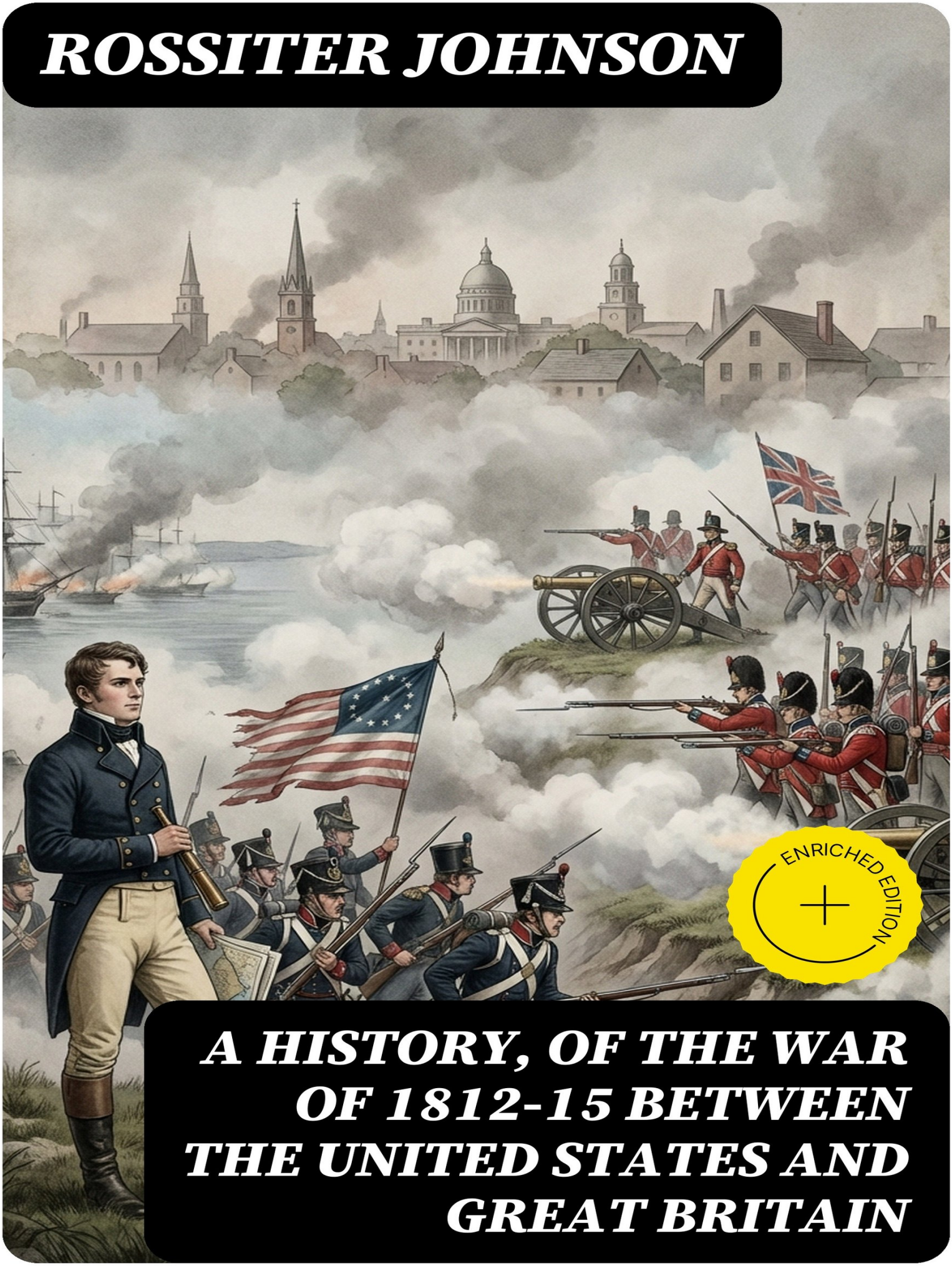
ROSSITER JOHNSON



A HISTORY, OF THE WAR OF 1812-15 BETWEEN THE UNITED STATES AND GREAT BRITAIN

Rossiter Johnson

A History, of the War of 1812-15 Between the United States and Great Britain

Enriched edition. Battles, diplomacy, and the birth of American identity in a 19th-century war

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Introduction, Studies and Commentaries by Derek Hale

EAN 8596547174981

Edited and published by DigiCat, 2022

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The offender, says an Italian proverb, never forgives; and it is a singular fact that the deepest resentments and the most implacable hatreds are not those arising from a sense of injuries received, but from injuries inflicted. The victim of a deliberate wrong seldom treasures up a purpose of revenge, or demands anything more than a restoration of his rights; but the oppressor always hates those who have escaped from his oppression.

That wise old philosopher, Ben Franklin, who died within seven years after the acknowledgment of our country as a separate nation in 1783, foresaw, even then, what did not take place till more than twenty years after his death. He declared that the war which had just closed in the surrender of Cornwallis was only the war of Revolution, and that the war of Independence was yet to be fought. When, in June, 1785, George III. received John Adams as United States

Minister at his court, he said: "I was the last man in the kingdom, Sir, to consent to the independence of America; but, now it is granted, I shall be the last man in the world to sanction a violation of it." If the King was sincere in this declaration, he must have had—as Lincoln said of himself when President—very little influence with the Administration; for, almost from the first, there was systematic disregard of the rights of the new nation, with an evident purpose to humiliate her people and cripple their commerce.

It was hard for the British Ministry and British commanders to realize that those whom they had so lately attempted to chastise as rebels, that they might again tax them as subjects, were now, after their triumph in a long war, and by the terms of a solemn treaty, entitled to the same privileges on the ocean, and the same courtesies in diplomacy, that were accorded to the oldest nation of Europe. They knew as little of the spirit of the American people and the mighty destinies within the coming century, as of the resources of the vast continent which lay behind that thin line of civilization along the Atlantic coast.

This failure to realize, or reluctance to admit, that the people of America were no longer British subjects, and that the United States was an independent nation, was forcibly illustrated in England's disregard, for thirty years, of an important portion of the Treaty of 1783. It was there stipulated that the military posts on our western frontier should be surrendered to our Government. Yet not only did the British forces retain possession of them, but from them they supplied the Indians with arms and ammunition, and

instigated savage hostilities against the American settlements. Attempts have been made to deny this, but the proof is unquestionable.

Lord Dorchester, Governor of Canada, called a council of the Indian tribes, engaged to supply them with munitions of war, encouraged them to enmity against the United States, and gave them to understand that they would have the co-operation of his Government. These facts were published in British newspapers, and when the British Minister was asked to account for them, he could give no satisfactory answer. In pursuance of this policy, when war broke out, in 1812, the English commanders not only employed Indian allies, but offered and paid a regular bounty for American scalps. It seems incredible that such things could have been done, only seventy years ago, by one of the most enlightened governments on earth. And yet in our own day we have seen the performance repeated, when the English in South Africa armed the native savages with the best English rifles, that they might make war upon the peaceful and industrious Boers of the Transvaal Republic.

But our people had a grievance, of more than twenty years' standing, which was even more serious than this. While the frontiersman was contending with British treachery and Indian ferocity, which combined to hinder the development of our inland resources, the American sailor—then the best in the world, as was proved by the result of the war—was confronted by a monstrous policy intended to check our growing commerce and recruit the English navy at our expense.

England was at this time the greatest commercial nation in the world. Her merchant ships and whalers were found on every sea, gathering and distributing the productions of every land. In herself she was but an island, not larger than one of our States—a very beautiful and fertile island, it is true; but if her jurisdiction had not extended beyond its borders, she would have been hardly more important than Switzerland or Sweden. But in her colonies and her commerce she was powerful. And now the finest of those colonies, casting off her authority in the only successful rebellion ever waged against it, were rapidly building up a mercantile marine that threatened to rival her own. They had thousands of miles of seacoast, with innumerable fine harbors; they had behind them, not a crowded island, but a virgin continent; the construction of their government and society was such that the poorest man before the mast might not unreasonably hope some day to command a ship. With all this, they were not involved in the wars which were then distracting Europe.

Being neutrals, of course they enjoyed those advantages which England has never been slow to reap when she herself has been a neutral while her neighbors were at war. Their ships could carry goods which in any other ships would have been seized by hostile cruisers. England was now—as she truly said, in extenuation of her depredation on American commerce—struggling for her very existence, against mighty armies led by the ablest general that had appeared since Alexander. Many of the most desirable ports were closed to her merchantmen, her entire coast was declared by Napoleon to be under blockade; and it was

exasperating in the last degree to see these misfortunes redounding to the advantage of a people whom she had so lately treated as rebels and outlaws, whose military prowess she had affected to despise, until it had disarmed her legions and conquered an honorable peace. The motive that controlled British policy was plainly revealed in an editorial article which appeared in the London *Independent Whig* (January 10th, 1813), after the war had been begun and the British public had been astounded by the capture of two or three of their finest frigates. "Accustomed, as we have hitherto been, to a long and uninterrupted tide of success upon the watery element, and claiming an absolute and exclusive sovereignty over the ocean, to be defeated there, where we securely rested our proudest hopes and wishes, might reasonably be expected to check our insolence and mortify our pride. In this view of the case, and if we could not flatter ourselves that it would have the effect of inducing us to abate somewhat of our unwarrantable pretensions, and listen to terms of moderation and forbearance, our regret would be sensibly diminished; since even the misfortune, severe as it is, might be converted into a great and lasting benefit to the nation at large. But the mischief will not confine itself here; the charm of the invincibility of the British navy, like that of the Grecian warrior, being destroyed, the terror that has long preceded our flag, and commanded the abject homage of surrounding nations, will henceforward be dissipated, and every maritime power with whom we may be involved in war will fight with redoubled zeal, ardently and anxiously hoping to lower our ascendency and establish the freedom of the

seas." That was it exactly; they were afraid somebody would establish the freedom of the seas, and at that time the Americans seemed most likely to do it.

During the Napoleonic wars, in the early years of the present century, England's navy consisted of about one thousand vessels. As she was recruiting this vast squadron by perpetual press-gangs, and maintaining its discipline by unstinted flogging, while at the same time the flourishing merchant marine of the United States was paying more liberal wages to men before the mast than could be obtained on the English merchantmen, it might have been expected that the number of desertions would only be limited by the number of opportunities to desert. Many of the deserters undoubtedly found employment on American ships, where British captains soon established the custom of searching for and reclaiming them. This was a gross violation of the sovereignty of the United States, for the deck of an American vessel is to all intents and purposes American territory; yet our Government permitted it, and only complained of what were considered its incidental abuses.

The troubles that followed from this beginning remind us of the fable of the camel and the tailor. England's next step was to claim that no British subject had a right to enter any military or marine service but the British, and that any who did so might be taken by British authorities wherever found —just as if they were deserters.

But presently it appeared that something more was needed in order to give Great Britain the full benefit of these assumptions. An English war-vessel stops an American

merchantman on the high sea, and sends an officer with armed men on board to inspect the crew and take off any that are British subjects. The officer selects some of the ablest seamen he finds, and claims them. Immediately a dispute arises; the seamen say they are American citizens—or at least not British subjects; the officer says they were born subjects of the English king, and can never throw off their allegiance. Here is a question of fact, and by all the principles of law and justice it would devolve upon the officer to prove his claim. But as the purpose was, not to do justice, but to recruit the British navy, the admission of any such principle would hardly answer the purpose. So the British Government set up the doctrine that the burden of proof rested with the accused; that is, any sailor who was unable to prove on the spot, to the satisfaction of the boarding officer, that he was *not* a British subject, was to be considered as such, and carried off to serve against his will on a British ship.

The English naval commanders were now fully equipped for this new method of recruiting, and it soon became the practice for them to board American merchantmen and take off as many of the best sailors as they happened to be in need of at the time, with very little reference to their nationality. Some of the men thus forcibly carried off were released by order of the Admiralty, on the application of the American Consul, with the apology that, as English and Americans spoke the same language and were of the same race, it was often difficult to distinguish between them. But as a matter of fact the sailors thus impressed included men of nearly every European nationality—Germans, Swedes,

Danes, Portuguese, and even negroes. In 1811 it was believed that more than six thousand American sailors were serving under compulsion in the British navy; and Mr. Lyman, United States Consul at London, estimated the number at fourteen thousand.

This was only the natural result of the original error committed by our Government when it admit ted the right to search for and carry away deserters. And the impressments took place not only on the high seas but often within the three miles from shore to which a maritime country's jurisdiction extends, and sometimes in the very harbors of the United States. Coasting and fishing schooners were robbed of their men, and occasionally fired upon and plundered; while of larger vessels bound for distant waters, the crews were sometimes so depleted by visit from a British man-of-war that the voyage was broken up and the ship compelled to return to port.

The greatest of these outrages was the capture of the *Chesapeake*, a United States frigate, by the British man-of-war *Leopard*, June 23d, 1806. The *Chesapeake*, which had just left Hampton Roads for a cruise, had not been put in fighting trim; not a single gun was ready for use. Her commander, Commodore James Barron, refused to permit a search for British deserters, and the *Leopard* thereupon fired several broadsides into her, when she struck her flag. Three of her crew were killed, and eighteen wounded. The *Leopard* carried away four of her men, claiming them as deserters; but it was afterward proved that three of them were Americans, and they were released, while the fourth was tried and executed at Halifax.

When the *Chesapeake* returned to Norfolk, Va., with the news, it created the greatest excitement the country had seen since the Revolutionary war. Indignation meetings were held, and the people seemed almost unanimous in a desire to plunge at once into war. A schooner was sent to England by our Government, carrying instructions to the American Minister to demand apology and reparation. These were made, after a fashion; but the English Government refused to give up the right of search. President Jefferson, who thought anything, under any circumstances, was better than war, issued a proclamation ordering all British vessels of war then in United States waters to leave at once.

Meanwhile, England had attempted to revive what was known as "the rule of 1756**[2]**." During the war of that year she had tried to establish a rule that neutral nations were not at liberty to trade with the colonies of a belligerent power from which, in times of peace, they were excluded by the parent state. For instance, if in time of peace France permitted none but her own vessels to trade at the ports of certain of her colonies, she should not be allowed, when at war, to have that trade carried on for her in vessels belonging to a neutral nation; and if such vessels attempted it, they should be liable to capture and confiscation by cruisers of the nation which was at war with France. Such a regulation of course belongs to the domain of international law, and cannot be established by one nation alone. This rule had been frequently disregarded by England herself, and had never received the sanction of other powers; but by orders in council, of November 6th, 1793, she secretly instructed her naval commanders to enforce it against

American vessels trading to the French colonies of the West Indies. The United States Government sent commissioners to London, English commissioners were appointed to meet them, and a treaty of "amity, commerce, and navigation" was concluded, which was ratified by both governments in 1795. Yet the capture and condemnation of American vessels went on almost as before.

In the early European wars of this century, the days of paper blockade—a blockade which consists merely in a proclamation, without the presence of armed vessels to enforce it—were not yet over, and on May 16th, 1806, England declared the whole coast of the Continent, from Brest to the mouth of the Elbe, to be in a state of blockade. Napoleon retaliated by issuing from Berlin a counter decree, dated November 21st, 1806, which declared the entire coast of Great Britain to be under blockade, and prohibited any vessel which sailed from a British port from entering a Continental port. England then, by orders in council, published November 17th, 1807, prohibited all neutral trade with France and her allies, except in vessels that had first entered a British port. As paper and ink were cheap, and by this time so little was left of the rights of neutrals that it was hardly worth while to regard them at all, Napoleon tried his hand at one more decree. Under date of Milan, December 17th, 1807, he proclaimed that any vessel which should submit to search by British cruisers, or pay any tax to the British Government, should be forfeit as good prize.

These so-called measures of retaliation—which became famous as the "orders in council," and the "Berlin and Milan decrees"—had very little effect upon the people who were at

war, but they laid some of the heaviest penalties of war upon the one maritime nation that was at peace with all. Instead of resorting to war at once, the United States Government, being as well able as any other to issue a foolish proclamation, laid an embargo, December 22d, 1807, upon all shipping in American ports, prohibiting exportations therefrom. This measure met with violent opposition in New England, which was more largely interested in commerce than any other part of the country. The coast of New England presented innumerable harbors, and her forests were full of the finest ship-timber, while in agriculture she could not compete with the States having richer soils and a less rigorous climate. Cotton-spinning was in its infancy, and the manufactures that were to employ her water-powers had not been developed. She naturally and properly looked to the carrying trade as her best means of livelihood. The orders in council and the Berlin and Milan decrees imposed great risks and unjust restrictions upon it, but did not altogether destroy it; the embargo suppressed it at once.

In March, 1809, Congress repealed the embargo, and substituted a system of non-importation and non-intercourse with France and Great Britain. Voyages to their dominions, and trade in articles produced by them, were prohibited; but it was provided that whenever either of those nations should repeal its decrees against neutral commerce, the restriction should be removed as to that nation.

This at last produced some effect, and the French Government revoked the Berlin and Milan decrees, the revocation to take effect on the 1st of November, 1810; the

letter of the French Minister communicating the fact to the American Minister adding that it was "clearly understood that the English orders in council were to be revoked at the same time." In August of that year, Hon. William Pinkney, United States Minister at London, laid this before the British Government, but was told that the English decrees would be revoked "after the French revocation should have actually taken place." This was a most palpable evasion, since it is very common for treaties and governmental orders to contain clauses which render them operative only in certain contingencies, and it was the easiest thing in the world for England to give her revocation precisely the same form as that of France, when each would have put the other in force on the date named. If any further proof had been wanted that the British Government was determined to suppress American commerce, at least till her own ships could resume the carrying trade of the world, it was supplied when in 1812 Lord Castlereagh, Minister for Foreign Affairs, declared officially that "the decrees of Berlin and Milan must not be repealed singly and specially, in relation to the United States, but must be repealed also as to all other neutral nations; and that in no less extent of a repeal of the French decrees had the British Government pledged itself to repeal the orders in council." That is, the rights of the United States as a neutral nation were not to be regarded by England, unless the United States could induce or compel France to regard not only these rights but those of all other neutral nations!

With this tangle of orders, decrees, and proclamations, with an important part of the Treaty of 1783 unfulfilled, with

unlawful impressments daily taking place on the high seas, and with no disposition on the part of the chief aggressor to right these wrongs, it is difficult to see how negotiations could have been continued longer, or the alternative of war avoided. On the first day of June, 1812, President Madison sent a message to Congress, in which he set forth the facts that necessitated war; Congress accordingly declared war on the 18th, and the next day the President proclaimed it. On the 23d, before this news was received, England revoked her orders in council, thus removing one of the grievances, but still leaving those which amply justified the declaration.

It thus appears that the immediate and specific causes of the war of 1812 between the United States and Great Britain were complex; but the general cause, the philosophic reason, was simply the determined purpose manifested by England to nullify and render valueless the political independence gained by the American colonies in the Revolution.

Since the inauguration of President Jefferson, in 1801, the Government had been in the hands of the Republicans, and all measures looking toward war with England were opposed by the party out of power—the Federalists. The young reader must not be confused by the change of names which political parties have undergone between that day and this. The Republican party of Jefferson's day was the predecessor of what is now called the Democratic party; while the Republican party of our own day is to some extent the successor of the Federal party of that day. Presidents Washington and Adams were Federalists, or what would now be called Republicans; Presidents Jefferson, Madison, and

Monroe were Republicans, or what would now be called Democrats.

The Federalists in Congress protested against the declaration of war; and this protest was repeated in every possible form by the Federal newspapers, by mass-meetings, in numerous political pamphlets, and even in many pulpits. The opposition was especially strong in the New England States. The arguments of those who opposed the war were, that the country was not prepared for such a struggle, could not afford it, and would find it a hopeless undertaking; that the war policy had been forced upon Madison's administration by the Republican party, in order to strengthen that party and keep it in power; that if we had cause for war with England, we had cause for war with France also, and it was unreasonable to declare war against one of those powers and not against both. The last argument was the one most vehemently urged, and the war party was denounced and sneered at as making our Government a tool of France. There was a certain amount of truth in each of these propositions. The country was poorly prepared for war at all, least of all with the most powerful of nations. Madison probably had been given to understand that unless he recommended a declaration of war, he need not expect a renomination at the hands of his party. And we certainly had cause of war with France, whose cruisers had captured or destroyed many of our merchantmen. But the position of the Federalists on this question furnishes a singular example of the fact that an argument may sometimes be true in each of its parts, and yet incorrect in its grand conclusion. It seldom happens that any people are

prepared for a just and defensive war; they begin their preparations for such a contest after the necessity is upon them. While a portion of the Republican party were undoubtedly actuated by selfish motives, as is the case with some portion of every party, the greater part were unquestionably patriotic, and advocated war because they believed it to be necessary. The crowning argument—that the United States had a grievance against France as well as England, and should make war on both if on either—would have been unanswerable if it had been a moral warfare that was in question. But in military matters it is necessary to consider what is practicable as well as what is logical. For our Government to attempt to fight England and France at the same time, would have been simply suicidal. A good general strives to divide his foes, instead of uniting them. The shrewd thing to do was, to declare war against one only, and by saying nothing of any grievance against the other, make of that other either an ally or a neutral. Then if the war was successful on our part, it would put an end to the outrages complained of, not only on the part of the nation with whom we had fought, but also on that of the other; or if not, a war with the second offender would almost necessarily have the same result. The only question was, with which of those great European powers we should attempt to cope in battle. It was not difficult to decide. England was by far the greater offender. Not only had she done more than France to cripple our commerce, but she still held military posts on our frontier which she had solemnly agreed to give up, and kept the savages in a state of perpetual hostility to our western pioneers. England had

colonies contiguous to our territory on the north, which we might make the battle-ground; France had no territory that would serve us for such a purpose. England was the power that our people had been compelled to fight thirty years before, to escape from oppression; France was the power that had assisted us in that war. Mr. Madison's Administration was right in the conclusion that war could no longer be avoided, if the United States was to maintain an honorable place among nations; and right in the determination to wage it against England alone. But for the manner in which it began and conducted that war, the Administration was open to the severest criticism.

CHAPTER II. THE DETROIT CAMPAIGN.

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First Bloodshed—Attitude of Political Parties—Plans for Invading Canada—Capture of Michilimackinac[4]—Engagements at the River Raisin and Maguaga—Battle of Chicago—Hull's Surrender.

It was perhaps characteristic of the conduct of the war, that the first blood spilled should be American blood, shed by Americans. This occurred in a riot, occasioned by high party feeling, and it is a curious fact that it took place in the same city where the first blood was shed, also by riot, in the great war of the Rebellion, half a century later. In the night of June 22d, three days after the proclamation of war, a mob in Baltimore sacked the office of the *Federal Republican*[3], edited by Alexander Hanson, because he had opposed the war policy. The mob also attacked the residences of several prominent Federalists, and burned one of them. Vessels in the harbor, too, were visited and plundered. About a month later Hanson resumed the publication of his paper, and in the night of July 26th the mob gathered again. This had been expected, and Hanson was ready for them. A large number of his friends, including Generals James M. Lingan and Henry Lee, offered to assist him in protecting his property. When the rioters burst into the building, they were at once fired

upon, and one of them was killed and several were wounded. The authorities were slow and timid in dealing with the riot; and when at length a force of militia was called out, instead of firing upon the mob, or capturing the ringleaders, they arrested Hanson and his friends, and lodged them in jail. The rioters, thus encouraged by those whose business it was to punish them, attacked the jail the next night, murdered General Lingan, injured General Lee so that he was a cripple for the rest of his life, and beat several of the other victims and subjected them to torture. The leaders of the mob were brought to trial, but were acquitted!

In this state of affairs, the war party in the country being but little stronger than the peace party, the youngest and almost the weakest of civilized nations went to war with one of the oldest and most powerful. The regular army of the United States numbered only six thousand men; but Congress had passed an act authorizing its increase to twenty-five thousand, and in addition to this the President was empowered to call for fifty thousand volunteers, and to use the militia to the extent of one hundred thousand. Henry Dearborn, of Massachusetts, was made a major-general and appointed to command the land forces. Against the thousand vessels and one hundred and forty-four thousand sailors of the British navy, the Americans had twenty war-ships and a few gunboats, the whole carrying about three hundred guns.

But these figures, taken alone, are deceptive; since a very large part of the British force was engaged in the European wars, and the practical question was, what force

the United States could bring against so much as England could spare for operations on the high seas and on this side of the Atlantic. In that comparison, the discrepancy was not so great, and the United States had an enormous element of strength in her fine merchant marine. Her commerce being temporarily suspended to a large degree, there was an abundance both of ships and sailors, from which to build up a navy and fit out a fleet of privateers. Indeed, privateering was the business that now offered the largest prizes to mariners and ship-owners**[2q]**. Yet so blind was President Madison's Administration to the country's main strength and advantage, that he actually proposed to lay up all the naval vessels, as the only means of saving them from capture. Of what use it would be to save from capture war-vessels which were not to sail the sea in time of war, he seems not to have thought. From this fatal error he was saved by the pluck and foresight of Captains Stewart and Bain-bridge. Those two officers happened fortunately to be in Washington at the time, and succeeded in persuading the Administration to give up this plan and order the vessels fitted for sea at once.

War with Great Britain being determined upon, the plan of campaign that first and most strongly presented itself to the Administration was the conquest of the British provinces on our northern border. This had been attempted during the Revolution without success, but none the less confidence was felt in it now. And it was certainly correct in principle, though it proved wofully disastrous in the execution. It is observable that in all recent wars, the party on whose ground the fighting has taken place has been in the end the

losing party. Thus the Mexican war in 1846-7 was fought in Mexican territory, and the Mexicans were defeated. The Crimean war was fought in Russian territory, and the Russians were defeated. The war between France and Austria, in 1859, was fought in Austrian territory, and the Austrians were defeated. The Schleswig-Holstein war was fought in Danish territory, and the Danes were defeated. The war between Prussia and Austria, in 1866, was fought in Austrian territory, and the Austrians were defeated. The Franco-German war of 1870 was fought in French territory, and France was defeated. The Russo-Turkish war of 1877 was fought in Turkish territory, and the Turks were defeated. The war of the American Rebellion was fought in territory claimed by the rebels, and they were defeated. It only needs that a war should continue long enough for us to see where the battle-ground is to be, and we can then tell what will be its result. The reason is obvious. A nation that is strong enough to carry the war into its enemy's country, and keep it there, will certainly prove strong enough to win in the end, unless interference by some other power prevents it; while a nation that is too weak to keep war, with all its devastation and ruin, out of its territory, must certainly be defeated unless assisted by some neighboring people. The invaders may, and probably will, lose the greater number of men in the pitched battles; but it is not their harvests that will be trampled, not their mills that will be burned, not their bridges that will be blown up, not their homes that will be desolated, not their families that must fly for shelter to the caves and the forests. Their sources of supply are untouched. This principle was recognized by Scipio, when he

declared that the war with Carthage "must be carried into Africa." As England claimed to be mistress of the seas, and practically the claim was almost true, the determination to send our little navy and a fleet of privateers against her was essentially carrying the war into English territory. And as this part of the contest was conducted with skill and valor, it was gloriously successful**[3q]**.

An invasion of Canada being determined upon, the first question that necessarily arose was, at what point that country should first be attacked. To any one not skilled in military science the most obvious plan would seem the best —to march as large a force as possible, without delay, into Canada at the nearest point. A young officer, Major Jesup, of Kentucky, sent a memorial to the Secretary of War, in which he set forth a totally different plan from this. He proposed that a strong expedition should be fitted out to capture and hold Halifax, which was then a city of fifteen thousand inhabitants, with the most important harbor in the Canadian provinces. As a precedent, he could refer to the capture of Louis-burg in 1748. But the Secretary, Hon. William Eustis, of Massachusetts, spoke of it contemptuously as "a very pretty plan," and set it aside. Yet it was sound in principle, and if properly carried out could hardly have failed to secure important results. In striking an enemy on the flank, it is always desirable, to choose that flank by which he holds communication with his base. A blow on the other flank may inflict injury, but it only drives him back toward his base. A movement that cuts him off from such communication compels him either to surrender or to fight at great disadvantage Canada's base—for many supplies, and

strategic advantage because it allowed easier supply and communication with seaboard ports and Upper Canada.

14 Refers to Zebulon M. Pike, a U.S. Army officer who led troops at York (now Toronto) and was mortally wounded in the magazine explosion there in April 1813; he was about thirty-four years old and had earlier led exploratory expeditions in the trans-Mississippi region.

15 In military usage, a magazine is a secure storehouse for gunpowder and ammunition; the text’s reference is to a powder magazine whose explosion caused heavy casualties at York.

16 A phrase meaning the defenders drove iron spikes into the touch-holes or otherwise disabled their artillery to prevent its use by the enemy, a common method for rendering captured guns temporarily unusable.

17 Isaac Shelby (1750–1826) was the governor of Kentucky and a militia leader in the War of 1812 who led large detachments of mounted volunteers that joined General Harrison's campaign.

18 Refers to Oliver Hazard Perry's naval victory on Lake Erie (September 10, 1813), which gave the United States control of the lake and enabled troop and supply movements in the region.

19 Henry Procter (often spelled Proctor in American accounts) was the British commander in the Northwest; after retreating in the campaign described he was later criticized by his government and subjected to a court-martial and suspension.

20 A Christian Native settlement (a Moravian mission) on the Thames River in Upper Canada; it was the Indigenous

community near where the Battle of the Thames took place (approximate modern area near Moraviantown/Thamesville, Ontario).

21 A military practice of disabling artillery by driving a metal spike into a cannon's touchhole so the gun cannot be fired until repaired or the spike removed.

22 A frontier stockade near the Tensaw/Alabama River where the Fort Mims massacre occurred on August 30, 1813, when Creek warriors overran the fort and many settlers and militiamen were killed.

23 A field fortification made by felling trees and arranging their branches toward an approaching enemy to form an obstacle (also spelled abatis), commonly used in 18th–19th century warfare.

24 An island off the southern coast of Cape Cod in Massachusetts that served as a familiar New England landfall and harbor; in the early 19th century it was a common stop for ships returning from Atlantic cruises.

25 Refers to HMS Leopard, a British warship that in 1807 attacked the U.S. frigate Chesapeake in the Chesapeake–Leopard affair, a diplomatic incident that intensified American complaints about British impressment of sailors.

26 A sailing-warfare term meaning the advantageous position upwind of an opponent, which gave a ship greater control over engagement range and maneuvering during the age of sail.

27 A long, pivoting deck gun (often an eighteen-pounder) mounted on privateers and small vessels to fire at distant targets; it could be swiveled to aim independent of the ship’s broadside battery.

28 A pejorative nickname used during the War of 1812 for opponents (primarily Federalists) accused of signaling or otherwise aiding the British—allegedly by burning blue signal-lights at the harbor mouth to warn blockaders.

29 Refers to Daniel D. Tompkins, who was Governor of New York from 1807 to 1817 and later served as U.S. Vice-President under James Monroe (1817–1825).

30 The name of a prominent Seneca (Iroquois) chief and orator, Sagoyewatha, who was active in the late 18th and early 19th centuries and allied with the British during the War of 1812 (he died c. 1830).

31 An artillery 'battery' is a unit of several guns (cannons); this phrase indicates the battery commanded by an officer named Towson and its position/action in the battle.

32 A kedge anchor is a relatively small anchor used to warp or pivot a vessel by hauling on lines (kedging), a common maneuver for turning or repositioning sailing ships.

33 A small island in Passamaquoddy Bay seized by British forces in July 1814; it is now the site of Eastport, Maine, on the U.S.–Canada maritime border.

34 A bay between northeastern Maine and New Brunswick (Canada), forming part of the Bay of Fundy and the location of several small islands and border waterways mentioned in the text.

35 A senior Royal Navy officer who commanded the British squadron before New London and led the expedition to Moose Island; he is the same Thomas M. Hardy noted for later service in the Napoleonic Wars.

36 A town and harbor on Penobscot Bay in eastern Maine that was occupied by British forces in 1814 and used as a base to administer the occupied territory.

37 An early 19th-century British military rocket system (developed by William Congreve) used as an incendiary and shock weapon during bombardments in the War of 1812.

38 An American naval officer who commanded the small Chesapeake flotilla and whose boats and sailors played a key role in local defense before being ordered to destroy the flotilla and join land defenses.

39 Henry Bathurst, 3rd Earl Bathurst, who was a British government minister at the time (Secretary at War/Colonies); Ross wrote to him about his conduct in Washington.

40 A meeting of New England Federalist delegates held at Hartford, Connecticut, in December 1814 to discuss regional grievances about the War of 1812 and propose constitutional amendments; its proceedings were secretive and the convention became politically unpopular after news of peace arrived.

41 A privateer and smugler based in the Barataria region near New Orleans who traded in captured goods and later offered his services (and men) to both British and American authorities; he and his followers assisted General Andrew Jackson in defending New Orleans.

42 A small American earthwork on Mobile Point guarding the entrance to Mobile Bay that repelled a British attack in September 1814 during the campaign on the Gulf Coast and was the scene of notable naval and land fighting.