

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

FOR FEDERAL PROPERTIES

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED

MAY 22 1987

DATE ENTERED

JUL 6 1987

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS**1 NAME**

HISTORIC

Chalmette Unit of Jean Lafitte National Historical Park (Historic District)

AND/OR COMMON

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

___ NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Arabi

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

___ VICINITY OF

1

STATE

CODE

COUNTY

CODE

Louisiana

22

St. Bernard

087

3 CLASSIFICATION**CATEGORY**☒ DISTRICT☐ BUILDING(S)☐ STRUCTURE☐ SITE☐ OBJECT**OWNERSHIP**☒ PUBLIC☐ PRIVATE☐ BOTH**PUBLIC ACQUISITION**☐ IN PROCESS☐ BEING CONSIDERED**STATUS**☐ OCCUPIED☒ UNOCCUPIED☐ WORK IN PROGRESS**ACCESSIBLE**☒ YES: RESTRICTED☐ YES: UNRESTRICTED☐ NO**PRESENT USE**☐ AGRICULTURE☒ MUSEUM☐ COMMERCIAL☒ PARK☐ EDUCATIONAL☐ PRIVATE RESIDENCE☐ ENTERTAINMENT☐ RELIGIOUS☐ GOVERNMENT☐ SCIENTIFIC☐ INDUSTRIAL☐ TRANSPORTATION☐ MILITARY☐ OTHER:**4 AGENCY**

REGIONAL HEADQUARTERS: (If applicable)

National Park Service

STREET & NUMBER

P. O. Box 728

CITY, TOWN

Santa Fe

STATE

New Mexico

___ VICINITY OF

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,

REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

St. Bernard Parish Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

STATE

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYSTITLE National Survey of Historic Sites and Buildings:
List of Classified Structures Inventory

DATE

1959; 1979

☒ FEDERAL ☐ STATE ☐ COUNTY ☐ LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR

SURVEY RECORDS

National Park Service, Southwest Regional Office

CITY, TOWN

Santa Fe

STATE

New Mexico

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
☐ EXCELLENT	☒ DETERIORATED	☐ UNALTERED	☒ ORIGINAL SITE
☒ GOOD	☐ RUINS	☒ ALTERED	☐ MOVED DATE _____
☐ FAIR	☐ UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Chalmette Unit encompasses sixteen historically significant sites and structures dating from the nineteenth century. The district contains approximately 143 acres, roughly forming a rectangle running from a point a short distance south of Louisiana Highway 46 to the east bank of the Mississippi River. A tour road and interpretive markers are located in the district to inform visitors of its history. Oak, pecan, and magnolia trees grow along its northern, southern, and eastern extremities. The district is administered by the National Park Service as the Chalmette Unit of Jean Lafitte National Historical Park. A 1 1/2-acre inholding is owned by St. Bernard Parish. The primary resources in the district are those relating directly to the Battles of New Orleans, 1814-15, while the secondary resources either commemorate those battles or constitute structures or sites of early and late nineteenth century occupations and associations.

Identified sites and structures contributing to the character of the district:

1. Chalmette Plain, across which the British army advanced to fight the Battles of New Orleans in 1814 and 1815. Historically the tract contained cut sugarcane, weeds, and was crossed by several drainage ditches. Today the terrain is grass-covered. The battlefield has lost some of its physical integrity through the years. Approximately 200 feet of the original land has been eroded away by the river, a process that has impacted the site of American Artillery Battery No. 1 and that of the redoubt guarding the right end of the American line. Part of the site of the left column of the British attack during the engagements of January 8, 1815, has been lost, along with most of the 1814-15 levee road and the site of British gun batteries used in the engagements of December 28, 1814, January 1, 1815, and January 8, 1815. Several features exist that detract from the overall integrity of the battlefield site. These include the Rene Beaugard House, the Chalmette Monument, the Chalmette National Cemetery and its buildings, the Spotts Marker, and the GAR Memorial, all of which are nonetheless features significant in their own right and are discussed below.
2. Part of the Rodriguez Canal, at one time the demarcation between the Chalmette and Rodriguez plantations. During the Battles of New Orleans this old millrace measured about 10 to 12 feet wide and about 4 to 8 feet deep. It ran back from the river at almost a right angle some 600 yards to the edge of a swamp. The canal comprised the front edge of the American rampart. (The present partial reconstruction of the rampart by the National Park Service is largely inaccurate, based on archeological findings in 1983-84, and thus represents a non-contributing element.)
3. The sites along the rampart occupied by American infantry troops and by American Artillery Batteries Nos. 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, and 8. The site of Battery No. 1 is located at the toe of the present modern levee.
4. The sites of the positions of three of the British artillery batteries used during the artillery exchanges of January 1 and 8, 1815. These heavy earthen fortifications together contained at least seventeen guns that pounded the American position of Major General Andrew Jackson's own artillerists. The sites, comprising the locations of a British advance battery of January 1, a Congreve rocket battery of January 1, and an advance field battery of January 8, are located within the present confines of Chalmette National Cemetery.

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NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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DATE ENTERED

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 7

PAGE 1

5. The site of a small portion of the cypress swamp that existed at the north end of the 1814-15 battlefield and which hemmed in the British and determined their course toward New Orleans along the high ground near the Mississippi River.

6. The site where British Major General Edward M. Pakenham was mortally wounded on January 8, 1815.

7. The site of the Rodriguez House and outbuildings which during the battles in 1814-15 served Major General Andrew Jackson's command by providing matériel for building fortifications and apparently by serving as a billet for American troops. The house measured about 58 feet long by 22 feet wide and had two or three upper rooms inside. There were two entrances at each end, and the roof was hipped and domered. A two-level gallery was apparently built of piers and colonettes. The house stood on a brick basement likely used for storage. Plaster-covered square brick piers probably supported the lower gallery. There was a finished attic, and the upper part of the house was covered with boards arranged horizontally. It also had French doors, colonettes, arched fanlights, a gallery stairway, a double-pitched roof, and storm doors with strap hinges. Adjoining the main house on the east was a brick creole cottage measuring about 40 feet square. Outbuildings consisted of at least a stable, a coachhouse, four slave cabins, a kitchen, and a hen house.

8. The architecturally important René Beauregard House ("Bueno Retiro"), a two-story brick structure erected in the 1830s but containing architectural detail characteristic of the 1850s. Each level has three open rooms joined by doorways, a plan ideally suited to the southern Louisiana climate and the informal French life style. The hipped roof is framed with wooden trusses supported by front and rear columns. The roofing material is of purple slate; the hips and ridge are covered with square-cut, vitrified tiles. There are six dormers spaced around the roof and a square brick chimney in the center containing flues for the six fireplaces in the house. The unfinished attic is well lighted by the dormer windows. The walls of the structure are plastered inside and out, the exterior ones being scored to simulate stone and painted yellow-orange. The columns and most exterior woodwork are painted white; the shutters are dark green. The principal entrance was from the river side, the door emphasized by a simple wooden pediment. Moulding of all interior and exterior trim is of a late Greek Revival character and probably dates from the 1850s. The first floor, located only a foot above grade, was of wood construction (presently restored by the National Park Service). At the west end of the house was formerly located a two-story addition and an extended gallery containing a stairway, apparently added after 1866. Another wing, also no longer extant, was added in the 1890s by Judge Beauregard. Outbuildings no longer present included a brick kitchen northwest of the house, stables, a carriage house, and several servant quarters. The unfurnished house presently serves as a visitor center.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED

DATE ENTERED

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 7 PAGE 2

9. The Chalmette Monument, erected between 1855 and 1908 to commemorate the Battle of New Orleans. The monument, built of Tuckahoe and Georgia marble on a marble-covered brick foundation, measures 100 feet 2 1/2 inches in height, 14 feet square at the base of the shaft, and 48 feet square at the base. Inside the shaft is an iron spiral staircase surrounding a brick central support that leads to an observatory now closed to the public for safety reasons. In 1947 a bronze plaque was placed on the monument by the Chalmette Chapter, United Daughters of 1812.
10. The Spotts Marker, erected in the 1890s by the Louisiana Society United States Daughters of 1776 and 1812. The stone loving cup-shaped monument, located near the southwest boundary of the district, memorializes the role of First Lieutenant Samuel Spotts in the Battle of New Orleans, January 8, 1815.
11. The Chalmette National Cemetery containing over 15,000 burials, established in 1864 and closed since 1945. The cemetery is surrounded by a fine brick wall completed in 1873. The cemetery occupies an area measuring approximately 250 feet wide by 2700 feet long. Interments include casualties and veterans of the Civil War, Spanish-American War, World War I, and World War II. A few Viet Nam casualties are buried in the cemetery, as are several veterans of the War of 1812. Monumentation consists of hundreds of headstones of varying size and design representing different eras of placement. Several historic artillery tubes are located at the north end of the cemetery, and an elaborate iron gate, dating from the early years of the cemetery, comprises the entrance. Brick administrative and maintenance buildings are located near the entrance.
12. The Grand Army of the Republic (GAR) Monument erected by that body in 1882. Originally placed in the center of the cemetery, the 12-foot-high granite monument was relocated in 1956 at the River Terminal Circle. The inscription on the monument reads: "Dum Tacent Clamant"--"While Silent, They Cry Out." The monument is situated on a site occupied by British soldiers during the battles of 1814-15.
13. Site of occupation area of the Confederate earthworks, 1862. While the Civil War intrenchments forming the Chalmette line lay east of the present cemetery site, and have since been completely obliterated, the site of the area of occupation of the works was within the present park unit boundary.
14. The seven-room brick administrative headquarters built in 1929 and located along the east side of the battlefield in the area of the National Cemetery enclosed by the brick wall. Originally the structure served as a caretaker's house; since 1939 it has served as the administrative facility for the battlefield park.
15. The brick maintenance building erected in 1929 and enclosed within the cemetery wall.
16. The brick carriage house erected in 1929 and enclosed within the cemetery wall. It is presently used as a garage.

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

For NPS use only

received

date entered

Continuation sheet

Item number 7

Page 3

Nonconforming intrusions detracting from the integrity of the district:

17. A concrete double-lane entrance road about 600 yards long.
18. A concrete single-lane tour road that cuts across the battlefield terrain.
19. The modern river levee.
20. The sea wall.
21. A crushed shell road that parallels the levee and is used by the Kaiser Aluminum and Chemical Corporation.
22. A sewage treatment facility situated near the river on a 1 1/2-acre inholding owned by St. Bernard Parish.
23. A small sewage pumping station located in the southwest corner of the district.
24. Several overhead utility poles and power lines.

In addition to these nonconforming intrusions, the setting of the district has been compromised by the establishment on east and west adjacent tracts of plant facilities of the Kaiser Aluminum and Chemical Corporation.

8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW				
☐ PREHISTORIC	☐ ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	☐ COMMUNITY PLANNING	☐ LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	☐ RELIGION	
☐ 1400-1499	☒ ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	☐ CONSERVATION	☐ LAW	☐ SCIENCE	
☐ 1500-1599	☐ AGRICULTURE	☐ ECONOMICS	☐ LITERATURE	☐ SCULPTURE	
☐ 1600-1699	☒ ARCHITECTURE	☐ EDUCATION	☒ MILITARY	☒ SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN	
☐ 1700-1799	☐ ART	☐ ENGINEERING	☐ MUSIC	☐ THEATER	
☒ 1800-1899	☐ COMMERCE	☐ EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	☐ PHILOSOPHY	☐ TRANSPORTATION	
☐ 1900-	☐ COMMUNICATIONS	☐ INDUSTRY	☐ POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	☐ OTHER (SPECIFY)	
		☐ INVENTION			

SPECIFIC DATES 1814-1937

BUILDER/ARCHITECT NA

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Chalmette Unit contains features associated with the social development of southern Louisiana and with the military history of the nation. Primarily the battles fought on this ground in late 1814 and early 1815 effectually concluded hostilities between the United States and Great Britain on a note of victory and speeded American ratification of the peace treaty ending the War of 1812 signed at Ghent, Belgium, two weeks earlier. The American success at Chalmette also fostered national pride and promoted the political, social, and economic recognition of the West as a viable region of the republic. The unit also represents in its secondary resources the commemorative aspects of the Battle of New Orleans, the military continuum associated with the Civil War earthworks and the cemetery, and facets of the economic and social life and architectural style that typified southern Louisiana before and after 1815.

The Chalmette Plain, Rodriguez Canal, and the sites of the American rampart and batteries, the cypress swamp, the British advance batteries, and the place where Major General Edward M. Pakenham was mortally wounded all represent the Battles of New Orleans, 1814-1815 and the scene of one of the most lopsided military victories in American history; the British army lost thousands in killed and wounded while American casualties were comparatively light. The battles were the last of the War of 1812, actually fought after the successful conclusion of peace negotiations in Europe. The overall American victory was conceived and executed in military simplicity, the fortifications behind Rodriguez Canal comprising an unrefined bulwark from which repeated British assaults were repelled. General Jackson's army composed a mixture of regular and volunteer forces displaying ethnic diversity, a factor that elicited prideful unity in the wake of the contest. The Battles of New Orleans--particularly the engagements of December 28, 1814, and January 1 and 8, 1815--had profound meaning. The immediate result was Congress's prompt ratification of the Treaty of Ghent ending the war. The American victory quieted European threats to close the Mississippi River and insured for American planters and farmers a continued outlet for their produce. In other respects, widespread news of Jackson's triumph generated a wave of nationalism and helped dispell sentiments for disunion then prevalent in some quarters. In Louisiana, the commonality of purpose exhibited by the disparate ethnic and social elements composing Jackson's army helped solidify the populace and obscured the regional and social distinctions that had formerly impeded state unity. Carried further, the military success coming after some humiliating losses inspired Americans with a new faith in their arms and contributed to a sense of national pride, especially giving westerners a feeling of stature and promoting their involvement in national affairs. Andrew Jackson, the popular hero of New Orleans and the West, later became President of the United States (1829-1837), thereby successfully challenging the control that the eastern aristocracy had heretofore exercised in the arena of national politics. The related Chalmette battlefield features reflect integrity of location, association with a person significant in the past (Jackson), and have yielded information important in history.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

- Greene, Jerome A. Historic Resource Study. Chalmette Unit, Jean Lafitte National Historical Park. Denver: National Park Service, 1985.
- Brooks, Charles B. The Siege of New Orleans. Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1961.
- Brown, Wilburt S. The Amphibious Campaign for West Florida and Louisiana, 1814-1815: A Critical Review of Strategy and Tactics at New Orleans. University, Alabama:

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 142.85

UTM REFERENCES

A 16 2111200 3316460
ZONE EASTING NORTHING

B 16 2111780 3316170
ZONE EASTING NORTHING

C 16 2111420 3315420
ZONE EASTING NORTHING

D 15 789108 3315790
ZONE EASTING NORTHING

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

16 210850

The boundary of Chalmette Unit is outlined in black on the accompanying map and conforms to the legal boundaries of the park.

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE

CODE

COUNTY

CODE

STATE

CODE

COUNTY

CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Jerome A. Greene, Historian

ORGANIZATION

National Park Service, Denver Service Center

DATE

May 30, 1985

STREET & NUMBER

755 Parfet Street

TELEPHONE

(303) 236-8863

CITY OR TOWN

Denver

STATE

Colorado 80225

12 CERTIFICATION OF NOMINATION

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

YES X

NO

NONE

Robert B. DeBlieux

Robert B. DeBlieux
STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

In compliance with Executive Order 11593, I hereby nominate this property to the National Register, certifying that the State Historic Preservation Officer has been allowed 90 days in which to present the nomination to the State Review Board and to evaluate its significance. The evaluated level of significance is National State Local.

FEDERAL REPRESENTATIVE SIGNATURE

Cheryl H. Harrison

TITLE

Cheryl H. Harrison

DATE

May 14, 1987

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

Amy Schlager
DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

DATE

7/6/87

ATTEST:

DATE

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
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INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

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DATE ENTERED

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE 1

The site of the Rodriguez House and its outbuildings is significantly representative of aspects of the social life of the elite professional class of southern Louisians early in the nineteenth century. The site also constitutes a battle-related feature as matériel from the complex was utilized in the construction of Jackson's intrenchments along Rodriguez Canal and the buildings were used to billet American troops during the combat. The site is moreover significant for its archeological contribution in disclosing elements of nineteenth century country living as well as the military occupation of 1814-15. The Rodriguez House site feature reflects an association with events of significant contribution to American history; archeologically the site has yielded information important in history.

The René Beauregard House, erected in the 1830s and re-styled in the 1850s, represents the use made of the battlefield land in the years following the Battles of New Orleans. A suburban country dwelling, the structure is architecturally significant in that it embodies the distinctive characteristics of French Colonial architecture as well as that of the Greek Revival period. The latter architectural pattern reached the area of southern Louisiana relatively late, and the Beauregard House epitomizes the region's tardy acceptance of that style. The transition from the old to the new can be discerned from study of the building, which was restored by the National Park Service in 1957-58. That work involved stabilizing and adaptively restoring the house to serve as a visitor center for Chalmette National Historical Park. With the exception of the stucco siding, the exterior was restored to its appearance in 1856-66. The exterior stucco had originally been placed on the building in ca. 1866-80, and park service officials deemed its removal unfeasible. The interior of the house was remodeled to facilitate exhibits on the Battle of New Orleans and to provide other visitor services. This work entailed removing the original grooved cypress floors on the first story and replacing them with 1-inch-thick Georgia marble. Two of the upper level rooms were combined to improve visitor circulation. With completion of the restoration, the house came to exemplify the fine ante-bellum homes located along the Mississippi River during the period preceding the Civil War.

The Chalmette Monument represents the historical desire of Americans to memorialize historic events and constitutes a statement about how Americans commemorated their war heroes during the latter half of the nineteenth century and early twentieth century. It exhibits integrity of location in its situation at the center of Jackson's line overlooking the battlefield. It reflects the feelings and associations of the public for the Battles of New Orleans, events of major importance in United States history, and is therefore of significant symbolic value. The monument is also architecturally significant as an example of the European-inspired Egyptian obelisk type of stone memorial adopted elsewhere in the United States during the period (e.g., the Washington Monument). Similarly, the Spotts Marker represents the memorialization instincts of the American people during the latter years of the nineteenth century when it was erected. In particular, it exemplifies how one relatively minor figure in the combat at New Orleans was remembered and honored.

The Chalmette National Cemetery signifies in its broadest sense the military continuum present on the battlefield terrain. It characterizes America's treatment and honor of its war dead and generates feelings and associations among the public for those men

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NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED

DATE ENTERED

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE 2

lost in past conflicts. The cemetery, situated on part of the 1814-15 battlefield site, possesses integrity of location in its own right by virtue of its establishment during the Civil War at a point variously occupied by Union and Confederate forces. Its presence reflects an association with the Civil War in southern Louisiana, while its design features represent a quality peculiar to national cemeteries of the period.

The cemetery has been an integral part of the Chalmette Unit since 1939. The presence of the GAR Monument in the cemetery symbolizes the ubiquitous existence of that body in national affairs during the late nineteenth century. It significantly characterizes the reverence for the Union war dead felt by the local GAR membership in the 1870s and 1880s when the design for the monument was conceived and executed. As such, it possesses integrity of feeling and association with events of significant contribution in American history, in terms of the Civil War and its aftermath. The brick administrative headquarters, maintenance building, and carriage house typify government buildings erected in national cemeteries during the early decades of the twentieth century. The structures have changed little and possess integrity of location, design, materials, and workmanship and embody the characteristics of the construction of national cemetery buildings of the 1920s and 1930s.

The site of the Confederate, and later Union, earthworks lies just east of the national cemetery wall. The interior of the works, however, stood in the area where the cemetery is now located. This site signifies the continuum of military use of the 1814-15 battlefield terrain as well as the strategic location of the ground in 1862-64. As the last defensive bulwark lying between Flag Officer David G. Farragut's naval squadron and the City of New Orleans in April, 1862, the earthworks, including their area of occupation, characterized Confederate resolve to resist the Union advance until the end. After the fall of New Orleans and the occupation of the Chalmette works by federal forces, the site represented a focal point of the Union presence in New Orleans and southern Louisiana for the duration of the war. The site possesses integrity of location, feeling, and association with events contributing to American history, in this case the Civil War.

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

For NPS use only

received

date entered

Continuation sheet

Item number 9

Page 1

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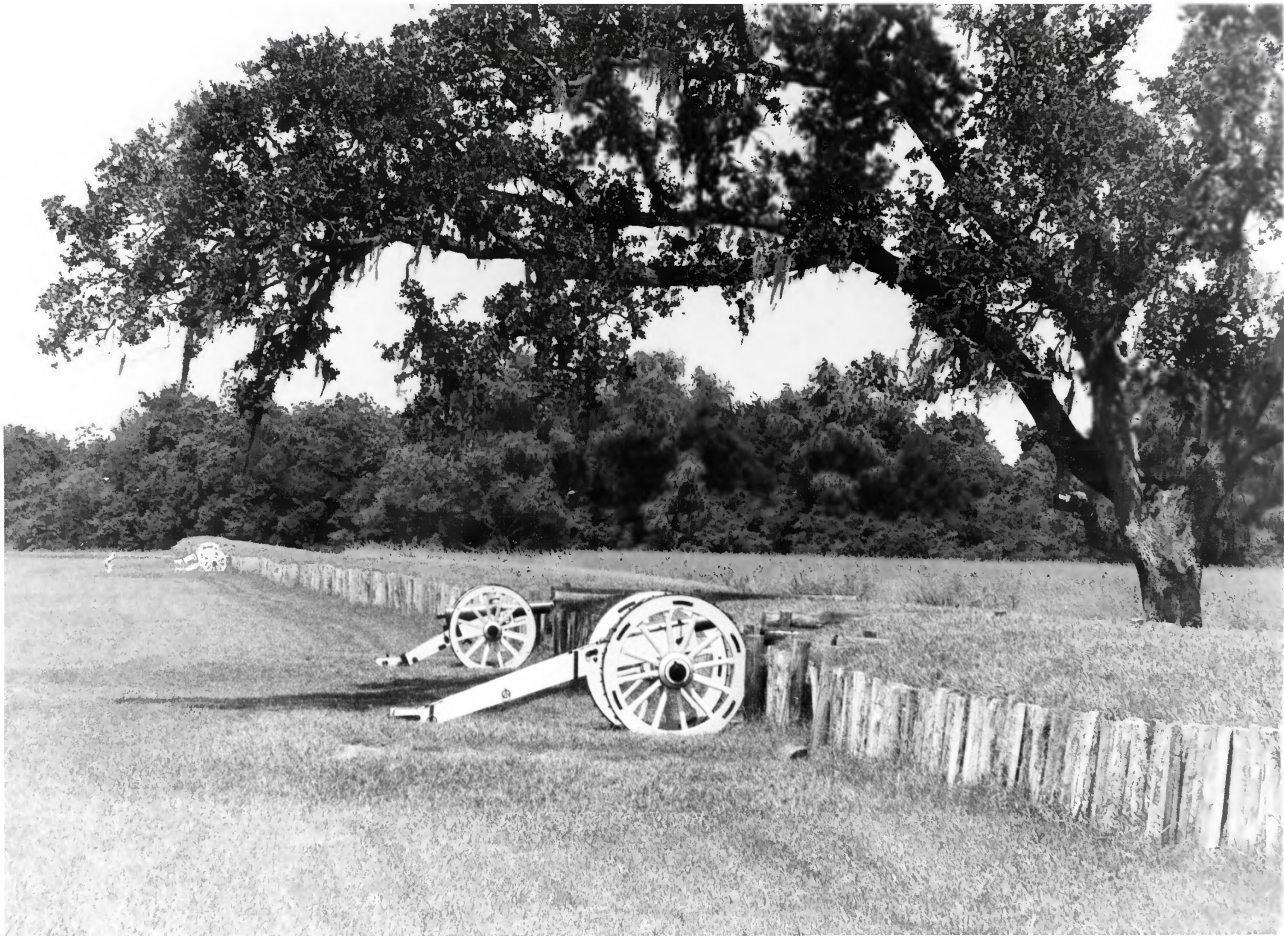
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1. The reconstructed American mud rampart, Chalmette Historic District.
2. Arabi, Louisiana.
3. Larry E. James
4. September 5, 1980
5. Chalmette Unit, Jean Lafitte National Historical Park.
6. Rampart line with present cypress grove representing the extent of 1814-15 swamp in background. View to the north.
7. Photograph number 2.



1. Chalmette Battlefield, Chalmette Historic District.
2. Arabi, Louisiana.
3. Larry E. James.
4. September 5, 1980.
5. Chalmette Unit, Jean Lafitte National Historical Park.
6. Battlefield of January 8, 1815, from near the northern end of the American rampart. Kaiser Aluminum plant in background. View to the southeast.
7. Photograph number 3.



1. Chalmette Battlefield, Chalmette Historic District.
2. Arabi, Louisiana.
3. Larry E. James.
4. September 5, 1980.
5. Chalmette Unit, Jean Lafitte National Historical Park.
6. Site where General Pakenham was mortally wounded on January 8, 1815. View to the southeast.
7. Photograph number 4.



1. G.A.R. Monument and Chalmette National Cemetery, Chalmette Historic District.
2. Arabi, Louisiana .
3. Larry E. James
4. September 5, 1980
5. Chalmette Unit, Jean Lafitte National Historical Park
6. View to the north.
7. Photograph number 6.