



The Era of Thomas Jefferson (1800–1815)

What You Will Learn

During Thomas Jefferson's presidency, the United States acquired a vast expanse of western territory. Conflicts with the British and Native Americans soon led to the War of 1812.

Focus Question

As you read this chapter, keep this question in mind: **How did Jefferson and Madison deal with unresolved problems?**

Section 1

Jefferson Takes Office

Section 1 Focus Question

How did Jefferson chart a new course for the government? To begin answering this question,

- Learn about the Republican victory in the election of 1800.
- Find out about Jefferson's new course for government.
- Learn about judicial review.

Section 1 Summary

After a bitter campaign, Thomas Jefferson took office as President. Jefferson tried to reduce the power of the federal government over states and citizens. Meanwhile, judicial review increased the Supreme Court's power.

Republicans Take Charge

The presidential campaign of 1800 was a bitter contest between the Federalists and the Republicans. The Federalists threatened a civil war if Jefferson won the election. **Thomas Jefferson**, the Republican candidate, received 73 electoral votes, defeating John Adams, the Federalist candidate. According to the Constitution, the person who received the next highest total of electoral votes would become Vice President. However, **Aaron Burr**, Jefferson's running mate, also received 73 votes. It was up to the House of Representatives to break the tie. After six days of deadlock, the House chose Jefferson. To avoid this situation in the future, the Twelfth Amendment to the Constitution established separate votes for President and Vice President.

Beginning with his inauguration, Jefferson established simpler customs that he believed were appropriate for a republic. For

Key Events

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example, he walked to his inauguration rather than ride in a carriage. Equally important, Jefferson used his inaugural address to bring the country together. ✓

Jefferson Charts a New Course

The new President saw his election as a chance to introduce new ideas. He thought of it as the “Revolution of 1800.” Jefferson’s first goal was to reduce the federal government’s power over states and citizens. He believed in an idea known as *laissez faire*, which means that the government should not interfere with the economy.

Jefferson’s Main Policy Changes

- Reduced the number of people in government
- Cut military spending
- Eliminated federal taxes in the country, except tariffs
- Released those jailed under the Sedition Act

Jefferson did not reverse all Federalist policies, however. For example, he believed that the nation should keep repaying its debt, and he did not fire most Federalist officeholders. ✓

The Supreme Court and Judicial Review

During his last hours in office, Adams appointed several judges. The Republicans argued that the appointments were an attempt to maintain Federalist power. When Jefferson took office, he ordered James Madison, his secretary of state, to stop work on the appointments. William Marbury, one of Adams’s appointees, sued Madison to receive his commission. In his lawsuit, Marbury cited the Judiciary Act of 1789, which gave the Supreme Court the power to review cases brought against a federal official.

The outcome of the case, called *Marbury v. Madison*, changed the relationship of the three branches of government. In an opinion written by Chief Justice John Marshall, the Court declared the Judiciary Act was unconstitutional. Marshall stated that the Court’s powers came from the Constitution. Therefore, Congress did not have the right to give the Court power in the Judiciary Act. This ruling established **judicial review**, or the authority of the Supreme Court to strike down unconstitutional laws. ✓

Check Your Progress

1. How did the election of 1800 affect future elections?

2. What power does judicial review give the Supreme Court?

✓ Checkpoint

Name the body that decided the election of 1800.

✓ Checkpoint

List a Federalist policy that Jefferson kept.

Vocabulary Builder

Reread the bracketed paragraph. The text says Marbury was one of Adams’s appointees. Using context clues in the paragraph, write a definition of *appointee* on the lines below.

✓ Checkpoint

Name the justice who wrote the Supreme Court’s decision in *Marbury v. Madison*.

The Louisiana Purchase

Section 2 Focus Question

What was the importance of the purchase and exploration of the Louisiana Territory? To begin answering this question,

- Learn about the nation's westward expansion.
- Find out about the Louisiana Purchase.
- Learn about Lewis and Clark's western expedition.

Section 2 Summary

Westward expansion sped up after the United States won its independence. The Louisiana Purchase almost doubled the size of the United States, and the Lewis and Clark expedition provided Americans with new knowledge of the West.

The Nation Looks West

By 1800, more than one million settlers lived between the Appalachian Mountains and the Mississippi River. Most settlers were farmers. Because there were few roads to the West, they shipped their crops down the Mississippi to the port at New Orleans. From there, the goods were shipped to markets in the East.

Spain, which controlled the Mississippi and New Orleans, had several times threatened to close the port to American ships. To prevent this from happening, the United States negotiated the Pinckney Treaty with Spain in 1795, which guaranteed Americans the right to ship goods down the Mississippi to New Orleans.

In 1801, Jefferson discovered that Spain had secretly transferred New Orleans and the rest of its Louisiana territory to France. Jefferson feared that Napoleon Bonaparte, the French leader, intended to expand France's control in America. ✓

Buying Louisiana

In 1802, before the transfer of Louisiana to France took place, Spain withdrew the right of Americans to ship their goods through New Orleans. Westerners demanded that Jefferson go to war to win back their rights.

Instead Jefferson sent James Monroe to Paris to offer to buy the city of New Orleans and a territory to the east called West Florida from the French. Monroe was assisted by Robert Livingston, the American minister in Paris.

Around this time, a revolution had driven the French from their Caribbean colony of Haiti. Without this base, France would have trouble defending Louisiana in a war. At the same time, tensions between France and Britain were rising, and war loomed. Napoleon needed money to support the war effort. As a result, France offered to sell not only New Orleans, but the entire

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✓ Checkpoint

Describe the route by which Western farm products traveled to markets in the East.

✓ Checkpoint

List the four boundaries of Louisiana Territory.

Vocabulary Builder

An early definition of *expedition* was “helping forward or accomplishing.” How can this definition still explain the word *expedition*?

✓ Checkpoint

Name the Native American woman who served as a translator for Lewis and Clark.

Louisiana Territory to the United States. The territory stretched from the Gulf of Mexico to Canada and from the Mississippi River to the Rocky Mountains.

Jefferson was delighted with the deal, which almost doubled the size of the country and gave the United States control of the Mississippi. However, the Constitution did not give the President the power to buy land from a foreign country. In the end, Jefferson decided that the power the Constitution gave the President to make treaties allowed him to buy Louisiana. The Senate approved the treaty, and Congress quickly voted to pay for the land. ✓

Lewis and Clark Explore the West

Even before the United States had bought Louisiana, Jefferson called on Congress to finance a western **expedition**, or long and carefully organized journey. Army officers **Meriwether Lewis** and **William Clark** were to lead the expedition.

Lewis and Clark’s mission had three goals. First, they were to report on the geography, plants, animals, and other natural features of the region. Second, they were to make contact with Native Americans. Third, they were to find out if a waterway connected the Mississippi River to the Pacific Ocean.

Lewis and Clark left St. Louis in the spring of 1804 with about 40 men. In October, a Native American woman named Sacagawea joined the expedition as a translator. The following August, they reached the Continental Divide. A **continental divide** is the place on a continent that separates river systems flowing in opposite directions. On the western side of the Rockies, they reached the Columbia River, which carried them to the Pacific Ocean. They spent the winter at the point where the Columbia River meets the Pacific before beginning their half-year-long return journey in March 1806. With them, they brought a new awareness of a rich and beautiful part of the continent.

Zebulon Pike led another expedition through the southern part of the Louisiana Territory from 1805 to 1807. His return route took him into Spanish New Mexico, where he and his men were arrested as spies. After several months, they were released. As the Spanish had feared, Pike’s reports about the Spanish borderlands created great American interest in the region. ✓

Check Your Progress

1. Why was the Louisiana Purchase important?

2. What was one purpose of the Lewis and Clark expedition?

A Time of Conflict

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✓ Checkpoint

List the four Barbary States.

✓ Checkpoint

Name the countries that challenged the United States' neutrality.

Focus Question

How did Jefferson respond to threats to the security of the nation?

To begin answering this question,

- Learn about the defeat of the Barbary States.
- Find out about the threats to American neutrality.
- Read about the trade embargo Jefferson imposed.
- Explore the efforts of Tecumseh and the Prophet to preserve Native American lands and ways of life.

Summary

Jefferson faced numerous threats to the nation's security and economy, including piracy, seizure of American ships by Britain and France, and unrest among Native Americans.

Defeating the Barbary States

Trade with Europe was critical to the U.S. economy. After the American Revolution, pirates began attacking American ships in the Mediterranean Sea. The pirates came from four North African countries known as the Barbary States. They were Morocco, Algiers, Tunisia, and Tripoli. European nations paid the Barbary States **tribute**, or money paid by one country to another in return for protection. In exchange, pirates left their ships alone.

For a time, the United States also paid tribute. But Jefferson put an end to that practice and sent warships to the Mediterranean to protect American merchant ships. At first these military patrols went badly. For example, the warship *Philadelphia* ran aground near the Tripoli coast, and its crew was captured. However, the next year, a small force of American marines marched 600 miles across the Sahara to capture Tripoli. This victory inspired confidence in the ability of the United States to deal forcefully with threats from foreign powers. ✓

American Neutrality Is Challenged

By 1803 Britain and France were once again at war. The United States, which remained neutral, continued trading with both countries. Britain and France began seizing American ships carrying trade goods to the other country. This was an attempt to weaken each other by cutting off the other's foreign trade. In addition, Britain impressed, or forced, thousands of American sailors to serve in the British navy. ✓

Jefferson Responds With an Embargo

Jefferson tried to force Britain and France to respect American neutrality by issuing an **embargo**. This is a government order that forbids foreign trade. In 1807 Congress passed the Embargo Act.

The embargo applied to American ships sailing to any foreign port. Jefferson predicted that France and Britain would soon stop attacking American ships.

However, Jefferson did not foresee the result of the embargo. The big loser proved to be the American economy. Declining exports caused crop prices to fall and tens of thousands of Americans to lose their jobs. The embargo was especially unpopular in New England, where merchants depended heavily on foreign trade. To evade the embargo, thousands of Americans turned to **smuggling**, or the act of illegally importing or exporting goods.

Congress finally repealed the Embargo Act in 1809. It then passed a law that reopened trade with all countries except Britain and France. The law stated that trade with Britain and France would resume when they started respecting America's trading rights as a neutral nation. ✓

Tecumseh and the Prophet

After the Battle of Fallen Timbers, tens of thousands of settlers moved westward. Ohio became a state in 1803, and settlers moved into Indiana Territory and beyond.

The tide of settlement had a terrible impact on Native Americans. Westward expansion exposed Native Americans to disease, threatened their hunting grounds, and drove away game. The Native American population declined, as did the power of their traditional leaders.

Two Shawnee brothers, **Tecumseh** and **Tenskwatawa**, or the Prophet, began urging Native American resistance. They called on Native Americans to preserve their traditional ways.

American officials were concerned by Tecumseh's activities. While Tecumseh was gone, **William Henry Harrison**, the governor of the Indiana Territory, led an attack on Shawnee villages on the Tippecanoe River. Harrison's troops defeated the Native Americans. The Battle of Tippecanoe marked the high point of Native American resistance to settlement. Still, Tecumseh and his warriors continued their struggle for several more years. ✓

Check Your Progress

1. What were the main threats to American trade?

2. How did westward expansion affect Native Americans?

✓ **Checkpoint**

List two effects of the Embargo Act on the United States' economy.

✓ **Checkpoint**

Name the two Native American leaders who fought back against American settlement in the West.

The War of 1812

Focus Question

What were the causes and effects of the War of 1812? To begin answering this question,

- Find out why the United States moved toward war with Britain.
- Learn about the early days of the war.
- Read about the war in the West and South.
- Learn about the final battles of the war.

Summary

The War of 1812 started badly for the United States. However, America's eventual victory increased American nationalism.

The Move Toward War

When James Madison became President in 1809, Americans were angry with the British for supplying arms to Native Americans and impressing American sailors. To most Americans, the country's honor was at stake. They felt a new sense of **nationalism**, or pride in one's country.

In 1810, Henry Clay of Kentucky and John C. Calhoun of South Carolina became leaders in the House of Representatives. The two men and their supporters were called **war hawks** because they were eager for war with Britain. Opposition to war was strongest in New England, where many believed war would harm American trade.

Relations with Britain worsened in the spring of 1812 when the British told the United States they would continue impressing sailors. Meanwhile, Native Americans in the Northwest began new attacks on frontier settlements. In June, Congress declared war on Britain. ✓

Early Days of the War

Britain was still at war in Europe at the time, but it was not willing to meet American demands in order to avoid war. When the war began, Americans were confident they would win. However, because of military cuts under Jefferson, the United States military was not prepared for war.

At the beginning of the war, Britain set up a blockade of the American coast. A **blockade** is the action of shutting a port or road to prevent people or supplies from coming into an area or leaving it. By the end of the war, the British were able to close off all American ports.

One early naval success for the United States was the USS *Constitution's* defeat of the British warship the *Guerrière*. ✓

Key Events

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✓ Checkpoint

Name the region in the United States where opposition to the war with Britain was strongest.

✓ Checkpoint

Name an action the British took at the beginning of the war.

✓ Checkpoint

List two commanders who led American forces to victory.

Vocabulary Builder

The word *negotiate* comes from the Latin word for “to carry on business.” What do you think the word *negotiating* means in the context of the underlined sentence?

✓ Checkpoint

Name the battle that occurred after the peace treaty was signed.

The War in the West and South

In the West, the Americans and British fought for control of the Great Lakes and the Mississippi River. The British captured American General William Hull’s troops after they tried to invade Canada. American forces under **Oliver Hazard Perry**, however, scored an important victory against the British on Lake Erie. William Henry Harrison and his troops defeated the British at the Battle of the Thames. In the South, Creek warriors attacked several American settlements. **Andrew Jackson** led American troops to victory against the Creeks in the Battle of Horseshoe Bend. ✓

Final Battles

After the British defeated Napoleon in 1814, they sent more troops to fight against the United States. In August, British troops attacked Washington, D.C., burning several government buildings, including the White House. The British moved on to Baltimore, where they attacked Fort McHenry. British warships bombarded the fort throughout the night of September 13, 1814. At dawn, however, the Americans still held the fort. An American, Francis Scott Key, witnessed the battle and wrote the poem, “The Star-Spangled Banner.” Set to music, it later became the national anthem of the United States.

Britain began to tire of the war, so the two sides began negotiating a peace treaty. On Christmas Eve 1814, the United States and Britain signed the Treaty of Ghent, ending the war. It took several weeks for the news to reach the United States, and during this time, the two sides fought one last battle. In January 1815, American forces under General Andrew Jackson defeated the British at the Battle of New Orleans.

Meanwhile, opponents of the war met in Hartford, Connecticut, in December 1814. Some delegates suggested that New England **secede**, or withdraw, from the United States. However, the convention quickly ended when news of the treaty arrived.

To some Americans, the War of 1812 was the “Second War of Independence.” Once and for all, the United States had secured its independence from Britain, and European nations would now have to treat the young republic with respect. ✓

Check Your Progress

1. What British actions led to the War of 1812?

2. Why was the United States unprepared for war?
