



Map 1.1 1783. (Reproduced by permission of Dr. Claudio Saunt, <http://www.ehistory.org/>, University of Georgia.)

The “Indian Question”

In Need of a Solution

They could now get on with the task of burying the dead. For the previous three days, the last three of the old year, a ferocious winter storm had pummeled the upper plains. By the morning of New Year’s Day, 1891, the blizzard had blown itself out, and the sun began to break through the gray clouds. As the sky cleared, a train of wagons accompanied by individuals on horseback, both Sioux and Americans, set out from Pine Ridge agency, situated near the southwestern corner of the Sioux’s Pine Ridge reservation in South Dakota. The party’s destination was Wounded Knee Creek some twenty miles to the east. There, Sioux and troops of the U.S. Seventh Cavalry had clashed on December 29, 1890, leaving hundreds of Sioux either killed or severely wounded.

The Sioux, absorbed in distressing thoughts, crossed the bleak prairie through the frigid morning air, along the trail leading to where so much ended. Many precious lives were lost. The beautiful dream had died too. Why? Was there no means left to

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save the old treasured ways? Was all hope finally exhausted for the Indian people? They remembered the spiritual path that many recently had followed with such passion. It was a seductive dream, teeming with confident anticipation of deliverance for Indian peoples and escape from the white oppressors. At the end of that intoxicating path lay not rebirth but, instead, this agonizing moment, this appalling conclusion of death and finality.

The Sioux who fell at Wounded Knee were followers of the Paiute mystic Wovoka, whose message combining Indian mysticism and Christian millennialism had found a substantial following in the late 1880s among the war weary, beaten-down western tribes. A dozen years had passed since the victory of the United States in the Great Plains wars that completed the Indians' subjugation. The mystic's message of God's forthcoming deliverance of the Indian people raised hopes and spawned jubilation among tribes from the Pacific Northwest to Oklahoma.

Wovoka described in great detail his vision and the instructions from the Divine to all who would listen. God promised in the fullness of time to expel the white people and return the earth to the Indians, the living as well as the dead—and give them back the buffalo.¹ Indians must learn a special dance and perform it regularly, Wovoka was instructed. The more often the Ghost Dance was performed, the sooner God would vanquish the white people and return the earth to the Indians.

News spread rapidly about Wovoka's vision and the possible return of old-fashioned life. Deeply discouraged by the long struggle with the United States, its army and bureaucrats, many Indian people turned joyously, some even desperately, to this forthcoming restorative event. They eagerly accepted Wovoka's revelations as divine inspiration and, for that reason, faithfully performed the dance. Devotees prepared themselves for their rebirth and for the vanquishing of the white man who had brought such chaos and unhappiness to their lives.

Federal authorities, alarmed by the mounting frenzy, in the autumn of 1890 ordered the Ghost Dance halted. Intimidated believers acquiesced across the West, including most of the Sioux,

the largest tribe on the Great Plains. Nonetheless, a significant number of Sioux refused and fled to the Dakota Badlands to continue the dance faithfully. Leaving their encampment on the Sioux's Cheyenne River reservation and making their way peacefully and cautiously southward toward the Pine Ridge reservation, Chief Big Foot and his band nevertheless were intercepted by troops of the Seventh Cavalry and taken as prisoners to the small settlement of Wounded Knee. On the morning following their capture in late December 1890, soldiers moved to disarm the Indians. Their resistance quickly turned into a melee between Sioux and soldiers, with shots exchanged. The Seventh Cavalry responded with a volley of rifle, pistol, and artillery fire that left hundreds of Sioux men, women, and children either killed or severely wounded. The massacre at Wounded Knee destroyed people's confidence in Wovoka's promises and their faith in the Ghost Dance.

Wounded Knee was the last battle, as the federal government termed the event, between the Indians and the United States Army, although no one knew it at the time. War Department annual reports throughout the 1890s indicated that the military anticipated other outbreaks of trouble. Faith in Wovoka's message and the Ghost Dance faded quickly after Wounded Knee; with all hope gone, no tribe dared to rise in resistance against the United States.

The full significance of Wounded Knee emerged in time: it was the conclusion of a four-century-long struggle with America's First Nations. That struggle had embroiled the United States for longer than a century and, before that, the European imperial powers for almost three centuries. It epitomized the greatest reality of the American Indian experience during that four-century-long struggle: the unalterable reality of white dominance over the continent and the lives and destinies of its indigenous peoples. It also demonstrated the utter failure of federal Indian policy to fashion a workable and mutually acceptable solution to what whites called the "Indian Question."

Wounded Knee also became an historical allegory that is, at the same time, artificial and accurate. For many, that event

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symbolizes the tragic passing of "Indian America," although most tribes had experienced their own "Wounded Knee," their own culminating episode, years, decades, or centuries before. Many view Wounded Knee as a microcosm of Indian history since the coming of the white man, characterized by victimization and cultural imperialism, futile resistance and absolute defeat.

This theme gained a wide popular audience with Dee Brown's best seller whose title, *Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee*, drew from Stephen Vincent Benét's poem "American Names." "I shall not be there. I shall rise and pass. Bury my heart at Wounded Knee," Benét reminded America of its once proud and free native peoples. That tragic event endures as a reminder of the dreadful human cost paid for the "Winning of the West," for realizing the republic's "Manifest Destiny," for conquering the lands comprising the contiguous United States of America.

Between 1776 and 1887, white conquerors would claim as their own 1.5 billion acres of land possessed by native peoples. The expansion of the American population westward during the first century of the national experience was spectacular in its swiftness and scope. Surging outward from the Atlantic seaboard and across the Appalachian chain, Americans moved with intense and unyielding determination to acquire and settle a vast western domain: first east, then west of the Mississippi. By 1850, the nation stretched from the Atlantic to the Pacific—"from sea to shining sea," as Americans heralded jubilantly in song. Many still dreamed of adding Canada, more of Mexico, and various Caribbean islands, such as Cuba, to the expansive republic.

Each year Americans filled in the frontier until finally, in the late nineteenth century, the superintendent of the census for the United States declared that the American frontier had ceased to exist. A Census Bureau bulletin in 1890 concluded: "Up to and including 1880 the country had a frontier of settlement, but at present the unsettled area has been so broken into by isolated bodies of settlement that there can hardly be said to be a frontier line." In a twist of irony, the announcement came in the same year as the massacre at Wounded Knee.

The vast locales acquired and settled by Americans were home to various native groups. First reports of the white invaders may have caused indifference or simple curiosity among Indians, but soon they judged these strangers a threat. The newcomers moved with a firm resolve to displace them, regulate them, and occupy their patrimony. The staggering migration of people, acquisition of territory, and settlement of the frontier was the foremost source of a near constant state of friction and hostility between the United States government, its citizens, and the Indians. In the face of this aggressive drive westward, the pattern most representative of United States–Indian relations was set early. Over the many years, it was subject to the ebb and flow of events and to differing views of policy, but through it ran a strain of unremitting determination to dislodge the indigenous inhabitants of the western lands. Government might from time to time relent; Americans wanting land never did. In 1879, a Wyoming newspaper foretold an inevitable outcome. "The same inscrutable Arbiter that decreed the downfall of Rome has pronounced the doom of extinction upon the red men of America. To attempt to defer this result by mawkish sentimentalism ... is unworthy of the age."

One central, overriding concern confronted the managers of the nation's westward expansion from the birth of the republic in 1787 onward: what should be done with the American Indians? Most whites considered them a dangerous impediment to the republic's territorial, cultural, and economic aspirations. The interracial tensions caused by expansion and the persistent demands from citizens for protection against Indian attacks meant that the United States had to solve the "Indian Question."

Many answers to this question were advanced, both in and out of government. Some proposed creating a geographic boundary that would separate Indian lands from that of American land, much as the British had done in their proclamation of 1763. Great Britain had designated a frontier line along the Appalachian Mountains, with Indian lands to the west and American territory to the east of the boundary line. If the United States government adopted a comparable solution, advocates argued, Indians might

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maintain their accustomed way of life on land of their own in the trans-Appalachian West, free from white encroachment.

Others suggested that culturally transforming the American Indians into "Indian Americans," then assimilating them into the dominant society was the wisest course. Indians were well aware of the existence, indeed the predominance, of this kind of thinking on the part of Americans; although, as Brian W. Dippie states in *The Vanishing American*, "This gift of civilization—the ultimate gift, to the whites' way of thinking ... always seemed to please the donor more than the recipient."

Still others, such as Montana Territorial governor James M. Ashley, urged extermination. "The Indian race on this continent has never been anything but an unmitigated curse to civilization, while the intercourse between the Indian and the white man has been only evil," Ashley asserted in 1870. It will remain so, he stressed, "until the last savage is translated to that celestial hunting ground for which they all believe themselves so well fitted, and to which every settler on our frontier wishes them individually and collectively a safe and speedy transit."

Abundant suggestions, prudent and foolish, mean-spirited and generous, were offered because most Americans thought that a solution to the Indian Question was needed. Indian Commissioner John Quincy Smith, in 1876 at the conclusion of the Plains Wars, observed, "For a hundred years the United States has been wrestling with the 'Indian question.'" And, try as it may, the lasting resolution so urgently sought remained sorely elusive. General William T. Sherman, in a comment to General John M. Schofield, reflected the exasperation this produced in generations of Americans, "The whole Indian question is in such a snarl, that I am utterly powerless to help you by order or advice."

This problem of what means would solve the Indian Question shaped and reshaped the relationship of the republic with America's native peoples. The United States was a half-century old in the 1830s when federal bureaucrats settled upon the initial solution; however, the Indian Question had roots stretching back to colonial times.

Breaching the Ohio Country Barrier

Americans had initiated an experiment with their Revolution the likes of which the world had never seen before: establishing a nation on the principle that liberty was a human right, an unalienable right from God—not the monarch, nor the president, nor legislators. Liberty was not license to act as irresponsibly as one chose. Liberty was acting in any manner a person wished as long as it did not interfere with the exercise of the rights of others. Above all, liberty to Americans meant freedom from a big, powerful, intrusive national government (like the British government) that would be kept out of the people's lives and possessions. For so many Americans, heading west meant heading to lands where life could be lived at its freest, with minimum restrictions. However, the impending movement of liberty-minded Americans into the nation's first West would spawn, with terrible irony, life-altering intrusion into the lives and liberty of native populations.

White settlers, as soon as the American Revolution ended, planned to press forward into the western lands for which they had fought so hard against the British and the Indians. A great many were veterans of the Revolution, compensated by their debt-ridden state and national governments for their time in the military with land grants in the Ohio Country. It was an appealing prospect. Available lands were no longer plentiful in New England, where families averaged seven living children. The South with its slave economy was not attractive either, particularly to those with little or no capital for start-up money. The best bet, especially for the young, lay across the Pennsylvania corridor and into the Ohio Country in search of homes, where acreage was abundant and inexpensive. However, a very serious problem existed for them: although Great Britain granted these lands to the United States when the Revolutionary War ended, the native peoples who had thought for centuries that the land beyond the Appalachian Mountains was their own to keep forever were determined to resist.

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Map 1.2

The United States government hoped both to promote westward expansion and minimize hostilities with tribes by the wise management of Indian affairs. It fell principally to the United States Congress to fashion the agenda for achieving these objectives. The Articles of Confederation initially, and then the Constitution for the United States, granted Congress regulatory power over commerce and treaty making. Those powers allowed the legislative branch to exercise sweeping control over Indian

affairs, which Congress attempted to manage using two tools: the passage of legislation and the negotiating of formal treaties with the various tribes.

Employing its legislative power, Congress created new laws to regulate white settlement on Indian lands and manage the purchase and sale of tribal lands by private speculators. Other laws addressed a devastating and injurious problem among Indians by trying to control white trade in liquor with them. Trade and Intercourse acts hoped to keep unscrupulous dealers away from Indians by establishing a network of government-operated trading houses, called "factories," to try and ensure fair business dealings with tribes.

Congress would use its second power, that of treaty making, to extinguish Indian title to tribal lands. Only another sovereign country can enter into a treaty with the United States. An immediate question that arose after the Revolution was what would be the practice with Indian tribes—was each one its own nation with which to enter into a treaty? In this matter, the Americans looked to the British example for direction. Great Britain throughout the colonial period had recognized tribes as sovereign nations holding title to land by right of occupancy. The British concluded numerous treaties with tribes based on this principle. The new United States government adopted this principle and, for almost 100 years, dealt with American Indian tribes within the borders of the United States as sovereign nations by means of formal treaties.²

As soon as the Revolutionary War ended in 1783, American commissioners conducted numerous councils with the Indian tribes of the South, typically staunch allies of the British in the late war. The commissioners wanted to make peace with these tribes and establish official relations between them and the new United States. Another equally important objective was to begin defining tribal territories and secure Indian land forfeitures to promote continued white settlement. In 1785 and 1786, commissioners negotiated initial treaties at Hopewell, South Carolina, with three of the most powerful southern tribes: the Cherokee, Chickasaw, and Choctaw. Other treaties with other southern tribes followed.

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The United States hoped these steps would keep the peace in the South. Southerners were not impressed by the new national government's activities. In fact, its actions upset the states of the South. Regional leaders charged that the US treaties violated states' sovereignty and undermined their exclusive right to handle affairs with those Indians residing within their borders. Disregarding the national government's objectives and desires, agents from Virginia, Georgia, and North and South Carolina kept Indian affairs stirred up as they doggedly continued to acquire more and more Indian land, using means ethical and unethical, peaceful and violent.

At the same time, other United States commissioners were busy preparing to deal with the western tribes residing above the Ohio River. The national government needed them to be successful, and as quickly as possible. Congress had already crafted a plan for expansion into the western wilderness, the unorganized national lands west of the original thirteen states and east of the Mississippi River. The new national government was determined that such expansion would not be haphazard but orderly, because it planned to use the land north of the Ohio River as its frontier lab. Policies and procedures would be tested and perfected in this laboratory in order to arrive at the best methods for settling the West.

The United States Congress passed land ordinances in 1784, 1785, and 1787 establishing the vast unorganized area beyond the Ohio River into the Northwest Territory. The three land ordinances detailed procedures for the orderly survey, sale, and settlement of land, as well as the establishment of government in this frontier test site. The legislation specified that three to five new states would eventually be fashioned from the Northwest Territory. All was prepared and ready to go, except for Indian concerns, and United States commissioners were under intense pressure to get the tribes out of the way as soon as practicable.

The Ohio Country, the southeastern portion of the new Northwest Territory, was to be developed first and systematically fashioned into a state of the Union, guided by the three land

ordinances. However, even before the first safe settlement could begin, treaties with the various Ohio tribes had to be secured in order to open up the Ohio Country. Commissioners would meet with these tribes at three different councils, where they achieved success after intense negotiations, too frequently assisted by using questionable aids.

The first council, in October 1784, was with the League of the Iroquois at Fort Stanwix, located in the League's territory at Rome, New York. The American Revolution had shattered the League's unity, and its representatives came to the deliberations in a vulnerable position. They were informed that the United States intended to terminate the League's longstanding claims to the lands west of Fort Pitt and north of the Ohio River. The American commissioners told the Iroquois bluntly: "You are a subdued people," and the United States will take "but a small part [of your territory], compared with their numbers and wants." By the terms of the Fort Stanwix treaty, the Iroquois League's claims to the Ohio Country and beyond were extinguished.

Their opening work successfully completed, the pleased commissioners journeyed to western Pennsylvania and Fort McIntosh, situated near the confluence of the Ohio River and the Beaver River in what is now Beaver, Pennsylvania. The second council got under way in January 1785, as the United States opened negotiations with 400 representatives of four Ohio tribes: the Wyandots, Delawares, Chippewas, and Ottawas. The American delegation thought poorly of the behavior and attire of the natives, regarding them as "a very motley crew—an ugly set of devils all." The inflexible Shawnees and Miamis refused to attend this council. Afterward these two tribes would anger the American government because they refused to be bound by the terms of the treaty that they never signed.

The commissioners presented their demands for Ohio land forfeiture to the assembled Indians, and justified their demands by a theoretical "right of conquest" from the Revolutionary War. After all, they pointed out, the Ohio Indians had fought on the side of the British, and the British had lost the war. The shocked Indians protested that Great Britain may have lost to the United

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States, but the Indians never had been conquered by the Americans. The Indian representatives then advanced their own arguments and claims for damages done to their people and villages by American frontiersmen during the war. The commissioners rejected their claims dismissively, asserting, "because we claim the [Ohio] country by conquest, [you are here] to give, not to receive."

Soon the harsh winter weather became difficult to bear, and the cold American negotiators decided that the deliberations with the stubborn Indians had dragged on too long without resolution. And so they employed an additional aid. The Americans plied the Indians with food and large quantities of liquor until tribal representatives, badly inebriated, signed away vast areas of their homeland. The Fort McIntosh Treaty reserved land in northwestern Ohio for the Ohio tribes. It took for the United States the remaining 30 million acres of Indian lands in the southwestern, southern, and eastern parts of the Ohio Country.

Most Ohio Indians ignored the Fort McIntosh Treaty. They felt no obligation to honor a treaty signed by their drunken representatives, especially one based, as they saw it, on the specious justification of right of conquest of them by the United States in the Revolutionary War.

The Fort McIntosh deliberations, intended to facilitate white settlement by producing peaceful relations with tribes living above the Ohio River, instead set those relations on fire. In light of the Americans' obvious plans to take their lands, tribal leaders realized that they must confer with one another and make plans for the defense of the Ohio Country. For assistance in these important preparations, they looked to old friends and allies up at Fort Detroit.

The British had refused to vacate many of its forts in the Great Lakes area at the conclusion of the Revolutionary War. These strongholds sat on land that was now United States soil, and Fort Detroit was one of them. These forts were a statement of British defiance and scorn for the new United States, a nation that was too weak to force Great Britain off its own sovereign territory. The British at Detroit welcomed the Indian leaders

and happily distributed guns, ammunition, blankets, and other supplies to their old associates. British officials also parceled out promises of Great Britain's pending recovery of the Northwest Territory, including the Ohio Country, from the pathetically weak American republic—with, of course, the Ohio Indians' armed assistance.

The first settlements in the Northwest Territory were to be planted on the north side of the Ohio River in the southeastern portion of the Ohio Country. This was Shawnee country, and ever since receiving word of the doings at the Fort McIntosh Treaty conference, the tribe was livid. The Shawnees, along with the Miamis, had not, as mentioned earlier, attended the conference, but they knew of the abundant liquor and inebriated tribal representatives. They deemed the Americans' assertion that these drunken men had signed away the Ohio Country, and that the Shawnees were bound by the Fort McIntosh Treaty, without their consent, as absurd. If American settlers were going to cross the Ohio and begin settling the lands north of that river, national officials realized that reaching an accord with the incensed and aggressive Shawnees was imperative.

In January 1786, American commissioners organized a third council, this time with the Shawnees, at Fort Finney, located on the Ohio River near modern Cincinnati. The commissioners brought along large quantities of liquor and planned to use it, if necessary, to manipulate the Shawnees into the desired results. Commissioners advised them to "be thankful for the forgiveness and offers of kindness of the United States." The Shawnees were incredulous; the Americans were playing the same game again. "God gave us this country," they retorted. "We do not understand measuring out the lands; it is all ours." The commissioners dismissed the Shawnee's contention as so much ignorance, brought out the liquor, threatened the tribe with war, and replied to their retort that "this country belongs to the United States."

On February 1, 1786, a treaty was signed by the intoxicated Shawnees and, theoretically, the tribe lost all of its lands in southern Ohio and adjacent areas of eastern Indiana. In reality,

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they left the proceedings, returned to their villages, sobered up, and repudiated the treaty. Then, out for vengeance, they again made war on their old nemeses, the Kentuckians, as well as on any Americans who now foolishly arrived north of the Ohio to settle on the Shawnees' "former" lands. It looked increasingly as if warfare and not negotiations would be the means of ultimately settling the issue of the fate of the Ohio Country.

By the time the United States got the Shawnees drunk at Fort Finney, a loose confederacy of western Indians was gathering along the Maumee River in northwestern Ohio and at Kekionga, the Miamis' capital on the Wabash River in eastern Indiana. The Miamis, Ottawas, Chippewas, Shawnees, Potawatomis, Kickapoos, and Delawares made up the confederacy. All agreed to fight together and hold the Ohio Country with the support of, and with guns from, the British at Fort Detroit. Little Turtle of the Miamis, Blue Jacket of the Shawnees, Buckongehelas of the Delawares, and Tarhe of the Wyandots led them. Soon the frontier was ablaze as the Indians struck hard, again and again, at the ever-increasing number of farms and settlements in eastern and southern Ohio Territory. One estimate claims that by 1790 more than 1,500 settlers perished in these Indian attacks.

A concerned Secretary of War Henry Knox decided that the United States must respond to the western confederacy of tribes with force. Only military victories against these Indians would coerce satisfactory results from treaties that the commissioners had yet to conclude. This more aggressive Indian policy reflected the new and more powerful national government under which Americans now lived. The first, states' rights-oriented national government of the United States, formed under the Articles of Confederation, had now been abandoned. A federal republic, established by the Constitution for the United States, replaced it in the spring of 1789. The Constitution gave the federal government greater military and enforcement provisions that it soon would use against the Indians.

The Ohio Country would be invaded three times by the United States in its dogged attempts to subdue the confederated Indians. For the initial invasion, a force composed of regular army soldiers

and frontier militiamen was organized at Fort Washington, near present Cincinnati, under the command of Brigadier General Josiah Harmar. In the autumn of 1790, Harmar's troops marched up through western Ohio, all the way to the heart of the confederacy at the village of Kekionga, the Miami capital. They burned it down, as well as Shawnee and Delaware villages they encountered. Inhabitants, learning of the approach of the American invasion force, had fled the scene earlier.

For the next week, Harmar and his men searched the frontier looking for the illusive Indian warriors. Then, as if materializing from out of nowhere in the forest, warriors led by Miami war chief Little Turtle ambushed Harmar's forces. While the regular army troops performed suitably during the battle, the militiamen fled in panic. Exhibiting behavior assessed as "scandalous" by a lieutenant in the regular army, he reported that "many militiamen never fired a shot but ran off ... and left the regulars to be slaughtered. Some of them never halted until they crossed the Ohio." A similar debacle involving terrified militiamen occurred two days later. Now General Harmar led his men in a retreat to Fort Washington.

An American army had been dealt a terrible blow at the hands of Indians. Josiah Harmar was relieved of his command. A court martial in 1791, convened at the general's own request, cleared him of any wrongdoing during the campaign. For the United States, that invasion was a huge disaster; for the Indians, it infused them with greater confidence that they could repel the Americans from taking their country. Josiah Harmar's disaster, as bad as it was, would soon be surpassed by the second invasion that fashioned a catastrophe.

A year passed before the Americans were prepared to invade again. Communications between Fort Washington, near Cincinnati, and the national government in New York City took a great deal of time. Raising and outfitting a new fighting force to replace the old one took more time. At last, by autumn 1791, the troops were prepared to move out. Territorial Governor Arthur St. Clair, a general officer during the Revolutionary War, commanded the expedition of 1,400 men. The second invasion

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pushed northward, up the rivers and the old Indian war trails of western Ohio, intent on subduing the confederated natives. Eyes were on the Americans during the entire excursion. Indian scouts, including a young Tecumseh, shadowed the Americans, providing Little Turtle and the Shawnee Blue Jacket with excellent intelligence. It allowed the two war leaders to pick the right time and the proper forest setting to spring their trap.

The weather was oppressively cold and light snow covered the ground as the Americans encamped on a small branch of the Wabash River some 75 miles north of Fort Washington and just east of the present Ohio-Indiana state line on November 3. The undisciplined militia, ill trained in wilderness warfare, had not taken adequate precautionary defensive measures to safeguard their camp from assault, nor were sufficient pickets positioned in the forest to give advanced warning of an imminent attack. The Indians struck the stationary invasion forces early on the morning of November 4, catching them completely by surprise. The three-hour battle was an unmitigated disaster for St. Clair and the Americans. The survivors, after disengaging from the fight, immediately began to retreat southward, eventually reaching the safety of Fort Washington. Little Turtle's and Blue Jacket's victory amounted to the worst defeat ever suffered by a United States army at the hands of Indians in a single battle: 600 Americans dead and nearly 300 wounded. As horrific as the results were, it could have been worse. Had the Indians not delayed as long as they did after the battle, rummaging through and picking up the spoils left behind by the panicked fleeing troops, they might have pursued and annihilated Arthur St. Clair's retreating army.

The news of St. Clair's humiliating defeat ignited George Washington's well-known temper. The president, upon hearing of this second huge victory for the Indians, knew that he had to pick a commander for a third invasion who was absolutely reliable. To lead it, Washington called on a comrade from the Revolution, General "Mad Anthony" Wayne, placing him in command of a newly formed professional military force called the "Legion of the United States."

Anthony Wayne was anything but mad in a clinical sense; he was a solid military man who had distinguished himself during the Revolutionary War, during which he earned his nickname for his reckless gallantry and ferocious temper. Wayne now drilled his troops in forest warfare at Cincinnati, training them relentlessly in the hazards they would face in the wilderness against skilled and battle-tested Indian warriors. In sharp contrast to the two commanders of the preceding invasion forces, General Wayne made sure his men knew how to fight in the backwoods before allowing them to move northward to take on the confederated Indians.

The painstaking training paid off. Wayne marched 2,000 regulars and 1,500 Kentucky volunteers against the Ohio Indians in the summer of 1794. After besting warriors in a series of engagements as he progressed up the western side of Ohio, Wayne beat the confederated Indians decisively near a British fort just south of modern Toledo, at the Battle of Fallen Timbers in August 1794.

Wayne's forces had the Indians on the run, and the troopers pushed on all the way to the stronghold of Kekionga. They erected fortifications in the town and named it Fort Wayne in honor of their commanding general. The war was over, the confederacy had been beaten, and in the springtime a year later more than 1,000 Indian representatives came to Fort Green Ville (in western Ohio) to meet with General Wayne. There, following negotiations that lasted all summer long, they signed a treaty highly unfavorable to their claims to Ohio on August 3, 1795. The Treaty of Green Ville gave most of what is now the state of Ohio to the United States, and cleared the way for Ohio to enter the Union as the 17th state just eight years later.

With the defeat of the confederated Indians, settlers began pouring into the Ohio Country. They came from the crowded cities of the East, the dirt-floor hovels of rural America, and even some European countries to escape their despotic rulers. All of the newcomers sought new lives in the lush and bountiful lands of the Ohio Territory and elsewhere in the trans-Appalachian

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West. Even before the founding of their nation, Americans had come to embrace a sense of rugged individualism, and the further one moved away from the East Coast, the more rugged individualists one encountered. Their personal liberty was now protected by the recently ratified national Constitution and the crucial Bill of Rights.

As early as 1800, there were approximately 40,000 white settlers in what became the state of Ohio in 1803. By the census of 1810, that figure had risen to 230,760. And there was no hint that the human flow would diminish.

The Shooting Star and the Prophet

Among the defeated warriors at the Battle of Fallen Timbers was the Shawnee Tecumseh, who knew there could be no peace if whites continued to push farther west. He realized that Anthony Wayne's victory at Fallen Timbers had badly damaged the Indians' cause, but it did not have to be the fatal blow. By the terms of the Green Ville treaty, Ohio was irretrievably lost, but he believed that options other than armed resistance might yet save the unconquered western lands. Tecumseh wanted Americans and Indians to live in peace. Peace, however, could only happen by mutually respecting a boundary line between them. Whether the boundary was the rivers of western Ohio or farther west on the Wabash River in Indiana was less important than the resolve of both sides to respect it.

The future Shawnee political and war leader was born in western Ohio Country in 1768, near modern Xenia. His parents were en route from their village of Kispoko Town, on the Scioto River, to a major tribal council at the Shawnee capital village of Chillicothe (today called Old Town) when his mother, Methotasa, went into labor. She gave birth at the very instant that a great meteor streaked across the sky.

Tecumseh, meaning "the Shooting Star," spent his youth enmeshed in the frontier wars of the trans-Appalachian West. His father, Pucksinwah, was second in command of all Shawnee



Figure 1.1 Tecumseh, Shawnee chieftain, warrior, orator, and statesman. Leader of the pan-Indian movement that attempted to block further westward expansion of the United States in the early nineteenth century. (Courtesy of the Ohio History Connection.)

warriors under Cornstalk. In 1774, the two men led warriors against the Virginia militia at the Battle of Point Pleasant, probably the bloodiest fight between Americans and Indians along the Ohio River during the entire colonial period. The Shawnees' hunting grounds in Kentucky and modern West Virginia had been threatened by Virginians who were beginning to explore and settle there. Consequently, Shawnee and Mingo warriors hit them hard on the south side of the Ohio River at Point Pleasant, intending to drive them away from their hunting grounds. Both sides fought to exhaustion and a draw; even so, the commander

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of the Virginia militia claimed victory after the Shawnee warriors withdrew to the north bank of the Ohio. Pucksinwah died an honorable warrior's death that day at Point Pleasant. Cornstalk perished three years later, the victim of duplicity, murdered by Americans under a flag of truce.

With the death of their father Pucksinwah, older brother Chiksika took over the mentoring of his younger brothers Lalawethika and Tecumseh. Lalawethika, having lost an eye in a hunting accident, and with poor looks and the nature of a braggart, had few friends and chose to follow the path of a drunken Indian. Tecumseh, handsome, personable, articulate, and skilled at hunting and fighting, mastered the ways of a warrior.

Those skills were soon tested with the onset of the Revolutionary War in 1775. The Shawnees sided with the British and fought the hated Americans. Chiksika and Tecumseh joined war parties that raided American encampments along the Ohio River. They joined warriors that attempted to drive American settlers out of Kentucky, traditional hunting grounds of not only the Shawnees, but also the Cherokees. The two brothers joined Delawares, Iroquois, Ottawas, and other Shawnees to help the Cherokees make war against Americans in eastern Tennessee, south of the critical Cumberland Gap that connected Tennessee with Kentucky.

At the conclusion of the Revolutionary War, the peace treaty with Great Britain awarded the United States the lands between the Appalachian Mountains and the Mississippi River. The two Shawnee brothers stayed in Tennessee and joined other Indians trying to block the westward movement of white people beyond the Appalachian chain. Tecumseh lost his mentor and brother in 1788 when Chiksika died attacking Buchanan's Station near present-day Nashville. Tecumseh remained in Tennessee through the following year, living among and fighting alongside the Chickamauga faction of the Cherokee.

Tecumseh's attention was drawn northward by the war for Ohio, as the native people with British assistance tried to stem the tide of American settlement. Shawnee lands had been directly threatened when the American government established the Northwest Territory as its frontier laboratory for westward

expansion and settlement. He realized that his highest priority must be to fight for his people's homeland. Tecumseh and those Shawnees who followed him headed for the Ohio Territory.

Arriving in 1790, they met up with tribal members of the loose western confederacy that had recently severely beaten General Josiah Harmar. Tecumseh threw himself into the defense of the land of his birth. Widely recognized for his fighting ability, he also stood out because of his firm stand against the torture of captives, an attitude virtually unheard of among Indian people, but nonetheless largely respected by them because of his bravery and superb leadership. Tecumseh participated in the next two grave engagements with the American armies that marched into Ohio—the overwhelming victory over Arthur St. Clair and the critical loss to Anthony Wayne.

In the aftermath of Wayne's victory at Fallen Timbers, Tecumseh began to preach a political message stressing pan-Indianism: that all tribes had a collective stake in joining together to block the further advance of the white people. He contended that the sale of any more tribal land should lack validity unless approved by all the tribes of the old Northwest and the old Southwest territories. There was no concept of private ownership of land among Indians; tribes held land commonly among its members. Tecumseh took the idea of communal ownership one step further and asserted that a particular tribe's land was owned in common by all Indians, echoing ideas offered previously by Blue Jacket of the Shawnees and Joseph Brant of the Mohawks.

Tecumseh's task therefore was to rally those tribes from the Great Lakes to the Southland that had not already fallen under the control of the Americans, and forge them into a powerful united pan-Indian front. If his plan succeeded, he would have accomplished a feat no other Indian leader had achieved on this scale. This task would have appeared impossible to most people, except not to a man as resolute as Tecumseh. In unity, he promised, Indians could block the relentless westward thrust of the young United States. With unity he could say to the aggressive Americans: "Thus far and no farther." To Tecumseh, there

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could be no peace if the settlers were to continue pushing farther and farther into Indian country, as they certainly would, if not stopped. He planned to stop them.

Tecumseh found strong backing from his younger brother Lalawethika, as now the formerly drunken braggart had experienced a spiritual conversion. Lalawethika had given up drink, cleaned up his life, and changed his name to Tenskwatawa, "the Open Door." Americans called him the "Shawnee Prophet." He led a purification movement, preaching to Indians a hatred of



Figure 1.2 Lalawethika, brother of Tecumseh, changed his name to Tenskwatawa, meaning "the Open Door." Americans called him the "Shawnee Prophet." He led a purification movement, preaching to Indians a hatred of white people; a rejection of their culture and habits; and a return to traditional native values and lifestyle. (Courtesy of the Ohio History Connection.)

white people; a rejection of their "poisonous" cultural ways; and a return to traditional native values and lifestyle.

Tenskwatawa considered the white invaders to be "the children of the Evil Spirit." Whether they were of the Evil Spirit or not, Indians clearly liked their guns, bullets, knives, boots, metal pots and pans, blankets, trousers, jackets, needles and pins, and many other items; but the product that only whites could supply them that perhaps had the greatest attraction to Indians was alcohol. It is well documented that it made little difference whether it was English rum, French brandy, or American whiskey—far too many Indians craved it irrepressibly. Liquor caused appalling problems for individuals, families, and tribes. The adverse effects of inebriation and alcoholism were second only to epidemic disease as the great destroyer of Indian culture and lives.

Tenskwatawa claimed to have the ability to convey divine revelations from the Master of Life as well as other supernatural powers. One of these supposed abilities was prophecy. Another was that he saw visions. When he accurately predicted a solar eclipse in 1806—the approach of the "Black Sun," as he called it—it only reinforced his claims and validated his other messages in the eyes of those Indians currently evaluating him and his brother, Tecumseh.

As the prophet shared his message with Shawnees and people from other tribes, he drew ever-larger gatherings of enthusiastic Indians to hear him speak and relay the reputed messages from the Master of Life. Whether Tecumseh believed in his brother's supernatural powers or not is hard to say. While it is possible that he did believe what his brother preached, it is equally possible that he was an opportunist who realized that the vast and highly emotional gatherings of the western native peoples his brother was attracting fit his need for widespread support for a great confederacy that could save the Indians' land in the Old Northwest and Old Southwest – the land of all the native peoples of the trans-Appalachian West. Regardless, the message the Shawnee brothers offered was crystal clear: the Indians' only hope of salvation was cultural rebirth, combined with armed resistance grounded on Indian unity.

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The old tribal leaders of the region, such as Black Hoof of the Shawnees, dismissed the brothers' ideas as impractical and probably hazardous to Indians. They sought to maintain harmony with the Americans by honoring the terms of the Green Ville Treaty. The brothers, even though they lacked the support of the old tribal leaders, who were by this time accommodationists, still went forward in their determination to form a union of tribes powerful enough to challenge any further American acquisition of Indian land. Tecumseh, therefore, knew well his objective as he journeyed tirelessly for several years, from tribe to tribe, from Wisconsin to Florida, from Indiana to Mississippi, trying to rally support to block further American settlement. North of the Ohio River, from the Great Lakes to the prairies of Illinois, he gained some adherents. South of the Ohio he was listened to with respect by the Creeks, Cherokees, Chickasaws, Choctaws, and probably even some Seminoles—but gained no real support.

He pleaded with tribes to learn from the past and to consider what the future might hold. "Where today are the Pequot? Where are the Narragansett, the Mohican, the Pokanoket, and other powerful tribes of our people?" asked Tecumseh. "They have vanished before the avarice and the oppression of the White Man, as snow before a summer sun." On one of his southern trips he exhorted: "Sleep not longer, Oh Choctaws and Chickasaws. ... Will not the bones of our dead be plowed up [by the white people], and their graves turned into plowed fields?" His warnings fell on uncertain ears, except among a traditionalist faction of Muscogee Creek people whom Americans called the "Red Sticks" or "Red Stick Creeks" because of their red-colored war clubs.

In 1808, because of mounting opposition from the Shawnee Black Hoof and other chiefs, the two brothers, the statesman and the prophet, moved their base of operations from western Ohio to a forest clearing where Tippecanoe Creek flows into the Wabash River in northwestern Indiana Territory. This multi-tribal community that formed there became known as Prophetstown. Hundreds of people from various tribes, ranging from young warriors to whole families, traveled there to camp and to hear the

encouraging messages. Many whites were alarmed. Some, such as Thomas Jefferson, the third president of the United States concluding his second term, were sympathetic. Even so, the president's solution for alleviating the strain on Indians caused by nonstop territorial expansion was anathema to Tecumseh and the Prophet.

Almost from the birth of the republic, two groups—the "Gradualists" and the "Removalists"—emerged with dissimilar proposals for the proper course of federal policy to deal with the Indian Question. Gradualists called for a total transformation of native society and sweeping changes in lifestyle for Indians. They would employ missionary work and educational efforts, combined with altering Indian land usage and subsistence methods, to affect the transformation. Gradualists had absolute confidence that this transformation would in all ways be superior to the Indians' "primitive" lifestyles that had preceded it.

Changing Indian land usage was vital. Gradualists stressed that nonagriculturalist Indians had to change their subsistence pattern from hunting, which required extensive territory and periodic migration, to farming, which used much smaller tracts of land and encouraged a sedentary lifestyle. This would free up "excess" land currently used as hunting grounds by tribes so that white settlers could acquire it peaceably. As Jefferson explained: "While they are learning to do better on less land, our increasing numbers will be calling for more land, and thus a coincidence of interests will be produced between those who have land to spare, and those ... who want land."

Farming Indians, after being introduced to the concept of individual ownership of land, would make progress toward becoming "productive members of society." Simultaneously, educational and missionary efforts would provide Indians the cultural and religious wherewithal to become acceptable neighbors for the white settlers about them. Gradualists stressed that for Indians to survive, it was essential that they abandon their own cultures and the tribal orders. "They cannot much longer exist in the exercise of their savage rights and customs," declared William H. Crawford, James Madison's—the fourth president—secretary

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of war. "They must become civilized, or they will finally ... become extinct."

What would happen to those Indians unwilling to alter or abandon their accustomed lifestyle? Gradualists foresaw no unsolvable problems here. They proposed to critics that the steady movement of the American agricultural frontier toward the Mississippi would deplete the wild game upon which these Indians depended. When they could no longer find sufficient food, they would be compelled to move out of the settlers' way, further west out into the wilderness. Gradualists confidently expected that their program would "civilize" and assimilate a sizable number of Indians and enable peaceful relations between native and white frontier neighbors.

Removalists, likewise, sought peaceful relations with Indians, but they were not persuaded that the Gradualists' plan held much likelihood of achieving this. Removalists contended that most Indians had little interest in being "civilized," gradually or otherwise, for which they pointed to the Shawnee Prophet's message about returning to traditional ways as excellent evidence. Perhaps the heart of the problem really was not one of unwillingness, they proposed, but of incapability. Most Americans regarded Indians as "irreclaimable, terrible savages," in the words of one Indian Affairs commissioner.

The scientific community validated this conclusion. "Do what we will, the Indian remains the Indian still. He is not a creature susceptible of civilization," stressed Dr. Josiah C. Nott, one of the South's leading surgeons. "He can no more be civilized than the leopard can change his spots. ... He is now gradually disappearing, to give place to a higher order of beings." To accept this line of reasoning required a rejection of the Gradualists' program. Indians, incapable of being civilized, were doomed to extinction. Therefore, any effort to civilize them must prove futile. This judgment by the Removalists was not meant to be malicious; it was simply common sense to them. Dr. Charles Caldwell, a University of Pennsylvania medical professor, the founder of a medical school in Kentucky, and an influential lecturer and author, drew the same conclusion: "When the wolf, the buffalo and the

panther shall have been completely domesticated, like the dog, the cow, and the household cat, then, and not before, may we expect to see the full-blooded Indian civilized, like the white man."

The conclusions of the contemporary scientific community led to another critical question: did uncivilized and, more important, uncivilizable people enjoy any inherent right to the land they occupied? Most Americans thought not. The noted nineteenth-century author Hugh Henry Brackenridge argued in his article "The Animals, Vulgarly called Indians" that tribes had no right to the soil. He asserted that it was as ridiculous to "admit a right in the buffalo to grant lands" as it would be to bestow the same right on "the Big Cat, the Big Dog, or any of the ragged wretches that are called chiefs and sachems." Brackenridge concluded with a question: "What would you think if going to a big lick or place where the beasts collect to lick saline nitrous earth and water, and addressing yourself to a great buffalo to grant you land?" The answer, he expected confidently, was obvious to all discerning people.

Removalists argued that the unrelenting thrust of white settlement westward would occur too rapidly to permit peaceful coexistence or changes using the Gradualists' program. America needed a way to avoid further bloodshed and deprivations on the frontier and, equally as important, to throw open more valuable tribal land for white settlement and enterprise. Removalists offered their own solution to the Indian Question: Indians must exchange their lands east of the Mississippi for equivalent territory west of that river. If some tribes resisted, as might be anticipated, Removalists urged forced eviction as the appropriate measure. They saw removal as a benevolent course—the best way of realizing peace between Indians and Americans. This solution was not judged as malice by them, but as common sense.

Of course, there were always some who advocated extreme measures. Congressman David Levy of Florida, for example, contended that Indians were "demons, not men. They have the human form, but nothing of the human heart. Horror and

detestation should follow the thought of them. If they cannot be emigrated, they should be exterminated."

President Jefferson, in one of his annual messages to Congress, offered vigorous praise and support for those Gradualist measures which would advance "the arts of civilization" among Indians. He reiterated this view in meetings with Indians. "We shall with great pleasure see your people become disposed to cultivate the earth, to raise herds of useful animals and to spin and weave, for their food and clothing," the president counseled Miamis, Weas, and Potawatomis. "These resources are certain, they will never disappoint you, while those of hunting may fail, and expose your women and children to the miseries of hunger and cold."

If Indians would not or could not be acculturated, and if extermination was to be avoided, many Americans came to the conclusion that only separation of the races by removal could save the weaker one. If Indians refused the opportunities provided by the Gradualists to civilize themselves and join the American family, Jefferson too, in an about face, agreed with the Removalists that they should be evicted from their land. "This then is the season for driving them off," he warned.

From 1808 onward, the man who had to deal directly with the Shawnee brothers and their many followers at Prophetstown was William Henry Harrison, governor of Indiana Territory. Harrison was a southerner who, like so many Americans of that time, headed west with the young country as it expanded beyond the Appalachians. He began life as a child of privilege, born into the powerful Harrison family of Virginia in 1773. William Henry secured a commission in the army at the age of nineteen and was sent out to the frontier to serve at Fort Washington, near Cincinnati.

Harrison arrived in Ohio Territory in the autumn of 1791 just as the survivors of Arthur St. Clair's army, whom Little Turtle's warriors had come close to annihilating, returned to Fort Washington. Harrison, a good soldier, was soon promoted to the rank of lieutenant and then made *aide-de-camp* to General Anthony Wayne, commander of all American forces in the West. Harrison fought as part of Wayne's Legion of the United States that defeated the loose western Indian confederacy at Fallen

Timbers in 1794. A year later, Lieutenant Harrison accompanied General Wayne to the peace conference at Green Ville and was one of the signatories of the Treaty of Green Ville.

Harrison resigned from the army in 1797 when he was appointed secretary of the Northwest Territory. In 1799, at age 26, he defeated the son of Governor Arthur St. Clair to win election as the first delegate representing the Northwest Territory in the United States House of Representatives. In 1801, outgoing President John Adams nominated Harrison to become governor of the new federal territory of Indiana.

Able and determined, William Henry Harrison understood and supported the nation's plan for expansion. Also a compassionate man, Harrison on one occasion adopted the son of a dying Delaware chief and raised the boy with his own family. Still, as far as Harrison was concerned, Tecumseh, Tenskwatawa, and Indians like them were a challenge to his authority as governor and also to that of the United States and its plans for expansion. He set to the task of dramatically reducing their presence in Indiana Territory. Between 1803 and 1809, he signed eleven treaties with various tribes, "purchasing" from them, aided by bribes and liquor, enormous tracts of Indian land amounting to three million acres on both sides of the Wabash River, approaching to within fifty miles of Prophetstown. The governor's acquisitiveness of native lands stunned regional tribes and aroused Indian resentment, especially the ire of Tecumseh and Tenskwatawa, who had recently made the move from Ohio to Indiana Territory.

Harrison kept a close eye on the activities at Prophetstown and the comings and goings of Tecumseh. "For four years he has been in constant motion," Harrison noticed. "You see him today on the Wabash and in a short time you hear of him on the Shores of Lake Erie, or Michigan, or the banks of the Mississippi. And where ever he goes, he makes an impression favorable to his purpose." The strident messages coming from Prophetstown and the nearly 1,000 warriors residing there alarmed Harrison. Trouble could not be far away, he reasoned, and inevitably came to the conclusion that, in Jefferson's phrasing, the season was nearing for driving off Tecumseh, the Prophet, and their admirers.

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In late July 1811, scouts reported to Harrison that Tecumseh and fifty-three canoes of warriors were descending the Wabash. The Indian leader chief was traveling south again to recruit warriors and make another attempt to bring the great tribes of the Southland to his cause. All Indians were on the brink of catastrophe, Tecumseh warned them. "The mere presence of the white man is a source of evil to the red man ... The only hope for the red man is a war of extermination against the paleface. Will not the warriors of the southern tribes unite with the warriors of the Lakes?" None but the Red Stick Creeks listened to Tecumseh's warning. The rest were paying attention to a different message.

Many people of the southern tribes rejected Tecumseh's plan because they had turned to the program of the Gradualists to save themselves. In one of the most significant episodes in Indian–United States relations, these Indians not only tried such acculturation during the first two decades of the nineteenth century, but some, like the Cherokees, did it with phenomenal success, and lived just as did their white neighbors. (Even then, Americans by the 1830s would still insist that the Cherokees abandon their homes in the southern highlands and resettle beyond the Mississippi River.)

William Henry Harrison used the opportunity of Tecumseh's absence to move against Prophetstown. Commanding regular troops, frontier militia, and volunteers, Harrison led a force of 1,000 men across Indiana Territory. Before he left for the south, Tecumseh had admonished his brother to avoid bringing on a fight with the governor during his absence. Tecumseh warned Tenskwatawa that he needed to recruit more warriors before he would be ready for a fight to drive away the white people.

The Prophet disobeyed. He convinced the warriors at Prophetstown that he had cast a spell that would protect them from the bullets of the approaching troops. He claimed that the Master of Life had come to him and told him that the Indians would succeed in defeating the Americans. At dawn on November 7, 1811, the attack commenced against Harrison's encampment. The Indians fought furiously and out in the open at the Battle of

Tippecanoe, a stark departure from their customary military tactic, one no doubt prompted by the conviction that they were invincible. Unfortunately, they soon found out that they were not in fact immune to the bullets of the Americans. Although the Indians inflicted heavy damage upon Harrison's troops, ultimately the governor and his men repelled the Prophet's warriors, then marched on to Prophetstown and burned it.

Governor Harrison reported to the secretary of war that his victory at Tippecanoe was "complete and decisive," although numerically, many more soldiers than Indians died that day. Psychologically, however, the Battle of Tippecanoe disillusioned Tecumseh's followers and shattered his movement. Soon thereafter, most of the tribes' support for it faded away. Tippecanoe was also a severe blow for Tenskwatawa, who lost both the confidence of his brother and prestige among the Indians. The Shawnee Prophet died in 1836, an exile at the village he established in what would be present Kansas City, Kansas.

For his part, Tecumseh now saw no other option than to turn to Great Britain for help. With his remaining followers, he crossed into Canada and put himself under British command at Fort Malden on the Canadian side of the Detroit River. Tensions between President James Madison's administration and the British were escalating dramatically. A second Anglo-American war seemed imminent. Tecumseh judged that his last hope was a war between the United States and Great Britain. In the event of a British victory, Great Britain promised support for the establishment of an independent state for the American Indians in the Northwest Territory. Naturally, they had Tecumseh's support.

Six months later, the War of 1812 broke out between Great Britain and the United States. In it, Tecumseh distinguished himself for valor, but he lost his life on October 5, 1813, at the Battle of the Thames in southern Ontario. At the time, he and his British allies were retreating and fighting a running battle against a United States army force commanded by Brigadier General William Henry Harrison, his old nemesis. The death of Tecumseh is shrouded in mystery and mythology, and it is impossible to determine precisely how he perished during the Battle of the

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Thames or what became of his remains. The victory against Tecumseh at the River Thames, plus the Battle of Tippecanoe against the Shawnee Prophet two years earlier, gave birth to a legend about General Harrison. Twenty-eight years later he would become president of the United States, the race marked by his famous campaign slogan: "Tippecanoe and [John] Tyler too."

The War of 1812 was a strange conflict that ended in a draw, with no winner and no loser declared. While the British might properly have claimed victory on the east coast of the United States—they burned the White House and the US Capitol building, and forced President James Madison to flee the nation's capital city—they and their Indian allies lost completely to the Americans in the Northwest Territory. When Great Britain raised the thorny question of an Indian state within the United States during peace talks at Ghent, Belgium, US negotiator John Quincy Adams angrily prepared to walk out of the proceedings. His fellow negotiator Henry Clay counseled him not to do so. The British were merely bluffing, Clay assured Adams. And indeed, they were. The British did not care about the Indians and were only using them, yet again, as pawns in the hope of securing various other treaty concessions from the Americans.

As for the Indians, much ended with the conclusion of the War of 1812. Tecumseh's hope of an Indian state in the Northwest Territory never materialized. William Henry Harrison's victory at the Thames, coupled with Andrew Jackson's triumph less than a year later over the Red Stick Creeks at the Battle of Horseshoe Bend in eastern Alabama, proved mortal. The outcomes of these military engagements ended the dream of the pan-Indian confederacy and significant Indian resistance to American expansion in the Ohio Valley and most of the lower Midwest and South.

Tecumseh had preached that in unity lay strength. He beseeched tribes that they all had a collective stake in joining together to block the advance of the white people. If he had succeeded, Tecumseh would have accomplished a feat no other Indian leader had achieved on such a large scale. Instead, Tecumseh's grand plan ended, as he once described the demise of once-great Indian nations, "as snow before a summer sun."

Notes

- 1 The American bison, commonly referred to as *buffalo*.
- 2 This did not change until 1871, when Congress passed legislation declaring that "No Indian nation or tribe within the territory of the United States shall be acknowledged or recognized as an independent nation, tribe, or power with whom the United States may contract by treaty."