

Ozarks Musicians Covering Jimmy Driftwood's "The Battle of New Orleans"

Live at the 2023 Smithsonian Folklife Festival

Audio Transcript

Brooks Blevins: Let's get to Jimmy's most famous song. Who knows— who knows Jimmy's most famous song?

Person in the crowd: "The Battle of New Orleans"!

Brooks: "The Battle of New Orleans!"

Pam Setser: There you go!

Brooks: Hey, let's do that before uh, before we get shut down.

Person in the crowd: Do all the verses!

Mark Bilyeu: Pam's gonna lead us here, and we'll jump in on the chorus—something like that.

[Pam starts singing over acoustic guitar]

*In 1814, we took a little trip
Along with Colonel Jackson down the mighty Mississipp'
We took a little bacon and we took a little beans
And we caught the bloody British in the town of New Orleans*

[Group singing]

*Fired our guns and the British kept a coming
Wasn't as many as there was a while ago
Fired once more and they began to running
Down the Mississippi to the Gulf of Mexico*

[Pam singing]

*We looked down the river and we seen the British come
And there must have been a hundred of them beating on the drums
Stepped so high and they made their bugles ring*

We stood behind our cotton bales and didn't say a thing

[Group singing]

*Fired our guns and the British kept a coming
Wasn't as many as there was a while ago
Fired once more and they began to running
Down the Mississippi to the Gulf of Mexico*

[Pam singing]

*Old Hickory said we could take 'em by surprise
If we didn't fire a musket 'til we looked 'em in the eyes
Held our fire 'til we seen their faces well
Opened up our squirrel guns and really gave 'em... well*

[Improvising]

*We gotta quit!
That's it!*

[musicians cheering, audience clapping]

Brooks: Thank you, ladies and gentlemen. That you, folks. You probably want to head inside somewhere.

Cindy Woolf: Are we clearing the site?

Staff member off stage: Yes, there's electrical activity in the area, which means we would like everyone to go to a museum and seek safety.

Brooks: Okay. Yeah, find you a museum and get in the dry and out of the lightning.

[recording fades out]