

Lesson Outline: The War of 1812

Post-Embargo Act Era

- Congress repealed the Embargo Act, renewing trade with Britain and France.
- Harassment of American vessels continued despite renewed trade.

James Madison's Presidency (1809-1817)

- James Madison, a Democratic-Republican from Virginia, became president in 1809.
- Served as Jefferson's Secretary of State; his wife, Dolly Madison, was White House hostess.
- Madison, known as the Father of the American Constitution, was respected for his role in framing the Constitution.

Rise of the Warhawks

- Newly elected congressmen from the South and West sought global respect for the U.S.
- Warhawks, led by Speaker Henry Clay (Kentucky), pushed for war with Britain, citing British influence on Native American tribes.

Native American Unrest and Tecumseh's Confederacy

- Shawnee Prophet encouraged tribes to reject outside influence.
- Tecumseh sought to unite tribes against settlers.
- British fur traders in Canada supplied tribes with weapons.
- Governor William Henry Harrison defeated Tecumseh's forces at the Battle of Tippecanoe.

Declaration of War

- British Parliament sought compromise, but news arrived too late.
- President Madison requested, and Congress declared, war in June 1812.

Key Battles of the War of 1812

Naval Victories

- USS Constitution ("Old Ironsides") captained by Isaac Hull achieved victories.

Northern Front

- American Navy gained control of the Great Lakes.
- Oliver Hazard Perry's victory at the Battle of Lake Erie (1813).
- General Harrison defeated British and Tecumseh's forces at the Battle of the Thames, where Tecumseh died.

Southern Front

- Andrew Jackson's Tennessee riflemen defeated the Creek Nation at the Battle of Horseshoe Bend.

Eastern Front

- British burned Washington, D.C., including the White House and Capitol.
- Dolly Madison saved important documents and a portrait of George Washington.
- British attack on Baltimore failed; Francis Scott Key wrote "The Star-Spangled Banner" during the bombardment of Fort McHenry.

Southwest Front

- Andrew Jackson's diverse force defeated the British at the Battle of New Orleans (1815), fought after the Treaty of Ghent ended the war.

Treaty of Ghent (December 1814)

- Ended the War of 1812, though final battle occurred in January 1815 due to slow communication.

Hartford Convention (1814)

- Federalist leaders in New England opposed the war.
- Discussed states' rights and nullification.

Results of the War of 1812

- National unity and a strengthened American identity.
- Increased global respect, especially from Britain.
- Stimulated manufacturing in the Northeast, fostering industrialization.

Conclusion:

- The War of 1812 established America's sovereignty, spurred westward expansion, and laid the foundation for economic and cultural divergence between the Northeast and Southeast.