

of the Army of the Northwest, Perry wrote: “We have met the enemy and they are ours.”

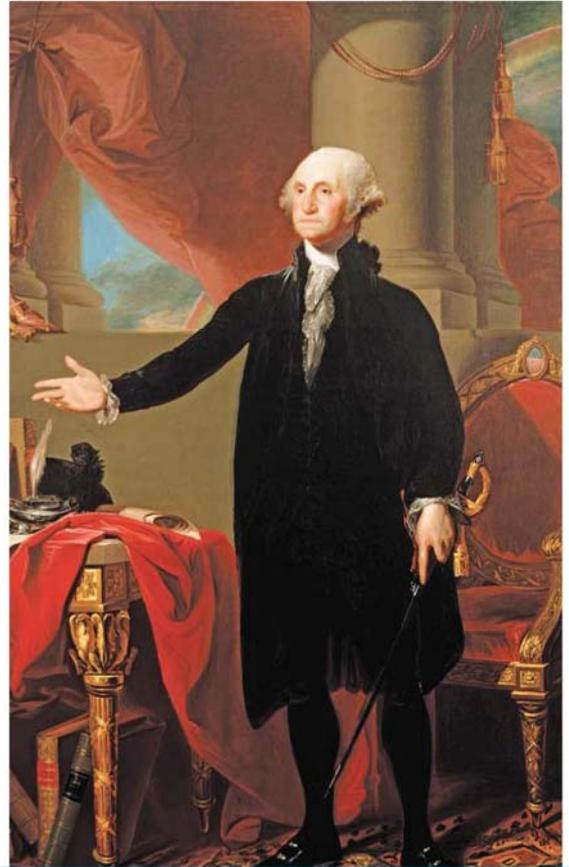
After General Harrison received Perry’s note, he set out to attack the British. But when Harrison transported his army across Lake Erie to Detroit, he discovered that the British already had retreated into Canada. Harrison pursued the British and defeated their forces at the Battle of the Thames in October 1813. This American victory put an end to the British threat to the Northwest—and took the life of Tecumseh, who died in the battle, fighting for the British.

The Second Phase of the War The second phase of the War of 1812 began after the British defeated Napoleon in Europe in April 1814. Britain’s army and navy were then free to attack the United States. In August 1814, President Madison and other officials fled Washington, D.C., as British forces neared the nation’s capitol. Dolley Madison, the president’s wife, stayed behind to rescue important objects from the White House. (See History Through Art at right.) She barely escaped before the British burned the White House and the Capitol building. The British then attacked Fort McHenry at Baltimore.

The commander of Fort McHenry had earlier requested a flag “so large that the British will have no difficulty in seeing it.” Detained on a British ship, a Washington lawyer named Francis Scott Key watched the all-night battle. At dawn, Key saw that the flag was still flying. He expressed his pride in a poem that is now known as “The Star-Spangled Banner.” It became the American national anthem.

Meanwhile, in the North, the British sent a force from Canada across Lake Champlain. Its goal was to push south and cut off New England. The plan failed when the American fleet defeated the British in the Battle of Lake Champlain in September 1814.

The Battle of New Orleans In the South, the British began to move against the strategically located port of New Orleans, in Louisiana. In December 1814, dozens of ships carrying some 7,500 British troops approached the coastline of Louisiana. To defend themselves, the Americans patched together an army under the



History through Art

George Washington, by Gilbert Stuart

As British troops closed in on Washington, D.C., in August 1814, most civilians fled the city. Even the 100 troops guarding the White House and First Lady Dolley Madison left. But Madison herself refused to leave until she had rescued one treasure: this full-length portrait of George Washington by renowned painter Gilbert Stuart. Madison was determined to save the painting or destroy it herself rather than let the British ruin it. When newly elected president James Monroe moved into the rebuilt White House in 1817, he restored this symbol of America to its rightful place.

CRITICAL VIEWING How does the artist show that Washington is an important person?