In 1999 David Curtis Skaggs published a review in the *William and Mary Quarterly* of two new books on the War of 1812. In that review, Skaggs said: “Since the publication of Donald R. Hickey’s *The War of 1812: A Forgotten Conflict* (Urbana, Ill., 1989), there has been a veritable flood of books trying to disprove his subtitle.” Skaggs’s assessment is certainly correct, at least on the war’s military history. In the 1990s alone more than seventy-five books bearing on the military history of the conflict were published, making this the most prolific decade ever for 1812 studies. And judging from additional projects known to be under way, there appears to be no letup in sight.

In the mid-1980s, when I began in earnest to work on my book, the historiographical landscape was very different. Two source guides had

* This article is limited to secondary sources and, with a few notable exceptions, does not include recent works that reproduce memoirs or other documents. An earlier draft was presented at the annual convention of the Society for Historians of the Early American Republic (SHEAR) in Buffalo, N.Y., on 21 July 2000. I am indebted to a host of people for assistance. Don Graves and Gene Smith have been especially generous in sharing their knowledge of the literature on the war. I am also indebted to Bill Dudley and Christine Hughes and their associates at the Naval Historical Center; and to Kevin Crisman, Dave Edmunds, Anna von Lunz, Christopher McKee, Bob Malcolmson, Frank Pytko, David Skaggs, and John Stagg. Finally, I want to thank two staff members at the U. S. Conn Library at Wayne State College: June Davidson at the interlibrary loan desk showed her customary efficiency in tracking down items and Gayle Poirier at the government documents desk brought a number of pertinent web sites to my attention.

1. *William and Mary Quarterly*, 3d ser., 56 (January 1999): 228. The two books were Joseph Whitehorne’s *The Battle for Baltimore* and Anthony Pitch’s *The Burning of Washington*, both of which are discussed below.
just been published: John Fredriksen’s bibliography, which lists over six
thousand works, and Dwight Smith’s annotated bibliography, which
describes almost fourteen hundred. Although Fredriksen’s work is
marred by a great many transcription errors, it is still the most complete
bibliography on the war.

We also had a number of good general military histories of the war.
Harry Coles’s study was the liveliest; Reginald Horsman’s was the most
accurate; and John Mahon’s was the most detailed. In addition, Glenn
Tucker had written a two-volume study which offered the best context
for the war; and Tucker had collaborated with James R. Jacobs on a short
volume that provided the best explanation of military policy and equip-
ment. Two Canadian scholars, J. Mackay Hitsman and George Stanley,
had written fine accounts of the fighting along the Canadian-American
border. Hitsman’s work was a solid military history presenting the Cana-
dian perspective, while Stanley’s study provided good detail and balance
and showed a fine grasp of the importance of logistics. Although there
were recent studies of the fighting on the Gulf Coast and in the Cham-
plain Valley, few other battles or campaigns had been subjected to mod-
ern analysis.

The state of historiography on the war at sea was much the same.
Theodore Roosevelt’s nineteenth-century study was still the best work
on the naval war, and Alfred Thayer Mahan’s 1905 study still offered the

2. John C. Fredriksen, Free Trade and Sailors’ Rights: A Bibliography of the
War of 1812 (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1985); Dwight L. Smith, The War of
Reginald Horsman, The War of 1812 (New York: Knopf, 1969); John K. Mahon, The
War of 1812 (Gainesville: University of Florida Press, 1972); Glenn Tucker, Poltroons
and Patriots: A Popular Account of the War of 1812, 2 vols. (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill
Company, 1954); James Ripley Jacobs and Glenn Tucker, The War of 1812: A
documented their work; Coles and Jacobs-Tucker did not.
4. J. Mackay Hitsman, The Incredible War of 1812: A Military History (Toronto:
University of Toronto Press, 1965); George F. G. Stanley, The War of 1812: Land
Hitsman did not document his work; Stanley provided only light documentation.
5. For the Gulf Coast, see Charles B. Brooks, The Siege of New Orleans (Seattle:
University of Washington Press, 1961); Wilburt S. Brown, The Amphibious Campaign
for West Florida and Louisiana, 1814–1815: A Critical Review of Strategy and Tact-
ics at New Orleans (University: University of Alabama Press, 1969); and Frank L.
Owsley, Jr., Struggle for the Gulf Borderlands: The Creek War and the Battle of New
Orleans, 1812–1815 (Gainesville: University Presses of Florida, 1981). For the Cham-
plain Valley, see Allan S. Everest, The War of 1812 in the Champlain Valley (Syra-
best analysis of naval strategy.\textsuperscript{6} Beyond this, we had only a few modern naval biographies and ship studies.\textsuperscript{7}

\textbf{General Works}

Today, the literature on the military history of the war is far richer. John Fredriksen, who has emerged as the war's unofficial bibliographer (at least of American sources), has published an annotated work describing 870 eyewitness accounts and is now working on an annotated list of all the manuscript collections bearing on the conflict.\textsuperscript{8} We also have two new encyclopedias. One, prepared by David and Jeanne Heidler, is devoted exclusively to the war.\textsuperscript{9} Perhaps out of necessity, the Heidlers wrote a large number of the entries themselves, and the other essays were not always assigned to the leading authority on the subject. In addition, the focus of the work is clearly American. Even so, the Heidlers managed to secure essays from a fine group of scholars, and the resulting work, replete with maps, illustrations, documents, a chronology, and a bibliography, is a splendid accomplishment. Equally impressive is Robert Rutland's encyclopedia of James Madison, which includes a host of essays on 1812 subjects, many written by distinguished scholars.\textsuperscript{10}

In the 1990s several general military histories of the war were published. In both my original work and in an abridged edition published in 1995, I had argued that the United States lost the war because it had initiated the contest and yet had not achieved the aims for which it was fighting.\textsuperscript{11} In a short account published in 1990, Canadian Wesley Turner

\begin{enumerate}
\item David S. Heidler and Jeanne T. Heidler, eds., \textit{Encyclopedia of the War of 1812} (Santa Barbara, Calif.: ABC-CLIO, 1997).
\end{enumerate}
argued that both sides won.\textsuperscript{12} The United States had won because it had eliminated the British and Indians as a threat, and Canada had won because it had fended off invasion and vindicated its existence as a nation. Another military history, written by the late John Elting, is a lively work that shows a good command of geography and of army organization and procedures but illustrates the dangers of writing history from secondary sources.\textsuperscript{13} Although Elting was an accomplished historian of the Napoleonic Wars, his treatment of the War of 1812 is filled with errors and misconceptions.

By contrast, Canadian Donald E. Graves has done a fine job of updating J. Mackay Hitsman's 1965 work.\textsuperscript{14} Except for making some cosmetic changes and correcting a few errors, Graves has reproduced Hitsman's original text. However, he has added an introductory chapter that traces the history of the myth that the militia won the war for Canada. He also has incorporated new illustrations and maps and appended a splendid bibliography that focuses on British and Canadian sources. Even more impressive, Graves and several Canadian colleagues have undertaken the painstaking task of retrofitting Hitsman's work with endnotes. Graves also has written an essay presenting his own view of the war, emphasizing internal dissent in Canada.\textsuperscript{15} The late Robert Quimby's two-volume work on the American army's role is yet another recent military history.\textsuperscript{16} Based mainly on government documents, this work reads like a semiofficial account. Although the numbing detail and ponderous style may put some readers off, for everyone this study should be a useful reference work. Moreover, Quimby does a good job of comparing what the principal participants actually did with what they later claimed in their memoirs.\textsuperscript{17}

Philip Katcher and Bryan Fosten have prepared another general work on the war, a volume in the Osprey Men-at-Arms series.\textsuperscript{18} This brief


\textsuperscript{14.} J. Mackay Hitsman, \textit{The Incredible War of 1812: A Military History}, updated by Donald E. Graves (Toronto: Robin Brass Studio, 1999).


\textsuperscript{17.} The only time that Quimby shows a blind spot in ferreting out humbug is in his treatment of General William Hull, who surrendered Detroit in 1812. Unaccountably and uncharacteristically, Quimby defends Hull even though his memoirs are manifestly at odds with the historical record. See ibid., 1: 46–48.

\textsuperscript{18.} Philip Katcher and Bryan Fosten, \textit{The American War, 1812–1814} (London: Osprey, 1990).
book contains photographs and paintings of the uniforms of the armies on both sides. René Chartrand has written a more comprehensive account of the uniforms, arms, and equipment of all the American forces in the war—regulars, militia, marines, naval personnel, and even some privateersmen. This study is richly illustrated and loaded with information. Chartrand also has completed two volumes in a large-format three-volume work on Canada’s military heritage. This work has a distinct Francophone bias, and its treatment of the War of 1812 is pedestrian, but it is well illustrated and presents a good description of British army life in nineteenth-century Canada. Chartrand also has collaborated with Gerry Embleton on a short volume in the Osprey Men-at-Arms series on the uniforms of the British and Canadian forces of the era. In another study of uniforms, Brian Dunnigan has examined the difficulties that both sides had outfitting troops on the western frontier.

Gerard Altoff describes the neglected role of African Americans in the conflict. Altoff suggests that because of growing American manpower needs, African Americans played an increasingly important role in the war on land, at sea, and on the lakes. David Skaggs and Larry Nelson have an anthology in press that will examine a broad range of topics bearing on the War of 1812 on the Great Lakes. Frederick Drake has written a fine article giving an overview of the war on the lakes. Donald E. Graves has written several well-researched articles on the artillery and ordnance used during the war and on the training and drill manuals employed by the American army. Robert Henderson has given us a good description of the diet and eating habits of British regulars in

Canada. Frank Winter has written an informative account of the Congreve rocket system, which the British used extensively in the Chesapeake campaign of 1814 and which various American inventors tried to duplicate. And for those who wish to tour the battlefields, Gilbert Collins's recent handbook covers most known sites and supersedes all earlier guides.

The Officers and Men

We have a number of new works on the officers and men of the opposing armies. William Skelton's superb work on the American officer corps examines the evolution of the American army from the Revolution to the Civil War. Although focusing on the antebellum period, when Skelton believes a truly professional officer corps emerged, the War of 1812 clearly sowed the seeds. In a recent article, Skelton has detailed how the army's high command (field and general grade officers) was gradually transformed between 1808 and 1815. In this article, Skelton attributes early failures in the War of 1812 less to the incompetence of the officers than to institutional weaknesses in the army.

Another book on the American officer corps is John Fredriksen's collection of biographical sketches of thirty American officers who served on the Niagara frontier in the so-called Left Division of the army. Evidently aimed at a popular audience, this work is too superficial to be of much use to scholars. Fredriksen also has written a useful work on the history of the army's regiment of riflemen, which he calls "the most effective infantry formation fielded by the United States in the War of 1812." This is the first detailed regimental history that we have for the

33. John C. Fredriksen, Green Coats and Glory: The United States Regiment of Riflemen, 1808–1821 (Youngstown, N.Y.: Old Fort Niagara Association, 2000). Quotation from p. 72. Although only one rifle regiment served for the duration of the war, Congress created three others in 1814.
war. Finally, in an important recent article, John Stagg compares the peacetime and wartime armies in the United States between 1802 and 1815 and concludes that they attracted very different kinds of recruits.\footnote{34. J. C. A. Stagg, “Soldiers in Peace and War: Comparative Perspectives on the Recruitment of the United States Army, 1802–1815,” William and Mary Quarterly, 3d ser., 57 (January 2000): 79–120.}

Another useful study is Edward Skeen’s detailed account of the role of the American militia.\footnote{35. C. Edward Skeen, Citizen Soldiers in the War of 1812 (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1999).} Although Skeen never solved the organizational problem of telling a story that involved militia from thirteen states serving in theaters all over the United States, his work is loaded with information and thenceforth should be the starting point for anyone interested in the militia’s role. Mark Piteavage has added a pair of informative articles on the militia, one showing that a small population and tax base in strategically important frontier areas doomed the territorial militia to ineffectiveness, and the other showing how growing opposition to militia service virtually killed the system in Ohio by the end of the war.\footnote{36. Mark Piteavage, “Ropes of Sand: Territorial Militia, 1801–1812,” Journal of the Early Republic 13 (Winter 1993): 481–500; and “Burthened in Defence of Our Rights”: Opposition to Military Service in Ohio during the War of 1812,” Ohio History 104 (Summer-Autumn 1995): 142–62.} Michael Bellesiles’s recent work on American gun culture also bears on the militia, since he claims that the ownership of guns and proficiency in their use was far less widespread in the early national period than previously had been thought.\footnote{37. Michael A. Bellesiles, “The Origins of Gun Culture in the United States, 1760–1865,” Journal of American History 83 (September 1996): 425–55, and Arming America: The Origins of a National Gun Culture (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2000). For additional criticisms of Bellesiles’s work, see Kimberley A. Strassel, “Arm-Twisting,” 5 April 2001, at <http://www.OpinionJournal.com>. According to Strassel, Bellesiles says he cannot respond to his critics because his notes were destroyed by a flood.} Bellesiles’s research is impressive and his case appears compelling, but his work should be read in conjunction with that of Clayton Cramer, who argues persuasively that Bellesiles misused some sources and ignored evidence indicating that the ownership and use of guns was actually commonplace.\footnote{38. See Clayton E. Cramer “The Truth about Bellesiles’ Arming America,” America’s 1st Freedom, November-December 2000, 55–57, 68. See also the material that Cramer has presented on several web sites: <http://www.ggnra.org/cramer/ArmingAmericaLong.pdf>, <http://www.ggnra.org/cramer/ArmingAmericaFraud.pdf>, and <http://www.ggnra.org/cramer/GunScarcity.pdf>.}

Several recent biographies of American generals should be noted. John Eisenhower’s study of Winfield Scott presents a good narrative of Scott’s military career but is too uncritical and especially weak whenever...
the author strays from strictly military matters. More useful is Timothy Johnson’s study of Scott, which shows a better grasp of his subject’s weaknesses—his oversized ego and other “fatal character flaws.” Also valuable is John Morris’s new biography of long-neglected Jacob Brown, which has burnished the reputation of a general who had a remarkably successful wartime and postwar military career. Morris credits Brown with winning four of the nine major American victories in the war, and with playing a central role in the postwar reform of the army.

For the British officer corps, we have Wesley Turner’s thoughtful and innovative study of the leadership, civilian and military, of five generals—George Prevost, Isaac Brock, Roger Sheaffe, Francis de Rottenburg, and Gordon Drummond. Turner ranks Brock and Drummond the highest, followed by Sheaffe and Prevost and then Rottenburg. This ranking gives Drummond more credit and Brock less than conventional wisdom suggests. Another Canadian, Stuart Sutherland, has prepared an impressive biographical register of the British officers who served in Canada during the war. In an illuminating introduction, Sutherland provides an overview of British army administration, including much-needed explanations of the chain of command in Canada and how the complicated system of promotion in the British army worked.

We also have new works that shed light on the Canadian militia. In a social history of Upper Canada, George Sheppard (like several others before him) has taken direct aim at the hoary myth that the militia saved Canada during the war. Another scholar, William Gray, has prepared a

42. According to Morris, Brown’s four victories were Sackett’s Harbor, Chippewa, Lundy’s Lane, and the sortie from Fort Erie. The other five American victories were the Thames, Fort George, the defense of Fort Erie, Plattsburgh, and New Orleans. Ibid., 302n38. Plattsburgh, which was won on Lake Champlain, and Lundy’s Lane, which is probably best seen as a draw, might well be excluded from this list. That would mean that Brown won three out of seven major American victories on land.
44. Stuart Sutherland, His Majesty’s Gentlemen: A Directory of British Regular Army Officers of the War of 1812 ([Toronto]: Iser Publications, 2000). This work has been privately printed and is not widely available. It deserves a commercial press and much wider distribution. In the meantime, interested parties can acquire a copy only by writing to Iser Publications at 63 Madison Ave., Toronto, ON, Canada M5R 2S3.
guide to the militia from Upper Canada who served in the conflict.\textsuperscript{46} Although undocumented, his work provides a particularly good overview of the militia. In contrast to Sheppard, Gray argues that citizen soldiers in Canada made a significant contribution (particularly in supporting roles) and that many of those who refused to serve did so simply because the pay was so pitiful—especially compared to wages in the labor-starved private sector. Yet another scholar, Luc Lépine, has prepared a biographical directory of the 2,700 militia officers who served in the war from Lower Canada.\textsuperscript{47} In still another study, David Facey-Crowther argues that the main purpose of the New Brunswick militia was to provide a pool of recruits from which volunteer provincial corps could be raised in time of crisis.\textsuperscript{48} Two such corps, enrolling 1,300 men, were raised during the War of 1812. Finally, in a brief article René Chartrand describes the attempt to transform the Canadian voyageurs (fur traders) into a military supply corps.\textsuperscript{49}

\textbf{The Old Northwest}

In addition to these general studies, there have been many specialized studies of battles and campaigns. Of the five major theaters of operations, the Old Northwest was probably the least important because it was so far removed from the centers of power, population, and commerce further east. Nevertheless, it was fiercely contested. In a study of British general Henry Procter's role, Sandy Antal has given us a new account of the campaigning on the Detroit River frontier.\textsuperscript{50} Antal seeks to rehabilitate Procter's reputation. Although not entirely successful—after all, Procter lost an army at the Thames and was severely condemned by a military court—Antal reminds us that Procter played a role in earlier British victories.\textsuperscript{51} In addition, Antal provides a good analysis


\textsuperscript{47} Luc Lépine, \textit{Les officiers de milice du Bas-Canada, 1812–1815/Lower Canada's Militia Officers, 1812–1815} (Montreal: Société généalogique canadienne-française, 1996). The introduction to this work is in French and English; the biographical sketches (most of which are very brief) are in French.


\textsuperscript{50} Sandy Antal, \textit{A Wampum Denied: Procter's War of 1812} (Ottawa: Carleton University Press, 1997).

\textsuperscript{51} For a more concise and focused defense of Procter, see Antal's article, “Myths and Facts Concerning General Procter,” \textit{Ontario History} 79 (September 1987): 251–62.
of British policy and strategy and of warfare on the Detroit and Ohio frontiers. In another study bearing on this theater, Bruce Bowlus describes the British assault on Fort Stephenson in Lower Sandusky (now Fremont), Ohio, in 1813.52 In still another work, Stuart Rammage examines the little-known Battle of Malcom's Mills in western Upper Canada in 1814.53 Finally, Donald Melhorn seeks to determine the accuracy of one of John Richardson's tales of Indian nobility at the siege of Fort Meigs.54

There also are a number of new studies of the war on Lake Erie, a waterway crucial to the land war in the Old Northwest. In 1988 a special issue of the *Journal of Erie Studies* was published commemorating the 175th anniversary of Oliver H. Perry's victory on Lake Erie. This contains a number of informative essays, most notably Michael Palmer's compelling indictment of Perry.55 About the same time, Gerard Altoff published an equally compelling indictment of Perry's nemesis, Jesse Duncan Elliott.56 Shortly thereafter, William Welsh and David Skaggs published another anthology, which has an especially illuminating essay on the murky subject of naval tactics and artillery by Frederick Drake.57 Less useful is Robert Ilisevich's brief and undocumented biography of Daniel Dobbins, the man who oversaw the construction of Perry's fleet on Lake Erie.58

We also have several new works on the Battle of Lake Erie. Canadians Robert and Thomas Malcomson have produced a large-format, heavily illustrated book aimed at a general audience.59 Their account gives


due attention to the British side of the story without sacrificing balance or ignoring the American side. Robert Malcomson also has written articles on HMS Detroit, the British flagship in the battle, and George Inglis, the officer who surrendered this ship. More recently, David Skaggs and Gerard Altoff have collaborated on a fine study of the battle. Although based mainly on American sources, their work is likely to be accepted as the standard treatment for some time to come. In a companion piece, Skaggs has concluded that Perry did a good job of fostering cohesion in his motley crew.

In another work on the battle, Altoff presents the most complete description we have of the 600 Americans who served in Perry's fleet, 40 percent of whom were regulars or militia with little or no naval experience. We also have two studies that seek to identify those engaged on the British side of the battle, but since they use different sources, their results are different. Using mainly POW and casualty records, Robert Malcomson has identified 451 men who were most likely involved; while Douglas Hendry, Charles Morrisey, and David Skaggs have used Admiralty and War Office records to come up with 564 names. Robert Malcomson also has examined British command relationships on Lake Erie. Lastly, Edward McHugh has told the story of a seaman and two marines executed for desertion from the American fleet on Lake Erie.

The Niagara Frontier

The second major theater of operations—along the Niagara frontier—witnessed some of the fiercest fighting of the war and has generated

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some of the best recent literature. In 1991 Arthur Bowler edited an illustrated anthology on the Niagara theater which includes a number of useful essays, most notably Donald E. Graves’s reassessment of the training of Winfield Scott’s troops at Buffalo. Graves also has written books of exceptional quality on the battles of Chippewa and Lundy’s Lane. These works, which have established Graves as the preeminent military historian of the war, have everything one could hope for: a good description of the men and equipment, excellent maps and illustrations, and an uncommonly lucid account of the unfolding battles. Complementing Graves’s work is Joseph Whitehorne’s concise operational study of the battles fought at Fort Erie in 1814. Supplementing the works of both Graves and Whitehorne is Richard Barbuto’s new book on the entire Niagara campaign of 1814. Barbuto’s work includes fresh insights and new detail though its real value lies in establishing the larger context for the campaign. Barbuto analyzes the war aims and national strategy of both belligerents and also discusses the influence of geography and logistics and the role of the militia and Indians.

Robert Malcomson has written an essay that offers the best account of the Battle of Queenston Heights. Brian Dunnigan has written a short article on the history of the large garrison flag at Fort Niagara that was recently repatriated from Scotland. And John Stagg has uncovered a


68. Donald E. Graves, Red Coats and Grey Jackets: The Battle of Chippawa, 5 July 1814 (Toronto: Dundurn Press, 1994) and Where Right and Glory Lead! The Battle of Lundy’s Lane, 1814, rev. ed (Toronto: Robin Brass Studio, 1997). Chippewa is one of several battles that is spelled differently on each side of the border. Americans spell it “Chippewa,” while Canadians spell it “Chippawa.”

69. Graves also has adopted Charles Oman’s simple but elegant solution for distinguishing between the numbered units of opposing armies. Numerals are used for British and Canadian forces (thus, 100th Regiment of Foot), while written numbers are employed for American forces (hence, Twenty-Fifth Infantry).


plan prepared by Peter B. Porter for an invasion of Canada in 1812 which he also analyzes. Stagg argues that Porter’s strategic recommendations were designed to support his goal of building an Ontario canal. Although he presents little direct evidence to support this contention, the document is nonetheless important, and Stagg’s commentary reminds us how often national policy and strategy in this era were seen through local prisms.

Also useful is a collection of essays—essentially a scientific report—edited by Susan Pfeiffer and Ronald Williamson describing the excavation and analysis of the remains of twenty-eight American soldiers discovered at Fort Erie in 1987. The scientific prose in this work may discourage some readers, but the way that information was gleaned from the skeletons is fascinating, and the findings (which are conveniently summarized in a well-written concluding chapter) shed light on the kind of men who served in the American army. For those who prefer to avoid the scientific jargon altogether, there is a fine popular account of this project by Paul Litt, Ronald Williamson, and Joseph Whitehorne that not only is well written but also presents information not found in the original report.

Just as the control of Lake Erie was crucial to the war in the Northwest, so too did control of Lake Ontario affect the war on the Niagara. Although this lake was an important theater of operations, no decisive battles were fought there. Instead, each side contended for mastery in what has been called “a shipbuilder’s war.” As a result, students of the War of 1812 have been inclined to slight Lake Ontario, preferring to focus instead on the more glamorous and decisive battles fought on Lake Erie and Lake Champlain. Robert Malcomson has now remedied this deficiency with a detailed and balanced account of the war on Lake Ontario, which includes a series of tables in the appendix giving the strength of each side at different times in the war. Malcomson also has written articles on HMS St. Lawrence, the 102-gun ship-of-the-line that the British had in service on Lake Ontario in the last months of the

conflict, and on British efforts to win control of the lakes by sending prefabricated warships to Canada.79

Robert Malcomson's work should be read in conjunction with several other studies. Patrick Wilder offers an excellent analysis of the Battle of Sackett's Harbor in 1813.80 Carl Benn has a fine account of the two American assaults on Fort York in his larger history of the Canadian post.81 And Tom Malcomson has done a valuable statistical analysis of the seamen who served on the lake and has told the chilling story of the only seaman hanged at Kingston during the war.82

We also have two fine studies of joint operations on Lake Ontario. William Dudley shows how successful such operations were for the United States at York and Fort George in 1813, although his defense of Isaac Chauncey's failure to cooperate with the army in 1814 is not very persuasive.83 Frederick Drake presents a good analysis of the conflicting tactical and strategic mandates of the two opposing naval commanders on the lake and concludes that British commander James Yeo did a better job of achieving his larger aims than Chauncey.84

The St. Lawrence and Lake Champlain Front

For the third major theater of operations, the St. Lawrence River and Lake Champlain, we also have several new works. Donald E. Graves has again left his mark with a superb account of the British victory at Crysler's Farm and the triumph of the French Canadians at Chateauguay.85 Graves points out that the United States employed more regular troops in this campaign than in any other military operation before the Civil War and that it represented the most serious attempt to conquer

Canada. Moreover, the American defeat was “so catastrophic” that “it swept away an entire stratum of incompetent senior officers.”

André Charbonneau has written an informative book on British fortifications and defense strategy in the Champlain Valley. Russell Bellico provides a brief but serviceable account of the war on Lake Champlain. Donald Alcock has made the dubious and largely unsupported claim that Vermonters engaged in smuggling to forestall a British invasion. Norman Ansley has identified more than 2,500 Vermonters who volunteered for service at Plattsburgh. And David Fitz-Enz has a book in press on the Battle of Plattsburgh that promises to shed new light on the fighting on land as well as on the lake.

The Chesapeake Bay

The fourth major theater of operations, the Chesapeake Bay, was virtually without any modern work in the mid-1980s other than Walter Lord’s fine popular account. We now have several good studies, each approaching the war from a different angle. The most comprehensive is Joseph Whitehorne’s mistitled account of the entire British campaign in the Chesapeake from 1812 to 1814. Whitehorne apparently relied heavily on published sources, and he has a weak introductory chapter on the causes of the war, but otherwise his work is thoughtful and informative. In another work, Anthony Pitch presents a lively and detailed (though at times confusing) account of the campaign against Washington and Baltimore. Christopher George has published a valuable work that

86. Ibid., xvi, 320.
examines British raiding operations in the Chesapeake and a long article that details the wartime role of Harford County, Maryland. 95

We have several new studies of British participants in the Chesapeake campaign. There are two new biographies of Horatio Nelson’s bold and gifted protégé, Admiral George Cockburn, who spearheaded British operations in the Chesapeake, culminating in the assault on Washington. James Pack is primarily interested in Cockburn as an individual, and his study presents a more detailed account of Cockburn’s Chesapeake campaign. 96 Roger Morriss, on the other hand, is more interested in Cockburn’s place in the Royal Navy tradition, and his work shows a firmer grasp of British strategic considerations. 97 In a related study, Bryan Perrett briefly examines the life of James Gordon, who masterminded the daring waterborne plunder of Alexandria in 1814. 98

Several other works on this campaign should be noted. Lonn Taylor has retold the story of how “The Star-Spangled Banner” was written and has traced the history of the famous flag from the end of the war to the present. 99 Scott Sheads has written a brief history of Fort McHenry that includes particularly striking contemporary color illustrations. 100 Louis Norton has written an informative biography of Chesapeake naval hero Joshua Barney, although the work is thinly documented, and the author acknowledges that he has taken “some minor license by adding a dash of prose coloration.” 101 And Christopher George has penned an article describing the role of African Americans in the campaign. 102

The Southwest and Gulf Coast

The fifth theater of operations, the Gulf Coast, was much better served by historians in the 1980s, largely because of the appeal of the spectacular Battle of New Orleans.103 Even so, we have several new works on this campaign. Gene Smith has put out a new edition of Arsène Lacarrière Latour's important contemporary work on the war on the Gulf Coast.104 Smith explains Latour's role in the war in an introductory chapter, and he has added twenty documents to the appendix that Latour planned to include in a future edition. Robert Remini has drawn upon his research on Andrew Jackson over the years to produce a lively account of the Battle of New Orleans that is rich in detail but thinly documented.105 Remini calls this battle "one of the great defining moments in the history of the republic" because it helped establish American character and vindicate American nationhood.106 Tim Pickles has written a breezy, undocumented account of the Battle of New Orleans that is part of the Osprey Campaign Series.107 This work is useful mainly for its lavish illustrations. Matthew Warshauer has re-examined Andrew Jackson's rule of martial law in New Orleans.108 And Robert Vogel has written a pair of articles on the Lafitte brothers and the Baratarian pirates.109

The Indians

Further enhancing our understanding of the War of 1812 has been the publication of a number of books on the Indians.110 Gregory Dowd has written a compelling analysis of the spiritually-based and remarkably persistent pan-Indian movement, although his treatment of the war

103. See note 5.
106. Ibid., 199.
110. In Canada, Indian tribes are officially known as "First Nations," and Indians are often referred to as "aboriginal people" (the equivalent in the United States of "Native Americans").
years is regrettably thin. John Sugden helps fill this gap in his detailed biography of Tecumseh, the best-known leader of the Indian unity movement. Sugden’s work is sometimes uncritical and often speculative, but it is based on extensive research, and the story he tells is richly textured and remarkably informative. The late Robert Allen has written an account of Britain’s relationship with the Indians, emphasizing the critical role they played in defending Canada during the War of 1812.

We also have several new works that focus on the northern Indians. Richard White’s study is a fine example of the new Indian history that “places Indian peoples at the center of the scene and seeks to understand the reasons for their actions.” White calls the Old Northwest “the middle ground,” a kind of no-man’s land where Indians and whites interacted in an extraordinary variety of ways, most of which had very little to do with imperial or tribal policy. Another important work shedding light on the northern Indians is Carl Benn’s superb study of the Iroquois. Like Robert Allen, Benn argues that the Indians played a crucial role in the defense of Canada, and he has a particularly good chapter on how the Iroquois waged war. He also demonstrates how this once powerful confederation, divided and greatly weakened by the American Revolution, was utterly devastated by the War of 1812. Less useful is Christopher Densmore’s brief biography of Red Jacket, the Seneca orator and statesman who sided with the United States. Densmore shows that Red Jacket deserves to be remembered for his efforts to preserve Seneca traditions and tribal lands but adds little to our understanding of his role in the War of 1812.

There are also several new books that focus on the Indians in the Southwest. Kathryn Braund’s study of Creek trade shows how contact with whites changed Creek society and ultimately led to the Creek civil war that soon became Andrew Jackson’s Creek War. Similarly, Benjamin Griffith’s dual biography of William McIntosh and William Weath-

erford, two mixed-blood leaders who fought on opposite sides in the Creek civil war, also argues that white contact caused the internecine conflict.\textsuperscript{118} Claudio Saunt makes much the same point in a perceptive study that argues that mestizos (mixed-bloods) spearheaded the adoption of new concepts of power and property that fundamentally transformed and disrupted Creek society and thus brought on the civil war.\textsuperscript{119} Indeed, Saunt emphasizes that Redstick traditionalists targeted mixed-bloods as much as whites in their war with the United States. David and Jeanne Heidler have written a study of Andrew Jackson and American expansion in the Southwest that is sharply critical of Old Hickory, portraying him as "an angry young man who became an angry old man."\textsuperscript{120} Thomas Kanon has written an article on the Battle of Horseshoe Bend that includes fresh detail.\textsuperscript{121} And Brian Rucker has written an article describing American raids on the surviving Redsticks who took refuge in Spanish Florida after their defeat at Horseshoe Bend.\textsuperscript{122}

Together these works present a great deal of information on how Native Americans lived and on their role in the War of 1812, showing that they were much more than passive agents to be manipulated by the belligerent powers.

The War at Sea

The war at sea has attracted almost as much attention as the war on land. Robert Gardiner has edited a large-format, illustrated work that presents an overview of the naval war. This is a British production, the fifth volume in a six-volume set on the British navy in the French Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars.\textsuperscript{123} Although an informative and useful corrective to American studies, this work is marred by an unnecessary introductory chapter that is filled with errors and by a tendency to distort the evidence to make the British look better. We also have two vol-

\textsuperscript{118}. Benjamin W. Griffith, Jr., McIntosh and Weatherford, Creek Indian Leaders (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 1988).


\textsuperscript{123}. Robert Gardiner, ed., The Naval War of 1812 (Annapolis, Md.: Naval Institute Press, 1999). The series is the Chatham Pictorial Histories.

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umes in the superb documentary collection being produced by William Dudley and his colleagues at the Naval Historical Center in Washington, D.C.\textsuperscript{124} This collection, which is now projected to reach four volumes, focuses on the American side of the story, but within those limits covers all aspects of the war on the coast, the high seas, and the lakes, including operations, supply, recruitment, privateers, marines, ship construction, prisoners-of-war, and inter- and intra-service rivalries.

We have two new studies of American naval strategy at the beginning of the war. In one, Peter Kastor makes the dubious claim that the administration sent the navy to sea only because the army was so slow to mobilize.\textsuperscript{125} In the other, Jeff Seiken suggests that the American navy might have been most profitably used disrupting trade and threatening troop and supply transports off the coast of Canada.\textsuperscript{126} Two other studies examine British naval strategy. In a fact-filled article focusing on the economic impact of the conflict, Faye Kert argues that blockade and convoy played a central role in British strategy.\textsuperscript{127} And in a thinly researched article that explores British attitudes, C. J. Bartlett argues that contempt for the American people underlay Britain's willingness to launch amphibious operations against civilian targets.\textsuperscript{128}

Another useful work on the navy is Christopher McKee's fine study of the officer corps.\textsuperscript{129} McKee presents an excellent analysis of how the navy worked before and during the War of 1812, focusing on the duties of officers, navy finances, deaths and resignations, crime and punishment, alcoholism (predictably widespread), and homosexuality (surprisingly rare). Another useful work is Harold Langley's informative but

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{126} Jeff Seiken, “'To Strike a Blow in the World that Shall Resound through the Universe': American Naval Operations and Options at the Start of the War of 1812,” in \textit{New Interpretations of Naval History: Selected Papers from the Fourteenth Naval History Symposium}, ed. Randy Balano and Craig L. Symonds, Naval Institute Press, forthcoming.
\item \textsuperscript{129} Christopher McKee, \textit{A Gentlemanly and Honorable Profession: The Creation of the U.S. Naval Officer Corps, 1794–1815} (Annapolis, Md.: Naval Institute Press, 1991).
\end{itemize}
diffuse study of naval medicine, which details attempts to cope with health problems ashore and afloat and describes the movement to establish a more professional medical service. Complementing Langley's work is Seebert Goldowsky's fascinating biography of Usher Parsons, a surgeon who served on the Niagara frontier and then in Perry's squadron on Lake Erie.

Spencer Tucker's illustrated study of naval guns and ordnance is yet another valuable work. Although this study is indispensable for understanding the war at sea, Tucker presents little information on how the guns actually performed in battle, and his spare documentation style will make it difficult for others to duplicate his research.

Tucker also has produced a fine study of Jefferson's gunboat navy. Tucker argues that during the War of 1812 gunboats played a useful (if modest) role, convoying coastal vessels, serving as transports for the navy, and delaying the British advance on New Orleans. In a follow-up article, Tucker credits these vessels with several other minor wartime contributions. In another study (one that uses a somewhat broader definition of gunboats), Gene Smith makes the credible argument that these vessels contributed to the American victories on Lake Erie and Lake Champlain as well as at New Orleans, although his claim that they also delayed the British assault on Washington and prevented an attack on Charleston and Savannah seems to go too far. In still another work, Robert Malcomson presents a superb analysis of the design and use of gunboats on Lake Ontario and the St. Lawrence River. In another study of small vessels, William Wells seeks to shed light on the confusing history of American revenue cutters captured during the war, although at times his account is itself confusing. Finally, in a brief article, Blake Dun-

navent examines the American navy’s river operations during the war.\textsuperscript{138}

We also have new studies of several ships and naval engagements. Frances Robotti and James Vescovi have written an undocumented popular history of the USS \textit{Essex} that challenges Captain David Porter’s claim that he did $5 million dollars in damage to the British in the Pacific before his ship was captured and turned into an Irish prison hulk.\textsuperscript{139} Tyrone Martin has significantly revised his authoritative 1980 popular work on the USS \textit{Constitution}, presenting additional detail on the ship and its successful cruises during the war.\textsuperscript{140} In another popular work, James Tertius de Kay traces the history of the \textit{Macedonian}, the British frigate that was captured by the USS \textit{United States} in 1812.\textsuperscript{141} Calling this “the most important prize of war ever taken by the American Navy,” de Kay shows how the navy kept this trophy ship on display until it was finally dropped from the rolls in 1875.\textsuperscript{142} In another popular work, De Kay describes the Anglo-American sparring in Long Island Sound and Great Britain’s curious assault in 1814 on the exposed but inoffensive town of Stonington, Connecticut.\textsuperscript{143} And in a recent article, Anthony Gutridge has examined the lucrative business of a British navy prize agent at Halifax and Bermuda during the war.\textsuperscript{144}

Poor record keeping has limited our understanding of the design and construction of many warships that took part in the 1812 conflict. Fortunately, scholars on both sides of the border have begun archaeological investigations of sunken ships, many of which have been well preserved in the freshwater environment of the lakes. So far, these projects have targeted some fifteen vessels, including the \textit{Nancy} in Lake Huron; the \textit{Hamilton}, \textit{Scourge}, and \textit{Jefferson} in Lake Ontario; the \textit{Eagle}, \textit{Ticonderoga}, and \textit{Linnet} in Lake Champlain; and Joshua Barney’s flotilla of gunboats in the Chesapeake Bay.\textsuperscript{145}

\begin{thebibliography}{145}
\item Frances Diane Robotti and James Vescovi, \textit{The USS “Essex” and the Birth of the American Navy} (Holbrook, Mass.: Adams Media, 1999).
\item Ibid., 11.
\item The best overview of this subject, though now somewhat dated, is Kenneth A. Cassavoy and Kevin J. Crisman, “The War of 1812: Battle for the Great Lakes,” in \textit{Ships and Shipwrecks of the Americas: A History Based on Underwater Archaeolog-
We have several new naval biographies as well. Ira Dye has written a fine dual biography of two commanders, William Allen of the USS Argus and John Maples of HMS Pelican, whose vessels clashed in 1813. In the process of telling his story, Dye presents a good deal of information on service in the American and British navies. Stephen Duffy has just published a study of Johnston Blakeley, the ill-fated officer who was in charge of the USS Wasp when it disappeared at sea in 1814 after a remarkably successful cruise. And Gene Smith has written a biography of Thomas ap Catesby Jones, the naval officer who chased smugglers and foreign privateers at New Orleans and then fought the British on Lake Borgne.

The War of 1812 was the last war in which privateering played a significant role, and several recent works deal with this subject. Lawyer Donald Petrie has written an incisive little book that lays out the ground rules for privateering. He also discusses the practice of ransoming vessels and the use of sea cartels. Faye Kert has written a fine account of Canadian privateering, demonstrating that this species of warfare contributed to the "unprecedented prosperity" of Nova Scotia and New Brunswick during the war. Kert has informative chapters on the operations of privateers, the evolution of prize law and prize courts, the British system for licensing enemy trade, and the disposition of navy prizes. She also compares privateering in Canada with the practice in the United States. In another work, Richard Winslow presents a colorful if superficial account of private armed vessels operating out of Portsmouth. And in yet another work, Gordon Harrington has written...
an article showing how American privateers caused problems in the Far East for Britain's East India Company.  

Most American POWs in this conflict were seafaring men, and two studies of this group should be noted. Robin Fabel has written an article that presents a good description of what life was like at Dartmoor prison for some 6,500 American POWs, most of whom were taken from privateers or released from British warships at the beginning of the war. Similarly, Ira Dye has done a statistical analysis of the Dartmoor POWs to produce a portrait of American seamen in this era.

**Works in Progress**

All in all, the recent outpouring of literature on the military history of the War of 1812 has been remarkable. Nor is the end in sight. Robert Malcomson is writing books on the Battle of Queenston Heights and warships on the lakes; James Elliott is working on the Battle of Stoney Creek; John Grodzinski is pursuing research on the war on the St. Lawrence River; Stanley Quick is writing a book on the war in the Chesapeake; William Gray has another project under way on the militia of Upper Canada; Donald E. Graves is working on a biography of the Canadian traitor Joseph Willcocks; Carl Benn is preparing a biography of the influential Anglo-Indian leader John Norton; Frederick Drake is working on the naval war; Gary Gibson is studying the war on Lake Ontario and the St. Lawrence River; Barry Gough is writing a book on the war on Lake Huron; David Skaggs is writing a dual biography of Oliver Perry and Thomas Macdonough; Tyrone Martin and Virginia Steele are working on a biography of shipbuilder William Doughty; Richard Eddy is working on a study of shipbuilder Joshua Humphreys; Kevin Crisman is editing a volume on the archeology of 1812 shipwrecks; Matthew Warshauer is writing a book on Andrew Jackson's imposition of martial law in New Orleans; John Stagg is working on a social history of the American army; Gene Smith is preparing a comprehensive work on African Americans in the war; and John Weiss is researching the 4,000 slaves who fled with the British at the end of the conflict.

Still a Forgotten Conflict?

Does this renaissance mean that we can drop the label "forgotten conflict"? Probably not yet. Most of the work has been done in the United States and Canada. Canadians have been especially busy, producing a disproportionate number of 1812 studies, probably because this war holds a more central place in their heritage. Indeed, in a recent poll Canadians ranked the War of 1812 as the third most important event in their history, behind only the establishment of the Confederation (1867) and the completion of the Canadian Pacific Railway (1885). The British, by contrast, still consider "the second American war" little more than a footnote to the Napoleonic Wars. Even though there were as many British troops in North America in 1814 (48,000) as at any time in the Peninsula, and far more than at Waterloo in 1815, the British continue to ignore the American conflict.

Moreover, virtually all the new work has been confined to the war's military history; the domestic history and the diplomatic history have been largely ignored. In addition, while the new works have given us a deeper understanding of the war, they probably will not significantly alter the way the conflict is treated in textbooks. Recent scholarship has

155. See Anne McIlroy, "Confederation Wins the Vote for the Greatest Event in Our History," Toronto Globe and Mail, 18 September 2000.


158. There are some exceptions. In Injured Honor: The "Chesapeake"-"Leopard" Affair, June 27, 1807 (Annapolis, Md.: Naval Institute Press, 1996), Spencer C. Tucker and Frank T. Reuter present the first book-length analysis of this episode in Anglo-American relations. Their description of the engagement and the ensuing American naval investigation is very good, but their diplomatic history is unreliable. In The Presidency of James Madison (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1990), Robert A. Rutland presents an even-handed but sympathetic view of Madison's wartime leadership. And in American Public Finance and Financial Services, 1700–1815 (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1994), Edwin J. Perkins presents a refreshingly modern and astute reassessment of American wartime finance. Perkins argues that the administration did much better in this area than is commonly thought, although he appears to have underestimated the seriousness of the financial crisis that beset the nation in the last months of the war, when the Treasury was so destitute of funds that it defaulted on the national debt, government paper was quoted at a substantial discount, and banks and government contractors refused to accept treasury notes.
not significantly changed the big picture of the war, and most textbooks
do not go much beyond this. Textbook writers are usually slow to adopt
new ideas anyway (unless, of course they deal with trendy subjects, such
as race, gender, class, or ethnicity).

Nor is it certain that the public will embrace the war as enthusiasti-
cally as scholars have. There are, however, some indications that it may.
Studies dealing with the conflict seem to sell reasonably well, although
this could be simply a reflection of the general popularity of military his-
tory. Also encouraging is the way that reenactors around the country
have gravitated to the conflict. Canadian John Sek has identified thirty-
seven American and British units that are now active. There is a Gen-
eral Society of the War of 1812, with affiliates in twenty-two states and
the District of Columbia, which is open to the male lineal descendants of
those who served in the war. There is a similar organization for
women, the United States Daughters of 1812, which is open to female
descendants of anyone who held a civil or military position between
1784 and 1815. This organization has affiliates in thirty-eight states and
the District of Columbia and maintains a museum in Washington, D.C.

The War of 1812 Consortium in Baltimore publishes a popular quar-
terly journal and sponsors an annual fall symposium on the war. Christo-
pher George and the War of 1812 Consortium also have established
a comprehensive website that publishes documents, articles, biograp-
ographical sketches, and other information on the war. Holts Tours of Kent,
England, has offered tours of 1812 sites, and HistoryAmerica Tours of Dallas,
Texas, offered a similar tour in 1998 (although it did not draw nearly as well as estab-
lished tours dealing with the Revolution, the Civil War, or the Indian wars of the West).

159. David Nevin's fictional work, 1812: A Novel (New York: Forge, 1996), also
seems to have sold well.

160. Sek has listed thirty-four units on his web site at <http://www.iaw.on.ca/
~jsek/1812unit.htm>. Three additional units have not yet been listed. Sek to author,

161. For details on this organization, go to: <http://www.societyofthewarof
1812.org>.

162. For details, go to: <http://www.usdaughters1812.org>.

163. The “Journal of the War of 1812” was formerly “The Journal of 1800–1840.”

164. “Casebook: The War of 1812” can be found at: <http://warof1812.casebook.
org>.

com/1812.htm>. Yale Law School's “Avalon Project” supports another website that
reproduces documents bearing on the war's diplomatic history. See <http://www.yale.
edu/lawweb/avalon/diplomacy/br1814m.htm>.

166. The Canadian army regularly offers tours of 1812 sites as part of the pro-
fessional development of its officers just as American army officers regularly take part
in staff rides of Civil War battlefields.
Even though only 4 of the 229 cultural or historical sites managed by the National Park Service are devoted to the war, the Park Service has initiated a study of all 1812 sites in the United States to foster preservation. The Park Service also is studying the feasibility of creating a Star-Spangled Banner National Historic Trail linking more than thirty 1812 sites in the Upper Chesapeake. Canadian officials and scholars seem equally determined to preserve and promote sites on their side of the border. Efforts also are under way to reconstruct some of the warships that sailed on the Great Lakes during the era of the War of 1812. On the American side the Niagara has been rebuilt, as has the privateer Chasseur (which, after a fire, has been rebuilt a second time and is called The Pride of Baltimore II); and on the Canadian side the Tecumseth and Bee have been reconstructed, and work has begun on the Detroit and Wolfe.

Documentary films could further stimulate public interest. Here, as in other areas, the Canadians have taken the lead. Arnie Gelbart and Andrea Nemtin have produced a four-part documentary presenting the Canadian and Indian view of the war for Galafilm of Canada. This ponderous film relies heavily on actors and reenactors instead of expert commentators, but despite some inadequacies, it is generally accurate. It has aired on local stations in Canada as well as on the History Channel. Canadian Robert Livesey has produced a three-part film on the war that relies entirely on re-enactors for both commentary and action scenes. Although marred by some errors, anachronistic language, and confusing battle scenes, the film does a good job of depicting field and battle conditions of the period. Mark Starowicz is producing a sixteen-part documentary on the history of Canada for the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation that started airing on CBC in the fall of 2000. The fifth episode covers the years from the American Revolution through the War of 1812.

167. The four 1812 sites are Fort McHenry National Monument and Historic Shrine in Baltimore, Maryland; Perry’s Victory and International Peace Memorial at Put-in-Bay, Ohio; Horseshoe Bend National Military Park at Daviston, Alabama; and John Lafitte National Historical Park, which includes Chalmette Battlefield and National Cemetery, in New Orleans, Louisiana. The total number of sites managed by the Park Service is 384. For more on the National Park Service’s American Battlefield Preservation Program (which is currently targeting sites from the American Revolution as well as the War of 1812), go to: <http://www2.cr.nps.gov/abpp>.

168. For the reconstruction of the Niagara, see Bob Malcolmson, “Niagara Sails Again,” Naval History 5 (Summer 1991): 37–43.


170. There is a large format, richly illustrated companion volume to the film that includes an interactive CD-ROM. It is Victor Suthren, The War of 1812 (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1999).


172. Rebels, Loyalists and Invaders, Episode #5 of Canada: A People’s History, prod. Mark Starowicz, Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, 2000–.
American Gary Foreman has produced nicely paced and reasonably accurate documentaries on the life of Tecumseh and the Battle of New Orleans, although the former is marred by too many Anglo-looking Indians and a certainty in the script that is hardly warranted by the historical record.173 Both of these films have aired on the History Channel. The History Channel has produced its own documentary on “The “Star-Spangled Banner.”174 This film is well-paced and profits from scholarly commentary, but the script is gushy and filled with errors. It is also marred by an ill-advised attempt to pass off Hillary Rodham Clinton as an expert on the Fort McHenry flag. Finally, Bruce Carlin and David Fitz-Enz of Cannonade Filmworks have produced a fine documentary on the Battle of Plattsburgh and are contemplating another documentary that would cover the entire war.175

Future Work

Is there additional work still to be done on the war? There certainly is. Although scholars have pursued some of the leads that I suggested in my 1989 study (as well as many that did not occur to me), there are still gaps in our knowledge. We need someone to write a history of this conflict from the perspective of the British government and the British people. We also need a full-scale analysis of the strategy and tactics of the war. We could use modern studies of the battles of Tippecanoe, Detroit, Fort George, Stoney Creek, and Beaver Dams. We could also use a detailed account of General Henry Dearborn’s aborted invasion of Upper Canada in 1812 and of the British occupation of Maine in 1814. In addition, we need fuller studies of the British and American supply systems, the treatment of prisoners of war, and the role of privateering. We could profit from modern biographies of all the British senior commanders (Prevost, Brock, Sheaffe, Drummond, and de Rottenburg) and several of their American counterparts (Dearborn and Porter as well as William Hull, Alexander Macomb, and James Wilkinson).

There also is work to be done on the domestic and diplomatic history of the war. To better assess the causes of the war, we need modern


studies of the British practice of impressment, the American use of economic sanctions, and the economic impact on the United States of the British Orders-in-Council and the French Continental Decrees. For the war itself, we need to know more about the scope and role of enemy trade, the part played by Republican dissidents in the United States and Canadian dissidents in Canada, and the way that enemy aliens were treated on both sides. We could also use a comprehensive study of Federalist opposition to the war.

We need modern treatments of the financial history of the war in the United States and Canada. The social and economic history of the contest in both countries has barely been touched. In addition, we could use studies that explore the war in the American and Canadian memories—that is, how the conflict has been understood and portrayed on each side of the border over the past two hundred years. Finally, as John Stagg has suggested, we need someone to break the standard campaign narrative mold and offer a new synthesis of the war, one that better links the wartime themes of American unity and expansion to subsequent developments in American history.

Fortunately, source material for much of this research is readily available. In the United States, most of the pertinent government records, personal correspondence, newspapers, pamphlets, and other sources have been microfilmed and thus can be bought or borrowed through interlibrary loan. Much of the British material is available on microfilm as well. According to Donald E. Graves, “The National Archives of Canada in Ottawa has acquired all the British diplomatic, strategical and operational primary documentation of the war in the north and it is well indexed, organized and available on microfilm for loan.”

In sum, even though we know more about the War of 1812 than we did ten or fifteen years ago, there are still plenty of opportunities for those interested in pursuing research on the “forgotten conflict.”

176. The most notable exception as far as social history is concerned is George Sheppard’s Plunder, Profits, and Paroles and a follow-up article, “Wants and Privations: Women in the War of 1812 in Upper Canada,” Histoire sociale/Social History 28 (May 1995): 159–79.

177. Stagg made this suggestion in a thoughtful comment delivered in a session entitled “The War of 1812 and Its Aftermath” at the annual SHEAR meeting in Buffalo, N.Y., on 21 July 2000.