

LIBERTY UNIVERSITY

A PRESENTATION PROPOSAL FOR THE GRADUATE RESEARCH SYMPOSIUM

ENTITLED

NEW ORLEANS LIVES ON:

GENERAL ANDREW JACKSON'S DIVERSE ARMY AND THEIR VICTORY OVER THE

BRITISH

BY

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American historians are reevaluating the War of 1812 as an important conflict in the history of the growing Republic. Prior to the 1990s, historians viewed the war as a trivial, and irrelevant. Some of the more noted campaigns in the war are the British assault on Fort McHenry and the British army's burning of Washington, D.C. While these incidents are important, equal consideration should be devoted to studying the Battle of New Orleans in more detail. The battle is interesting because General Andrew Jackson and his diverse army of approximately six thousand people defeated a British army of approximately nine thousand battle-hardened soldiers who fought in the Napoleonic Wars. More importantly, the battle restored Americans' sense of pride in their country and propelled Andrew Jackson into the spotlight when he later campaigned for the presidency. However, the dynamics of General Jackson's army raises an interesting question. What other factors, besides a hatred for the British, motivated these different groups to cooperate efficiently in Andrew Jackson's army and successfully defeat the British army?

Preliminary assumptions about the Battle of New Orleans persist. For example, some historians believe the campaign was a waste of time by the Americans and British. Furthermore, the battle occurred after the American and British ambassadors signed the Treaty of Ghent. The treaty did not end the war until both hostile governments ratified the document. Some historians mistakenly believe that the Americans won and the British lost the battle in a single day. On the contrary, the Battle of New Orleans was a month-long siege that started in December 1814 and lasted until January 1815. Another assumption is the British army failed to use rifles while the Americans hid behind fortifications for protection.

Few historians have written books on the 1815 Battle of New Orleans. This presented a challenge to my research because I did not have the opportunity to look at the historiography pertaining to the battle. My sources are valid, credible, and give a voice to the British and

American participants in the battle. Most of the sources are secondary while one of the sources is a narrative based on primary sources. My research paper assesses General Jackson's inclusion of African-American slaves, freedmen, pirates, and Choctaw Indians into his army, the artillery duel, the buildup of fortifications, the British mentality going into the battle, and the major assault on January 8, 1815.