

REFLECTING ON THE WAR OF 1812

A Defining Chapter in our History

IT IS HARD TO IMAGINE NOW, but two hundred years ago, relations between the United States and Great Britain were not what they are today. A series of events and frustrations led Americans to feel that Great Britain was not respectful of America's independence as a nation.

Things finally unravelled on June 18, 1812, when the United States declared war on Great Britain and its British North American colonies – known today as central and eastern Canada. What happened next would change the face of North America forever and establish a path to Confederation and the development of the independent, modern nation that is Canada today.

The traditional British
Red Coat uniform

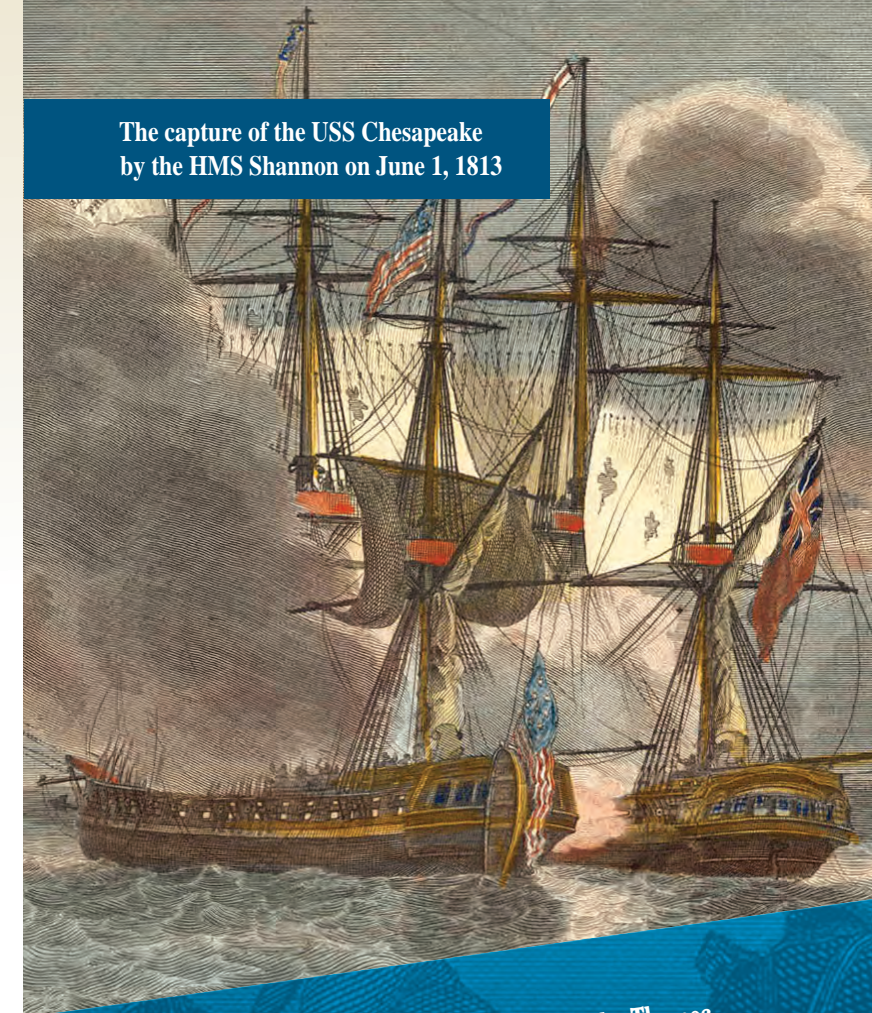
First Nations and Métis During the War

The First Nations and Métis proved to be remarkable and courageous allies, fighting together with the Canadian militia and the British Army to resist the American invasion. Known to be exceptional fighters, more than 1,500 First Nations members from Upper and Lower Canada participated in almost every major battle. In addition, the British were allies with thousands of warriors from many Nations from the Ohio and Mississippi valleys of the United States, with many Métis warriors fighting alongside First Nations relatives. First Nations and Métis warriors played a key role in the outcome of the War and helped to shape Canada as an independent nation.



Commemorative War of 1812 Medal for Aboriginal Canadians

The capture of the USS Chesapeake
by the HMS Shannon on June 1, 1813



The End of the War

On December 24, 1814, negotiations led to the signing of the Treaty of Ghent – an agreement that called for peace and reset the boundaries between Canada and the United States to the pre-1812 configuration.

The Treaty of Ghent did not immediately end the War. The new treaty would only come into effect once ratified by the British parliament and the American congress. Since overseas communications were slow, it took several weeks for the Treaty to reach the United States. One of the War's bloodiest battles was fought at New Orleans in the meantime.

Canada would not exist had the American invasion of 1812-15 been successful, making the War of 1812 a defining chapter in Canada's history.

Greatness built a nation, from clashes on land, at sea, and on the Great Lakes to the historic battles at Queenston Heights, Stoney Creek, and Fort Erie. These battlefields, now historic sites, along with the heroes and heroines of the War, are commemorated and honoured across Canada and provide a rich history of which all Canadians can be proud.

A series of activities and events are being held across
Canada to commemorate the War of 1812



Visit 1812.gc.ca

- 1812
- Fort St. Joseph and the capture of Michilimackinac (Mackinac) (July 17)

- Declaration of War (June 18)
- Fort Malden or Amherstburg and the capture of Detroit (August 16)



The Battle of the Châteauguay on October 26, 1813

- Battle of Queenston Heights and the death of Brock (October 13)
- Prescott and the capture of Ogdensburg (February 22)

1813



Major-General Sir Isaac Brock

- Capture of York (April 27)
- Battle of Fort George (May 27)
- Battle of Stoney Creek (June 6)
- Battle of Beaver Dams (June 24)



Laura Secord

Canada's Military Regiments

The War of 1812 was a pivotal point in the development of Canada's military forces. Between 1803 and 1812, six "fencible" infantry regiments were raised in both Canadian provinces, as well as in New Brunswick, Nova Scotia and Newfoundland to defend against American invasion. When the War broke out, thousands of volunteer militiamen from Upper and Lower Canada also fought alongside British soldiers and First Nations allies against the American army. Many modern regiments in Canada can trace their origins back to the War and perpetuate the history and honours of predecessor units from the War of 1812.



Canadian Forces War of 1812
Commemorative Banner

- Battle of Lake Erie (September 10)
- Battle of the Thames (October 5)



Shawnee War Chief Tecumseh

Heroes of the War

There were many heroes and heroines that emerged from the War of 1812. Perhaps Brock, Tecumseh, Salaberry, and Secord are the best known, but there were many other heroes, such as Mohawk war chiefs John Brant and John Norton; Charles Frederick Rolette, a Canadian Officer of the Royal Navy; and Richard Pierpoint, a former slave who helped raise a company of black soldiers to resist the American invasion. These and countless others defended Canada's borders and ultimately succeeded in repelling the Americans in the fight for Canada.

- Battle of Châteauguay (October 26)
- Battle of Crysler's Farm (November 11)



Lieutenant-Colonel
Charles-Michel d'Armand de Salaberry

- Battle of Lundy's Lane (July 25)
- Treaty of Ghent (December 24)

1814

- Battle of Chippawa (July 5)
- The siege of Fort Erie (August 4 - September 21)



The signing of the Treaty of Ghent in December 1814

Visit 1812.gc.ca to download an app,
take our quiz, and learn more
about the War of 1812.