

Chapter 1 : War Of | HistoryNet

One ship that was at sea early in was Master Commandant James Lawrence's brig USS Hornet (20). On February 24, he engaged and captured the brig HMS Peacock (18) off the coast of South America. Returning home, Lawrence was promoted to captain and given command of the frigate USS Chesapeake (50) at Boston.

Navy was an eighteen-year-old institution with barely a dozen ships to its name. The British Royal Navy, by contrast, had been operating for centuries, and could boast over five hundred active warships. Eighty-five of these ships were sailing American waters at the time war broke out. In the age of sail, oceangoing vessels were classified by structural characteristics: A man-of-war, or ship of the line, has multiple masts and decks. The Royal Navy was paying around , seamen, 31, of whom were well-trained marines. Navy had about seamen and marines. But war at sea in would not be a simple numbers game. Conditions of service were difficult: An average British crew might include criminals, as well as foreign sailors who felt very little loyalty to the Crown. And while the official Navy might be young, the American maritime tradition was not. This way of life was threatened when the British, exercising their advantage, established a blockade along the eastern seaboard, strangling American shipping and commerce. While his uncle William distinguished himself in the militia, his father Joseph commanded a flotilla of whaleboats on Long Island Sound, harassing the British whenever possible. At 20, Hull received his first merchant commission; two years later, in , he was commissioned fourth lieutenant in the U. Navy and assigned to the USS Constitution. He saw action in the Caribbean and the Mediterranean, and sparred with the French navy and Barbary pirates. Not satisfied with forty-four, Hull crammed at least fifty guns on board in One month later, in August, , the Constitution encountered the British Guerriere in the Atlantic. The broadside weight of this heavy frigate gave the Constitution an advantage over her British counterpart, easily withstanding the British attack and answering with round after round of punishing cannon fire. Navy could not break the blockade, but early in the war, these sea battles showed the world that Americans knew how to build ships, and how to sail them. Shipbuilding on the Frontier In December, Congress voted to fund another ten of these heavy ocean-worthy frigates but none would be ready to fight for years. In a way, this did not matter. Both sides knew early on that naval dominance of the Great Lakes was the key to victory, since these inland waterways were crucial for supplying any army. A race was on to build lightweight warships for the lakes as quickly as possible. This is where the decisive naval battles would take place. Navy started building a squadron of gunboats and two frigates in the remote town of Erie, on the shores of Lake Erie. It was an odd choice, given that there were no access roads, no foundries, rope factories or shipwrights nearby. In fact, the timber resources in North America were one of the several reasons that Britain wished to hold on to the Canadian provinces. Timber on the British Isles was all but gone – any new ships for the Royal Navy would be fashioned out of New World wood. Not surprisingly, British shipwrights were also busy building ships on the Great Lakes, in Amherstburg and Kingston, Ontario. The Battle of Lake Erie The British captain charged with control of Lake Erie was Commander Robert Heriot Barclay, an experienced naval officer frustrated by the difficulties of maintaining an inland fleet. Supplies and reinforcements came only intermittently, and by his squadron was smaller in both number and size than the American squadron in Erie. But Barclay was in possession of thirty-five long guns, powerful cannon that could throw up to forty-two pound shot over distance. On September 10, when Perry and Barclay faced off, all the elements of battleship construction came into play: Perry had nine vessels in total, but his second-in-command, Jesse Elliot, inexplicably held his ship, the Niagara, and four smaller ships out of the battle. The result was a bloody massacre. With each hit, the hull shattered into dozens of deadly splinters that were propelled across the deck. In what has become a celebrated episode of U. Taking advantage of a wind change, he sailed the ship directly into the British line, then let loose with broadsides from both port and starboard, raking four ships at once. The double-loaded carronades were effective, not only in shattering hulls, but in causing such confusion that two British ships, the Queen Charlotte and the Detroit, collided and become inextricably locked together. Barclay struck his colors and Perry penned his famous note: Two ships, two brigs, one schooner and a sloop. Providing support for PBS.

Chapter 2 : The Battle of Lake Erie - HISTORY

events -- war of -- the war at sea -- USS Hornet sinks HMS Peacock, 24 February By the middle of February the U.S. Sloop of War Hornet (Master Commandant James Lawrence) had been cruising the Atlantic for nearly four months, sometimes in company with the big frigate Constitution, but by herself since early January.

The British, fearing that Harrison planned to pursue and worried that their forces on the Niagara frontier would be bottled up, withdrew to the more defensible position on the Burlington Heights in early October. The intent was that Wilkinson would conduct an offensive to capture Montreal, and he looted the Niagara frontier of regular troops for the purpose; although Harrison arrived by ship with a force of at Niagara during October, he and his men were promptly put on the march to Sackets Harbor. The Niagara frontier remained a neglected theater of war, under the nominal direction of George McClure, an Irish-born brigadier general of the New York militia. War Secretary Armstrong had originally pushed for a drive on Kingston, but Wilkinson had convinced him, with good reason, that Montreal would be the more important strategic target. The assault on Montreal was to involve a parallel drive by two substantial forces: A force of about 7, men under the command of Wilkinson, which was to move down the Saint Lawrence River from Sackets Harbor. An army of about 4, men assembled at Plattsburg on Lake Champlain under the command of Brigadier General Wade Hampton, poised to north across the border. There was something unpleasantly familiar about the arrangements for the offensive. Neither force was big enough to take Montreal on its own, and Wilkinson had no confidence in Hampton. Hampton had no confidence in Wilkinson either, though he was far from alone in his opinion, Wilkinson being regarded as an extremely dubious quantity by those who took orders from him, sometimes described as a "conman in uniform". People who met Wilkinson for the first time were often impressed. In appearance, he was no rugged soldier, being clearly well-fed and fond of comfort, but once he started talking, people found him charming, confident, enthusiastic, with a strong streak of military optimism -- a far cry from his inert predecessor Dearborn. Republican politicians thought him a military genius, the answer to their prayers. Those who actually dealt with him in practice quickly realized that his impressive appearance was completely deceptive, that he was entirely treacherous to deal with, being dishonest, corrupt, interested only in self-advancement, totally unconcerned in the welfare of his troops or in effective military action. Scott was so loud in his contempt for his superior officer that he was put before court-martial for insubordination in and suspended for a year without pay. Hampton had also served under Wilkinson and had no illusions about him. Wilkinson had gone to Washington, where he energetically lobbied for his new command. For whatever reasons, War Secretary Armstrong decided to put Wilkinson in charge in the north. One of the big problems was that Wilkinson got started late in the year, in territory noted for its unpleasant winter climate. The troops were exposed to harsh and stormy weather that wrecked many of their boats, ruined a substantial portion of their food supplies, and reduced many of them to disease. Wilkinson was among the ill, with the general using whiskey and laudanum to brace himself up. Wilkinson finally set out with his force down the Saint Lawrence on 2 November. Republican papers played up the expedition, proclaiming final victory was just around the corner, but people on the spot knew better. Judge Nathan Ford, a prominent New York Federalist and a persistent thorn in the side of the Madison Administration, observed Wilkinson and his little army to describe it as "weak beyond measure" and branding it a fraud: The Americans lost over a hundred dead, many more wounded, with British losses about half that. Hampton had advanced north across the border, to then run into a small force of Canadian militia under Lieutenant Colonel Charles de Salaberry set up near the Chateaugay River, south of Montreal, on 26 October. Hampton outnumbered the British by almost ten to one, but the defenders were well set up behind log defenses in terrain that favored the defense. Hampton tried to split his forces and catch the British in a two-pronged attack, but swamps and other difficulties disrupted the assault into incoherence, while the Canadians poured fire into the Americans whenever they had the chance. Hampton finally called it quits and went back to where he had come from, even though he had only suffered less than a hundred casualties. Chateaugay was a bright victory for the Canadians, with both French- and English-speaking militiamen enthused at driving off the American rabble. He pulled back to French Mills, just

behind the New York state border, claiming he planned to renew the offensive once weather permitted. The climate there was bitterly cold, one officer writing: Several Sentinels, have frozen to death on post and many are badly frostbitten. McClure had been talking up a tough war with the militia under his command -- but he was unable to make any good use of them, only obtaining insubordination, unruly conduct, and desertions. While his force disintegrated, the British command was braced by the arrival of Lieutenant General Gordon Drummond, who had replaced General Rottenburg as lieutenant general of Upper Canada. The burning of Newark infuriated the British, McClure commenting that "the Enemy is much exasperated and will make a descent on this frontier if possible. The fort commander, Captain Nathaniel Leonard, promptly surrendered. The British captured 27 cannon, thousands of small arms, stockpiles of ammunition, and worst of all the bulk of American food stores in the area. Not only had the British seized the most significant American strongpoint in the region, they had also rendered American operations there logistically impractical. A second attack was performed immediately following the surrender of Fort Niagara by a force of about a thousand British troops and Indians under Irish Major General Phineas Riall, resulting in the pillaging and burning of the town of Lewiston near the fort. The British then hit south, attacking Black Rock and Buffalo on the morning of 30 December, scattering the militiamen to then sack and burn the towns. The disinclination of the British to press their advantage was the only good news in the fiasco. Federalists blasted the Republican administration. To divert attention from the failings of leadership, the government played up stories of atrocities by the raiders, inflaming the public and laying the ground for further retaliation in kind. A fight had been brewing between the settlers and the Creeks even before the war had broken out. In May , a band of Creeks had killed six settlers and kidnapped a woman named Martha Crowley. The incident, particularly the abduction of Mrs. Crowley, inflamed the citizens of the region, with the commander of the West Tennessee militia, Major General Andrew Jackson, calling up volunteers. Jackson was a tough, resourceful, and sharp-tempered frontiersman with an inclination towards the brute-force solution, and he believed the Creeks "must be punished". Crowley eventually managed to escape her captors and make her way to safety. Getting organized took time, however, due to the difficulty of obtaining supplies for the expedition. The Federal government issued paper notes to support the expedition, but there was little confidence in them and they had no great purchasing power. The weather was variable, sometimes sunny, sometimes wintry and icy. The force finally made it to Natchez in mid-February, the bulk of their journey over -- or so they thought. On reaching Natchez, Jackson got a letter from General Wilkinson, at the time still in charge in New Orleans, telling Jackson to stay put with his men in Natchez. Jackson had dealt with Wilkinson before and was suspicious of him, but Jackson did as he was told, putting his men to military drill in Natchez to keep them occupied. Then he got another letter, this one from War Secretary Armstrong, telling Jackson that the services of the militia were no longer needed -- the war against the British going badly, the government in Washington was less enthusiastic about operations against the Spanish in Florida. Jackson was told that the men should simply be released from service, to make their way back home as best they could. Jackson was baffled and furious, since he was being told to abandon his men, including his sick and injured. The order was not only unconscionable, it would certainly destroy his credibility as a leader. Jackson marched his men back home; Wilkinson refused to provide funds for supplies for the march and so Jackson took the financial burden on himself, setting out with his men in late March. The movement went more swiftly than expected, the troops greatly wanting to get back home, with the citizens of Nashville coming out in force to greet the militiamen when they arrived in May. The force then disbanded. Although Jackson was a militia officer with no formal military experience -- he had been elected to his position, effectively the only rank he had ever held was general -- his men found him admirable, describing him as "tough as hickory wood", giving him the nickname of "Old Hickory". Eventually, they would find out he demanded a lot more respect than they thought of giving him voluntarily. These Creeks became known as "Red Sticks" after the war totems and war clubs they carried. Creek chiefs tried to restrain the Red Sticks, leading to a civil war in miniature among the tribes. In July , a group of Red Sticks went to Pensacola in Spanish Florida to trade for weapons to be used in the fight. On July 27, as the Red Sticks were returning, they were attacked by about Mississippi militia; the Red Sticks lost most of their supplies in the fight, which was later named the Battle of Burnt Corn, but sent the militia packing, with the

Red Sticks returning south to re-arm. Now the fighting between the whites and the Red Sticks began in earnest. A few whites did escape and spread tales of monstrous atrocities, which though exaggerated had a substantial basis in fact. The massacre at Fort Mims spread alarm through the region, with expeditions then raised by the whites against the tribes. In late September, Jackson called up the militia again. He was not in the best condition for a campaign at the time, having been wounded after siding with one of his officers in a violent dispute; Jackson would have lost one of his arms, but he refused to let the doctors cut it off. He was still carrying the pistol ball around with him, along with another he had obtained from a duel in However, Jackson was too tough-minded to allow his ailments to keep him out of the field -- though no doubt they aggravated his legendary explosions of rage. On 10 October, Jackson put a force of 2, Tennessee militiamen on a march into Creek territory, looking for a fight. Jackson was to be reinforced by a second column of 1, East Tennessee militia under Major General John Cocke, while two other forces -- one consisting of Georgia militia under General John Floyd, the other of US Army regulars and Mississippi Territory militia under Brigadier General Ferdinand Claiborne -- were also to contribute to the campaign. The four forces were to move into Red Stick territory, destroy Red Stick villages, and set up a line of strongpoints to provide control over the region. Friendly Creeks and Cherokees -- the Cherokees wanted nothing to do with the Red Sticks -- assisted Jackson, providing scouting and intelligence. Jackson moved his men south to the Coosa River, where he set up Fort Strother as an advance base. From there, his cavalry under the command of General John Coffee fought a battle at the Indian village of Tallushatchee on 3 November, with the militiamen bagging most of the defenders and slaughtering almost of them. We now shot them like dogs; and then set the house on fire, and burned it up with the forty-six warriors in it. Instructed by the example of what had happened to Tallushatchee, many Creek villages in the region declared their peace with Jackson. The general accepted their loyalty; William Weatherford was infuriated with the defections, and decided to destroy the village of Talladega in retaliation. Jackson got wind of Red Stick intentions, to march 2, men to Talladega, engaging about 1, Red Sticks on 9 November. He sent a force directly against the village, with instructions to make contact and then pull back, while cavalry and infantry columns advanced around each side of the village to seal it off. The Red Sticks fell into the trap, but managed to break out -- though not after losing about killed, with Jackson losing only a handful. The Indians gave Jackson the name of "Sharp Knife". That was effectively the end of the campaigning for the year. His starving troops grew restless, all the more so because many of his militia believed they had stayed as long as they had signed up for. They were useless; Jackson told Cocke to march his men back to Tennessee and discharge them. How could he force them to stay to simply starve? The weather also began to get very cold; and our clothes were nearly worn out, and the horses getting feeble and very poor. Incidentally, the force of Georgia militia under General Floyd had advanced into Red Stick territory from the east -- but on being given a serious bloodying by the Red Sticks, Floyd gave up the fight, withdrew, and discharged his men, with Georgia contributing little more to the war. All that was left of the war against the Red Sticks for the time being was Jackson and about men still clinging on at Fort Strother. The humiliations of led to an outcry among the British public to deal with the insolent Americans, and so the Royal Navy presence in the western Atlantic was heavily reinforced. Under the direction of Admiral Warren, the blockade was tightened up along the East Coast to bottle up US Navy vessels and privateers, though New England remained exempt for the time being. Even those raiders that managed to slip loose on moonless nights found the hunting more difficult, since the Royal Navy had set up convoys, with warships protecting groups of merchantmen.

Chapter 3 : [] (2): Don't Give Up The Ship

The War of 1812 was a conflict fought between the United States, the United Kingdom, and their respective allies from June to February. Historians in Britain often see it as a minor theater of the Napoleonic Wars ; in the United States and Canada, it is seen as a war in its own right.

Outbound for the Mediterranean, the vessel was provisioned for a long patrol and carrying passengers and their baggage, its decks cluttered and guns obstructed by unstowed equipment. Just off the coast of Norfolk, Chesapeake encountered the gun HMS Leopard, one of several British vessels blockading French warships that had sought shelter in American waters. Commodore James Barron refused, and Humphreys opened fire on the unprepared U. A boarding party removed four seamen, one of whom the British hanged as a deserter. Navy ultimately blamed Barron for the debacle. He was court-martialed, convicted of negligence and poor leadership and suspended from Navy service for five years. Neither America nor Great Britain was prepared for the subsequent conflict, and both sides would ultimately pay dearly in blood and treasure. The War of 1812 was a conflict neither belligerent government really wanted. Great Britain was militarily and economically overextended in its ongoing global conflict with France, and in the years since the American Revolution it had come to consider the United States an important trading partner. The Americans had fought a brief war of their own against France and were politically divided along regional lines over the question of war with Britain. But above all the United States was militarily unprepared for a shooting war against a nation that was a leading global power. Its unreadiness for war was particularly evident at sea. At the outbreak of the war Britain was the most powerful maritime nation in the world, with approximately 1,000 commissioned ships in the Royal Navy. It deployed more than half of those ships in the American theater, including seven ships of the line and 31 frigates. Navy comprised just 18 warships, none larger than a frigate, and some largely irrelevant gunboats. On paper, at least, the outcome of a war at sea between the United States and Great Britain seemed a foregone conclusion. Despite the obvious naval mismatch, some positive surprises for America emerged as the war unfolded. The American ship, commanded by Captain Isaac Hull, had a leg up in the weight of metal it could deliver. The British ship was helpless, and Dacres struck his colors. Two comparable ships had met, and the U. It had been decades since a Royal Navy captain had been bested in a one-on-one struggle and surrendered his ship. But the outcome of the battle between Constitution and Guerriere proved more than mere good luck; two additional U. Navy victories followed in rapid succession. Navy was beginning to develop a new breed of commanders who could win in combat when on roughly equal terms with any opponent. Second, the new heavy frigates being designed and built in America were proving a breakthrough in vessel design. With seamanlike verbal economy, it was said the U. The message for America was that its Navy now could, under equal circumstances, hold its own against the Royal Navy. That was a disturbing surprise in Britain and a significant psychological plus in America. The naval vision expressed by John Paul Jones more than three decades earlier had finally begun to gain real traction with Congress and the American public. In a letter to a friend in Jones had written about the nascent Navy: The most far-reaching result of the American frigate victories was to shift the thinking in the United States about the importance of a blue-water navy. The fact that U. Encouraging events, for Britain, soon counterbalanced those U. The early score in naval actions between the U. Navy and Royal Navy wound up close to a draw, with five U. Great Britain was also able to successfully apply two significant elements of naval power against the United States: To a degree Warren was able to check the U. Chesapeake had been bottled up in Boston, and its crew lacked training. The British blockade—which initially targeted the Chesapeake Bay area and eventually expanded to the entire Atlantic coast—had the broader effect of crippling U. The most noteworthy of the raids was the British attack on Washington in mid-August. A British force sailed up the Patuxent River and put ashore in Maryland, sent American defenders packing at Bladensburg and quickly fought its way through mostly militia defenses to Washington. There they set fire to the Capitol, the White House and other federal buildings. A classic application of expeditionary warfare, it emphasized speed and focused impact to achieve its objective. Within a month the British force that occupied Washington had withdrawn, but the point had been made: Every

harbor on the U. Atlantic coast was vulnerable. Before the war American political leaders generally believed that a ground invasion of Canada would be the most efficient way to fight Great Britain. An ill-conceived American ground attack on Montreal had failed, as had one on Niagara. And the British had seized the U. But the Battle of Lake Erie would turn the military tide in the north. As the squadrons closed on one another, Perry pulled Lawrence out of the American formation and charged headon at the British line—a tactic reminiscent of Admiral Lord Horatio Nelson at Trafalgar in 1805. For two hours and at point-blank range, Lawrence and the British ships poured heavy fire into one another until Lawrence was a total wreck. Perry transferred his flag to Niagara, reentered the fray and carried the day. After the action Perry sent a now-famous message to his military commander, Maj. General Brock: "I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 11th inst. and in reply to inform you that the British forces under Lt. General Brock, operating in close support of Brig. General Dearborn, have been defeated by the American forces under the command of Commodore Perry. The British ships, including the flagship, the *Queen Charlotte*, its commander dead, struck its colors, and the other British ships followed suit. The American Navy now has officers who could win fleet actions as well as single-ship battles. The timing of the Lake Champlain victory was crucial. In their seminal work *Sea Power: A Naval History*, editors E. B. Potter and Admiral Chester W. Nimitz returned prisoners and captured territory. The treaty imposed neither indemnities nor any territorial boundary changes. America was free to continue pushing its boundaries farther into the Northwest. The war also enhanced U.S. power. That feeling was enhanced by the decisive U.S. victory. Back across the Atlantic, the British exploited the cessation of hostilities to concentrate on building their mercantile and colonial power for the next century. Thus the War of 1812 can fairly be described as a long-range strategic victory for each side—a war that both sides won. For further reading Joseph Callo recommends *Sea Power: A Naval History*, edited by E. B. Potter and Chester W. Nimitz. Originally published in the March issue of *Military History*. To subscribe, click here.

Naval Battleships in the War of When the United States declared war on Great Britain in June , the U.S. Navy was an eighteen-year-old institution with barely a dozen ships to its name.

This was the last time British Empire allowed privateering. The British restricted the American trade since they feared it was harmful for their war with France and they also wanted to set up an Indian state in the Midwest in order to maintain their influence in the region. Since Canada was a British colony back then, Canadians were also British allies. The Americans objected to the British Empire restricting their trade and snatching their sailors to serve on British ships. They were also eager to prove their independence from the British Empire once and for all. Major Events of The War of During the war, both sides suffered many losses and even the White House was burned down in The British were quite defensive in the beginning, since they concentrated their military efforts on Napoleonic Wars but after their victory over France in , they started to fight Americans more aggressively. American national pride was boosted by the victories in the Battle of Baltimore in and the Battle of New Orleans in The Negotiated End Of the War Of The Treaty of Ghent was finally signed on December 24, and it established the status quo ante bellum, which means that nobody lost any territory in the war. The war officially ended on February 17, when US Congress ratified the treaty. Their ships laden with sugar, coffee and rum, merchant captains depended on the Royal Navy for aid and protection. Only odd miles off the dreaded shoals of Cape Hatteras, the Royal Navy captains had to be alert. At the start of the war the United States had only 16 warships more or less ready for sea, and half of those were, at best, rated sloops of war. Not a single ship larger than a fifth-rate frigate graced the American list. Of those no more than six warships actively blockaded key ports holding American naval vessels. Three early and unexpected victories by American frigates and a plague of merchant losses forced the Admiralty to scrape the bottom of the barrel for additional forces for Warren, more than doubling his strength on station. Rather than commit these warships to a blockade, Warren concentrated them for a raid into the Chesapeake Bay during the late spring and summer of As that Jamaican convoy slowly cruised up the Carolina coast, no more than 11 ships invested American ports outside the Chesapeake region. Even then the blockaders primarily guarded against the escape of American merchantmen and the warships of the U. But other, more numerous enemies lurked within American ports. As the sun dipped to leeward, the easterly wind continued to blow across a rapidly darkening sea. In another day or so it would veer to blow from the west and allow the convoy to wear for England. For now, wind, the dying sun and the falling moonless night boded ill for the convoy. Eighteen miles to windward, topmast crosstrees barely visible above the horizon, a predator bided its time in the gloom, marking potential prizes silhouetted by the setting sun. As lanterns flickered on distant taffrails and ships shortened sail across the length of that herd of merchantmen none dared sail in convoy at night without such lights to alert the ships around them , an American officer briefly flashed a hooded lantern astern where the crews of another schooner and a brig impatiently waited to risk life, limb and spars for a share in plundered riches. This document allowed a vessel to function as a de facto warship, preying on enemy commerce and selling the captures in prize courts, with the proceeds divided into shares split among owners, investors, officers and crews as specified by contract. These letters of marque also limited the actions of privateers, lest the line between privateer and pirate wear thin. Privateering was a risky business, and privateers were loved by few who did not benefit directly from their success. Though letters of marque made things legal, by plundering defenseless merchantmen for private gain still seemed little better than theft to the many civilians caught up in the waves of reform and religious revivalism then sweeping the Protestant world. Oddly enough, both the Royal Navy and the U. Navy despised their own privateers. Usually, complaints had a patriotic ringâ€”we serve for duty; they serve for profit! Other times the public navies vented their spleen at the competition to employee seamen. After all, who would exchange the easy discipline, lack of risk and better pay offered by a privateer for the harsh life aboard a warship? In truth, the real thorn of competition was prize money. Both public and private navies shared this bonus plan, but duty escorting merchantmen, blockading and such meant the public navies could not pursue enemy merchantmen with the directness of the privateer.

And every ship taken by a privateer meant one less prize for the deserving officers and crews of the public navy. Little wonder that Lieutenant Henry E. Must drive her off, as she spoils our cruising ground. With the last glimmer of reflected sunlight but a memory, the American privateers began their steady approach to the straggling convoy. Loaded cannon, boarding parties and a prize crew rested by the bulwarks while captains and mates carefully tracked the lights of the convoy, especially those of the single frigate guarding its windward flank. During the War of the American government issued more than letters of marque to captains eager to wield a sword as long as they could edge it with looted gilt against the British maritime fleet. Thus a bewildering array of hulls, rigs and armaments initially bedeviled the Royal Navy. Many raiders carried only one cannon shots to the hull tended to reduce the value of a capture; damage to the rigging made it difficult for the prize to avoid recapture and small arms. By the end of privateers had stung more than British merchantmen, most sailing off the North American coast or in the West Indies. Americans burned about 10 percent of their captures when of little value, too easily recaptured or lacking prize crews. Another 10 percent sailed for English ports carrying British seamen being exchanged for American prisoners held in Britain. The remainder turned their bows to American ports, though some ran afoul of British warships—perhaps as much as 20 percent—while others disappeared in bad weather or wrecked on ironbound coasts. Still, the remaining merchantmen and their cargos poured wealth into coastal towns. American district courts condemned ships, fittings and goods, to be sold at auction, the proceeds shared per contract. Sailors, captured specie weighing their pockets, rollicked through ports, happily trickling their hard-earned wealth into other hands and their war stories into other ears. But the big windfall went to investors and ship owners, who held their money close or invested it in new privateering enterprises. In Baltimore and other towns, artisans, journeymen and small merchants the common man and woman joined wealthier individuals in investing in the next wave of privateers. Navy completely ignoring the American private navy. By the end of , as profits in privateering became obvious, custom-built privateers began sliding down the ways in American shipyards. Most followed the model of the Baltimore clipper, built for speed and ability to sail closer to the wind than square-rigged British warships. Others had the lines of sloops of war or small frigates, balancing reinforced scantlings and broadside armament against speed, and obviously intended to stand against the smaller British patrollers and escorts. Both new and old vessels, manned by veteran captains and crews, sailed for new hunting grounds in waters stretching around the world. In American privateers operated off the coast of Ireland and in the English Channel, burning prizes or letting them run for French-controlled ports. When British warships appeared in numbers, the Americans simply moved to other hunting grounds. Other privateers worked the Azores and Cape Verde islands, disrupting communications by intercepting British government packet vessels as well as merchantmen. Lion successfully cruised the Bay of Biscay; in a single month the warship seized some 20 vessels ranging from merchantmen to horse transports. The Duke of Wellington, then campaigning against the French in Spain, found his logistical lines to England frequently cut. He shared his displeasure with the Admiralty: Its crew occupied an Irish island for six days, then sailed into a small Scottish harbor to burn seven anchored merchantmen. It added another seven prizes to its accomplishments before returning home. The successes of this and other raiders roused the British press, especially as maritime insurance rates rose. Their action was too late for the more than British merchantmen already captured by American privateers. They were close enough to hear as each ship of the convoy rang four bells of the evening watch. Each American captain picked his target, quietly ordering the tiny shifts of helm that would allow his ship to come alongside a prize. Then the men at the bulwarks flinched as rockets burst overhead! Sharp eyes on the guardian frigate had at last spotted one of the raiders. Signal guns blasted lines of fire into the night and blue fuses appeared at the mainmast of the British frigate as sleepy men tumbled from their hammocks below to meet the threat. One by one, grapnels flew from the privateers, and screaming Americans crossed to merchant decks. Cochrane had the ships and the opportunity to institute a tight blockade of the American coast. Not only would this have stifled trade and naval raiders, it would have closed local ports to returning prizes and demoralized the occupants of those towns. But Cochrane, hating Americans ever since the death of a brother in the late Revolution, concentrated his forces against Chesapeake Bay a failed strategy tried by his predecessor in an effort to crush American resistance. An American army fled from the battlefield at Bladensburg, allowing the British to

burn the public buildings in Washington. A British squadron pushed up the Potomac to Alexandria, overwhelming Fort Washington and seizing ships and tobacco before returning to the bay. As Cochrane sailed into the upper Chesapeake, raiders ravaged local settlements along the coast. Then, at Baltimore, resistance gelled: American militia defeated the veteran British troops, Fort McHenry resisted the mighty British fleet, and Francis Scott Key penned the words of a powerful national anthem. Cochrane withdrew his forces from the bay and prepared for operations in the Gulf of Mexico. Meanwhile, American privateers many having switched their base from the Chesapeake to such Southern ports as Wilmington, Charleston or Savannah the previous year ranged the waters of the world, frequently working together to attack British convoys. Leo of Baltimore created an international incident when it captured a prize bearing a statue of the late Queen Louise commissioned by the Prussian government. American privateers boldly snatched prizes in the Thames Estuary, then sold them to laughing former allies of the British. Maritime insurance rates stood at triple and quadruple the rates of "if insurance could be found at all. Hard pressed by merchants, ship owners and a people tired of years of war, the British government joined the Americans at the treaty table in Ghent, Belgium, in late , a year in which losses to American privateers neared vessels. Pistol shots and threats sent the deck watches of the British merchantmen scrambling below or falling, bloody, to their knees. Panic gripped the remainder of the convoy when a nearby ship fired its signal gun. Civilian captains ordered their helms hard over in an attempt to escape the raiders. Fleeing downwind in the impenetrable dark, they became a danger to other ships and themselves. Within half an hour the convoy spread across 10 square miles of ocean, heading for destruction on the harsh Carolina coast if the convoy commander could not get them stopped and reorganized. Meanwhile, the raiders had locked their prisoners below, cut grapnels, shaken out reefs and doused all lights. They fled among the panicked herd, slowly working their way to a course for Wilmington or Charleston. One by one, prizes and prize-takers dribbled into Wilmington until only the brig remained absent. Prisoners paroled or incarcerated, the crews of the privateers waited for their compatriot. The auctions came; shares of prize money were awarded and spent or invested. In an uncertain time the crews did not yet mourn their missing friends.

Chapter 5 : What is a Border? | War of | PBS

Action between USS Chesapeake and HMS Shannon, 1 June Text accompanying the four lithographs by L. Haghe, published by Smith, Elder & Company, London, in This text provides general background information on the battle, plus detailed descriptions of the actions represented in each of the prints.

In addition to these continental theaters of action, there were also numerous ship-to-ship battles at sea, almost all of them in the Atlantic. Actions along the Canada–US border occurred in three sectors from west to east: Battles chronological order within theater [edit] American Northwest[edit] Capture of the Cuyahoga Packet July 2, The American vessel contained official documents with information valuable to the British belonging to Brigadier General William Hull. Hull was unaware that war had been declared when he dispatched the schooner. Capture of Michilimackinac Island July 17, The bloodless capture of Fort Mackinac on Michilimackinac Mackinac Island by a British force consisting of a small number of regulars, about two hundred fur traders and four hundred Chippawa, Menominee, Ottawa, Sioux, and Winnebago warriors. The Americans surrendered without firing a shot. After successfully crossing the river on July 12, the Americans never pressed the attack on the out-numbered British force at Fort Amherstburg, and withdrew back to Detroit when Hull learned of the imminent arrival of British reinforcements under the command of Major General Isaac Brock. Skirmish at Brownstown, Michigan Territory August 5, A British victory in which a small force, including twenty-five warriors under Tecumseh , ambushed two hundred Ohio militiamen at a small Wyandot village located near present-day Gibraltar about twenty miles south of Detroit , who were on their way to escort a supply train from Frenchtown near present-day Monroe headed for Detroit. Skirmish at Maguaga, Michigan Territory August 9, The first land battle of the war in which the Americans held their own. It occurred when an American detachment sent to Maguaga a Wyandot village near present-day Wyandotte to reopen the supply line between Frenchtown present-day Monroe and Detroit was ambushed by a British force including both regulars and native warriors under Tecumseh. A massacre carried out by Potawatomi and Menominee warriors following the evacuation of Fort Dearborn at the location of present-day Chicago , ordered by Brigadier General Hull upon learning that Fort Mackinac had been captured by the British. The garrison was attempting to march to Fort Wayne, Indiana Territory, when the attack occurred about a mile and a half south of Fort Dearborn. Capture of Detroit, Michigan Territory August 16, A startling and humiliating defeat for the Americans. Hull surrendered Detroit without a fight, despite having a larger force under his command than the force under Major General Isaac Brock , his British adversary. An attack by Kickapoo Warriors on a small settlement about a hundred miles south of present-day Indianapolis, Indiana. The first American victory in the war on land. The fort located on the Wabash River just north of present-day Terre Haute, Indiana defended by about sixty officers and men under the command of Captain Zachary Taylor , was attacked by a large party of Kickapoo, Miami, Potawatomi, Shawnee and Winebago warriors from Prophetstown, Indiana Territory. When a relief part arrived from Vincennes, the Indians withdrew. An unsuccessful attempt by about six hundred warriors from the Ottawa Nations to infiltrate and attack the American garrison at Fort Wayne at the confluence of the Maumee, St. Mary Rivers in northeastern Indiana Territory. Even before taking command of the Northwestern American army, William Henry Harrison commissioned as a Brigadier General in August, , and promoted to Major General in March, had begun the process establishing supply bases in northern Ohio and sending detachments of infantry to protect American forts that were threatened by Indians allied with the British. He oversaw the construction of Fort Meigs in early , secured his supply line, and reoccupied Detroit following the American naval victory on Lake Erie. Destruction of Prophetstown, Indiana Territory November 19, An attack ordered by Brigadier General William Henry Harrison on the Indian settlement near the junction of the Tippecanoe and Wabash Rivers north of present-day Lafayette, Indiana, that had been the site of the Battle of Tippecanoe in November, The village was not occupied at the time of the attack. A battle that occurred during an expedition against Delaware and Miami villages at a location where the Mississinewa River flows into the Wabash River near present-day Marion, Indiana. A raid by a British landing party from the Royal George, in which the British

seized the American merchantman *Lady Murray* and a smaller boat, with no resistance from the small American force present. Erie, Upper Canada October 9, A successful raid conducted by about a hundred American troops who crossed the Niagara River from Buffalo and captured two Provincial Marine brigs that had just arrived at Fort Erie. The *Caledonia* was sailed safely to Black Rock on the American side of the river, whereas the *Detroit* ran aground at the southern tip of Squaw Island and was set on fire before the British could recapture it. An American raid across the Niagara River intended to prepare the ground for a subsequent invasion of Upper Canada. The first objective was accomplished; the second was not. A debacle for the Americans, caused by poor planning and poor leadership by Brigadier General Alexander Smyth. An unusual incident in which a private American citizen, two other men, and a boy captured a British sergeant and three privates of the 10th Royal Veteran Battalion on Carleton Island, an island in the upper St. Lawrence. These were the first prisoners taken in the war. An unsuccessful British naval attack on Sackets Harbor, a small port at the eastern end of Lake Ontario and the location of an American naval base. Lawrence River July 31, A standoff between a small American schooner, the *Julia*, and two larger British ships heading downriver toward Ogdensburg, New York, to attack six American schooners moored there. After a three-hour exchange of fire off Elizabethtown, New York, the British ships broke off the engagement, and the *Julia* retired to Ogdensburg. Lawrence River September 16, A failed attempt by a small force of Americans from Ogdensburg, New York, to intercept a British supply convoy of forty bateaux coming up the St. Lawrence. Raid at Gananoque, Upper Canada September 21, A successful raid by American troops from Sackets Harbor on the British depot at Gananoque, about twenty miles from Kingston down the St. Lawrence. First attack on Ogdensburg, New York October 4, A failed British amphibious attack on Ogdensburg, a transshipment point for supplies being moved along the St. Lawrence River, repelled by American artillery. It, and the nearby American post at French Mills, were recaptured a month later by a small British force carrying supplies up the St. Lawrence. Skirmish at Lacolle, Lower Canada November 20, A battle at Lacolle, a small village on the Lacolle River about five miles north of the New York border. Henry Dearborn called off his planned invasion of Lower Canada. An unsuccessful attempt by Sauk and Fox warriors to capture a fort on the upper Mississippi River at the location of present-day Fort Madison, Iowa. The first capture of an American ship by the British during the war. A battle off the Azores in which the British sloop *Alert* surrendered to the American frigate *Essex* after an engagement lasting only about eight minutes. The first capture of a British frigate by an American ship. An engagement about three hundred miles north of Bermuda that caused serious damage to both ships. The British sloop surrendered only after being boarded by a party from the American sloop. Later in the day, while crews from both ships were making repair, HMS *Poictiers* captured the *Wasp* and recaptured the *Frolic*. The capture of the American sloop *Wasp* and the recapture of the British sloop *Frolic* by the British only hours after the *Frolic* had been captured by the *Wasp*. A two-hour-long engagement about five hundred miles west of the Canary Islands, which ended when the British frigate *Macedonian* surrendered to the American frigate *United States*, which was on an independent cruise. The pursuit and eventual capture of the American brig *Vixen*, cruising about ninety miles east of St. Augustine, Florida, by the British frigate *Southampton*. The crews were rescued and taken to Jamaica. A two-and-a-half-hour battle off the coast of Brazil during which the British gun fifth-rate *Java* suffered such serious damage that its captain ordered it scuttled. A major naval initiative, commanded by Admiral Sir John Warren, with the goals of blockading Chesapeake Bay, gathering intelligence concerning American strength, destroying the USN *Constitution*, interrupting commercial traffic within Chesapeake Bay, capturing of American vessels and supplies useful to the British and eventually extending the blockade to include Delaware Bay and Long Island. Although Warren remained the senior commander, many of the operations were conducted by ships under the command of Vice Admiral Sir Alexander Cochrane. Cochrane was much hated by the Americans because of his aggressive actions on-shore, such as destroying the private property of civilians in villages and towns that opposed his landings. Battle of the Rappahannock River, Virginia April 3, A British foray up the Rappahannock River, which empties into Chesapeake Bay forty miles north of Hampton, Virginia, during which they captured or destroyed fourteen American ships. Raid at Frenchtown, Maryland April 29, When Maryland militia resisted the landing at Havre de Grace, the Royal Marines burned and looted homes, burned a warehouse and appropriated or killed livestock. At the Principio

Foundry they destroyed a number of guns and the works in which they had been manufactured. Raid at Georgetown and Fredericktown, Maryland May 6, The landing party destroyed uninhabited homes, four schooners and stores of sugar, lumber and leather. Assault on Craney Island, Virginia June 22, An important victory for the United States fought on an island at the mouth of the Elizabeth River, in which a British landing party failed to overcome a much smaller force of Americans defending the island. This defensive victory thwarted a British attempt to occupy the port city of Norfolk. Capture and occupation of Hampton, Virginia June 25â€”26, The successful British occupation of Hampton, Virginia, following their humiliating failure to secure Craney Island. During the one-day occupation of the town, the British took guns, ammunition, wagons, horses, livestock and other foodstuffs. French troops that were part of the force were reported to have participated in looting, vandalism, raping and killing. The raid captured a number of American vessels and confiscated stores and livestock from the villages of Ocracoke and Portsmouth. A British victory achieved when a force of regulars, militia and native warriors surprised the Americans in a pre-dawn attack, and after several hours of heavy fighting, accepted the surrender of the entire American command. The battle came to be known as the Raison River Massacre on account of the massacre the following morning of numerous American wounded waiting to be transported to Fort Malden. Siege of Fort Meigs, Ohio May 1â€”9, An unsuccessful attempt by a British force consisting of regulars, militia and over a thousand warriors commanded by Tecumseh to capture the recently construct fort at the rapids on the Maumee River about twelve miles from its mouth near present-day Perrysburg, Ohio. Investment of Fort Meigs, Ohio July 21â€”28, A second unsuccessful attempt by the British to capture the fort, this time by a force containing more than three thousand warriors from the Fox, Menominee, Ojibwa, Ottawa, Sac, Sioux and Winnebago Nations under the command of Tecumseh. A battle that erupted between a party of Indians loyal to the British and an American force including Pennsylvania volunteers under the command of Maj. Ball en route to Fort Stephenson. The action occurred near Fort Seneca located about eight miles south of Fort Sephenson and thirty-five miles southeast of Fort Meigs. Assault on Fort Stephenson, Ohio August 2, Battle of Put-in-Bay, Ohio September 10, With their supply line cut, the British in southwestern Lower Canada were forced to abandon Detroit and Fort Amherstburg and retreat eastward toward the Niagara Peninsula. Battle of Moraviantown, Upper Canada October 5,

Chapter 6 : Napoleonic War at Sea | Weapons and Warfare

Intermediate One class period. Program Segments The War at Sea (2 ½ minutes) Spring The British Invade (7 minutes) NCSS Themes. III: People, Places, and Environments.

This was partly because the Royal Navy was by far the largest of any in the eighteenth century: Nonetheless, size alone could not account for the success of the British navy at securing maritime dominance: From 1793, the navy blockaded the French coast, giving the British crews a wide experience of sailing a vessel in all kinds of weather and seas. British ships may have been more sluggish than their sleeker French or Spanish counterparts, but what they lacked in speed was more than compensated for by the skill of their crews in handling a vessel in the most difficult of conditions. In combat, the ability of a British crew to steer their ship close to the enemy allowed them to make use of their superior gunnery, since they also had more experience of firing at sea. The role of the Royal Navy in cooperating with the army in combined operations is often neglected. During the Seven Years War, the Admiralty had approved a design for a flat-bottomed landing craft which remained the basic vessel for such operations. Naval support was also one of the essential ingredients for ultimate allied success in the Peninsular War. Between 1793 and 1805, the navy kept up a steady flow of muskets, pistols, cartridges, and artillery pieces to arm not just the regular forces, but also the Spanish guerrillas. The main problems confronting the British were twofold: By Trafalgar only 83 out of 100 ships of the line were fit for service: They are worn out like post-horses during a general election. Within four years, the navy had seaworthy ships of the line, to which were added the cruisers, which had trebled in number since 1793, as the navy used every sinew to prosecute the war: Wartime absences from home and even from any land at all could last for a very long time, since a ship might be at sea for months—“even years”—without putting into port. Still, perhaps two-thirds of sailors were volunteers, including deserters from European navies and blacks, some of whom had escaped from slavery. Parties from ships of the line would seize sailors from in-bound merchant vessels, while on shore an officer would establish his headquarters usually in a tavern, where volunteers would be accommodated and the less fortunate souls who had been press-ganged would be locked up. Small, auxiliary vessels called tenders would sit in the harbour to transport the recruits to the naval bases at Portsmouth, Plymouth, and the Nore. Those who were pressed were usually people with seafaring skills—“often they were sailors already, for the bounty was higher for a seaman than for a landlubber. Violence was actually rare, but the arrival of a press gang in a port was certainly a time to draw breath: The gangs tended to fall on the least influential people in society, but they provoked local hostility nonetheless. William Henry Dillon, a lieutenant in the Impress Service, commented on his soul-destroying work in Hull in 1805: “In this performing my unpleasant duties, I soon experienced the ill will of the mob. On one occasion I was assaulted by a shower of brickbats: Such opposition, paradoxically, existed alongside support for the war itself—“it was just that, understandably, people did not want to have to leave their homes and jobs, nor lose valued members of their communities, to fight it. Magistrates did sometimes see the arrival of the Impress Service as an opportunity to get rid of paupers and petty criminals, but the difficulty then was in persuading the gangs to accept them. One has good cause to suppose that in such an isolated world as a warship at sea, such a rag-bag collection of often reluctant men could only be forced into performing the arduous, muscular work of sailing a wooden ship and of standing firm in battle by the lash. Instead, the British navy was a reflection of British society: Naval life was, by the orderly standards of a modern fleet, chaotic, but what kept the men in line was less the brutality of discipline than a strong sense of common purpose with their officers and an awareness of the dangers which awaited them. In such circumstances, a brutal officer was a weak and inefficient officer, since he could only command obedience through violence. In any case, imposing the harsher punishments was difficult: Anything more required the time-consuming and unpredictable process of a court martial—“and such tribunals proved remarkably reluctant to convict. A court martial could impose the death penalty for twenty offences including desertion and striking an officer, but this was actually milder than the sanguinary justice meted out to British civilians on shore, who could find themselves dangling from the gallows for no less than types of crime. Naval courts martial tended to impose death sentences on two offences

onlyâ€”murder and probably reflecting religious scruples buggeryâ€”although the alternative sentences of several hundred lashes, for example could scarcely be described as a light alternative. A ship could not function if the men were reduced to unthinking beasts of burden ruled by the lash: His ship was a pattern of order and discipline, and splendidly manned; and of both ship and crew he was justly proud. If French army officers were noted for their aggression, courage, and initiative, they had their maritime counterparts in the British navy. Confidence in their ships and their men bred a fiery and determined brand of command in the Royal Navy, which relied heavily on the personal initiative of individual commanders. The physical danger was desperately close: At point-blank range in the close quarters of naval combat, this was devastating. Cannon balls, jagged wooden splinters, and fragments of iron from canister shot spun on unpredictable trajectories through the cramped spaces in the gun decks. The metal shot might ricochet between the decks before finally being spent: The concussion of cannon was deafening: The feeble light let in by the gun ports was obscured by the barrels of the cannonâ€”and, at close range, the hull of the enemy ship. The interior was filled with the sulphurous smoke from the gunfire and sometimes from burning wood and sail. The momentary light from muzzle flashes compounded the vision of hell. Outside, the atmosphere was equally outlandish. Sulphur and fire, agony, death and horror, are riding and revelling on its bosom.

Chapter 7 : War Sea Battles

*[[the war at sea * As might have been expected, in the naval war turned solidly against America. The humiliations of led to an outcry among the British public to deal with the insolent Americans, and so the Royal Navy presence in the western Atlantic was heavily reinforced.*

Private and Officer of the th Regiment. Regaining Detroit and invading UC at that point was still a priority. This would protect settlements in the Northwest and would be followed up with the recapture of Michilimackinac, which would break British influence on the natives and secure the lucrative fur-trade route. Less specifically defined was a campaign on the St. Jones ordered his saltwater captains to make independent cruises as commerce raiders rather than operate in squadrons. In addition, forming, supplying, and coordinating the wings of his army brought endless problems, so it was not until December that his advance under Brigadier General James Winchester was proceeding down the Maumee River in Ohio toward the western end of Lake Erie. Here, in January , Harrison suffered a major setback when Winchester seized the British outpost at Frenchtown, Michigan, on 18 January only to be attacked and brutally defeated on 22 January by a force of about regulars and militia and up to native warriors under now-Brigadier General Henry Procter. It developed into a formidable establishment, and Procter realized that Harrison would launch his invasion from there. As a preemptive strike and, in part, because of the pressure that Tecumseh and the senior chiefs put on him to be aggressive, Procter undertook an expedition at the end of April to lay siege to the fort. He lacked suitable siege weapons, however, and could not breach the ramparts. A significant action took place on 5 May, when American reinforcements overran British batteries and were then badly mauled while an American sortie attacked another battery. The British rebuffed these attacks, but inclement weather and lack of supplies forced Procter to lift the siege. He invested Fort Meigs late in July, at the urging of Tecumseh, but achieved little and suffered a sharp failure when he attacked Fort Stephenson on the Sandusky River on 2 August before heading home. Perry had assembled and constructed a squadron at Erie, Pennsylvania, through the spring and summer and sailed early in August to take control of Lake Erie. Commander Robert Barclay had been sent there by Commodore Yeo but had received little in the way of men or munitions. Here Harrison sent regiments of Kentucky militia and his own allied native warriors to route the hurriedly deployed British regulars and the natives under Tecumseh. The great chief was killed, and most of the regulars were captured; Procter and the survivors limped back to Burlington Heights at the western end of Lake Ontario. The Americans now occupied southwestern UC, but it was too late in the season to attempt a recapture of Michilimackinac. On Lake Ontario and the St. Lawrence River, things had not been so one-sided. After much debate, Dearborn and Chauncey opened their campaign with an attack on York on 27 April. Kingston was considered too well defended, while the two British ships rumored to be under construction at the capital of UC were tempting targets. Navy combined operation succeeded in capturing York but at the cost of hundreds of casualties and widespread sickness to the force. Sheaffe, who happened to be there, escaped toward Kingston with half his small corps after burning the one warship under construction. Prevost soon relieved the unpopular general of command. Their next goal was Fort George, across the Niagara River from Fort Niagara, and this was managed in a well-orchestrated attack on 27 May. Once more, however, the British army, commanded by Brigadier General John Vincent, managed to escape and take up quarters at Burlington Heights. Dearborn and Chauncey were planning a pursuit of Vincent when news arrived that the British had attacked Sackets Harbor; Chauncey hurriedly sailed for his base. Commodore Yeo reached Kingston in mid-May in company with Prevost, and by the last week of the month the former PM squadron was ready for action. The RN transported a force there on 28 May, and the attack was launched the next day. Marines, and militia held off the British, inflicting heavy casualties and prompting Prevost to approve a withdrawal, to the displeasure of many officers, most notably Yeo. When Chauncey returned, however, and saw how he had nearly lost a new ship and all his resources, he stayed put and rarely ever left his base unless he could be sure of its defense. On the Niagara Peninsula, the early American success had gone sour. Their only major expedition from the fort ended in disaster at the battle of Beaver Dams on 24 June, when over Americans were

captured or killed in this unique victory achieved by British native allies. De Rottenburg undertook a blockade of the Americans at Fort George resulting in a long, hot summer of constant skirmishing during which everyone watched Lake Ontario, expecting the issue to be decided by the commodores. In July, both Chauncey and Yeo were instructed to seek a decisive action as a priority instead of only supporting the armies. The commodores craved such a fight, but the disparity between the strengths and weaknesses of the two squadrons forced each man into constantly maneuvering for a momentary advantage. In the end, the Americans were left fighting for their very survival against a tremendous storm, while Yeo managed to anchor in safety and make repairs. Chauncey did succeed the next week in capturing a troop convoy en route for Kingston, sparking Prevost to criticize Yeo for not providing the necessary protection. Chauncey completed his essential assignment of covering the movement of a large army in small boats from Niagara to Sackets Harbor. At the head of this army was Major General James Wilkinson, as notorious an officer as ever served in the U. Secretary Armstrong had picked him to work under Dearborn and then to replace him when the older man fell ill in June. During the summer, the notion of attacking the St. Lawrence River region came under discussion again. Wilkinson ordered most of the army at Fort George to Sackets Harbor, where a second large force was gathering. Only late in October did he commit to a campaign down the St. Lawrence to Montreal rather than Kingston, which Chauncey had been led to believe would be the target. This was a critical error, as the two generals despised one another and communicated only, and rarely at that, through Armstrong. Led by Lieutenant Colonel Charles de Salaberry, this small force, backed by a larger reserve, fought Hampton to a standstill on 26 October. The general retreated to his previous camp and then gave up on the whole enterprise and returned to Plattsburgh. It picked up more regulars, some militia, and natives at Prescott, increasing its strength to about 1, Since Wilkinson had been laid low by illness and had never shown much talent for organization , command during the battle devolved on Brigadier General John Boyd. It was fought under classic open-field conditions, ending with a victory for Morrison; casualties ran high on both sides. The Americans withdrew and fled down the river to Cornwall, where Wilkinson decided the expedition was at an end and ordered his army to go into winter camp at French Mills, New York. Through the summer and fall, military and naval reinforcements had reached Quebec, and among these was Lieutenant General Gordon Drummond, sent from England to replace de Rottenburg in command of the government and forces in UC. He reached Kingston in the first week of December and was at St. Davids on the Niagara Peninsula on 16 December to see firsthand the evidence of a recent American outrage. Prior to his pullout, on 10 December he ordered the burning of the town of Niagara, which was completely destroyed, and the inhabitants were turned out into a snowstorm. Drummond moved quickly to seek retribution. On Lake Champlain, little had occurred during the year. At the end of July, a combined naval and military expedition raided communities on the Vermont and New York shores, but after Macdonough sailed with a slightly stronger force in September, the British remained at their base to build a proper brig of war. While half their goals for had been achieved in the north, the Americans found themselves vulnerable to attack in the Chesapeake Bay region. The British government sent more warships, two battalions of Royal Marines, a regiment of infantry, artillery, rocketeers, and two companies of ill-disciplined expatriate French soldiers to Admiral Warren with orders to extend the blockade and bring the war to the thriving tidal ports. Most important, Rear Admiral George Cockburn joined Warren at Bermuda during January and began a reconnaissance of the bay in March before most of the reinforcements arrived. This force, usually with Cockburn leading from the front, captured many vessels and raided numerous communities. Cockburn tolerated no resistance from the locals and his destruction by fire of Havre de Grace, Maryland 3 May , earned him the reputation in the United States as a barbarous scoundrel. The local militias seldom resisted the British raids, and the U. Navy lacked the strength locally to oppose the incursions. The larger military force arrived in June, and Warren centered his activities in the southern part of the bay. Hampton, Virginia, fell easily on 25 June and was briefly occupied. In September, a small blockading squadron was left at the mouth of the bay, while Cockburn went to Bermuda for a refit of his warships and Warren headed for Halifax. The British blockade, which was increased to cover most of the American coast in November , managed to prevent USN warships and merchantmen from sailing, but some did escape, with the privateers leading the pack and striking at British shipping. Unable to maintain a perfect blockade impossible

under the best conditions and fight an ambitious inshore campaign at the same time, Warren had only moderate success in each. The unpopularity of the war, evident in some quarters since its beginning, became more obvious during the war. The UC Militia, who had shown some zeal on the Niagara Peninsula in 1812, failed to perform at York in April and after the fall of Fort George offered up their parole to the conquering Americans in large numbers. Martial law was considered several times as a means of forcing farmers to sell their produce to the government. Such evidence of dissension caused much concern for Prevost and his commanders in the upper province. Similar, though not quite as extreme, examples existed in the United States. New England merchants obtained licenses from British authorities at Halifax to ship goods to the forces in the Peninsular War.

Chapter 8 : War of - Wikipedia

The first naval event of the late war upon Lake Champlain, a lake, all, except about one-twentieth part, within the boundaries of the United States, occurred on the 3d of June, Two American armed sloops appeared in sight of the British garrison at Isle-aux-nois.

The War of 1812 was fought between the United States and Great Britain from June to the spring of 1813, although the peace treaty ending the war was signed in Europe in December. The main land fighting of the war occurred along the Canadian border, in the Chesapeake Bay region, and along the Gulf of Mexico; extensive action also took place at sea. American resentment grew during the French Revolutionary Wars and the Napoleonic Wars, in which Britain and France were the main combatants. In time, France came to dominate much of the continent of Europe, while Britain remained supreme on the seas. The two powers also fought each other commercially: Britain attempted to blockade the continent of Europe, and France tried to prevent the sale of British goods in French possessions. During the 1790s, French and British maritime policies produced several crises with the United States, but after the difficulties became much more serious. The United States believed its rights on the seas as a neutral were being violated by both nations, but British maritime policies were resented more because Britain dominated the seas. Also, the British claimed the right to take from American merchant ships any British sailors who were serving on them. Frequently, they also took Americans. This practice of impressment became a major grievance. The United States at first attempted to change the policies of the European powers by economic means. The embargo failed to change British and French policies but devastated New England shipping. Later and weaker economic measures were also unsuccessful. Failing in peaceful efforts and facing an economic depression, some Americans began to argue for a declaration of war to redeem the national honor. The Congress that was elected in 1800 and met in November included a group known as the War Hawks who demanded war against Great Britain. These men were all Democratic-Republicans and mostly from the West and South. Among their leaders were John C. Calhoun. They argued that American honor could be saved and British policies changed by an invasion of Canada. Unknown to Americans, Britain had finally, two days earlier, announced that it would revoke its orders. Campaigns of 1812. The initial plan called for a three-pronged offensive: The attacks were uncoordinated, however, and all failed. In the West, Gen. American frigates won a series of single-ship engagements with British frigates, and American privateers continually harried British shipping. American attempts to invade Canada in 1812 were again mostly unsuccessful. There was a standoff at Niagara, and an elaborate attempt to attack Montreal by a combined operation involving one force advancing along Lake Champlain and another sailing down the Saint Lawrence River from Lake Ontario failed at the end of the year. The only success was in the West. This victory forced the British to retreat eastward from the Detroit region, and on Oct. Campaigns of 1813. In the United States faced complete defeat, because the British, having defeated Napoleon, began to transfer large numbers of ships and experienced troops to America. The British planned to attack the United States in three main areas: The British then hoped to obtain major territorial concessions in a peace treaty. The situation was particularly serious for the United States because the country was insolvent by the fall of 1812, and in New England opponents of the war were discussing separation from the Union. The British appeared near success in the late summer of 1814. American resistance to the diversionary attack in Chesapeake Bay was so weak that the British, after winning the Battle of Bladensburg August 24, 1814, marched into Washington, D. President Madison had to flee into the countryside. Fearing the possibility of a severed line of communications, the British army retreated into Canada. It also occupied a strategic place on the map. Located just miles upstream from the mouth of the Mississippi River, the Crescent City offered a tempting prize to a British military still buoyant over the burning of Washington, D. To capture the city, Admiral Sir Alexander Cochrane fitted out a naval flotilla of more than 50 ships to transport 10,000 veteran troops from Jamaica. They were led by Sir Edward Pakenham, the year-old brother-in-law of the Duke of Wellington and a much-decorated general officer. Meanwhile, the British armada scattered a makeshift American fleet in Lake Borgne, a shallow arm of the Gulf of Mexico east of New Orleans, and evaluated their options. Two British officers, disguised as Spanish

fishermen, discovered an unguarded waterway, Bayou Bienvenue, that provided access to the east bank of the Mississippi River barely nine miles downstream from New Orleans. Two American officers, whose plantations had been commandeered by the British, informed Jackson that the enemy was at the gates. He quickly launched a nighttime surprise attack that, although tactically a draw, gained valuable time for the outnumbered Americans. Old Hickory used this time well. He retreated three miles to the Chalmette Plantation on the banks of the Rodriguez Canal, a wide, dry ditch that marked the narrowest strip of solid land between the British camps and New Orleans. While the Americans dug in, General Pakenham readied his attack plans. On December 28 the British launched a strong advance that Jackson repulsed with the help of the Louisiana, an American ship that blasted the British left flank with broadsides from the river. The arrival of fresh troops during the first week of January gave the British new hope. Once these redcoats were in position to pour flank fire across the river, heavy columns would assault each flank of the American line, then pursue the insolent defenders six miles into the heart of New Orleans. Units carrying fascines -- bundled sticks used to construct fortifications -- and ladders to bridge the ditch and scale the ramparts would precede the attack, which would begin at dawn January 8 to take advantage of the early morning fog. It was a solid plan in conception, but flawed in execution. The force on the west bank was delayed crossing the river and did not reach its goal until well after dawn. Deprived of their misty cover, the main British columns had no choice but to advance across the open fields toward the Americans, who waited expectantly behind their mud and cotton-bale barricades. To make matters worse, the British forgot their ladders and fascines, so they had no easy means to close with the protected Americans. In addition to his regular U. His men made perfect targets as they marched precisely across a quarter mile of open ground. Hardened veterans of the Peninsular Campaign in Spain fell by the score, including nearly 80 percent of a splendid Scottish Highlander unit that tried to march obliquely across the American front. More than 2, British had been killed or wounded and several hundred more were captured. The American loss was eight killed and 13 wounded. The Treaty of Ghent, which ended the War of but resolved none of the issues that started it, had been signed in Europe weeks before the action on the Chalmette Plantation. Berton, Pierre, *Flames across the Border* ; repr. *A Popular Account of the War of* , 2 vols.

Chapter 9 : Bibliography of the War of - Wikipedia

The War of was a conflict between two very different naval powers, a pattern that is far more common in naval history than tends to be appreciated.

The line, or barrier, as far as we need take notice of it, consists of a rapid river, the St. From Quebec to Kingston, which stands at the entrance of Lake Ontario, the distance is about miles, but the water communication is interrupted by shoals and rapids. Lake Ontario is about miles long and 50 broad, and is navigable for ships of any burden. The strait of Niagara, in length about 36 miles, but interrupted at one part by its famous falls, connects Ontario with Lake Erie ; which is about miles in length, and about 40 broad, and is also navigable for large ships. Of Lake Huron, it will suffice to say, that it is connected with Erie by the river Detroit; on which river stands the British post of Amherstburgh, distant just miles from Quebec. The regular force, scattered over the Canadas at the breaking out of the war, consisted of between and men, chiefly fencible and veteran or invalid troops. Ontario was the only lake that contained any armed vessels belonging to the British. These consisted of the Royal-George, a ship of tons, mounting 20 guns, a brig of 14 guns, and two or three smaller vessels; all manned by Canadians, and commanded by a provincial officer, named Earle. The force of the Americans on this lake, at the commencement of the war, consisted of only one solitary brig, the Oneida, of 16 guns, commanded by Lieutenant Melanthon Thomas Woolsey, of the national navy. Imboldened by the dastardly behaviour of his opponent, Lieutenant Woolsey fitted out a captured British merchant schooner with one long pounder and two sixes ; and, manning her with about 30 seamen and a company of riflemen to act as marines, sent her, under the command of Lieutenant Henry Wells, to Ogdensburg, on the St. On her way thither, the Julia encountered, and actually beat off without losing a man, the Moira of 14, and the Gloucester of 10 guns. Notwithstanding the glaring incompetency of Earle, Sir George Prevost neither removed nor censured him. About this time the British gun ship Tartarus, Captain John Pasco, arrived at Quebec from Halifax ; and, had the governor-general of British America but given his sanction to the measure, the captain would have laid his ship up, and, with his officers and men, have proceeded straight to Kingston, and superseded Earle in the command of the squadron. Instead of this, an attempt was made to hire sailors at Quebec, at one half of the wages which the merchants were giving; as if sailors could be of any use, without an officer capable, or willing for, we believe, Earle, as well as Sir George, was born on the wrong side of the boundary line , to lead them against the enemy. With this comparatively formidable force, Commodore Chauncey chased the Royal-George into Kingston, cannonaded the town and batteries, and possessed the entire command of the lake. Soon afterwards Sir George Prevost ordered two ships of war to be built, to mount 24 guns each; one at Kingston, the other at York, an unprotected port at the opposite extremity of the lake. On Lake Erie, while the Americans possessed only one armed vessel, the Adams, a small brig mounting six 6-pounders, the British colonial authorities, by hiring or purchasing some merchant vessels and arming them, had assembled a force, consisting of one ship of tons, the Queen-Charlotte, mounting 16 light carronades, a brig of 10 guns, a schooner of 12, and three smaller vessels, mounting between them seven guns. These six vessels were manned by Canadians, and subsequently by soldiers in addition. On the 16th of July, at, the surrender of Detroit, the Adams fell into the hands of the British, and was afterwards named the Detroit and sent down the lake, manned by a small Canadian crew. Elliot, and between 50 and 60 petty officers and seamen, to superintend the construction of some schooners at Black-Rock. On the 9th Lieutenant Elliot, with the whole of his seamen and about 50 soldiers, boarded and carried the Detroit, and a merchant brig, the Caledonia, of one or two swivels, in her company. The former the Americans were afterwards obliged to burn, to save her from falling into the hands of a detachment of soldiers from Fort Erie; but the Caledonia and her valuable cargo, they carried safe to Black-Rock. The Americans landed and drove away the few British troops at the post; but, previously to their retreat, the latter saved the Americans the trouble of burning the ship on the stocks, by destroying her themselves. On the 6th of May the British troop-ship Woolwich, Captain Thomas Ball Sullivan, arrived at Quebec from Spithead, having on board Captain Sir James Lucas Yeo, four commanders of the navy, eight lieutenants, 24 midshipmen, and about

picked seamen, sent out by government expressly for service on the Canadian lakes. Such was the zeal of the officers and men to get to the scene of action, that they departed, the same evening, in schooners for Montreal. In four or five days they reached Kingston; and, although the number of seamen was not half enough to man the vessels in the harbour, now augmented by the gun ship Wolfe, launched on the 5th or 6th of May, Sir James Yeo, with the aid of the provincial sailors already on the lake, and of a few companies of soldiers, was ready, by the end of the month, to put to sea with two ships, one brig, and three schooners, besides a few small gun-boats. Sir George hesitated, looked at the place, mistook trees for troops, and blockhouses for batteries, and ordered the expedition to put back. Encouraged by this, Sir George permitted the squadron to begin working its way back to the American port. On the morning of the 29th some of the lighter vessels got close to the shore, and the troops were landed. They drove the Americans like sheep, compelled them to set fire to the General-Pike, a new frigate on the stocks, the Gloucester, captured at York, and a barrack containing, among other valuable articles, all the naval stores taken on the same occasion. At this moment some resistance unexpectedly made at a log barrack caused the British commander-in-chief to sound a retreat. The indignant, the victorious officers and men were obliged to obey the fatal bugle, and the British retired to their vessels; and the Americans, as soon as they could credit their senses, hastened to stop the conflagration. The General-Pike, being built of green wood, was saved; but the Gloucester, and the barrack containing the stores, were entirely consumed. That Sir George Prevost was as fond of writing official letters, as he was of substituting the first personal pronoun for the third, has already appeared in these pages; but, in the present instance, contrary to all precedent, he required his adjutant-general, Colonel Edward Baynes, to pen the dispatch. On the 3d of June Sir James Yeo sailed from Kingston with his squadron, composed of the ship Wolfe, of 23 guns and men, ship Royal-George, of 21 guns and men, brig Melville, of 14 guns and men, schooners, Moira, of 14 guns and 92 men, Sidney-Smith, of 12 guns and 80 men, and Beresford, of eight guns and 70 men, together with a few gun-boats. On the 8th, at daylight, the squadron arrived in sight of the American camp at Forty-mile creek; but, as it was calm, the only vessels that could get close to the shore were the Beresford, Captain Francis Brockell Spilsbury, and the gun-boats, commanded by Lieutenant Charles Anthony, first of the Wolfe. A spirited attack by the schooner and gun-boats compelled the American troops to make a precipitate retreat, and all their camp equipage, provisions, and stores fell into the hands of the British. Sir James then landed the troops that were on board his squadron, and steered to the westward. On the 13th he captured two American schooners and some boats containing supplies. Receiving information from the prisoners, that there was a depot of provisions at Genessee river, Sir James proceeded thither; and, landing some seamen and marines, brought off the whole. On the 19th he took another supply of provisions from Great Sodus, and on the 29th re-anchored in Kingston. At length, towards the latter end of July, that fine ship was armed, manned, and stored. On the 8th of August, in the morning, while the American fleet lay at anchor off Fort Niagara, the British squadron hove in sight; and, that a better opinion may be formed of the situation of the parties, we will state the force of each. The British had six vessels, mounting 92 guns; of which, two were long pounders, 13, long pounders, five, long 12 and 9 pounders, and 72, carronades of different calibers, including six pounders; and the vessels were manned with officers and men. The Americans, by their own admission, had 14 vessels, armed, also by their admission, with guns; of which, seven were long pounders, 32, long pounders, eight, long pounders, 19, long 12 and 9 pounders, and 48, carronades, 40 of which were 32 and 24 pounders. Nearly one fourth of the long guns and carronades were on pivot-carriages, and were consequently as effective in broadside as twice the number. The 14 American vessels, thus armed, were manned with officers and men. Commodore Chauncey immediately got under way, and stood out, with his 14 vessels, formed in line of battle; but, as the six British vessels approached, the American vessels, after discharging their broadsides, wore and stood under their batteries. Light airs and calms prevented Sir James Yeo from closing; and during the night, in a heavy squall, two of the American schooners, the Hamilton and Scourge, upset, and their crews unfortunately perished. On the 9th the two parties were again in sight of each other, and continued manoeuvring during that and the succeeding day. On the 10th, at night, a fine breeze sprang up, and Sir James Yeo immediately took advantage of it, by bearing up to attack his powerful opponent; but, just as the Wolfe got within gun-shot of the Pike and Madison, these two powerful American

ships bore up, fired their stern-chase guns, and made sail for Niagara; leaving two fine schooners, the Julia and Growler, each armed with one long 32 and one long 12 pounder on pivots, and manned with a crew of 40 men, to be captured without an effort to save them. With his two prizes, and without the loss of a man, and with no greater injury to his ships than a few cut ropes and torn sails, Sir James Yeo returned to Kingston. The writer, having previously stated the American force at two ships, one brig, and. The schooners commenced the action with their long guns, which did great execution. At half-past 12, the Commodore fired his broadside, and gave three cheers, which was returned from the other ships, the enemy closing fast. We lay by for our opponent, the orders having been given, not to fire until she came within pistol-shot, though the enemy kept up a constant fire. Every gun was pointed, every match ready in hand, and the red British ensign plainly to be descried by the light of the moon; when, to our utter astonishment, the commodore wore, and stood S. The latter was mistaken. On the 18th we again fell in with the enemy steering for Kingston, and we reached the harbour on the 19th. This is the result of two cruises; the first of which, by proper guidance, might have decided in our favour the superiority on the lake, and consequently in Canada. This schooner was described by the Americans as upwards of tons. She was afterwards converted into a brig. On the 11th of September, while the British squadron lay becalmed off Genessee river, the American fleet of 11 sail, by the aid of a partial wind, succeeded in getting within range of their long 24 and 32 pounders; and during five hours cannonaded the British, who did not fire a carronade, and had only six guns in all the squadron that could reach the enemy. At sunset a breeze sprang up from the westward, when Sir James steered for the American fleet; but the American commodore avoided a close meeting, and thus the affair ended. It was so far unfortunate for Sir James Yeo, that he had a midshipman William Ellery and three seamen killed and seven wounded. In his official letter on the subject of this action, Commodore Chauncey most uncandidly says: It was this, and not, as Mr. Clark, in describing this action, speaks of the British "frigate" Wolfe; upon which he had previously mounted "36 guns. The General-Pike suffered a considerable loss of men; among whom were 22 killed or wounded by the bursting of a gun. It was therefore the damages and loss sustained by the American squadron, and not the "British batteries on Burlington heights," upon which not a musket was mounted, that "obliged the commodore to give up the chase. These, owing to the loss of one of them, now consisted of five; and they were not equal in aggregate tonnage or force to a British gun ship. With a lieutenant, and 19 rejected seamen of the Ontario squadron, Captain Barclay, towards the middle of June, joined his enviable command; and, with the aid of the seamen he had brought, a ship was forthwith laid down at Amherstburgh, intended to be of tons, and to mount as many as 18 guns. The destruction of these vessels on the stocks, would have enabled the British to maintain the ascendancy on the lake, and would have averted the fatal blow that was afterwards struck in this quarter. Colonel Proctor, the British commanding officer at Amherstburgh, saw this; as well as the facility with which the thing might be done, if Sir George Prevost would send him the long promised supply of troops, and about sailors. He wrote letter after letter to Sir George on the subject, but all in vain. The latter, when he had exhausted his excuses, became petulant and rude. The two American brigs were launched; and, although they had to pass a bar, with their guns and stores out, and almost on their beam-ends, the Niagara and Lawrence, by the beginning of August, were riding on the lake, in readiness for action. By the latter end of August, the Detroit, as the new ship was named, was launched; and the next difficulty was to get guns for her. For this, the fort of Amherstburgh was stripped, and 19, of four different calibers, were obtained. It will convey some idea of the expense of hastily fitting vessels at this distance from home, to mention, that every round shot cost one shilling a pound for the carriage from Quebec to Lake Erie, that powder was ten times as dear as at home, and that, for anchors, their weight in silver would be scarcely an over-estimate. But, were the Americans on this lake any better off? In five days an express reaches Washington. It would, under the most favourable circumstances as to weather and dispatch in office, take as many months to get an article ordered from England, or even permission to stir a peg out of the common routine of service. Early in September, Captain Barclay received a draught of seamen from the Dover troop-ship; and many of these would have scarcely rated as "ordinaries" on board the regular ships of war. He had now 50 British seamen to distribute among two ships, two schooners, a brig, and a sloop, armed altogether with 63 carriage-guns. It must have been the incredibility of this that induced some of the British journals, in their account of the

proceedings on this lake, to state ", " instead of 50 seamen. It is asserted, on the express authority of Captain Barclay himself, that no more than 50 seamen were at any time on board the Lake Erie flotilla; the complements having been made up by Canadian peasants and soldiers, men that, without disparagement to either, were sorry substitutes for British sailors. On the other hand, the ships of the Americans, as their newspapers informed us, were equipped in the most complete manner; and through the same channel we learned, that large draughts of seamen had repeatedly marched to Lake Erie from the sea-board. The best of riflemen were to be obtained on the spot. What else was required, to render the American ships in these waters quite as effective as the best appointed ships on the ocean? On the 9th of September Captain Barclay was lying, with his little squadron, in the port of Amherstburgh, anxiously waiting the arrival of a promised supply of seamen.