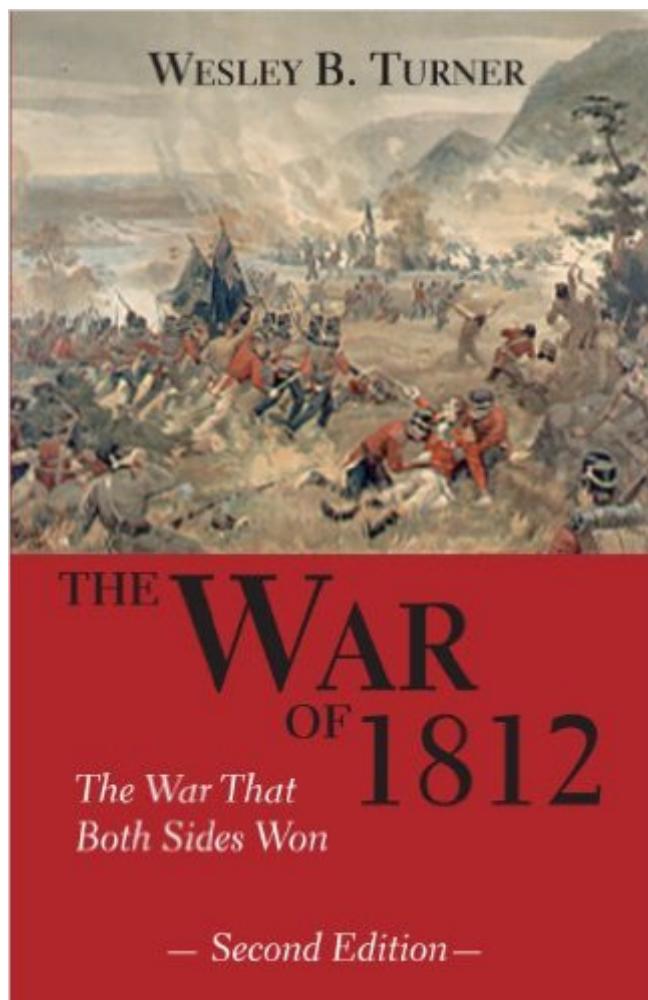


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The War Of 1812: The War That Both Sides Won



Synopsis

Tragedy and farce, bravery and cowardice, intelligence and foolishness, sense and nonsense - all these contradictions and more have characterized the War of 1812. The real significance of the series of skirmishes that collectively made up the war between 1812 and 1814 is the enormous impact they have had on Canadian and American views of themselves and of each other. The publication of *The War of 1812: The War That Both Sides Won* in 1990 provided a contemporary look at the period, and included such developments as the 1975 discovery of the *Hamilton* and *Scourge* on the bottom of Lake Ontario, and the 1987 discovery of the skeletons of casualties at Snake Hill. Now, a decade later, Wesley B. Turner has updated *The War of 1812* to include the volumes of new research that have come to light in recent years. All this new material has been incorporated into this interesting and informative overview of a crucial period in Canada's history.

Book Information

Paperback: 188 pages

Publisher: Dundurn; 2 edition (May 1, 2000)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1550023365

ISBN-13: 978-1550023367

Product Dimensions: 6 x 0.4 x 9 inches

Shipping Weight: 9.6 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 3.6 out of 5 stars See all reviews (8 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #2,330,852 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #40 in Books > History >

Americas > Canada > War of 1812 #282 in Books > History > Americas > Canada >

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Customer Reviews

This book is a good overview of the war that does not get bogged down in extensive details pertaining to each individual battle. Those looking for a detailed analysis of the war may want to look elsewhere, but those who are more interested in the general events and the reason for the choices made during the war will likely be pleased with this. My only real qualm is that the book lacks good maps to accompany the descriptions of advances, retreats, etc. Overall though, anyone looking for a general explanation of the events of 1812 and especially the reasons why certain choices were made during the war will likely be pleased with this book.

Brief history of the war from the Canadian perspective. Very different to be the enemy - but useful to read the other side. Gives insights into their perspective and I became more sympathetic to the British reactivity - no wonder they burned Washington!

It works as a good overview. This is not the author's only book about this event, so I trust he knows his facts but I wouldn't be able to verify that. One small drawback is that the author assumes you know the location of certain places so you might become geographically lost at times. It was a quick read on the war which was all I was looking for.

I have read a few books on the War of 1812, and I would say this is the shortest but also the clearest of all those accounts. In his introduction, Turner explains that the book started life as a "textbook" for his university class. This genesis clearly shows through in the way the text is arranged. The prose is quite sparse while still giving the details of battles, leaders, geography, etc. It doesn't have the sheer readability and cleverness of a "people's history" like Pierre Burton's 2-volume set ("The Invasion of Canada" and "Flames Across the Border"), but it's certainly more scholarly and academic. Likewise, it doesn't contain the (sometimes excruciating) detail of other academic works. If you want to learn about the War of 1812 for the first time, this is the book to get. Other things I liked about the book: (a) It puts the War of 1812 in the context of the larger world war that was raging around Napoleon Bonaparte's exploits. (b) It has an appendix on weapons that is useful. (c) It correctly emphasises the fate and plight of the Native Peoples involved. (d) It covers the political aspects from both sides. Unfortunately, there are a some things I didn't like. Primarily, there is the issue of readability - the text is a little dry, the drama never really comes to life. I also share the view of another viewer - it does read as being biased towards the Canadian/British side. Nonetheless, I would have liked for the book to have more detail, because I think Turner is on the right track - there is a need for a survey book of this type and what the book does, it does well.

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