

Madison Administration 1809-1817

Name: _____

Time: _____

Date: _____

James Madison



In 1809, James Madison easily won election to the presidency; unfortunately, he took the office in very difficult times.

Madison was born in Virginia in 1751. He grew up on the plantation Montpelier that he later inherited. He went to the College of New Jersey (later named Princeton) and studied history, government, and public law. He helped draft the Virginia Constitution in 1776, served in the Continental Congress from 1780 to 1783, helped write the Constitution of the United States, drafted the Bill of Rights, and wrote several of the *Federalist Papers* in support of the Constitution. Later, Madison was an advisor to President George Washington. Madison stood 5'4", was very shy, spoke in a low voice, and preferred the company of books to people. He was one of the great thinkers of his time.

Foreign Affairs

In 1803, Britain and France went to war. Napoleon Bonaparte was taking over Europe and only Britain was strong enough to stop him. America refused to take sides in the conflict and continued to trade with both countries. Despite peace efforts by previous presidents, both Britain and France continued to attack American ships going to their enemies' ports. President Madison made an offer to Britain and France: if you stop attacking American ships, the Americans will stop trade with your enemy. France agreed but secretly told its military to continue

attacking American ships; Britain refused the offer altogether.

Additionally, Britain was suffering from a shortage of sailors. So, in the early 1800s, when Britain stopped an American vessel, they often impressed (kidnapped) American sailors claiming they were actually British deserters. Americans were outraged.

1. What did the British do that angered Americans? (circle two)
 - f. attacked American ships
 - g. blockaded American ports
 - o. impressed American sailors
 - y. stole American land

Domestic Issues

President Madison needed to deal with the growing Native American threat in the west. Americans poured into the Ohio Valley looking for cheap land to settle. Native Americans found themselves losing the land they were promised by several treaties signed with the United States. The Shawnee Indians, led by Tecumseh and his brother the Prophet, began organizing tribes in the region to create a confederation¹ to fight the American settlers. Soon, warfare broke out along the frontier in the Ohio Valley. Indiana governor William Henry Harrison marched 1000 men within Indiana Territory and successfully defeated the Indian forces near Tippecanoe Creek in what became known as the Battle of Tippecanoe. Harrison became a national hero. The victory led Americans to discover that the British were supplying

weapons to the Shawnee. America decided it was time to fight Great Britain—again.

2. What domestic problems did the United States face? (circle two)
 - f. Native Americans attacked Americans on the frontier
 - g. the economy collapsed
 - o. New England threatened war with Canada
 - y. Britain supplied weapons to Native Americans

War of 1812

President James Madison asked for and received from Congress a declaration of war against Great Britain on June 18, 1812. In the summer of 1812, America tried to conquer Canada and drive the British out. Each attack failed miserably and the Americans were forced to retreat. On August 15, 1812, pro-British Indians captured Ft. Dearborn and burned it to the ground. The next day, the Americans surrendered Ft. Detroit without firing a shot.

On September 10, 1813, American naval vessels under the command of Admiral Oliver Perry managed to take control of Lake Erie from the British. Taking advantage of the situation, General William Harrison attacked and defeated the British at a battle on the Thames River on October 5, 1813. This was a devastating defeat for the British as the Indian chief Tecumseh was killed causing Indian support for the British to shrink dramatically.

The Americans briefly held a position in Canada. General Dearborn attacked York (present day Toronto) on April 27, 1813, and burned down the Parliament

¹ confederation: group of states or tribes

buildings before retreating back to the United States.

By August 1814, the British had defeated Napoleon Bonaparte and Britain could now focus on the war against America. Using the most powerful navy in the world, Britain blockaded the American coast, preventing anything from entering or leaving the United States.

On August 14, 1814, the British successfully invaded Washington D.C., forcing President Madison and Congress to flee for their lives while the British burned down the Capitol and the president's mansion. The British were halted when they attacked Fort McHenry at Baltimore, Maryland, on September 13, 1814. A lawyer named Francis Scott Key, who witnessed the assault, wrote a poem called the "Defence of Fort McHenry" and put it to music. The poem was later re-titled "The Star-Spangled Banner."

On September 11, 1814, a superior British force invading New York from Canada was defeated at the Battle of Plattsburgh Bay. This was the most decisive battle of the war as it prevented the British from dividing the United States in two. Clearly, if Britain continued the war, it would probably defeat the United States and perhaps bring it back into the British Empire, but a war-weary British public began to question the need to fight on.

3. He wrote "Defence of Fort McHenry." (circle one)

- f. James Madison
- g. Oliver Perry
- o. Francis Scott Key
- y. Lord Germain

The End of the War

The Treaty of Ghent was signed on December 24, 1814, in Belgium. Great Britain agreed to leave the Northwest Territory; America agreed to respect Native American

rights although this was never enforced. With the Native Americans left weak and leaderless from the war, American settlers easily moved into the Northwest territories. Both countries also agreed to stop the international slave trade. The British blockade during the war caused American manufacturing to boom as businesses produced goods Americans could not import from other countries. The end of the war created a nationalism among Americans and a sense that the United States was a powerful nation.

Unfortunately, it took time for word to spread from one location to another. Before news of the treaty reached America, the British advanced on New Orleans with 8,700 troops in an attempt to take control of the Mississippi River. Andrew Jackson was waiting for them with 6,500 American troops.

Several skirmishes² occurred over a two-week period. On January 8, 1815, the Battle of New Orleans began. Within a half an hour Andrew Jackson destroyed the British forces inflicting over 2000 casualties³ while the Americans only suffered 71. The biggest American victory of the war occurred two weeks after the war ended, and it made Andrew Jackson a national hero.

4. The Battle of New Orleans... (circle three)

- f. made Andrew Jackson a hero
- g. was the first battle of the war
- o. occurred after the war was over
- y. was a defeat for the British

5. The end of the war led to... (circle two)

- f. the end of the slave trade
- g. a loss of American land
- o. American national unity
- y. war with France

End of the Federalists

The Federalists had opposed the war from the very beginning. The British blockade of American ports was hurting the New England economy. The Federalists wanted the war to end. In December 1814, the Federalists held a convention at Hartford, Connecticut, where some members of the party talked of secession from the Union to either form their own country or rejoin Britain. However, the Treaty of Ghent and Andrew Jackson's victory at New Orleans embarrassed the Federalists and the political party essentially ceased to exist.

The next two years of Madison's presidency were uneventful. Like Thomas Jefferson and George Washington, Madison refused to run for a third term as president.

Madison died on June 28, 1836. As per his instructions, his notes on the Constitutional Convention were published after the death of the last signer of the Constitution. Madison's notes are the best source of information on the debates and what happened at the Constitutional Convention.

6. Why did Federalists lose support? (circle one)

- f. they supported Britain
- g. they refused to end the slave trade
- o. they published papers about the Constitutional Convention
- y. they wanted to secede

² skirmish: small battle or fight

³ casualties: killed, wounded, missing