



By Dr. Stuart L. Butler

THE CAUSES OF THE WAR

On June 18, 1812, the United States declared war on Great Britain and its colonies. The declaration stemmed from the nearly twenty years of warfare between Great Britain and Napoleonic France, and the American desire to maintain peace with the belligerent powers. From 1793 until 1815, except for a brief period of peace in 1803, Great Britain and France were at war with one another. During this period, both nations attempted to protect their own trade by preventing the other from receiving aid from neutrals like the United States. Each established blockades to interdict and seize goods destined for enemy ports. Because of Great Britain's larger naval forces, American ships were much more often seized by British than French forces; however, from 1798 to 1801, the United States fought an undeclared naval war or Quasi War against France over seizures of its ships. Between 1807 and 1809, Great Britain issued a series of Orders in Council which restricted the American commercial trade with Europe by banning trade with French ports, forcing neutrals to ship through British ports, and an outright ban of all trading between northwest Germany and all French controlled ports in the Mediterranean Sea.

Not only did Great Britain seize contraband goods, but they also seized merchant seamen whom they believed to be British citizens. In doing so, they impressed into service by the war's end, nearly ten thousand American citizens. Although Great Britain recognized that its citizens could become

naturalized American citizens, it also believed that naturalization did not absolve British-born citizens of their obligations to Great Britain. Great Britain refused to relent on its impressment policy, as it believed the policy was the only way in which it could maintain its naval supremacy during the wars. British impressment and restrictive commercial policy were the two major reasons for the American declaration of war against Great Britain. Although not major reasons behind the declaration of war, many Americans on the western frontiers also resented continued British military occupation in the Northwest Territories, positions which they should have abandoned by provisions of the Treaty of Paris of 1783. Moreover, Americans on the western frontier believed that the British supplied the Indians with arms and provisions from these posts and from nearby Canada to destabilize the frontier and raid American settlements.

Beginning in 1806 and continuing up to the declaration of war, the Jefferson and Madison Administrations sought to stay out of war by imposing commercial restrictions on its trade with Great Britain and France. In 1806, Congress prohibited a partial non-importation on certain British goods. This was followed by a harsh non-exportation policy known as the Embargo which prevented American ships and goods from leaving American ports. This proved a commercial disaster for the United States and failed to change British or French attitudes. Although repealed in 1809, a non-intercourse act replaced this policy which re-opened trade with the world except for the belligerent powers. A year later this was repealed in favor of what became known as Macon's Bill Number Two which committed the United States to resume trade with whatever power dropped its commercial restrictions and to continue non-intercourse with the other power. Napoleon signaled his intent to drop French trade restrictions in the summer of 1810, and the United States accepted prematurely the Emperor's word, though many Americans thought the French could not be trusted. When Great Britain refused to recognize France's position and alter her trade restrictions, President Madison recommended to the Twelfth Congress that

war with Britain may be the only just recourse. The vote for war in the House of Representatives was 79-49, and 19-13 in the Senate, the closest vote for a war declaration in American history. Support for the war was greatest in the South and West, and weakest in New England. While most Republicans voted for the war, many did not. No Federalist in Congress voted for the declaration. The country as a whole was conflicted over the war with perhaps near a third of Americans opposed to war, although many thought there were grievances enough to go to war. For many Americans, the nation's honor was at stake, while others felt that the British, through their Orders in Council, were determined to destroy the American carrying trade under the guise of defeating Napoleon. Most modern historians have now dismissed the belief that Americans went to war to annex Canada. Canada was a means for carrying on the war, not its cause.

HOW AND WHERE THE WAR WAS FOUGHT

The United States was completely unprepared for war against Great Britain in the summer of 1812. Both the Jefferson and Madison administrations had reduced expenditures in the War and Navy Departments during the first decade of the eighteenth century. Consequently, the country's ability to wage offensive military and naval campaigns against British military and naval targets in Canada and on the sea was severely hampered. Nor was the country in a strong position to finance the war. The First Bank of the United States expired years before the war, and no successor took its place to act as a central banking institution to finance the war. The war was largely financed through large loans at unattractive rates of interest, and through internal taxes that would strap the young country for some time to come. The United States relied primarily on revenue from its import duties to finance government expenditures. After years of restrictive commerce directed against Great Britain and France, such duties became irregular and, in some cases, had gone uncollected.

THE WAR AT SEA

There were only two avenues open to American arms to get at British forces: on the high seas, and through Canada. American naval forces were hopelessly outnumbered by the mighty Royal Navy. The War of 1812 at sea was fought mostly on the Atlantic, but included action in the Caribbean, and even in the South Pacific. At the start of the war, the American navy consisted of some twenty warships, eight frigates and twelve sloops, plus an assortment of gunboats. This compared to the nearly six hundred ships the British had, but the best of the British warships were concentrated in European waters. The American frigates were larger and carried more firepower than their British counterparts. They were also built of firmer oak and pine, and manned by experienced crews including some Englishmen. These discrepancies accounted for many of the American naval victories early in the war. In what was considered to be the first major American naval victory of the war, Capt. John Rodgers of the *President* defeated British Capt. Richard Byron's *Belvidera* in June 1812. Other significant victories included Capt. Isaac Hull's *Constitution (Old Ironsides)* over *Guerriere* in August 1812; Capt. Stephen Decatur with the *United States* over *Macedonian* October, 1812; and Capt. William Bainbridge in *Constitution* when it defeated *Java* on December 29, 1812. Although Capt. James Lawrence died when his ship *Chesapeake* was defeated at the hands of British Capt. Philip Broke and the *Shannon* on June 1, 1813, Captain Lawrence's famous words, "Don't Give up the Ship," soon became a national slogan and the Navy's motto. Capt. David Porter also became an American naval hero when he took the *Essex* into the Pacific by way of the Cape Horn. Later, Porter was defeated in battle at Valparaiso, Chile, when a squadron of British vessels trapped him in the harbor. American naval victories, however, did not decisively change the course of the war. What they did, however, was to prove to Americans and the world that American ships could one-on-one hold their own against the best British frigates.

THE WAR IN CANADA 1812-1814

In comparison with the early American naval victories, the American military invasion along the Canadian border in 1812-1813 was anything but victorious. Days before the declaration of war, President Madison sent General William Hull with a small army to secure Detroit and Michigan Territory, and in case of war, to cross over to Canada and seize Fort Malden. Hull's delay in securing Detroit and his failure to take Fort Malden, led to the capture of his entire army of some two thousand at Detroit by Upper Canada's Governor, Maj. Gen. Sir Isaac Brock. This was followed by British victories at Mackinac and at Fort Dearborn at Chicago. Following Hull's defeat, President Madison appointed Maj. Gen. William Henry Harrison in command of a new Northwest Army to retake Detroit, destroy Fort Malden and defeat the British and their Indian allies in Upper Canada. Harrison, with some regular U.S. Army forces, and with 1500 militia each from Pennsylvania and Virginia, marched through Ohio to establish Fort Meigs on the Maumee as a major post from which to launch his Detroit campaign. Part of Harrison's army under the command of Gen. James Winchester was captured by Col. Henry Proctor and Chief Tecumseh, at Frenchtown on the River Raisin, which delayed indefinitely Harrison's plans to retake Detroit. Following the capture, British troops were unable to control their Indian allies who killed in cold blood over one hundred prisoners, many of whom were Kentuckians. This atrocity gave rise to the patriotic call on the lips of Kentuckians in future battles of "Remember the Raisin!"

Farther east along the Niagara River, Gen. Stephen Van Rensselaer led an inexperienced army composed mostly of militia across the Niagara River on the night of October 12-13, 1812, where he was soundly defeated by a smaller force of regular British and Canadian militia at Queenston Heights. Van Rensselaer was succeeded by Irish-born Brig. Gen. Alexandria Smyth, who launched an ill-fated expedition to take Fort Erie in late November and early December 1812. Smyth managed to get only a portion of his army across the Niagara, but dallied in getting the rest across. Smyth delayed crossing for

several days, and by that time the British had reinforced the shore batteries, and Smyth was forced to abandon any more invasion plans for the winter season. Smyth's refusal to entertain further plans to invade Canada resulted in a massive army mutiny which destroyed any discipline and spirit left in the army of the Niagara. What accounted for such poor showing by the American military forces? Much of the American army along the Niagara was composed of raw and inexperienced militia. The regular army at this time, however, was not that much better. The army, as a whole, was ill-supplied and ill-prepared for a late fall campaign. While the militia supplied large numbers of troops, the troops were undisciplined and unruly, and often refused to cross over into Canada. In addition, American efforts to invade Canada and hold territory suffered by and large from poor leadership and incompetent generals. This was slow to change.

In 1813, American military prospects improved along the Canadian frontier, but attempts to take Montreal and Quebec failed, and Americans were unable to seize and hold large portions of either Upper Canada (Ontario) or Lower Canada (Quebec). In May and July of 1813, General Harrison's army withstood a massive siege at Fort Meigs. Maj. George Croghan successfully defended Fort Stephenson from British attacks in August. Failures by the British to take either fort ended further British attempts to curtail American influence in the area. By late spring 1813, at Presque Isle on Lake Erie, four ships were being built for what was to become part of Capt. Oliver H. Perry's Lake Erie Squadron. Perry's victory over the British Commander Robert Barclay near Put-in-Bay on October 10, 1813, secured American control of Lake Erie. Perry's statement to General Harrison that "We have met the enemy and they are ours" became one of the most memorable dispatches in naval history. Perry's presence on the lake leading up to the victory on Lake Erie enabled General Harrison to pursue British Gen. Henry Proctor and Chief Tecumseh and defeat them both at the Battle of the Thames on October 9, 1813. It was the

first major American victory on Canadian soil and marked the end of British control and Indian threats in the Detroit area.

Meanwhile, to the east, Secretary of War John Armstrong and Maj. Gen. Henry Dearborn made plans to attack York (now Toronto), the Canadian capital, and seize British Forts George and Erie on the Niagara River. Victories there would precede a main attack on Montreal later in the year. The joint military and naval attack on York took place on April 27, 1813, under the joint command of Commodore Isaac Chauncey and Brig. Gen. Zebulon Pike. During the assault, General Pike was killed as well as several hundred Americans when a powder magazine exploded. During the battle, many Canadian parliamentary buildings were burned, and their contents destroyed or taken away. The British used the destruction of York as their main reason for burning Washington the next year. A British attack on Sackets's Harbor, New York, by British Commodore Sir James Yeo on May 29, 1813, failed to destroy the small naval base there, but indicated that the British could strike American bases across Lake Ontario. Two days earlier, on May 27, 1813, Fort George was taken by General Dearborn's forces. Attempts to invade farther into Canada, failed when part of Brown's army was defeated by British General John Vincent at Stoney Creek. Later, at Beaver Dams in June, two American generals, William Winder and John Chandler, were captured. American forces remained cooped up at the fort until December when Gen. George McClure abandoned the fort, but not before burning and destroying the nearby town of Newark. British forces used Newark as a pretext for a sustained campaign of severe reprisals on the New York-Niagara frontier during the winter of 1813-14, especially at Lewiston and Buffalo, resulting in the capture of the American fort at Niagara.

Meanwhile, Secretary Armstrong replaced General Dearborn with Maj. Gen. James Wilkinson. Armstrong planned an attack on Kingston or Montreal, but left too much discretion in the hands of

Wilkinson who preferred to attack Montreal first, then Kingston. The plan called for Wilkinson's forces, nearly seven thousand at Sacket's Harbor, to sail down the St. Lawrence and join Maj. Gen. Wade Hampton's four thousand troops then at Plattsburg, New York, for a coordinated attack on Montreal. The whole plan began to fall apart when the two generals, who despised one another, began to feud over strategy, while bad weather delayed the start of the campaign. Wilkinson also suffered severe health problems which plagued him the whole campaign. Hampton's forces managed to reach Chateaugay, about fifty miles south of Montreal, where they were met by a smaller (about 1700 men), but more determined Canadian army of militia and Indians. Unable to dislodge the enemy, Hampton called off the battle, citing sickness in his army, and the fact that Armstrong had already ordered Hampton to winter in headquarters south of the Canadian border. Wilkinson's army fared no better against British and Canadian forces. At the battle of Chrysler's Field, Ontario, November 11, 1813, Wilkinson's army was outmaneuvered by a much smaller army under Col. James Morrison, a setback that ended any further attempts to take Montreal. Although American forces gained considerable experience and some victories in 1813, they were unable to take full advantage of them, and the Canadian border remained a stalemate.

Armed engagements erupted once again in the spring of 1814 when Commodore James Yeo and Gen. Gordon Drummond attacked the important naval and supply base of Oswego, New York, on May 5 to keep the Americans from gaining control of Lake Ontario. Gen. Jacob Brown, American commander on the lake, sent reinforcements to beat back the British attack, but not before the enemy confiscated thousands of barrels of supplies there. Brown later sent Gen. Winfield Scott with his 4,800 man army across the Niagara to seize Fort Erie on July 3, as a prelude to consolidating American control of Upper Canada. Fort Erie was taken, but British forces contested American control by attacking Brown's army at nearby Chippewa and Lundy's Lane later in July. The battle at Lundy's Lane was perhaps the bloodiest in the war, with both sides sustaining huge losses. On September 17, two dramatic attempts to

break out of Fort Erie succeeded in inflicting some damage on British arms, but the Americans remained in the fort until November when all American arms were withdrawn from Canada. The battles of Chippewa and Lundy's Lane proved that the American army could fight as professionally as British veterans of the Napoleonic war. This was due largely to the tough discipline and training imposed on American troops by Gen. Winfield Scott during the previous winter.

The last major offensive by British forces in Canada was the joint army-navy campaign down the Lake Champlain corridor towards Plattsburg, New York, that would split the New England states from the rest of the country. Gen. Sir George Prevost had about 7,000 men, compared to the American force at Plattsburg of about 3,500 regulars and 3,000 militia troops under the command of Gen. Alexander Macomb. Prevost, however, depended on the success of the naval forces on the lake to maintain supply lines into New York. While Prevost's army neared Plattsburg on September 5, 1814, and probed for weaknesses in the American defensive lines, he waited until Captain Downie's squadron to arrive on September 9. Defending the lake was Navy Lt. Thomas MacDononough's squadron of three warships and three gunboats. On September 11, the decisive battle of Lake Champlain was fought ending in the American victory, and the death of Captain Downie. Without naval control of the lake, General Prevost concluded he could not long sustain his army, and ordered a retreat back to Canada. The American victories at Plattsburg and Lake Champlain, coming at the same time as that of Baltimore, gave Americans a new optimism about the war's end.

THE WAR IN THE SOUTH, 1812-1815

CHESAPEAKE BAY

On February 4, 1813, British naval forces under Vice Admiral John B. Warren sailed into Hampton Roads and imposed a naval blockade of the Chesapeake and Delaware Bays. Later that year, the

blockade was extended from Georgia to as far north as Long Island Sound. The blockade served several purposes: to prevent maritime trade from entering or leaving the East Coast, and to destroy the many swift sailing privateers particularly out of Baltimore and New York, that continued to menace British merchantmen. By the end of the war, Chesapeake Bay privateers alone were responsible for taking or destroying nearly five hundred British merchantmen. British presence in the Chesapeake Bay so close to the capital also prevented more military resources and manpower from being sent from Virginia and Maryland to Canada.

Warren's chief lieutenant, Adm. Sir George Cockburn, was given the order to harass, capture, or destroy as much Chesapeake Bay commercial shipping as possible, as well as capturing or destroying goods and provisions at ports. He was also to capture the port of Norfolk, and destroy, if possible, the frigate USS *Constellation*. Cockburn's squadron effectively blockaded the mouth of the Chesapeake Bay, and later sent his squadrons up the bay in May 1813 where he raided Havre-de-Grace, and burned much of Frenchtown, Georgetown, and Fredericktown on Maryland's Eastern Shore. Reinforced by Admiral Warren at Norfolk, the British admirals planned an amphibious assault on Craney Island as a prelude to taking Norfolk. British forces of 2,500 on the morning of June 22, 1813, were repulsed by a force of roughly eight hundred militia artillerymen, and naval personnel from USS *Constellation* and its gunboats. Three days later, on June 25, Cockburn's naval and marine forces easily overwhelmed about five hundred Virginia militia defending nearby Hampton, and occupied the town for several days. The town had little or no strategic importance, but during its occupation, a battalion of French soldiers enrolled by the British from the Peninsular War in Spain, wreaked havoc on the town, indiscriminately killing, pillaging, and, in some cases raping some citizens. A few weeks later, Cockburn stationed a few frigates to maintain the blockade, and sailed with a small squadron south to Oracoke on North Carolina's Outer Banks, to put an end to inland trade being shipped to that port from Virginia through

the Albemarle Sound. During the rest of 1813, Cockburn's forces visited the James, the Rappahannock, and Potomac Rivers, landing occasionally and engaging with the local militia in Virginia's Northern Neck and Eastern Shore. During this time, British naval forces captured or sunk over a hundred commercial vessels in the bay.

WASHINGTON-BALTIMORE CAMPAIGNS

In April 1814, British and allied forces entered Paris and forced Napoleon to abdicate and be sent to exile in Elba. This event freed up considerable numbers of British troops which were sent to America to prosecute the war more forcibly there. In the Chesapeake, Vice Admiral Alexander Cochrane relieved Admiral Warren, and promised a more vigorous enforcement of the war there. Cockburn was given additional Royal Marines and army regiments and ordered to execute a campaign of reprisals for the American burning of York and Newark. This Cockburn did in the summer of 1814 using his reinforced squadrons to raid and pillage up and down the Chesapeake Bay, especially along Virginia's Northern Neck counties and the southern Maryland counties of St. Mary's and Calvert. On April 2, 1814, Cochrane issued a proclamation to all enslaved persons that those coming aboard British ships or occupied territory would be greeted as free persons. Many of those who came in were enlisted in the Colonial Marines and trained to fight against their former masters. Tangier Island was transformed into a British base, Fort Albion, which served as a training base for the Marines. Former enslaved men and families were offered jobs at the British naval base in Bermuda, or were transported to New Brunswick or Nova Scotia. By the end of the war, an estimated several thousand former slaves of the Chesapeake states were liberated by British forces.

Norfolk was no longer considered a priority for British assaults by early 1814. In July 1814, Admiral Cockburn convinced Admiral Cochrane that an assault on Washington or Baltimore was

feasible. The capital was part of the new Tenth Military District under the command of Brig. Gen. William Winder. Neither Winder nor Armstrong fortified Washington for a possible attack, believing that Baltimore was the preferred target. With four thousand British regulars and Royal Marines under the command of Gen. Robert Ross and the naval squadrons under Cockburn, the British cleared out the remaining American opposition in the Patuxent, and landed at Benedict, Maryland on August 19. They quickly pushed aside an ineffectual militia army at Bladensburg, Maryland, a few miles outside of Washington, and entered Washington on August 24. There they torched the Capitol Building, the White House, and other government buildings. Meanwhile, a secondary British squadron under the command of Capt. James Gordon sailed up the Potomac to meet the main British force at Washington. Delayed by weather and shoals, Gordon's squadron arrived too late to reinforce Cockburn, but managed to destroy Fort Washington, twelve miles below Washington, and force the leaders of Alexandria to hand over to the British all the available tobacco, corn, cotton and flour on the city's wharves. On returning to the main fleet, Gordon's squadron and his prize ships encountered stiff resistance from hastily build batteries of Virginia militia troops a few miles below Mount Vernon from September 4-5, but escaped relatively unharmed.

Flushed with victory at Washington, the unified British fleet and Ross' army were transported up the Patapsco River for a full-scale assault on Baltimore, the nation's third largest city, and the privateering capital of the Chesapeake. Baltimore's defenses, consisting of approximately 17,000 were under the command of U.S. Senator, and now Maj. Gen. Samuel Smith. These were mostly militia from Maryland, Pennsylvania, and Virginia, and some U.S. regulars. Baltimore's chief defensive point was Fort McHenry, commanding the sea entrance into Baltimore on the Patapsco River. In command there was Virginia-born Maj. George Armistead and U.S. artillery consisting of 1,000 men. The fort had to be taken in order for British ships to safely enter the harbor.

Shortly after unloading his men at North Point, near Baltimore, Maryland, on September 12, 1814, British General Ross was killed by Maryland militia. Col. Arthur Brooke succeeded to command. Brooke fought a strong skirmish with Maryland militia, and marched his army within two miles of the eastern part of the city where he found nearly fifteen thousand militia behind well-entrenched fortifications and professionally constructed bastions. Meanwhile, Admiral Cochrane bombships and frigates began an all-night barrage on Fort McHenry on September 13 into the 14th. The next morning, the fort remained in American hands. Francis Scott Key, on one of the British ships to secure release of Dr. William Beanes, witnessed the aerial bombardment of rockets and bombs. So moved was Scott on seeing a large American flag still waving in the morning through rain and cloud, that he wrote the poem, the “Star Spangled Banner”. The poem was later set to music, and became in 1931 the nation’s national anthem. Cochrane called off the assault on Fort McHenry, and Brooke considered the Baltimore defenses too strong to overcome. The British withdrew from Baltimore the next day. By the end of November, British naval forces in the Chesapeake Bay were greatly reduced to prepare for the assault on New Orleans. A small, but still potent squadron remained in the Bay to maintain the naval blockade until the end of the war.

In November, Admiral Cochrane began to prepare for a Gulf of Mexico campaign and the capture of New Orleans. As a diversion, he sent Admiral Cockburn to the South Carolina and Georgia coasts to draw off speculation to where the main assault would fall. Meanwhile, General Jackson, now commander of the Gulf area U.S. Army units, suspected a major British campaign somewhere on the Gulf when the British seized Pensacola, but failed to take Mobile. When Jackson learned that Cochrane intended to take New Orleans, he arrived at the city on December 1, 1814, to prepare for its defenses. Cochrane arrived in Louisiana on December 8, landed part of the British army on December 23, and

waited for Gen. Edward Pakenham's main army, which did not arrive until December 25. A series of skirmishes between the two forces took place in the days leading up to the main battle on January 8, 1815. The British sent wave after wave of soldiers against Jackson's well entrenched army. In a combined volley of artillery, rifles, and muskets, Jackson's regulars and militia dealt a devastating blow to the British line, resulting in the death of General Pakenham. The British lost primarily because Jackson had enough time to pick and prepare his defenses, and the British failed to apply their numerical strength at the right places. One of the most unique aspects of the battle was that it was fought two weeks after the Treaty of Ghent was signed, but news of the victory coming as it did about the same time as the treaty reached Washington, it cemented the two in the minds of most Americans.

THE CREEK CAMPAIGNS, 1813-14

War between the United States and part of the Creek nation came not as a result of British encouragement as was the case in the Northwest, but from a civil war within the Creek Nation. This war was in part aided by the influence of Tecumseh and only much later by promises of Spanish and British help. The Upper Creeks in western Alabama, known later as "Red Sticks" resisted white cultural influence and encroachment on their lands, and feuded with the eastern tribes, known as Lower Creeks, who were more amenable to white influence. Soon, local militias of Georgia and Mississippi Territory, and Tennessee were drawn into the struggle against the Upper Creeks. When the Upper Creeks besieged Fort Mims, and later massacred its inhabitants in August 1813, the federal government mobilized nearby regular army units to aid the Georgia, and Tennessee militias. Throughout the rest of 1813, Georgia militia commander, John Floyd, and Tennessee militia generals, John Cocke and Andrew Jackson, carried out a sustained campaign to destroy the Creek presence in the territory. The American military effort, however, was constantly plagued by logistical problems in supplying arms and rations. While the militias inflicted small tactical defeats upon the Red Sticks, they were unable to completely defeat them.

On March 27, 1814, at a bend in the Tallapoosa River called Horseshoe Bend, General Jackson inflicted a resounding defeat upon a large body of Red Sticks, completely annihilating most of the 1000 warriors. The victory proved so decisive that in the ensuing months, most of the Red Stick leaders and warriors lay down their arms or fled to Florida. A final peace treaty with the Creek Nation was signed at Fort Jackson on August 9, 1814, which, in effect, ceded almost 22 million acres of Creek land to the United States, and opened to white settlers all Alabama land previously closed to Americans.

TREATY OF GHENT AND THE WAR'S LEGACY

Although a search for peace between Great Britain and the United States started soon after war was declared, serious negotiations did not begin until President Madison appointed a delegation to follow up on Russia's offer of mediation in March 1813. While the British dismissed Russia's help, it signaled that it would continue to discuss the issue. After rejecting Gothenburg in Sweden, both nations settled on Ghent, Belgium, as the site for talks. Terms presented by the respected representatives at the negotiations softened and hardened as news of either American or British victories reached the negotiators. With the impressment issue settled by the end of the war in Europe, Indian and territorial issues remained to be worked out. Finally, on December 24, 1814, the American team, which consisted of Henry Clay, Senator James Bayard, and John Quincy Adams, signed the treaty. Congress ratified the treaty on February 15, and its provisions became effective two days later.

The treaty recognized the pre-War boundaries between Canada and the U.S. In many ways, all of the belligerents got something out of the war, except for the Native Americans, who lost their British protection and were now at the mercy of a new expansionist America. The Canadians saw the war as a victory over the Americans which kept them within the British Empire; and the British, despite initial

losses at sea and on land, thought their military and naval forces performed admirably, especially when considering they were at war with France for the past twenty years.

The War of 1812 was not the seminal event that the Revolutionary War, Civil War, or World War II were to American history. As wars go, the war was short, only lasting two and a half years, but the war left its impact, especially on the American people at the time. Despite the fact that the nation did not achieve the ends it sought in war, and despite the intense internal dissension over the declaration of war, the country as a whole felt a renewed pride of accomplishment and strength at the war's end. Militarily, the war was a transforming event. American leaders saw that the militia, although effective in certain situations, was not enough to defend the country from attack, and that a professional army was necessary to defend the nation. The American navy on the lakes and seas proved that it was an equal to the British frigates. It, too, needed to become a larger and better trained navy if it were to maintain the nation's trade and commerce and project growing American power. Politically, the end of the war also saw the decline and fall of the Federalist Party as well, and a renewed Democratic-Republican Party that would dominate American politics for the next twenty years. Six future American Presidents participated in the war politically or militarily: James Monroe, Andrew Jackson, John Quincy Adams, William H. Harrison, John Tyler, and Zachary Taylor. African-Americans also participated in the war on both sides. They served in considerable numbers in both navies, and in some regular army units. At least a thousand served in Cockburn's Colonial Marines who were effectively used against the Virginian and Maryland militias.