

## Instant History

by Chuck Ross

This is the eighth in our series on Presidential elections, concerning the election of 1816. The period had begun on an ominous note, the War of 1812. However, peace was now at hand and the country embarked on a new era. **The Eighth Election (1816)**

The United States lost most of the battles, but somehow "won" the war. Unlike most conflicts, the War of 1812 led to economic self-sufficiency for the nation and a great feeling of national pride. On two occasions, now, we had been defeated, or at least withstood, Britain the superpower.

(1) The Americans inflicted a crushing defeat on the British at New Orleans in January 1815. What was the strategic impact of this battle on the war?

(2) The victory at New Orleans was the culmination of a military career and the beginning of a political career for what man?

(3) The Hartford Convention of December 1814 was hardly in keeping with the spirit of the country. What was it all about?

(4) Madison declined to run for a third term. Who were the candidates and what was the outcome of the eighth election?

(5) Indiana became the 19th state to vote, yet her votes were contested. Why?

### Answers

(1) None. The battle was fought after the Peace of Ghent had been signed (oops — I knew there was something I meant to tell those fellows!). However, the effect on the morale of the American people was tremendous.

(2) Old Hickory, Andrew Jackson.

(3) With their ports blockaded because of the war, the New England states were in an economic squeeze. The Federalists, who opposed the war from the beginning, convened an angry

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convention with delegates from five New England states at Hartford, Connecticut. Hot heads talked of secession and a separate peace, but moderates prevailed. A series of constitutional amendments, mostly restrictive on Congress, were drafted. But the New Englanders were not in tune with the times. Arriving in Washington to press their demands on the President and Congress, they found a capitol celebrating the victory at New Orleans. With news of peace arriving shortly afterwards. The country was in no mood to listen. It was a time for expansion, not contraction.

(4) James Monroe was elected our fifth President along with his running mate, Daniel Tompkins. The Democratic Republicans amassed 183 electoral votes each against 34 for Rufus King and 22 for John Howard, the two Federalists. It was a landslide for the Republicans, who carried 16 of 19 states — and it was the last hurrah for the Federalists, who never again presented a national ticket.

(5) Indiana was not admitted to the Union until December 11, one month after the election. Although challenged, her votes were finally counted because they had no effect on the outcome.



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