

# [War of 1812](https://assignbuster.com/war-of-1812/)

1812 Thewar of 1812, supposedly fought over neutral trading rights, was a very peculiarconflict indeed. Britains trade restrictions, one of the main causes, wereremoved two days before the war started; the New Englanders, for whom the warwas supposedly fought, opposed it; the most decisive battle, at New Orleans, was fought after the war ended.

Duringthe Napoleonic wars, Britain and France had disrupted US shipping, confiscatedAmerican goods, taking US seamen into the British navy, and both sides hadblockaded each others ports. This caused great annoyance to American traders, and Britains abduction of American sailors especially caused great uproar andindignation at home. Many called for war, although it is interesting to notethat it was southerners and westerners, the so-called war hawks led by Clay andCalhoun, who supported war who were least affected by Britains actions. Somehistorians attribute this to their desire to take British Canada and SpanishFlorida in the process of war. The Republican administration, traditionallysupportive of France, finally declared war on Britain in 1812, ironically twodays after Britain had lifted their trade embargo. Two and a half years offighting commenced, and when the peace treaty was eventually signed in Ghent, there was no mention whatsoever of neutral rights.

The treaty gave neither sideanything they did not have before the war, nor resolved any long-standingdisputes over trade or neutral rights. However, it is accepted by many historians that America actually gained far more thanthe British from the war. The course of the war had led America to build up herindustry as she could not trade at the time.

She had strengthened her army, healed old Republican/Federalist splits, and showed Europe that fighting withAmerica was not worthwhile. Finally, she was able to turn her back on Europe andget on with developing and progressing. Thewar of 1812 was both unnecessary and dangerous. Trade with Europe was severelydisrupted during the war, when the end of the Napoleonic wars would haveallowed American trade back into Europe more profitably than ever.

She sufferedhumiliation when a feeble and cowardly militia fled, abandoning Washington forthe British to ransack. Her best victory, although it did not gain anything andwas caused mainly by British tactical incompetence, at New Orleans, came afterthe end of the war. Development of industry and an army did not need the 1812war; it merely needed people to recognize that Hamilton was right all along. Bloodshedand destruction were totally unnecessary, and America was lucky that Britainwas still recovering from the Napoleonic wars. No gains were made in Canada, nor Florida. America held New Orleans, but her capital was ransacked.

Perhapsthe greatest achievement of the war was to highlight the inherent weakness ofboth state militia and certain Republican ideas.;,?