in obtaining intelligence of the Americans' situation, difficulties in operating over an inhospitable terrain in weather detrimental to success, and a prepared and resourceful enemy who constructed a line impossible to turn. These were the obstacles to British triumph, despite Cochrane's assertion that "there never was an expedition better planned; nor to a certain degree better executed."[16] Strategically, British thinking was sound; tactically, however, it failed, and in British circles controversy over the reasons for the failure swirled vigorously for generations. Why was a frontal attack made against Jackson's line? Why was no greater effort made to turn Jackson's left? And why was the troubled Forty-fourth regiment directed to lead the final, fatal assault?[17] Latour attributed the British loss to their failure to "sacrifice the regularity of their movements to promptitude and celerity." Pakenham's men, he said, should have charged with bayonets rather than marching in step. "It is well known that agility is not the distinctive quality of British troops."[18] In sum, Pakenham's direction of the whole affair drew criticism, if not outright condemnation, from his own men. "I cannot help

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14 Order Book Louisiana Militia, Jan. 28th, 1815 to Feb. 27th, 1827 (typescript in the Louisiana State Museum Library), pp. 8, 9, 18-19, 20, 22, 25, 31, 32.

15 Jackson to James Brown, February 4, 1815, *Correspondence of Andrew Jackson*, ed. by John Spencer Bassett (7 vols.; Washington: Carnegie Institution of Washington, 1926-35), VI, p. 447. See also Wilburt S. Brown, *The Amphibious Campaign for West Florida and Louisiana, 1814-1815: A Critical Review of Strategy and Tactics at New Orleans* (Tuscaloosa, Alabama: University of Alabama Press, 1969), p. 108.

16 "Narrative." See also letter signed "Verita," January 18, 1855, Manuscript Division, Cincinnati Historical Society.

17 Rowland, *Andrew Jackson's Campaign Against the British*, p. 359; Carson I. A. Ritchie, "The Louisiana Campaign," *The Louisiana Quarterly* XLIV, Nos. 1 and 2 (January-April 1961), p. 60.

18 *Historical Memoir*, p. 160.

saying that I have been disappointed in him," remarked an officer who served under Pakenham and who believed the General should have delayed the attack when it became obvious that Thornton's movement to the west side had been stymied. "I never supposed that any front attack would have commenced till we were firmly fixed on the opposite bank."[19] Finally, it has been suggested that the British troops, having met reversal on two previous occasions, December 28 and January 1, were psychologically prepared for defeat by the time they advanced in earnest on January 8.[20] The conclusion is indeed plausible and could in fact be the single most dominant factor for Pakenham's defeat.

The outcome of the battle had profound implications for Jackson personally and for the country as a whole. As "Hero of New Orleans," Jackson's fame endured, and in 1828 he was elected President, largely because of the symbolism he engendered as a spiritual embodiment of the nation derived from his New Orleans experience. Though slow to comprehend the evolving military situation around him, Jackson instinctively had melded an army of disparate ethnic and social elements—French, Indians, backwoodsmen, African Americans—and set them working toward a shared objective, the defeat of the British. That action and the dissemination of news of the cohesiveness of these groups helped break down the cultural and social barriers that had heretofore affected the region and contributed to a commonality of purpose previously unknown. The event at New Orleans re-inspired the nation with confidence and instilled pride in its arms, lately embarrassed during the British invasion of Maryland and Virginia.[21] All in all, the Battle of New Orleans contributed significantly in directing the course of the United States, both in 1815 and for a long time thereafter.

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19 "Sir John Maxwell Tylden Journal, *1814-1815*," p. 67. See also Charles Francis Adams, "Battle of New Orleans," in *Studies Military and Diplomatic*, 1775-1815 (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1911), pp. 197-98.

20 Brown, *Amphibious Campaign*, p. 130.

21 Adams, "Battle of New Orleans," p. 193; John Spencer Bassett, *Life of Andrew Jackson* (2 vols.; New York: The Macmillan Company, 1916), I, p. 205; David Lindsey, *Andrew Jackson and John C. Calhoun* (Woodbury, New York: Barron's Educational Series, Inc., 1973), pp. 25-26.

CHAPTER 9

THE BATTLEFIELD AND ENVIRONS IN LATER YEARS

In the decades following the Battle of New Orleans, the site of the January 8 encounter became a local and regional attraction for visitors. Although the property remained in private ownership and for many years lacked any form of official recognition, it nonetheless represented an important epic in American history whose significance was immediately apparent. The battle site commanded a great amount of attention, particularly as the concept of "Jackson Day"—January 8—became standardized in later years. Because of the early interest generated, there exist numerous first-hand accountings that provide evidence of the later appearance and condition of the battlefield property (Figure I-10).

One of the earliest such renderings was that of Samuel Mordecai, who visited the scene on April 22, 1815, less than four months after the battle. Mordecai located the area of the British encampment by "observing a line of small spots among the clover where fires had been kindled."

> At one place the ditch [of a battery?] still retained a bloody stain and the smell was extremely offensive. I have since learned that the enemy made a breastwork here of hhds [hogsheads] of sugar—which probably caused the appearance and smell. The house, in which the British headquarters were held, was perforated with cannon balls. Many of these must have been sent from the Caroline and other vessels, which greatly harassed the enemy.[1]

Two days later Mordecai was ushered over the American part of the field by several battle participants. He noted that "the house in which Genl Jackson established headquarters . . . bore many marks of the enemy's balls. One remained half buried in a position wall over his bed."[2]

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1 Diary of Samuel Mordecai, March-June, 1815, Southern Historical Collection, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill.

2 *Ibid.*

Figure I-10. A section of Charles F. Zimpel's 1834 "Topographical Map of New Orleans and its Vicinity." This map shows the main area of the battlefield nearly twenty years after the Battle of New Orleans. The former Macarty Plantation is in the lower left part of the map and is identified by the name "J. Lombard," the former Rodriguez Estate is identified by the name "E. Prevost," and the large Bienvenu Plantation is still identifiable under its original name and occupies the right-central portion of the map section. The adjacent de La Ronde Plantation is labeled "Versailles" on Zimpel's map.

Courtesy of The Historic New Orleans Collection, accession no. 1955.19e.

LANGUILLE Brothers
J. LOMBARD
E. PREVOST
CANTREL
VILLAVOSA
P. C. PEYROUX
B. S. DELERY
Battle
Ground
H. and M. St. AMAND
V. DEBOUCHEL
F. FORMENTO
P. F. THOMAS
L. M. BIENVENUE
A. VIAVANT
D. DELARONDE
A. BIENVENUE
VERSAILLES
VERSAILLES
LACOSTE

The earliest known changes in the appearance of the battleground were reported by the artist and architect Benjamin Henry Latrobe during a visit in 1819. Latrobe, whose son had served as an engineer officer and had helped erect the batteries on the right of Jackson's line, noted that the river had already eroded away part of that end of the position to include that on which the advance redoubt stood. Latrobe took the occasion to prepare a significant sketch map of the right end of the line as it appeared in 1819, as well as two drawings showing relative positions of existing structures to the line.[3] The line, wrote Latrobe, "is now visible only as the somewhat elevated bank of a narrow canal from the Mississippi to the swamp."[4] Comparing Jackson's feat with that of Hannibal over the Romans, Latrobe commented:

> This ditch and something of a bank extending from the river road to the swamp will probably remain for many years, because the ditch serves as a plantation drain. But the soluble quality of the earth and the exceedingly heavy rains of the climate would otherwise, in a few years, destroy every vestige of a work which saved the city and the whole country of the delta from conquest.[5]

A few years later, in 1825, a German visitor walked along the line, but was clearly more intrigued with the area mansion houses than with learning the rudiments of the battle. Duke Bernhard of Saxe-Weimar Eisenach registered his interest in the homes along the river which, he noted, were almost universally built behind a garden about one hundred yards in length with an entrance walkway lined with carefully manicured laurel and China trees. Most of the homes were two-storied with galleries and piazzas.[6] Bernhard saw the Macarty House headquarters of Jackson as well as the British headquarters at Villeré's, which he described as "not very large and . . . not very much ornamented." Behind the house were two brick structures, one containing a sugar mill, the other a sugar boiling apparatus. Stables and cabins for house servants stood nearby, while huts for the field slaves stood some distance away. Bernhard also remarked

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3 Benjamin Henry Latrobe, *Impressions Respecting New Orleans. Diary and Sketches, 1818-1820*, ed. by Samuel Wilson, Jr. (New York: Columbia University Press, 1951), p. 74.

4 *Ibid.*, p. 43.

5 *Ibid.*, p. 46.

6 Bernhard, Duke of Saxe-Weimar Eisenach, *Travels through North America, during Years 1825 and 1826* (2 vols.; Philadelphia: Carey, Lea and Carey, 1828), I, p. 65.

on the changing course of the Mississippi, which during the years since the battle had inclined to the right, leaving the Villeré mansion farther back from the bank.[7]

Changes were less perceptible in the area of the January 8, 1815, battle some distance upstream. In 1827 Andrew Jackson briefly returned to the scene of his triumph, but his biographer described nothing of the appearance of the battlefield at the time.[8] One of the better descriptions of the ground was provided by Joseph H. Ingraham, who came to New Orleans in the early 1830s. Ingraham's observations were extensive but offered nonetheless a contemporary view that additionally remarked on an element of the post-battle society that had evolved near the site:

> Following our guide a few hundred yards . . . down the river-road, we passed on the left hand a one story wooden dwelling-house situated at a short distance back from the road, having a gallery, or portico in front, and elevated upon a basement story of brick, like most other houses built immediately on the river. This, our guide informed us, was "the house occupied by General Jackson as head-quarters: and there," he continued, pointing to a planter's residence two or three miles farther down the river, "is the mansion-house of General, (late governor, Villere) which was occupied by Sir Edward Packenham [sic] as the head-quarters of the British army."[9]

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7 *Ibid.*, pp. 65-66, 68, 69. Bernhard gave a description of the sugar-making process at Villeré's, which, because of its significance to the battlefield area, is presented here: "The whole is surrounded by cane fields, of which some were then brought in, and others all cut down. A field of this description must rest fallow for five years, and be manured, before being again set out in plants. For manure, a large species of bean is sown, which is left to rot in the field, and answers the purpose very well. The cane is commonly cut in December, and brought to the mill. These mills consist of three iron cylinders, which stand upright, the centre one of which is put in motion by a horse-mill underneath, so as to turn the other by crown-wheels. The cane is shoved in between these, and must pass twice through to be thoroughly squeezed out. The fresh juice thus pressed out, runs through a groove into a reservoir. From this it is drawn off into the kettles, in which it is boiled, to expel the watery part by evaporation. There are three of these kettles close together, so as to pour the juice when it boils from one to the other, and thus facilitate the evaporation of the water. The boiling in these kettles lasts one hour; one set gives half a hogshead of brown sugar." *Ibid.*, p. 69.

8 James Parton, *The Life of Andrew Jackson* (3 vols.; orig. pub. 1860; reprint, New York: Johnson Reprint Corporation, 1967), III, pp. 139-40.

9 The house pointed out by the guide conforms more closely to the Rodriguez House, which during the battle was closely

"But the battle-ground—where is that sir?" we inquired, as he silently continued his rapid walk in advance of us.

"There it is," he replied after walking on a minute or two longer in silence, and turning the corner of a narrow, fenced lane which extended from the river to the forest-covered marshes—"there it is, gentlemen,"—and at the same time extended his arm in the direction of the peaceful plain, which we had before observed,—spread out like a carpet, it was so very level—till it terminated in the distant forests, by which and the river it was nearly enclosed. Riding a quarter of a mile down the lane we dismounted, and leaving our horses in the road, sprang over a fence, and in a few seconds stood upon the American breast-works . . . .

The rampart of earth upon which we stood, presented very little the appearance of having ever been a defence for three thousand breasts; resembling rather one of the numerous dikes constructed on the plantations near the river, to drain the very marshy soil which abounds in this region, than the military defences of a field of battle. It was a grassy embankment, extending, with the exception of an angle near the forest—about a mile in a straight line from the river to the cypress swamps in the rear; four feet high, and five or six feet broad. At the time of the battle it was the height of a man, and somewhat broader than at present, and along the whole front ran a fosse, containing five feet of water, and of the same breadth as the parapet. This was

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9 (cont.) adjacent to Jackson's line. Jackson had his headquarters in the Macarty house some distance to the rear of the line. Apparently there existed confusion among local inhabitants over the proper headquarters site, an error that seemingly was perpetuated for decades. A battle participant who visited the Macarty house in 1838 noted "cannon-balls still embedded in its walls, where the owners had in their enthusiasm, caused them to be gilt, in the year 1822." Vincent Nolte, *Fifty Years in Both Hemispheres or Reminiscences of the Life of a Former Merchant* (orig. pub. 1854; reprint, Freeport, New York: Books for Libraries Press, 1972), p. 217.

now nearly filled with earth, and could easily be leaped over at any point. The embankment through the whole extent is much worn, indented and, occasionally, levelled with the surface of the plain

We walked slowly over the ground, which annually waves with undulating harvests of the rich cane. Our guide was intelligent and sufficiently communicative without being garrulous. He was familiar with every interesting fact associated with the spot, and by his correct information rendered our visit both more satisfactory and agreeable than it otherwise would have been.

"Here gentilhommes, j'ai finde some bullet for you to buy," shouted a little French mulatto at the top of his voice, who, among other boys of various hues, had followed us to the field, "me, j'ai trop—too much;" and on reaching us, this double-tongued urchin turned his pockets inside out and discharged upon the ground a load of rusty grape-shot, bullets, and fragments of lead—his little stock in trade, some, if not all of which, I surmised, had been manufactured for the occasion.

"Did you find them on the battle-ground, garcon?"

"Iss—oui, Messieurs, me did, de long-temps."

I was about to charge him with having prepared his pockets before leaving home, when Mr. C. exhibited a grape shot that he had picked from the dark soil in which it was half buried. I bought for a piccaiune, the smallest currency of the country, the "load of grape," and we pursued our walk over the field, listening with much interest to the communications of our guide, conjuring up the past scenes of strife and searching for balls; which by and by began to thicken upon us so fast, that we were disposed to attribute a generative principle to grape-shot. We were told by our cicerone that they were found in great numbers by the ploughmen, and disposed of to curious visitors. On

> inquiring of him if false ones were not imposed upon the unsuspecting, he replied "No—there is no need of that—there is an abundance of those which are genuine."
>
> "I'm got half a peck on un to hum, myself, I'se found," exclaimed a little negro in a voice that sounded like the creaking of a shoe, bolting off at the same time for the treasure like one of his own cannon-balls. What appalling evidence is this abundance of leaden and iron hail strewed over the field, of the terrible character of that war-storm which swept so fearfully over it. Flattened and round balls, grape of various sizes, and non-descript bits of iron were the principal objects picked up in our stroll over the ground.
>
> The night was rapidly approaching—for we had lingered along on this interesting spot—and precluded our visit to the oaks, to which it had been our intention to extend our walk; and as we turned to retrace our steps with our pockets heavy with metal, something rang to the touch of my foot, which, on lifting and cleansing it from the loam, we discovered to be the butt-piece of a musket.[10]

Contemporary information regarding the battlefield also came in the mid-1840s from other visitors to the scene. Often, however, the impulse was to wax patriotic rather than descriptive. One commentator, noting the dearth of any monument at the site, observed that "if there is no lofty structure of granite or marble, to perpetuate the glorious achievement, it has a holier, a more enduring memorial in the heart of every true American . . . ."[11] In 1846 a British tourist reported that the levee was in process of being strengthened along the riverfront, "for the Mississippi is threatening to pour its resistless current through this battle-ground, as, in the delta of the Ganges, the Hoogly is fast sweeping away the celebrated field of Plassy."[12]

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10 Joseph Holt Ingraham, *The South-West* (2 vols.; New York: Harper and Brothers, 1835), I, pp. 198-99, 201, 204-06.

11 B. M. Norman, *Norman's New Orleans and Environs: Containing a Brief Historical Sketch of the Territory and State of Louisiana, and City of New Orleans* (New Orleans: Published by the author, 1845), p. 200.

12 Charles Lyell, *A Second Visit to the United States of America* (2 vols.; London: John Murray, 1849), II, p. 156.

More substantive depiction came in the account of a militia soldier bound for the Mexican War whose regiment encamped at Chalmette. "The plain itself is a magnificent place for the marshalling of large bodies of men . . . . The entrenchments are still visible tho the peaceful pursuits of agriculture are fast obliterating the lines. . . ." He reported that the British dead were located on the field where Pakenham had formed his troops for opening the assault, an act, he said, that typified "the sublimity of bravery."[13] A Mississippi soldier who also stopped at Chalmette en route to Mexico in July 1846 described his regiment's encampment on ground recently vacated by volunteers from Kentucky and Ohio:

> Our tents were pitched on the ground where the British lines were drawn up on the 8th [of January 1815], but we had a full view of the ground upon which the Americans were stationed, and as it was surveyed by the eye, the recollections of that celebrated battle where American arms achieved such a splendid victory, seemed to arouse every heart and nerve every arm for the conflicts . . . we confidently anticipate.

Despite torrential rains, the Mississippians remained at Chalmette for two days until severe flooding finally forced them out of their tents. On July 17 they abandoned the Chalmette site for drier quarters in New Orleans.[14]

Historian Alexander Walker probably offered the most specific description of the battle scene at mid-century. Jackson's line, wrote Walker in 1855,

> becomes more distinct as it approaches the swamp, the ground near the river having been more exposed to the action of the plow and the tramp of men and cattle. The river having caved some hundred or two feet, the line of the levee has been slightly changed, and the road has worn away the mound and the vestiges of the redoubt on the extreme right.[15]

Walker described the area of the British attack as

13 Charles T. Harlan to "Dear Julia," July 19, 1846, Eugene C. Barker History Center, University of Texas, Austin.

14 *Jeffersonian* (New Orleans), July 20, 1846.

15 Alexander Walker, *Jackson and New Orleans* (New York: J. C. Derby, 1856), p. 308.

> an unbroken level, usually when not in cane, covered with a luxuriant growth of stubble or weeds, and cut into numerous small ditches. Solitary live oaks, reverently spared by the plowman, loom out grandly at long distances apart from the grey or brown plain.[16]

The swamp appeared much the same as it had in 1815, still protruding in the manner which had facilitated the British approach. That stretch of the line occupied by Coffee's Tennesseans remained largely intact forty years after the battle.[17] The Macarty House, surrounded by pruned cedar, cypress, and orange trees, had changed little and was still "scarred in many places with marks of the severe cannonade."[18]

During the Civil War the old Chalmette lands again served as an encampment area, first for Confederate, then Union, troops (Figures I-11 and I-12). One soldier, Private Elisha Stockwell, Jr., of Company I, Fourteenth Wisconsin Volunteer Infantry, observed that the battlefield, "a dead-level piece of land with ditches every few rods square," had previously been used for truck gardening.[19] Descriptive renderings on the grounds seem to have become scarcer later in the century as attention commonly focused on structures in the vicinity related to the battle. The Macarty House, it was noted, was "changed and modernized" by 1891.[20] But the most attention seems to have been lavished on the old British headquarters at Villeré's, downstream from the January 8, 1815, battleground. By 1885 the structure was in decay, its doors and window panes removed and weeds growing on its roof.[21] A few years later, the house was described as having been built of the "choicest timber," with hand-forged nails and hinges:

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16 *Ibid.*, p. 309.

17 *Ibid.*

18 *Ibid.*, pp. 308-09. Apparently the battlefield area was referred to locally as "Jacksonburgh." "Plan of Levee Ward and Drainage District No. 1." 1851 or 1852. National Archives, Record Group 77, Cartographic Archives Division, M 53-2, Washington, D.C.

19 Elisha Stockwell, Jr., *Private Elisha Stockwell Sees the Civil War*, ed. by Byron R. Abernathy (Norman, Oklahoma: University of Oklahoma Press, 1958), p. 155.

20 *The Daily Picayune* (New Orleans), January 18, 1891.

21 *Historical Sketch Book and Guide to New Orleans and Environs* (New York: Will H. Coleman, 1885), p. 177.

> [T]he doors and shutters are of solid cypress and the large and curiously shaped hinges of wrought iron. The same fanciful hinges are on the low doors between the connecting rooms . . . . There are virtually no rear rooms . . . , but on the side facing the woods is the long dining-room, which connects with the parlor facing the river. The arrangement of the rooms has been little disturbed. In the corner towards the city facing the river is the bedroom the general [Pakenham] occupied . . . . One of the main charms of the . . . [parlor] was the large open fireplace . . . .[22]

A short distance from the Villeré House stood the so-called Pakenham Oak, a tree that, according to legend, sheltered the British commander before he died. Pakenham's entrails were supposedly interred at the base of the tree along with the bodies of several other officers killed in the January 8 battle. In 1886 some bones from these burials were recovered with pieces of belts identifying the remains as British officers. Five years later the tree was described as being 12 feet in diameter and "of interest outside of its mortuary significance."[23]

By the turn of the century, visitors came to the New Orleans Battlefield via electric streetcar to Jackson Barracks and then by carriage or foot along the river to the site.[24] There they saw an unfinished monument, the eroded embankment of Jackson's line, and the broad field across which the British advanced.[25] By then, however, the resources, intermixed with homes and pathways utilized by the local populace in routine daily activities, were beginning to experience the threats to their integrity which ultimately impacted them so severely at mid-century. As early as 1905, a New Orleans newspaper prophesied of the historic terrain:

> But a few generations from now and careless persons engrossed in the absorbing occupation of getting on in the world will pass you by and never know the story your soil holds. Men will sweat and toil and fight for industrial supremacy in your midst, where Old Hickory, in a rain of bullets and blood, drove the British back to the river . . . .[26]

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22 *The Daily Picayune* (New Orleans), January 18, 1891.

23 *Ibid.*

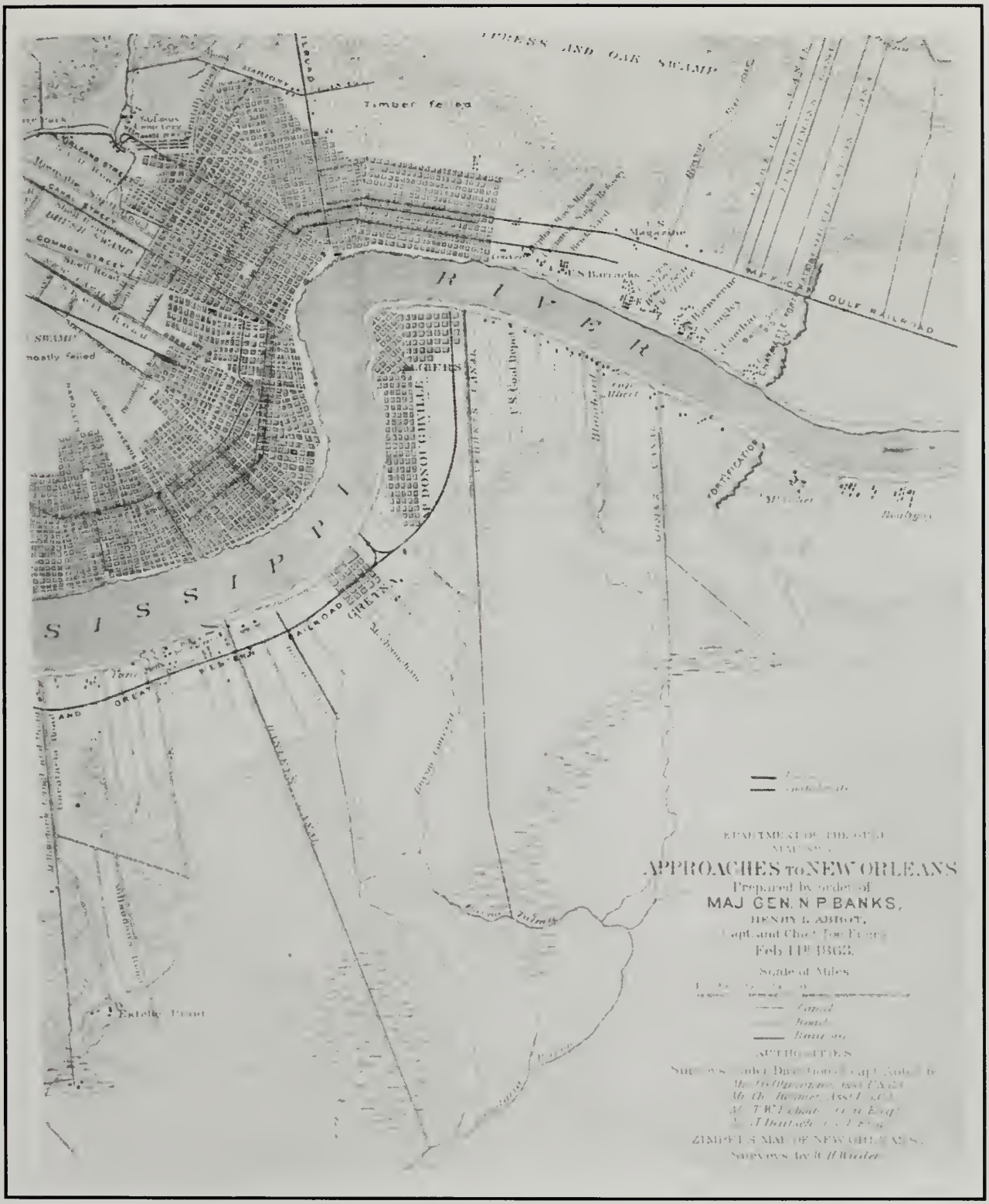
24 *The Picayune's Guide to New Orleans* (New Orleans: The Picayune, 1900), p. 79.

25 Battle of New Orleans Scrapbook, Louisiana State Museum Library, New Orleans.

26 *The Times-Democrat* (New Orleans), October 16, 1905.

Figure I-11. Henry L. Abbot's "Approaches to New Orleans." This Civil War map (February 14, 1863) shows the locations of the Chalmette and McGehee fortifications (upper right portion of map). The Chalmette fortifications were located along what is now the east side of the Chalmette National Cemetery.

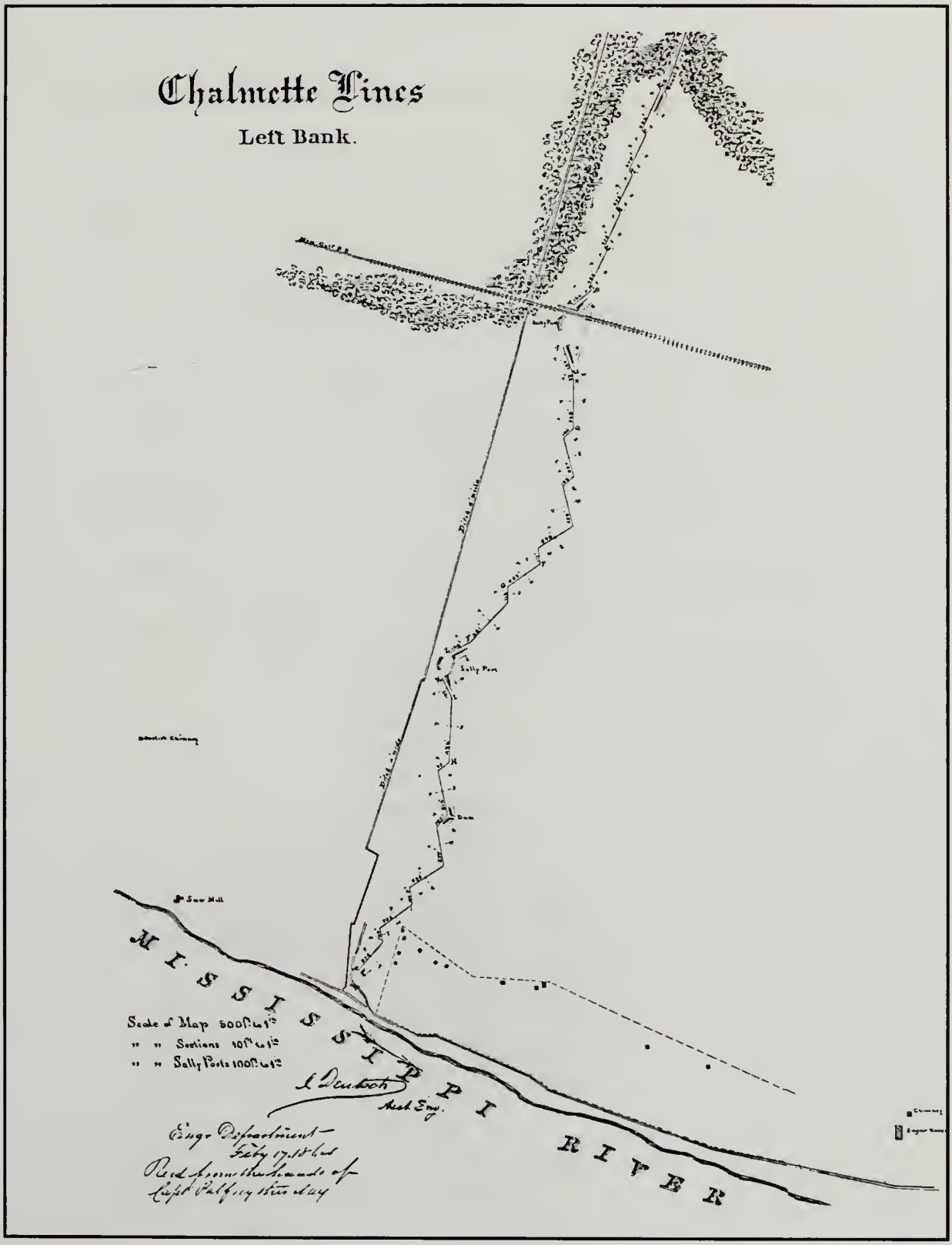
From *Atlas to Accompany the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies.* Plate XC, 1. Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1819-95.



APPROACHES TO NEW ORLEANS
Prepared by order of
MAJ GEN. N P BANKS,
HENRY L. ABBOT,
Feb 11th 1863.
Scale of Miles
Timber felled
U.S. Magazine
U.S. Barracks
GULF RAILROAD
RIVER
SISSIPPI
GREAT WESTERN RAILROAD
FORTIFICATION
Estelle Point

Figure I-12. Captain Henry C. Palfrey's "Plan of Fortification and Sally Ports at Chalmette," February 17, 1864. Note the buildings along the riverfront. The "obelisk chimney" on the left marks the unfinished Chalmette Monument. The "saw mill"of that period occupies the middle part of what is now the Chalmette Unit. On the far lower right are shown the "chimney" and "sugar house" associated with the Bienvenu Plantation tract. The Chalmette fortifications of the Civil War era ran along an approximate line that is now occupied by the far eastern border of the Chalmette National Cemetery.

Courtesy of the National Archives, Washington, D.C.


Chalmette Lines
Left Bank.
Sally Port
Dam
Saw Mill
MISSISSIPPI RIVER
Scale of Map 500 ft to 1 in
" " Sections 10 ft to 1 in
" " Sally Ports 100 ft to 1 in
L. Deutsch
Asst. Eng.
Engr Department
Feby 17.18 bd
Recd from the hands of
Capt Palfrey this day

APPENDIX

LIST OF THE OFFICERS AND MEN SERVING AT THE BATTERIES

Lieutenant Colonel William MacRea's "List of the officers and men serving at the Batteries, with their names, rank, and Corps to which they respectively belonged. Also the names of Men killed and wounded up to this date—Camp 16th Jany 1815."

Courtesy of the Andrew Jackson Papers. Manuscript Division. Chicago Historical Society.

1st Battery	Captn Humphrey	Artillery
"	2d Lieut Elgin	"
"	Wm Blanchard	Volunteer
"	Caleb Mimby	Sergeant Adjt.
"	Isaac Wiley	" "
"	Richd Stevenson	Corporal
"	Clark Baten	"
"	Adam Spid	Artificer
"	John Atwell	Private
"	Jonathan Barber	d°
"	William Cassidy	d°
"	Thomas Cissna	d°
"	Josiah Davis	d°
"	Edward Durgan	d°
"	John Fhemar	d°
"	William Love	d°
"	Samuel McGee	d°
"	David King, Music	d°
"	Alexander Holmes,	Artificer d°
"	Samuel Mayne	d° d°
"	Lewis Brothers	d° d°
"	John Baptiste	d° d°
"	John Chapple	Volunteer
"	William Emerson	d° d°
"	Bisqueet	d° d°
"	Francis Dequine	Private—Capt. St. James
"	Francis Dibeck	d° d°
"	Daniel Kayne	Corporal—7th Infantry
"	Mark Hart	Private d°
"	Martin Duncan	d° d°

Killed and Wounded.

" James Campbell—Artificer—Capt. Humphrey
Killed 28th
Dec. 1814
" Robert Donnigan—Private d° Killed 1st
Jany 1815
" John Bridwell d° d°
Killed 8th d°
" John Roe d° d°
Wounded 1st d° d°
" William Welch—Artificer—Capt. Wollstoncraft.
Killed 28th
Dec 1814
" William Carroll—Volunteer Killed 1st
Jany 1815.

2nd Battery, Commanded by 1st Lieut. Norris of the Navy.

"	Erasmus Watkins	Master
"	E. Brean	Volunteers
"	Samuel Holoman	Seaman
"	L. Murray	D°
"	P. Short	D°
"	John Graham	D°
"	John Hartman	D°
"	George May	D°
"	James Evans	D°
"	James Burns	D°
"	John Shupton	D°
"	William Whitehouse	D°
"	John Calwell	D°
"	William Blake	D°
"	D. McCloud	D°
"	J. Edwards	D°
"	L. Linson	Boy

Killed on the 1st Instant—Christian Sileson, Carpenter.

3d Battery, Commanded by Captain Dominique

Jean Lulan	Chef de piece
Etieme Tour	Seaman
Jean Sapia	D°
Jratrian	D°
Baptiste Plauche	D°
Pierre Brulor	D°
Barthelemy	D°
Lauriat	D°
Jacques Alain	D°
Joarmy	D°
Mackerie	D°
Sterling	D°

Wounded on the 1st Vincent Gamby—Lortalot Sellegrin[?]
Canon, Michel Monson, Sean Boutin

4th Battery, Commanded by Capt. Beluche.

Christophe, chef de piece	
Manuel Domingo	Seaman
Andre Serresol	do
Joseph Terrabonne	do
Jean Jnard	do
Baptiste Merle	do
Jacque Canon	do
Dominique Larabot	do
Bertrand	
Ferrand	
Francois Vetuais	
Francois veau Luisant	
Jean	
Rainaud Isenard	

5th Battery, Commanded by Lieut. Crawley (Navy).

Wm Livingston	master's mate
John F. Pitot	midshipman
John Osborn	boatswain mate
John Fulton	qtr master navy
John Hall	Seaman
Samuel Mastmas[?]	do
Henry Roble	do
Thomas Brown	do
John Armstrong	do
Levy Ewell[?]	do
Charles Cook	do
Abm Dunmore	do
John Williams	do
David Evans	private 44th Infy
Wm Pickering	do do
Robert Jackson	do do

Killed, Manuel Peres, 44th Infy. John Winstrom
four volunteers—name unknown
Levi Heathcoch—Seaman—Wounded
John Armstrong—Seaman—44th Regt D°
John Grey D° D° D°

6th Battery, Commanded by LC Perry
3d Lieutenant Kerr

Corporal	John Newell	Capt. Humphrey	Artillery
Private	David Rutherford	D°	D°
"	William McCullogh	D°	D°
	William Dougherty		
"	Evan Sneed	D°	D°
"	Francis Rigsby	D°	D°
"	Hugh Maston	D°	D°
"	James Buckley	D°	D°
"	Samuel Garish	D°	D°
"	Martin Lanoire	D°	D°
"	William Burrows	D°	D°

"	William Wayne	Corporal	Marines
"	Henry Graff	Private	D°
"	James Strange	D°	D°
"	Roderick Doherty	D°	D°
"	Thomas Gilmore	D°	2d Infy
"	Wm Johnson	D°	44th Infy
"	Saml Rowen	D°	D°
"	Vincent	D°	D°
"	Wm Davis	D°	7th Infy

Slater [T. Pater?] Killed on the 1st Inst.

7th Battery Commanded by Brigadier General Garrique Flaujac

	2d Lieutenant Bertel	
	Jean Guerin	Private
	Jean Vadil	do
	Louis Ayat	do
	Louis St. Germain	D°
	Charles Lee	D°
	Pierre Bibart	D°
	Louis Miniche	do
	Pierre Rabic	do
	Nicole	do

8th Battery Commanded by 2d Lieut. Samuel Spotts Artillery

	3d Lieutenant Louis Chaureau		
	Wm B. Jenkins	Sergt	Artillery
	Benjamin Wilcox	do	do
	Robert Pancost	Artificer	do
	John W. Fancier	do	
	Thomas Hutchinson	Musician	do
	Richard Walker	Private	do
	Thaddeus Stevenson	do	
	Wm Bolke [?]	do	
	John Lightel	do	
	John Williams	do	
	Edward Eulen	do	
	John DuRoudeau [?]	do	

	Robert Nelson	do
	James Black	do
	Albort Gill	Hostler [?]

Killed on the 8th Inst. James Mac
Wounded on the 8th James Ferral

9th Battery Commanded by Lieut. Harrison of the Artillery.

Corporal	Joseph Marsh		44th Infantry	
Private	William Preston		7th	D°
"	Thomas Adams		D°	D°
"	James Maloy		D°	D°
"	Jessey Holly		D°	D°
"	Fleet Potts		D°	D°
"	William W. Callob	private	7th Infantry	
	Thomas Green	D°	D°	
	John Cherrington	D°	D°	
	George Brand	D°	D°	

10th (or 1st Battery on the river) Commanded by
Lieut. Barbrir De Bellevere of the Marines

John Hauckey	Sergeant	Marines
George Povic	Corporal	D°
Thomas Burke	Private	D°
Stephen Foster	D°	D°
Jonathan Hattan	D°	D°
Henry Spears	D°	D°
Jacob Browers	D°	D°
Jacob Attiback	D°	D°
Joseph Lewis	D°	D°
John Shaun	D°	D°
Michael Durf	D°	D°
John Benner	D°	D°
Bernard Lavivierre	D°	D°
Hezekiah Parner	D°	D°

11th (or 2d Battery on the river) Commanded by Charles R. Blanchard, Engineer

Charles Winn, Midshipman—Commanding one Gun		
Captain David Roberts	D°	D°
Captain Griffin	D°	D°
Captain Leeds	D°	D°
Lieut. Montagut		Marine Corps
Sergeant Rico		" "
Corporal McClinton		Marines
Corporal Shean		D°
Music. Grasfield		D°
" Read		D°
Private Joseph Bell		D°
" David Davis		D°
" Thomas McDonald		D°
" John Tinks		D°
" Samuel Johns		D°
" Patrick Avei		D°
" Bob Roberts		D°
" William Strichling		D°
" Peter Searey		D°
" Grant Stiles		D°
" George Pentecost		D°
" John Russell		D°
" William Evans		D°
" Archibald Gillis		D°
" Tagrus Handerson		D°
" Jacob Montgomery		D°
" John Kelly		D°
" Alexander Williams		D°
" Frederick Little		D°

Lt. Chauvereu Liurten
Artillery. actg adjutant

At the Bomb [mortar]

Lt Gitteint	Engineer
Lt Lefevre	
" Lessrilleris [?]	
" Dubois	
Sergt Malley of the 7th Infantry	

Wm Macrea
Lt Col Artillery

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PART II

HISTORICAL INVESTIGATIONS OF THE CIVILIAN OCCUPATION OF THE CHALMETTE BATTLEFIELD

Jill-Karen Yakubik

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Jill-Karen Yakubik

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CHAPTER 10

INTRODUCTION

This report comprises an examination of the history of land use within the Chalmette Unit of Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve. In order to identify and highlight archeologically sensitive areas, particular emphasis has been given to the structural improvements that have been made over time on the park area's many and varied historic properties. It should be noted at the onset that primary-source archival research on historic St. Bernard Parish is encumbered by the fact that most of the conveyance and other court records from the parish were destroyed in a fire ca. 1883. As a result, many important successions and judicial court records were lost, and key conveyances crucial to establishing complete chains of title often are not available. The approach utilized herein was to investigate the title history of a property to obtain background information on land ownership and land use. Subsequent research provided additional historical detail on specific properties and individuals. Archival research was undertaken at the Louisiana Collection, Special Collections, and Southeastern Architectural Archives of the Howard Tilton Memorial Library, Tulane University; at the Historic New Orleans Collections; at the New Orleans Public Library; at the Louisiana State Museum; and at the Office of Public Works of the State of Louisiana in Baton Rouge. The research files of the distinguished historic architect Samuel Wilson, Jr., who generously provided them for our use, were especially valuable. A particularly important source of information on former standing structures has been historic map data (Figures II-1 through II-20). The maps which have been utilized for this study, as well as their relative reliability, may be summarized as follows:

1) The 1808 Barthelemy Lafon survey of the Jean Baptiste Prevost property (Figure II-1) gives the appearance of being a carefully rendered plan; however, the scale of the structures shown appears to be both too large and too close to the river. Consequently, it is believed that this map has little utility for the location of archeological structural remains.

2) Latour's "Plan of Attack and Defence of the American Lines below New Orleans on the 8th of January, 1815" (Figure II-2) provides a great deal of detailed locational information. The variety of sizes of structures shown suggests that their scale may be fairly accurate, and their relative positions to one another also appear reasonable in terms of Louisiana plantation layout. It is believed, then, that this plan can be used to approximate the location of former standing structures.

3) The map "Survey of Battlefield Embraced in the Engagements of December 23, 1814 and January 8, 1815, constituting the Battle of New Orleans" consists of a projection by D. G. W. Ricketts of the above Latour Map on the present landscape (Figure II-7). This 1935 map has been demonstrated to be inaccurate in respect to the relationship between the present course of the river and the location of former standing structures, and it is utilized here only to demonstrate that the Chalmette Plantation structural complex is downriver from the present park area.

4) Zimpel's 1834 "Topographical Map of New Orleans" (Figure II-3) has been shown to be extremely accurate. This map was utilized to locate archeological remains at both the New Orleans General Hospital Site and the Elmwood Site. In both cases, the placement of the structures, as well as their relative size, was demonstrated to be accurate within a few feet. However, the section of the map showing the Chalmette area is shown drawn at a smaller scale than that used for the above-mentioned sites. Consequently, it is likely that the map is less reliable for predicting former structure locations in the park.

5) The Mississippi River Commission Map (Figure II-4) from the 1870s (as updated in 1893-94) was also utilized to provide locational information at the Elmwood Site. The placement of the structures with respect to one another was found to be fairly accurate; however, the actual sizes of the structures shown on the map are incorrect. These difficulties are the result of the small scale of the map.

6) Both the 1837 and 1867 d'Hémécourt plats (Figures II-8, II-11) can be relied upon as fairly accurate surveys. However, most of the structural improvements extant in the park area during the 1860s are not shown on the 1867 plat. Nonetheless, they should provide accurate representations of parcel boundaries.

7) A number of the maps included in this report are twentieth-century surveys for levee setbacks (Figures II-6, II-18, II-19). As such, they can be considered extremely accurate, and their relatively large scale increases their reliability. They also include presently extant landmarks which allow them to be tied into the present landscape.

8) The "Plan of Proposed Shell Road at Chalmette Monument Ground" (Figure II-5) apparently is an accurate survey of the early twentieth-century features of this parcel.

9) The map of the "Chalmette Back Levee District" (Figure II-14) is taken from a USGS quad map and thus is based on aerial photographs. The accuracy of this map, therefore, should be good.

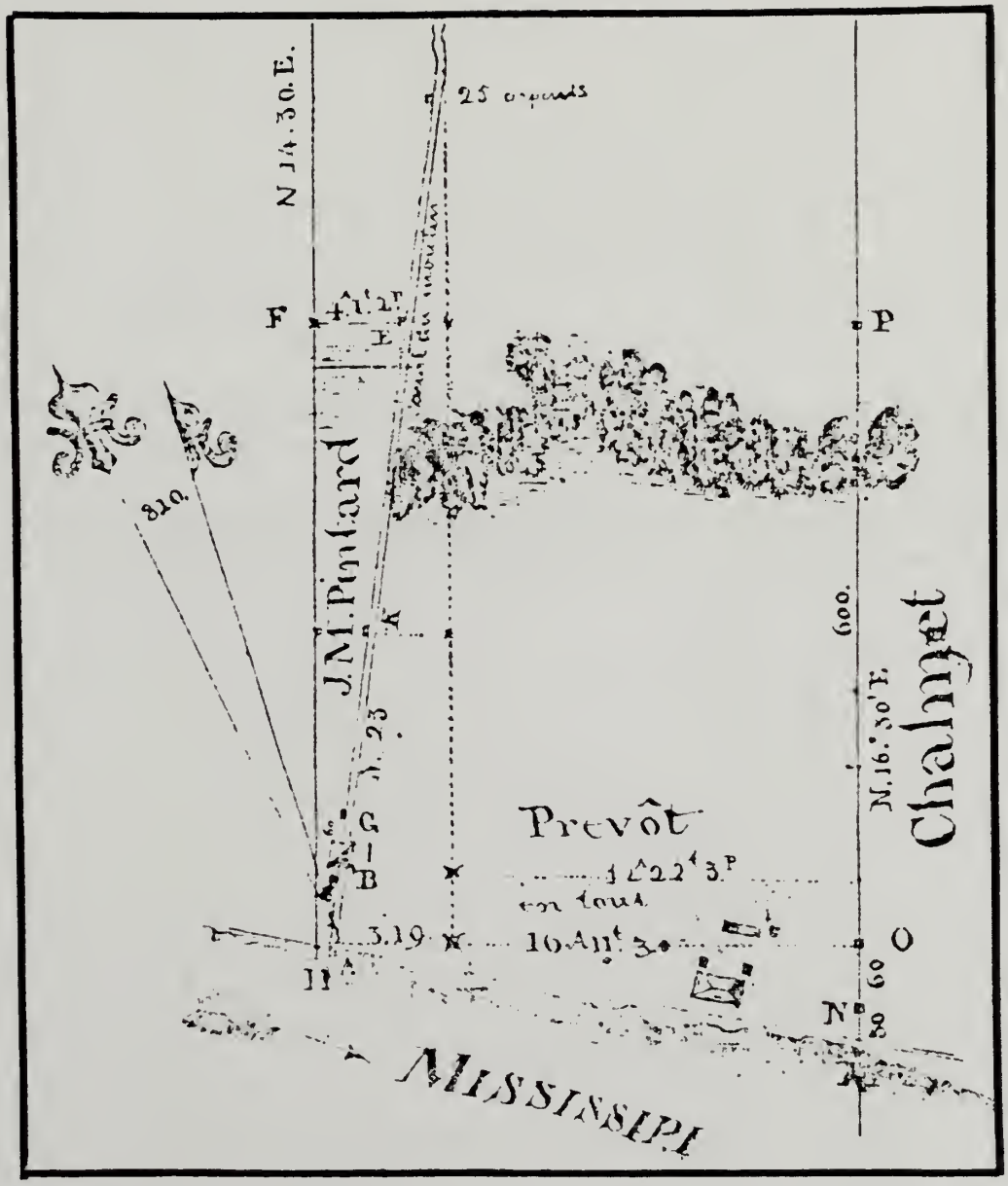
10) Several of the maps used herein include no structural information; rather, they merely illustrate property boundaries and landownership (Figures II-10, II-13, II-15, II-16, II-17, I-20). These maps are accurate for their purpose and should be helpful for delineating areas of high probability.

A cautionary note should be interjected here. First, time, space, and financial constraints necessitated the redrawing and rescaling of several maps (Figures II-2, II-3, II-8, II-9, II-10, II-11, II-12, II-15, II-20). The fact that these have been submitted to a second drafting reduces their accuracy somewhat. Since most of these maps are drawn on a small scale, any additional error, however slight, can drastically affect the maps' reliability for predicting the locations of structural remains. Consequently, copies of the original maps should be obtained and utilized whenever possible. Also, several of the maps (Figures II-5, II-6, II-7, II-12, II-14, II-18, II-20) were obtained from microfilm copies, which also affects the scale of the maps. In all cases where the scales of the maps appeared questionable as a result of map reduction or enlargement, the scales were redrawn utilizing measurements from smaller scale surveys. Finally, while many of the above maps may seem accurate upon inspection, the actual utility of each map remains unknown until tested against the archeological record.

The properties investigated here include two distinct plantations: the Rodriguez Plantation, on which the Chalmette Monument and property to the west of the Rodriguez Canal presently are located; and the Chalmet Plantation, the present location of land east of the canal up to and including the Chalmette National Military Cemetery. Because the Chalmet Plantation was first subdivided in 1832, these subdivided parcels are discussed individually after that date. Finally, the archeological implications of the results of this historical research effort are discuss

Figure II-1. Barthélémy Lafon's 1808 survey of the Jean Baptiste Prevost property, which later became the westernmost sixteen arpents of the Chalmet Plantation; and the J. M. Pintard property, which became the Rodriguez Estate. Plan by Barthélémy Lafon, 1808, attached to Michel de Armas, June 14, 1813.

Courtesy New Orleans Notarial Archives.



0 100 200 300 400 toises

Figure II-2. Redrawn detail of A. Lacarrière Latour's "Plan of the Attack and Defence of the American Lines below New Orleans on the 8th January, 1815."

Drawn by R. Christopher Goodwin and Associates, Inc., from a copy of Latour's map in the Chalmette Unit, Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve.

N
Chalmet Plantation
Rodriguez Plantation
Macarty Plantation
MISSISSIPPI
RIVER
0 20 40 60 80 100 yards

Figure II-3. Redrawn detail of Charles F. Zimpel's 1834 "Topographical Map of New Orleans and its Vicinity."

Drawn by R. Christopher Goodwin and Associates, Inc., from a copy of Zimpel's map in the Louisiana Map Collection, Special Collections, Tulane University.

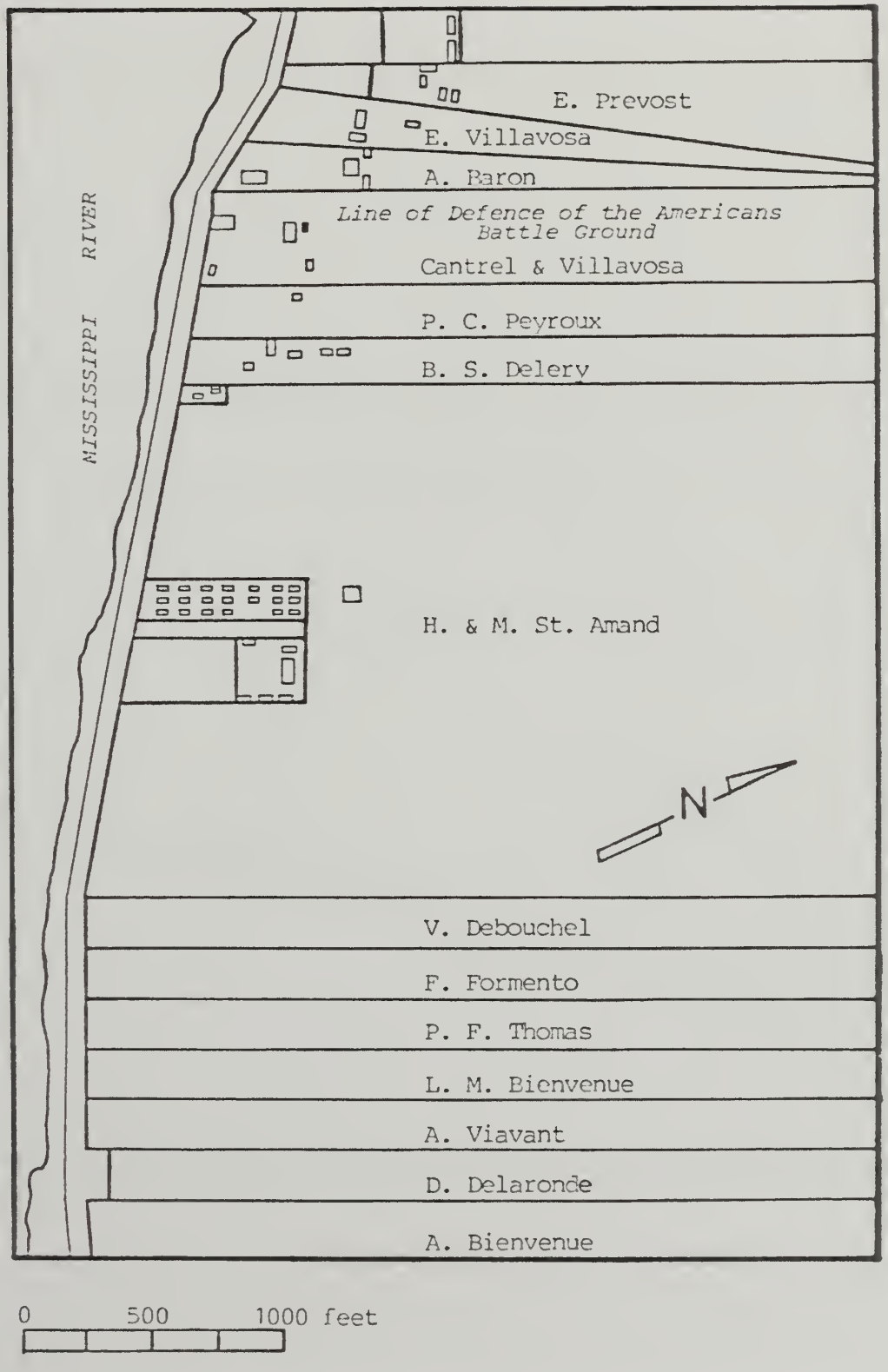

E. Prevost
E. Villavosa
A. Baron
Line of Defence of the Americans
Battle Ground
Cantrel & Villavosa
P. C. Peyroux
B. S. Delery
MISSISSIPPI RIVER
H. & M. St. Amand
N
V. Debouchel
F. Formento
P. F. Thomas
L. M. Bienvenue
A. Viavant
D. Delaronde
A. Bienvenue
0
500
1000 feet

Figure II-4. Detail of the 1874 Mississippi River Commission Map "Mississippi River, Chart No. 76 (as updated in 1893-94)."

Courtesy of the Louisiana Map Collection, Special Collections, Tulane University.

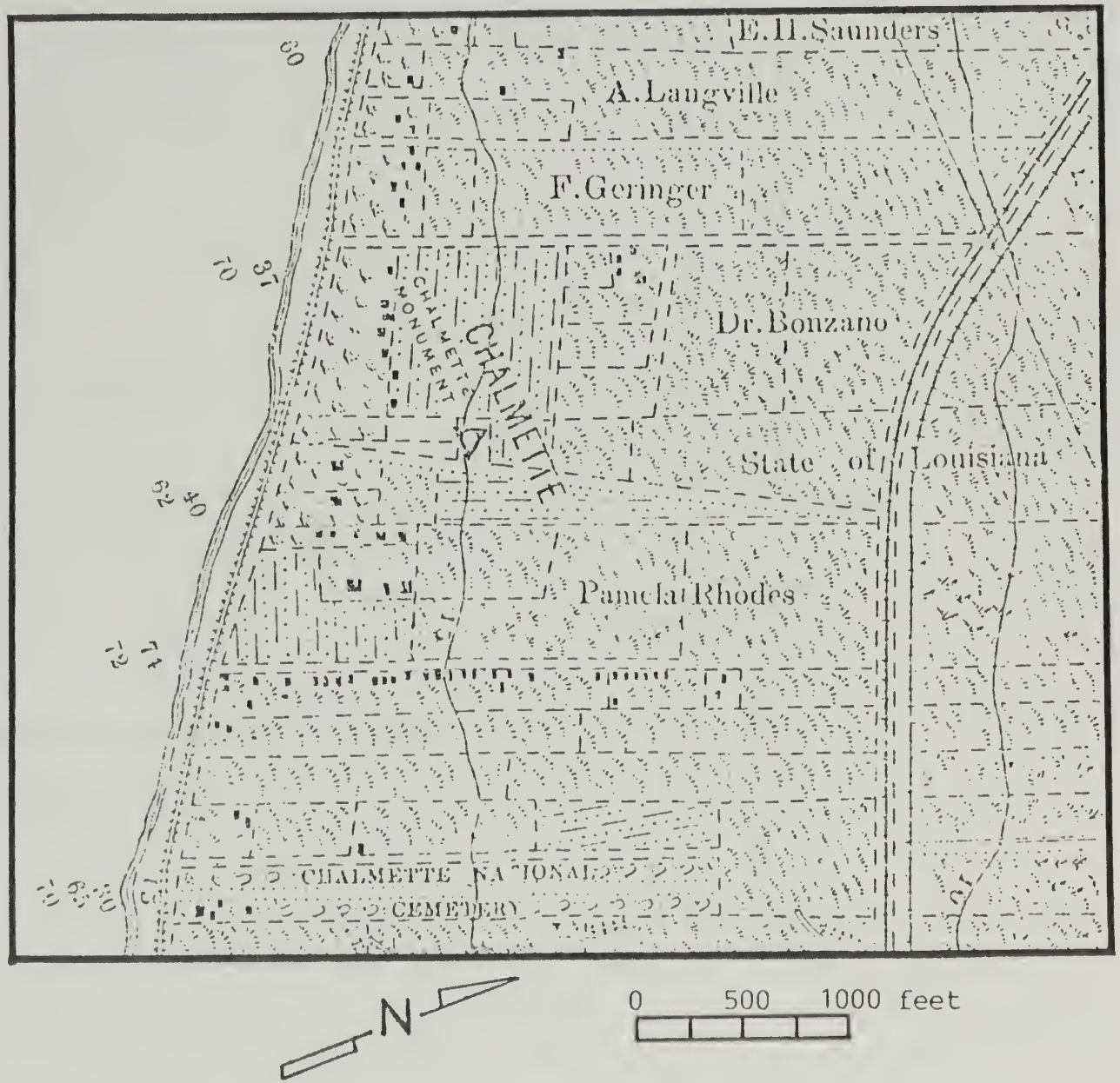

E.H.Saunders
A.Langville
F.Geringer
Dr.Bonzano
State of Louisiana
Pamela Rhodes
CHALMETTE MONUMENT
CHALMETTE
CHALMETTE NATIONAL
CEMETERY
N
0 500 1000 feet

Figure II-5. "Plan of Proposed Shell Road at the Chalmette Monument Ground, New Orleans, Louisiana, December 24, 1909."

Courtesy of the Office of Public Works, State of Louisiana, Baton Rouge, Louisiana.

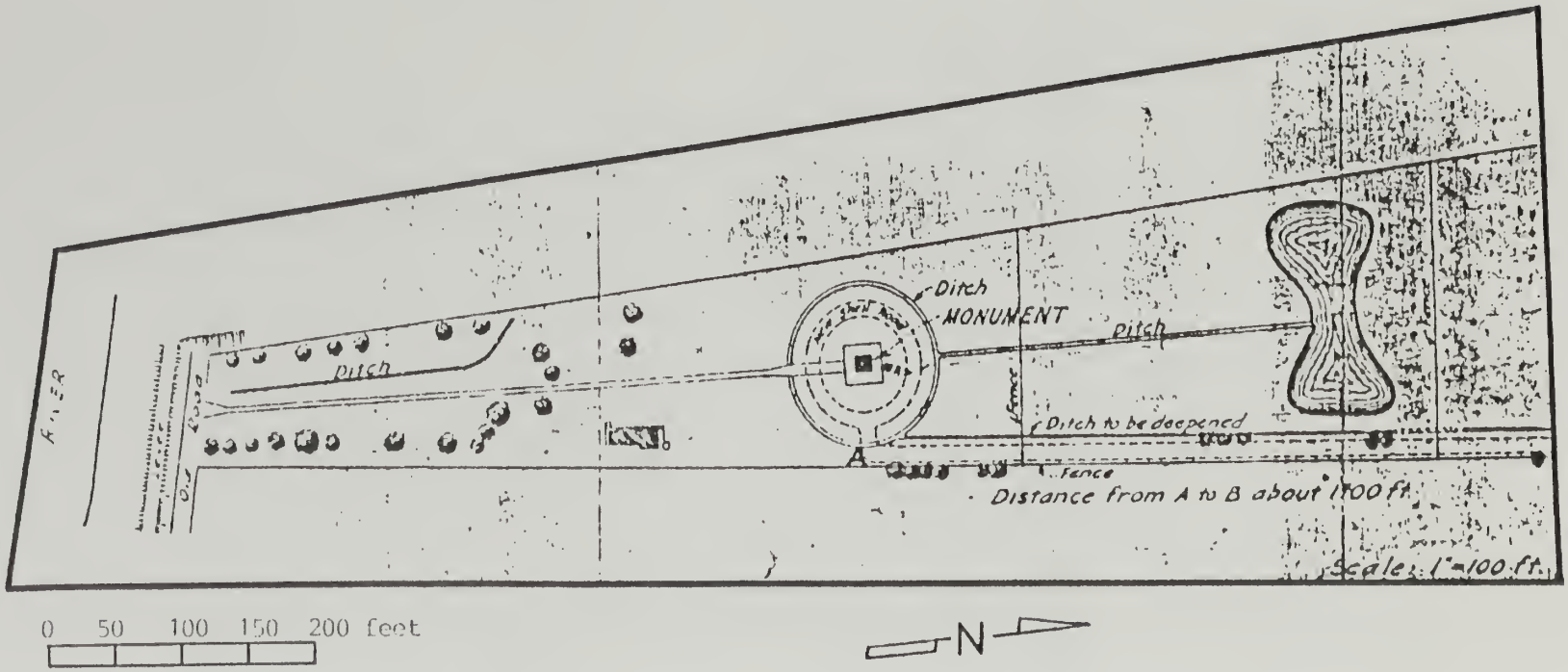

RIVER
Ditch
MONUMENT
Ditch
Ditch
Ditch to be deepened
Fence
Fence
A
Distance from A to B about 1100 ft.
Scale: 1" = 100 ft.
0 50 100 150 200 feet
N

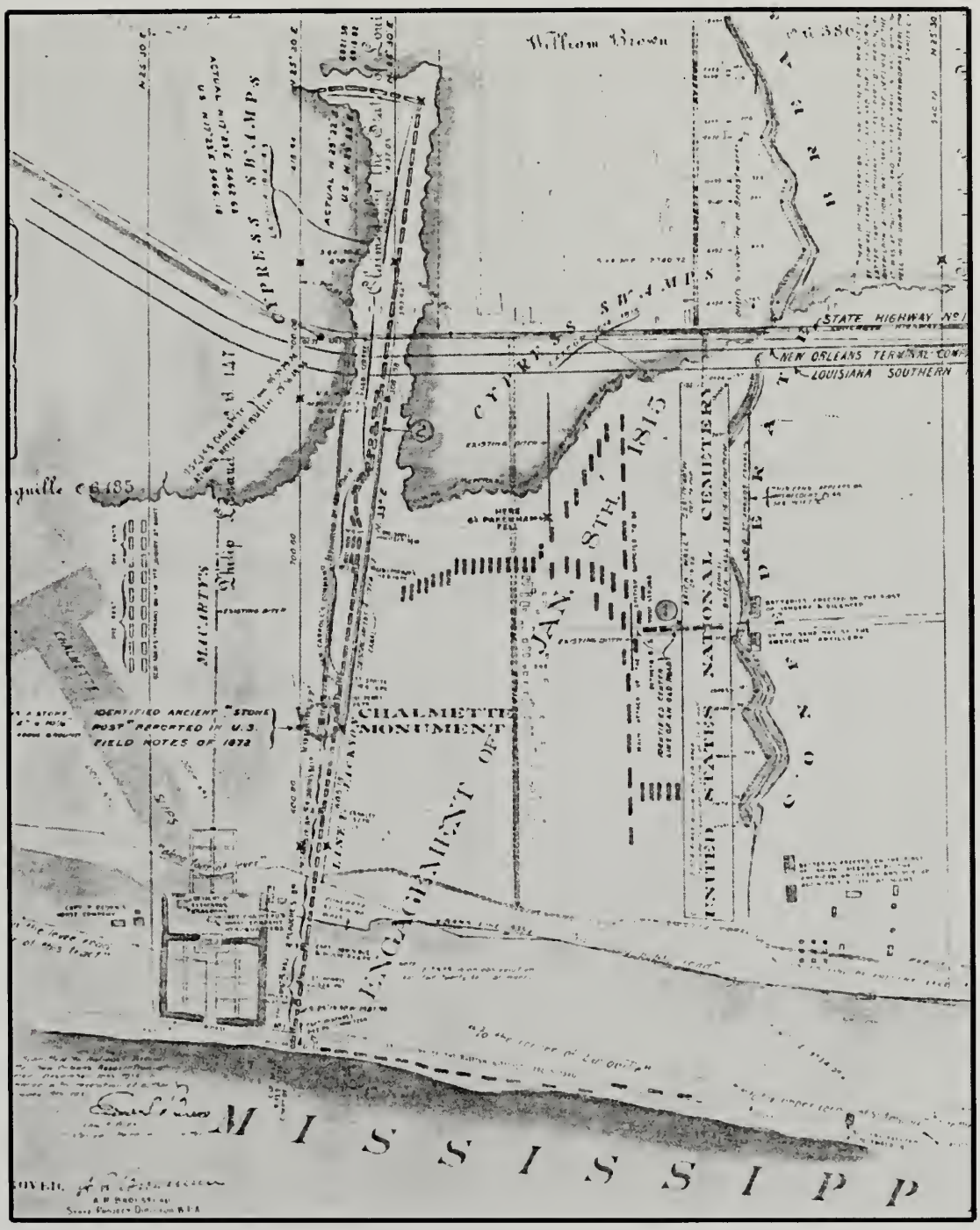
Figure II-6. Untitled 1940 levee setback map of the riverfront of the Chalmette Monument, St. Bernard Parish.

Courtesy of the Office of Public Works, State of Louisiana, Baton Rouge, Louisiana.

LAFAYETTE MONUMENT
House
Bourgeard's Home
Shell Road
Road Slope
Bank Line
Conc. Bulkhead
M I S S I S S I P P I
R I V E
N

Figure II-7. D. G. W. Ricketts's "Map of Survey of the Battlefield Embraced in the Engagements Fought on December 23, 1814, and January 8, 1815 Constituting the Battle of New Orleans Showing the Positions of the Opposing Forces," 1935.

Courtesy of the Office of Public Works, State of Louisiana, Baton Rouge, Louisiana. Layout and enhancements by Judy Kesler, National Park Service.



N

Scale approximate and based on original Map

0 500 1000 1500

Feet

Figure II-8. Redrawn detail of Allou d'Hémécourt's 1867 "Plat of the Battleground Plantations."

Drawn by R. Christopher Goodwin and Associates, Inc., from a copy of d'Hémécourt's map at theChalmette Unit, Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve.

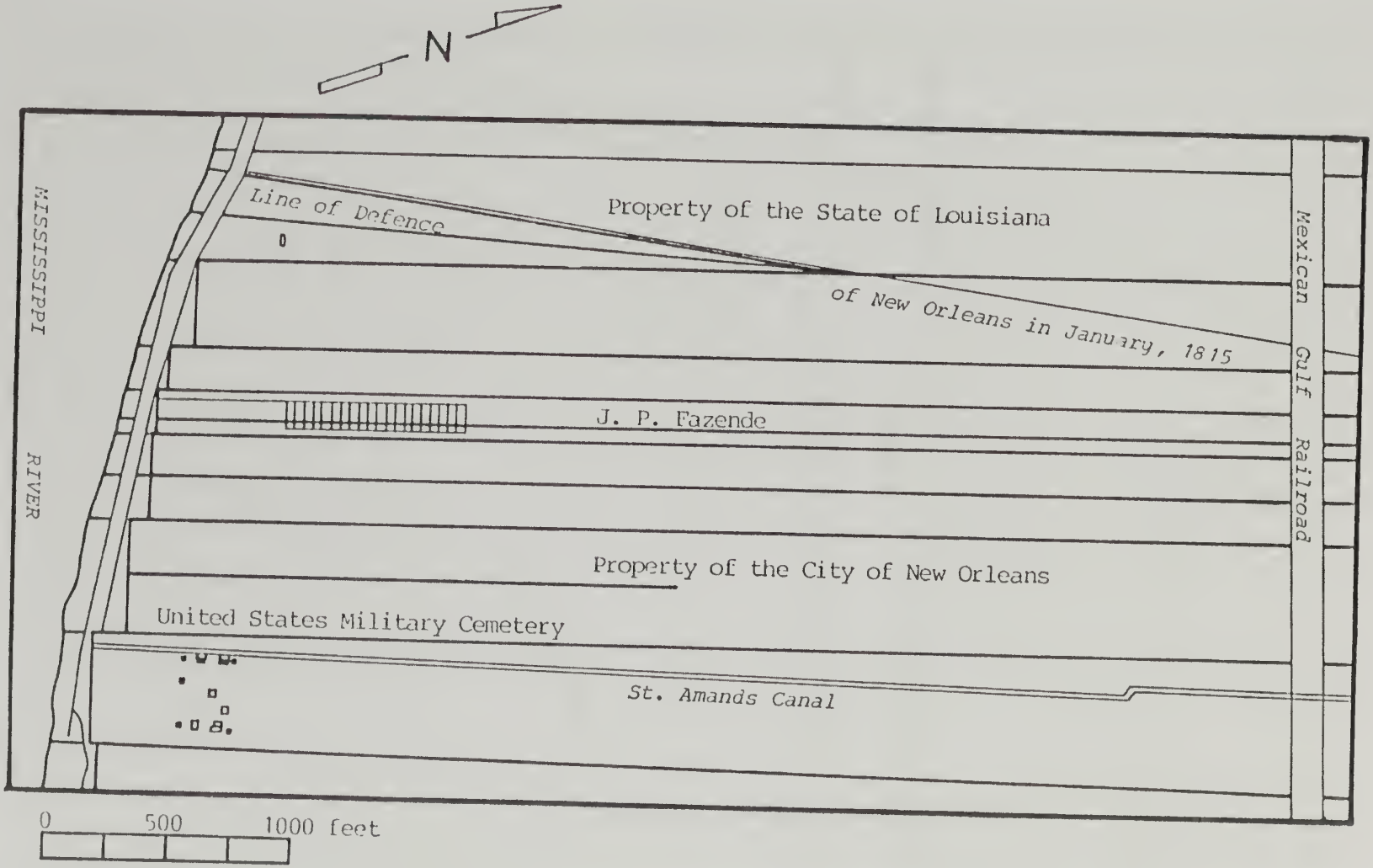

N
MISSISSIPPI
RIVER
Line of Defence
Property of the State of Louisiana
of New Orleans in January, 1815
J. P. Fazende
Property of the City of New Orleans
United States Military Cemetery
St. Amands Canal
Mexican Gulf Railroad
0
500
1000 feet

Figure II-9. Artist's reconstruction of a missing 1831 "Plan of the Subdivision of the St. Amand Plantation" by Allou d'Hémécourt.

Drawn by R. Christopher Goodwin and Associates, Inc. Original once attached to C. Pollock, April 10, 1832, New Orleans Notarial Archives.

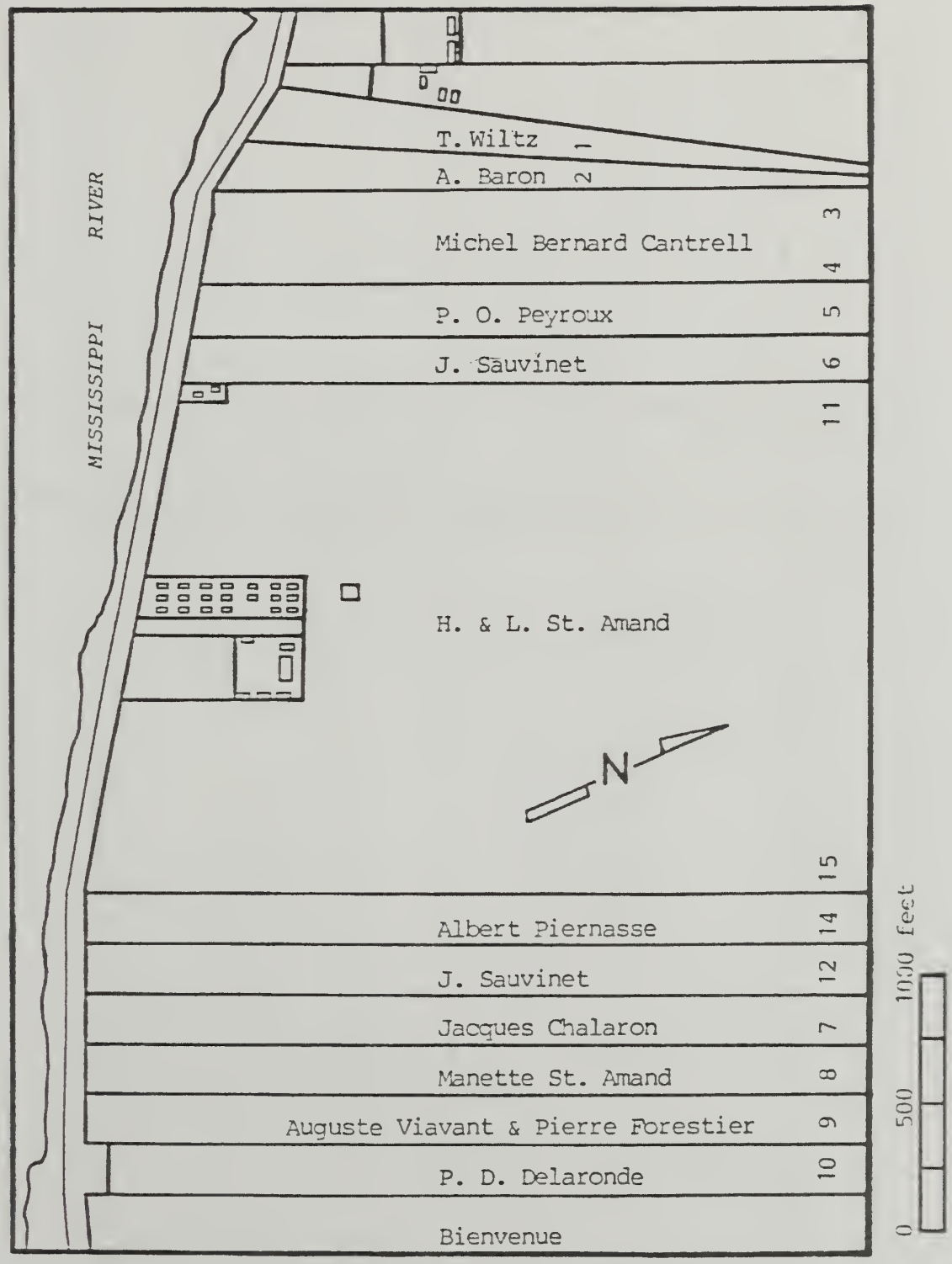

MISSISSIPPI RIVER
T. Wiltz 1
A. Baron 2
Michel Bernard Cantrell 3 4
P. O. Peyroux 5
J. Sauvinet 6
11
H. & L. St. Amand
N
15
Albert Piernasse 14
J. Sauvinet 12
Jacques Chalaron 7
Manette St. Amand 8
Auguste Viavant & Pierre Forestier 9
P. D. Delaronde 10
Bienvenue
0 500 1000 feet

Figure II-10. Redrawn detail of Allou d'Hémécourt's 1841 "Plan of the Louis St. Amand Plantation."

Drawn by R. Christopher Goodwin and Associates, Inc., from the d'Hémécourt plan attached to C. V. Toulon, December 13, 1841, New Orleans Notarial Archives.

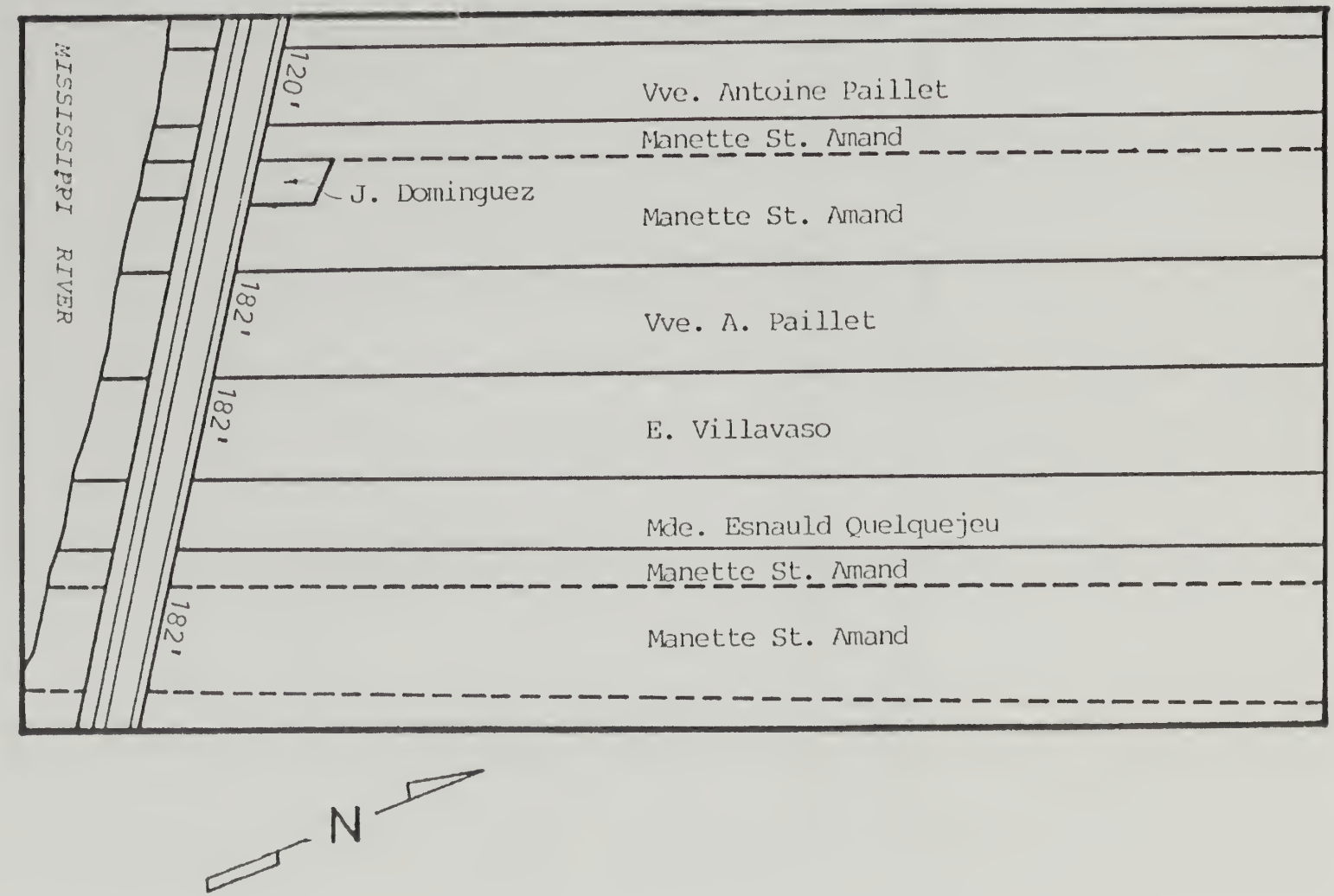

MISSISSIPPI RIVER
120'
182'
182'
182'
Vve. Antoine Paillet
Manette St. Amand
J. Dominguez
Manette St. Amand
Vve. A. Paillet
E. Villavaso
Mde. Esnauld Quelquejeu
Manette St. Amand
Manette St. Amand
N

Figure II-11. Redrawn detail of Allou d'Hémécourt's 1837 "Plan of the St. Amand Plantation."

Drawn by R. Christopher Goodwin and Associates, Inc., from d'Hémécourt's map in Plan Book 79, p. 6, New Orleans Notarial Archives.

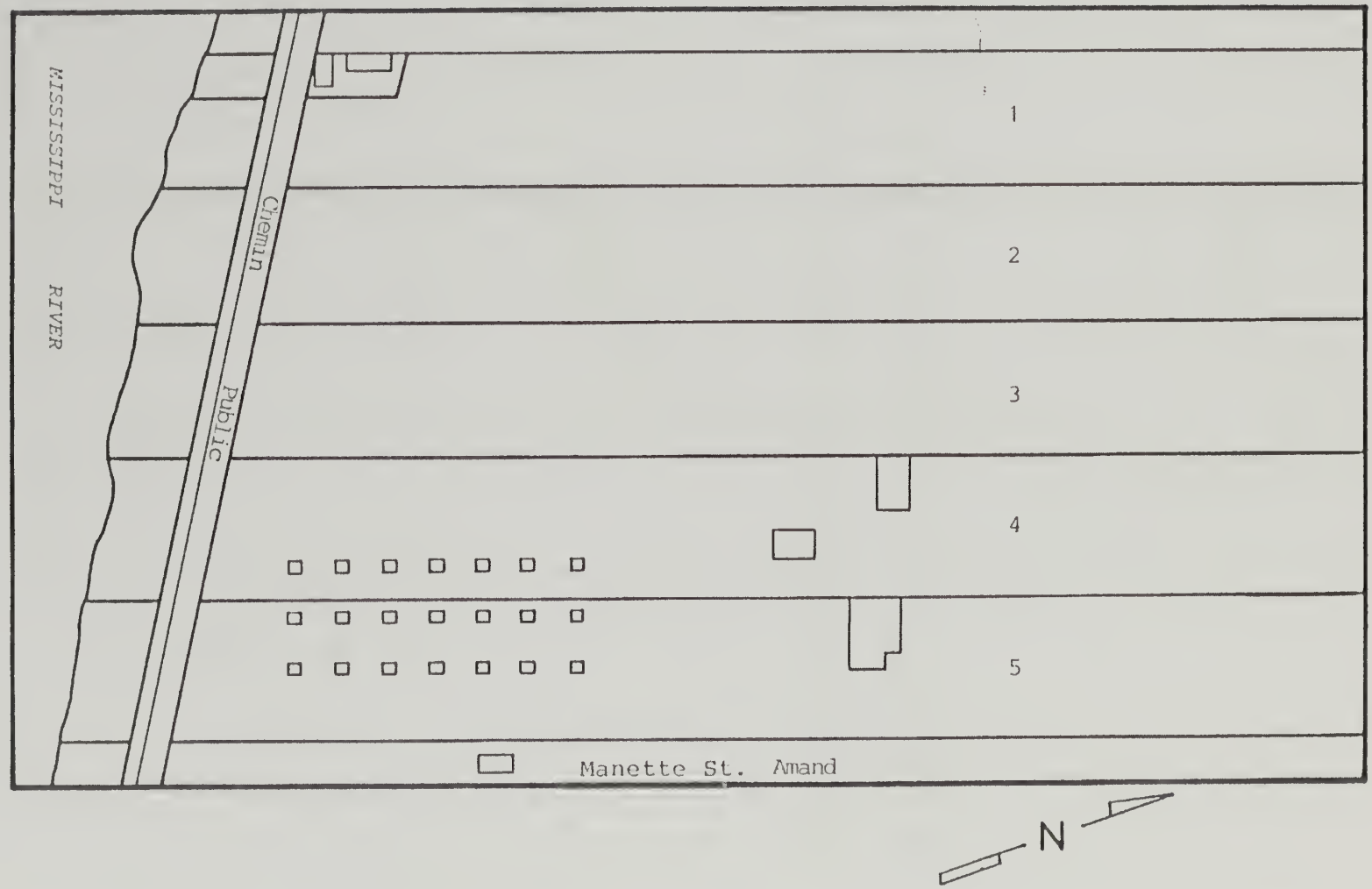

MISSISSIPPI RIVER
Chemin Public
1
2
3
4
5
Manette St. Amand
N

Figure II-12. Redrawn detail of the 1927 map entitled "Chalmette Cemetery Survey," Mississippi River Commission, Lake Borgne Levee District.

Drawn by R. Christopher Goodwin and Associates, Inc., from the original in the Office of Public Works, State of Louisiana, Baton Rouge, Louisiana.

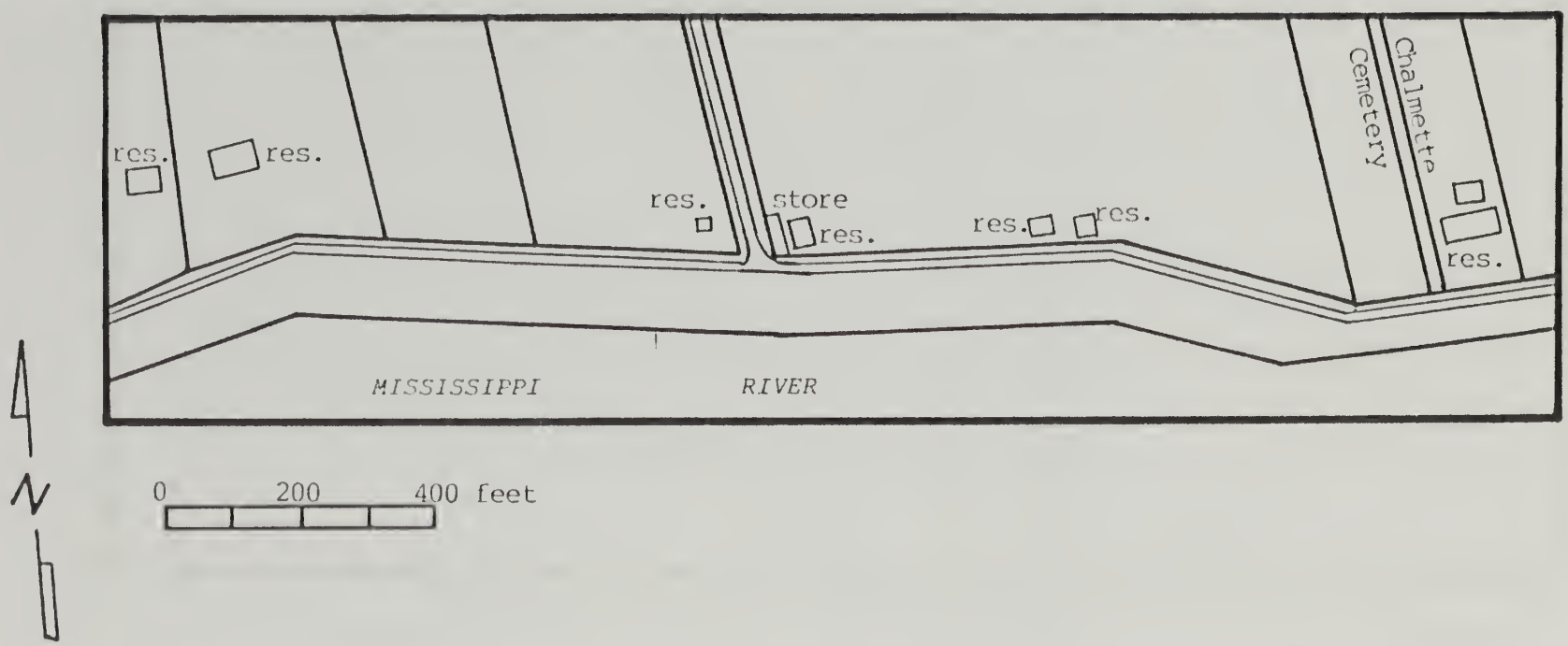
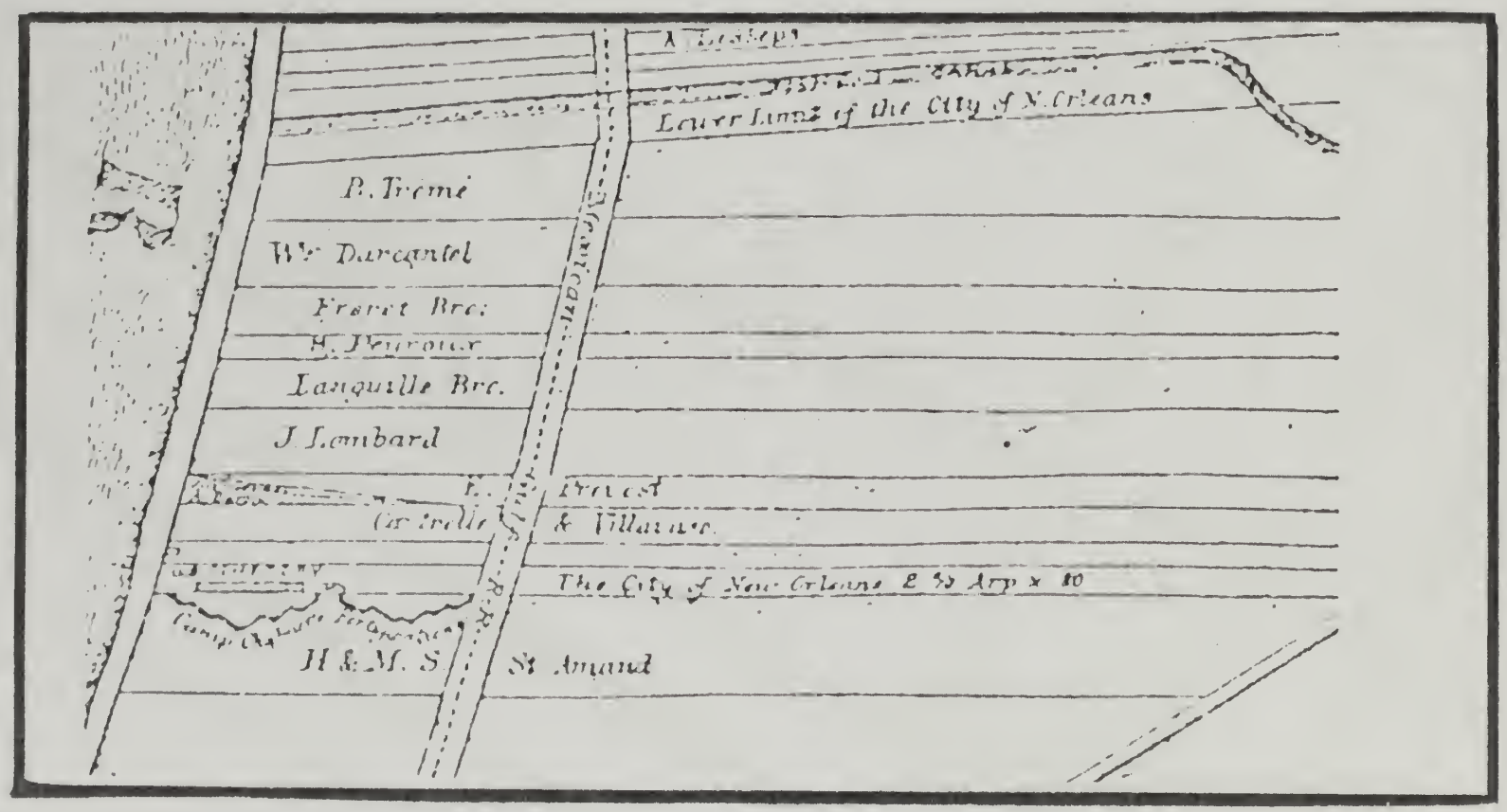
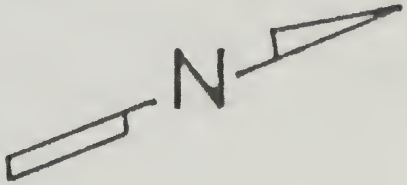

res.
res.
res.
store
res.
res.
res.
Cemetery
Chalmette
res.
MISSISSIPPI
RIVER
N
0
200
400 feet

Figure II-13. Detail from the 1867 map "New Plan of the City and Environs of New Orleans, Jefferson and Carrolton."

Courtesy Louisiana Map Collection, Special Collections, Tulane University.

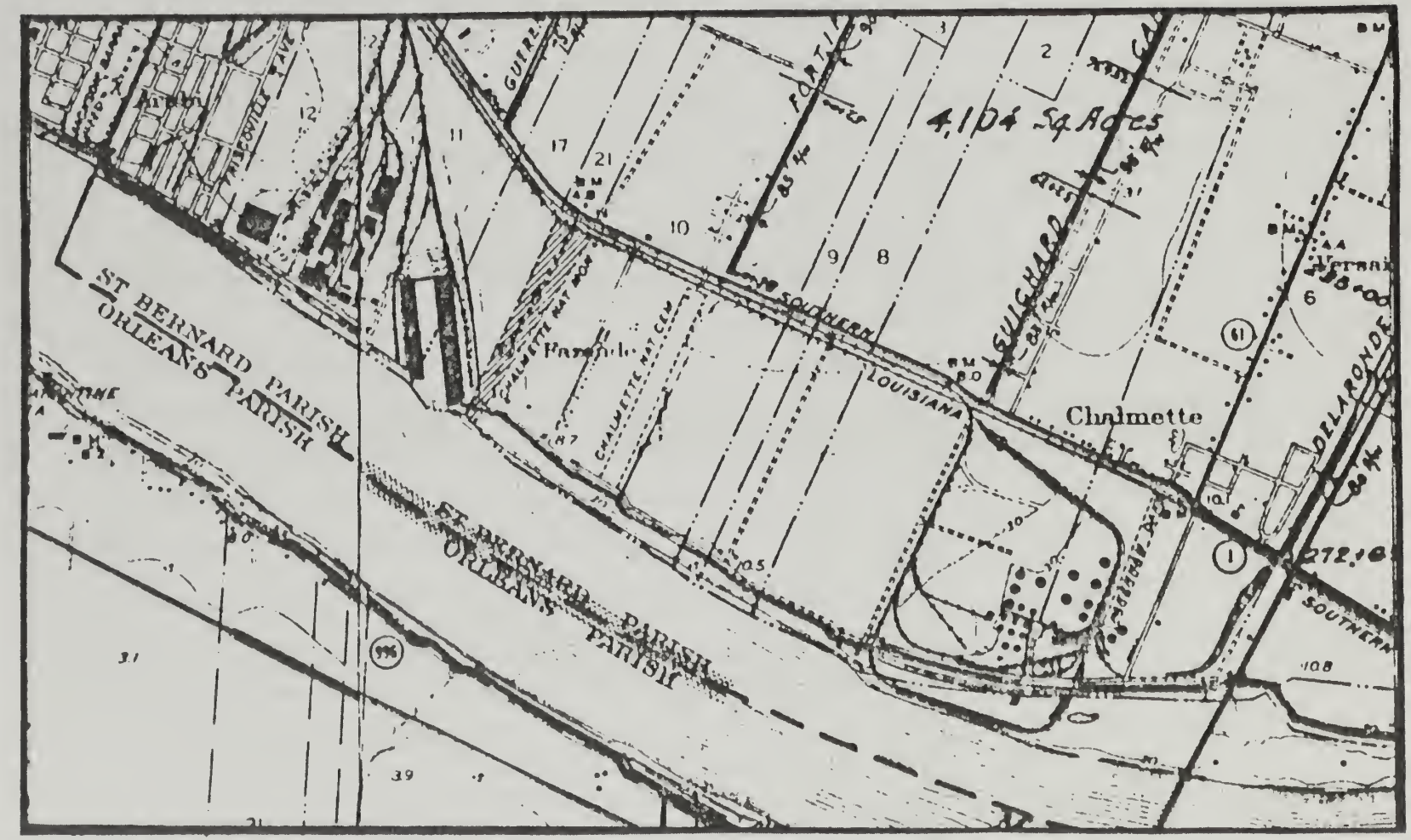




0 1500 3000 feet

Figure II-14. "Map of Chalmette Back Levee District, March 1949."

Courtesy of the Office of Public Works, State of Louisiana, Baton Rouge, Louisiana.



0 1000 2000 3000 feet

Figure II-15. Redrawn detail of Edgar Pilié's "Plan of Fazende Property," which was based on d'Hémécourt's plan of the same land area in 1878.

Drawn by R. Christopher Goodwin and Associates, Inc., from an original plan attached to the Notarial Act of C. Theard, November 16, 1888, New Orleans Notarial Archives.

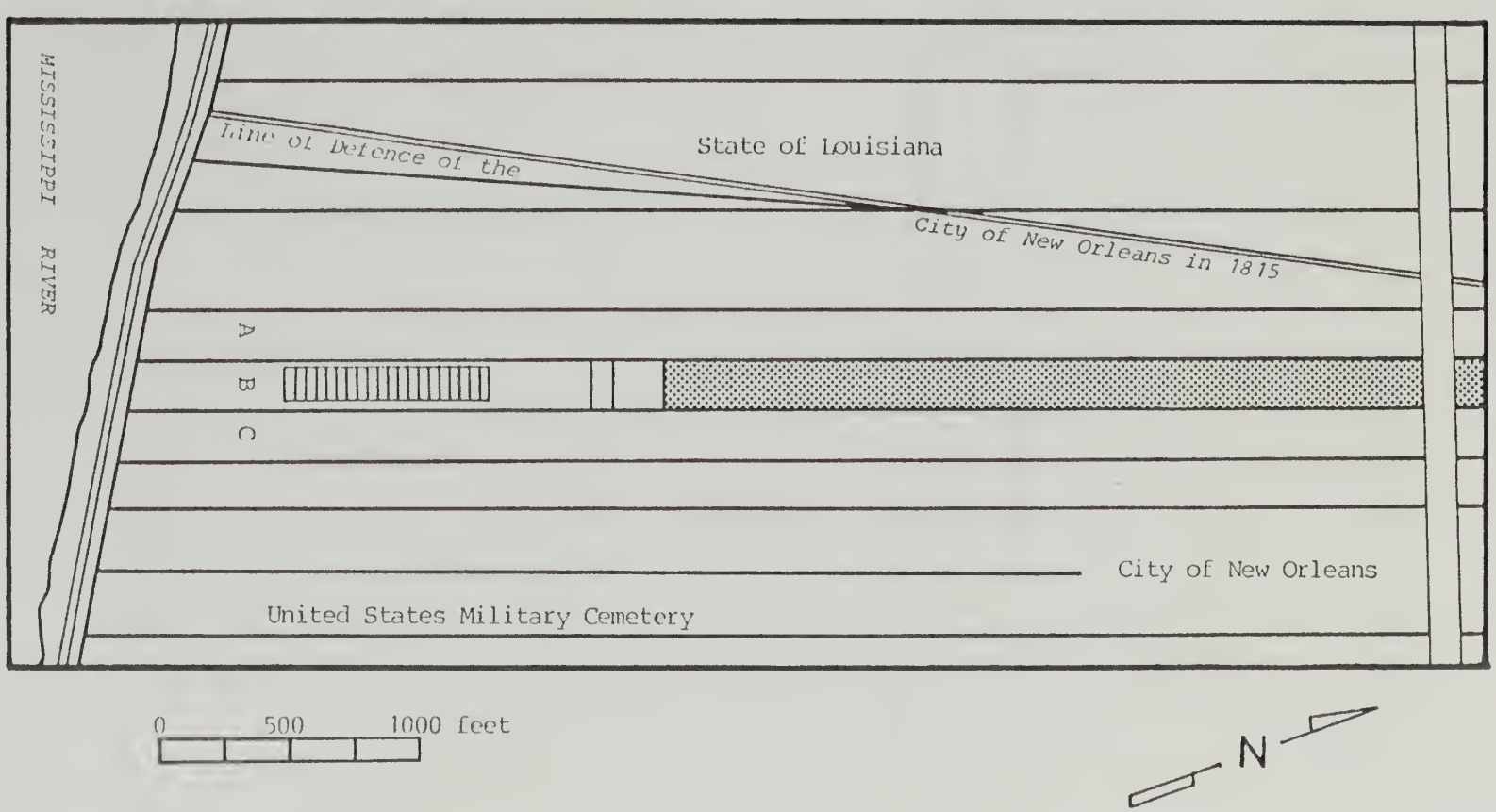

MISSISSIPPI RIVER
Line of Defence of the
State of Louisiana
City of New Orleans in 1815
A
B
C
City of New Orleans
United States Military Cemetery
0
500
1000 feet
N

Figure II-16. "Plan of the Fazendeville Area, Chalmette National Historical Park, 1963."

Chalmette Unit, Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve.

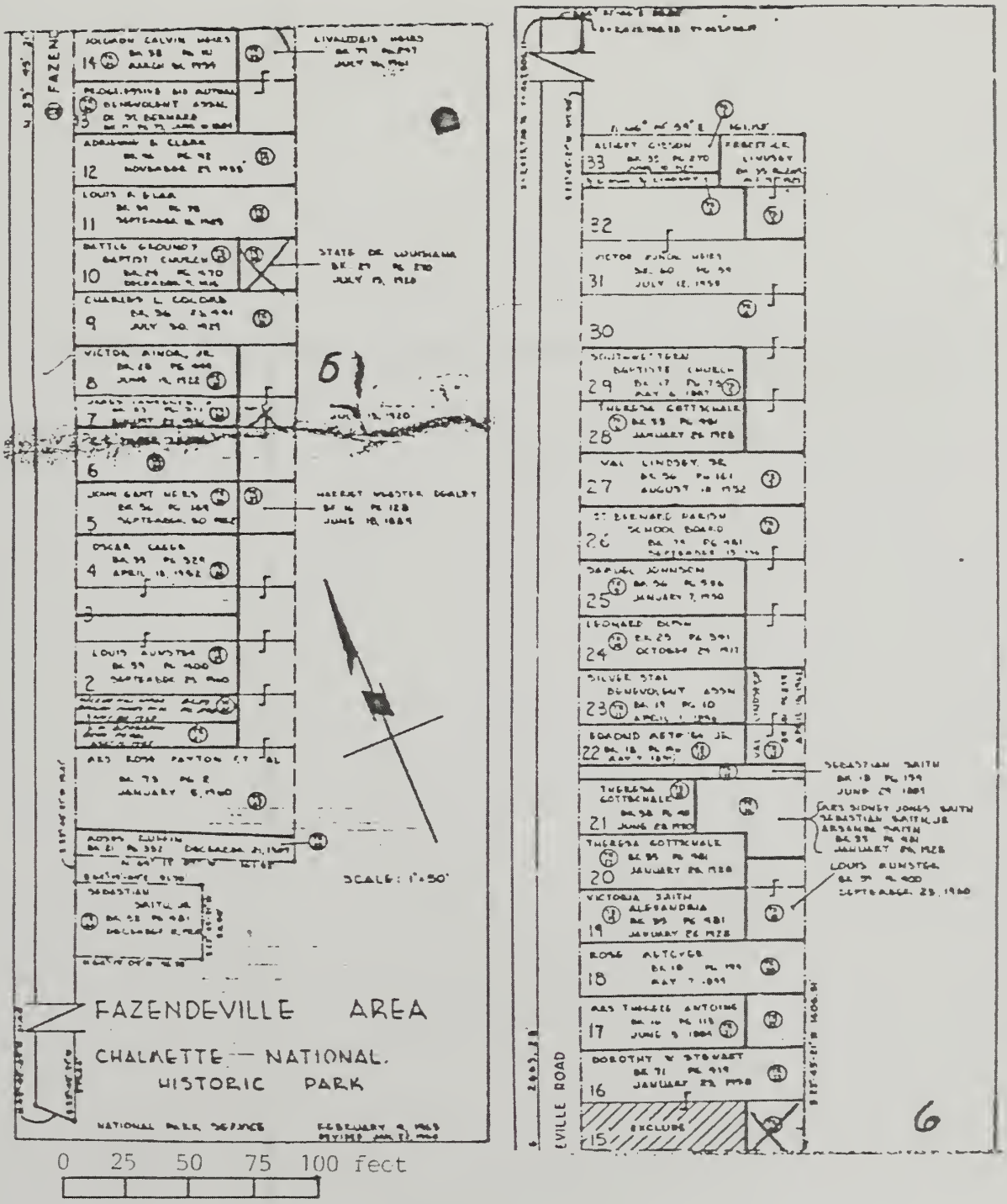
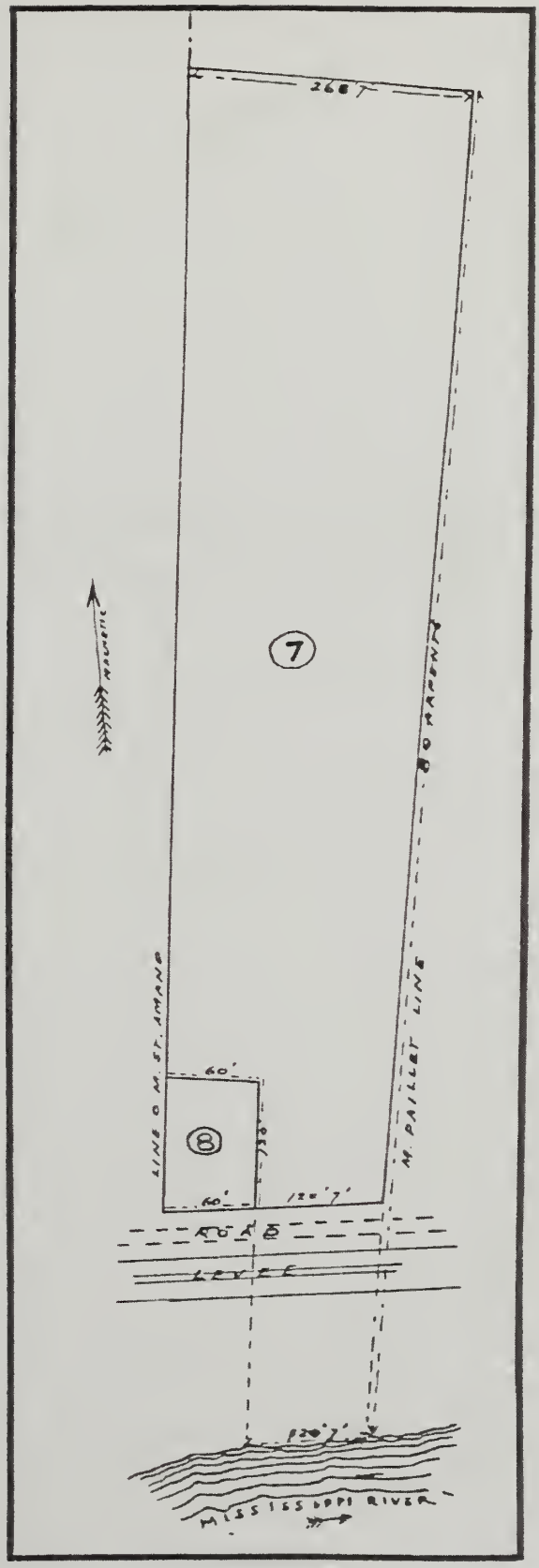

FAZENDEVILLE AREA
CHALMETTE — NATIONAL
HISTORIC PARK
SCALE: 1"=50'
0 25 50 75 100 feet
61
6

Figure II-17. Plan of the Battle Ground Plantation, J. L. Hardee, 1896, attached to H. C. Leake, Sept. 21, 1896.

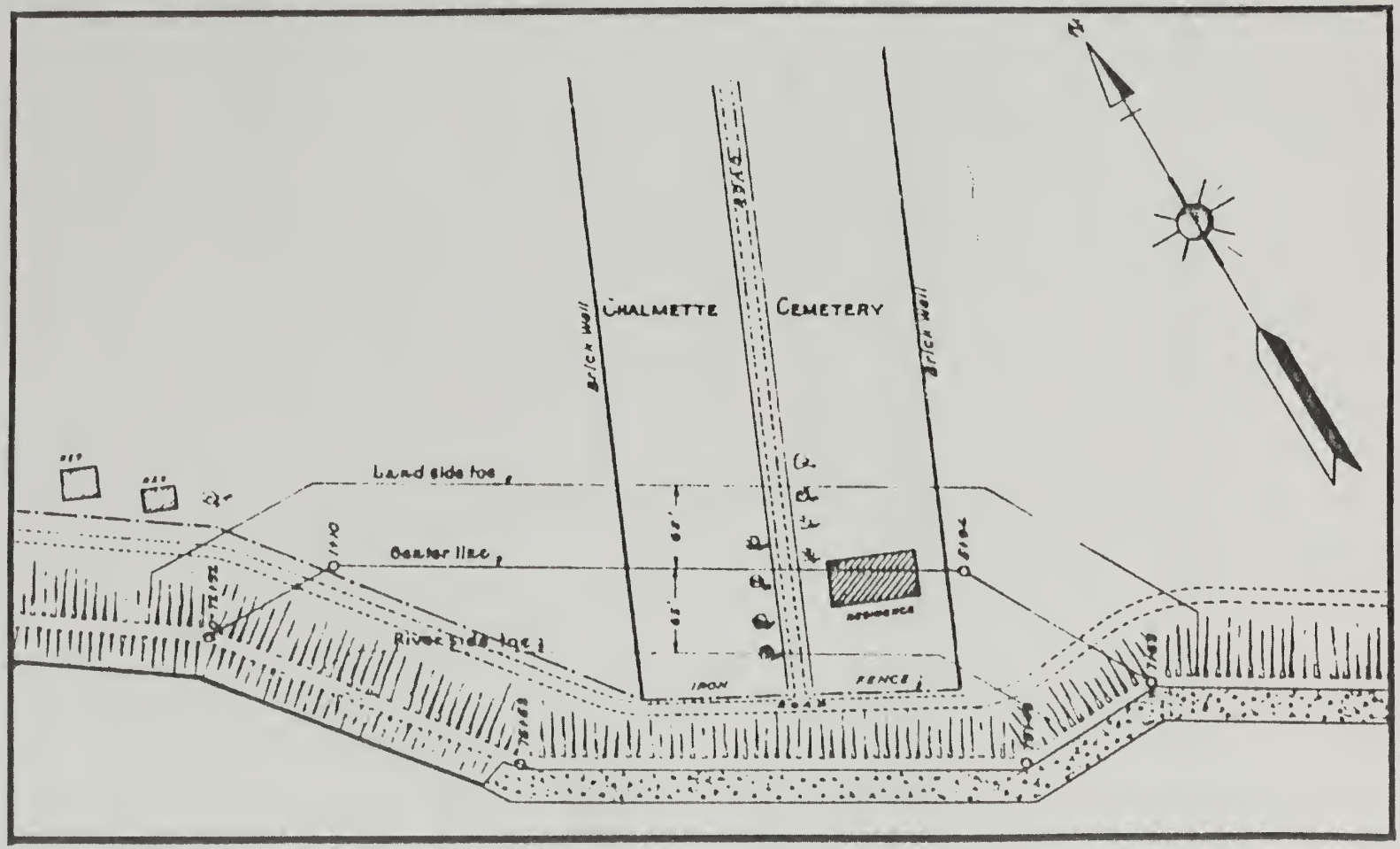
Courtesy New Orleans Notarial Archives.



268'
7
LINE O M. ST. AMAND
M. PAILLET LINE
60'
8
60'
120'7'
ROAD
LEVEE
120'7'
MISSISSIPPI RIVER

Figure II-18. "Chalmette Cemetery New Levee." Levee setback map dated 1927.

Courtesy of the Office of Public Works, State of Louisiana, Baton Rouge, Louisiana.



0 125 250 feet

Figure II-19. Excerpt of a 1928 levee setback map, "Chalmette Cemetery New Levee," showing the area of land impacted during the construction of the U.S. Chalmette Cemetery New Levee.

Courtesy of the Office of Public Works, State of Louisiana, Baton Rouge, Louisiana.

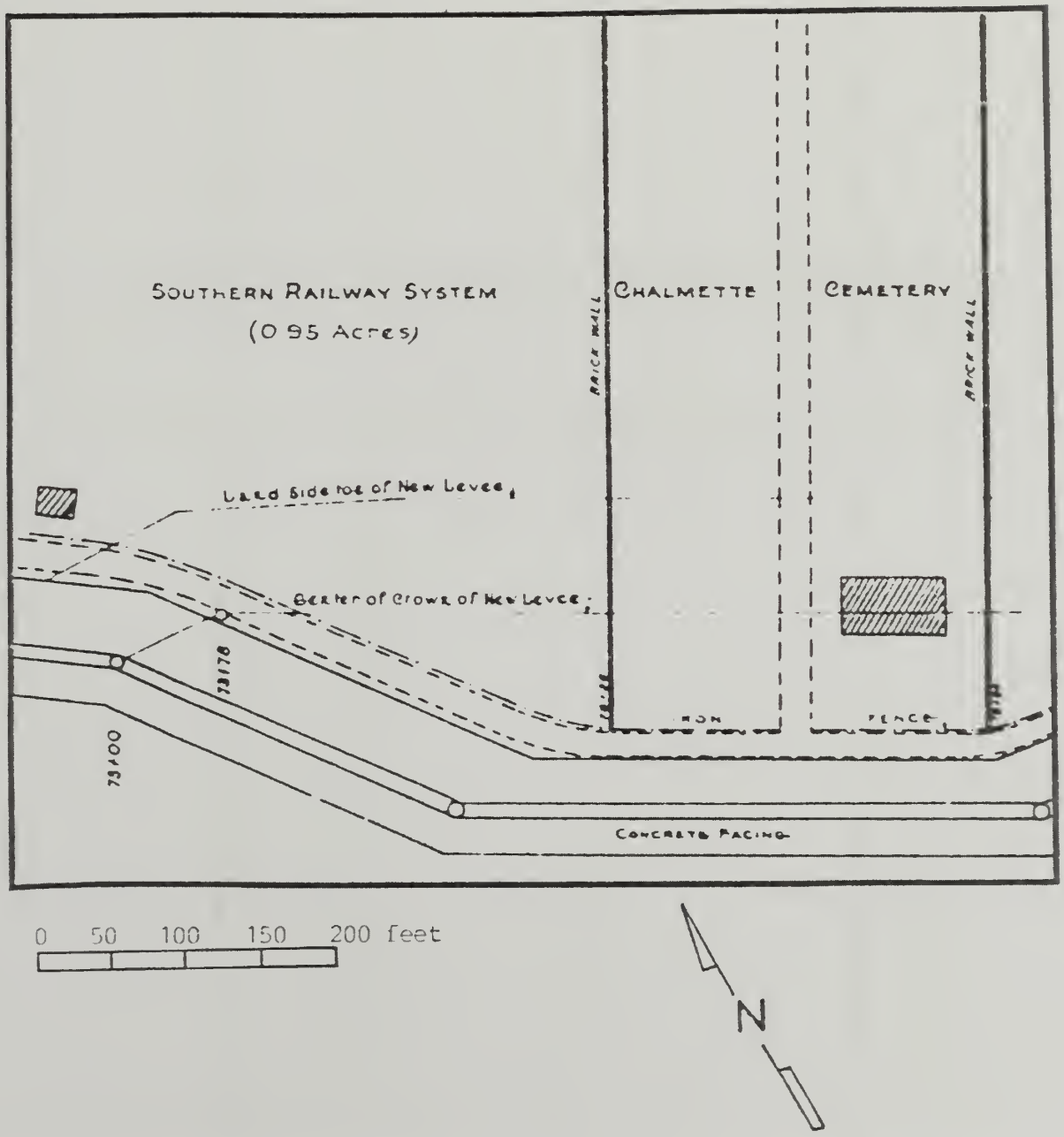
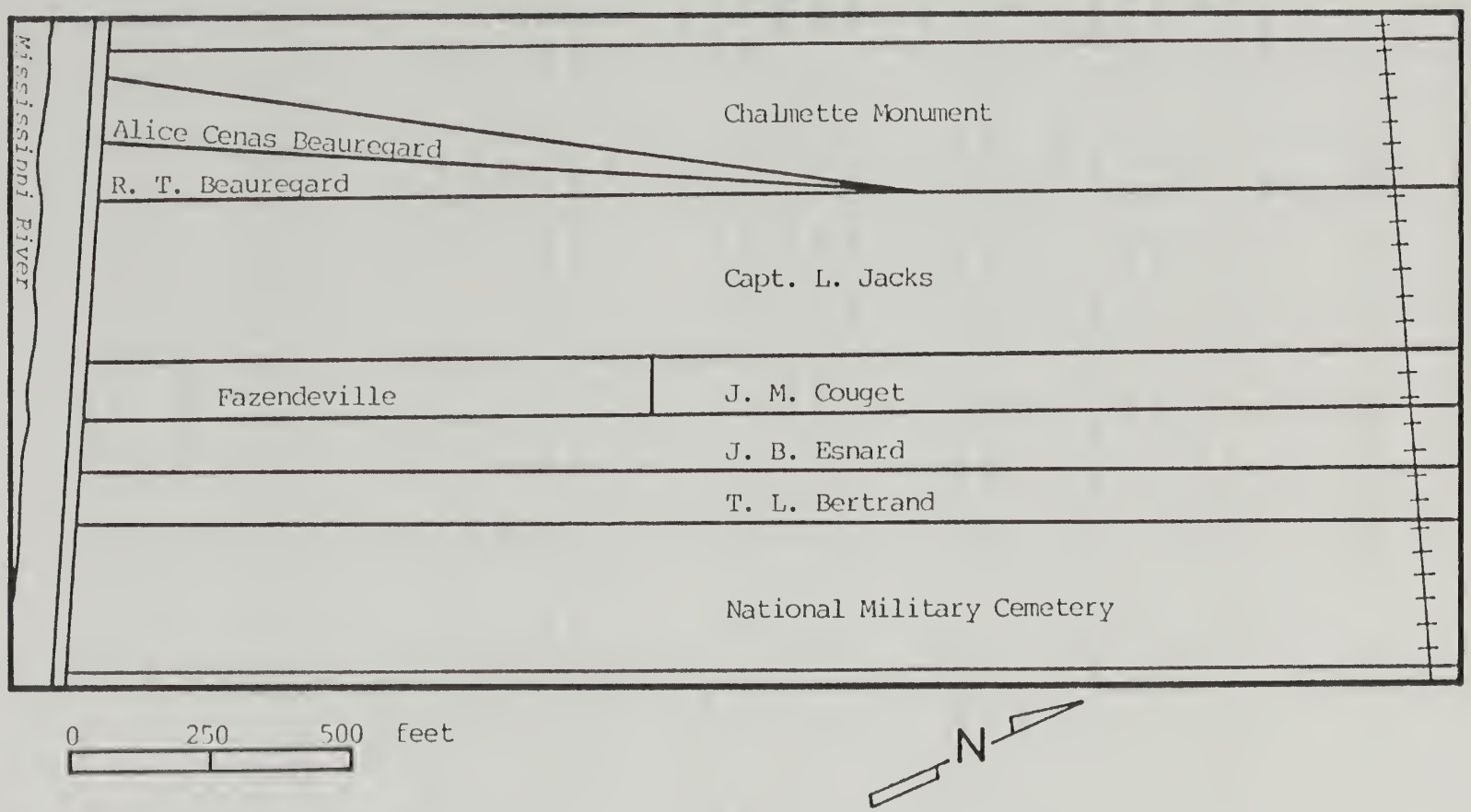

SOUTHERN RAILWAY SYSTEM
(0.95 Acres)
CHALMETTE
CEMETERY
BRICK WALL
BRICK WALL
Land Side toe of New Levee
Center of Crown of New Levee
73+78
73+00
IRON
FENCE
CONCRETE PACING
0 50 100 150 200 feet
N

Figure II-20. Redrawn detail of the 1902 plat attached to the "New Orleans Terminal Co. vs. Anna Jacks McMillan, et al.," No. 601, Twenty-Ninth Judicial District Court.

Redrawn by R. Christopher Goodwin and Associates, Inc., from the original in the St. Bernard Parish Courthouse.


Mississippi River
Chalmette Monument
Alice Cenas Beauregard
R. T. Beauregard
Capt. L. Jacks
Fazendeville
J. M. Couget
J. B. Esnard
T. L. Bertrand
National Military Cemetery
0
250
500
feet
N

CHAPTER 11

THE RODRIGUEZ PLANTATION

Immediately upriver from the Chalmet Plantation was the small tract of land that became known as the "Rodriguez Plantation." The history of this property may be viewed archivally in a sequence of land tenure that was closely related to the Battle of New Orleans and to subsequent recognition of the historic importance of that event. This parcel of land was owned in 1790 by Espiritus Liotaud and Augustus Faure, who subsequently sold it to Pierre Denis de La Ronde. In 1800, the tract was purchased by Laurent (or Lorenzo) Sigur from Pierre Denis de La Ronde.[1] The downriver, adjoining sixteen arpents, which became known as "Chalmet Plantation," had been purchased by Sigur in 1798. In March 1802, Sigur sold the small upriver parcel to Nicholas Roche. Three years later, Roche sold the property to Jean Baptiste Drouillard.

The act of sale for this transaction describes the property as comprising three and one-half arpents fronting on the river, and it included a residence, a mill, and other unspecified structures.[2] Wilson suggested that the mill enumerated in this act of sale, which was located on the Rodriguez Canal, was built ca. 1800, during Sigur's ownership of the property.[3] This structure, but not the residence, is recorded on the 1808 Lafon plat (Figure II-1).

Drouillard held the property for just over one year, and then he sold the lowermost one-half arpent riverfront portion to Jean Baptiste Prevost, owner of the adjoining downriver plantation.[4] It was Prevost who commissioned the Lafon survey (Figure II-1). Prevost sold the property four months later to Dame Eliza M. Pintard, who was acting as agent for her husband, J. M. Pintard.[5] Again, the property was sold a short time later to the notary John Lynd; two days later, Lynd

1 P. Pedeselaux, June 12, 1806, New Orleans Notarial Archives, New Orleans, Louisiana; Samuel Wilson, Jr., *Plantation Houses on the Battlefield of New Orleans* (New Orleans: The Battle of New Orleans 150th Anniversary Committee of Louisiana), pp. 18-19.

2 P. Pedeselaux, December 21, 1805, New Orleans Notarial Archives.

3 Wilson, *Plantation Houses*, p. 35.

4 P. Pedeselaux, March 28, 1807, New Orleans Notarial Archives.

5 P. Pedeselaux, July 10, 1807, New Orleans Notarial Archives.

sold the property to Daniel Clark, the Louisiana Territory's representative to Congress.[6] Clark was an active land speculator in Louisiana during this period.

Clark sold the property to Jean Rodriguez, a New Orleans attorney, on September 29, 1808. This act of sale described the property as

> One half arpent of land fronting the river with all its buildings and dependencies situated at four miles from this city, below and shown on one side of the residence of Mr. Guillermo Brown and on the other side that of Mr. Edouard Macarty, with a depth of eighty-one and in conformity with the act of sale of Mr. Pierre Denis de la Ronde to Mr. Laurent Sigur, the said half arpent of land forming an angle opening and always following the canal . . .[7]

John Dimitry, a writer for the *Illustrated Visitor's Guide to Orleans*, recounted a conversation with General John L. Lewis on the subject of Rodriguez and of his house:

> Dimitry: Who owned this house in 1814-15?
> Lewis: An old Spanish lawyer named Rodriguez.
> Q: What did Rodriguez do in those days?
> A: He spoke broken English, and practiced, with notable success, civil law.
> Q: What became of him afterwards?
> A: He died—still speaking broken English—on his own place.[8]

Thus, Rodriguez was the owner of this property during the Battle of New Orleans. In this period, the property probably served as a country retreat, since the tract was too small to support sugar agriculture profitably. Nevertheless, the property was referred to as a plantation, suggesting that some agricultural activities may have been undertaken there. The residence is shown in Laclotte's print "The Defeat of the British Army12,000 Strong . . . " (Figure I-8), where a two-story, one-room-wide structure with a columned gallery on the building's front is shown. On the downriver side of the house, a single-storied wing was present. A hole is shown on its roof in the Laclotte print, as is a four-columned gallery across the wing's front. Latour's "Plan of the Attack and Defence of the American Lines below New Orleans on the 8th of January, 1815" (Figure II-2)

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6 P. Pedesclaux, June 23, 1808, New Orleans Notarial Archives.

7 P. Pedesclaux, September 29, 1808, New Orleans Notarial Archives.

8 J. Curtis Waldo, *Illustrated Visitor's Guide to New Orleans* (New Orleans: J. Curtis Waldo, 1879), pp. 16-17.

also shows the Rodriguez House. Beside the house in Latour's plan is another small building, but it is illustrated as detached, rather than being an attached wing as shown on the Laclotte print.

After the war Rodriguez made a claim to the United States government for losses sustained as a result of the Battle of New Orleans. This document sheds further light on the possible function of the small wing adjoining the main residence. This claim states that the stable, coach house, four slave cabins, a henhouse, a pigeon house, and the kitchen were "entirely destroyed," while the residence and "an adjoining building" were only damaged. Thus, it appears that this damaged, but surviving, structure was not the kitchen, since the latter had been fully demolished. In addition, Rodriguez placed a large claim for the damage or loss of movables, including books; possibly the structure had served as a library. [9]

Despite Dimitry's report to the contrary, Rodriguez did not die on the property, and after the Battle of New Orleans he sold it to Dame Marguerite Verret. The consideration for this 1817 sale was $7,500.00, or $2,500.00 more than Rodriguez had paid for it nine years earlier.[10] This suggests that any damage sustained by the residence during the Battle of New Orleans probably was repaired prior to the 1817 sale.

However, no structures were referenced specifically in the 1817 transaction:

> To Mrs. Marguerite Verret, wife, having separate property, of Mr. Solomon Prevost, residing in this parish, . . . accept as buyer for her and her heirs, a land situated at about four miles below this city, on the left side of the river, together with all the buildings thereon, without retaining any of them, said land having half and arpent fronting on what used to be the old levee, eighty arpents in depth, bounded on one side by the property of Mr. Montgomery before Edmond Macarty, and on the other by Mr. Pierre St. Amand

9 Betsy Swanson, "Annotated Archival Source Listing Relevant to the Archaeological, Architectural and Historical Interpretation of the Rodriguez Plantation Buildings, Chalmette Unit, Jean Lafitte National Historical Park" (2 vols.; unpublished report dated October 1984, in the National Park Service, Intermountain Support Office, Santa Fe Library) I, pp. I.11, I.16-I.18, I.32-I.56.

10 P. Pedesclaux, May 7, 1817, New Orleans Notarial Archives.

> before Ignace Delino, following the canal which is on this property. . . .[11]

In 1819, Benjamin H. B. Latrobe made a sketch of the area which showed a number of changes in the residence (see Figure III-4). The gallery was enclosed by blinds, and a dormer window had been added to the hipped roof front. The adjoining, single-storied wing appeared substantially the same as recorded previously in the 1815 Laclotte print. Dame Verret, the wife separate in property from Solomon Prevost, presumably resided at least part time in the house at Rodriguez Plantation. She held the property until her death, at which time ownership passed to her son, Edouard Prevost. Although the date of Madam Prevost's death has not been established, map evidence indicates that she died prior to 1834. Figure II-3 shows the property under Prevost's ownership. The residential structure and attendant buildings seen in the Latour plan again are portrayed. Two additional structures also are shown on the property; these may have been barns. Prevost subsequently held the property until his death. On March 7, 1849, the Second Judicial District Court ordered the sale of Edouard Prevost's property; the purchase price was $4,500.00, indicating that the property may have deteriorated during the period following Dame Verret's death.

Etienne Villavaso, a resident of St. Bernard Parish and owner of the adjoining downriver parcel, purchased the property after Edouard Prevost's death.[12] Villavaso sold the property in 1852 to Pierre Bachelot for $5,000.00. It is possible that Bachelot took up residence on the property, since he was listed as a resident of St. Bernard Parish three years later on the date of his sale of the property to the State of Louisiana. At that time, the property was described as

> A certain portion of land with all and singular improvements thereon . . . situated in the Parish of St. Bernard about four miles below the city, and on the left bank of the River Mississippi, having in French measure ninety-one feet ten inches front on said river and running back between side lines opening in such manner as to give a width of two and a half arpents at the distance of fifteen arpents from the said River and from this point running back between two side lines, one of which closes seven feet eight inches so as to give a width of 443 feet on the rear line at the distance of eighty arpents from the said river, the whole bounded on the upper side by the property of Madam Widow Lombard, and

11 *Ibid.*

12 F. Percy, April 25, 1849, New Orleans Notarial Archives.

> on the lower side by that of Mr. Martin M. Villavaso and in conformity with a plan drawn by A. d'Hemecourt on the twenty-eighth day of December 1851.[13]

This purchase was authorized by an act of the Louisiana legislature entitled "An Act for the Relief of the Association for the Jackson Monument and for the Erection of a Memento upon the Battle Ground of the Eighth of January, 1815," which was enacted on February 26, 1852.

The residence at Rodriguez Plantation was still standing at the time of the acquisition of the property by the State of Louisiana. However, during the late nineteenth century, it fell into "the shabbiest of ruins."[14] Possibly because of its deteriorated state, it was not depicted on the 1874 Mississippi River Commission Map (Figure II-4). Based on a contemporary woodcut, Wilson described the structure at the end of the nineteenth century as

> . . . a small, raised structure erected on a fairly low brick basement. A gallery with chamfered wood columns extended downriver to the east. The western end of the front gallery was protected by louvered jalousies. The house was only one room in width with two semi-circular fan light French doors opening onto the front gallery. A single dormer overlooked the river from the double pitched, hipped shingle roof. It was a typical small plantation house of the period.[15]

It should be noted that the single-story wing no longer was extant in 1879.

The Rodriguez House was torn down before the end of the century, and during the 1890s money was appropriated for the construction of a house for the caretaker of the Chalmette Monument, the latter having been begun during the 1850s. This residence is illustrated in Figure II-5. The structure remained in existence at least until 1940 (Figure II-6). By this time, there was also a small garage adjacent to the house.

Work on the monument was not completed by the State of Louisiana, and on May 24, 1907, the Secretary of State of Louisiana transferred jurisdiction over the property to the United States government. The United States government

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13 T. Guyol, February 19, 1855, New Orleans Notarial Archives.

14 Waldo, *Illustrated Visitor's Guide to New Orleans*, 1879, p. 16.

15 Wilson, *Plantation Houses*, p. 35.

appropriated $25,000.00 for the completion of a monument to the memory of soldiers who fell during the Battle of New Orleans.[16]

To recapitulate, at the end of the Spanish period, the Rodriguez Plantation was part of a larger holding owned, successively, by the partners Liotaud and Faure, by Pierre Denis de La Ronde, and by Laurent Sigur. The land was undoubtedly used at this time as an indigo plantation. The Rodriguez property remained part of a parcel which was three and one-half arpents front on the river until Jean Baptiste Prevost purchased one-half arpent of the land in 1807, probably with the intention of operating the mill on the property. This small parcel, too tiny for monocrop agriculture, changed hands many times until purchased by Jean Rodriguez in 1808 for use as a residence. Rodriguez sold it after the Battle of New Orleans, and it then remained in the Prevost family until 1849. State governmental jurisdiction over the property began in 1852, and the United States government completed the Chalmette Monument and took control of the property in the early years of the twentieth century.

16 Benjamin Ory, May 24, 1907, New Orleans Notarial Archives.

CHAPTER 12

THE CHALMET PLANTATION

The plantation that became known as "Chalmette Plantation" measured slightly over twenty-two-arpents front on the Mississippi River. The history of this property illustrates not only trends in the settlement and economic history of the region, but also provides insights into the changing life-ways that emerged on the outskirts of New Orleans over the last 250 years. The lowermost six arpents of the twenty-two-plus-arpent front plantation can be traced directly to the early French colonial period. This portion of the plantation, granted to or purchased by Francois Phillipe de Marigny prior to 1728, was a larger tract that included the other portions of the Chalmette Plantation for which no direct chain of title from the French colonial period survives today.[1] After Marigny's death, his land holdings in the area passed to his widow, Marie Madeleine Le Maire, who married the Chief Engineer of the Louisiana colony, Captain Ignace Francois Broutin.[2] Ownership of these lands eventually passed to Marigny's son, Antoine Philippe de Marigny de Mandeville. The census of 1770 recorded Antoine Philippe's ownership of 10 arpents of land, 50 slaves, 60 head of cattle, 14 horses, 100 sheep, 12hogs, and 2 muskets.[3]

On July 13, 1794, Antoine Philippe's widow sold ten arpents of land to Charles Antoine de Reggio.[4] Reggio subsequently sold six arpents of this ten-arpent parcel to Ignace de Lino de Chalmet in 1805. The property conveyed was described as having been located about 1.75 miles below New Orleans, bounded on the lower side by the lands of Antoine Bienvenu and on the upper side by lands owned by Laurent Sigur.[5] De Lino (or Delino) de Chalmet was the grandson of Marie Madeleine Le Maire and of Broutin.[6]

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1 Samuel Wilson, Jr., *Plantation Houses On the Battlefield of New Orleans* (New Orleans: The Battle of New Orleans 150th Anniversary Committee of Louisiana); Samuel Wilson, Jr., "The Rene Beauregard House: An Architectural Survey Report" (unpublished manuscript dated 1956, National Park Service Intermountain Support Office, Santa Fe Library).

2 Charles V. G. Maduel, *Census Tables for the French Colony of Louisiana from 1699 through 1737* (Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing Company, Inc., 1972), p. 142.

3 J. K. Voorhies, *Some Late Eighteenth Century Louisianians: Census Records, 1758-1796* (Lafayette: University of Southwestern Louisiana, 1973), p. 221.

4 F. Rodriguez, July 13, 1794, New Orleans Notarial Archives, New Orleans, Louisiana.

5 P. Pedesclaux, February 9, 1805, New Orleans Notarial Archives.

6 Wilson, *Plantation Houses*, p. 39.

The other sixteen-arpent parcel of what became Chalmet Plantation appears to have formed part of the Marais concession.[7] However, as noted previously, no direct chain of title remains to demonstrate this original land tenure. Reeves states that part of this property was owned during the early Spanish colonial period by Francois Pascalis de La Barre, yet there is no direct evidence of this.[8]

Nonetheless, this area may be characterized using data from the 1770 census. During the Spanish period (1769-1803), indigo was the major crop in the area, followed by sugar, maize, and rice. Lumbering also was a common occupation. Cattle comprised the primary stock, although sheep were plentiful. Hogs and horses were relatively scarce. Domesticated fowl included turkey, geese, chicken, ducks, and pigeons. The substantial wealth of the area's occupants can be judged from the three-to-one ratio of slaves to owners.[9] These data present a general impression of a relatively wealthy resident planter population below New Orleans during the years before the turn of the eighteenth century.

The fact that indigo was the chief crop in the area is not surprising. France had encouraged the production of indigo in the Louisiana colony, and this policy was continued during the Spanish period. Indigo was a particularly labor-efficient crop; one slave could plant and tend two acres of the plant and still have ample time to attend to his own provisions.[10] Each plantation generally had its own indigo-processing facility, since the manufacture of dye from indigo was relatively easy and required no expensive machinery. The cut plant was placed in a vat called a "steeper," and the indigo then was covered with water until fermentation occurred. The liquid by-product then was drawn off into another vat, called a "beater," where it was agitated much like the churning of butter.

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7 *Ibid.*

8 William D. Reeves, *De La Barre: Life of a French Creole Family in Louisiana* (New Orleans: Polyanthos, 1980), p. 42.

9 Voorhies, *Some Late Eighteenth Century Louisianians*, pp. 250-53.

10 Jack D. Holmes, "Indigo in Colonial Louisiana and the Floridas," *Louisiana History* VIII (1967), p. 340.

A precipitate was formed in the solution by adding lime water. The water was drawn off, and the indigo solids were placed in cloth bags to dry.[11]

Pedro de Marigny de Mandeville, a Knight of the Royal and Military Order of St. Louis, acquired the sixteen arpents in question from Louis Boisdore late during the Spanish period. On February 10, 1798, Marigny de Mandeville exchanged this parcel for another with Laurent Sigur, a captain in the Spanish militia. The transactions specified that

> The Sieur Sigur sells to Monsieur Marigny the land . . . from the line of Monsieur Daunoy Treme and the fortification of the city, the said vendor reserving all the rights on the portion which has been withdrawn by Monsieur de Carondelet, former Governor of this Province, in order to establish the fortification, as well as the land situated at Gentilly which he has sold to Monsieur Reano.[12]

The only improvements noted on the transferred property at this time were fences and "small huts." The land acquired by Marigny later was subdivided into the Faubourg Marigny.

Beginning in the 1790s and continuing into the early nineteenth century, major change took place in Louisiana's economy. The impetus to this change was the economic failure of indigo production. By the 1790s indigo was becoming unprofitable. In terms of production costs, Louisiana's indigo could not compete in the world market with indigo produced in India. Indigo also was susceptible to insect blights, and it was sensitive to the weather. Consequently, crop losses could be severe. Furthermore, the crop exhausted the soil. And an increase in the price of slaves in Louisiana made it difficult to obtain the labor necessary for indigo production on the plantations. Finally, the terrible smell of indigo production attracted disease-carrying insects, and the production of indigo polluted the streams between Pointe Coupee and the Yazoo River.[13] During the 1790s, the cotton gin was invented, and Etienne de Bore developed a process enabling the commercially successful production of sugar from cane. Cotton and sugar rapidly became Louisiana's two major money crops.

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11 *Ibid*, p. 344.

12 N. Broutin, February 16, 1798, New Orleans Notarial Archives .

13 Holmes, "Indigo in Colonial Louisiana," pp. 346-48.

During this period, Sigur made a number of improvements to the property he had acquired from Marigny, including outfitting it for production of the new cash crop. When he sold the property in 1805 to Jean Baptiste Prevost, a judge of the Supreme Court of the Territory of Orleans, the property was a fully functioning sugar plantation, complete with a great house, a sugarhouse, a refinery, a storehouse, slave cabins, and a variety of outbuildings and attendant structures. Thirty-five slaves (Table II-1) also were conveyed in this sale, as were horses, pigs, about fifty sheep, wagons, plows, and other agricultural implements. The price of the sale was $50,000.00.[14]

Figure II-1 depicts the property during Prevost's ownership. The great house and two garconnieres are shown facing the river, and behind the residence two smaller buildings were present. It appears that the scale of these structures is not accurate, so their precise historic location also is somewhat suspect. However, their former location either was in the area of the present military cemetery, or, as is more likely, they were located immediately downriver.

Three years later, Prevost sold the plantation to William Brown, the collector of customs for the Port of New Orleans.[15] During his ownership of the property, Brown registered his claim to the land with the United States government:

> William Brown claims a tract of land, situated on the east side of the Mississippi in the County of Orleans, containing sixteen arpents, eleven toises, and three feet in front with a depth extending back as far as Lake Borgne and bounded on the upper side by land of J.M. Pintard and on the lower by land of Chalmet Delino . . . . It appears that the front and first depth of forty arpents of this land was actually inhabited and cultivated on the 20th day of December, 1803, and for more than ten consecutive years prior thereto. So much the Board confirms, but rejects the claim to the remaining extension of depth.[16]

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14 P. Pedeselaux, June 12, 1805, New Orleans Notarial Archives.

15 P. Pedeselaux, March 21, 1808, New Orleans Notarial Archives.

16 Walter Lowrie and Walter Franklin (eds.), *American State Papers, Class VIII, Public Lands* (Washington: Gales and Seaton, 1834), p 281.

Brown's operation of the plantation was short lived and less than successful:

> William Brown the collector has ran off, and taken with him a large sum of public money.[17]
>
> There is no longer room to doubt the villainy of William Brown the collector; he arrived at the Balize on board of the vessel called the Kingston on the afternoon of the 16th instant, and having obtained a pilot, put to sea on the same evening.[18]

Brown's hasty departure appears to have resulted in part from the overextension of his financial resources:

> [Brown's] purchase of a sugar plantation and of so many negroes, I was [convinced] would involve him, and I thought it probable, that he would ultimately become a public defaulter.
>
> But I never supposed that a man who had given no previous symptoms of depravity would at once have covered himself with Infamy.[19]

The United States filed suit against William Brown (#2324 on the docket of the Superior Court for the Territory of Orleans). Unfortunately, that suit has been lost. Nevertheless, the net result was the acquisition of the property by the United States. On March 15, 1811, Phillip Grymes, the Attorney General of the United States, sold the property to Thomas H. Williams for $1.00, "for use and benefit of the United States."[20] Prior to this sale, Grymes had arranged with Williams to re-sell the property to Charles Mynn Thruston, known as the "fighting parson of the Revolution," and to Henry Daingerfield, Thruston's son-in-law. The two purchased the plantation from the agent Thomas H. Williams for $44,000.00, and Thruston took up residence there even before the act of sale was passed before the notary on April 24, 1813.

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17 Governor W. C. C. Claiborne to Secretary of State Robert Smith, November 17, 1809, cited in Wilson, "Rene Beauregard House."

18 Claiborne to Smith, November 26, 1809, cited in Wilson, "Rene Beauregard House."

19 Claiborne to President Thomas A. Jefferson, January 12, 1810, in Wilson, "Rene Beauregard House."

20 M. de Armas, March 15, 1811, New Orleans Notarial Archives.

Table II-1: Slaves Conveyed in 1805 Sale of Land to Jean Baptiste Prevost (P. Pedesclaux, June 12, 1805, New Orleans Notarial Archives)

		Age
Jean-Baptiste	digger	17
(Fandango)	digger	35
(Douilha)	digger	25
Jupiter	builder	30
Sans Chargrin	builder	30
Fazau	blacksmith	40
Elie Toussaint		45
Francois		50
Lucie	mulatta	45
Polidon	laborer	40
Remy	foreman	45
Lubin		40
Banadarme	digger	35
Jean	digger	30
Antoine	digger	30
Ret ( )	blacksmith's aid	30
Lucielle		20
Cupidon	digger	30
Laurent	builder	30
Augustine	gardener	30
Coffe		45
Francois	servant	11
Jeanne	milkmaid	38
Victoise	head laundry woman	36
Coijoie	laundry woman	30
Suzan	cook	40
Marie Laville	laundry woman	40
Denise	gardener	28
Marie	chicken yard negress	28
Julie		20
with her child Charlotte		7
Rosalie	ironing woman	--
and her son Vincent		2
Marcelline		--
Parullemeur		6
Annette		5

Thruston died at and was buried on his St. Bernard plantation in 1812. After his death, the plantation was advertised for sale:

> There is on this land, the following buildings: to wit, a very pretty house with a story, American construction style, and very livable; another house located near the first, very livable and in good condition. Moreover, there are kitchens with ovens, a chicken yard, negro cabins, latrines, wells, stables and a good carriage house for two carriages. None of these buildings suffered from the last hurricane.[21]

On June 14, 1813, Henry Daingerfield's and Thruston's heirs sold the plantation to Ignace de Lino de Chalmet for $65,000.00. The plantation was described as comprising 16 arpents, 11 toises, and 3 feet front on the Mississippi. This purchase brought Chalmet's holdings to a total of more than twenty-two-arpents front. Twenty-five slaves also were purchased at that time.[22] Sometime after this purchase, Chalmet moved his family to the great house on the new upriver parcel.[23]

The British occupied the Chalmet Plantation on December 27, 1814. Jackson subsequently ordered all buildings on the plantation destroyed. The destruction of these buildings left the Chalmet family with a small house on Bourbon Street in New Orleans. Shortly thereafter, on February 10, 1815, Chalmet died. His widow, in filing Chalmet's succession, stated:

> . . . all the furniture and papers belonging to the said succession and which were located on the plantation where her said late husband dwelt, have been reduced to ashes by the fire which the American General judged necessary to have set to the principal house, and other establishments which were located on the said plantation, for the defense of Louisiana against the English.[24]

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21 *Louisiana Courier*, May 3, 1813.

22 M. de Armas, June 14, 1813, New Orleans Notarial Archives.

23 Francis F. Wilshin, "The Rene Beauregard House" (unpublished report dated 1952, in the library of Chalmette Unit, Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve).

24 Wilson, "Rene Beauregard House," p. 7.

Figure II-2 depicts the Chalmet Plantation at the time of the battle. The complex of structures included the great house (nearest the river), slave quarters, and various other buildings. One of the larger structures near the quarters area, no doubt, was the sugarhouse. It is likely that the Chalmet great house (Figure II-2) was the same structure as the Prevost residence (Figure II-1). Figure II-7 displays a projection of the Latour map on the contemporary landscape. As stated above, this map is unreliable in regard to the placement of structures with respect to the present course of the river. However, the structures are clearly located downriver of the present park boundaries. Thus, remains associated with the Chalmet occupation are not expected within the project area. Furthermore, it is not likely that remains from previous occupations will be represented, since the major habitation and activity areas of the latter probably are the same as those mapped on the Chalmet Plantation.

Chalmet's half brother, Pierre Denis de La Ronde, owned the plantation immediately downriver. De La Ronde also held a mortgage on the Chalmet Plantation,[25] and he filed suit against Chalmet's widow and heirs (#1306, First Judicial District Court). De La Ronde purchased the plantation when it was offered at a sheriff's sale on February 20, 1817.

Two months later, de La Ronde sold the property to two brothers, Hilaire and Louis St. Amand, who were free men of color and residents of New Orleans. The lowermost six arpents of the plantation extended back to the lake, while the upper parcel had a "known" depth. The property was bounded above by the Rodriguez parcel, and the two properties were separated by the Rodriguez Canal. The property below was the plantation of Antoine Bienvenu. No description was given in the act of sale of any structures or improvements on the property, since the St. Amands had visited the plantation and were "content and satisfied with the same and do not desire a more ample description."[26] However, it is unlikely that any of the structures previously standing there survived the fires set by General Jackson's troops.

The price of this sale was $55,000.00. Instead of paying cash, the buyers signed over to de La Ronde six notes by Pierre St. Amand, a resident of St. Charles Parish. Pierre St. Amand pledged his plantation in St. Charles Parish as security for his notes. It is likely that Pierre was Louis and Hilaire's brother. The St. Amand family apparently included several wealthy plantation and slave-owning free men of color; in addition to land holdings in St. Charles Parish, the

25 N. Broutin, October 24, 1814, New Orleans Notarial Archives.

26 M. de Armas, April 28, 1817, New Orleans Notarial Archives.

St. Amand family was connected with the 120-arpent Rigaud Plantation on Grand Isle.[27]

In fact, free colored families such as the St. Amands were not uncommon in ante-bellum Louisiana. Throughout this period, Louisiana benefited economically from a relatively large population of free people of color.[28] The free colored population grew by three means: manumission of slaves; immigration of free blacks, primarily from the West Indies; and natural reproduction. Although relatively few slaves were freed during the French period, the mechanism for doing so was established early in the French *Code Noir*. With some exceptions, free people of color enjoyed the same economic privileges as whites. However, free men of color could be reduced to slavery for aiding runaway slaves, whereas whites were merely fined for such activities. The Spanish expanded the means by which a slave could be freed. The most notable of these was "self purchase."[29]

The beginning of the American period in Louisiana coincided with slave insurrections in Haiti. From 1804 to 1809, Louisiana's free colored population more than doubled, as free blacks fled the violence in Haiti. One result of this wave of immigration was the creation of federal laws restricting free black immigration and manumission. Free men of color were forbidden to serve in the militia, and they were denied the right to vote or to hold political office.

Nevertheless, Louisiana's free colored population continued to grow throughout the nineteenth century. The census of 1852 listed 242 free people of color, as large, medium or small planters. A few owned very large sugar and cotton plantations where labor was provided by African American slaves. In 1830, there were 212 slave-owning free men of color in the rural parishes of Louisiana, and 25 of those owned 20 to 75 slaves.

Most owned three to five slaves. This widespread ownership of slaves by free men of color underscores the identification of free colored planters with their white counterparts. The wealthy elite among the free men of color "espoused the ideology of the planter class."[30]

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27 C. Pollock, May 8, 1832, New Orleans Notarial Archives; Betsy Swanson, *Historic Jefferson Parish from Shore to Shore* (Gretna, Louisiana: Pelican Publishing Company, 1975), p. 160.

28 David Connel Rankin, " The Forgotten People: Free People of Color in New Orleans, 1850-1870" (unpublished doctoral dissertation dated 1976, Johns Hopkins University), pp. 40-41.

29 *Ibid.*, p. 42.

30 *Ibid.*, p. 160.

It is significant that the St. Amands bought the large St. Bernard Parish property at a time when sugar production was increasing rapidly in south Louisiana. Sugar production was not feasible for small planters because of the large capital investments it required. According to Mark Schmitz,[31] in 1860 the average investment in sugar-producing machinery on a Louisiana plantation was $9,900.00. This contrasts sharply with an $830.00 average investment for equipment on a cotton plantation. Sugar yielded a 9 percent return, whereas cotton's return averaged about 7 percent.[32]

The planting cycle on sugar plantations began with the preparation of the soil and the planting of the cane in late January or early February. Also, corn was planted in March and April, and peas and potatoes were planted in May and June. As in the case of cotton cultivation, field hands continued to hoe the crops until they were "laid by" around July 4. From then until the harvest, slaves gathered wood for the fuel needed in sugar production, levees were repaired, and ditches were cleaned. Harvesting of the crop began in October, and work continued virtually twenty-four hours a day until the harvest was done. Sugar production was completed in late December or early January. During this time, cane was cut and milled, seed cane was put up, and the ground was plowed.[33]

Structures usually found on residential plantations included a great house, kitchen, offices, garconnieres, pigeonniers, and carriage houses. The overseer had his own house, and the slaves lived in whitewashed, one- or two-room cabins set in rows. Often there was a separate kitchen where the slaves' food was prepared.[34] Barns, stables, storage sheds, and privies also were present on sugar plantations. The major industrial structure and major investment on a sugar plantation was the sugarhouse. In the early nineteenth century, these structures generally were made of wood, but by 1850, most sugarhouses were constructed of brick. Sugarhouses generally were 100 to 150 feet long and about 50 feet wide.[35] The mill usually was powered by a steam engine. The mill was used for expressing juice from the cane, and it usually was housed within the sugarhouse, although detached structures for the mill also were utilized on Louisiana plantations.[36]

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31 Mark Schmitz, *Economic Analysis of Antebellum Sugar Plantations in Louisiana* (New York: Arno Press, 1977), p. 108.

32 Joe Gray Taylor, *Louisiana* (New York: W. W. Norton and Company, Inc., 1976), p. 67.

33 J. Carlyle Sitterson, *Sugar Country: The Sugar Industry in the South, 1753-1950* (Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 1953), p. 112.

34 *Ibid.*, p. 92.

35 *Ibid.*, p. 137.

36 Samuel Wilson, Jr., to the writer, 1983.

The most common method of cane juice clarification and evaporation was the open-pan method. This method involved the use of a set of four kettles of decreasing size called, respectively, the grande, the flambeau, the syrup, and the battery. The kettles were set into a masonry structure usually about 30 feet long by 7 feet wide, within which was the furnace and the flue for conveying heat to the kettles. The furnace was under the battery, and an ash pit would have been outside but adjacent to the sugarhouse. Both coal and wood were used to fuel the furnaces. The flue, at the opposite end of the kettle set, would have turned a right angle to the set and passed to the outside of the sugarhouse where it connected to the chimney.[37]

After the clarification and evaporation of the cane juices, they were emptied from the battery into shallow wood troughs, or coolers, and the sugar granules formed as the juice cooled. The coolers were 10 to 12 feet long, 4 feet wide, and 18 inches deep.[38] There usually were about sixteen coolers in a sugarhouse.[39] After the completion of granulation, the sugar and molasses in the coolers were packed into hogsheads, or barrels of approximately 1,000 pounds. The packing was done in the purgery, a room in the sugarhouse containing a large cement cistern overlain by timbers on which the hogsheads were placed. The hogsheads had holes in the bottom through which the molasses could drain into the cistern, leaving the granulated sugar.[40] A cane shed for storing cane as it was brought in from the field usually was attached to the sugarhouse on the same end as the mill.[41]

Thus, the St. Amands had both equipment and building expenses when they took ownership of the property in question. It may be assumed that the St. Amands had to rebuild the plantation's standing structures. In 1822, the St. Amands contracted to have a canal built to Bayou Bienvenu. The contract for the work was specific and detailed:

> . . . to be ten feet wide and four feet deep in all its length to begin from the back fence which now stands near the wood and to run down as far back as to reach Bayou Bienvenu in a straight direction, each side of the canal to be parallel and at an equal distance from both the side lines of said plantation . . . the parties will throw two feet of earth coming out . . . digging on side of the

37 Sitterson, *Sugar Country*, p. 141.

38 T. B. Thorpe, "Sugar and the Sugar Region of Louisiana," *Harper's New Monthly Magazine* VII (1853), p. 763.

39 Sitterson, *Sugar Country*, p. 143.

40 Thorpe, "Sugar and the Sugar Region," p. 763.

41 Sitterson, *Sugar Country*, p. 137.

> canal nearer the city and make therewith a causeway or levee to be two feet wide along the canal, the other eight feet of earth on the other side of the canal as to have on that side of the canal a space at least two feet clear and free of said earth. Also, the mechanics will build a small house near the said back fence where the canal is to begin for them to live in during all the time they shall be working on the canal . . . everyone [of the workmen] . . . shall keep off from the dwelling house, outhouses, yard and negro camp [of the St. Amands] . . . and shall not meddle, nor have any intercourse or communication with the slaves and the workmen . . . .[42]

Figure II-8 shows the location of this canal, as well as the location of the St. Amand Plantation complex. As was the Chalmet Plantation complex, the St. Amand complex was located downriver from the present park area (Figure II-8). It is not unlikely that the St. Amands utilized the foundations of the Chalmet Plantation structures; such re-use of structural remains was common in the New Orleans area.[43]

Louis and Hilaire borrowed more than $22,000.00 for construction on their property from their sister Marie Manette St. Amand. They also borrowed a like amount from another sister, Genevieve.[44] These debts were capitalized by mortgages on the St. Amand brothers' land, described as "a plantation made into a sugar refinery."[45] By 1832, the St. Amands found it necessary to subdivide and offer part of their plantation for sale to repay debts totaling more than $70,000.00.[46] The sale was advertised in the *Louisiana Courier*, March 7, 1832:

> Ten arpents of the Plantation of Messrs. Hilaire and Louis St. Amand five miles below New Orleans, and known by the name of Battle Ground. Of these ten arpents, six are situated at the upper limit of the plantation on the side of the city—the two first arpents contiguous to the boundary of Mr. Edward Prevost's property, reach only fifteen arpents more or less in depth; and the four other arpents go to 80 arpents in depth. The four arpents at the lower limit are contiguous to the plantation of Antoine Bienvenu. They

42 M. de Armas, June 6, 1822, New Orleans Notarial Archives.

43 See, for example, R. Christopher Goodwin and Jill-Karen Yakubik, "Data Recovery at the New Orleans General Hospital Site, 16 OR 69" (unpublished manuscript dated 1982 submitted to the Division of Archeology, Department of Culture, Recreation, and Tourism, State of Louisiana).

44 F. de Armas, June 3, 1824, New Orleans Notarial Archives.

45 F. de Armas, August 3, 1825, New Orleans Notarial Archives.

46 C. Pollock, June 8, 1832, New Orleans Notarial Archives.

> are entitled to the double concession of eighty arpents and conformably to the act of sale of Mr. Denis de la Ronde, reach as far as Lake Borgne. The sellers do not warrant this prolongation. On the six arpents of the upper part is found the line of defense of the American Army in 1815, and on the four arpents of the lower part are the four majestic oaks, where all those who come to visit the field of battle generally end their walk.

The auction sale took place on March 23, 1832. Despite their original intention to offer only 10 arpents of the plantation for sale, 12 lots of 1 arpent each, 6 at each limit of the plantation, were sold. A plan of the subdivision was drawn by d'Hémécourt, and Louis and Hilaire deposited it in the offices of the notary Carlisle Pollock:

> And being desirous to grant unto the said purchasers all proper facilities for the conveyances which they have this day made to them respectively for the lots by them respectively purchased at said sale, the said appearers have produced and delivered unto me notary the afore recited plan . . . this day made before me have been at the request of said appearers deposited in the margin of this minute in this my current register. . . .[47]

Unfortunately, this plat has been lost. However, by utilizing the property descriptions given in the acts of sale, along with Zimpel's 1834 map of New Orleans and environs, it has been possible to reconstruct d'Hémécourt's plat (Figure II-9). The lot numbers assigned each of the parcels indicate that the lots numbered 11 and above were subdivided and sold as an afterthought, since they appear out of sequence. It is unlikely that any structures were present on the lots sold at that time. Rather, any such structures probably were constructed immediately after the subdivision sale. Thus, the reconstruction shown in Figure II-9 only shows structures on lands not formerly part of the Chalmet or St. Amand Plantation, and those on land retained by Hilaire and Louis St. Amand. The plantation complex, built by the St. Amands, included a large quarters area behind which the sugarhouse probably was located, as well as a great house surrounded by garconnieres, offices, a kitchen, and other attendant structures (Figures II-3, II-9).

Table II-2 shows the purchasers of the lots during the 1832 sale; the plots acquired are shown in Figure II-9. Figure II-3, Zimpel's plan, which was drafted in 1833, suggests that structural improvements on the various lots were

47 C. Pollock, April 10, 1832, New Orleans Notarial Archives.

undertaken rapidly after the 1832 sale. Comparison of Figures II-3 and II-9 also shows that some of the properties changed hands shortly after the sale. For example, papers relating to the settlement of debts show that Joseph Sauvinet sold Lot 12 to Frederick Formento almost immediately after the sale described above.[48] Since they were not incorporated as part of the park, the lowermost six parcels are no longer of concern here.

The subdivision and sale of the St. Amand holdings brought Louis and Hilaire a total of $73,600.00. This allowed them to payoff most of their debts. Three days later, Joseph Sauvinet released the brothers from their debt to him, and their sister Genevieve did likewise.[49] Nevertheless, Louis and Hilaire continued to owe their sister Manette over $18,000.00. Perhaps to settle this remaining debt, Manette purchased Louis's one-half share in the remaining plantation. Zimpel's 1834 plan shows "H. and M. St. Amand" as owners of the property (Figure II-3). To facilitate this sale, Louis and Hilaire divided the slaves they held together on the plantation. Table II-3 shows the results of this division. Since Louis' share was valued higher than Hilaire's, the former paid the latter $1,000.00. It also was noted in this partition that the St. Amand brothers owed one obligation of over $9,000.00 in favor of Hilaire's wards Louis Ovide and Marie Mirthee St. Amand.[50] Clearly, the St. Amands still were having financial difficulties at that date.

In 1834, one of the auctioned lots, Lot 6, was reacquired by Louis St. Amand. That lot apparently was sold by Sauvinet back to Hilaire St. Amand, who died in 1833. The property (Figures II-3, II-9) then was sold to Louis Bartholemy Chauvin Delery.[51] Delery sold it to Dame Celeste Destrehan, the wife of Prosper Marigny, shortly thereafter. Louis St. Amand purchased the parcel, including buildings and improvements, from Dame Destrehan.[52]

48 C. Pollock, May 8, 1832, New Orleans Notarial Archives.

49 C. Pollock, March 26, 1832, New Orleans Notarial Archives.

50 C. Pollock, February 18, 1833, New Orleans Notarial Archives.

51 Samuel Wilson, Jr., to the writer, 1984.

52 O. de Armas, November 28, 1834, New Orleans Notarial Archives.

Table II-2: Purchasers of Lots at the Public Auction on March 23, 1832 (C. Pollock, April 10, 1832, New Orleans Notarial Archives)

Lot 1	Theophile Wiltz	$3,700
Lot 2	Alexander Baron	3,700
Lot 3	Michel Bernard Cantrell	7,300
Lot 4	Michel Bernard Cantrell	7,900
Lot 5	Pierre Oscar Peyrous	6,900
Lot 6	Joseph Sauvinet	6,200
Lot 7	Jacques Chalaron	6,100
Lot 8	Marie Manette St. Amand	5,900
Lot 9	Auguste Veavant & Pierre Forestier	7,600
Lot 10	Pierre Denis de la Ronde	6,200
Lot 12	Joseph Sauvinet	6,000
Lot 14	Albert Pierna	6,100

Table II-3: Division of Slaves between Louis and Hilaire St. Amand in1833 (C. Pollock, February 18, 1833, New Orleans Notarial Archives)

To Louis St. Amand	Age	
Petite Louis	40	$ 500
Louis	39	500
Gros Louis	42	700
George, a mulatto	36	700
(Tiauba)	35	500
(Medor)	30	200
Petite Baptiste	16	500
Marie Noel	30	400
Marie Anne	40	500
Julie, daughter of Marie Anne	16	300
Belisaire, son of Marie Anne	13	200
Jacques	44	400
Bernard	11	200
Pierre Bonaparte	35	800
(Fine)	14	300
Hyacine	8	200
		$6,900

To Hilaire St. Amand		
John	24	$ 600
Pitou	35	500
Noel Perry	40	500
(Iales), a mulatto	38	1,500
Isadore	32	400
Noel Franchonette	40	300
Petit Ben	18	600
Marie Joseph	36	500
Charles	14	300
Etienne	12	200
		$5,900

As indicated by the name "Battle Ground" Plantation, the area was recognized as an important historic landmark and was visited by travelers to the New Orleans area.[53] One such visitor was Harriet Martineau, who came to the site of the Battle of New Orleans subsequent to the St. Amand subdivision:

> We were taken to the Battle ground, the native soil of General Jackson's political growth. Seeing the Battle ground was all very well; but my delight was in the drive to it, with the Mississippi on the right hand, and on the left gardens of roses which bewildered the imagination . . . . One villa built by an Englishman was obstinately inappropriate to the scene and climate;—red brick, without gallery, or even eaves or porch,—the mere sight of it was scorching. All the rest were an entertainment to the eye as they stood, white and cool, amidst their flowering magnolias, and their blossoming alleys, hedges, and thickets of roses. In returning, we alighted at one of these delicious retreats, and wandered about, losing each other among the thorns, the ceringas, and the wilderness of shrubs. We met in a grotto, under the summer-house, cool with a greenish light, and veiled at its entrance with a tracery of creepers. . . . The canes in the sugar grounds were showing themselves above the soil; young sprouts that one might almost see grow. . . . The Battle-ground is rather more than four miles from the city. We were shown the ditch and the swamp by which the field of action was bounded on two sides, and some remains of the breast-work of earth which was thrown up.[54]

Louis died several years after Hilaire. Unfortunately, the Civil Court records in New Orleans do not contain the successions of either brother. However, the partition of Louis's real property in 1841 among his three surviving sisters is recorded. This document shows that by the time of his death, Louis's land was reduced to one-arpent tracts, one of which was the parcel purchased from Dame Destrehan in 1834. A plat of this partition shows that by 1841, much of the former plantation of Louis and Hilaire was in the possession of two of their sisters: Manette and Felicite Orsol, widow of Antoine Paillet. This no doubt resulted from the settlement of the St. Amand brothers' debts to their sister Manette, as well as from the earlier settlement of Hilaire's estate.

As shown in Figure II-10, each of three surviving sisters received two-thirds of an arpent as a result of this partition. The act also specified that the

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53 *Louisiana Courier*, March 7, 1832.

54 Harriet Martineau, *Restrospect of Western Travel* (2 vols.; London: Saunders and Otley, 1838), II, pp. 155-57.

"house, the buildings, the negro cabins, and other dependencies" were located on Lot 4, which was partitioned between Manette and Genevieve.[55] Figure II-11 shows that these structures actually were on both Lots 4 and 5. It also shows that the great-house complex was downriver on the land held by Manette, and that the house referred to in the act probably was the overseer's dwelling. During these proceedings, Manette acted as attorney-in-fact for her sisters living in St. Landry Parish and in France.

The property descriptions for the partitioned parcels also are notable, as the properties are measured off of the public road rather than the river:

> One of said lots, bounded, according to said map, on one side by the property of Eulalie Peyroux, and on the other by that of the said Manette St. Amand, designated on said map under No. 1, measuring 180 feet, fronting on the public road . . . . And the other lot, designated on said map as No. 4, measuring 182 feet fronting on the public road . . . plus the rights of the succession of said Louis St. Amand to the Batture which exists before said two lots and which do not appear on the plan . . . .[56]

This indicates that by 1841 the public, or levee, road was a significant feature in the landscape. Unfortunately, no details as to its construction could be found.

By the end of 1841, then, all of what had been the Chalmet Plantation had been divided into small tracts, none of which were large enough for profitable cane cultivation. These tracts subsequently were used for residential purposes, for gardens, and for commercial uses. The ownership and use of these subdivided parcels is discussed below.

55 C. V. Toulon, December 13, 1841, New Orleans Notarial Archives.

56 *Ibid.*

LOT 1: THE ALICE CENAS BEAUREGARD PARCEL

Lot 1 of the subdivision of Louis and Hilaire St. Amand's plantation (Figure II-9) was purchased by Theophile Wiltz on April 10, 1832.[57] Wiltz did not retain ownership for long, and the following January he sold it to Auguste and Etienne Villavaso for $3,900.00.[58] Figure II-3 shows the structural improvements to the property during Villavaso's ownership; these probably included a residence and two attendant structures. Unfortunately, at this point in the property history, there is a break in the chain of title for Lot 1, probably due to the loss of early St. Bernard Parish conveyance records. The next owner recorded for the property was Mrs. Celeste Cantrelle; the Cantrelle and Villavaso families were related. Members of both families are recorded as owning the adjoining downriver property during the mid-1800s. In addition, Lise Cantrelle, the granddaughter of Michel Cantrelle of St. James Parish, married Etienne Villavaso.[59] Thus, it may be assumed that Celeste Cantrelle received the property from Villavaso, probably after 1849 when the latter purchased the Rodriguez tract.[60]

Octave Cantrelle, the administrator of the succession of Celeste Cantrelle, sold the property to Jose Antonio Fernandez Lineros in St. Bernard Parish on September 24, 1866. The year before, Fernandez Lineros had purchased the adjoining downriver parcel, Lot 2, from the Michel B. Cantrelle family. This latter parcel included the structure that would become known as the Beauregard House, and it was there that Fernandez Lineros made his home. Fernandez Lineros both expanded and renovated this residence during the late 1860s.

Fernandez Lineros's fortunes declined during the 1870s, and in 1873 he sold Lot 1 to Carmen Ribas, the wife separated in property from Auguste Lesseps. Ribas was a relative, since Fernandez's wife was Carmen Lesseps. The consideration for the sale was $4,000.00.[61] The Lesseps family resided in Plaquemines Parish, rather than on the property acquired from Fernandez Lineros.

Two years later, Ribas sold the parcel to her son, Auguste Lesseps, Jr., for $4,000.00.[62] During his ownership, Auguste evidently let the property decay, since nine years later, at the date of its sale to A. E. Livaudais, the property

57 C. Pollock, April 10, 1832, New Orleans Notarial Archives.

58 Conveyance Office Book (COB) 11, Folio 340, Orleans Parish.

59 T. Seghers, December 17, 1834, New Orleans Notarial Archives.

60 F. Percy, April 25, 1849, New Orleans Notarial Archives.

61 G. Le Gardeur, April 13, 1875, New Orleans Notarial Archives.

62 *Ibid.*

brought only $2,500.00.[63] Livaudais sold the property one year later to Octave Toca for the same price.[64] On September 24, 1888, Toca sold the property to the wife of the owner of the Beauregard House, Rene T. Beauregard.[65] Beauregard was the son of the Confederate General P. G. T. Beauregard. This purchase of Lot 1 enabled the two lots to be rejoined as they had been during Fernandez's ownership. The two lots remained in the possession of the Beauregard family until 1904, when both parcels were sold to the New Orleans Terminal Company. The consideration for this sale was $9,500.00, a $6,500.00 increase over its price of sixteen years before.[66] Figures II-4 and II-12 suggest that one small residential structure survived on Lot 1 into the twentieth century.

LOT 2: THE R. T. BEAUREGARD PARCEL

Lot 2 was sold to Alexander Baron (Figure II-9) by the St. Amands.[67] This is the parcel on which the Beauregard House still stands. Its history has been described thoroughly in Francis Wilshin, "The Rene Beauregard House" (1952), in Samuel Wilson, Jr., "The Rene Beauregard House: An Architectural Survey Report" (1956), and in Jerome Greene, *Historic Resource Study, Chalmette Unit, Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve* (1985).

LOTS 3, 4, AND 5: THE BATTLE GROUND SAWMILL

Lots 3 and 4 of the St. Amand Plantation, each one -arpent front by eighty arpents in depth, were purchased by Michel Bernard Cantrelle, a member of one of the first families of St. James Parish. The lots (Figure II-9) were purchased for $7,300.00 and for $7,900.00, respectively.[68] Zimpel's 1834 plan of New Orleans and vicinity shows that, although the property title was held by Cantrelle, the property was utilized both by Cantrelle and by Villavaso (II-3). In fact, Villavaso and Cantrelle also were related. It was during this period of land tenure that the "Battle Ground Sawmill" was established and began operation. Figure II-3 shows the structures on the Cantrelle and Villavaso lots; the two largest structures probably represent the mill and warehouse, while the smaller structure that fronts the public road was probably an office.

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63 G. Le Gardeur, June 25, 1884, New Orleans Notarial Archives.

64 P. A. Conrad, June 25, 1885, New Orleans Notarial Archives.

65 E. A. Peyroux, September 24, 1888, New Orleans Notarial Archives.

66 H. G. Defour, November 28, 1904, New Orleans Notarial Archives.

67 C. Pollock, April 10, 1832, New Orleans Notarial Archives.

68 *Ibid.*

Michel Martin Villavaso received this property from the succession of Michel B. Cantrelle in 1845, along with slaves and certain bank shares. Cantrelle's succession was opened in St. James Parish, and the property was purchased there by Villavaso from Joseph Cantrelle. Prior to this purchase, Villavaso possessed an undivided one-quarter share of the two properties.[69] The record of this former act was destroyed by fire, as was the record of the 1868 Sheriff's Sale ordered by the Second Judicial District Court in the matter of the succession of Marie Josephine Cantrelle, the wife of Michel Martin Villavaso (#584). The result of this latter sale was the purchase by Charles Dahlgren of the "Battle Ground Sawmill," which, by that time, also included Lot 5. The consideration for this sale was $30,500.00.[70]

Lot 5 originally had been purchased by Pierre Oscar Peyroux, a New Orleans merchant, from Louis and Hilaire St. Amand for $6,900.00 (Figure II-9). On March 16, 1835, Peyroux sold the property to Constance Peyroux, along with 132 shares of stock in the Citizens Bank of Louisiana, for $18,000.00.[71] On February 16, 1844, the Citizens Bank of Louisiana brought suit against Constance Peyroux.[72] The Citizens Bank of Louisiana held a mortgage against Lot 5; in addition, Constance Peyroux had taken additional loans against her stock. After she refused repayment of these notes, a writ of *Fieri Facias* was ordered and the property was sold at a Sheriff's Sale to Marie Aimie Caraby, the wife of Pierre Oscar Peyroux.[73] Caraby then sold the property to Michel Martin Villavaso on March 31, 1853, for $3,590.00.[74] The great reduction in the value of the property in the twenty years following subdivision suggests that much of the original value of the property derived from stands of timber and that structural improvements, if any, were relatively insignificant assets. This hypothesis is supported by Figure II-3, which shows only one small structure on the property.

When the sawmill property was sold during settlement of the succession of Marie Josephine Cantrelle, the property measured three-arpents front by eighty in depth. Figure II-13 shows the three-arpent tract about the time of Cantrelle's death. Improvements to the property included a large steam-driven sawmill, which also had a grist and flour mill and a lathe. There was a storehouse for corn, a forge, a house for the engineer, a house for the clerks, and housing for the mill's employees. There was a large hospital on the site, and a substantial residential

69 C. Boudousquie, December 30, 1846, New Orleans Notarial Archives.

70 J. Strawbridge, June 26, 1868, New Orleans Notarial Archives.

71 T. Seghers, March 16, 1835, New Orleans Notarial Archives.

72 #23107, First Judicial District Court, Orleans Parish.

73 *Ibid.*

74 A. Boudousquie, March 31, 1853, New Orleans Notarial Archives.

complex that included a very large great house, a kitchen, two pigeonnaires, servants' quarters, a wash house, a coach house, a henhouse, and privies.[75] It should be added that the sawmill was very successful, and that it was patronized by prominent New Orleans architects such as James Gallier, Jr., who ultimately married the Villavaso's daughter.

Dahlgren, who purchased the sawmill property and shares of stock in the Citizens Bank of Louisiana at the Sheriff's Sale following the death of Marie Cantrelle, sold both in 1868 to Mary A. C. Packwood for $30,500.00, his original purchase price.[76] Packwood donated both the stock and the property to Sarah Ainsworth Packwood, the wife of Dr. Richard Packwood.[77]

Once again, the property was held only for a short time, and Packwood sold it, along with the remaining shares in Citizens Bank, to Mary Atkins Lynch in January 1871. The price of this sale was $22,500.00, indicating devaluation in the stock, the real property, or both.[78] It is possible that the sawmill had not been maintained adequately during this period of rapid change in ownership.

Mary Atkins Lynch, the wife of John Lynch, the Surveyor General of Louisiana, sold the "Battle Ground Sawmill" to the Board of Control of Louisiana Agricultural and Mechanical College on March 30, 1875, for $20,555.00.[79] The following June, an advertisement in the *New Orleans Times* solicited proposals for buildings to be erected on the site. This suggests that few of the structures formerly located on the property survived into the 1870s. At that time, then, the name for the property, the "Battle Ground Sawmill," no longer described the property per se, but rather referred to its history.

Structures were not built on the property by the college, however, and the Citizens Bank of Louisiana, which held many of the Agricultural and Mechanical College's mortgages during the period, brought suit against the school.[80] The

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75 "Note for the inventory of the Succession of the late Marie Josephine Cantrelle, spouse of Michel Martin Villavaso," in Samuel Wilson, Jr., to the writer, 1984.

76 J. Strawbridge, June 26, 1868, New Orleans Notarial Archives.

77 *Ibid.*

78 O. Moral, January 28, 1871, New Orleans Notarial Archives.

79 A. Hero, March 30, 1875, New Orleans Notarial Archives.

80 See R. Christopher Goodwin, Jill-Karen Yakubik, and Peter A. Gendel, "Historic Archeology at Star and Bourbon Plantations" (unpublished manuscript dated 1983, submitted to the Corps of Engineers, New Orleans District, Contract No. DACW29-83-M-0521).

bank acquired the property at public sale on October 1, 1881. In November of that year, the bank sold the property for $10,000.00 to Lycurgus Holt Wooten.[81]

In June 1885, Wooten sold the property to Pamela Rentrop, the wife of Dr. John Rhodes. The Rhodes were separate in property, according to a judgment by the District Court for the Parish of St. Mary in 1873. Both resided in Caldwell Parish.[82] The map in Figure II-4, which is dated 1874 but was actually drafted during the 1890s, shows the property under Pamela Rhodes's ownership. A fenced yard is shown surrounding what probably were the Rhodes's residence and two dependencies. Five small buildings are shown immediately upriver from the residential complex. Some, if not all, of these were built during the operation of the mill by Cantrelle and Villavaso. These smaller structures were located on Lot 3, and no improvements are shown on Lot 5.

In 1896, Captain LaFayette Jacks of Plaquemines Parish brought suit against Dr. John Rhodes before the Twenty-Second Judicial District Court of the Parish of St. Bernard (#453). At that time, the Rhodes were residents of St. Bernard. Dr. Rhodes had borrowed money from Captain Jacks, mortgaging his wife's property as security. Since Rhodes could not meet his debt, the property was seized and sold at a Sheriff's Sale on November 14, 1896, for $7,000.00.[83]

Jacks later donated the property to his daughter, Anna Jane, the wife of James M. McMillan.[84] However, in 1903 the New Orleans Terminal Company, formerly known as the New Orleans and San Francisco Railroad Company, decided to build a terminal for the handling of its export and import business in St. Bernard Parish. The tract for the terminal was to extend from the "lower side of the New Orleans Belt and Terminal Company, known as 'Chalmette', to the lower limits of the City of New Orleans."[85] The Jacks property was part of this area, which comprised

> A certain tract of land known as the "Battle Ground Sawmills", together with all the buildings and improvements thereon . . . situated in the Parish of St. Bernard in this state on the left bank of the Mississippi River at about 3/4 of a mile below the City of New Orleans, measuring three arpents front on the said Mississippi River by eighty arpents in depth between parallel lines, and

81 A. Pitot, Jr., November 30, 1887, New Orleans Notarial Archives.

82 J. Eustis, June 26, 1885, New Orleans Notarial Archives.

83 COB 19, Folio 72, St. Bernard Parish.

84 G. Le Gardeur, June 23, 1899, New Orleans Notarial Archives.

85 #601, Twenty-Ninth Judicial District Court, St. Bernard Parish.

> composed of three lots designated by the numbers three, four, and five on a plan drawn by A. d'Hemecourt . . . each of said lots has one arpent front on said river, three being bounded on the upper line by the lot Number two, now the property of R. T. Beauregard, to which it is contiguous as far as the point marked "D" on said plan and thence to its rear line by the Prevost Plantation now owned by the State of Louisiana, and known as "Chalmette Monument Property," . . . and lot number five being bounded . . . on the lower side by the property formerly belonging to H. C. Delery and now to Fazende Lane and by the property now owned by Jean Marie Couget.[86]

Structures on the property consisted of a frame building where the overseer apparently resided and several small outbuildings. Figure II-12 shows a small residence in a grove of pecan trees on the property. This may represent the frame structure mentioned above.

Anna Jacks agreed to sell the property to the New Orleans Terminal Company, but her asking price was high. The New Orleans Terminal Company petitioned the Court that

> [the] petitioner cannot agree with the owners of said property as to the price to be paid for the purchase thereof, and the said Mrs. Anna J. McMillan cannot make title thereto on account of the dangers resulting from the possible revindication of this said donation at the death of the donor . . . .[87]

The company requested that the property be expropriated and that the owners be paid for any damages resulting from the expropriation. The court found in favor of the plaintiffs, and Anna and Captain Jacks were paid $27,500.00 for the property.[88] The New Orleans Terminal Company almost immediately leased sixteen acres of the land to Vincent and Paul Guerra for the calendar year 1904.[89]

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86 COB 20, Folio 241, St. Bernard Parish.

87 #601, Twenty-Ninth Judicial District Court, St. Bernard Parish.

88 H. G. Dufour, December 7, 1903, New Orleans Notarial Archives.

89 COB 20, Folio 280, St. Bernard Parish.

LOT 6: FAZENDEVILLE

The chain of title for Lot 6 is unclear for the first half of the nineteenth century. It was numbered Lot 6 and sold to Joseph Sauvinet in 1832 by the St. Amand brothers (Figure II-9),[90] but it almost immediately was returned to Hilaire St. Amand. The latter died in 1833; as Zimpel's 1834 map indicates, the tract was sold to Louis Bartholemy Chauvin Delery soon after (Figure II-3). At that time, a new house stood on the property. It had six apartments, five of them with fireplaces.[91] Figure II-3 indicates that there were at least four other structures. The property passed to Celeste Destrehan, wife of Prosper Marigny, and it was repurchased by Louis St. Amand in 1834.[92] The property devolved to the possession of Felicite Orsol, the widow of Antoine Paillet, in 1841, at the partition of Louis St. Amand's estate among his three sisters and heirs (Figure II-10).[93] However, Felicite only received two-thirds of the property at this date, while the other third was adjudicated to Manette St. Amand. The latter undoubtedly had control of the property, since, as noted previously, she was attorney-in-fact for Felicite, who resided in St. Landry Parish. The next indication of ownership dates from 1854, when the entire one-arpent tract, including the parcels of both Felicite and Manette, is listed as part of the succession of Jean Pierre Fazende, a free man of color who was a resident of New Orleans and who died in Plaquemines Parish. Fazende's wife predeceased him; she was Catiche Paillet, Felicite's daughter. In the absence of positive documentation, Catiche Paillet appears to have received two-thirds of the property from her mother, and the other or lowermost third either through purchase or from her mother's prior inheritance of the parcel from her Aunt Manette.

Fazende's succession provides every indication that an inventory of his estate was taken, but it is not included in the probate record.[94] His son, Jean Pierre Fazende, a New Orleans grocer, received the parcel as part of his inheritance when the estate was settled ca. 1857.[95] There is no indication that the younger Fazende took any interest in the property prior to the late 1860s, when he had that portion of his property nearest to the river subdivided (Figure II-8). He began selling the lots in the 1870s. Figure II-4 shows that residences were constructed on these lots before the end of the nineteenth century, and

90 C. Pollock, April 10, 1832, New Orleans Notarial Archives.

91 Samuel Wilson, Jr., to the writer, 1984.

92 O. de Armas, November 20, 1834, New Orleans Notarial Archives.

93 C. V. Toulon, December 31, 1841, New Orleans Notarial Archives.

94 #7849-7958, Second District Court, Orleans Parish.

95 COB 16, Folio 160, St. Bernard Parish.

Figure II-14 demonstrates that these were extant until relatively recently. The following year he sold the back portion of his property to Joseph Altamar Fazende, a New Orleans baker, for $1,200.[96]

This latter tract was turned over rapidly during the next few years. J. A. Fazende sold it in March 1887 to Henry Thoele, a New Orleans grocer, for $350.00.[97] The following year, Thoele made a profit of $150.00 when he sold the land to Jayme Frigola.[98] Frigola then sold the property to Jean Marie Couget in 1894.[99] Couget held the property until 1904, when she sold it to the New Orleans Terminal Company.[100] The property was described as improved; its location was specified

> At about three arpents above the U.S. Military Chalmette Cemetery, and forming part of the property known as "Fazende's property" and which Fazende's property is designated by the letter B on a plan drawn by A. J. d'Hemecourt (see Figure II-15, shaded section) . . . on 20th March 1878, now in the possession of P. A. d' Hemecourt . . . said tract of land measures 191′10″ front on a line parallel with the public road, said line being at a distance of 2031′ 10″ from the fence at the public road and having a depth of 13315′ 2″. . . .[101]

The property was located between that of Wooten (upriver side) and Hager (downriver side).

The vast majority of development took place, however, on the southern tract, which included the "Fazendeville" subdivision. Figure II-12 shows that in 1927 there was a house to the west of Fazendeville Road, to the south (riverward) of the subdivision. This was the residence of Harry Colomb.[102] The structure probably was built during the twentieth century, since it is not shown on the 1893-94 update of the 1874 Mississippi Commission Map (Figure II-4). Colomb's house stood at least until 1940 (Figure II-6). Across the road from Colomb's house was another residence and a store (Figure II-12); no further information on

96 COB 16, Folio 160, St. Bernard Parish.

97 F. Zengel, March 19, 1887, New Orleans Notarial Archives.

98 C. J. Theard, October 16, 1888, New Orleans Notarial Archives.

99 C. J. Theard, January 11, 1894, New Orleans Notarial Archives.

100 H. G. Dufour, December 6, 1904, New Orleans Notarial Archives.

101 *Ibid.*

102 Ted Birkedal to the writer, 1984.

these last two structures could be found, but they had been extant at least from the 1890s. This area is presently occupied by the St. Bernard Parish Sewage Treatment Plant.

The Fazendeville subdivision survived well into the twentieth century as an African American residential community (Figure II-14). This property was acquired and incorporated into the Chalmette Unit, Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve (Figure II-16).[103]

THE OLD BATTLE GROUND STORE

This one-arpent tract originally was numbered "11" in the 1832 St. Amand subdivision, but it was not sold at the auction sale (Figure II-9). Instead, it remained in the possession of the St. Amands. In 1833, Manette St. Amand bought her brother Louis's one-half share of the property.[104] In July of 1833, Manette and Hilaire St. Amand sold a small portion of this tract to Joaquim Dominguez for $1,000.00 (Figure II-10):

> That piece or parcel of ground situate, lying and being part of the said Parish of St. Bernard, about five miles below the city, on the left Bank of the River Mississippi, having French measure of sixty feet front on the public road by one hundred and twenty feet, commencing at the upper limit of the plantation belonging to said sellers, where it adjoins land belonging to Mr. Delery and running downriver for a distance . . . together with all the improvements of said thereon, and all right of said Sellers to the Batture in front of said lot.[105]

After Hilaire's death in 1833, Manette became sole owner of the remainder of this tract; she held it until at least 1841 (Figure II-10). Subsequently, Dominguez acquired the property from her estate.[106] However, all the improvements to the property were on the tract Dominguez purchased in 1833. Figure II-3 shows that two structures were located on this property at least as early as the 1830s.

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103 Papers relating to the acquisition of Fazendeville, in the files of the Chalmette Unit, Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve.

104 C. Pollock, February 18, 1833, New Orleans Notarial Archives.

105 C. Pollock, July 24, 1883, New Orleans Notarial Archives.

106 A. Dreyfous, August 30, 1867, New Orleans Notarial Archives.

After Dominguez died, an inventory of his estate was made by the Second Judicial District Court of St. Bernard. Unfortunately, that record was destroyed in the courthouse fire. However, other records indicate that a family meeting was called in 1856 for the benefit of the deceased's minor children: Joaquim, Gilbert, Hypolite, and Oneida. At this time, it was decided to adjudicate the property to Dominguez's widow, Marie Estopinal, for the price given in the inventory, that is, $5,000.00 for the two lots and $150.00 for the furniture. Clearly, the Dominguez family was in residence on the property at this time, and they apparently continued to live there.[107] On August 30, 1867, Estopinal sold the property to Mrs. Clara Menttel Bitterwolf for $3,900.00.

Xavier Bitterwolf and his wife, Clara, were separate in property by judgment of the Fifth District Court of New Orleans on October 18, 1856. However, it seemed that they both had ownership in this property, since in 1871 they sold both parcels to John Smith.[108] Smith sold the property to Peter Henry Grun of New Orleans in 1878.[109] Grun sold the larger portion of the property, which was unimproved, to Gottlieb Christian Friedrich Grun in February of 1880, but then rescinded the sale the following November.[110] Two years later, Peter Henry Grun sold the property to John Hager, Sr., a manufacturer's agent in New Orleans.[111]

Hager apparently took up residence on the property and opened a store there. On his death, the property became vested in his widow, Mary Baden, and his children: John Jr.; William; Adolphe; Robert; George; and Mary, the wife of Frank Kraemer. Rather than undertake the expense of a partition, Hager's heirs held a compromise sale in 1896, when this St. Bernard property came into possession of John, Jr., and William Hager.[112] The Hager brothers subsequently offered the property for sale:

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107 *Ibid.*

108 A. Dreyfous, March 20, 1871, New Orleans Notarial Archives.

109 A. Dreyfous, March 22, 1878, New Orleans Notarial Archives.

110 J. Cohn, February 5, 1880, New Orleans Notarial Archives.

111 A. Dreyfous, March 30, 1882, New Orleans Notarial Archives.

112 F. Dreyfous, July 22, 1896, New Orleans Notarial Archives.

Business Stand
Garden & Timber Land
The Celebrated
"Old Battle Ground Store"

> This property is one of the best patronized stores in St. Bernard parish. It contains a large store, one room, kitchen, and two small storerooms downstairs, and four plastered rooms above. There is a fine stable, chicken-house and all other buildings. The property fronts on the Mississippi River for 197 feet, and runs back to a depth of eighty arpents. Twenty-eight acres are clear, and twelve under cultivation; the balance finely timbered with maple and cypress. There are about three acres of standing corn, okra, and young sweet potatoes. The property is further enhanced by five fig trees, fifteen pecans, peach, orange, plum, and grapes. The water supply is drawn from a fine well, curbed and bricked, and cisterns. The Port Chalmette and Shell Beach Roads run through the property; only one mile from the slaughter house, and one from the new and growing port of Chalmette.[113]

Figure II-4 shows two structures on this tract; these undoubtedly are the store and an outbuilding. It seems that the store did not survive into the twentieth century. Although a store is shown in Figure II-12, it is adjacent to the Fazendeville Road, and therefore is located on Lot 6, the Fazendeville Tract, and thus upriver from the site of the Battle Ground Store. The property was sold to John B. Esnard, a New Orleans lottery agent, on August 26, 1896, and a plat was attached to this act of sale (Figure II-17).[114]

On September 21, 1903, the property was acquired by Louis L. Stanton, Jr., who subsequently sold this and other lands to the New Orleans Terminal Company.[115]

113 Hunter C. Leake, September 21, 1896, New Orleans Notarial Archives.

114 *Ibid.*

115 COB 20, Folio 209, St. Bernard Parish; COB 20, Folio 251, St. Bernard Parish.

THE BERTRAND TRACT

Louis St. Amand died sometime prior to the end of 1841, leaving three heirs: Manette St. Amand, Genevieve St. Amand, and Felicite Orsol. Genevieve was the wife of Jacques Julien Charles Claude Quelquejue; Manette acted as her attorney-in-fact because the former resided in France. Felicite Orsol presumably was half sister to the St. Amand siblings. She was the widow of Antoine Paillet, a free man of color, and she lived in St. Landry Parish.[116]

The partition of Louis's estate among his sisters included a plat showing the landholdings of each (Figure II-10). This plat shows that Lot 2 (Figure II-11) was in the possession of the widow of Antoine Paillet (Figure II-10) in 1841, and she probably received it as part of Hilaire St. Amand's succession after 1833. She continued to hold this property in absentia until her death, and it was part of her succession which was settled in St. Landry Parish in 1869. There, the probate court ordered Thomas L. Maxwell, Sheriff of Orleans Parish, to auction the Widow Paillet's property.[117]

The lot was acquired by Juan Fernandez at the estate sale on July 26, 1869. The property was described as being one-arpent front on the Mississippi River, by a depth of eighty arpents. The property was bounded on the upper side by the land belonging to the heirs of Joaquim Dominguez and on the lower side by the land of Charles Rixner.[118]

Fernandez's wife, Marie Salvant, died in St. Bernard Parish, and on December 21, 1893, the Twenty-Second Judicial District Court for St. Bernard placed her estate, including her husband's St. Bernard Parish property, in possession of her heirs. "Building and improvements" of unspecified types were located on the property at this date, although no structures are shown on the 1874 Mississippi River Commission Map, which was drafted in the 1890s (Figure II-4).[119] The only structures that were built on this property, according to map data, are two twentieth-century residences (Figures II-11, II-18), one of which was removed in 1927 (Figure II-19).

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116 C. V. Toulon, December 13, 1841, New Orleans Notarial Archives.

117 J. Duvigneaud, December 10, 1896, New Orleans Notarial Archives.

118 *Ibid.*

119 Succession of Marie Salvant, wife of Jean (Juan) Fernandez, #407, Twenty-Second Judicial District Court, St. Bernard Parish.

Fernandez did not long survive his wife, however, and on May 16, 1896, his children and heirs were placed in possession of his estate.[120] Later that same year, Josephine Fernandez, the wife of Jean Baptiste d'Auterive; Juana Fernandez, the wife of John Hier; Eve Fernandez, the wife of Louis Bollinger; Philomena Fernandez, the wife of (Enguerand) d'Auterive; and Innocented Fernandez, the widow of Anthony Frenchus, sold to Thomas Leo Bertrand, a resident of Plaquemines Parish, the one-by-eighty tract of land they had inherited from their parents.[121] In 1903, the property was purchased by L. L. Stanton, who subsequently sold this and other property to the New Orleans Terminal Company.[122]

THE NATIONAL MILITARY CEMETERY

This parcel, which measured slightly less than three arpents, remained in the possession of the St. Amands after the 1832 partition. It included the land on which a residence and slave-quarters complexes stood (Figures II-3, II-8). Louis St. Amand's undivided half of this property passed to his sister Manette in 1833.[123] Later that year, Hilaire died. It was probably at the time of the settling of Hilaire's succession that the three, approximately one-arpent, parcels that became the military cemetery were purchased/inherited by different individuals. The parcel which was the farthest upriver of these three, Lot 3 in Figure II-11, had no structure on it and came into the possession of Etienne Villavaso, one of the owners of the Battle Ground Sawmill. The adjacent property, Lot 4 in Figure II-11, included a plantation house and several slave cabins. This came into the possession of Louis St. Amand. Lot 5 in Figure II-11 included slave cabins and may have contained the sugarhouse. This came into the possession of Manette St. Amand. In 1841, both Villavaso and Manette still held their respective lots (Figure II-10). Louis St. Amand's one-arpent tract had been partitioned between his two sisters, with Genevieve Quelquejue receiving the upper two-thirds arpent and Manette receiving the lower one-third arpent (Figure II-10). As stated before, Genevieve lived in France, and Manette was her agent in Louisiana and had

120 Succession of Juan Fernandez, #455, Twenty-Second Judicial District Court, St. Bernard Parish.

121 J. Duvigneaud, December 12, 1896, New Orleans Notarial Archives.

122 COB 20, Folio 233, St. Bernard Parish; COB 20, Folio 251, St. Bernard Parish.

123 C. Pollock, February 18, 1833, New Orleans Notarial Archives.

control over both of these tracts. Since she also possessed the adjacent downriver property (Figure II-10), which included the St. Amand great-house complex (Figure II-3), it is probable that Manette continued to manage this land as a farm, as indicated by her listing as a "gardener" in the 1842 New Orleans City Directory.

The next indication of the ownership of these properties occurs in 1859, when J. G. Bienvenu, a New Orleans notary public, sold all three properties to Charles Rixner. Two years later, on November 11, 1861, Rixner sold these three lots, measuring a total of about two and two-thirds arpents, to the City of New Orleans. The property was eighty arpents deep and was bounded by the properties of the Widow Paillet and the late C. V. Hurtubise.[124] The price of the sale was $11,520.00. As no conveyances in Orleans Parish record a sale by Manette St. Amand or sale to J. G. Bienvenu, we must assume that the intervening conveyances were lost in the St. Bernard Parish Courthouse fire.

Figure II-8 shows the present park area as of 1867. The land which composed the lots marked "United States Military Cemetery" and "Property of the City of New Orleans" included Lots 3, 4, and 5 (Figure II-11). Clearly, the three lots have been bisected; hence, the lot marked as the "Property of the City of New Orleans" (Figure II-8) is comprised of Lot 3 and the western half of Lot 4 (Figure II-11), while the cemetery parcel is comprised of the eastern half of Lot 4 and Lot 5 (Figure II-11). Thus, the sites of the St. Amand slave quarters, overseer's house, and industrial complex lie within the present boundaries of the park, and the majority of the cabins and the postulated "sugar house" are within the present site of the military cemetery. The remains of the St. Amand great-house complex can be seen downriver from the Military Cemetery (Figure II-11).

Figure II-4 shows these properties at the end of the nineteenth century: four structures are shown on the cemetery tract; these include the cemetery caretaker's house and dependencies.[125] This former structure remained in existence until 1928, when a levee setback removed the southernmost portion of the cemetery (Figures II-12, II-19).

Three structures were on the property owned by the City of New Orleans in the late nineteenth century (Figure II-4). None of these are related to the St. Amand structures formerly located on Lot 4 (Figure II-11). One of the two

124 C. E. Fortier, November 11,1861, New Orleans Notarial Archives.

125 Ted Birkedal to the writer, 1984.

southernmost structures apparently was a powder magazine that had been extant at least since 1872 and most probably dated to the Civil War.[126] A plat of the property from this date shows the magazine as the only structure on the parcel. However, directly to the north of the powderhouse was a cemetery used by the Freedmen's Bureau for the burial of African American soldiers.[127] The remaining two structures shown on the 1893-94 edition of the 1874 Mississippi River Commission Map (Figure II-4), therefore, must have been constructed at the close of the nineteenth century and are undoubtedly functionally associated with the magazine and/or the cemetery.

SUMMARY OF TWENTIETH-CENTURY CONSOLIDATION

The majority of lots from the original Chalmet Plantation ultimately became the possession of the New Orleans Terminal Company in the first few years of the twentieth century, except Fazendeville and the National Military Cemetery, here (Figure II-20) including the property formerly listed as belonging to the City of New Orleans. The company had the intention of building terminals on the site and acquired these extensive landholdings for that reason. In 1949, the New Orleans Terminal Company sold the properties in Lots 1 through 5 (Figure II-9) to the State Parks Commission of Louisiana for $100,000.00.[128] By the end of the year, the State Parks Commission of Louisiana turned the property over to the United States government.[129]

The downriver parcels that had been acquired by the New Orleans Terminal Company were sold to Kaiser Aluminum and Chemical Corporation in 1953.[130] In 1960, Kaiser Aluminum donated this property to the United States government.[131] Once the last remaining lots of the Fazendeville subdivision had been acquired in 1965, all the property from the Rodriguez Plantation to the National Military Cemetery, with the exception of the small inholding occupied by the St. Bernard Parish Sewage Treatment Plant, came under government control.

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126 Carl Gaines to the writer, 1984.

127 *Ibid.*

128 Watts K. Leverich, March 14, 1949,.New Orleans Notarial Archives.

129 P. M. Flanagan, November 28, 1949, New Orleans Notarial Archives.

130 COB 57, Folio 283, St. Bernard Parish.

131 COB 85, Folio 435, St. Bernard Parish.

CHAPTER 13

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

Despite gaps in the documentary record of the Chalmette Unit, Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve, a fairly complete history of occupation of the area has resulted from this research effort. Three major periods are recognized. The early period, prior to ca. 1835, is characterized by an emphasis on plantation agriculture. Indigo plantations were typical of the area in the colonial period. With the beginning of the American period, sugar cultivation was rapidly adopted. The exception to this pattern is the Rodriguez tract, which although referred to as a "plantation," was too small for mono-crop agriculture.

The second period, ca. 1835-1900, postdates the breakup of all of the St. Amand Plantation land included in the park holdings (which presumably occurred after Hilaire St. Amand's death in 1833). During this second period, the area exhibited a surprisingly diverse range of occupations, including country estates (such as the R.T. Beauregard House and lot), "tract" housing (Fazendeville) , commercial endeavors (the Old Battle Ground Store), and industrial development (the Battle Ground Saw Mill). During the third period (post-1900), the area was first consolidated by the New Orleans Terminal Company and later by the National Park Service.

Two major occupations can be identified during the Plantation period: the Chalmet Plantation and related structures (Figure II-2) and the St. Amand Plantation and related structures (Figure II-3, II-11). Unfortunately, nothing is known about the structural improvements to the land during the colonial period. However, the kinds of remains likely to be recovered from plantation occupations can be inferred. Residential areas on plantations included the great house, the overseer's house, and the slave quarters. These areas were not necessarily adjacent to each other; for example, a quarters area next to the great house would have housed domestics, while quarters for field hands would have been near the sugar mill. If viewed archeologically, these areas would consist primarily of structural remains and of habitation refuse, such as ceramics, glass, faunal remains, etc. Areas of animal husbandry, such as stables and barns, might be recognized archeologically by tools, tack, and other hardware associated with stock, including remains of blacksmithing activities. Industrial areas of the plantation would be associated with more massive structural remains, tools, machinery parts, and the by-products of manufacturing, such as bagasse.

We may summarize the archeological potential of the park as follows:

1) It has been hypothesized that the Rodriguez House standing at the time of the Battle of New Orleans was damaged and was later replaced with a second structure.[1] Nothing has been recovered in the documentary record to support this hypothesis. The similarity between the structures shown in the Latour 1815 plan (Figure II-2) and the Zimpel 1834 map (Figure II-3) suggest this was not the case. However, the later structure may have been constructed on the foundation of the earlier Rodriguez House. This was a common occurrence in the New Orleans area.[2] Also, the archeological evidence tends to support this hypothesis.[3]

2) Structural remains associated with the Chalmet Plantation were located downriver from the National Military Cemetery (Figure II-2, II-7). Consequently, there is little possibility of recovering remains from this occupation within the park.

3) The St. Amand great-house complex also was located downriver from the cemetery. The plantation quarters, lesser residential structures, and the industrial area of the site were located within the present National Military Cemetery, the southern portion much of which has been lost as a result of levee setbacks over the years (Figures II-1, II-11, II-19, II-20). Therefore, the likelihood of recovery of a large portion of remains from the St. Amand Plantation within the park is not great.

4) Archeological remains associated with residential structures are anticipated between the Rodriguez Canal and the Beauregard House. One structure, possibly dating from the 1830s, survived on Lot 1 until the early twentieth century (Figures II-1, II-3, II-9, II-12).

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1 Ted Birkedal to the writer, 1983.

2 R. Christopher Goodwin and Jill-Karen Yakubik, "Data Recovery at the New Orleans General Hospital Site, 16 OR 69" (unpublished manuscript dated 1982, submitted to the Division of Archeology, Department of Culture, Recreation, and Tourism, State of Louisiana).

3 Jill-Karen Yakubik, "Analysis of Historic Remains from Archeological Testing at the Site of the Rodriguez House, Chalmette National Historic Park" (unpublished report dated 1983 submitted to Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve).

5) Industrial remains associated with the Battle Ground Saw Mill would be expected to occur in the area between the Beauregard House and the St. Bernard Parish Sewage Treatment Plant (Lots 3, 4, and 5 on Figure II-11). These remains would be concentrated nearer to the Beauregard downriver property line, since Lots 3 and 4 were the first to be developed (Figure II-3). Late nineteenth-century habitation refuse, including remains from the Rhodes occupation, also may occur within this area.

6) The late nineteenth- and twentieth-century habitation remains of Fazendeville would be on the east side of Fazendeville Road, north of the St. Bernard Parish Sewage Treatment Plant. To the west of Fazendeville Road would be the twentieth-century remains of Harry Colomb's residence.

7) Two structures stood on the Old Battle Ground Store lot at least as early as 1833 (Figure II-3). These survived throughout the nineteenth century (Figure II-4). Their location would have been immediately downriver from the eastern property line of the Fazendeville tract. The site of these structures is likely to contain the only surviving remains of the St. Amand Plantation occupation (Figures II-3, II-11). It also is expected to contain later nineteenth-century habitation refuse and the remains of the Old Battle Ground Store.

8) Military remains are expected from the lot immediately to the west of the present cemetery. Two undefined structures from the late nineteenth century were also located in this area; it is suggested that these were also martial in nature. There is a possibility of recovering some surviving remains from the St. Amand Plantation along the eastern boundary of this lot as a result of its proximity to the plantation quarters, lesser residential complex, and industrial center.

Thus, the park property potentially includes a variety of different archeological remains. It is unfortunate that probably the most significant archeological remains, those from the St. Amand slave/overseer residential and industrial complexes, have little potential for recovery due to their location within the Military Cemetery property, part of which has already been impacted by a levee setback. Virtually nothing is known about the material culture of Louisiana's free people of color. The St. Amand Plantation, because of the circumstances of its history, would have provided the remains of an ante-bellum plantation owned and operated solely by free blacks. Examination of the remains of the slave residential area could have provided information on the diet and material culture provided to slaves of African American masters. However, the possibility of recovering such material should not be entirely excluded, since

some areas within the cemetery as it exists today have not been disturbed by burials.[4] There also may be surviving features or other remains in the adjacent lot to the west, just beyond the western wall of the cemetery.

Similarly, the remains of the Old Battle Ground Store lot also would be significant, since the only other structures from the St. Amand Plantation within the park itself were located here (Figures II-3, II-9, II-11). These probably were residential structures for either slaves or a watchman, positioned to enable the overseeing of the upriver plantation lands. Again, this area should provide information on life on an African American-owned plantation. Less important late nineteenth-century residential and commercial remains would also be recovered in this same land parcel.

It has been suggested above that the former property of the City of New Orleans, immediately west of the present cemetery, may include remains from the St. Amand Plantation. This area also is significant as it was the site of military activity after the Battle of New Orleans, as evidenced by the powder magazine. This structure dates to the Civil War, and other military features and materials from this period may also be revealed on this site. Also, the African American military cemetery potentially could provide forensic data for an interesting comparison to remains of African American slaves that have been recovered, such as those recently unearthed in the Vieux Carre in New Orleans. Finally, the documentary history for this area in and around the Chalmette National Military Cemetery was scantier than for any other area within the park. Archeological investigation here would supplement our limited knowledge of land use in this sector.

The Fazendeville area, north of the St. Bernard Parish Sewage Treatment Plant, is potentially significant because of its unusual history. It was an African American community, begun during the Reconstruction Period by a free man of color, that survived well into the second half of the twentieth century. Material and dietary remains would provide an interesting contrast to both those from ante-bellum slaves and Reconstruction Period whites. Development of the community could be examined diachronically, and at the present time, it would still be possible to collect oral history on the area.

4 Ted Birkedal to the writer, 1984.

Finally, the remains of the Battle Ground Saw Mill are interesting since they potentially can provide information on the ante-bellum industrialization of the suburban New Orleans area. The potential for further documentary research on this area is also good, as many of the city's noted architects patronized the mill.

The documentary record of the property which today makes up the Chalmette Unit, Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve, demonstrates that this area had a wide variety of land uses since its initial settlement. Originally the site of a colonial plantation, the greater portion of the land area became one of the larger plantations owned by free men of color during the early nineteenth century. Recognition of the area's historic significance as the site of the Battle of New Orleans occurred during the mid-nineteenth century, when the Rodriguez Plantation was purchased as the site for the monument and the National Military Cemetery was established. The remainder of the present park lands continued in use for residential, commercial, and industrial purposes until the early twentieth century. While much of this history is important in a state or local context, the cultural resources of major national significance at Chalmette remain those connected with the Battle of New Orleans.

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