

A small but bitter war —
that forged the destiny of a continent.



The War of 1812

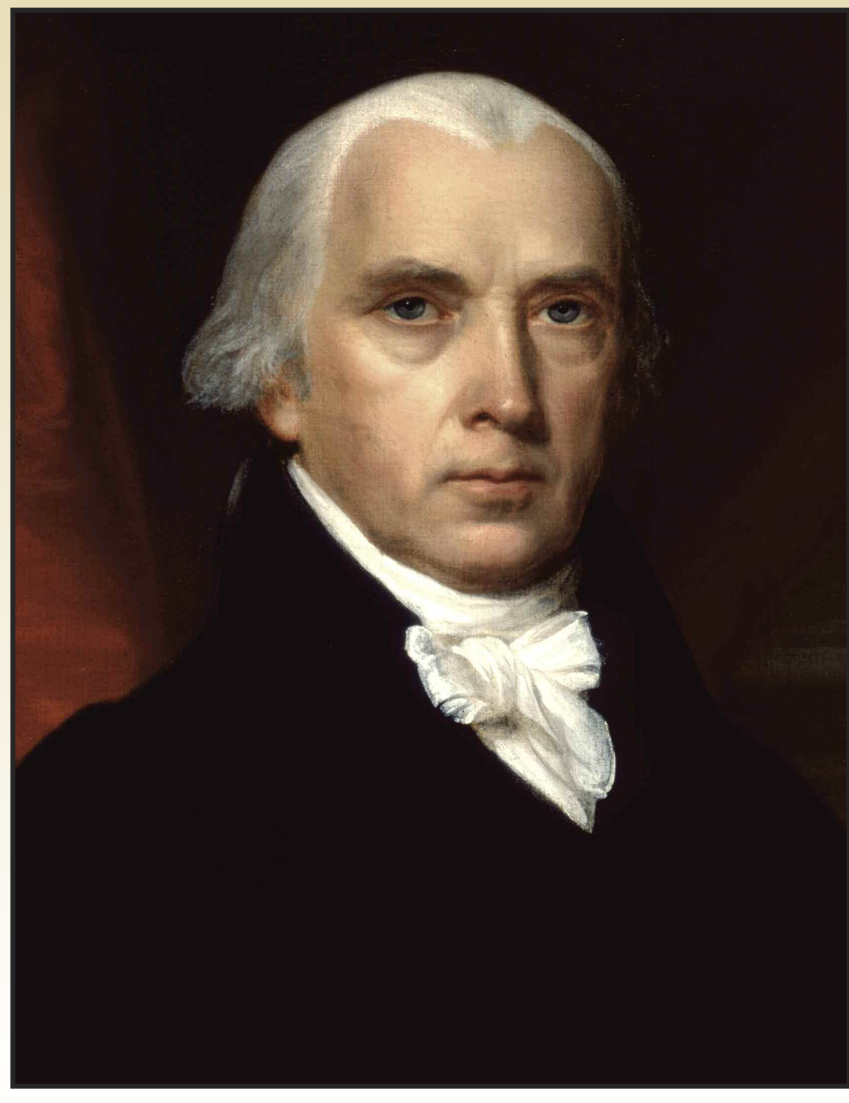


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PERSPECTIVES OF *The War of* 1812

American

In June 1812, the young United States of America declared war on the greatest power in the world, Great Britain. For two and a half years, Americans fought against the British, Canadian colonists, and native nations in a small but brutal war. Yet in the U.S. today, very little of the War of 1812 lives on in the public mind.



James Madison

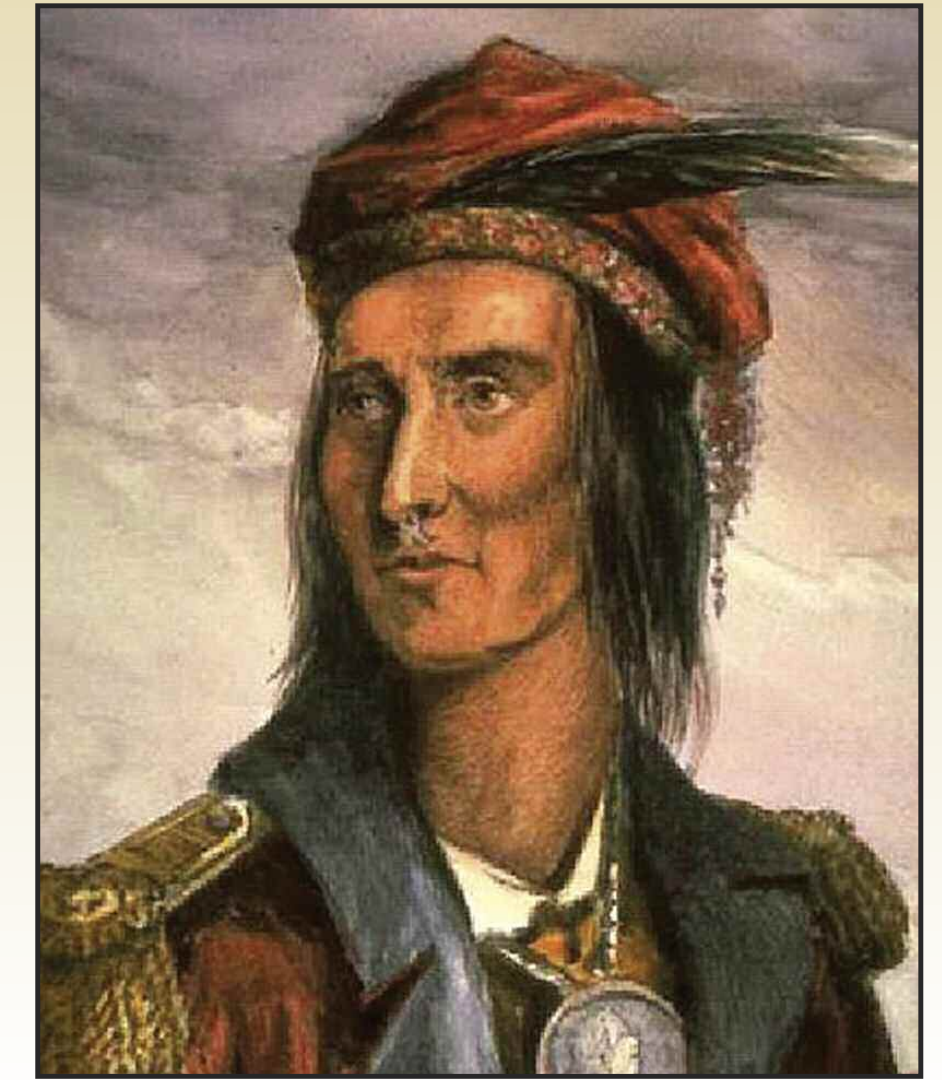
- Pressured by the War Hawks to go to war
- Denounced for declaring war
- Married to Dolley Madison
- President of the United States when Washington and the White House burned

Native Nations

Native American leaders knew that the British and American linear minds moved from claiming the land, to colonization and exploitation of natural resources. They knew their own process was one of native logic and inclusiveness – involving the flora and fauna as well as their native communal values and relationships. Choosing the British as an ally was difficult at best, but the future of native North America hung in the balance.

Tecumseh

- Shawnee chief
- Fierce warrior
- Resistance with a united front
- Died in battle – defending his land



Canadian Colonies

By the end of the war, the sufferings of Canadian civilians at the hands of American troops and the legacy of burnt and looted communities along the frontier gave the people of Upper Canada a strong sense, not so much of who they were, but certainly who they were not.



Major-General Isaac Brock

- Commander in Upper Canada
- Brilliant military leader
- Partnered with Tecumseh in battle
- Killed at Queenston Heights

British

In Britain, the declaration of war was yet another unwelcome piece of news. Napoleon and his allies controlled most of Europe. King George the Third was insane; in May, the Prime Minister had been shot and killed in the House of Commons. The last thing Britain needed was another war.

Sir George Prevost

- Sensible, practical administrator
- Held onto as much of Canada as he could with the help of Brock
- Retreated from the largest invasion of the continental United States
- Sent back to England in disgrace



For lesson plans on the perspectives of the war, key people of the war, and much more, download the entire educators guide at pbs.org/1812



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The War of 1812 premieres Monday, October 10, 2011 at 9 p.m. ET on PBS stations nationwide.