

Chalmette

NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK • LOUISIANA

ADMINISTRATION

Chalmette National Historical Park is administered by the National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior. A superintendent, whose address is Box 429, Arabi, La. 70032, is in immediate charge.

THE DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR—the Nation's principal natural resource agency—has a special obligation to assure that our expendable resources are conserved, that renewable resources are managed to produce optimum benefits, and that all resources contribute to the progress and prosperity of the United States, now and in the future.

U. S. Department of the Interior
National Park Service



Gen. Andrew Jackson's stunning victory over crack British troops at Chalmette plantation on January 8, 1815, was the greatest land victory of the War of 1812. Commonly called the Battle of New Orleans—the last battle of the last war between England and the United States—it preserved America's claim to the Louisiana Territory, prevented the Mississippi River from becoming America's fixed western boundary, and restored American military pride. It also made Jackson a national hero.

In early December 1814 a British force of 7,500 veteran soldiers under Gen. Sir Edward Pakenham marched overland from Lake Borgne to attack New Orleans, the key to the trans-Appalachian region. This was the last of three major offensives launched against the United States in 1814. The previous two—one on Lake Champlain, the other in Chesapeake Bay—had failed, leaving the capture of the important gulf coast city Britain's main hope for exacting a favorable peace settlement from the Americans. By controlling the mouth of the Mississippi River, England could seriously threaten the economic well-being of the entire Mississippi Valley and hamper U.S. westward expansion.

On December 23, when the British columns were within 7 miles of the city, General Jackson's militia halted their advance in a fierce night attack that caught the British off guard. Falling

back to Chalmette plantation, Jackson threw up a defensive line along the banks of the dry, narrow Rodriguez Canal. Pakenham tried unsuccessfully to dislodge the Americans with artillery. On January 8, 1815, the British commander sent 5,400 seasoned soldiers head-on against the American line, but the withering fire from Jackson's artillery and infantry tore through their ranks with devastating effect. Two other assaults also failed. In less than 30 minutes the British suffered 2,000 casualties; the American loss was 13. The Battle of New Orleans was over, and Jackson's victory assured the future of Louisiana.

ABOUT YOUR VISIT

Chalmette National Historical Park is in St. Bernard Parish on the east bank of the Mississippi River, 6 miles from Canal Street in the heart of New Orleans. From Canal Street follow the main thoroughfare that begins at Rampart Street and merges into St. Claude Ave., then into St. Bernard Highway, which passes directly in front of the park.

The park is open daily from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. June through August; from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. September through May. The visitor center, located in the Beaugreud House, contains exhibits and an audio-visual program explaining the importance of Louisiana and the Battle of New Orleans in the War of 1812.

