

## Battle of New Orleans

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Music and lyrics by Jimmy Driftwood: Jimmy Driftwood was a high school principal and history teacher who loved to sing, play instruments and write songs. Mr. Driftwood wrote many songs, all for the sole purpose of helping his students learn about this battle and other historical events. But this song turned out to be so popular that it won the 1959 Grammy Award for Song Of The Year (awarded in 1960 for musical accomplishments in 1959). Johnny Horton also won the 1959 Grammy Award for Best Country And Western Performance for his recording of this song.

"The Battle of New Orleans," is about a battle in the War of 1812, and it became one of the biggest selling hits of 1959. Students might also be interested to know that there is a movie called "The Buccaneer" about the Battle of New Orleans. It is interesting to reflect on the fact that despite the turbulent early relationship between England and the American colonists, our two countries have long since been strongly united. The words were written to correspond with an old fiddle tune called "The 8th of January," which is the date of the famous "Battle of New Orleans".

### *Narrative by Jimmy Driftwood:*

*"After the Battle of New Orleans, which Andrew Jackson won on January the 8th eighteen and fifteen, the boys played the fiddle again that night, only they changed the name of it from the battle of a place in Ireland to the "Eighth of January". Years passed and in about nineteen and forty-five an Arkansas school teacher slowed the tune down and put words to it and that song is The Battle Of New Orleans and I will try to sing it for you." (\*Note -- two minor revisions were made for classroom use)*

Well, in eighteen and fourteen we took a little trip  
along with Colonel Jackson down the mighty Mississip.  
We took a little bacon and we took a little beans,  
And we caught the bloody British near the town of New Orleans.

We fired our guns and the British kept a'comin.  
There wasn't nigh as many as there was a while ago.  
We fired once more and they began to runnin'  
down the Mississippi to the Gulf of Mexico.

Well, I see'd Mars Jackson walkin down the street  
talkin' to a pirate by the name of Jean Lafayette [pronounced La-feet]  
He gave Jean a drink that he brung from Tennessee  
and the pirate said he'd help us drive the British in the sea.

The French said Andrew, you'd better run,  
for Packingham's a comin' with a bullet in his gun.  
Old Hickory said he didn't give a dang,  
he's gonna whip the britches off of Colonel Packingham.

We fired our guns and the British kept a'comin.  
There wasn't nigh as many as there was a while ago.  
We fired once more and they began to runnin'  
down the Mississippi to the Gulf of Mexico.

Well, we looked down the river and we see'd the British come,  
and there must have been a hundred of 'em beatin' on the drum.  
They stepped so high and they made their bugles ring  
while we stood by our cotton bales and didn't say a thing.

Old Hickory said we could take 'em by surprise  
if we didn't fire a musket til we looked 'em in the eyes.  
We held our fire til we see'd their faces well,  
then we opened up with squirrel guns and really gave a yell.

We fired our guns and the British kept a'comin.  
There wasn't nigh as many as there was a while ago.  
We fired once more and they began to runnin'  
down the Mississippi to the Gulf of Mexico.

Well, we fired our cannon til the barrel melted down,  
so we grabbed an alligator and we fought another round.  
We filled his head with cannon balls and powdered his behind,  
and when they tetched the powder off, the gator lost his mind.

We'll march back home but we'll never be content  
till we make Old Hickory the people's President.  
And every time we think about the bacon and the beans,  
we'll think about the fun we had way down in New Orleans.

We fired our guns and the British kept a'comin,  
But there wasn't nigh as many as there was a while ago.  
We fired once more and they began to runnin'  
down the Mississippi to the Gulf of Mexico.

Well, they ran through the briars and they ran through the brambles  
And they ran through the bushes where a rabbit couldn't go.  
They ran so fast the hounds couldn't catch 'em  
down the Mississippi to the Gulf of Mexico.

**We fired our guns and the British kept a'comin.  
But there wasn't nigh as many as there was a while ago.  
We fired once more and they began to runnin'  
down the Mississippi to the Gulf of Mexico.**

**(P.S. If you've never heard this song, go to a music store or to [www.ebay](http://www.ebay)  
and get a copy. Jmax)**