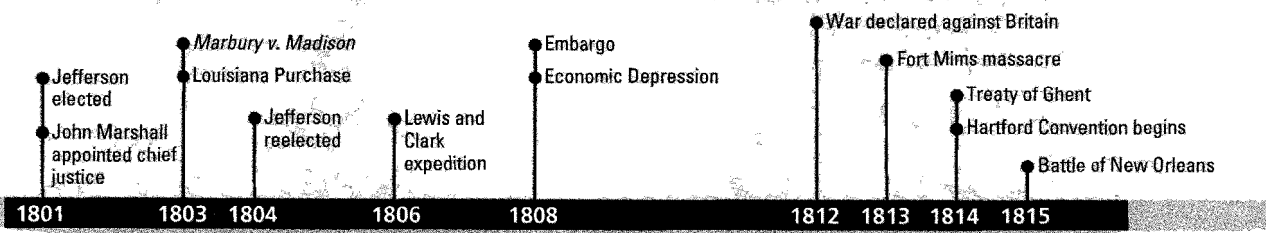
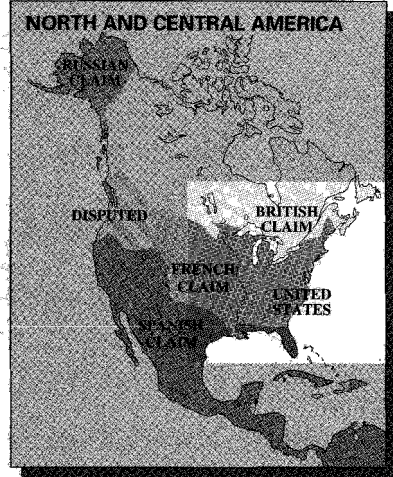
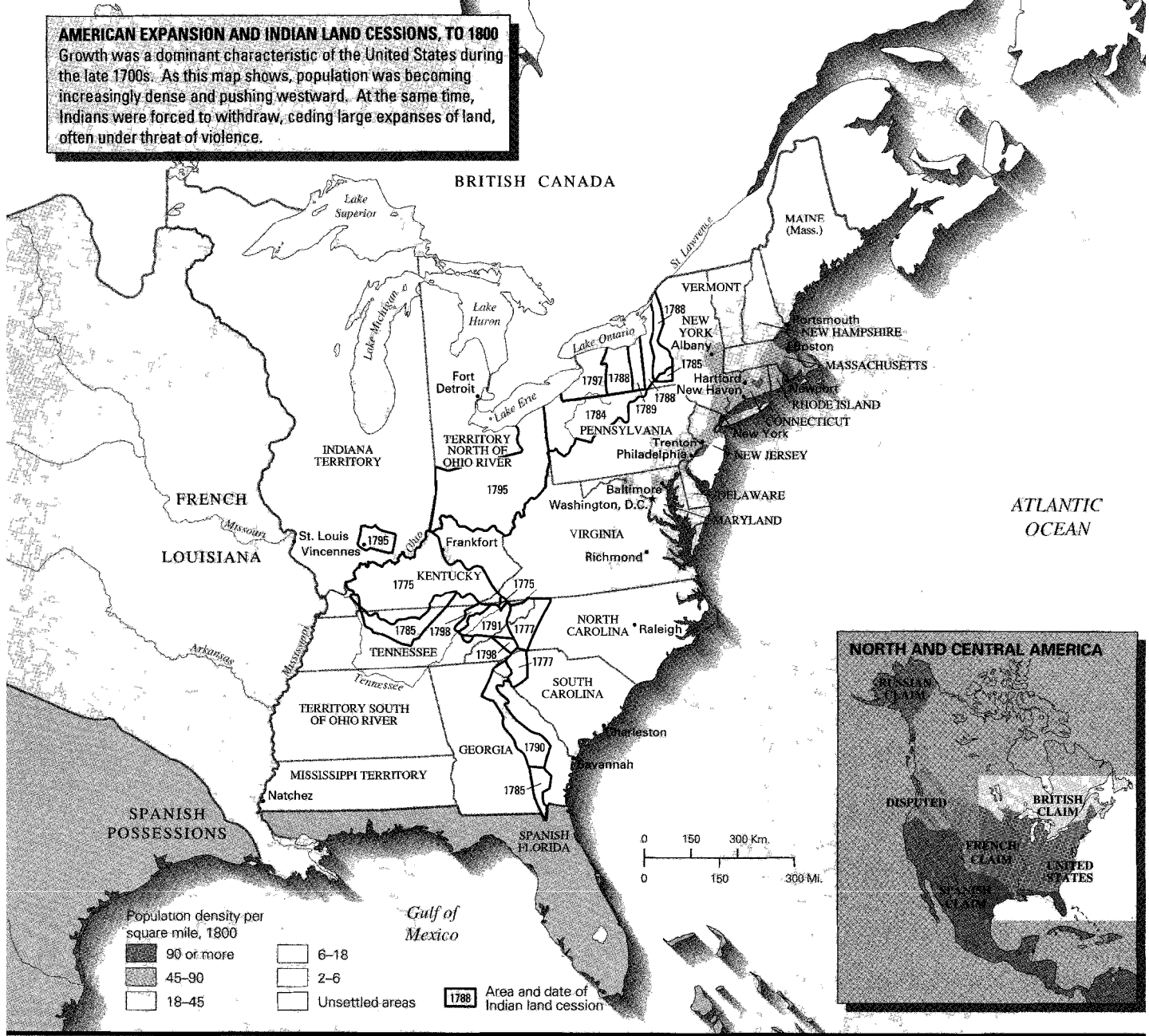




**AMERICAN EXPANSION AND INDIAN LAND CESSIONS, TO 1800**  
 Growth was a dominant characteristic of the United States during the late 1700s. As this map shows, population was becoming increasingly dense and pushing westward. At the same time, Indians were forced to withdraw, ceding large expanses of land, often under threat of violence.



# The Triumphs and Trials of

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## Jeffersonianism, 1800-1815

### The "Revolution of 1800"

What constraints did the Federalists attempt to impose on Jefferson's presidency?

- How did Republicans choose to deal with Federalist constraints?

### Republicanism in Action

What were Jefferson's expectations for American development?

What policies did he choose to meet those expectations?

### Challenge and Uncertainty in Jefferson's America

- How did the expectations of most Americans change during Jefferson's presidency?

What were Jefferson's expectations concerning Native Americans and African Americans?

### Troubling Currents in Jefferson's America

- How did regional interests constrain Jefferson's political and economic expectations?

## Crises in the Nation

- What constraints arose from Jefferson's economic and Indian policies?
- How did the expectations of frontier politicians such as William Henry Harrison help lead to war in 1812?

## The Nation at War

- What developments finally convinced the United States to choose war against Great Britain in 1812?
- Why were American military choices successful or unsuccessful?

## The War's Strange Conclusion

- What constraints on American national development did the outcome of the War of 1812 remove?
- How did the war change Americans' expectations about politics, economics, and national expansion?

## ( INTRODUCTION )

The *outcome* of Federalist efforts to maintain power at any cost was the loss of voter support. In 1800, voters *chose* to remove Federalists from office, turning the government over to Thomas Jefferson. But enough people remained faithful to the Federalist position to maintain that faction's existence and to ensure that it would act as a continuing *constraint* on Republican political activity.

Although Jefferson claimed that he distrusted and disapproved of federal power, he used his power as president to pursue his policy goals. Jefferson purchased the Louisiana Territory despite the fact that there was no constitutional provision permitting such a purchase.

The entire direction of national development changed during Jefferson's presidency. The Louisiana Purchase and the elimination of internal taxes indicated that the days of eastern-dominated mercantilism were at an end. Now the nation's future would be tied to the West. Most Americans saw significant improvement in their *expectations* thanks to a thriving economy, and the nation became increasingly optimistic. But prosperity was a product of international problems as much as it was of Jefferson's *choice*. The nearly constant war in the Old World allowed Americans to make money by selling grain to Europeans. National security and economic prosperity depended on Jefferson's ability to keep America a neutral player on the world stage, a role that became harder to sustain in his second term.

After 1804, increasing *constraints* on American trade forced Jefferson and his successor, James Madison, to make hard *choices*. Believing that Europe needed American food more than America needed European manufactures, Republicans *chose* to prohibit American ships from trading with Europe. The *outcome* was economic depression in the United States. Adding to the problem were widening cracks in Jefferson's party support. Some Republicans thought Jefferson had overstepped his bounds in *choosing* to make the Louisiana Purchase. Federalists too were upset, especially in the Northeast. They believed that Jefferson had

Expectations  
Constraints  
Choices  
Outcomes

*chosen* to serve southern and western interests exclusively.

The *expectations* and *choices* of others played havoc with Jefferson's hopes for a peaceful and prosperous nation. French and British policymakers *chose* not to respect American neutrality. American politicians of various stripes *chose* to oppose the president. In the West, whites seeking land for expansion *expected* that war against the Indians and the British would best serve their ends, while Indians increasingly *chose* to stop retreating. The *outcome* of these *choices* was another war with Great Britain in 1812.

Ill prepared and underfinanced, the United States initially fared badly against Great Britain and its Indian allies. An economic crisis and political infighting divided the nation even more. But a series of improbable American victories prompted a war-weary British public to demand peace.

Officially, the outcome of the war changed nothing. The Treaty of Ghent simply restored relations between the United States and Great Britain to what they had been before hostilities broke out. But in reality, much had changed. Americans emerged from the conflict with a new sense of national pride and purpose and a new set of *expectations* about the future.

## Domestic Expansion and international Crisis

1800 Jefferson and Burr tie in Electoral College

1801 Judiciary Act of 1801

Jefferson elected president by House of Representatives

John Marshall becomes chief justice

1803 Louisiana Purchase

Renewal of war between France and Britain

*Marbury v. Madison*

1804 Thomas Jefferson re-elected president

Britain steps up impressment

Duel between Alexander Hamilton and Aaron Burr

1804-1806 Lewis and Clark expedition 1805 Beginning of

Shawnee religious revival

1807 Burr conspiracy trial Founding of Prophetstown

*Chesapeake* affair

1808 Embargo goes into effect

Economic depression begins James Madison elected president

1809 Fort Wayne Treaty  
Non-Intercourse Act

1810 Macon's Bill No. 2  
Formation of the War Hawks

1811 United States breaks trade relations with  
Britain  
Destruction of Prophetstown

1812 United States declares war against Britain  
United States invades Canada  
Madison re-elected

1813 Fort Mims massacre  
Battle of Put-in-Bay  
Embargo of 1813  
Battle of the Thames

1814 Battle of Horseshoe Bend  
Napoleon defeated  
Battle of Plattsburgh  
British capture and burn Washington, D.C.  
Treaty of Ghent  
Hartford Convention begins

1815 Battle of New Orleans

## The "Revolution of 1800"

The partisan press portrayed the election of 1800 in terms of stark contrasts. The Republican press characterized Adams as a monarchist who planned to rob citizens of their freedom and to turn the United States back into a British colony. By contrast, Federalist newspapers painted Vice President Jefferson as a dangerous, atheistic radical who shared French tastes for violent politics and loose sexual morals.

### The Lesser of Republican Evils

As the election of 1800 approached, the split within the Federalist party widened. Disgusted by the president's failure to declare war on France, Hamilton schemed to elevate Charles Cotesworth Pinckney, hero of the XYZ affair, to the presidency over Adams. Hamilton's methods backfired. They drove southern Federalists into supporting Jefferson. Bitter

factional disputes within the Federalist party and hatred of the taxes the Federalists had imposed in 1798 led to a Republican victory in 1800.

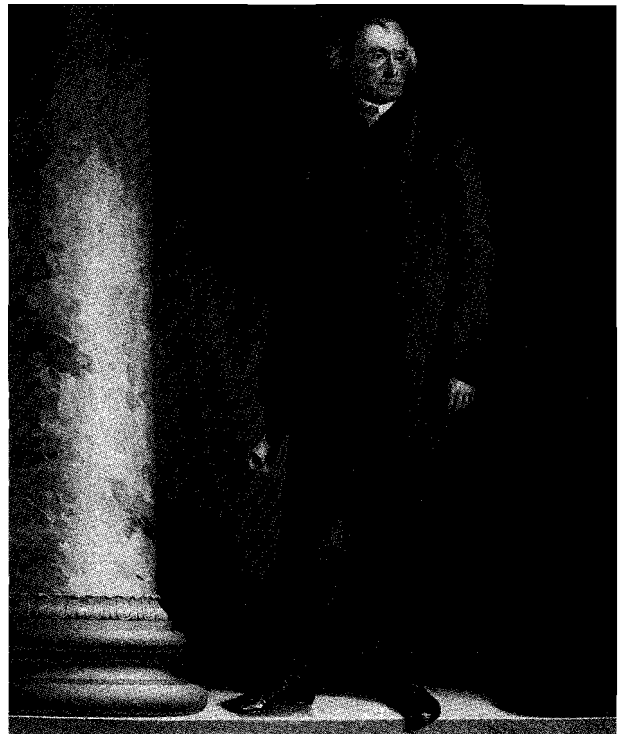
Still, it was not clear who would be the next president. Jefferson and his running mate, Aaron Burr, emerged with the same number of electoral votes, thereby throwing the election into the House of Representatives. The majority of the House consisted of hard-line Federalists elected during the Quasi-War hysteria in 1798. These Federalists were forced to choose between two men, both of whom they regarded as dangerous radicals. Neither Jefferson nor Burr could win a clear majority of House votes. Burr could have ended the deadlock at any time by withdrawing, but he sat silent.

Hamilton helped to break the deadlock by convincing several Federalists that Jefferson was far more conservative than his rhetoric implied. Another development that tipped the scales in Jefferson's favor was the mobilization of the Virginia and Pennsylvania militias. These states feared that the Federalists might attempt to steal the election from Jefferson. As Delaware senator James Bayard described the situation, Federalists had to admit "that we must risk the Constitution and a Civil War or take Mr. Jefferson." Finally, on the thirty-sixth ballot, Jefferson emerged with a clear majority.

The Jefferson-Burr deadlock of 1801 led to the passage of the Twelfth **Amendment**. Ratified in 1804, this amendment separated balloting in the Electoral College for president and vice president and thereby eliminated the confusion that had nearly wrecked the nation in 1800.

### **Federalist Defenses and Party Acceptance**

The Federalists were not about to leave office without erecting a strong bulwark against the Republicans. During its last days in office, the Federalist Congress passed the Judiciary Act of 1801, which created sixteen new federal judgeships, six additional circuit courts, and many federal marshal-ships and clerkships. President Adams filled all these positions with loyal Federalists, signing appointments right up to midnight on his last day in office. Adams appointed his secretary of state, John Marshall, as chief justice of the Supreme Court.



◆ Suffering a lifelong sensitivity to cold as well as a dislike for formality, Thomas Jefferson usually chose to dress practically, in fairly plain clothes that kept him warm. This 1822 portrait by Thomas Sully captures the former president in his customary greatcoat, unadorned suit, and well-worn boots. *"Thomas Jefferson" by Thomas Sully, West Point Museum, United States Military Academy, West Point, N.Y.*

**Twelfth Amendment** Constitutional amendment ratified in 1804 that provides for separate balloting in the Electoral College for president and vice president.

**Judiciary Act of 1801** Law that the Federalist Congress passed to increase the number of federal courts and judicial positions; President Adams rushed to fill these positions with Federalists before his term ended.

**John Marshall** Virginia lawyer and politician made chief justice of the Supreme Court by President Adams; his legal decisions helped shape the role of the Court in American government.

Despite these last-minute Federalist appointments, Jefferson's inaugural address was conciliatory. "We are all Republicans; we are all Federalists," Jefferson said. In his mind, all Americans shared the same fundamental principles established in 1776. Yet even Jefferson considered the election of 1800 "a revolution in the principles of our government."

Jefferson sought to restore the republic envisioned by revolutionaries twenty-five years before. Unlike the Federalists, Jefferson was unalterably opposed to sedition acts or other government restraints directed against political opponents. The Republican Congress endorsed Jefferson's commitment to free speech by letting the Sedition Act and the Alien Acts expire. Congress also repealed the Naturalization Act, replacing its fourteen-year naturalization period with one of five years.

**Jefferson's conciliatory** policies and tone led Americans to see political parties in a new light. Many concluded that people in opposite political camps could hold different positions and not be enemies. As Jefferson observed, "Every difference of opinion is not a difference of principles." Even extreme Federalists like Fisher Ames of Massachusetts came to realize that a "party is an association of honest men for honest purposes." Such realizations marked the beginnings of accepting political parties in the United States.

### **Madison Versus the Midnight Appointments**

The power of the judicial branch to interpret and enforce federal law became a major issue during Jefferson's first administration. His secretary of state, James Madison, had held back the appointment letters that had not been delivered before the expiration of Adams's term. One jilted appointee was William Marbury, who was to have been justice of the peace for the newly created District of Columbia. Marbury filed suit in the Supreme Court, claiming the Judiciary Act of 1789 gave the Court the power to demand that Madison deliver Marbury's appointment letter.

In considering *Marbury v. Madison*, Chief Justice Marshall believed that the Judiciary Act did re-

quire Madison to deliver the letter. He was keenly aware, however, that the Court had no power to enforce its orders. Ordering Madison to appoint Marbury justice of the peace could lead to a confrontation between the executive and judicial branches, a confrontation that Marshall was sure the Court would lose. He thus ruled in 1803 that the Constitution contained no provision for the Supreme Court to issue orders such as the Judiciary Act of 1789 required. Therefore the 1789 act was unconstitutional.

Jefferson and Madison accepted Marshall's decision because it meant they did not have to place Adams's handpicked men in powerful judicial positions. But it also meant that they would have to acknowledge that the Supreme Court, not the individual states or the branches of the federal government, had the right to determine the **constitutionality** of federal laws. Most Republicans endorsed Marshall's decision, which asserted the principle of **judicial review** over acts of Congress. Because of their experience with the Alien and Sedition Acts, however, many southerners continued to assert that states had the fundamental right to determine the constitutionality of the laws.

Having blocked the appointment of many new Federalists to judicial posts, some Republicans in Congress chose to wage a partisan war against those already on the bench. Their first target was New Hampshire Federalist John Pickering, an alcoholic who used his federal judgeship to rail against Republicanism. Brought before the Senate on **impeachment** charges, the Republican majority

**conciliatory** Striving to overcome distrust or to regain someone's good will.

*Marbury v. Madison* Supreme Court decision (1803) declaring part of the Judiciary Act of 1789 unconstitutional and thus establishing the principle of judicial review.

**constitutionality** Agreement with the principles or provisions of the Constitution.

**judicial review** The power of the Supreme Court to review the constitutionality of laws passed by Congress and the states.

**impeachment** The presentation of formal charges of wrongdoing against a public official.



quickly found him guilty and removed him from office. Flushed by that success, staunch Republicans decided to go after bigger game: Supreme Court Justice Samuel Chase. Though extremely competent as a jurist, Chase was notorious for making partisan decisions. There was no evidence, however, that Chase had committed the "high crimes and misdemeanors" required for the removal of a federal judge. Even so, House Republicans ordered a bill of impeachment and sent Chase to trial before the Senate. Many expected the Senate, chaired by radical Republican Aaron Burr, to make quick work of disrobing Chase, but Burr surprised his colleagues by conducting a fair trial during which Chase presented a convincing defense. The war on the courts came to a sudden end when both Federalists and the majority of Republicans chose to dismiss the charges against Chase, marking an important precedent against the partisan use of impeachment powers.

## Republicanism in Action

When Jefferson assumed office, he brought a new spirit to national politics and the presidency. He was the first president to be inaugurated in the new national capital of Washington City. He led a much simpler life than his predecessors had. He refused, for example, to ride in a carriage, preferring to go by horseback through Washington's muddy and rutted streets. He abandoned the fashion of wearing a wig, letting his red hair stand out.

### Jefferson's Vision for America

Jefferson had a strong, positive vision for the nation that was guided by his fears and hopes for the American experiment in republican government. The greatest dangers to a republic, he believed, were high population density and the concentration of money in the hands of a few. These led to corruption and the rise of tyrants like George III. Accordingly, Jefferson wanted to steer America away from the large, publicly supported industries that Hamilton advocated. Jefferson wanted America to be a nation of farmers who owned their own land, produced their own food, and were beholden to no one. Such yeoman farmers, Jefferson believed, could make political decisions based solely on reason and good sense.

Jefferson did not want Americans to be deprived of the benefits of industry and commerce. But he did want to preserve American independence and freedom from corruption. His solution was simple: America's vast

surpluses of food should be traded for European manufactures.

Jefferson was also an advocate of free trade. He believed that businesses should make their own decisions and succeed or fail in a marketplace free of government interference. This belief contrasted with the mercantilist theory that governments should control prices and restrict trade to benefit the nation-state.

Responsibility for implementing this economic policy fell to Treasury Secretary Albert Gallatin. Gallatin's first goal was to make the United States free of debt by 1817. He cut the budget drastically, even closing several American embassies. At home, he pared administrative costs by reducing staff and putting an end to fancy receptions and balls. The administration reduced the army from four thousand to twenty-five hundred men and the navy from twenty-five ships to a mere seven. In making these cuts, Gallatin subtly weakened the central government's economic presence, putting more responsibilities back onto the states, where he thought they belonged.

Gallatin's plan also called for a significant change in how the government raised revenue. In 1802, the Republican Congress repealed all internal taxes, including the hated whiskey excise tax, leaving customs duties and the sale of western lands as the sole sources of federal revenue. With this one gesture, Gallatin struck a major blow for Jefferson's economic vision by tying the nation's financial future to westward expansion and foreign trade.

The success of Jefferson's economic policy depended greatly on his handling of foreign affairs. During Jefferson's presidency, two foreign issues

**Albert Gallatin** Treasury secretary in Jefferson's administration; he favored limited government and reduced the federal debt by cutting spending.

loomed large. One was the need to improve navigation on North America's inland waterways. The other was the need to ensure free navigation of the open seas. France and Spain posed a major challenge to the first of these, and pirates threatened the other.

### **War in the Mediterranean**

The challenge to free navigation came from pirates who patrolled the northern coast of Africa from Tangier to Tripoli. Ever since the 1790s, the United States had paid the Barbary pirates not to attack American ships. By 1800, fully a fifth of the federal budget was earmarked for this purpose. Gallatin wanted to eliminate this expense. For Jefferson, the principle of free navigation of the seas was just as important. Noting that "tribute or war is the usual alternative of these Barbary pirates," Jefferson decided on war and dispatched navy ships to the Mediterranean in 1801.

The war that followed was far from successful. The American navy suffered a major defeat when the warship *Philadelphia* and its entire crew were captured. Lieutenant Stephen Decatur, Jr.'s bold raid left the *Philadelphia* in ashes so it could not be used by the ruler of Tripoli, but the ship's crew remained in captivity. The United States finally negotiated peace terms in 1805, paying \$60,000 for the release of the hostages, while Tripoli promised to halt pirate raids on American shipping.

### **Crisis in America's Interior**

As settlers continued to pour into the region west of the Appalachian Mountains, the commercial importance of the Mississippi River increased. Whoever controlled the mouth of the Mississippi would have the power to make or break the economy of the interior.

In Pinckney's treaty of 1795 (see page 145), Spain had granted American farmers the right to ship cargoes down the Mississippi. In 1800, however, Napoleon had exchanged some French holdings in southern Europe for Spain's land in North America. The deal between Spain and France threatened to scuttle American commerce on the river. Such fears took on substance when Spanish officials suspended free trade in New Orleans.

Jefferson responded by dispatching James Monroe to talk with the British about a military alliance. He also had Monroe instruct the American minister to France, Robert Livingston, to purchase New Orleans and as much adjacent real estate as he could get for \$2 million.

Napoleon may have been considering the creation of a North American empire when he acquired Louisiana from Spain. **Santo Domingo**, a French colony in the Caribbean, would likely have been the hub for such an empire. But Napoleon's invasion force that was sent in 1802 to reclaim Santo Domingo from rebellious slaves was unsuccessful.

### **The Louisiana Purchase**

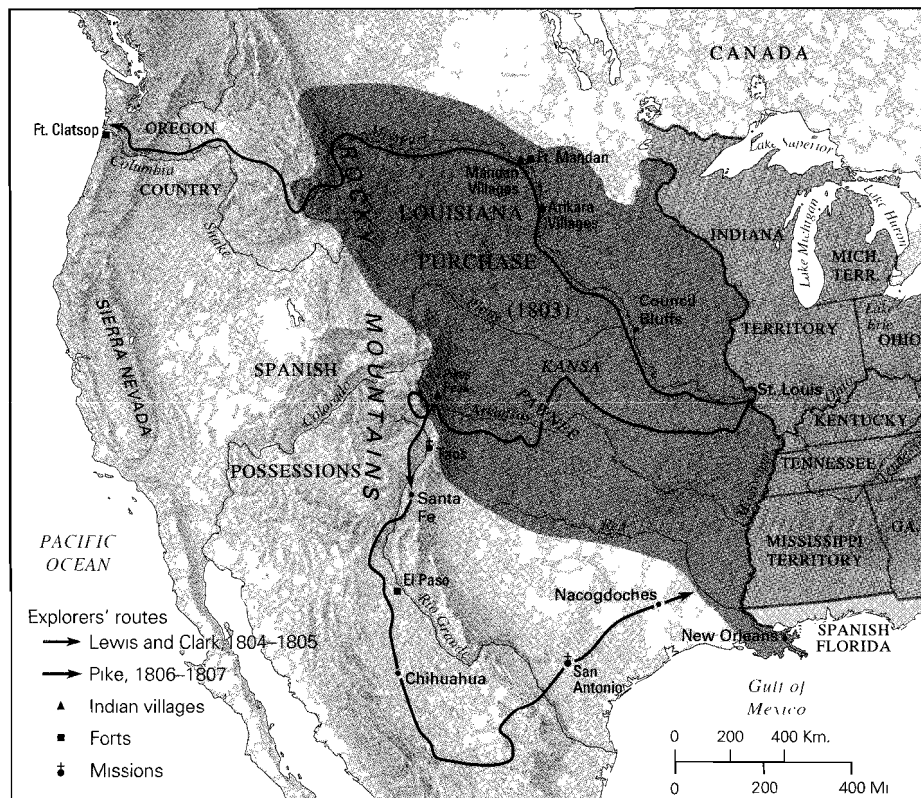
Having failed in the Caribbean, Napoleon turned his full attention to conquest in Europe. Desperate for money, the French emperor greeted Monroe and Livingston with an offer to sell the whole of Louisiana for \$15 million. Although Livingston and Monroe had been authorized to spend only \$2 million, they jumped at the deal. The president not only approved of their action but was overjoyed. The deal offered three important benefits. It saved him from having to ally the United States with Britain. It secured the Mississippi River for shipments of American agricultural products to Europe. And it doubled the size of the United States, opening up uncharted expanses for settlement by yeoman farmers. Jefferson recommended that the Senate ratify the purchase, even though the Constitution was silent on the acquisition of new territories. The Senate approved the **Louisiana Purchase** overwhelmingly in November 1803.

Jefferson subsequently sent a small party to explore this area (see Map 8.1). **Meriwether Lewis**,

Santo Domingo Island shared by the modern nations of Haiti and the Dominican Republic.

Louisiana Purchase The U.S. purchase of Louisiana from France for \$15 million in 1803; the Louisiana Territory extended from the Mississippi River to the Rocky Mountains.

Meriwether Lewis Jefferson aide who was sent to explore the Louisiana Territory in 1803; he later served as its governor.



\*MAP 8.1 Louisiana Purchase and the Lewis and Clark Expedition As this map shows, President Jefferson added an enormous tract of land to the United States when he purchased Louisiana from France in 1803. The president was eager to learn as much as possible about the new territory and sent two exploration teams into the West. In addition to collecting information, Lewis and Clark's and Pike's expeditions sought to commit Indian groups along their paths to alliances with the United States and to undermine French, Spanish, and British relations with the Indians, even in those areas that were not officially part of the United States.

Jefferson's private secretary, and his co-commander, Indian fighter **William Clark**, were to note the numbers of French, Spanish, and Indians in the area and to chart major waterways and other important strategic sites. They were also to undermine the Indians' relations with the Spanish and French.

The expedition set out by boat in the spring of 1804, arriving among the Mandan Indians in present-day North Dakota in the late fall. The explorers spent the winter there, gathering information from the Mandans and from French Canadian fur traders. The next spring, they set out across the mountains, led by a French trapper named Charbono and his Shoshone wife, **Sacajawea**. With the

William Clark Soldier and explorer who joined Meriwether Lewis on the expedition to explore the

Louisiana Territory; he was responsible for mapmaking.  
Sacajawea Shoshone woman who served as guide and interpreter on the Lewis and Clark expedition.

help of Sacajawea's people and other Indians, the expedition reached the Pacific Ocean in November 1805, wintering near the mouth of the Columbia River. When spring came, the party retraced its steps eastward. Finally, after nearly three years, Lewis and Clark arrived back in Washington carrying the information they had been asked to gather. They had also obtained promises from many Indian tribes to join in friendship with the new American republic.

## **Challenge and Uncertainty in Jefferson's America**

Jefferson's policies brought a new spirit into the land. The Virginian's commitment to opportunity and progress, to openness and frugality, offered a stark contrast to the policies of his predecessors. Nevertheless, some disturbing social and intellectual developments began to surface. In particular, rapid westward expansion strained conventional social institutions. The economic opportunities in the West caused a quiet rebellion of young adults against the authority of their parents.

### **The Heritage of Partisan Politics**

The popularity of Jefferson's Republican party was abundantly clear by the 1804 election. The Republicans had virtually eclipsed the Federalists in the congressional elections of 1802, and by 1804 the Federalists were in disarray. Prominent Federalists such as Fisher Ames and John Jay had withdrawn from public life altogether. In the absence of more prominent alternatives, the Federalists chose Charles Cotesworth Pinckney to face off against Jefferson.

In launching their campaign, the Federalists focused on the Louisiana Purchase, charging that Jefferson had overstepped his constitutional authority. Most Americans, however, considered this technicality unimportant compared to the benefits of opening up the West. Also, Jefferson had eliminated internal taxes, encouraged westward migration, eliminated the hated Alien and Sedition Acts, and fostered hope in the hearts of many disaffected

Americans. He had also proved that he was no threat to national commerce. America's international earnings grew at the same pace during Jefferson's tenure in office as they had in the 1790s. This substantial record won Jefferson a resounding victory in 1804. He captured 162 electoral votes to Pinckney's 14, carrying every state except Connecticut and Delaware.

## **Westward Expansion and Social Stress**

By 1810, vast numbers of young adults had grabbed at Jefferson's frontier vision. The population of Ohio, for example, grew from 45,000 in 1800 to 231,000 in 1810. Similar spurts occurred in Tennessee and Kentucky. Although such rapid growth was a source of pride, it was also a source of anxiety to westerners trying to establish order in new communities.

Social instability was common in the West. The odd mixture of ethnic, religious, and national groups that made their way west did little to bring cohesiveness to community life. Most of the population consisted of young men. There were few women or older people to encourage stable behavior.

The expansion of the American West had an unsettling effect on communities in the East as well. During the eighteenth century, older people had maintained their authority by controlling the distribution of land to their children. Sons and daughters lived with and worked for their parents until their elders saw fit to deed property to them. As a result, children living in the East generally did not marry or operate their own farms and businesses until they were in their thirties. Economic opportunities on the frontier lessened young people's need to rely on their parents for support and lowered the age at which they began to break away from their parents.

During the early nineteenth century, the age at which children attained independence fell steadily. By the 1820s, children were marrying in their early to mid-twenties. Breathing the new air of independence, intrepid young people moved out of their parents' homes, migrating westward to find land and new opportunities.

## The Religious Response to Social Change

The changes taking place in the young republic stirred conflicting religious currents. One was rationalism in religious thought. The other was a new **evangelicalism**.

Jefferson, Franklin, Paine, and many others of the revolutionary generation had embraced the **deism** of the Enlightenment (see page 75). They viewed God as a vague "first cause" whose universe was a perfectly crafted machine that had been left to run itself according to rational laws. Religion had to be plain, reasonable, and verifiable to be acceptable to such rationalists. Jefferson, for example, edited his own version of the Bible, keeping only the moral principles and the solid historical facts and discarding anything that he regarded as supernatural. Thomas Paine rejected Christianity altogether, calling it the "strangest religion ever set up."

Rationalism also permeated some mainstream denominations during the Revolutionary era. Some New England Congregationalists began to question predestination and to emphasize instead the individual's role in salvation, especially the significance of reason in that pursuit. Like Jefferson, these rationalist reformers rejected much of the mystery in Christian faith, including the ideas of the Trinity and Christ's divinity. Unitarianism, as this form of Christian worship came to be called, grew by leaps and bounds during and after the Revolution.

Unitarianism held great appeal for the young generation in fast-growing port cities like Boston, New York, and Baltimore. In a nation where young people were carving out economic lives for themselves in the worlds of commerce and manufacturing, the notion that they were powerless to effect their own salvation seemed increasingly ridiculous.

While deism and Unitarianism were gaining footholds in eastern cities, a very different kind of religious response was taking shape in the West. There Methodists, Baptists, and Presbyterians emphasized the centrality of conversion in the life of a Christian. Conversion was that emotional moment during which one realizes that one is damned and can be saved only by the grace of God. Typically, conversions were brought about by spirited preaching. These denominations concentrated on

training a new, young ministry and sending it to preach in every corner of the nation. The Second Great Awakening, which began in Cane Ridge, Kentucky, in 1801, spread throughout the country.

Like the rationalist sects, the evangelicals stressed individuals' roles in their own salvation and de-emphasized predestination. However, the new awakeners breathed new life into the old Puritan notion of God's plan for the world and the role that Americans were to play in this plan. They also emphasized the importance of Christian community in areas where other forms of community were lacking.

Presbyterian, Baptist, and Methodist churches provided ideological underpinnings for the expansive behavior of westerners and a sense of mission to ease the insecurities produced by venturing into the unknown. They also provided some stability for communities in which traditional controls were lacking. These attractive features helped evangelicalism sweep across the West.

### The Problem of Race in

#### Jefferson's Republic

Jefferson's policies enabled many Americans to benefit from the nation's development, but they certainly did not help everyone. Neither Indians nor African Americans had much of a role in Jefferson's America.

A slaveholder, Jefferson doubted the capabilities of blacks. In his *Notes on the State of Virginia* (1785), he asserted that blacks were "inferior to whites in the endowments both of body and mind." Although Phillis Wheatley had won acclaim for her

**rationalism** The theory that the exercise of reason, rather than the acceptance of authority or spiritual revelation, is the only valid basis for belief and the best source of spiritual truth.

**evangelicalism** Protestant movements that stress personal conversion and salvation by faith.

**deism** The belief that God created the universe in such a way that no divine intervention was necessary for its continued operation.

**Trinity** The Christian belief that God consists of three divine persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

poetry (see page 121), Jefferson dismissed her work as "below the dignity of criticism." He similarly refused to accept the accomplishments of the black mathematician, astronomer, and engineer Benjamin Banneker as proof that blacks were the intellectual equals of whites.

Throughout the Jeffersonian era, the great majority of blacks in America were slaves in the southern states. From the 1790s onward, the number of free blacks increased steadily. Emancipation did not bring equality, however, even in northern states that had mandated the gradual abolition of slavery (see page 121). Many states did not permit free blacks to testify in court, to vote, or to exercise other fundamental freedoms accorded to whites. Public schools often refused admission to African-American children. Even churches were often closed to blacks.

Free blacks began to respond to systematic exclusion by forming their own institutions. In Philadelphia, tension between white and free black Methodists led former slave Richard Allen to form the Bethel Church for Negro Methodists in 1793. Ongoing tension with the white Methodist hierarchy eventually led Allen to secede from the church and to form his own African Methodist Episcopal church (Bethel) in 1816. Similar controversies in New York led James Varick to found the African Methodist Episcopal church (Zion) in 1821.

The African Methodist Episcopal (AME) church grew rapidly. Besides providing places of worship and centers for cultural and social activities, AME churches joined with other African-American churches to provide schools and other services withheld by whites. Bishop Allen's organization launched the first black magazine in America and eventually founded its own college, Wilberforce University.

The place of Indians in Jeffersonian thought was somewhat paradoxical. Jefferson considered Indians to be savages but was not convinced that they were biologically inferior to Europeans. Jefferson attributed the differences between Indians and Europeans to the Indians' cultural retardation. He argued that harsh economic conditions and lack of a written language had kept the Indians in a condition of "barbarism." Jefferson was confident that whites could help lift Indians out of their uncivilized state.

Jefferson's Indian policy reflected this attitude. As president, he created government-owned trading posts at which Indians were offered goods at cheap prices. He believed that Indians who were exposed to white manufactures would recognize the superiority of white culture and adopt that culture. Until this process was complete, the Indians, like children, were to be protected from those who would take advantage of them. Also like children, the Indians were not to be given the full rights and responsibilities of citizenship. What rights they had

were not to be protected by the Constitution but were to be subject to the whims of the Senate.

The chief problem for Jeffersonian Indian policy was not the Indians' supposed cultural retardation but their rapid progress and acculturation. This was particularly true of the Cherokees and Creeks. Alexander McGillivray of the Creeks, for example, deftly played American, French, and Spanish interests off against each other while building a strong economic base founded on both communal and privately owned plantations. In similar fashion, the Cherokee elite in 1794 established a centralized government that brought the Cherokees wealth and power.

The Indians' white neighbors generally did not think that this represented the right kind of progress. From their perspective, the Indians' destiny was to vanish along with the receding wilderness. Eyeing Cherokee lands, Georgia contended that Indians within its borders were no concern of the federal government. Jefferson insisted, however, that federal authority over Indian affairs was essential for maintaining peace and ensuring the Indians' future welfare.

Jefferson nonetheless feared that an all-out war between the states and the Indians might develop. He accordingly suggested that large reserves in the Louisiana Territory be created for Indians. This

**Benjamin Banneker** African-American mathematician and astronomer who published an almanac that calculated the movements of stars and planets.

**African Methodist Episcopal church** African-American branch of Methodism established in Philadelphia in 1816 and in New York in 1821.

would remove Indians from state jurisdictions and from the corrupting influence of the baser elements of white society. He made many efforts, largely unsuccessful, to convince the Indians to exchange traditional lands for new lands west of the Mississippi.

## **Troubling Currents in Jefferson's America**

Racial problems were not the only ones that beset Jefferson's party following its success in the 1804 election. Factions that would challenge Jefferson's control were forming. A small but vocal coalition of disgruntled Federalists threatened to **secede** from the Union. Even within his own party, voices were raised against Jefferson. Diplomatic problems also would trouble Jefferson's second administration.

### **Emerging Factions in**

#### **American Politics**

The Federalists' failure in the election of 1804 nearly spelled their demise. With the West and the South firmly in Jefferson's camp, New England Federalists found themselves powerless. Federalist leader Timothy Pickering was so disgruntled that he advocated the secession of the northeastern states from the Union. He formed a political coalition called the **Essex Junto** to carry out his scheme, which came to nothing at this time.

Rifts appeared in Jefferson's party as well. Throughout Jefferson's first administration, some southerners had criticized the president for expanding federal power and interfering with states' rights. One of Jefferson's most vocal critics was his cousin, congressman **John Randolph** of Roanoke. Randolph considered himself the last true Republican, and he opposed any legislation that violated his principles.

The tension between the two Virginia Republicans came to a head in 1804 over the **Yazoo affair**, a scandal stemming from Georgia's sale of most of present-day Alabama and Mississippi to political insiders in 1795. Outraged voters forced the Georgia legislature to overturn the *sale* the following

year, but lawsuits were still pending when Georgia ceded the area to the United States in 1802. Jefferson advocated federal compensation for those who had lost money because of the overturned sale. Randolph claimed that would violate Republican principles and plain morality, and he used his power in Congress to block Jefferson's efforts.

In 1806, Randolph broke with Jefferson completely. He regarded Jefferson's requesting Congress for a \$2 million gift to France for trying to influence Spain to part with its claims in Florida as nothing more than bribery. Randolph formed a third party, the **Tertium Quids**, fracturing Jefferson's united political front.

A second fissure in the Republican party opened over Vice President Aaron Burr. Burr's failure to renounce the presidency in the election of 1800 had deeply angered Jefferson. Jefferson snubbed Burr throughout his first term and then dropped Burr from the ticket in 1804. Burr then ran for governor of New York with the support of the Essex Junto, which was scheming to have New York join a northern confederacy. Alexander Hamilton was furious when he perceived Burr's intentions and loudly denounced Burr as "a dangerous man . . . who ought not to be trusted with the reins of government." Burr lost the election in a landslide.

Steaming with resentment, Burr blamed Hamilton for his defeat and challenged him to a duel. Although Hamilton hated dueling, he accepted

**secede** To withdraw formally from membership in an alliance or association.

**Essex Junto** Group of Federalists in Essex County, Massachusetts, who called for New England and New York to secede from the Union during Jefferson's second term.

**John Randolph** Virginia politician who was a cousin of Thomas Jefferson; he believed in limited government and opposed the acquisition of Florida.

**Yazoo affair** Notorious deal in which the Georgia legislature sold a huge tract of public land to speculators for a low price; the sale was overturned by a new legislature a year later.

**Tertium Quids** Republican faction formed by John Randolph in protest against Jefferson's plan for acquiring Florida from Spain.

Burr's challenge. The vice president wounded Hamilton mortally in July 1804. Burr was indicted for murder and fled. While in hiding, he hatched a plot with James Wilkinson, a Revolutionary War commander who had become something of a soldier of fortune. The nature of this plot remains obscure. Whatever they had in mind, rumors that Burr and Wilkinson intended to seize Louisiana soon surfaced. Federal authorities began investigating when they received a letter from Wilkinson in December 1806.

Double-crossing Burr and playing innocent, Wilkinson warned of a "deep, dark, wicked, and widespread conspiracy" against America. Burr, learning that Wilkinson had turned him in, tried to reach Spanish Florida but was captured early in 1807 and put on trial for treason. Chief Justice John Marshall instructed the jury that treason, according to the Constitution, consisted of "levying war against the United States or adhering to their enemies." Because Burr had not waged war and because neither Spain nor Britain was then an enemy of the United States, the jury acquitted the former vice president.

### **The Problem of American Neutrality**

Shortly after the conclusion of the Burr trial, new concerns about the possibility of war with Great Britain emerged. The impressment of American seamen and violations of American neutrality had led to deteriorating relations with Great Britain since 1803, when war resumed between Britain and France. Britain, strapped for mariners by renewed warfare and by thousands of desertions, pursued a vigorous policy of reclaiming British sailors, even if they were on neutral American ships and, more provocatively, even if they had become naturalized American citizens. The British abducted as many as eight thousand sailors from American ships between 1803 and 1812. The loss of so many seamen hurt American shippers, but it wounded American pride even more. Like the XYZ affair, impressment insulted national honor.

The escalating economic warfare between France and Britain quickly involved Americans. A pivotal event occurred in June 1807. A British frigate fired on the American warship *Chesapeake* inside American territorial waters when the latter

refused to hand over British sailors. The British broadsides crippled the American vessel, killing three men. The British then boarded the *Chesapeake* and dragged off four men, three of them naturalized American citizens. Americans were outraged.

Napoleon responded to more aggressive British enforcement by declaring economic war against neutrals. In the **Milan Decree**, he vowed to seize any neutral ship that even carried a license to trade with Britain. Ships that had been boarded by the British would be subject to immediate French capture.

Many Americans viewed the escalating French and British sanctions as extremely insulting. The *Washington Federalist* observed, "We have never, on any occasion, witnessed . . . such a thirst for revenge." If Congress had been in session, it probably would have called for war. But Jefferson stayed calm. War would bring his whole political program to a crashing halt. He had insisted on inexpensive government, lobbied for American neutrality, and hoped for renewed prosperity through continuing trade with Europe. War would destroy all those things. But doing nothing also would put the country in great peril.

Believing that Europeans were far more dependent on American goods than Americans were on European manufactures, Jefferson issued an **embargo**—an absolute ban—on all American trade with Europe in December 1807. It went into effect at the beginning of 1808.

### **Crises in the Nation**

While impressment, blockade, and embargo plagued America's Atlantic frontier, a combination of European and Indian hostility along the western

**broadside** The simultaneous discharge of all the guns on one side of a warship.

**Milan Decree** Napoleon's order authorizing the capture of any neutral vessels sailing from British ports or submitting to British searches.

**embargo** A government order that bans trade with another nation or group of nations.



frontier added to the air of national emergency. The resulting series of domestic crises played havoc with Jefferson's vision of a peaceful, prosperous nation.

### **The Depression of 1808**

Jefferson's embargo resulted in the worst economic depression since the founding of the American colonies. Trade slumped disastrously. American exports fell from \$109 million to \$22 million, and net earnings from shipping plummeted by almost 50 percent. During 1808, earnings from legitimate business enterprise in America declined to less than a quarter of their value in 1807.

The depression shattered economic and social life in many eastern towns. Some thirty thousand sailors were thrown out of work. In New York City alone, 120 businesses went bankrupt, and 1,200 New Yorkers were imprisoned for debt in 1808. New England, where the economy had become almost entirely dependent on foreign trade, was hit harder still. The Federalists enjoyed a comeback, not in spite of but because of their rhetoric calling for disobedience of federal law and the possibility of secession.

New Englanders screamed loudest about the embargo, but southerners and westerners were just as seriously hurt by it. The economy of the South had depended on the export of staple crops like tobacco since colonial times. The embargo meant near death to all legitimate trade. The loss of foreign markets caused tobacco prices to fall from \$6.75 per hundredweight to \$3.25, and cotton from 21 to 13 cents per pound. In the West, wholesale prices for agricultural products also spiraled downward.

Although trading interests in New England suffered during the depression, a new avenue of economic expansion opened there as a result of the embargo. Cut off from European manufactured goods, Americans started to make more textiles and other items for themselves. The expansion in cotton spinning is a case in point. Prior to 1808, only fifteen cotton mills had been built in the United States. Between the passage of the embargo and the end of 1809, eighty-seven mills sprang up, mostly in New England.

### **The Prophet and Tecumseh**

The crisis along the Atlantic frontier was echoed by a problem along the nation's western frontier. Relations with Indians in the West had been peaceful since the Battle of Fallen Timbers in Ohio in 1794, but only because the Indians had been crushed into submission. The Shawnees and other groups had been thrown off their traditional homelands in Ohio by the Treaty of Greenville and forced to move to new lands in Indiana. Food shortages, disease, and continuing encroachment by settlers caused many young Indians to lose faith in their traditional beliefs and in themselves as human beings. A growing number turned to alcohol to escape feelings of helplessness and hopelessness. Traditional leaders seemed unable to halt the growing tide of white expansion.

In the midst of the crisis, one disheartened, diseased alcoholic rose above his sickness to lead the Indians into a brief new era of hope. A young Shawnee named Lalawathika claimed that he remembered dying and meeting the Master of Life, who showed him the way to lead his people out of degradation. He then returned to the world of the living and awoke, cured of his illness. He immediately adopted the name Tenskwatawa ("The Way") and launched a revival in 1805 to teach the ways revealed to him by the Master of Life. Whites called him "the Prophet."

**The Prophet** preached a message of ethnic pride, nonviolence, and passive resistance. Blaming the decline of his people on their adoption of white ways, the Prophet taught them to discard whites' clothing, religion, and especially alcohol and to live as their ancestors had. Whites, he said, were dangerous witches, and Indians must avoid them. He also urged his followers to unify against the white exploiters and to hold on to what remained of their lands. If they followed his teachings, the Indians would regain control of their lives

**The Prophet** Shawnee religious visionary who called for a return to Indian traditions and founded the community of Prophetstown on Tippecanoe Creek in Indiana.

and their lands, and the whites would vanish from their world.

In 1807, the Prophet established a new community, Prophetstown, on the banks of Tippecanoe Creek in Indiana. This community was to serve as a model for revitalized Indian life. Liquor, guns, and other white goods were banned from the settlement. The residents of Prophetstown worked together, using traditional forms of agriculture, hunting, and gathering.

The Prophet's message of passive resistance underwent a significant change in the face of continuing white opposition. He began to advocate more forceful solutions to the Indians' problems. In April 1807, the Prophet suggested that warriors unite to resist white expansion. Although he did not urge his followers to attack whites, he claimed that the Master of Life would protect his followers in the event of war.

Whereas the Prophet continued to stress spiritual means for stopping white aggression, his older brother **Tecumseh** advocated a political course of action. A brave fighter and a persuasive political orator, Tecumseh traveled the western frontier working out alliances with other Indian tribes. Although he did not want to start a war against white settlers, Tecumseh exhorted Indians to defend every inch of their remaining land.

Tecumseh's success in organizing Indian groups caused confusion among whites. British authorities in Canada were convinced that the Prophet and Tecumseh were French agents trying to divert British attention from the war in Europe. Americans were equally convinced that the brothers were British agents. Both the British and the Americans were wrong. Like many other gifted Indian leaders, Tecumseh played whites off against each other to gain what he wanted for his people. He did go to Canada in 1807 and secured promises of British support, but he did not become a British agent. Rather, Tecumseh wanted the Americans to believe that he had a powerful ally.

Identifying Tecumseh as a British spy, however, served the purposes of some Americans. Indiana Governor William Henry Harrison, for example, had built a military career and then a political career as an advocate of westward expansion. Harrison, who had first made his reputation at the Battle of Fallen Timbers, believed nothing should stand

in the way of American control of all of North America.

War with Britain and its supposed Indian allies was an attractive option to American expansionists for at least three reasons. First, a war could justify Americans' invading and seizing Canada. Taking Canada from the British would open up rich timber, fur, and agricultural lands for Americans. More important, it would secure American control of the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River, the primary shipping route for agricultural produce from upper New York, northern Ohio, and the newly opening areas of the Old Northwest.

Second, many believed that the British in Canada stirred up Indian conflict on America's frontiers. A war could remove this source of trouble and remove obstacles to American expansion. It would further provide an excuse to attack the Shawnees and break up their emerging confederacy.

Finally, frontiersmen, like other Americans, blamed Britain for the economic depression that began in 1808. They believed that eliminating British interference would restore a boom economy for western farmers. Thus westerners banded together to raise their voices in favor of American patriotism and war against Britain.

### Choosing War

In 1808, Jefferson followed Washington's lead and left the presidency after two terms. When he stepped down from the presidency, he pegged fellow Virginian James Madison as his successor. Madison easily defeated his Federalist opponent, Charles Cotesworth Pinckney. But the one-sided election disguised deep political divisions in the nation. Federalist criticism of Jefferson's embargo found a growing audience as the depression deepened, and the Republicans lost twenty-four congressional seats to the Federalists.

Internal dissent also weakened the Republican party. In 1810, sixty-three mainstream Republicans lost their congressional seats to dissident

Tecumseh Shawnee leader and brother of the Prophet; he tried to establish an Indian confederacy along the frontier as a barrier to white expansion.

Republicans who did not agree with Madison's conciliatory policy toward the British. The newcomers' increasingly strident demands for aggressive action against Britain earned them the nickname **War Hawks**.

**Henry Clay** and **John C. Calhoun** quickly assumed the leadership of this group of young southerners and westerners. Clay was the dominant voice among the younger representatives. Born in Virginia in 1777, Clay at the age of 20 had moved to Kentucky to practice law and carve out a career in politics. He became Speaker of the Kentucky state assembly when he was only 30 years old and won a seat in the House of Representatives four years later.

A year younger than Clay, John C. Calhoun of South Carolina was a dedicated nationalist who wanted to break Britain's stranglehold on the American agricultural economy. Together, he and Clay called for aggressive action against British provocations. Events soon played into their hands.

In 1809, Congress revoked the Embargo Act and replaced it with the **Non-Intercourse Act**, which forbade trade only with Britain and France. Even though this act was much less restrictive than the embargo, American merchants were relieved when it expired in 1810. Congress then passed an even more liberal boycott, **Macon's Bill No. 2**. Under this new law, merchants could trade even with the combatants if they wanted to take the risk. Also, if either France or Britain lifted its blockade, the United States would stop trading with the other.

Napoleon responded to Macon's Bill in August by promising to suspend French restrictions on American shipping. Although the French emperor had no intention of living up to his promise, Madison sought to use it as a lever against Great Britain. Madison instructed the American mission in London to tell the British that France's action would force the president to close down trade with Britain unless Britain ended its trade restrictions. Sure that Napoleon was lying, the British refused. In February 1811, the provisions of Macon's Bill forced Madison to end trading with Britain.

Events in the West added the final element to the unfolding diplomatic crisis. In August 1810, Tecumseh and a delegation of Indians had told **William Henry Harrison** that they regarded the Fort Wayne Treaty, signed a year earlier, as fraudu-

lent. Tecumseh claimed that the three tribes that had sold millions of acres in Indiana and Illinois to the government had no right to sell this land. Harrison insisted that the Fort Wayne Treaty was legitimate. Tecumseh countered that "bad consequences" would follow if whites attempted to settle on the disputed lands. The meeting resulted in a stalemate.

The meeting with Harrison convinced the Indians that they must prepare for a white attack. The Prophet increasingly preached that the Master of Life would support the faithful in battle against the whites. Tecumseh traveled the frontier to enlist additional allies for his confederacy.

Convinced that war was imminent, Harrison determined to attack the Indians before they could unite. He got his chance in the fall of 1811 when Potawatomis raided a village in Illinois. Harrison assembled over a thousand soldiers and militiamen to march on Prophetstown, even though the Indians there had had nothing to do with the raid.

The Prophet ignored Tecumseh's advice to avoid confrontation and unleashed the Indians on Harrison's army. Prepared for the assault, the white soldiers routed the attackers and made a mockery of the Prophet's assurance that the Mas-

**War Hawks** Members of Congress from the West and South who campaigned for war with Britain in the hopes of stimulating the economy and annexing new territory.

**Henry Clay** Congressman from Kentucky who was a leader of the War Hawks; he helped negotiate the treaty ending the War of 1812.

**John C. Calhoun** Congressman from South Carolina who was a leader of the War Hawks; he later became an advocate of states' rights.

**Non-Intercourse Act** Law passed by Congress in 1809 reopening trade with all nations except France and Britain and authorizing the president to reopen trade with them if they lifted restrictions on American shipping.

**Macon's Bill No. 2** Law passed by Congress in 1810 that offered exclusive trading rights to France or Britain, whichever recognized American neutral rights first.

**William Henry Harrison** Indiana governor who led U.S. forces at the Battle of Tippecanoe; he later became the ninth president of the United States.

ter of Life would make the Indians victorious. Disheartened, most of the warriors from Prophets-town deserted the settlement, which enraged frontiersmen then burned.

Tecumseh was away trying to win southwestern Indians over to his cause when Harrison's men burned Prophetstown. When he learned that hope for a peaceful settlement had vanished, he gathered an army of Indian allies to defend Indian territory. Harrison immediately called on the federal government for military support against what he portrayed as a unified Indian and British declaration of war. He had no doubt that the British stood behind Tecumseh.

The **Battle of Tippecanoe** provided the War Hawks with the excuse they had been looking for. John C. Calhoun declared that Great Britain had left Americans with the choice between "the base surrender of their rights, and a manly vindication of them." Calhoun was out to vindicate American rights, and he introduced a war bill in Congress in 1812. His bill declaring war on Great Britain passed by a vote of 79 to 49 in the House and 19 to 13 in the Senate. Representatives from heavily Federalist regions that depended the most on overseas trade—Massachusetts, Connecticut, and New York—voted against war. Republican western and southern representatives voted in favor.

## The Nation at War

Although the prospect of war had been likely for some time, the United States was woefully unprepared when the breach with Great Britain finally came. With virtually no army or navy, the United States was taking a terrible risk in confronting the world's most formidable military power. Not surprisingly, defeat and humiliation were the early fruits of the War of 1812.

### The Fighting Begins

In line with War Hawk ambitions, the first military campaign was a three-pronged drive toward Canada (see Map 8.2). Harrison's force was successful in raiding undefended Indian villages but

was unable to make any gains against British troops. Farther east, Major General Stephen Van Rensselaer's force was defeated by a small British and Indian army. Meanwhile, Henry Dearborn's troops lunged at Montreal but withdrew into U.S. territory after an inconclusive battle.

American sailors fared much better. Leading the war effort at sea were the *Constitution* (popularly known as **Old Ironsides**), the *President*, and the *United States*. In mid-August, the *Constitution* outmaneuvered a British frigate and sank it. The *United States* enjoyed a similar victory.

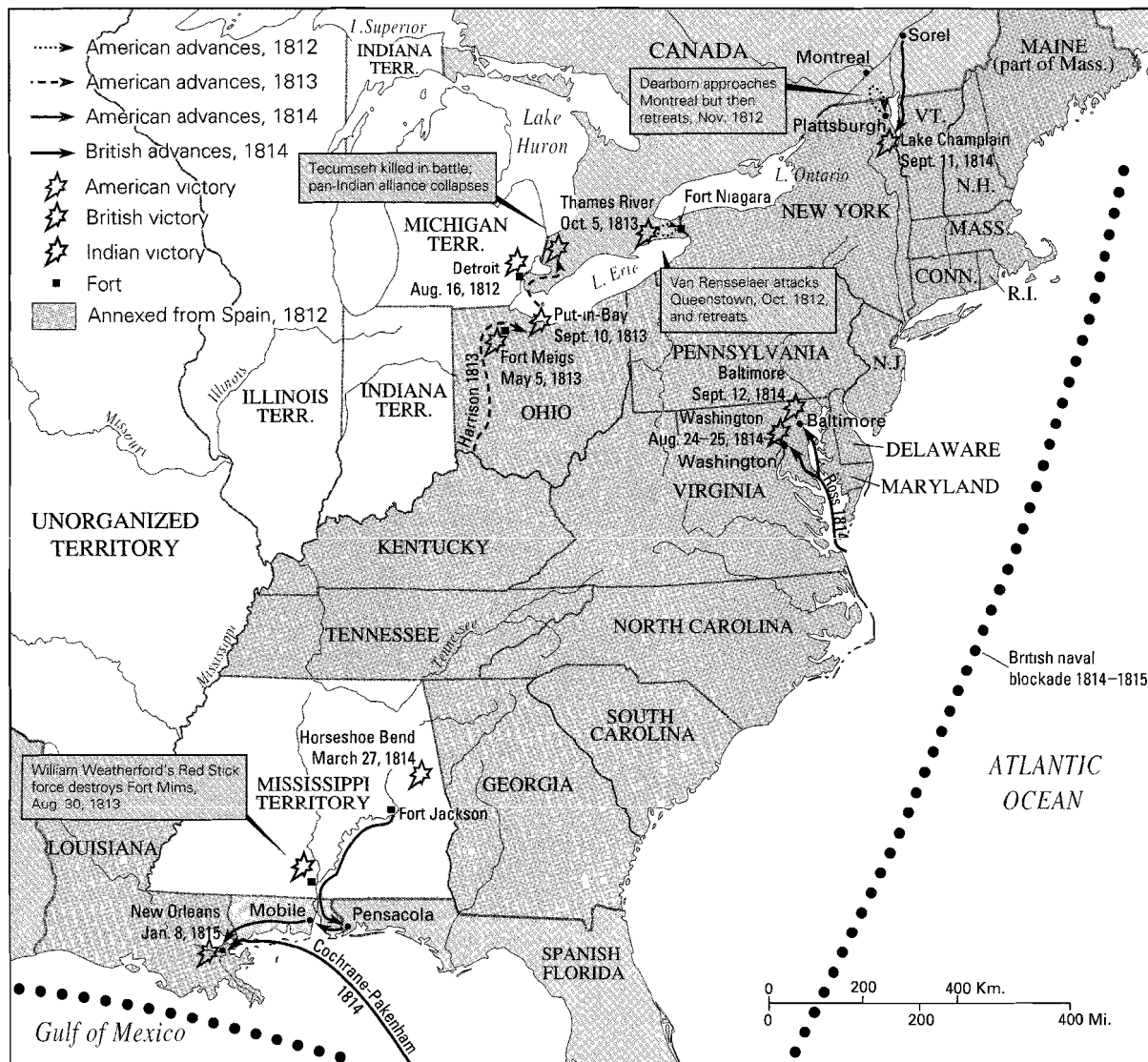
The biggest threat to British seafaring, however, came from armed American privateers. During the first six months of the war, privateers captured 450 British merchant ships valued in the millions. American naval victories were all that kept the nation's morale alive in 1812. One observer commented, "But for the gallantry of our noble Tar's [sailors], we should be covered with shame and disgrace." Vowing to reverse the situation, Congress increased the size of the army to fifty-seven thousand men and offered a \$16 bonus to encourage enlistments.

Madison thus stood for re-election at a time when the nation's military fate appeared uncertain and his own leadership seemed shaky. Although the majority of his party's congressional caucus supported him for re-election, nearly a third of the Republican congressmen—mostly those from New York and New England—rallied around New Yorker DeWitt Clinton. Clinton was a Republican who favored Federalist economic policies and agreed that the war was unnecessary. Most Federalists supported Clinton and did not field a candidate of their own.

**Battle of Tippecanoe** Battle near Prophetstown in Indiana Territory in 1811; American forces led by William Henry Harrison defeated Shawnee followers of the Prophet.

**Old Ironsides** Nickname of the *Constitution*, the forty-four-gun American frigate whose victory over the *Guerrière* bolstered sagging morale in the War of 1812.

**frigate** A very fast warship rigged with square sails and usually carrying thirty guns on its gun deck.



◆ **MAP 8.2 The War of 1812** The heaviest action during the first two years of the War of 1812 lay along the U.S./Canadian border. In 1814, the British sought to knock the United States out of the war by staging three offensives: one along the northern frontier at Plattsburgh, New York; one into the Chesapeake; and a third directed at the Mississippi River in New Orleans. All three offensives failed.

The outcome of the election was nearly the same as that of the congressional vote on the war bill earlier in 1812. New York and New England rallied behind Clinton; the South and West supported Madison, the Republicans, and war. Madison won, but his share of electoral votes fell from 72 percent in 1808 to 59 percent in 1812. The Republicans also lost strength in the House and the Senate.

### The War's Fruitless Second Year

In the spring of 1813, American forces challenged British control of the Great Lakes and the uninterrupted supply line those lakes afforded. On Lake Ontario, the Americans met with frustration; on Lake Erie, they met with success. **Oliver Hazard Perry** met the British at the Battle of Put-in-Bay on Lake Erie in September 1813. After two hours of cannon fire, Perry's flagship, the *Lawrence*, had been nearly destroyed. Still, Perry refused to surrender. He slipped off his damaged vessel and took command of a nearby ship. What remained of his command then cut the enemy to pieces and captured six British vessels. "We have met the enemy and they are ours," Perry reported to William Henry Harrison.

Harrison's land campaign was not going nearly so well. In the spring of 1813, Tecumseh and the British general Henry Procter had surrounded Harrison's camp on the Maumee Rapids in Ohio. Finally, on May 5, Kentucky militiamen arrived to drive the enemy off. However, they lost nearly half of their number in pursuing the British and Indian force.

After harassing American forces throughout the summer of 1813, Procter and Tecumseh withdrew to Canada in the fall. Harrison pursued them. His army surprised the British and Indian forces at the Thames River, about 50 miles east of Detroit, on October 5. The British surrendered quickly, but the Indians abandoned the fight only after Tecumseh was killed. His body was torn apart by the victorious Americans following the Battle of the Thames.

Another war front opened up during 1813. Although the Creek Confederacy as a whole remained neutral, the Red Stick faction had allied with Tecumseh in 1812. When war broke out, the Red Sticks raided settlements in what are now Alabama and Mississippi. Alexander McGillivray's

heir, William Weatherford, led a Red Stick army against Fort Mims, 40 miles north of Mobile (see Individual Choices: William Weatherford). The attackers overran the fort, killing all but about thirty of the more than three hundred people there.

The Fort Mims massacre enraged whites in the Southeast. In Tennessee, twenty-five hundred militiamen enlisted under the command of **Andrew Jackson**. Nicknamed "Old Hickory" because of his toughness, Jackson promised that "the blood of our women & children shall not call for vengeance in vain." Along with other volunteers from Tennessee and Georgia, Jackson's troops hounded the Red Sticks throughout the summer and fall.

Meanwhile, the British shut down American forces at sea. Embarrassed by the success of *Old Ironsides* and other American frigates, the British sent sufficient ships to bottle up the American fleet and **merchant marine** in port. British control over the Atlantic was so complete that they decided to bring the war home to Americans living near the shore. Admiral Sir George Cockburn raided the countryside around Chesapeake Bay during the spring of 1813. In Maryland, Cockburn burned an American fleet in Frenchtown and then burned Georgetown, Fredericktown, and Havre de Grace. The Americans seemed powerless against these raids.

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## The War's Strange Conclusion

The War of 1812 assumed a new character when Britain and its European allies defeated Napoleon's army in the fall of 1813. By the end of March 1814, they had forced Napoleon's abdication and

**Oliver Hazard Perry** American naval officer who led the fleet that defeated the British in the Battle of Put-in-Bay during the War of 1812.

**flagship** The ship that carries the fleet commander and bears the commander's flag.

**Andrew Jackson** General in the War of 1812 who defeated the British at New Orleans in 1815; he later became the seventh president of the United States.

**merchant marine** A nation's commercial ships.

## Choice in Civil War



### William Weatherford

*Tecumseh's effort to unite all Indians into a single political military alliance split the Creek Confederacy into two warring factions. At first, William Weatherford tried to mediate between the two, but he encountered serious constraints and finally chose to lead the Red Stick faction into war against the United States.*

Tennessee State  
Library & Archives.

William Weatherford had the potential to be the most powerful man in the Creek Nation. Like his maternal uncle Alexander McGillivray, Weatherford was part white and part Indian. But among the Creeks, family roots were traced back only through the mother's line, making him fully Creek in the tribe's eyes. The Creek tradition also marked him to inherit McGillivray's position as the dominant chief in the confederacy. But by 1800, historical pressures on the Creeks had eroded traditional ways of doing things, and Weatherford's position was far from secure. In 1812, he found himself facing a difficult choice: he had to choose sides in a Creek Nation split in two by civil war.

The Creek Nation was a confederacy consisting of a variety of Indian groups that spoke a variety of languages, had different customs, and practiced quite different economies. Over time, these groups had aligned themselves into two large organizations: the Lower Towns—villages in the low-lying southern portion of the Creek territory in modern-day Georgia and Alabama—and the Upper Towns—villages in the more mountainous and heavily wooded northern part of the region. Geographical and cultural diversity was part of what held the Creek confederacy together: the many different resources controlled by different Creek member villages led them to depend on each other.

By the end of the eighteenth century, the mutually dependent economy that had kept the Creek towns aligned had given way to greater dependence on the Europeans. In the Upper Towns, where Weatherford was born, the fur trade distracted hunters from providing meat and other necessities for the confederacy. In the Lower Towns, the lure of growing cotton and tobacco for sale to the whites distracted the

people from providing corn. In many villages, essential commodities now had to be purchased outside the confederacy.

The economic separation between the two areas became a source of major conflict after 1808, when President Jefferson's embargo triggered a depression. Suddenly, Creeks in the Upper Towns had no market for their furs. Blaming whites for their dependence on the fur trade, and the fur trade for their dire economic situation, many in the Upper Towns found the Prophet's message of turning away from white ways appealing. More appealing still was Tecumseh's suggestion of empowerment through joint action. Not surprisingly, when Tecumseh visited the Creeks in 1811, he was well received in the Upper Towns. Many chose to follow his red war stick.

It appears that Weatherford was leery of Tecumseh, but the response of the Lower Towns to Tecumseh's visit forced Weatherford's hand. Allied by common economic interests with southern white planters, Creeks in the Lower Towns feared that an alliance between Creeks in the Upper Towns and the Shawnees might ruin their economy further and, more important, close off avenues of improvement through political cooperation with their white neighbors. The Lower Towns began putting enormous pressure on the Upper Towns to turn away from Tecumseh's message. Weatherford and other responsible leaders tried to keep the peace, but when war broke out between the Americans and the British in 1812, that became hard to do. In February 1813, rogue bands of Red Sticks went on forays against settlements, aiming to punish whites for attacks or rumored attacks on Indians.

Bent on preventing war with the Americans, the Creeks in the Lower Towns sent an armed party against the Upper Towns to put an end to Red Stick violence, but the situation only worsened. Determined to defend themselves, the Upper Towns sent a party under Red Stick leader Peter McQueen to the Spanish post at Pensacola to buy guns and ammunition.

Though not yet committed to the Red Stick position, Weatherford accompanied this party, possibly hoping to prevent further violence. A combined force of white militiamen and Creeks from the Lower Towns stumbled on them at midday on July 27, attacking them while they ate lunch. Most of McQueen's party was able to escape, but the bodies of the twenty men who were killed in the surprise attack were brutally mutilated. For Weatherford, that was the last straw. An honorable peace no longer seemed possible, so he chose war.

A little over a month later, Weatherford led about seven hundred Red Sticks on a raid against Fort Mims, a post jointly occupied by Creeks from the Lower Towns and white militiamen with their families. Weatherford and his force launched their assault as the lunch bell rang at noon on August 30. Within minutes, they swept into the surprised post, and a general melee began. When the fighting stopped, between three hundred and five hundred people lay dead, and the fort was in flames. Major Joseph P. Kennedy, who arrived at the fort ten days after the battle, reported, "Indians, negroes, white men, women, and children lay in one promiscuous ruin."

Although he preferred peace and was no convert to the teachings of Tecumseh, Weatherford had seen his choices narrow as differing interests among the Creeks pulled the confederacy apart. His decision to join Tecumseh irreversibly altered the Creek Nation's future. After the massacre at Fort Mims, there was no going back: the destiny of the Creeks would depend on Tecumseh's plan and British military success.

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imprisoned him. Napoleon's defeat left the United States as Great Britain's sole military target. Republican Joseph Nicholson expressed a common lament when he said, "We should have to fight hereafter not for 'free Trade and sailors rights,' not for the Conquest of the Canadas, but for our national Existence."

### **The Politics of Waging War**

American choices in the war were complicated by the British offer in December 1813 to open peace negotiations. President Madison responded by forming an American peace commission. The British peace overture made the unruly Congress even more difficult to deal with. Federalist William Gaston of North Carolina proclaimed it "inexpedient to prosecute military operations against the Canadas" while negotiations were pending. Fellow Federalists joined him in supporting bills to limit American military operations to "the defence of the territories and frontiers of the United States." Madison's supporters objected. John C. Calhoun proclaimed that the entire war was "defensive."

While this debate was going on, Madison turned his attention to diplomacy. He proposed another embargo to hasten negotiations with the British. Madison had two objectives in mind: (1) to stop the flow of American flour and other supplies to British military commissaries in Canada and (2) to stop the drain of American currency from the country. He asked and obtained Congress's approval to prohibit American ships and goods from leaving port and to ban British imports.

The Embargo of 1813 was the most far-reaching trade restriction bill ever passed by the American Congress. It had a devastating economic impact. The embargo virtually shut down the economies of New England and New York and crippled the economy of nearly every other state.

### **A Stumbling British Offensive**

As combat-hardened British veterans began arriving in North America after Napoleon's fall, the survival of the United States was in jeopardy (see Map 8.2). By September 1814, the British had thirty thousand troops in Canada. From this posi-

tion of strength, they prepared three offensives to bring the war to a quick end.

The main thrust of the British offensive in the North was against eastern New York. Sir George Prevost, governor-general of Canada, massed ten thousand troops for an attack against Plattsburgh, New York. Prevost's plans were upset when a small American fleet shredded British naval forces on Lake Champlain on September 11. Prevost broke off his attack when he learned about the fate of the British lake fleet and ordered a retreat. The New Yorkers gave chase and turned the retreat into a rout. Prevost's failure in the Battle of Plattsburgh marked the end of the major fighting on the Canadian frontier.

The British opened a second front farther south in August 1814. It began when twenty British warships and several troop transports sailed up Chesapeake Bay. British General Robert Ross landed a force outside Washington, D.C., on August 24. Some seven thousand Maryland militiamen held off the experienced British regulars for several hours, but when they ran out of ammunition, the British broke their defensive line and seized the capital.

The defenders did stop the British long enough to allow most of the civilians in the capital, including the president, to escape. Dolley Madison, the president's wife, managed to save a number of treasures from the presidential mansion, as well as important cabinet documents. Department clerks succeeded in moving most of the government's vital papers. Even so, much of value was lost. The British looted many buildings, including the White House, and then torched most of the structures, including the Capitol, which housed the Library of Congress. The British finally abandoned the ruins of Washington on August 25, marching toward Baltimore.

At Baltimore, the British navy had to knock out Fort McHenry and control the harbor before they could take the city. On September 12, British ships armed with heavy **mortars** and rockets attacked

**Embargo of 1813** An absolute embargo on all American trade and British imports.  
mortar A portable, muzzle-loading cannon.

the fort. During a twenty-five-hour bombardment, the British fired more than fifteen hundred rounds at the American post. Despite the pounding, the American flag continued to wave over Fort McHenry. The sight moved a young volunteer named **Francis Scott Key**, who had watched the shelling as a prisoner aboard a British ship, to record the event in a verse that later became the national anthem of the United States.

## The Gulf Coast Campaign

On the third front, the British pressed an offensive against the Gulf coast designed to take the pressure off Canada and to close the Mississippi River. The campaign began in May 1814 when the British occupied the Spanish port city of Pensacola, Florida. From there the British began working their way toward New Orleans and the Mississippi.

The defense of the Gulf coast fell to Andrew Jackson and his Tennessee volunteers. Having spent the winter raising troops and collecting supplies, Jackson was determined to punish the Red Sticks. At the **Battle of Horseshoe Bend** on the Tallapoosa River in Alabama, Jackson's forces killed nearly eight hundred Red Sticks, destroying the Creeks' power.

Jackson then moved on the British depot at Pensacola. Although ordered to stay out of Florida to avoid war with Spain, he ignored the order. He attacked Pensacola on November 7, 1814. The Spanish did nothing, and the overmatched British withdrew.

Jackson immediately left Pensacola and raced his army to New Orleans, where the main British force was closing in. When he arrived on December 1, he found the city ill prepared to defend itself. The local militia, consisting mostly of French and Spanish residents, would not obey American officers. Local banks and businesses refused to support government efforts, fearing a collapse in the nation's economy.

A man of forceful action, Jackson permitted no opposition or apathy. "Those who are not for us are against us, and will be dealt with accordingly," he proclaimed. Through the example of his own energy and enthusiasm he transformed the community. "General Jackson electrified all hearts," one observer said. Soon volunteers flooded to the

general's assistance. Free blacks in the city formed a regular army corps, and Jackson created a special unit of black refugees from Santo Domingo. Proper white citizens protested when Jackson armed runaway slaves and when he accepted a company of Baratarian pirates under the command of **Jean Laffite**, but Jackson ignored them. The pirate commander became Jackson's constant companion during the campaign.

Having pulled his ragtag force together, Jackson settled in to wait for the British attack. On January 7, 1815, it came. Jackson's men waited until the British were only five hundred yards away before they fired their cannon. When the British got to within three hundred yards, riflemen opened fire. And when the British were within one hundred yards, the men armed with muskets began to shoot. One British veteran said that it was "the most murderous fire I have ever beheld before or since." General Edward Pakenham tried to keep his men from running but was cut in half by a cannon ball. General John Lambert, who took over command, raised a white flag immediately.

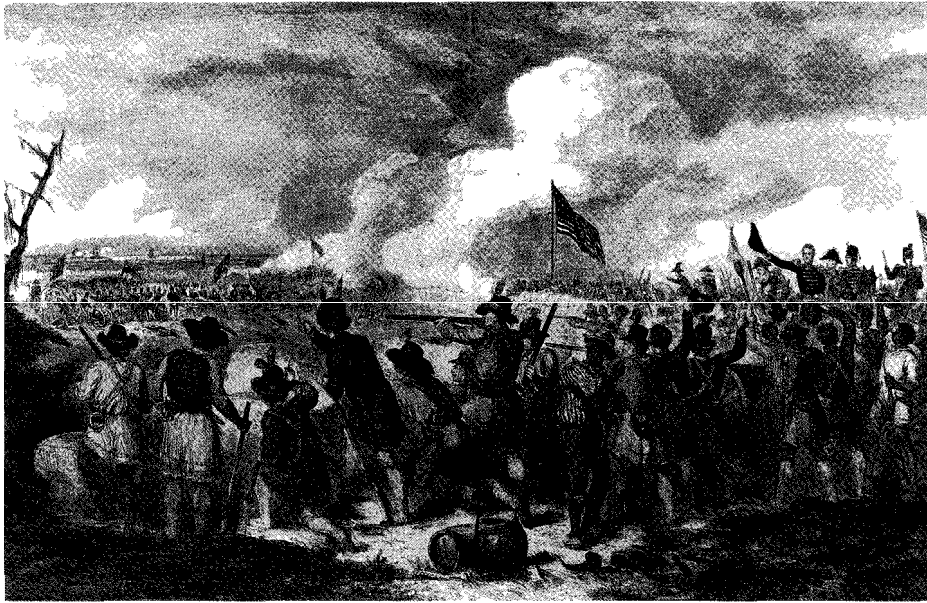
The **Battle of New Orleans** was by far the most successful battle fought by Americans during the War of 1812. The British lost over two thousand men, the Americans only seventy. Ironically, the war was already officially over before the battle began.

**Francis Scott Key** Author of "The Star-Spangled Banner," which chronicles the British bombardment of Fort McHenry at Baltimore in the War of 1812; it became the official U.S. national anthem in 1916.

**Battle of Horseshoe Bend** Battle in 1814 between Tennessee militia and Creek Indians in Alabama; the American victory marked the end of Indian power in the South.

**Jean Laffite** Leader of a band of pirates off Barataria Bay in southeast Louisiana; he offered to fight for the Americans at New Orleans in return for the pardon of his men.

**Battle of New Orleans** Battle in the War of 1812 in which American troops commanded by Andrew Jackson repulsed the British attempt to seize New Orleans.



- ◆ The nearly miraculous American victory in the Battle of New Orleans—fought two weeks after the Americans and British had signed a peace treaty—helped launch a new era in American nationalism. As this illustration from a popular magazine shows, it also made Andrew Jackson, shown waving his hat to encourage his troops, a national hero of greater than human proportions. *Library of Congress.*

## The Treaty of Ghent

While the British were closing in on Washington in August 1814, treaty negotiations were beginning in Ghent, Belgium. Confident of victory, the British refused to enter meaningful negotiations. They declined to discuss impressment and insisted that the security of Canada be ensured by the formation of an Indian buffer state between Canada and the United States.

The Americans, however, were anxious for a peaceful settlement. Madison ordered the delegation to drop impressment as an issue. He justified this decision by saying that the end of the war in Europe had so greatly reduced Britain's need for sailors that impressment was no longer an important issue. Far more important was the British plan for an Indian buffer state.

When Prevost lost the Battle of Plattsburgh and the Lake Champlain fleet, however, the British demand for an Indian buffer zone suddenly became negotiable. The sticking point then became what territories each country would retain when the war ended. The British proposed that each nation keep whatever land it held when the hostilities stopped. The Americans rejected this because it would require giving up much of Maine, some

territory around the Great Lakes, and perhaps even New Orleans and the nation's capital.

At that point, domestic politics in Britain intervened. After two decades at arms, the British people were weary of war and wartime taxes. The failure at Plattsburgh made it appear that the war would drag on endlessly. Moreover, the American war interfered with Britain's European diplomacy. Still trying to arrive at a peace settlement for Europe at the Congress of Vienna, a British official commented, "We do not think the Continental Powers will continue in good humour with our Blockade of the whole Coast of America." Like the proposed Indian buffer state, British territorial demands fell before practical considerations.



- ◆ Following the War of 1812 and the death of Tecumseh, aggressive American expansionists put great pressure on Indians living on the east side of the Mississippi River to move farther west. Artist James Otto Lewis was present at the 1825 Prairie du Chien treaty meetings, where various Sauk and Fox, Menominee, Iowa, Winnebago, Ojibwa, and Sioux bands gave up much of their land. He was present the following year at similar talks at Fond du Lac, where he painted these three Chippewa (Ojibwa) women. *"Chippeway Squaws at the Treaty of Fond du Lac"* by James Otto Lewis, 1826. Chicago Historical Society.

In the end, the **Treaty of Ghent**, completed on December 24, 1814, restored diplomatic relations between Britain and the United States to what they had been before the war. The treaty said nothing about impressment, blockades, or neutral trading rights. It left Canada in British hands. Although the Americans had not fulfilled any of the initial goals for which the war was fought, they still considered it a victory. They had secured national survival against the world's most formidable military power and could point to the Battle of New Orleans with justifiable pride.

The War of 1812 also proved to be a pivotal experience in American history. First, the conflict entirely discredited Jefferson's plan for an agricultural nation that would exchange raw materials for European manufactures. Americans now meant to steer clear of entanglement in European affairs and tried to become more self-sufficient. Pioneering developments in American manufacturing during the embargo of 1808 helped make this course possible. The pace of industrialization quickened considerably during the war. In the years to come, factories in New England and elsewhere would supply more and more of America's consumer goods. Industrial areas in turn offered an enlarging market for the

nation's harvests. In an economic sense, the War of 1812 truly was a second war for independence.

Second, relations between the United States and the Indian nations changed profoundly. When Harrison's soldiers burned Prophetstown and later killed Tecumseh, they wiped out all hopes for a pan-Indian confederacy. Jackson's victories against the Red Sticks destroyed the power of the Creeks and the other southern tribes. As a result, no serious Indian resistance occurred for decades. During that time, white settlers occupied most of the eastern half of the continent.

Third, the failure to take Canada and its water routes convinced Americans that they had to improve inland transportation. British control of the Great Lakes had demonstrated how poor American transportation was. The lack of roads and the resulting shortage of men and equipment in the interior had ruled out any significant American vic-

- k **Treaty of Ghent** Treaty ending the War of 1812, signed in Belgium in 1814; it restored peace but was silent on the issues over which the United States and Britain had clashed.

tories on the Canadian front. In the following decades, Americans built canals, national roads, and other transportation links to tie the expanding West to the rest of the nation.

Finally, the war's conclusion helped bring an end to political factionalism. As the war dragged on, the Essex Junto grew in strength. From mid-December 1814 until January 5, 1815, New England Federalists met in Hartford, Connecticut. At the Hartford Convention, party members finally went public with their threat to secede. If Madison did not repeal the Embargo of 1813 and submit constitutional amendments that protected New England's minority rights, New England was ready to leave the Union. News of the Treaty of Ghent and the Battle of New Orleans, however, made the Federalists appear to be traitors. Madison and the Republicans were able to drive their political opponents into retreat. The Federalists managed to hold on in hard-core areas of New England until the 1820s, but the party as a whole was on a steepening decline. They vanished altogether in 1825.

Thus, after 1815, a new surge of hopefulness and national pride engulfed Americans. The United States had fought the greatest military power in the world to a standstill and in the process had launched new ventures in manufacturing, swept away Indian resistance, and restored political unity.

## SUMMARY

Expectations  
Constraints  
Choices  
Outcomes

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Many Americans *expected* a political revolution when Jefferson and the Republicans triumphed in the 1800 election. In the waning days of the Adams administration, however, the Federalists erected a formidable *constraint* against the Republicans by filling the federal courts with their appointees. As Alexander Hamilton *expected*, Jefferson also *chose* to be much more moderate in his actions while in office than his former radical rhetoric had led many to believe.

The *outcome* of the first transfer of power from one political party to another was a redirection of government, not a revolution. Jefferson did have the much-despised excise taxes repealed, and he did pare down the expenses of government. He also cherished the *expectation* that he had secured the future for America's yeoman farmers when he authorized the Louisiana Purchase and doubled the size of the nation.

Jefferson and his Republican successor, James Madison, faced increasingly difficult diplomatic *constraints* after 1803 when renewed warfare broke out between Great Britain and France. Both chose to steer a neutral course and to avoid becoming entangled in a war with either European power. The War Hawks, however, regarded British violations of American neutrality and British incitement of the Indians living in the Northwest as insults to the national honor. The *outcome* was the War of 1812.

Although there were moments of glory for the Americans, the war was mostly a disaster. The Americans were fortunate that a war-weary British public chose peace in 1814. The Treaty of Ghent restored diplomatic relations to what they had been before 1812. Nevertheless, news of peace and of Andrew Jackson's stunning victory at New Orleans produced an unlikely *outcome*—a surge of national pride, confidence, and unity.

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## SUGGESTED READINGS

Edmunds, R. David. *The Shawnee Prophet* (1983); *Tecumseh and the Quest for Indian Leadership* (1984).

Each of these biographies is a masterpiece. They present the most complete recounting of the lives and accomplishments of these two fascinating brothers and their historical world.

Hickey, Donald. *The War of 1812: A Forgotten Conflict* (1989).

Arguably the best single-volume history of the war; encyclopedic in content but so colorfully written that it will hold anyone's attention.

Hofstadter, Richard. *The Idea of a Party System* (1969). The classic account of the rise of legitimate opposition in the American party system.

McCoy, Drew. *The Last of the Fathers; James Madison and the Republican Legacy* (1989).

Hailed by most critics as the best book on Madison and his role in making the early republic.

McCoy, Drew. *The Elusive Republic* (1980).

The best summary of Jefferson's agrarian vision; engagingly written and forcefully argued.

Miller, John C. *The Wolf by the Ears: Thomas Jefferson and Slavery* (1977).

A master historian confronts the dichotomy between Jefferson's attitudes about race and the actuality of slavery.

Ronda, James. *Lewis and Clark Among the Indians* (1984).

A bold retelling of the expedition's story, showcasing the Indian role in both Lewis and Clark's journey and the nation's successful expansion into Louisiana.

Sheehan, Bernard W. *Seeds of Extinction: Jeffersonian Philanthropy and the American Indian* (1973).

An evaluation of Jefferson's attitudes toward Indians and his Indian policy, beautifully written by one of the nation's best Indian policy historians.

Stagg, J. C. A. *Mr. Madison's War: Politics, Diplomacy, and Warfare in the Early American Republic, 1783-1830* (1983).

An excellent view of the politics and diplomacy surrounding the War of 1812.