History
The War of 1812 was an inconclusive British-U.S. conflict from June 18th 1812 until December 24th, 1814 arising chiefly out of U.S. grievances over oppressive maritime practices during the Napoleonic Wars. While it ended much like it started; in stalemate; it was in fact a war that once and for all confirmed American Independence. The offensive actions of the United States failed in every attempt to capture Canada. On the other hand, the British army was successfully stopped when it attempted to capture Baltimore and New Orleans. There were a number of American naval victories in which American vessels proved to be superior to similarly sized British vessels.

The long struggle between Great Britain and France, fought intermittently between 1793 and 1815, led both belligerents to infringe on the rights and impair the interests of neutrals. Napoleon averted hostilities by agreeing not to interfere with U.S. trade to Britain. Britain, on the other hand, confident in its naval supremacy, continued to enforce its order of 1807, which led to the blockade of all French ports, and insisted that neutral vessels first call at British ports and pay duties. In addition, U.S. sensibilities were offended by the British practice of stopping U.S. ships on the high seas and impressing seamen alleged to be deserters from the Royal Navy.

Tension was also increased by U.S. resentment of British actions along the western Canadian frontier. British authorities were supplying arms and encouragement to the Shawnee leader, Tecumseh, in an effort to check the advance of white settlers into Indian country. After a Shawnee attack led to the pitched Battle of Tippecanoe in the Indiana Territory (Nov. 7, 1811), Westerners raised the cry that the British must be expelled from Canada to ensure frontier security. This theme was espoused vigorously by a group of Expansionist congressmen called War Hawks, who also included Florida in their territorial ambitions.

Despite limited U.S. success, including the recapture of Detroit, by the summer of 1814 the British still controlled access to Lake Michigan and occupied the northern Mississippi River. An amphibious British force ravaged the shores of Chesapeake Bay and, after winning the Battle of Bladensburg, burned public buildings in Washington, D.C., in retaliation for similar U.S. acts in York (Toronto). A predominantly naval battle (Sept. 11, 1814) in Cumberland Bay, near Plattsburgh, resulted in a victory for the American fleet under Commodore Thomas Macdonough, causing the British to abandon the invasion of New York. U.S. Morale was lifted when U.S. ships hindered British commerce, but this action failed to disturb Britain's control of the sea and its blockade of the American coast.

Both sides signed the Treaty of Ghent in Belgium on Dec. 24, 1814, restoring prewar conditions. This settlement forestalled a New England separatist movement, proposed at the Hartford Convention (December 1814-January 1815) in response to the extremely unpopular war. Though the U.S. gained none of its avowed aims, popular legend soon converted defeat into the illusion of victory. The war also marked a decline of U.S. dependence on Europe and stimulated a sense of nationality. -- "1812, War of" Encyclopædia Britannica Online.
Scope & Content
This collection consists primarily of contemporary pamphlets and newspapers published during the War of 1812. Also contained in the collection is an Orderly Book pertaining to the Battle of Plattsburgh.

This collection also contains the components that went into the exhibit “Agent 13 in the North Country” by Matthew Dudley under the guidance of Dr. M. Schrems. These include document descriptions, transcriptions, pamphlets, posters, and maps.

Provenance
Purchase and gifts over time from various sources.

Series
1. Correspondence & Documents  2. Orderly Book of Alexander Macomb

Selected Chronology of the War of 1812

1811 November. The Battle of Tippecanoe (Prophetstown)
1812 June 12. US declares war
       July 4. The Lachine Riot.
1813 February 22. Battle of Ogdensburg
       April 27. Battle of York.
       May 28. Invasion of Sacket's Harbor
       October 26. The Battle of Chateauguay
       November 10. The Battle of Chrysler’s Farm
1814 March 30. The Battle of Lacolle Mill
       July. Niagara Campaign.
       August 24-25. British burn Washington. (George Cockburn & National Intelligencer)
       September 11. The Battle of Plattsburgh Bay (aka Battle of Lake Champlain)
       January 8. The Battle of New Orleans

BOX LIST
Box 1
Series 1 Correspondence and Documents
1. Wilkenson, General James Correspondence (1799-1815) 3 Letters
1. Camp Lofus (?) Heights January 25, 1799
3. “Near Hamilton on the St. Lawrence November 8th 1813” Contemporary transcript of a war Council of generals concerning troop strength and readiness for advance on Montreal.

   1. Ogdensburg, NY May 6th, 1818, John Whitman to Major Austin commanding recruiting service, Boston. Discussing Whitman’s recruiting assignment and request for training. Also requests to be assigned to Burlington, Vt.


   3. Ogdensburg, NY July 21, 1818 Additional letter reporting to Major Austin

   4. Ogdensburg, NY July 21, 1818 to Lieut. Col. Lawrence Reporting to the Headquarters of Regiment also forwarding of additional letter to Major Austin or proper officer. Requests not to travel to Boston and to be located in Burlington, Vt.

   5. Charges and Speculation against Lieutenant John Whitman of 8th Infantry March 4, 1819. Conduct unbecoming to an officer and a gentleman. 1. Boston, December 15 and 16 1818. Drinking and becoming intoxicated with noncommissioned officers and privates. 2. March 2, 1819 extremely drunk requesting pay and was sent away. 3. Intoxicated and sleeping on the benches at a rendezvous point. [n.d.]

3. Documents Concerning Purchase and Payment of Supplies and Financial Accounts (1814 – 1815)
   1. 25 Documents containing receipts, contracts, balance sheets, and other financial information pertaining to rations, lodging, ammunition and such. Correspondence and documents from primarily Sackets Harbor and Albany.

4. Student Research Materials
   1. Miscellaneous papers and pamphlets
   2. Document Transcriptions
   3. Document Descriptions
   4. Posters and Maps

Series 2 Orderly Book of U.S. Army officer, Alexander Macomb (1814)

Alexander Macomb (1782 – 1841) began his military career as a New York Ranger, progressing to Lieutenant in the US Army. Prior to the War of 1812 Macomb was responsible for the supervision of the construction of frontier fortifications on the Canadian Border. As the war progressed Macomb established himself as one of the up and coming young generals replacing the older generation who had commanded during the first two years of the war. After being promoted to brigadier general in January 1814 Macomb witnessed the last battle of one of the older generation, James Wilkinson, at La Colle Mill, Lower Canada. Following the forced retirement of Wilkinson, Macomb was stationed at Plattsburg on Lake Champlain under the command of Maj. Gen. George Izard. Izard’s departure to the defense of Sackets Harbor left Macomb to command troops in the defense of Plattsburg. Successfully deterring an invasion of British General Sir George Prevost, Macomb was promoted to Major General and received a gold medal from congress.

This particular orderly book of Malcomb contains 66 leaves. Dates included in the collection are February 6, 1814 to September 22, 1814. The contents of the book primarily deal with the fortification of Plattsburg and the preparation of defenses against the British attack. In what was recognized as “the most decisive engagement of the war” by Winston Churchill Macomb’s troops with the aid of the naval support of Lt. Thomas Macdonough fought off the advancement of the British troops on Plattsburgh. The orderly book is divided into two parts.

1. Orderly Book of Consolidated 6th, 12th, and 13th regiments of infantry. March 14, 1814 (fragment dated 6th March 1814) to July 14, 1814 from Plattsburg, Chazy, and Champlain.

Duncan Clark (1785-1862) was a Lieutenant in the Volunteer Incorporated Militia Battalion of the Eastern and Johnston Districts in Canada, serving in the War of 1812 and the Rebellion of 1837, and was later associated with the Northwest Company and the Hudson Bay Company in the fur trade.


4. Orderly Book of various participants in the War of 1812 dated August 23, 1814 to May 23, 1815.

Box 2
Series 3 Pamphlets

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-- Wells and Lilly Boston 1815
A Solemn Review of the Custom of War
-- P. B. Gleason & Co. Hartford 1815
The Olive Branch or Faults on Both Sides
Carey, Matthew Rowe & Hooper Boston 1815
An Answer to Certain Parts of a Work
A Federalist by Author Philadelphia 1816
Speech of the Hon. Silas Wright at a Mass Mtg.
-- Youngs & Hunt New York 1840
Discourse Delivered in the First Congregational
Channing, W. J. Crissy, Printer Philadelphia 1841
Fragments of the War of 1812
Dr. Canniff Belford Mo. Magazine Toronto 1877

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Letter From the Secretary of State to Mr Monroe
-- A. & G. Way Printers Washington 1808
Letters from the Secretary of State, Part II
-- A. & G. Way Printers Washington 1808
Letters from the Secretary of State, Part III
-- A. & G. Way Printers Washington 1808
Letters from the Secretary of State, Part IV
-- A. & G. Way Printers Washington 1808
Papers Relative to French Affairs
Gen Armstrong A. & G. Way Printers Washington 1808
The British Treaty With Appendix of State
-- John J. Stockdale London 1808
Appendix, &c. Treaty of Amity, Commerce
-- -- London 1794
Cobbett against Himself Suo sibi gladio hune Cobbett, Wm T. Gillet, Wild-court London 1800

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Series 4. Newspapers
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The War
New York, NY March 22, 1814
The Repertory & General
Boston, MA August 21, 1812
The Weekly Messenger
Boston, MA December 3, 1813
Pennsylvania Republican
Harrisburg, PA August 1, 1815
War of 1812
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Chronological order of publication

*Address of the House of Representatives to the people of Massachusetts.* Boston, 1812  E357.6 .M4


Smith, M. *A Geographical View of the Province of Upper Canada…* NY: Pelsue & Gould, 1813  F1057 .S64 1813


*Sketches of the war, between the United States and the British isles…* Rutland, Vt. Fay and Davison, 1815  E34


*Diagrams and plans, illustrative of the…Memoir.* Phila: Abraham Small, 1816  E353.1.W6 W6 1816,

*Collection of the official accounts, in detail, of all the battles fought by sea and land…* NY: printed by E. Conrad, 1817  E355 .C65 1817

Perkins, S. *A History of the Political and military Events of the late War…* New Haven: S. Converse, 1825  E354 .P45 1825


Skinner, St. J. *The Battle of Plattsburgh: an address…* Plattsburgh : [s.n.] 1835  E356.P7 S6 1835

Van Rensselaer, S. *A Narrative of the affair of Queenstown; in the war of 1812.* NY: Leavitt, Lord & Co., 1836  E356.Q3 V2 1836


Leech, Samuel. *Thirty Years from home, or, A voice from the main deck…* Boston: Tappan, Whittemore & Mason, (1843) 15th edition, 1847  G549 .L48 1847x