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Chapter 12 - The Second War for Independence and the Upsurge of Nationalism

I. On to Canada Over Land and Lakes

1. Due to widespread disunity, the War of 1812 ranks as one of America's worst fought wars.
2. There was not a burning national anger, like there was after the Chesapeake outrage; the regular army was very bad and scattered and had old, senile generals, and the offensive strategy against Canada was especially poorly conceived.
3. Had the Americans captured Montreal, everything west would have wilted like a tree after its trunk has been severed, but the Americans instead focused a three-pronged attack that set out from Detroit, Niagara, and Lake Champlain, all of which were beaten back.
4. In contrast, the British and Canadians displayed enthusiasm early on in the war and captured the American fort of Michilimackinac, which commanded the upper Great Lakes area (the battle was led by British General Isaac Brock).
5. After more land invasions were hurled back in 1813, the Americans, led by Oliver Hazard Perry, built a fleet of green-timbered ships manned by inexperienced men, but still managed to capture a British fleet. His victory, coupled with General William Henry Harrison's defeat of the British during the Battle of the Thames, helped bring more enthusiasm and increased morale for the war.
6. In 1814, 10,000 British troops prepared for a crushing blow to the Americans along the Lake Champlain route, but on September 11, 1814, Capt. Thomas MacDonough challenged the British and snatched victory from the fangs of defeat and forced the British to retreat.

II. Washington Burned and New Orleans Defended

1. In August 1814, British troops landed in the Chesapeake Bay area, dispersed 6,000 panicked Americans at Bladensburg, and proceeded to enter Washington D.C. and burn most of the buildings there.
2. At Baltimore, another British fleet arrived but was beaten back by the privateer defenders of Fort McHenry, where Francis Scott Key wrote "The Star Spangled Banner."
3. Another British army menaced the entire Mississippi Valley and threatened New Orleans, and Andrew Jackson, fresh off his slaughter of

the Creek Indians at the Battle of Horseshoe Bend, led a hodgepodge force of 7,000 sailors, regulars, pirates, and Frenchmen, entrenching them and helping them defeat 8,000 overconfident British that had launched a frontal attack in the Battle of New Orleans.

4. The news of this British defeat reached Washington early in February 1815, and two weeks later came news of peace from Britain.
5. Ignorant citizens simply assumed that the British, having been beaten by Jackson, finally wanted peace, lest they get beaten again by the “awesome” Americans.
6. During the war, the American navy had oddly done much better than the army, since the sailors were angry over British impressment of U.S. sailors.
7. However, Britain responded with a naval blockade, raiding ships and ruining American economic life such as fishing.

III. The Treaty of Ghent

1. At first, the confident British made sweeping demands for a neutralized Indian buffer state in the Great Lakes region, control of the Great Lakes, and a substantial part of conquered Maine, but the Americans, led by John Quincy Adams, refused. As American victories piled up, though, the British reconsidered.
2. The Treaty of Ghent, signed on December 24, 1814, was an armistice, acknowledging a draw in the war and ignoring any other demands of either side. Each side simply stopped fighting. The main issue of the war, impressment, was left unmentioned.

IV. Federalist Grievances and the Hartford Convention

1. As the capture of New Orleans seemed imminent, Massachusetts, Connecticut, New Hampshire, Vermont, and Rhode Island secretly met in Hartford from December 15, 1814 to January 5, 1815, to discuss their grievances and to seek redress for their wrongs.
 - While a few talked about secession, most wanted financial assistance from Washington to compensate for lost trade, and an amendment requiring a 2/3 majority for all declarations of embargos, except during invasion.
2. Three special envoys from Mass. went to D.C., where they were greeted with the news from New Orleans; their mission failed, and they sank away in disgrace and into obscurity.
 - The Hartford Convention proved to be the death of the Federalist Party, as their last presidential nomination was trounced by James Monroe in 1816.

V. The Second War for American Independence

1. The War of 1812 was a small war involving some 6,000 Americans killed or wounded, and when Napoleon invaded Russia in 1812 with 500,000 men, Madison tried to invade Canada with about 5,000 men.
2. Yet, the Americans proved that they could stand up for what they felt was right, and naval officers like Perry and MacDonough gained new respect; American diplomats were treated with more respect than before.
3. The Federalist Party died out forever, and new war heroes, like Andrew Jackson and William Henry

Harrison, emerged.

4. Manufacturing also prospered during the British blockade, since there was nothing else to do.
5. Incidents like the burning of Washington added fuel to the bitter conflict with Britain, and led to hatred of the nation years after the war, though few would have guessed that the War of 1812 would be the last war America fought against Britain.
6. Many Canadians felt betrayed by the Treaty of Ghent, since not even an Indian buffer state had been achieved, and the Indians, left by the British, were forced to make treaties where they could.
7. In 1817, though, after a heated naval arms race in the Great Lakes, the Rush-Bagot Treaty between the U.S. and Britain provided the world's longest unfortified boundary (5,527 mi.).
8. After Napoleon's final defeat at Waterloo, Europe sank into an exhaustion of peace, and America looked west to further expand.

VI. Nascent Nationalism

1. After the war, American nationalism really took off, and authors like Washington Irving (Rumpelstiltskin, The Knickerbocker Tales such as The Legend of Sleepy Hollow) and James Fenimore Cooper (The Leatherstocking Tales which included The Last of the Mohicans) gained international recognition.
2. The North American Review debuted in 1815, and American painters painted landscapes of America on their canvases, while history books were now being written by Americans for Americans.
3. Washington D.C. rose from the ashes to be better than ever, and the navy and army strengthened themselves.
4. Stephen Decatur, naval hero of the War of 1812 and the Barbary Coast expeditions, was famous for his American toast after his return from the Mediterranean: "Our country! In her intercourse with foreign nations may she always be in the right; but our country, right or wrong!"

VII. "The American System"

1. After the war, British competitors dumped their goods onto America at cheap prices, so America responded with the Tariff of 1816, the first in U.S. history designed for protection, which put a 20-25% tariff on dutiable imports.
2. It was not high enough, but it was a great start, and in 1824, Henry Clay established a program called the American System.
 - The system began with a strong banking system.
 - It advocated a protective tariff behind which eastern manufacturing would flourish.
 - It also included a network of roads and canals, especially in the burgeoning Ohio Valley, to be funded for by the tariffs, and through which would flow foodstuffs and raw materials from the South and West to the North and East.
 - Lack of effective transportation had been one of the problems of the War of 1812, especially in the West, and in 1817, Congress sought to distribute \$1.5 million to the states for internal improvements, but Madison vetoed it, saying it was unconstitutional, thus making the states look for their own money to build the badly needed roads.

VIII. The So-Called Era of Good Feelings

1. James Monroe defeated his Federalist opponent 183 to 34, and ushered in a short period of one-party rule.
2. He straddled the generations of the Founding Fathers and the new Age of Nationalism.
3. Early in 1817, Monroe took a goodwill tour venturing deep into New England, where he received heartwarming welcomes.
4. A Boston newspaper even went as far as to declare that an “Era of Good Feelings” had begun.
5. However, seeds of sectional troubles were planted. Notably, the South did not like the tariff saying it only benefited the North and made the South pay higher prices. And, the South disliked the internal improvements linking the North and West—the South didn’t see any benefits in paying taxes for roads and canals in other states.

IX. The Panic of 1819 and the Curse of Hard Times

1. In 1819, a paralyzing economic panic (the first since Washington’s times) engulfed the U.S., bringing deflation, depression, bankruptcies, bank failures, unemployment, soup kitchens, and overcrowded debtors’ prisons.
 - A major cause of the panic had been over-speculation in land prices, where the Bank of the United States fell heavily into debt.
 - Oddly, this started an almost predictable chain of panics or recessions. An economic panic occurred every 20 years during the 1800s (panics occurred during 1819, 1837, 1857, 1873, 1893).
2. The West was especially hard hit, and the Bank of the U.S. was soon viewed upon as the cause.
3. There was also attention against the debtors, where, in a few overplayed cases, mothers owing a few dollars were torn away from their infants by the creditors.

X. Growing Pains of the West

1. Between 1791 and 1819, nine frontier states had joined the original 13.
2. This explosive expansion of the west was due in part to the cheap land, the elimination of the Indian menace, the “Ohio Fever,” and the need for land by the tobacco farmers, who exhausted their lands.
3. The Cumberland Road, begun in 1811 and ran ultimately from western Maryland to Illinois. And, the first steamboat on western waters appeared in 1811.
4. The West, still not populous and politically weak, was forced to ally itself with other sections, and demanded cheap acreage.
5. The Land Act of 1820 gave the West its wish by authorizing a buyer to purchase 80 acres of land at a minimum of \$1.25 an acre in cash; the West demanded and slowly got cheap transportation as well.

XI. Slavery and the Sectional Balance

1. Sectional tensions between the North and the South came to a boil when Missouri wanted to become a slave state.
2. Although it met all the requirements of becoming a state, the House of Representatives stymied the plans for its statehood when it proposed the Tallmadge Amendment, which provided that no more slaves be brought

into Missouri and also provided for the gradual emancipation of children born to slave parents already in Missouri (this was shot down in the Senate).

3. Angry Southerners saw this as a threat figuring that if the Northerners could wipe out slavery in Missouri, they might try to do so in all of the rest of the slave states.
4. Plus, the North was starting to get more prosperous and populous than the South.

XII. The Uneasy Missouri Compromise

1. Finally, the deadlock was broken by a bundle of compromises known as the Missouri Compromise.
 - Missouri would be admitted as a slave state while Maine would be admitted as a free state, thus maintaining the balance (it went from 11 free states and 11 slave states to 12 and 12).
 - All new states north of the 36°30' line would be free, new states southward would be slave.
2. Both the North and South gained something, and though neither was totally happy, the compromise worked for many years.
 - Monroe should have been doomed after the 1819 panic and the Missouri problem, but he was so popular, and the Federalist Party so weak, that he won in 1820 by all but one vote (unanimity was reserved for Washington).

XIII. John Marshall and Judicial Nationalism

1. Chief Justice John Marshall helped to bolster the power of the government at the expense of the states.
2. *McCulloch vs. Maryland* (1819): This case involved Maryland's trying to destroy the Bank of the U.S. by taxing its currency notes. Marshall invoked the Hamiltonian principle of implied powers and denied Maryland's right to tax the bank, and also gave the doctrine of "loose construction," using the elastic clause of the Constitution as its basis. He implied that the Constitution was to last for many ages, and thereby was constructed loosely, flexibly, to be bent as times changed.
3. *Cohens vs. Virginia* (1821): The Cohens had been found guilty by Virginia courts of illegally selling lottery tickets, had appealed to the Supreme Court, and had lost, but Marshall asserted the right of the Supreme Court to review the decisions of the state supreme courts in all questions involving powers of the federal government. The federal government won, the states lost.
4. *Gibbons vs. Ogden* (1824): When New York tried to grant a monopoly of waterborne commerce, Marshall struck it down by saying that only Congress can control interstate commerce, not the states themselves; it was another blow to states' rights.

XIV. Judicial Dikes Against Democratic Excesses

1. *Fletcher vs. Peck* (1810): After Georgia fraudulently granted 35 million acres in the Yazoo River country (Mississippi) to privateers, the legislature repealed it after public outcry, but Marshall ruled that it was a contract, and that states couldn't impair a contract. It was one of
2. *Dartmouth College vs. Woodward* (1819): Dartmouth had been granted a

charter by King George III, but New Hampshire had tried to change it. Dartmouth appealed, using alumni Daniel Webster to work as lawyer, and Marshall ruled that the original charter must stand. It was a contract, and the Constitution protected those and overruled state rulings.

3. Marshall's rulings gave the Supreme Court its powers and greatly strengthened the federal government, giving it power to overrule state governments sometimes.

XV. Sharing Oregon and Acquiring Florida

1. The Treaty of 1818 put the northern boundary of the Louisiana Purchase at the 49th parallel and provided for a ten-year joint occupation of the Oregon Territory with Britain, without a surrender of rights and claims by neither Britain nor America.
2. When revolutions broke out in South and Central America, Spanish troops in Florida were withdrawn to put down the rebellions, and Indian attacks ravaged American land while the Indians would then retreat back to Spanish territory.
3. Andrew Jackson swept across the Florida border, hanged two Indian chiefs without ceremony, executed two British subjects for assisting Indians, and seized St. Marks and Pensacola.
4. Monroe consulted his cabinet as to what to do against Jackson; all wanted to punish him except for John Quincy Adams, who demanded huge concessions from Spain.
5. The Florida Purchase Treaty of 1819 had Spain cede Florida and shadowy claims to Oregon in exchange for Texas. The U.S. paid \$5 million to Spain for Florida.

XVI. The Menace of Monarchy in America

1. Monarchs in Europe now were determined to protect the world against democracy, and crushed democratic rebellions in Italy (1821) and in Spain (1823), much to the alarm of Americans.
2. Also, Russia's claims to North American territory were intruding and making Americans nervous that Russia might claim territory that was "rightfully American."
3. Then, in August 1823, the British foreign secretary, George Canning, approached the American minister in London proposing that the U.S. and Britain combine in a joint declaration renouncing any interest in acquiring Latin American territory, and specifically warning the European despots to keep their hands off of Latin American politics.

XVII. Monroe and His Doctrine

1. Sly and careful John Q. Adams sensed a joker in the proposal, correctly assumed that the European powers weren't going to invade America anytime soon, and knew that a self-denouncing alliance with Britain would morally tie the hands of the U.S.
2. He knew that the British boats would need to protect South America to protect their merchant trade, and presumed it safe to blow a defiant, nationalistic blast at all Europe.
3. Late in 1823, the Monroe Doctrine was born, incorporating non-colonization and nonintervention.
4. Dedicated primarily to Russia in the West, Monroe said that no

colonization in the Americas could happen anymore and also, European nations could not intervene in Latin American affairs.

5. In return, the U.S. would not interfere in the Greek democratic revolt against Turkey.

XVIII. Monroe's Doctrine Appraised

1. The monarchs of Europe were angered, but couldn't do anything about it, since the British navy would be there to stop them, further frustrating them.
2. Monroe's declaration made little splash in Latin America, since those who knew of the message also recognized that it was the British navy and not America that was protecting them, and that the U.S. was doing this only to protect its own hide.
3. Not until 1845 did President Polk revive it.
4. In the Russo-American Treaty of 1824, the Russian tsar fixed the southern boundary of his Alaskan territory at 54°40' and it stayed at that.
5. The Monroe Doctrine might better be called the Self-Defense Doctrine, since Monroe was concerned about the safety of his own country, not Latin America.
6. The doctrine has never been law, a pledge, or an agreement.
7. It was mostly an expression of post-1812 U.S. nationalism, gave a voice of patriotism, and added to the illusion of isolationism.
8. Many Americans falsely concluded that the Republic was in fact insulated from European dangers simply because it wanted to be and because, in a nationalistic outburst, Monroe had publicly warned the Old World powers to stay away.

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