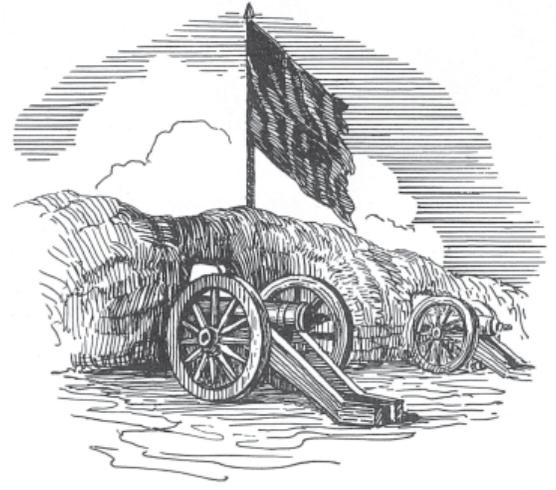




## Timeline: Gulf Coast Campaign and Battle of New Orleans

### New Orleans Faces Invasion

The port of New Orleans was ideally positioned for trade between the new American frontier and the markets of the world. The Mississippi River brought goods from the vast interior of the Louisiana Purchase territory; in New Orleans those goods were loaded onto ships and sent to the east coast of the United States and throughout the world. As the British fleet sailed towards one of America's richest prizes, troops from all social classes, races, and backgrounds gathered in New Orleans for what would be the last major battle of the War of 1812.



USS = United States Ship (American)

HMS = His Majesty's Ship (British)

British forces included Canadian troops and volunteers and allies from Indian tribes and nations. American forces also included Indian allies.

1814	May	22	US Gen. (later president) Andrew Jackson appointed to command Seventh Military District (present-day LA, MS, AL)
	August	22	Jackson and US troops arrive in Mobile AL.
	September	3	HMS <i>Sophia</i> anchors in Baratavia Bay south of New Orleans LA. British invite pirate Jean Lafitte and his men to become British allies.
		12-16	British ships fail at attempt to capture Mobile AL from US.
	October	1	British Gen. Sir Edward Pakenham named as commander of Louisiana invasion forces.
	November	7	Jackson's US troops capture Pensacola FL from Spain (a British ally).
		11	Jackson's troops return to Mobile AL.
		14	US Gen. William Carroll calls for militia volunteers in TN to aid Jackson (Jackson was formerly general of TN militia).
		22	Jackson and his troops leave Mobile, marching to New Orleans LA because of expected British attack there.
		24	US Gen. Carroll and TN volunteers leave Nashville TN and march toward New Orleans.
		24-29	British fleet gathers in Jamaica, then sets sail for US Gulf Coast.
	December	1	Jackson and troops arrive in New Orleans. For the next 10 days, Jackson inspects local forts, assigns local militias to key locations, and develops a plan to defend the city.
		8	British invasion fleet anchors off MS coast since ships too large to pass over sandbars in Mississippi River. Troops begin rowing men, artillery, and supplies toward New Orleans in small boats.
		11	Jackson orders artillery battery built at Chef Menteur Pass east of New Orleans and assigns MS and TN militia, Choctaw Indian allies, and volunteer free men of color battalions to guard area.
		13	Carroll and TN volunteers reach Natchez MS. Jackson receives word that British vessels are in Lake Borgne, just east of New Orleans.
		14	British capture entire US gunboat squadron in Battle of Lake Borgne.
		16	Disguised as fishermen, British troops explore possible bayou routes between Lake Borgne and Mississippi River. Jackson declares martial law, ordering that no one enter or leave the city without permission and drafting every able-bodied free man into service.
		17	Jackson orders improvements to Fort St. John (guarding the approach to New Orleans from Lake Pontchartrain and Bayou St. John) and Fort St. Charles (on the edge of what is today the French Quarter). The forts will be defended by US Army regulars, US Marines, local militia, and Jean Lafitte's Baratarians.
		18	With great ceremony and watched by cheering citizens, Jackson reviews troops in what is now Jackson Square in New Orleans. Jackson meets with pirate Jean Lafitte to ask for assistance against British.
		19	British camp on Pea Island in Lake Borgne.
		21	British begin troop transport from Pea Island to Bayou Bienvenue, which has access to plantations and roads along the Mississippi River south of New Orleans.
		23	British capture Villeré plantation, but Louisiana militia officers alert Jackson in New Orleans. US forces march downriver to attack. The "night battle" begins with fire from USS <i>Carolina</i> on Mississippi River and ends in darkness and confusion as both sides withdraw.

1814	December	24	US forces and enslaved workers begin fortifying Rodriguez Canal at what is now Chalmette Battlefield with a rampart and artillery batteries, creating a strong defensive position. Jackson moves most of the troops who had been guarding other areas around New Orleans to battlefield. In Belgium, the Treaty of Ghent is signed by US and British diplomats to end the war, but treaty specifies that fighting will continue until treaty is ratified by both governments.		
		25	British Gen. Pakenham to take command. US fortifies defensive positions on Mississippi River's west bank; artillery there can target battlefield on east bank.		
		26	US builds second defensive line between Rodriguez Canal and New Orleans.		
		27	British artillery blow up USS <i>Carolina</i> in Mississippi River, but sailors save cannons.		
		28	British launch reconnaissance in force to test strength of Rodriguez Canal defenses but meet strong resistance and withdraw.		
		30	British construct artillery batteries to bombard US troops and defenses behind Rodriguez Canal.		
		1815	January	1	"Artillery duel" begins with British artillery assault on American line at daybreak and ends when British run out of ammunition.
				4	Volunteer militia from KY arrive at battlefield.
				5-7	Local and KY volunteer militias arrive at west bank fortifications. Increased activity by British forces convinces Jackson that they will attack again soon.
				7	Ursuline nuns and other New Orleans residents pray throughout the night for an American victory.
8	Battle of New Orleans. British fire signal rocket at sunrise and attack the two ends of the American rampart. British Gen. Pakenham and many others officers killed and attack collapses into chaos. More than 2,000 British casualties, fewer than 20 American. British attack on west bank positions succeeds but too late.				
9	US and British agree to suspend hostilities at battlefield. British fleet, now sailing up Mississippi River, bombards Fort St. Philip, about 80 miles south of New Orleans.				
13	British Gen. Lambert orders troops to evacuate.				
18	British and US exchange prisoners; British continue evacuation; British fleet ends attack on Fort St. Philip and sails downriver.				
19	Jackson is convinced that British have left area.				
22	KY militia skirmish with British rear guard.				
23	Celebration of victory and thanksgiving held in New Orleans.				
25	MS militia skirmish with British rear guard at Bayou Bienvenue.				
27	Last of British troops reach their transports to depart.				
February	February	6	British fleet leaves Lake Borgne.		
		8	British fleet attacks US Fort Bowyer in Mobile Bay AL.		
		9	Fort Bowyer surrenders to British.		
		10	Americans prepare to evacuate Mobile. HMS <i>Brazen</i> arrives with news of Treaty of Ghent.		
		13	US Senate ratifies Treaty of Ghent.		
		17	Ratification ceremony formally ends the War of 1812.		
March	March	15	Jackson learns of ratification ceremony and war's end. He discharges the militia and volunteers and lifts martial law in New Orleans.		

## After the War

The American victory at the Battle of New Orleans on January 8, 1815, preserved US claims to the Louisiana Purchase territory, prompted settlement in the Mississippi River Valley, and made Andrew Jackson a national hero who would later become president. After the War of 1812, foreign governments began to view the United States as more than an experiment in democracy; they saw it was a legitimate power capable of defending its territory. It took many years, but Great Britain and the United States finally became allies, creating what both governments refer to as a "special relationship" that has lasted through two world wars and countless crises.

Perhaps the most lasting legacy of the Battle of New Orleans and the War of 1812 was a new American identity. Until the Civil War, January 8 was celebrated in American cities with the same enthusiasm, parades, and fireworks as Independence Day on the Fourth of July. The United States had proved it was truly united by defeating Great Britain once again in what became known as "the second War of Independence." Americans became more confident in their country's future and began to realize that no matter what separated Americans from each other---region, religion, race, language, or social class---, what united them was more important.



The US Post Office issued this postage stamp to commemorate the battle's sesquicentennial in 1965. At the stamp's bottom are the two sides of the peace medal that celebrates 150 years of peace between the United States and Great Britain.