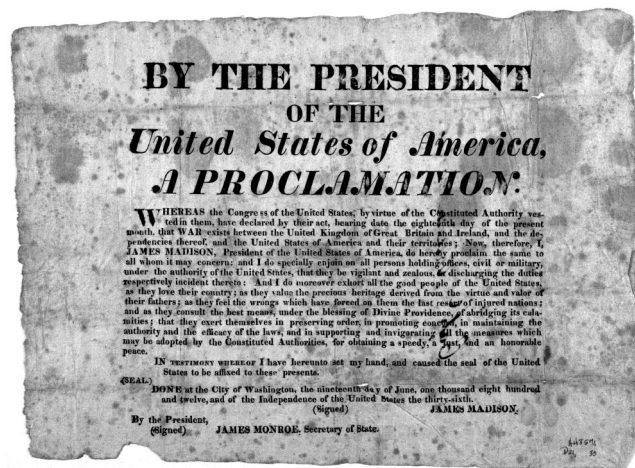


Historical Background

The War of 1812 often gets overshadowed by the Revolutionary War and is generally less understood among the American public. This war was really an offshoot of a larger global conflict between the British empire and the French empire of Napoleon Bonaparte. To North Americans, however, it was seen as a renewed struggle for independence. Canadian colonists and Native Americans fought against the U.S. invasion of their territories. Americans declared war on Britain because of interference in American trade with France, whom Britain was blockading, and also because of British impressment of sailors from American ships.

Students may be unclear about the motivations, operations, and consequences of the War of 1812. However, they have probably heard of Tecumseh and Andrew Jackson. They may already be familiar with the story of Dolly Madison rescuing the portrait of George Washington from the burning White House. Many sayings and symbols that have become part of our national identity were generated during the War of 1812, like Uncle Sam and the “Star Spangled Banner.” This war was also responsible for generating Tennessee’s state motto, “The Volunteer State.”

By war’s end, American forces had inflicted decisive defeats over Native American forces, but could not claim victory over the British. The Treaty of Ghent (1814) basically ended hostilities by restoring the status quo, after which Britain turned its attention once more to defeating Napoleon. Nevertheless, many Americans considered the war a second war for independence. Native American lands, however, were not restored to status quo, and were soon overrun with white settlers.



[By the President of the United States of America, a proclamation. Whereas the Congress of the United States, by virtue of the constituted authority vested in them, have declared by their act ... that war exists between the United Kingdom ... and](#) [1812]

Suggestions for Teachers

Teachers can approach the War of 1812 by asking students if they know where the “Star Spangled Banner” came from, or if they know the origins of some of the other iconic moments from the war mentioned at left or in the [March 2012](#) or [September 2015](#) newsletters.

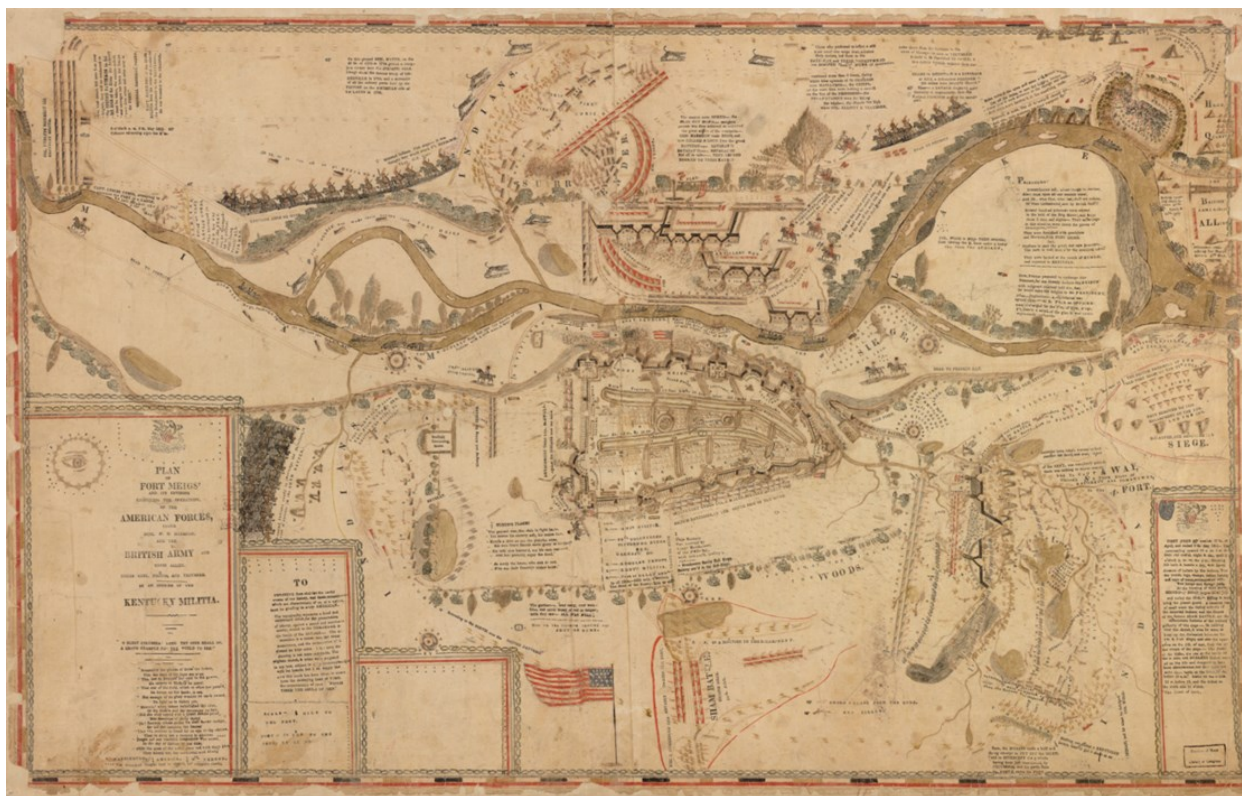
Study of the war can be divided into categories, like the primary sources on the following pages. Have students compare the war in the north with the war in the south, for instance. Who were the combatants on each front? How were the battles and outcomes different? Or have students examine some of the primary sources under “Remembering the War of 1812” and connect them to the events that inspired them. How was the war depicted a few decades after it ended? A century after? Today?

Have students examine a map such as the one on the next page. Zoom in to read the text and view the drawings. What does this map say about the British? Native Americans? White Americans?

Additional Links

- [TPS-MTSU War of 1812 Links guide](#)
- [TPS-MTSU March 2012 newsletter](#)
- [TPS-MTSU September 2015 newsletter](#)
- [“War of 1812”](#) (Tennessee Encyclopedia of History and Culture): short article that focuses on the role of Tennessee and Tennesseans in the War of 1812.
- [The War of 1812](#) (PBS): Web site for PBS documentary on the War of 1812; includes contextual essays, lesson plans, a timeline, descriptions of historic sites related to the war, and video clips.
- [The Volunteer State Goes to War: A Salute to Tennessee Veterans](#) (Tennessee State Library and Archives): Online exhibition with section on “The War of 1812 and Indian Wars.”
- [Tennessee’s Presidents: Andrew Jackson](#) (Tennessee State Museum): Sections on Old Hickory include “A Military Hero,” “Creek War,” and “Battle of New Orleans.”
- [The Battle of Horseshoe Bend: Collision of Cultures Lesson Plan](#) (National Park Service): This Teaching with Historic Places lesson plan includes historical context, maps, images, readings, and activities.
- [The Star-Spangled Banner: The Flag That Inspired the National Anthem](#) (Smithsonian Institution): Online exhibition with background on the war, the flag, and the song, plus interactive features.

[Plan of Fort Meigs' and its environs : compricing \[sic\] the operations of the American forces, under Genl. W.H. Harrison, and the British Army and their allies, under Genl. Proctor and Tecumseh / by an officer of the Kentucky Militia. \[1813\]](#)



War in the North



[Perry's victory on Lake Erie, Sept. 10th 1813 / drawn by J.J. Barralet ; engraved by B. Tanner.](#)
[c1814 October 14th]



[Death of Tecumseh: Battle of the Thames Oct. 18: 1813/ lith. & pub. by N. Currier.](#) [c1846]



[The Yankey torpedo / E-s del & sc.](#) [1813]



[A scene on the frontiers as practiced by the "humane" British and their "worthy" allies / Wm. Charles, del et sculp.](#) [1812; detail]



[A correct map of the seat of war.](#) [1812]



[A boxing match, or another bloody nose for John Bull / W. Charles, del et sculp.](#) [1813; detail]

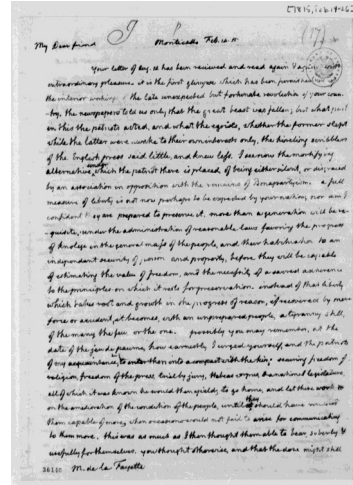


[British valour and Yankee boasting or, Shannon versus Chesapeake / G. Cruikshank fect.](#) [1813; detail]

The Hartford Convention

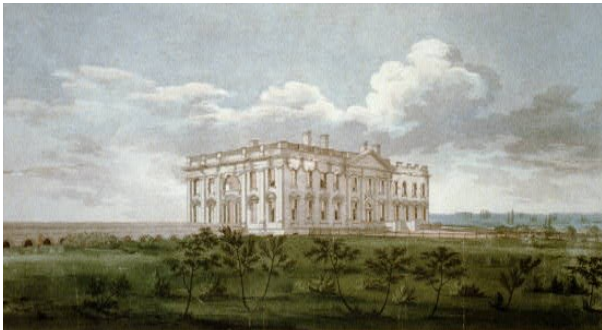


[The Hartford Convention or Leap no leap / Wm. Charles, Sc.](#) [1814; detail]



[Thomas Jefferson to Marie Joseph Paul Yves Roch Gilbert du Motier, Marquis de Lafayette, February 14, 1815, with Postscript Dated February 26](#) [1815; see [transcription](#)]. Also see, [Thomas Jefferson to Benjamin Waterhouse, October 13, 1815](#) [1815; see [transcription](#)]

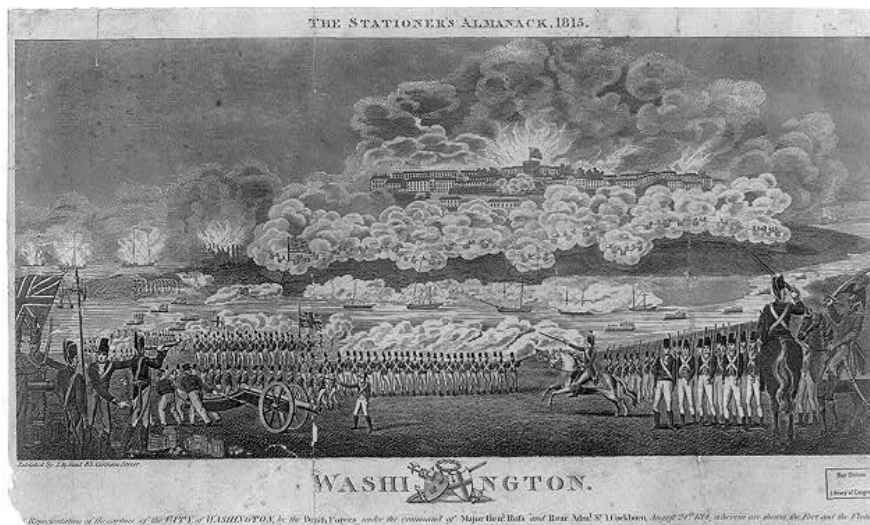
The Capture of Washington



[A view of the Presidents house in the city of Washington after the conflagration of the 24th August 1814.](#) [1814; detail]



[\[Waterfront fire, probably burning of the Washington Navy Yard, 1814, Anacostia River, Washington, D.C.\]](#) [1815; detail]



[Washington. \[A\] representation of the capture of the city of Washington, by the British forces under the command of Major Genl. Ross and Rear Adml. Sir I. Cockburn, August 24th 1814, wherein are shown, the fort and the flotilla](#) [1815; detail]

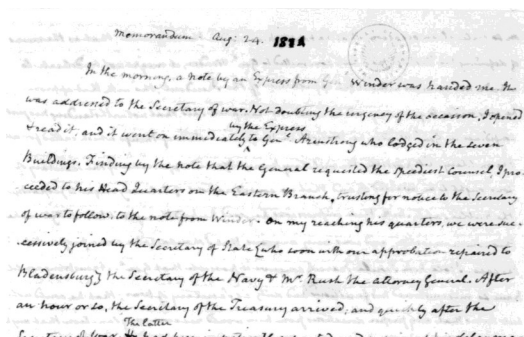
The Capture of Washington (cont.)



The taking of the city of Washington in
America [1814 Oct. 14.; detail]



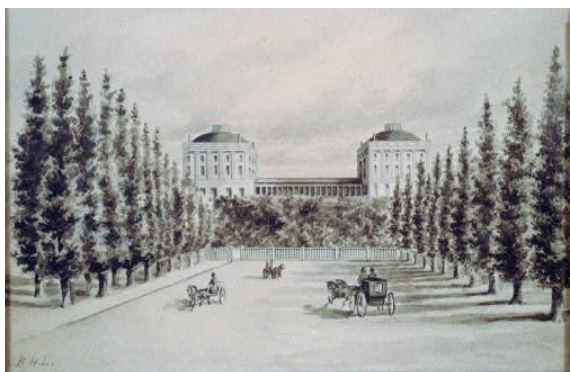
Capture of Washington [Cut] On Wednesday, August 24, there was a severe action at Bladensburgh, six miles from the Capitol. "Baltimore has acquired immortal honor by the brave resistance of Commodore Barney, his sailors and the bold volunteers." [1814]



[James Madison, August 24, 1814. Observations on the capture of Washington DC by British troops.](#) [24 August 1814] [Transcription](#)



The fall of Washington--or Maddy in full flight [1814]



[\[U.S. Capitol and Pennsylvania Avenue before 1814\]](#) [1814; detail]



[A view of the Capitol after the conflagration of the 24th August 1814 / G. Munger del. ; W. Strickland sculp. \[1814; detail\]](#)

War in and South

[General orders](#)
[Andrew Jackson. Major-General 2d Division, Tennessee. November 24, 1812.](#)
 [1812; detail]

GENERAL ORDERS.

The Major-General of the second Division is commanded by his excellency Governor Blount, to call into service the organized volunteers, who are destined for the defence of New-Orleans and the lower Mississippi. The whole of the volunteers from the second Division are included in this order. They will accordingly rendezvous in Mobile on Thursday the tenth of December, prepared to descend the river without delay. The Cavalry will provide themselves with allowed a fair compensation. Such of the non-commissioned officers and privates as bring with them a blanket, for their own use, will be paid for it a full price. They are particularly requested to furnish themselves with this article.

On their arrival at the place of rendezvous, the officers, non-commissioned officers, and privates will receive two months pay in advance, and the non-commissioned officers and privates will receive seven months pay in advance, and the non-commissioned officers and privates will receive seven months pay in advance.

The Major-General informs the volunteers, that upon a consultation with the Field Officers, it has been resolved, that the respective companies which form the detachments, will appear in uniform. Dark blue, or brown, has been prescribed for the uniform of the volunteer, in uniform of the volunteer; hunting-shirts, or coats at the option of the different companies, with pantaloons and dark colored socks. White pantaloons, vests, &c. may be worn upon parade. As the expedition will not terminate under five or six months, and will include the winter and the spring, the volunteers will see the propriety of adapting their clothing, in quantity and quality, to both seasons.

The field officers will wear the uniform which is provided for officers of the same grade in the army of the United States. Company officers will conform to the same regulation, if convenient; otherwise, they will conform to the uniform of their companies.

The constant and honorable zeal which the volunteers have evinced, excludes the idea that any one of them will voluntarily desert themselves, nor that they have received the final summons to the field of honor and of danger. If sickness, inevitable necessity, or real absence from the state, should detain any one, he will make known his situation to the commanding officer of the company. In all cases where this is not done to the satisfaction of the Major-General, the absence will be placed upon the list of deserters, exposed to the scorn of his fellow-citizens, and the severe penalties which the law will inflict upon him.

Captain WILLIAM CARROLL, of the Nashville volunteers, is appointed Brigade-Sergeant for the organized volunteers, and THOMAS H. FLETCHER is appointed second aid to the Major-General, in the place of Major John Coffee, deceased. The officers and privates of the volunteer detachment, are commanded to honor and obey them as such.

The volunteers commanding regiments will distribute these orders by express; the expense of which will be reimbursed by the Assistant-deputy-quarter-master.

ANDREW JACKSON,
 Major-General 2d Division, Tennessee.

November 24, 1812.



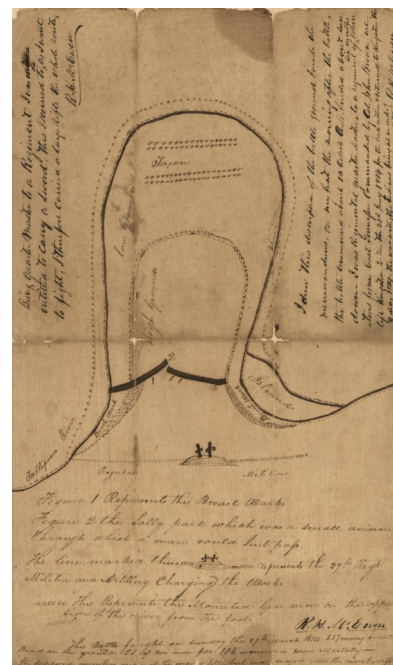
[Map 1814-15 New Orleans.](#) [1815; detail]



[Battle of New Orleans and death of Major General Packenham \[sic\] on the 8th of January 1815 / West del. ; J. Yeager sc.](#) [1817; detail]



[Hunter's of Kentucky. Or half horse and half alligator](#) [1815]



[\[Sketch map of the Battle of Horse-shoe Bend of Tallapoosa River. 27th March 1814.\]](#) [1814; detail]

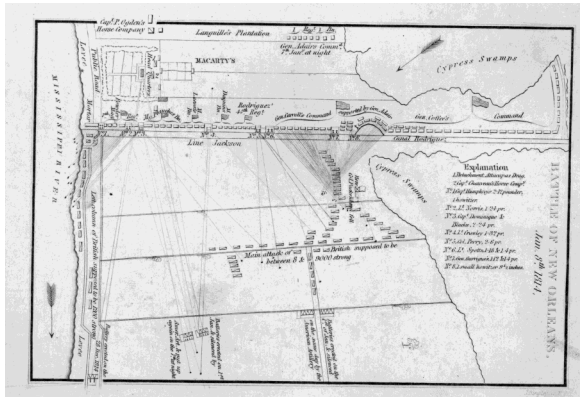
War in the South (cont.)



[Gold medal presented to Jackson by Congress](#) [1815; detail]



[The battle of New Orleans, fought Jan'y 8th 1815](#) [1842]



[Battle of New Orleans, Jan. 8th 1814 \[i.e., 1815\]](#) [between 1820 and 1840]



[Glorious news from New Orleans! Splendid victory over the British forces Essex, Register Office. Feb. 9 \[1815\].](#) [1815]



[A correct view of the battle near the city of New Orleans, on the eighth of January 1815, under the command of Genl. Andw. Jackson, over 10,000 British troops, in which 3 of their most distinguished generals were killed, & several wounded and upwards of 3,000 of their choicest soldiers were killed, wounded, and made prisoners, &c. / Francis Scacki.](#) [between 1815 and 1820]

The Treaty of Ghent

TREATY OF PEACE AND AMITY,

Between his Britannic Majesty and the United States of America. (a)

Dec. 24, 1814.
Ratified and confirmed, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate, Feb. 17, 1815.
1821, ch. 40.
1827, ch. 36.
1828, ch. 62.

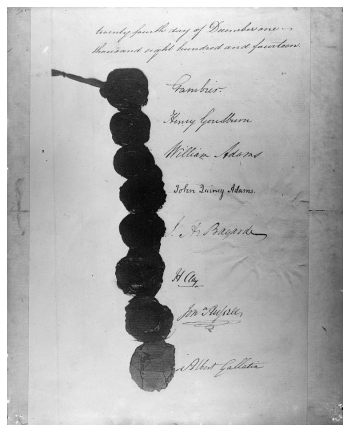
His Britannic Majesty and the United States of America, desirous of terminating the war which has unhappily subsisted between the two countries, and of restoring, upon principles of perfect reciprocity, peace, friendship, and good understanding between them, have, for that purpose, appointed their respective plenipotentiaries, that is to say: His Britannic Majesty, on his part, has appointed the right honorable James Lord Gambier, late admiral of the white, now admiral of the red squadron of His Majesty's fleet, Henry Goulburn Esquire, a member of the Imperial Parliament, and under Secretary of State, and William Adams, Esquire, Doctor of Civil Laws:—And the President of the United States, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate thereof, has appointed John Quincy Adams, James A. Bayard, Henry Clay, Jonathan Russell and Albert Gallatin, citizens of the United States, who, after a reciprocal communication of their respective full powers, have agreed upon the following articles:

ARTICLE THE FIRST.

Firm and inviolable peace.

There shall be a firm and universal peace between His Britannic Majesty and the United States, and between their respective countries, territories, cities, towns, and people, of every degree, without exception of places or persons. All hostilities, both by sea and land, shall cease

[Treaty with Great Britain. 1814.](#) [1814]



[\[Signatures, Treaty of Ghent, December 24, 1814\]](#) [1814]



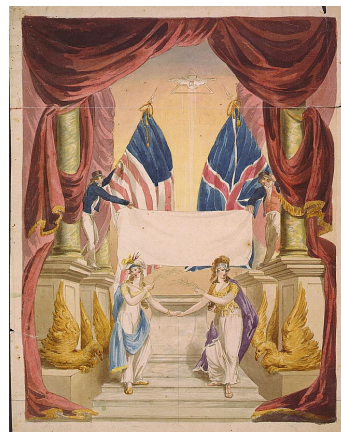
[Peace of Ghent 1814 and triumph of America / Mme. Plantou, Citizen of the United States pinxit ; Chataigner, sculptor.](#) [ca. 1820]



[\[Cut\] Peace on honorable terms to America. Signed by our commissioners at Ghent, Dec. 24, 1814-- Prince Regent, Dec. 28,-- Ratified by the President and Senate, of the United States, Feb. 17, 1815. \[Two columns of verse\] Boston Printed by Nathan](#) [1815]



[Octagon House, \[Washington, D.C.\], room in which Treaty of Ghent was signed table is original](#) [between 1910 and 1926]



[Peace](#) [ca. 1814(?)]

Remembering the War of 1812



[Victory monument, Put-In-Bay, Ohio](#) [between 1900 and 1910]



[Monument commemorating the Battle of North Point, Calvert Street and Fayette Street, Baltimore, Maryland](#) [ca. 1846]



[Funeral of Hiram Cronk / American Mutoscope and Biograph Company. \[1905\]](#)

BANKS OF BRANDYWINE, AND JAMES BIRD.

ONE morn'g, very early, in the pleasant month of May,
As I walked forth to take the air, all nature being gay,
The moon had not yet set, but through the trees did shine,
As I wandered for amusement on the banks of Brandywine.
The many rough and rugged rocks, and bushes of small growth,
By many lofty ancient trees the leaves were putting forth;
I wandered up along those banks, where murmuring streams do join,
Where pleasant music caught my ear on the banks of Brandywine.
At such an early hour I was surprised to see,
A lovely maid with downcast eyes upon those banks so gay;
I modestly related her, she knew not my design,
And requested her sweet company on the banks of Brandywine.
She said young men be civil, my company I seek,
For in my real opinion, I think you are a rake;
My love's a valiant soldier, he's now gone to the main,
While conductors I wander on the banks of Brandywine.
My dear, why do you thus give up to melancholy cries,
I pray leave off your weeping, and dry those lovely eyes;
Perfection in each part, my dear they do a mirror find,
He will leave you still to wander on the banks of Brandywine.
Oh! leave me, sir, do leave me, why do you me torment?
My Henry won't desert me, therefore I am content;
Why do you thus torment me, and cruelly combine,
To fill my mind with sorrow on the banks of Brandywine.
I will not to affect your wail, but rather for to ease
Such dreadful apprehensions, they soon your mind will ease;
Your love, my dear, in wedlock bands, to another one is joined;
She returned into his arms on the banks of Brandywine.

"Hug'd" troops that marched to Erie, were th' King's men volunteers,
Captain Thomas then considered to protect our West Indians.
Tender were the scenes of parting, mothers wrung their hands and cried,
Mothers wept their twins in secret, fathers swore their tears to hide.
But there's one among the number, tall and graceful in his mien,
From his step, his look undaunted, scarce a soldier's look was seen;
One sweet kiss he snatch'd from Mary, ere'd his mother's prayer once more,
Press'd his father's hand and left them for Lake Erie's distant shore.
Mary tried to say "farewell James," we'd her hand but nothing spoke,
Good bye Bird, my heaven protect you, from the net so paring snake.
Soon they came where noble Perry had assembled all his fleet,
There the gallant Bird exulted, hoping soon the foe to meet.
Where is Bird, the battle rages, he is in the strife we see?
Now the cannon roar tremendous, dare he meet the hostile foe?
Ah—behold him! see with Perry in the self-same ship to fight,
That his men-mates fall around him, nothing can his soul delight.
But behold a ball has struck him, see the crimson current flow,
Leaves the deck, exclaim'd brave Perry, No, cried Bird, I will not go,
Here on deck I took my station, ne'er will Bird his colors fly,
I'll stand by you, gallant Captain, till we conquer or we die.
Still he fought, though faint and bleeding, till our stars and stripes arose,
Victory having crown'd our efforts, all triumphant o'er our foes.
And did Bird receive a pension? we he to his friends would tell,
His name never to his honor, they'd the maid his heart sell.

This stanza came most dismal tidings from Lake Erie's distant shore.

Huzza! for General Jackson.

Come all who are our country's friends,
And unto these few lines attend,
Perhaps before you reach the end
You'll find something for to mend,
But listen to my story.
I hope we shall be like the sun,
A steady course to always run,
In freedom's cause as we began,
And be united all as one,
And never turn a Tory.

If Jackson should be President,
We'll borrow guns of Government,
And you may load and I'll tend vent,
Then touch her off and let her vent,
With huzza! for Andrew Jackson.
And when the people hear the gun,
The men and boys they all will run,
Expecting for to see the fun,
When they get there will all as one,
Huzza! for Andrew Jackson.

Huzza! for General Jackson. [n. d.]

Audio

- [James Bird](#) [1939]
- [Eighth of January](#) [1941/08/30] (date of Battle of New Orleans)

CITATIONS

Teachers: Providing these primary source replicas without source clues may enhance the inquiry experience for students. This list of citations is supplied for reference purposes to you and your students. We have followed the Chicago Manual of Style format, one of the formats recommended by the Library of Congress, for each entry below, minus the access date. The access date for each of these entries is February 6, 2012.

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