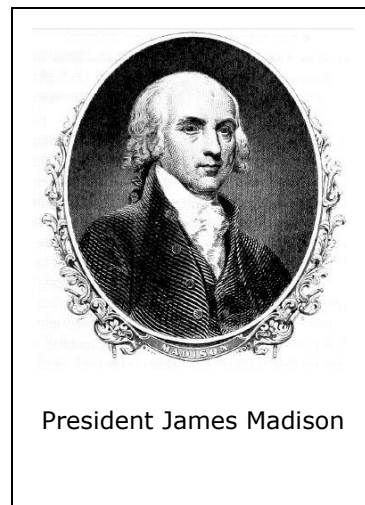


Thirteenth Congress

May 24, 1813-Mar. 3, 1815

Second Administration of James Madison

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Historical Background

The War of 1812 dominated the 13th Congress with President James Madison reporting on the major issues associated with that conflict, including efforts to conduct negotiations with Great Britain, the outcomes of battles fought on multiple fronts, and the affect the war had on the economy. Over the course of the war, there were several incidents which would become forever etched in U.S. history. One of the most lasting occurred on August 1814 when the British raided Washington and burned the Capitol, the White House and all the executive departments except the Patent Office. Another occurred Sept. 13-14, 1814 when the British attacked Baltimore, conducting a naval bombardment of Fort McHenry. The ultimate failure of the attack and subsequent abandonment of the British assault on Baltimore stiffen American resistance. On Sept. 20, Madison spoke before a joint session of Congress, so he could discuss not only the successful defense of Baltimore, but other military successes “which have given new luster to the American arms.” The successful defense of Baltimore was also the inspiration for the poem “Defense of Fort M’Henry’, written by Francis Scott Key after witnessing the attack. The poem would later be set to music and become the basis for the United States’ national anthem.

During 1813 and into 1814 Madison was determined to get the British to negotiate and stop “the effusion of blood.” Madison said that despite his repeated attempts to get the British to negotiate, they continued to delay, even after Russian Emperor Alexander I agreed to mediate. Madison suspected the delays reflected a hostility toward the United States, and in the message delivered to Congress on Sept. 20, 1814 he stated, “a spirit of hostility is indulged, more violent than ever, against the rights and prosperity of this country.” However, by late 1814 negotiations had gotten underway in Ghent, Belgium and were occurring at the same time the British burned Washington. Nonetheless, on Dec. 24, 1814, negotiators reached an agreement that was embodied in the Treaty of Ghent. Because of the slow

House	Senate
Majority Party: Jefferson Republicans (114 seats)	Majority Party: Republican (28 seats)
Minority Party: Federalists (68 seats)	Minority Party: Federalists (8 seats)
Other Parties: None	Other Parties: None
Speaker of the House: Henry Clay; Langdon Cheves	President Pro Tempore: William H. Crawford; Joseph B. Varnum; John Gillard

pace with which information was transmitted, fighting continued into 1815 until word of the Treaty reached New York in February 1815.

Additionally, during the raid on Washington British troops burned the Library of Congress. In order to establish a new library, former President Thomas Jefferson offered to sell his library collection of 7,000 books to the Government, an offer which was accepted, and on Jan. 30, 1815 Congress allocated \$23,950.00 for the purchase.

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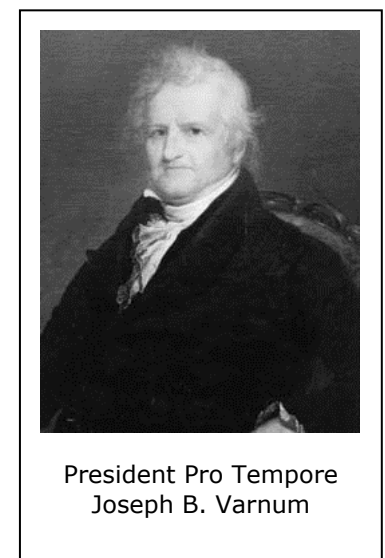
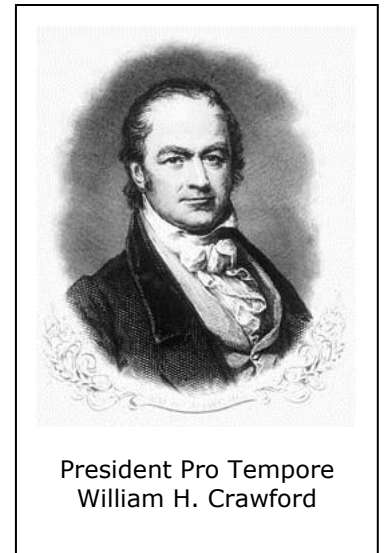
War or Peace?

War of 1812

The battles that U.S. forces engaged in dominated President Madison's messages to Congress in 1813 and 1814. As part of the messages delivered during those years, he praised the victories the Navy gained on the waterways separating the United States and British North America (Canada), specifically on Lakes Erie, Ontario and Champlain, and on the St. Lawrence River. Of course, there were other naval engagements during 1813, and Madison listed unsuccessful attacks by the British on Craney Island, Va., Fort Meigs and Sandusky (both in Ohio), and at Sacketts Harbor, N.Y.

He also praised the victories of ground forces—mostly composed of regular Army units and militias—which, he said, rescued the inhabitants of Michigan from British occupation forces that included Native American tribes. He criticized the British for using “seduction” to create alliances with the tribes. Madison claimed the Creek tribes especially exhibited “a bloody fanaticism” in their fighting, and he credited the “advantages” the British gained by allying themselves with the tribes as the reason for the early British victories. To counter those advantages, and prevent other tribes from allying with the British, Major General Andrew Jackson was tasked to lead a campaign in the Mississippi Territory that would “crush such a war before it could spread among the contiguous tribes.” Jackson's campaign was a success, and in August 1814 a treaty with the Creeks was signed in which the tribe was forced to cede 23 million acres of their territory located in Georgia and Alabama to the United States.

Furthermore, the treatment of American prisoners of war by the British was a matter of great concern to Madison. He reported that POWs who had been British citizens, but who immigrated to the United States before the war were being separated from other American POWs for transport to England where they were to stand trial for treason. Those POWs were “fighting for



the rights and safety” of their adopted country, and Madison made clear that if American POWs were executed under such circumstances, an equal number of British POWs “would be put to death.”

During his 1814 message to Congress, Madison said that despite the recent British success with the raids on Washington and on Alexandria, Va., located five miles south of Washington, “the enemy, with all his augmented means and wanton use of them, has little ground for exultation.” Rather, Madison focused on the failed attempt to take Baltimore and the failed attack on Fort Mchenry, which withstood a long naval bombardment. In addition, Madison also focused on Jackson’s successful campaign in the Mississippi Territory that halted the British advance, provided the defense of New Orleans, and marked the beginning of the conquest of West Florida.

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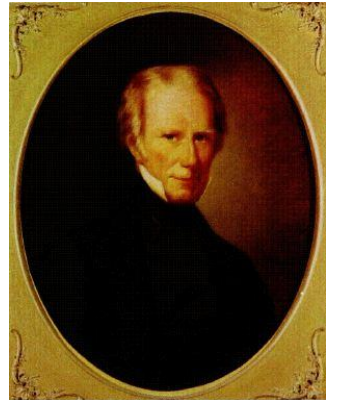
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President Pro Tempore
John Gaillard



Speaker of the House
Henry Clay

Economic Trends and Conditions

Throughout the 13th Congress the war had a major effect on the economy and on the U.S. budget. During President Madison’s 1813 address he said, the expenses of the current year were based on the “multiplied operations” undertaken by the Government. While the costs were considered “extensive [...] all good citizens” would consider the expenses a “necessity” in order to resist “wrongs and usurpations.” However, he did add that once citizens no longer had to “borne” the additional expenses, the result “will sufficiently outweigh the privations and sacrifices inseparable from a state of war.”

While the war had a negative effect on U.S. trade, it had positive effects on the U.S. manufacturing, according to Madison. He argued during his 1813 message, “if the war has increased the interruptions of our commerce, it has at the same time cherished and multiplied our manufactures, so as to make us independent of all other countries for the more essential branches for which we ought to be dependent on none.” Madison also forecast that goods produced in war-time would be traded after the war in more markets. The

war “is even rapidly giving them an extent, which will create additional staples in our future intercourse with foreign markets.”

In the fiscal reports for 1813 and 1814, Madison included loans as revenue, but omitted surplus funds from the previous year as revenue. According to Madison, the United States’ revenues for 1813—which was only reported up to Sept. 30—totaled \$37.5 million, of which \$24 million was loans; expenditures through that period amounted to about \$30.5 million, leaving a surplus of nearly \$7 million. During the fiscal report for 1814, Madison included the same information for revenues and expenditures saying the United States collected \$32 million in revenues through June 30 of that year, of which \$21 million was loans; expenditures through that period amounted to about \$34 million, but with the \$7 million surplus from 1813, left a surplus of about \$5 million.

In a message to Congress dated May 25, 1813, Madison said the war was the reason for the Government’s increased dependency on loans, and if lawmakers wanted to reduce that dependency, they should pursue new methods of generating revenue that would provide “more adequately for the future supplies of the treasury.” That could be achieved “by a well digested system of internal revenue, in aid of existing sources,” he said. While he was not specific as to how “a well digested system of internal revenue” would be achieved, he did say that it would abridge “the amount of necessary loans,” and improve the interest rates “on which loans may be obtained.”

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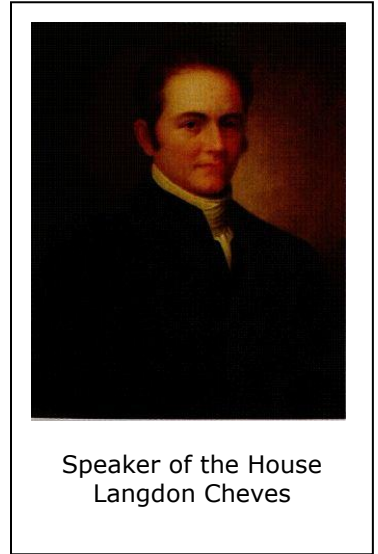
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Major Treaties

Treaty of Ghent. Ended the War of 1812 and provided for release of all prisoners taken in the war, as well as the restoration of all territory taken during the war (except West Florida), and for the appointment of an arbitral commission to settle the northeastern boundary between the U.S. and Canada. Concluded Dec. 24, 1814. Approved by the Senate, Feb. 16, 1815. ([8 Stat. 218](#))

Treaty with the Creeks, 1814 (also known as the **Treaty of Fort Jackson**), signed on Aug. 9, 1814 at Fort Jackson, Ala. near the community of

Wetumpka following the defeat of the Red Stick Creeks at the Battle of Horseshoe Bend by forces commanded by General Andrew Jackson. The surrender ended the Creek War, which the United States was fighting simultaneously with the War of 1812. Under the terms of the treaty, the Creeks were forced to cede 23 million acres of their territory including their remaining land in Georgia and much of central Alabama, to the United States. Approved by the Senate, Aug. 9, 1814. ([7 Stat. 120](#))

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1813 Events

- **Jan. 22:** *War of 1812* - [U.S. forces capture Frenchtown in the Michigan Territory from the British and their Native American allies](#)
- **Jan. 28:** Jane Austen's novel *Pride and Prejudice* is published
- **Feb. 23:** The first raw cotton-to-cloth mill in the United States is founded in Waltham, Mass.
- **Feb. 27:** [The first federal vaccination legislation is enacted](#)
- **Feb. 27:** [Congress authorizes use of steamboats to transport mail](#)
- **Mar. 3:** The U.S. Army forms the Office of Surgeon General
- **Mar. 18:** David Melville of Newport, R.I. is awarded a patent for an apparatus used to make coal gas
- **Apr. 27:** *War of 1812* - [U.S. troops capture York, Canada \(present day Toronto\), but retreating British forces detonate a munitions depot killing General Zebulon Pike, the U.S. commander of the expedition](#)
- **May 23:** South American independence leader Simón Bolívar arrives in Mérida, Venezuela thereby leading the invasion of Venezuela, and is subsequently proclaimed El Libertador ("The Liberator")
- **June 6:** *War of 1812* - The U.S. invasion of Canada is halted at Stoney Creek, Ontario
- **July 5:** *War of 1812* - [The British begin a three-week campaign of raids in New York](#)
- **Aug. 27:** *Napoleonic Wars* - Napoleon Bonaparte defeats the Austrians at the Battle of Dresden
- **Sept. 10:** *War of 1812* - [U.S. Navy led by Oliver Hazard Perry defeat the British Navy in the Battle of Lake Erie](#)
- **Oct. 16:** *Napoleonic Wars* - The combined armies of Prussia, Austria and Russia defeat Napoleon Bonaparte at the Battle of Leipzig – the largest battle fought in Europe for more than 100 years
- **Nov. 6:** The Chilpancingo congress declares Mexico independent of Spain
- **Dec. 2:** Prince Willem Frederik of the Netherlands, who grew up in Prussia and who entered the Netherlands for the first time on Nov. 30, accepts a constitutional monarchy

- **Dec. 29:** *War of 1812* - British troops and Native American warriors burn Buffalo, N.Y.

1814 Events

- **Feb. 1:** Lord Byron's poem *The Corsair* sells 10,000 copies on its first day in print
- **Feb. 11:** Norway declares its independence
- **Mar. 27:** *War of 1812* - U.S. General Andrew Jackson defeats the Red Sticks, part of the Creek tribe near Dadeville, Ala., which is known as the Battle at Horseshoe Bend
- **Mar. 31:** *Napoleonic Wars* - Forces allied against Napoleon Bonaparte capture Paris
- **Apr. 11:** *Napoleonic Wars* - Napoleon Bonaparte abdicates unconditionally and is eventually exiled to the island of Elba off the coast of Italy
- **Apr. 26:** France's King Louis XVIII lands at Calais from England, leading to the restoration of Bourbon reign in France
- **May 4:** Spain's King Ferdinand VII signs the Decree of the 4th of May, returning Spain to absolutism, under which the monarch has absolute power
- **May 30:** The Treaty of Paris is signed returning France's borders to their 1792 extent
- **July 25:** George Stephenson introduces his first steam locomotive
- **Aug. 8:** *War of 1812* - [The United States and Great Britain begin peace negotiations in Ghent, Belgium](#)
- **Aug. 13:** The Dutch formally cede the Cape of Good Hope, near the southern tip of Africa, to the British
- **Aug. 13:** Great Britain and the Netherlands sign the Anglo-Dutch Treaty of 1814, which bans Dutch citizens from participating in the slave trade
- **Aug. 24-25:** *War of 1812* - [British forces capture Washington, D.C. and burn the White House, Capitol and Library of Congress](#)
- **Sept. 12-14:** *War of 1812* - U.S ground forces engage the British near Baltimore at the Battle of North Point, a day later British naval forces bombard Fort McHenry which holds, inspiring Francis Scott Key to write the poem 'Defence of Fort M'Henry'
- **Sept. 20:** Francis Scott Key's poem 'Defence of Fort M'Henry' is set to music by John Stafford Smith and is published as the song *Star Spangled Banner*
- **Oct 1:** The Congress of Vienna convenes with the goal of redrawing Europe's political map in the wake of the defeat of Napoleon Bonaparte
- **Dec. 24:** *War of 1812* - Representatives from the United States and Great Britain, who have been negotiating in Ghent, Belgium since August, sign the Treaty of Ghent ending the War of 1812

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Major Acts

Purchase of the Library of Thomas Jefferson. Authorized the purchase of the library of Thomas Jefferson for the use of Congress at a sum of \$23,950. Approved Jan. 30, 1815. ([3 Stat. 195, Chap. 27](#))

Naval Reduction Act of 1815. Established a Board of Navy Commissioners. Put the Navy's gunboat flotilla up for sale, stripped armed U.S. vessels on the Great Lakes of their equipment and ordered them to be sold or laid up. Approved Feb. 27, 1815. ([3 Stat. 217, Chap. 62](#))

Peacetime Military Establishment. Established a peacetime standing army of 10,000 men. Approved Mar. 3, 1815. ([3 Stat. 224, Chap. 79](#))

Declaration of War Against Algiers. Declared war against Algiers which had been molesting American ships and insisting upon payment of tribute. Approved Mar. 3, 1815. ([3 Stat. 230, Chap. 90](#))

Source:

Dell, Christopher and Stephen W. Stathis. [Major Acts of Congress and Treaties Approved by the Senate, 1789-1980](#). Government Division (CRS), Sept. 1, 1982. 97th Congress, 2nd Session, 82-156 GOV. ProQuest Congressional, CRS-1982-GOV-0005

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