Combined operations in the American War of Independence and the Naval War of 1812 in the North American theatre: a comparative study of strategy, tactics and effectiveness

FINAL SUBMISSION 3-1-2022 Incorporating the List of Amendments 17-4-2022

Thesis details and title

Combined operations in the American War of Independence and the Naval War of 1812 in the North American theatre: a comparative study of strategy, tactics and effectiveness

By Michael David Hardman

University of Wolverhampton- Department of History, Politics and War Studies

Director of Studies: Dr Howard Fuller

Supervisor: Dr Eamonn O'Kane

2020 PhD Thesis

Thesis Structure

List of abbreviations used in the footnotes and bibliography
Thesis Abstract
Introduction The Aims of the thesis and thesis summary
Combined operations:
- The definition of combined operations
- Combined operations

Thematic constraints:
- The definition of thematic constraints
- Thematic constraints
- The types of thematic constraints and their relative importance

Literature Review

Part 1 Preamble

A brief history of the evolution of combined operations by the mid-eighteenth century

Part 1

Chronological analysis of combined operations in the American War of Independence
- Chapter 1: American resistance and the British response
- Chapter 2: Civil War
- Chapter 3: World War
- Chapter 4: British defeat

Part 2

Chronological analysis of combined operations in the Naval War of 1812
- Chapter 1: Britain on the defensive
- Chapter 2: The Turning Point
- Chapter 3: Britain on the offensive
- Chapter 4: Stalemate

Conclusion
Bibliography
Appendix
1. List of maps and sources
2. Maps

BL British Library

LOC Library of Congress, Washington D.C.

NDAR Naval Documents of the American Revolution (12 volumes), U.S. Government, Department of Defense DoD, U.S. Military, U.S. Navy, Progressive Management

NMM Caird Library, National Maritime Museum, Greenwich

TNA The National Archives, Kew

ADM Admiralty

CO Colonial Office

FO Foreign Office

WO War Office

NARA National Archives and Records Administration. U.S. National Archives, Washington D.C.

NHHC Naval Heritage and History Command

NRS Navy Records Society

Paper Collections

John Adams Papers in LOC

Ethan Allen Papers in LOC

Alexander Cochrane Papers in LOC

George Cockburn Papers in LOC

Peter Force Collection in LOC

Benjamin Franklyn Papers in LOC

Nathanael Greene Papers in LOC

Thomas Jefferson Papers in LOC

The Writings of George Washington, Volumes 22 and 23, in LOC

George Washington Papers Revolutionary War Series, 22 Volumes in NHCC

The British Library BL

Additional Manuscript Series, (Add. Ms.)

Frederick Haldimand Papers, Volume 1, (Add. Ms. 21807)

Frederick Haldimand Papers, Volume 2, (Add. Ms. 21808)

Miscellaneous Collections Volume XLVI (Add. Ms. 5847)

The British Library Rare Books Department

Pennsylvania Gazette (PENN NT 280)

Maryland Gazette (PENN NT 300)

The National Maritime Museum NMM

Biography Collection (BGR)

General Augustus Elliot correspondence (ELL)

Thomas Graves correspondence (GRV)

Samuel Hood Correspondence (HOO)

Journals and Diary Collection (JOD)

Sir Charles Middleton correspondence (MID)

Thesis Abstract

This thesis examines the use of combined operations in the American War of Independence and the Naval War of 1812, hereafter referred to as the War of 1812. It compares the use of combined operations in both wars and examines the extent to which the use of combined operations contributed to the very different outcomes of the two wars. However, certain factors such as weather or chance referred to in this thesis as thematic constraints intervened to prevent the success of combined operations. By examining combined operations in both of these conflicts, and also the influence of the thematic constraints on combined operations, various lessons and conclusions can be drawn about combined operations as a distinct art of war by the early nineteenth century. The first war resulted in a clear British defeat and the loss of the thirteen colonies in North America. The second war ended in a political stalemate in which neither side lost any territory. This thesis demonstrates that combined operations and the associated thematic constraints were overwhelmingly influential in determining the different outcomes of the two wars. The thesis examines the lexicographical problems which arise in the definition of the term 'combined operations' and arrives at a working definition. It then argues that the objective of combined operations was to deliver a victory, but that the fog and friction of war intervened under certain circumstances in the form of the thematic constraints. Their presence could be sufficient to cause the combined operation to fail. The thematic constraints were not all equally important. Some like political constraints or defects in leadership were more important than others. The relative importance of the thematic constraints to each other and the criterion used to assess their relative importance are discussed in detail below. The thematic constraints could operate in isolation, such as weather, or in conjunction with other

thematic constraints. They could intervene at the planning level to prevent the successful formulation of a combined operations plan, or more usually, at the operational level to prevent the combined operation from being successfully implemented.

This thesis argues that combined operations and the thematic constraints were overwhelmingly influential in determining the outcomes of the two wars. It acknowledges the thematic constraints as a group of factors which overwhelmingly influenced the outcome of combined operations. It does so in a structured format which allows for a comparison of the thematic constraints in the conduct of combined operations and in doing so it develops and builds upon the existing historiography.

"We must tell our Countrymen, that a Military, Naval, Littoral War, when wisely prepared and discreetly conducted, is a terrible Sort of War. Happy for that People who are Sovereigns enough of the Sea to put it into Execution. For it comes like Thunder and Lightning to some unprepared part of the World".

Thomas More Molyneux. "*Conjunct Expeditions: or expeditions that have been carried on jointly by the fleet and army".* (1759). 3-4.

***

"The Defeat of many Braithwaites and Baillies will not destroy them (the English). I can ruin their resources by land but I cannot dry up the sea".

Haidar Ali speaking of his victories over the British forces under Colonel Baillie and Colonel Braithwaite in the Mysore War in India 1780-1781.

R. B. Mowat, *A History of Great Britain 1688-1924 634-5*

***

"…(the defeat at Plattsburgh)…crippled the British advance and was the most decisive engagement of the war".

Sir Winston Churchill, *History of the English Speaking People.* Vol III, 236.

***

Introduction

Introduction

The aims of the thesis and the thesis summary

This thesis examines combined operations in the American War of Independence and the War of 1812. The thesis argues that combined operations were overwhelmingly important in determining the different outcomes of the two wars. It analyses the contribution made by combined operations and the associated thematic constraints to each war and examines how the effects of those contributions in the two wars compared to each other. It argues that combined operations when competently implemented were a highly efficient way of winning a conflict as quickly and as cheaply as possible in contrast to sieges, blockades or wars of attrition. When carried out inefficiently their outcomes could be equally influential but in a negative way. Whilst emphasising the importance of combined operations, at the same time the significance of other types of engagements such as military and naval operations is also acknowledged.

A comparison of the two wars has not previously been undertaken in the manner attempted by this thesis. The first war, particularly in Great Britain, was regarded as more important than the second. The comparatively small War of 1812 whilst regarded as important in the United States was regarded by the British as a sideshow to the Napoleonic War in Europe. As the Canadian historian William Kingsford commented more than a hundred years ago, the events in the War of 1812 have not been forgotten in Britain 'for they have never been known there'.[1] Even in the United States the War of 1812 is the 'one least likely to be remembered'.[2]

[1] Jon Latimer, *1812 War with America,* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2007), 1.
[2] Nicole Eustace, 'Interchange: The War of 1812', in *The Journal of American History,* Vol. 99, No. 2, (September, 2012)

Similarly, no attempt has been made previously to systematically examine the important role played by the thematic constraints in intervening to determine the outcome of combined operations. In emphasising the importance of combined operations, analysing the effect of the thematic constraints on their outcome and comparing their effects in the two wars, the thesis fills a gap and adds to the existing historiography.

The use of military forces in conjunction with naval forces has, unsurprisingly, a very long history. The first recorded instance of combined operations in history was found on the tomb of the Egyptian General Uni serving under Pepi I which is on record as a combined operation attack (land and naval forces attack) against defenders in Canaan circa 2400 BC.[3] However, British (or pre-1707, English) combined operations had certainly begun to emerge as an operational art by the seventeenth century.[4] In 1691 Edward Littleton recommended that King William III should undertake a 'descent' (a coastal landing of troops on enemy territory) in France.[5] The use of combined operations was a clear mark of rising military professionalism in the eighteenth century. The victory of the British General James Wolfe at Quebec in 1759 indicated what could be achieved by combined operations when competent military and naval commanders worked together successfully. British naval supremacy in the form of power-projection and combined operations created expectations as exemplified in the new 'Rule Britannia' composition which was a popular feature in theatres and opera houses of the time. British naval power and combined operations were expected to deliver success in the War of American Independence and later against the US in 1812. However, at the same time, events in Cartagena in 1741 demonstrated the limits of combined operations. The Cartagena

[3] J. B. Pritchard (ed.), *Ancient Near Eastern Texts relating to the Old Testament,* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1969)
[4] K. A. McLay, 'Combined operations and the European theatre during the Nine Years' War, 1688-97', in *Institute of Historical Research,* Vol. 78, No. 202 (November, 2005), 507-539
[5] Ibid, 507

expedition is important because it is an example of a failed combined operation. It is compared and contrasted with Quebec and the relief of Gibraltar in the Part 1 Preamble of this thesis when the characteristics of successful and failed combined operations are examined in more detail.

Subsequently, this thesis rests upon the following propositions:

(1) The outcomes of key combined operations whether successes or failures were overwhelmingly influential in determining the different outcomes of the two wars.

(2) Thematic constraints were also overwhelmingly influential in intervening to prevent the successful formulation and implementation of combined operations. Thematic constraints were any factors which could intervene in a combined operation to prevent or to restrict its success.

Combined operations

It is difficult to arrive at a comprehensive definition of combined operations. Different writers at different periods of history and in different countries have used different terminology. In addition the nature of combined operations changes over time due to technological developments and also due to differing conceptions as to the role of combined operations. James J. Wirtz and Jon J. Rossenwasser commenting on the nature of combined operations wrote that:"…a commander should employ multiple categories of forces and weapons in an integral matter that maximises their integral effectiveness, offsets their limitations and produces greater combined effect".[6] This comment correctly summarises the nature of

[6] James. J. Wirtz and Jon. J. Rossenwasser, 'From Combined Arms to Combat Intelligence: Philosophy, Doctrine and Operations', in *Intelligence and National Security,* Vol 25, No 6, (Winter, 2010), 725-743.

combined operations which involves a synthesis of military and naval forces, together with a judicious mix of the two which is calculated to lead to the best result in terms of effectiveness and a mitigation of the limited results which are achieved when the forces are used in isolation. Keith McLay in his doctoral thesis noted that it is difficult to arrive at a definition of combined operations and stated that "No blanket definition of combined operations can be carried out".[7] Despite the difficulties noted in defining combined operations, it is necessary to have a working definition to form the discussion. Therefore, for this thesis the definition of combined operations which will be used is "The co-operation of military and naval forces acting together to achieve a desired result, achievable only by co-operation".

However, the results will be assessed at the strategic and planning levels, as well as the tactical and operational levels, since combined operations could have results which substantially influenced the outcome of the entire war. The planning and strategic level focuses on defining and supporting national policy and relates directly to the outcome of a war or other conflict as a whole. The operational level is concerned with employing military forces in a theatre of war or theatre of operations to obtain an advantage over the enemy and thereby obtain strategic goals through the design, organisation and conduct of campaigns and major objectives. Tactics deal with the details of prosecuting engagements. [8]

Combined operations played an important role in the two wars on both sides. For this reason it is necessary to examine the reasons why there were noticeable differences between the

[7] British Library PhD theses, Ethos. Published PhDs. [online]. Available at https://ethos. bl uk. Accessed 16 May 2018. Keith McLay Doctoral thesis. Glasgow University 2003 Combined Operations: British Naval and Military Co-operation in the War of 1688-1713. Chapter III: A Distinct Form of Warfare? The Problems of Definition.
[8] USAF College of Aerospace Doctrine, Research and Education (CADRE), *Air and Space Power Mentoring Guide,* Vol. 1 (Maxwell AFB, AL: Air University Press, 1997). (excerpt).

American and British Navies and the barriers to creating and deploying those forces. In the first war, the British and American approaches to the employment of combined operations were determined by the existing military and naval infrastructure, ethos and traditions and by the limitations imposed by distance, geography, finance and other thematic constraints. The thirteen North American Colonies were on the far side of the Atlantic. The conduct of operations and the maintenance of supply lines could be seasonal because of adverse weather conditions in the North Atlantic. The American coastline was not like Western Europe's or Britain's. The extended 'double coastline' meant that a large flotilla of littoral craft would be needed and it made the conduct of blockades by the Royal Navy more difficult. In places like Virginia there were many intersecting rivers. The eastern seaboard was separated from the Ohio Valley by the Appalachian Mountains making trans-theatre operations problematic. The St Lawrence River was not conducive to operations by the seagoing ships of the Royal Navy beyond Quebec and therefore getting naval power onto the Lakes was difficult. In the first war, new vessels had to be constructed from scratch particularly by the Americans. The Americans had the advantage of building ships on their own territory. However, it is a mistake to imagine that prior to the outbreak of war the Americans had little involvement with a navy. Americans would have regularly used vessels for the purpose of fishing, trade or commercial transport and a very substantial navy already existed at a local level. In addition, rudimentary State Navies also existed and in 1775 a seven member Marine Committee was appointed by the Continental Congress to construct a navy for the United Colonies.[9] By 1775 there were three American Navies in existence-the local navies, the State Navies and the newly formed Continental Navy. The Americans carried out a combined operation early on in the war when they used the Colonial Navy in the invasion of Canada.[10] In addition, large coastal cities such as Boston,

[9] George C. Daughan, *If by Sea The Forging of the American Navy-From the Revolution to the War of 1812,* (New York: Basic Books, 2008), 50

[10] Canada in the first war means the Province of Quebec (before its extension in the Quebec Act of 1774) and consisted mainly of the area occupied by the St. Lawrence River including Quebec and Montreal and

Baltimore, New York, Philadelphia and others had timber yards and warehouses and large supplies of timber for the construction of different types and sizes of ships. Whilst sections of pre-constructed ships could be transported, they were open to attack. It was difficult to decide what role the new navy would play and what its objectives were. Any attempt to construct capital ships of the line (ships of more than 50 guns) was impossible because of the overwhelming size of the Royal Navy. An attempt was made to convert a dozen or so merchant vessels into warships but financial constraints meant that the new navy would adopt a primarily defensive role. Gunboats were constructed to defend the American coast and privateers were licenced by Congress under Letters of Marque to attack British Merchant vessels.[11] The use of gunboats was a policy favoured by Jefferson but they were in the main no match for ships of the line.[12] American privateers had become so numerous towards the end of the war that they were a major problem for the Royal Navy. However, Letters of Marque were issued by both sides.[13] The lack of adequate naval resources in terms of both numbers and types of ships in the American Navy in the first war was also a feature of the second war where it also acted as a thematic constraint. In consequence, the over-reliance on privateers by the Americans which characterised the first war was also repeated in the second.

In terms of military forces in both wars the British had a long-established army and officer corps with a long history of waging war and combined operations in particular. In the Seven Years' War, outstanding officers such as James Wolfe and competent naval commanders such

immediately to the north of the states of New York, New Hampshire and Massachussetts later Maine. Canada will also include Nova Scotia. See Bicheno, *op. cit.* 10. Canada in the second war means Upper and Lower Canada, including Nova Scotia and also New Brunswick.

[11] 8-8-1776, Jefferson to John Page, The papers of Thomas Jefferson. The Library of Congress. Vol. 1, 486. Jefferson remarked that 'the spirit of privateering is gaining ground fast'.

[12] Ibid, 487. 9-8-1776, Jefferson to Francis Eppes, This gives an account of an engagement between galleys and men of war

[13] 10-12-1782, TNA/HCA 32-492, 10.

as Charles Saunders showed what a well-conducted combined operation could achieve at Quebec in the British victory of 1759. In contrast, on the American side, in the first war the Continental Army had been formed by the adoption of the New England Army by Congress on 14 June 1775.[14] The over-reliance of the Americans on the militia, at least in the early stages, was characteristic of the first war, although as the war progressed, the Continental Army became more experienced and more proficient. The Americans had become familiar with the use of combined operations in the French and Indian Wars and the earlier wars and they had experience of participating in them, for example in the expedition to Cartagena de Indias. The Americans used combined operations in the evacuation carried out by John Glover and the Marblehead Mariners at Long Island and in the crossing of the Delaware prior to the attack on Trenton.[15] They lacked the organisational structure such as the Navy Board and the Admiralty Board which the British had possessed even before the time of Samuel Pepys.[16] The infrastructure was to develop over time. The use of combined operations increased once the French Navy became available following the entry of France into the war in 1778. After this, the French maintained large military and naval forces in the North American theatre.

The predominant characteristic of both wars, however, was the huge size of the Royal Navy. In the first war, in contrast to the Americans, the British had an enormous navy of over 135 ships of the line, experienced Admirals such as Richard Howe, George Bridges Rodney and Samuel Hood and a long experience of conducting combined operations. By 1 May 1777 the fleet had grown to 393, by 29 April 1778 to 431 and by 22 January 1779 to 459.[17] The sheer

[14] Robert J Allison, *The American Revolution,* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2015), 27.
[15] John Glover, *A Memoir of John Glover of Marblehead by William P. Upham,* (FB &c Ltd.: London, 2018)
[16] David Syrett, *Shipping and the American War 1775-83, A Study of British Transport Organisation* (London: The Athlone Press, 1970), 18.
[17] 1-5-1777, A List of Your Majesty's Royal Navy. Entire fleet. Navy Office, NMM/MID 9-13. On 1 May 1777, 29-4-1778, and 22-1-1779. (48 pages).

size of the British Fleet is misleading however, since a large proportion of it had to be retained in home waters to guard against any potential French invasion. Even adopting the policy of 'A Fleet in Being'-i.e. maintaining a naval presence to distract the enemy whilst not engaging it in action-the Fleet retained in the Channel was still quite substantial.[18] The British Fleet overall was enormous. With such a large fleet, the best approach for the British appeared to be to project naval power 3,000 miles away by means of combined operations, raids and blockades and that of the colonies to adopt a defensive posture by using gunboats supplemented by the use of privateers, until such time as larger vessels could be constructed. However, the majority of Americans lived in cities, towns and villages on the coast. The colonies outside of the major coastal cities and especially on the trans-Appalachian frontier were undeveloped in terms of infrastructure. In this colonial hinterland, roads and canals were primitive when compared with those of England or Western Europe. The coastal location of the cities, towns and villages made them susceptible to the use of combined operations, raids and blockades by the Royal Navy. In the first war, the decision as to whether to employ the Royal Navy primarily to conduct a blockade, or whether to employ it partially to conduct a blockade and also to assist the British army in transporting troops and supplies and to carry out combined operations was a source of debate and disagreement in the Government and its advisers. The subsequent decision to use military means initially to implement the policy of coercion meant that combined operations became of the greatest importance.[19]

In the second war, as in the first war, American and British use of combined operations was also influenced by the existing infrastructure and traditions and the limitations imposed by a

[18] John B. Hattendorf," 'The Idea Of a Fleet in Being' in Historical Perspective' ", in *Naval War College Review,* Vol. 67, No. 1, Article 6 (Winter, 2014), 43-60.
[19] Daniel A. Baugh, 'The Politics of British Naval Failure, 1775-1777', in *The American Neptune: A Quarterly Journal of Maritime History,* Vol. 52, Part 4 (1992), 222-226.

variety of thematic constraints. By 1812 a more structured US Army and Navy had emerged. The US Army in the summer of 1812 had a strength of 11,744 men including officers and including also 5,000 recruits. Its authorised strength was 35,600.[20] The US Navy consisted of only twenty eight vessels made up of three large frigates of 44 guns, three small frigates of 36 guns and twenty two miscellaneous vessels. These forces grew only slowly as the war progressed.[21]

From the British side, the main characteristic of the second war was the priority given to the European theatre which was given precedence over the North American theatre in terms of supplies of men, ships and money. The reason for this was that, unlike in the first war when the French had substantial military and naval forces in the North American theatre, French forces in the second war were concentrated in Europe. On the British side in June 1812, there were approximately only 7,000 Regulars in the whole of Upper and Lower Canada.[22] The British commander, Isaac Brock, had about 800 militia but over the course of the war some 10,000 militia were to be raised but the British also enjoyed the support of the Native Americans.[23] The Royal Navy had 11 ships of the line, thirty four frigates and a similar number of small vessels stationed in North America. The David and Goliath disparity between the overwhelming strength of the Royal Navy and what A. T. Mahan called the 'tiny' American fleet was illusory.[24] The British fleet which was allocated to American waters was engaged in a variety of tasks including escort duties, protection of the St Lawrence, the blockade of

[20] Donald R. Hickey, *The War of 1812 A Forgotten Conflict* (Illinois: University of Illinois, 2012), 32. Also Latimer, *1812, op. cit.* 56.
[21] John Mackay Hitsman, *The Incredible War of 1812 a Military History* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2000), 310. Comparative figures for the USN in 1812, 1813 and 1814, were 44 gun frigates 3, 3 and 4. 36 gun frigates 3, 4 and 3 and for small vessels 11, 10 and 19. The figures do not include the naval force on the Great Lakes.
[22] Hitsman, *The Incredible War of 1812, op. cit.* 295.
[23] Alan Taylor, *The Civil War of 1812, op. cit,* 125
[24] Alfred Thayer Mahan, *Sea Power in its Relationship to the War of 1812,* (Leipzig: Filiquarian Publishing LLC, 2006). Vol. 1, 195.

American ports and hunting down the predatory American frigates. Canada assumed a greater importance in the second war than in the first war, since it was the only British territory which had a common border with the USA, and this rendered it susceptible to American attacks. The increasingly efficient and extensive British blockade in the second war allowed combined operations to be used in the form of raids on the American eastern coastline.[25] Such raids were intended to act as a diversion from American attacks on Canada.[26] Furthermore, geopolitical changes in the form of the Louisiana Purchase in 1803 opened up new targets for British combined operations in the Mississippi and New Orleans area. In consequence, combined operations became increasingly important. However, combined operations also had disadvantages since they were a sophisticated tool and sophistication implied complexity. Complexity could intervene as a thematic constraint to prevent the combined operation coming to a successful conclusion. The more complex the operation, the more likely it was to go wrong. Before the outbreak of the War of 1812 in America, a large British expedition in Europe to seize the Dutch Island of Walcheren in July 1809 indicated that combined operations could also have their limitations. This expedition which was described as a 'conjoint expedition' was intended to capture or destroy the French vessels either being built at Antwerp or Flushing or afloat in the river, destroy the dockyards, to reduce the island of Walcheren and also to render the River Scheldt no longer navigable by the French.[27] Its use as a diversion to assist the Austrians was limited by the fact that the latter had already been defeated at the Battle of Wagram on 5 July 1809. The expedition consisted of 40,000 men, 400 transports and 200 escorts including 37 ships of the line.[28] However, sickness, long delays which allowed the French to bring up reinforcements and indecisiveness caused the expedition to be withdrawn

[25] Hickey, *The War of 1812, op. cit.* 154-155
[26] Undated, TNA/WO 1-142, Continued, 194. See also 30-8-1814, Ross to Bathurst, TNA/WO 1-141, 15
[27] Martin R. Howard, *Walcheren, 1809* (Barnsley: Pen and Sword Books Ltd., 2012), 35.
[28] Robert Harvey, *The War of Wars* (London: Constable and Robinson Ltd, 2007), 673.

after the loss of thousands of troops.[29] At the height of the crisis, British soldiers suffered a mortality rate of 33.2 per cent which was attributable to disease.[30] More than 40,000 British troops were sent out on the Walcheren expedition and over 4,000 had died and another 11,000 were sick.[31] The War Minister, Castlereagh, was blamed for the defeat.[32] Winston Churchill described Walcheren as 'a costly diversion …but a promising plan…' indicating how wide the gap could sometimes be between promising success and delivering it.[33]

Thematic Constraints

For the purpose of this thesis, thematic constraints are defined as any factor which could intervene to restrict or prevent the success of a combined operation. This is a wide definition but it reflects the large number of thematic constraints and their importance.

Whilst the objective of combined operations was to deliver a successful outcome, in practice certain factors intervened to prevent this occurring. Carl von Clausewitz wrote that "countless minor incidents-the kind you can never really foresee-combine to lower the general level of performance, so that one always falls far short of the intended goal".[34] Such incidents Clausewitz referred to as "friction". Friction manifested itself in many forms. For the purpose of this thesis the various manifestations of friction will be described as "thematic constraints".

[29] Jacqueline Reiter," 'Day after day adds to our miseries': the private diary of a staff officer on the Walcheren expedition", 1809 Part 2, in *Journal of the Society for Historical Research,* Vol. 96, No. 387 (Winter, 2018), 231-250.
[30] Christopher D. Goulding and Christopher T. Goulding, 'Amphibians at Heart, The Battle of Copenhagen (1807), the Walcheren expedition, and the war against Napoleon', in *Journal of the Society for Army Historical Research,* Vol. 90, No. 363 (Autumn, 2012), 182.
[31] T. H. McGuffie, ' The Walcheren Expedition and the Walcheren Fever', in *The English Historical Review,* Vol. 62, No. 243, (April, 1947), 191-202.
[32] Charles Webster, *The Foreign Policy of Castlereagh 1812-1815* (London: G. Bell and Sons, Ltd, 1963), 15.
[33] Winston S. Churchill, *A History of the English Speaking Peoples* (London: Bloomsbury Publishing Plc. 2015), 213.
[34] Carl von Clausewitz, *On War,* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008), 66.

The thematic constraints could act individually, or in conjunction with other thematic constraints. The thematic constraints could operate at the highest levels of policy making and grand strategy. Alternatively, they could operate at the tactical or operational level. The thematic constraints were not all equally important but they all operated at varying levels and to varying degrees to prevent or reduce the success of combined operations.

At the highest level of leadership and government, the views of the war held by each side could be different and even diametrically opposed. However, how a war appeared to each side could change over time depending on changing circumstances and events and how these were interpreted. In turn this could lead to a reassessment of strategy and priorities. A gulf sometimes developed between what the key formulators of policy and strategy considered desirable and achievable and what the commanders on the ground believed was possible.[35] Feedback was sometimes available about the opinion of the commanders on the ground, but this information did not always result in a change of policy. An example of this was the request by General Gage for a suspension of the Coercive Acts and the request for 20,000 troops. [36]

The types of thematic constraints and their relative importance

A large number of thematic constraints existed. The thematic constraints can be identified from the primary sources. Some thematic constraints were more important than others. A comparative assessment of the importance of the different thematic constraints can be carried out from the information in the primary sources. The criterion for assessing the relative

[35] Harold A. Larrabee, *Decision at the Chesapeake* (London: William Kimber, 1965), 35. Sandwich hoped that thirty or forty thousand Americans, not just twenty thousand, would join their army, "for the more rebels, the greater the stampede when they come up against the British".
[36] W. Bodham Donne (ed.), *The Correspondence of King George III with Lord North from 1768 to 1783,* Volume I, 216. The King stated that 'his idea of suspending the Acts appears to me the most absurd that can be suggested'.

importance of the thematic constraints is the frequency and extent to which the thematic constraints intervened in combined operations and the level at which they intervened and their long-term influence on the outcome of the combined operation, the campaign and even the war itself. Using this criterion, leadership, faults in the command and control structure and in the decision making process, planning and planning assumptions, allies, maintaining an adequate supply of military and naval resources, economic, financial and fiscal constraints, political constraints and geography appeared to be the most important thematic constraints since these were recurring and long-lasting and had the greatest long-term effects on the planning and implementation of combined operations. Chance and luck could also intervene at the highest level. Other thematic constraints were, arguably, of less importance. Weather and technology tended to have a more transitory effect and to have the least effect in the long-run. However, it is difficult to reach an entirely objective assessment since all of the thematic constraints were important. The constraints will be examined in outline only here and their consequences for individual campaigns and engagements are examined in the chronological analysis section.

Leadership and personality defects constituted an important thematic constraint at all levels. On the British side in the first war, the Prime Minister, Frederick Lord North, was completely indecisive and changed his mind regularly.[37] Lord North did not have the charisma, personality or inclination to impose his authority on the cabinet.[38] As a result the Cabinet was weak and also divided. This was particularly so since the doctrine of collective Cabinet responsibility had not yet evolved into its present form.[39] At the tactical and operational level, General

[37] Andrew O'Shaughnessy, *The Men Who Lost America,* (London: Oneworld publications, 2013), 67.
[38] Larrabee, *Decision at the Chesapeake, op. cit.* 23. He did not, "like the Great Earl of Chatham, sufficiently coerce the other members of the Cabinet". In Wraxall, *Memoirs,* II, 142.
[39] Ibid, 18.

William Howe exhibited serious leadership defects.[40] Both Vice-Admiral Marriott Arbuthnot and Admiral George Rodney were un-cooperative and argumentative with other commanders and their subordinates.[41] On the American side in the first war, George Washington had many good qualities as a leader such as courage and determination.[42] However, his character was not suited to fighting a defensive war.[43] His judgement could also be faulty as his conduct at Jumenville's Glen and Fort Necessity in the Seven Years' War and the many mistakes he made at the Battle of Long Island illustrate.[44] In the second war on the British side, Lord Bathurst occupied the combined offices of Secretary of War and of the Colonies and was a highly capable political master in London who forwarded clear dispatches and civil military relations were excellent. The Prime Minister, Lord Liverpool, was an experienced politician with a skilled and competent Cabinet.[45] The British had excellent commanders such as Isaac Brock and Robert Ross. The loss of these two leaders and the subsequent loss of morale indicates the importance of leadership as a thematic constraint.[46] In contrast, on the American side in the second war, policy and strategic decisions were made by the President James Madison and his Cabinet. Madison had little knowledge of military affairs and he was a poor judge of men.[47] The Secretary of War, John Armstrong, a Presidential appointee, exhibited serious character defects and issued confusing and ambiguous orders.[48] The President and the Cabinet chose poor commanders such as William Hull, William A. Winder and James Wilkinson who

[40] Ira D. Gruber, 'Lord Howe and Lord George Germain, British Politics and the Winning of American Independence', in *The William and Mary Quarterly,* Vol 22, No. 2 (April, 1965), 239.
[41] Kenneth Breen, 'Divided Command: the West Indies and North America, 1780-1781', in Jeremy Black and Philip Woodfine (eds.), *The British Navy and the Use of Naval Power in the Eighteenth Century,* (Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1988), 190.
[42] U.S. Marine Corps Command and G. Ksiaski, 12 March 2014, *Commanders-in Chief of the American War for Independence: A Leadership Study of George Washington and Sir William Howe,* See Chapter 3 The Leadership of Washington, 13-23. Masters thesis.
[43] Robert Middlekauff, *The Glorious Cause* (New York: Oxford University Press Inc., 2005), 340.
[44] Lengel, Washington *A Military Life, op. cit.* 156
[45] Martin Hutchinson, *Britain's Greatest Prime Minister Lord Liverpool,* 2020, 140. See also Latimer, *1812 War with America, op. cit.* 35.
[46] Hickey, *The War of 1812, op. cit.* 211.
[47] Ibid, 105-6.
[48] Ibid, 105-106.

performed very poorly at the tactical level.[49] Defects in leadership on the American side in the second war acted as a serious thematic constraint.

However, the thematic constraints did not act in isolation and they were sometimes closely related. The policy-makers and the key decision-makers acted within the organisational structure and the constraints of such a structure could inhibit or exacerbate the personal defects of the decision-makers. If the controls were strong, then the defects were inhibited but if they were weak the defects were exacerbated. The thematic constraints of defects in leadership and defects in the command, control and communications system and in the decision making process were therefore closely connected. The first stage in the decision-making process was arriving at a Cabinet decision. In the American War of Independence the Cabinet consisted of the Prime Minister (the First Lord of the Treasury), the Secretaries of State of the Northern, Southern and American Departments and the First Lord of the Admiralty. The Lord Chancellor, the Lord President and the Lord Privy Seal also attended.[50] The decisions of the Cabinet were put before the King for his approval. If the King refused, a pragmatic compromise was reached.[51] This method of arriving at a decision was inefficient and time-consuming. After a decision had been reached, the Secretaries of State issued orders to the Treasury, Admiralty and the Commanders in Chief of the Army. The orders issued by the Secretary of State to the Admiralty concerning the transport of troops and supplies were then passed to the Navy Board. The Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty met a few times every week to conduct the business of the Navy but its policies were administered by the Navy Board.[52] The power of the Navy Board was enormous since it carried out the orders of the government for transporting troops,

[49] Alan Taylor, *The Civil War of 1812*, (New York: Vintage Books, 2010), 279.
[50] Syrett, *Shipping and the American War, op. cit.* 2.
[51] Ibid, 3.
[52] Ibid, 17.

stores, clothes, equipment and after 1779, provisions for the army. One of the faults on the British side in the first war was the complexity of the administrative bodies, institutions and boards which existed when attempting to organise supplies or troop movements.[53] Long delays occurred between the issuing of orders by the Secretary of State and the orders being carried out and the system was a serious thematic constraint to the conduct of combined operations.

The chain of command between the political masters in London and the commanders in the field was weak in the first war. Germain, the Secretary of State for the American Department, issued imprecise and confusing orders to Sir William Howe and failed to co-ordinate the operations of Howe with those of General John Burgoyne, which resulted in the British capitulation at Saratoga.[54] The separate commands and stations competing with each other in the first war on the British side in the North American theatre was also a serious constraint.[55]

In the first war, the key decision-makers on the American side were the prominent members of Congress and General George Washington. The Continental Congress appointed Washington to the important position of Commander in Chief of the American forces on 15 June 1775. Washington was "punctually to observe and follow such orders and decisions from time to time as you shall receive from this and any further Congresses".[56] In addition in December 1776, Congress resolved that "General George Washington be possessed of full power to order and direct all things relevant to the department (of the army) and to the operation of the war".[57] The

[53] Ibid, 121.
[54] Larrabee, *Decision at the Chesapeake, op. cit.* 31.
[55] F. E. Chadwick Ed., *The Graves Papers and other Documents,* 1916, 19 October 1781, Rodney to Jackson.133-136. Also see Kenneth Breen, 'Divided Command: the West Indies and North America, *op. cit.* 20, 191.
[56] *The Papers of George Washington,* Volume 1, June-September 1775, 6-7, The Council for the Continental Congress, 19 June 1775.
[57] George F. Scheer and Hugh F. Rankin, *Rebels and Recoats,* (1957, New York: the World Publishing Company, 206).

extent of the authority of Congress over the individual states was not well defined and no centralised strategic authority was established until after the war had ended and the War Office was established.[58] Washington had nominal authority over the military forces in each colony but he had little effective control over them.[59] These deficiencies in the organisational structure were a severe thematic constraint. In the second war on the British side, the Prince Regent had replaced George III.[60] The office of Prime Minister was occupied by Lord Liverpool, a more effective Prime Minister than his earlier counterpart Lord North. In the second war the offices of the American Department, the Northern Department and the Southern Department which had caused so many internal territorial disputes under Lord George Germain disappeared. Lord Bathurst occupied the joint office of Secretary for War and the Colonies and was also responsible for communicating and then implementing the decisions of the Cabinet. Lord Melville occupied the office of First Lord of the Treasury. In the second war, the key offices and institutions on the American side at the strategic and planning level were Congress, the President James Madison, the Secretaries of War representing principally the army (William Eustis in 1812, John Armstrong, in 1813-1814 and James Monroe 1814-1815) and the Secretary of the Navy (Paul Hamilton in 1812 and William Jones in 1813-1814). The combination of President, Cabinet and Congress did not result in an efficient command structure, although the creation of the office of the Secretary of War improved the situation. Conflict and division existed in the American Cabinet.[61] The strategic plans put forward in the form of the three American invasions of Canada were badly formulated and implemented.[62]

[58] C. Buckley, *1776-A Critical Time in the American Revolution*, 20. Also USA NA M337 Roll Number 12. The War Office was established on 1 August 1789.
[59] Edward G. Lengel, *General George Washington A Military Life*, (New York: Random House, 2005), 95.
[60] 29-9-1812, *Hansard*, Parliamentary Debates, Volume XXIII, TNA/ZHC 2-23. See List of HM Ministers as it stood at the period of dissolution 29-9-1812. See also 24-11-1812, Hansard, TNA/ZHC 2-24. The list of the Prince Regent's Ministers as it stood at the opening of the New Parliament 24-11-1812.
[61] Lynne Cheney, *James Madison. A Life Reconsidered*, (New York: Penguin Books, 2015), 394.
[62] Charles E. Brodine Jr, 'The War's most challenging theatre', in *Naval History Magazine*, Vol. 27, Number 5, (September 2013)

Deficiencies in the decision-making process and in the command and control structure on the American side in the War of 1812 acted as a severe thematic constraint.

However, even if the thematic constraints of defects in leadership and faults in the command and control structure did not intervene, the absence of any co-ordinated combined operations policy to ensure the co-operation of the army with the navy could still intervene as a thematic constraint and it did so on the American side, in both wars. Whilst the British had developed a sophisticated combined operations policy, the United Colonies, having little experience of combined operations, had not.[63] What is surprising is that the situation continued substantially in the Naval War of 1812. The American military commander, Jacob Brown, had suggested to Commodore Isaac Chauncey that the army and the navy undertake a combined (or 'joint') operation in the Battle of Chippawa but was rebuffed by Chauncey.[64] This is discussed further in the analysis of the Battle of Chippawa.

Closely related to the thematic constraint of defects in leadership were planning and planning assumptions. The defects in planning and planning assumptions were related to that of defects in leadership since incompetent commanders often made incorrect assumptions. However, they could also be related to other thematic constraints such as inadequate intelligence, since inadequate intelligence could result in faulty assumptions. The thematic constraints could interact with each other. Flawed assumptions could lead to an incorrect strategy. Strategic changes would then become necessary. One such assumption on the British side in the first war was that colonial forces would be unable to stand up to British regulars. This led to the Cabinet

[63] O'Shaughnessy, *The Men Who Lost America, op. cit.* 90. Admiral Richard Howe's reforms to amphibious operations in May 1758.
[64] Hickey, *The War of 1812, op. cit.* 189.

in London underestimating the strength of the armed forces required in North America. The Battle of Bunker Hill led to the Americans making many incorrect assumptions which are examined in the analysis of that Battle.[65] In the War of 1812, the assumption by the Americans that there would be little resistance to the invading American army in Canada and that the taking of Canada would be a "mere matter of marching" led to overly optimistic expectations of initial success.[66]

A further example of a thematic constraint which often acted in conjunction with other thematic constraints was that of weather and climate. Although not the most important of the thematic constraints, these were still significant. Clausewitz gave the examples of fog and rain but very low or high temperatures and wind are also important.[67] Bad weather could intervene particularly at the tactical and operational level.[68] It could delay combined operations, prevent them from occurring or cause them to fail.[69] Sometimes weather acted in conjunction with other factors to produce an adverse result.[70] Weather was especially important in the age of sail where adverse wind conditions could delay or prevent the execution of naval operations, for example the Cartagena expedition of 1741-1742.[71] Bad weather intervened in both wars in the implementation of blockades in North America.[72]

[65] Buckley, United States Marine Corps Command Staff College, *op. cit.* 11.
[66] Mahan, *Sea Power in its Relations to the War of 1812, Volume 1, op. cit.* 191.
[67] Clausewitz, *On War, op. cit.* 66.
[68] The Naval Commander Lord Byron was particularly susceptible to bad weather and it coincided with his operations so often that he acquired the name "Foul-weather Jack". See also Michael Howard, *Clausewitz A very short Introduction*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), 26 on weather as an external factor and the inherent tendency of things to go wrong.
[69] Piers Mackesy, *The War for America*, (Nebraska: Nebraska University Press, 1993), 340. The effect of storms destroying the siege train, weapons and horses in the expedition to Charleston on 26 December 1779.
[70] L. D. Ferreiro, 'The Race to the Chesapeake between Destouches and Arbuthnot, March 1781' in *The Mariner's Mirror*, Vol. 2018, 104:4, (November 2018), 477-481.
[71] 18-10-1740, TNA/CO 5-41 Part 2, 138, Cathcart to Newcastle.
[72] Brian Arthur, *How Britain Won the War of 1812 The Royal Navy's Blockades of the United States, 1812-1815*, (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2011), 43.

Chance or luck could intervene in almost any operation at any level. Clausewitz wrote that "War is the realm of chance…Chance makes everything more uncertain and interferes with the whole course of events".[73] He noted that chance makes war a gamble, and in consequence, guesswork and luck are very important in war.[74] More information can reduce the incidence of chance. Improvements in weather forecasting can help to prepare for and minimise the impact of weather but chance can never be entirely eliminated. An example of a chance event might be where an unreliable musket which had a one in two hundred chance of hitting a target happened to kill a commanding officer. The death of General Ross in the second war created a delay in appointing a replacement and in the appointment of a much less capable officer. The delay permitted General Jackson to fortify New Orleans and General Edward Pakenham, the replacement for Ross, conducted an inept offensive which resulted in a British defeat and the failure to take New Orleans. Chance could thus operate in conjunction with the other thematic constraints such as time, leadership, weather and disease to produce important results at the strategic level.

Closely connected to personal qualities was a lack of experience on the part of the commander. However, this thematic constraint diminished in the case of an innately capable commander as he became more proficient as a result of participating in engagements. Washington had held a commission in the Virginia militia in the French and Indian War and had accompanied General Edward Braddock's expedition in 1755.[75] However, he had not held a senior command as Commander in Chief of a regular army. In contrast he was faced with experienced British Commanders such as General Henry Clinton and General William Howe. He made a

[73] Clausewitz, *On War*, *op. cit.* 46.
[74] Ibid., 26.
[75] Lengel, *General George Washington A Military Life, op. cit.* 51.

considerable number of mistakes in the Battle of Long Island which are examined in the analysis of that battle. In addition, Congress itself was inexperienced in conducting a major war. In the second war, Great Britain entered the war with an established army and commanders who had considerable recent experience of fighting a war against Revolutionary and Napoleonic France and was a country with a long military and naval tradition. In contrast, the United States had only a small army and navy and relied on an inexperienced militia. On the American side, lack of experience was a serious thematic constraint in both wars at all levels in the conduct of military and naval operations.

Time was a thematic constraint and a factor to be taken account of at all levels. At the strategic and planning levels this required the pro-active formulation of policy and strategy in a timely and efficient manner. In the first war on the British side the *laissez-faire* policy of decentralisation resulted in a chronic failure to expedite business.[76] The attempt at some degree of decentralisation as a result of Congress delegating command to Washington led to quicker responses, for example the sending of troops to New York even before it had become evident that that was Howe's intention.[77] In the second war, the British responded more quickly, for example in formulating plans for North America even before the abdication of Napoleon had occurred.[78] However, the formulation of American strategy and planning was neither quick nor efficient where the plans were often seriously deficient and delays sometimes occurred in the key decision-makers granting approval of those policies.[79] At the operational and tactical levels, time acted as a constraint since combined operations had to be completed quickly to

[76] Larrabee, *Decision at the Chesapeake, op. cit.* 30. Spector, *The American Department*, 75, 85.
[77] Lengel, *General George Washington, op. cit.* 128.
[78] Hitsman, *The Incredible War of 1812, op. cit.* 213. Lord Bathurst wrote to the Duke of Wellington on 10-1-1814 for advice on strategy in North America well before the abdication of Napoleon on 11-4-1814.
[79] Ibid, 216. Although plans for the third American invasion of Canada were approved by the Secretary of War and the President on 30-4-1814 they were not approved by the cabinet until 7-6-1814.

take advantage of the element of surprise and to prevent troops being exposed to enemy fire. Time constraints could cause combined operations to be hurriedly prepared and executed with unsuccessful outcomes. The Cartagena combined operation in 1741-1742 was an example.

Many of the thematic constraints are characterised by the absence of a particular quality, such as the absence of experience or the absence of intelligence. The absence of allies could also act as a thematic constraint. However, the possession of allies could also act as a thematic constraint. The term "allies" is employed in its widest sense to mean any individual, groups of individuals or nations which covertly or overtly, actively or passively, supported the cause of either of the belligerents. The absence of allies could also be a constraint. In the American War of Independence Great Britain had no ally on the continent. In the Seven Years' War Frederick the Great had proved an invaluable ally by engaging French forces on the continent. However, his support required the payment of subsidies and he was alienated when Britain precipitately ended the subsidies. The Native Americans which were used so extensively by General John Burgoyne and Isaac Brock inspired terror in the Americans but were unpredictable, unreliable and expensive to maintain.[80] The term 'Native Americans' is used to mean members of any of the indigenous people who were present before the establishment of the European settlements in North America. Great Britain appeared to have a large source of potential manpower in the Loyalist population but in practice it proved difficult to transform the Loyalist support into an effective military force. Nonetheless, the number of Loyalists who had served in the Loyalist military Corps was estimated be 19,000.[81] The term "Loyalist" refers to those members of the colonial population who wished to remain loyal to the Crown of Great Britain. In contrast

[80] 6-11-1776, Germain to Stuart, TNA/CO-242, 63-64, re "supply of goods to the savages". Also see the conduct of the Native Americans in the assault on Fort Meigs on 20-7-1813. Hitsman, *The Incredible War of 1812, op. cit.* 167.

[81] Stephen Conway, " 'The British Army, 'Military Europe', and the American War of Independence", in *The William and Mary Quarterly,* Vol. 67, No. 1 (January, 2010), 69-100

members of the colonial population who supported the Revolution and wished to be independent of Great Britain are referred to as "Patriots". Large numbers of the colonists, however, were neutral and supported neither side. Britain found a ready potential ally in the black slaves in the colonies but Lord Dunmore's proclamation alienated the white slave owners of the South and acted as a double-edged sword.[82] When France entered the American War of Independence in 1778, the joint operations with the American Patriots proved problematic at Savannah and at Rhode Island.[83] Even language presented a problem. Washington spoke no French. The French and Spanish Alliance which resulted in the joint operation to attempt an invasion of England in 1779 was also unsuccessful because of the thematic constraints of weather, distance, the size of the fleets, operational problems relating to joint command and logistical and communication problems, and large amounts of time had to be spent in translating signalling instructions into French and Spanish.[84] Joint operations could be difficult to implement since disputes and problems could arise which would otherwise not have occurred. In the second war, on the British side, the Canadian militia also proved unreliable to such an extent that only a percentage of them could be armed.[85] Allies in general, whilst offering advantages, could act as a thematic constraint in the conduct of combined operations. The importance of allies, however, was illustrated in the first war by the entry of France and Spain into the war as allies of the colonists which completely transformed the likely outcome of the war and was possibly the most important event of the entire war.

Some thematic constraints such as defects in leadership were of a recurring nature, but others, whilst not intervening as prominently were, nonetheless, important. Communication was a

[82] Sam Willis, *The Struggle for Sea Power*, (London: Atlantic Books Ltd., 2015), 105.
[83] 30-10-1779, Tonyn to Clinton, TNA/CO 5-98, Part 3, 376 re the disputes relating to the French American joint operation at Savannah.
[84] Willis, *The Struggle for Sea Power, op. cit.* 284.
[85] Hitsman, *The Incredible War of 1812, op. cit.* 36.

serious thematic constraint. The great distances over the Atlantic meant that despatches often took six weeks to send and a further six weeks for the reply to arrive. Security was also a problem. Despatches could be intercepted or lost and Clinton often used codes or cypher in his despatches.[86] Despatches could also be falsified to convey misleading information. In addition, the communication of information by signalling was unreliable notwithstanding reforms. Faulty signalling caused a major problem in the Battle of the Capes and was substantially responsible for the loss of the Battle and the loss of America.[87] The limitations in communication acted as an important constraint in the conduct of combined operations.

Some thematic constraints whilst recurring frequently tended to be less decisive in determining the outcome of the war. Health, diseases and hygiene were important constraints as cholera, malaria, typhus dysentery, pneumonia, measles and smallpox were common in both wars. In general, British ships were cleaner than French ships.[88] However, diseases were a major problem in both of the navies and scurvy was common on British ships. Smallpox was a major problem in the American invasion of Canada and in the evacuation of Boston.[89] Although inoculation against smallpox was in use, the disease was widely feared.[90] The cramped and unhygienic conditions on ships and hospital ships encouraged the spread of diseases.[91] Disease often killed more soldiers than were killed in war.[92] The position in the War of 1812 was no better. For this reason, disease can be regarded as important. However, it was not one of the

[86] 2-9-1781, Clinton to Cornwallis, TNA/PRO 30-11-68, 79-80. This is one of many examples of despatches in cypher.
[87] W. M. James, *The British Navy in Adversity,* (London: Longman, Green and Co, Ltd., 1933), 293. "In the later stages one signal ruined everything".
[88] N. A. M. Rodger, *The Wooden World,* (London, Fontana Press, 1986), 105.
[89] 26-6-1776, John Adams to his wife Abigail, *Naval Documents of the American Revolution,* hereafter referred to as NDAR, Vol. 5 753, Kindle 788 of 3403.
[90] Scheer and Rankin, *Rebels and Redcoats, op. cit.* 223.
[91] French Ensor Chadwick (Ed.), *The Graves Papers,* xxxi.
[92] Richard Holmes, *Redcoat The British Soldier in the Age of Horse and Musket,* (London, Harper Collins Publishers), 2001, 49.

more important thematic constraints since it was, by itself, rarely decisive in determining the long-term outcome of the war.

Whilst some of the thematic constraints mentioned above such as weather were not of primary importance, and were of a transitory nature, others were of primary importance. The supply of military and naval resources including an adequate number of ships, military and naval personnel, armaments and provisions and other supplies was among the most important constraints on both sides in both wars and there were recurring logistical inadequacies. The maximum available quantity of military and naval resources was determined partly by the size of the economy and whether the economy was operating within or on its production-possibility curve. In the first war, the insufficient number of British ships in the North American theatre was a problem from the outbreak of war.[93] The forests of North America were no longer available to supply timber for masts and Britain had to look to the Baltic States.[94] The loss of the Jerseys meant that Britain had to import food into North America.[95] In addition, the supplies of clothing, tents, footwear and equipment also had to be imported. The alternative was to let the army live off the land, but this, as the British experience in the South in 1781 was to show, unsurprisingly resulted in the alienation of the Loyalists.[96] However, the colonies in the first war also experienced economic constraints. Under the Old Colonial System and the Navigation Acts, the colonies produced few finished goods and muskets had to be imported from France and gunpowder was in short supply.[97] In the second war the United States was able to

[93] NRS, Sandwich Papers, 1, 62. 17-6-1775, Lord Dartmouth to the Admiralty. Also the Palliser Memorandum, July 1775, Ibid, I, 64.
[94] NRS, Sandwich Papers, II, 34.
[95] Willis, *The Struggle for Sea Power, op. cit.* 162.
[96] Gregory J. W. Urwin, " 'To bring the American Army under strict Discipline': British Army Foraging Policy in the South, 1780-1781", in *War in History,* Vol. 26, No. 1 (2017), 4-26
[97] Willis, *The struggle for Sea Power, op. cit.* 41. See also USA NA Box Number 174 RG 45. The shortage of articles for the building of ships.

manufacture large amounts of weapons and gunpowder and was not subject to the same constraints of the first war.[98] The American Navy was, nonetheless, tiny compared to the British Navy.[99] The British blockade in the second war was viciously effective and substantially reduced both imports and exports.[100]

An obvious constraint on the conduct of combined operations lay in the area of human resources. In the first war, desertion rates were high overall because of impressment. In both wars, impressment was used on the British side to maintain an adequate number of naval and military personnel.[101] On the British side, in the first war, an attempt was made to obtain 20,000 mercenaries from Catherine the Great in Russia but this attempt was not successful. Instead, 40,000 mercenaries were obtained from Hessen-Kassel in Germany and other small principalities.[102] The employment of Loyalists and Native American allies had varying degrees of success. The difficulties in obtaining an adequate supply of troops were highlighted by the Gordon Riots caused by the proposed lifting of restrictions on the recruitment of Roman Catholics into the Amy and other grievances.[103] On the American side, Washington was forced to rely substantially on militia and even after the formation of the Continental Army, numbers fluctuated with desertions and the demands of the harvest. The maximum number of military and naval personnel available was determined partly, but not entirely, by the size of the population. In 1812, the population of America, excluding Native Americans was 7.7 million, in Canada ½ a million and in Great Britain 12.6 million.[104] However, the poor pay of the

[98] Hickey, *The War of 1812, op. cit.* 74.
[99] 13-5-1814, Hansard, TNA/ZHC 2-27, 871-873. Parliamentary Debates, Volume XXVI, Navy Estimates. It was stated that "we had a naval power equal to check the combined fleets of the world".
[100] Hickey, *The War of 1812, op. cit.* 154.
[101] F. E. Chadwick, *The Graves Papers,* 1916, xx.
[102] Friederike Baer, 'The Decision to Hire German troops in the War of American independence Reactions in Britain and North America, 1774-1776', in *Early American studies An Interdisciplinary Journal,* Vol. 13, Issue1 (Winter, 2015), 111-150.
[103] W. Bodham Donne (Ed.), *The Correspondence of King George III with Lord North from 1768 to 1783,* 322.
[104] Hickey, *The War of 1812, op. cit.* 67.

American soldiers limited the numbers recruited.[105] In the second war, on the British side, a shortage of sailors remained a recurring thematic constraint on the conduct of combined and naval operations, especially on the Great Lakes.[106] Fencible Regiments were raised in the second war to increase British troop numbers in North America, but, like the militia they could be employed only locally. Americans mistrusted standing armies because of the potential threat to civil liberties and in the first war particularly attempts were made to limit the size of the army.[107]

Whilst thematic constraints were important because they interfered with the outcome of actual events, the misrepresentation of those events could also be of importance. Misrepresentation and propaganda acted as thematic constraints. Andrew Lambert has commented on the misrepresentation of the size of the American vessels in the early naval engagements of the War of 1812.[108] The engagements were portrayed by the Americans as a contest of equals but the American ships were considerably larger in terms of both the size of the vessels and the number of the crew than the British ships. Propaganda had been used by the colonists prior to the outbreak of the first war for example in the engraving by Paul Revere of the "Boston Massacre".[109] They continued to employ it successfully subsequent to the outbreak of the war. The colonists were quick to convey their slanted version of the events of the battles of Lexington and Concord to London by the use of a fast schooner which meant that their views were established in the London press before the despatches of General Thomas Gage had even arrived.[110] Such misrepresentations could act as a powerful tool of persuasion and detract from

[105] Hitsman, *The Incredible War of 1812, op. cit.* 207.
[106] Ibid, *op. cit.* 251.
[107] Lengel, *General George Washington A Military Life, op. cit.* 89
[108] Andrew Lambert, *The Challenge,* (London: Faber and Faber, 2012).
[109] Allison, *The American Revolution,* op. cit. 15
[110] Scheer and Rankin, *Rebels and Redcoats, op. cit.* 44.

the effects of a combined operation whilst acting as a constraint on the successful implementation of future combined operations.

No combined operations, or indeed the war itself, could be carried out in the absence of a sound economic base and financial system. Financial and fiscal constraints were important in both wars on both sides. Immediately before the outbreak of the first war Lord North had attempted to reduce the number of ships in his capacity as First Lord of the Treasury because of financial constraints.[111] However, financial constraints impacted initially far more on the Americans than the British in the first war.[112] The huge cost of the two wars placed finance among the most important of the thematic constraints.[113] It was also an ongoing, long lasting and ever increasing constraint the importance of which is not always acknowledged. In the first war, Congress was forced to resort to the issue of loans which were of dubious value and currency was subject to high inflation. French aid was substantial in the form of loans and outright gifts to the colonists and was crucial to the American rebels.[114] Great Britain with the Bank of England as its central bank had substantial experience of raising loans. In Britain in the first war interest rates were low at 3 to 4 per cent. In contrast, French interest rates were at least double that and whilst British financial controls and budgetary controls were poor, in France they were virtually non-existent.[115] In the second war, William Pitt the Younger was able to arrange new loans and arrange for loans to be repaid by the capable administration of the Sinking Fund in conjunction

[111] Larabee, *Decision at the Chesapeake, op. cit.* 4. Also NRS, Sandwich Papers, I, 19. Lord North stated that 'I must be of opinion for reducing the number of guard ships to sixteen or less'.
[112] Ben Baack, 'Forging a Nation State: the Continental Congress and the financing of the War of American Independence', in *Economic History Review*, Vol. LIV, No. 4 (2001), 639-656
[113] Daniel A. Baugh, 'Why did Britain lose command of the sea during the war for America?*'* in Jeremy Black and Philip Woodfine (eds.), *The British Navy and the Use of Naval Power in the Eighteenth Century* (Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1988), 159.
[114] W. Bodham Donne Ed., *The Correspondence of King George III with Lord North from 1768 to 1783,* Volume I, 369, Letter 676, 30 April 1781. In 1781 Washington wrote to Franklin that "We must have one of two things, peace or money from France".
[115] Willis, *The Struggle for Sea Power, op. cit.* 464.

with taxation but fiscal restraints were important since land taxes and Income Tax were unpopular.[116] However, financial and fiscal considerations were regularly under review by Parliament.[117] This included Income Tax and the operation of the Sinking Fund.[118] On the American side, Congress was forced to issue loans and Treasury Notes, some of these loans being used to pay off the interest on earlier loans.[119] The banking system broke down and it no longer became possible to finance the war with borrowed money. Congress was forced to raise taxes and raise the interest rate on Treasury Notes.[120] The banking system of the United States was less well established than that of the United Kingdom and succumbed to the rigours of the British blockade.[121]

Political constraints were closely connected to economic and financial constraints and economics and finance attracted close scrutiny and were the subject of much debate in the respective legislative bodies. Political constraints were substantial and widespread and operated at all levels. The thesis argues that they were the most important of the thematic constraints, because of their influence on the formulation and implementation of strategy and tactics and their long-term effects on the outcome of the wars and the political will and determination to carry on the war was a necessary condition for its long-term continuance. The influence of British politics on the conduct of the first war can be seen in the failure of the consensual approach of Lord North and the Earl of Dartmouth in 1775 and the subsequent appointment of Lord George Germain, an advocate of the use of force, as the Secretary of State

[116] *Hansard*, TNA/ZHC 2-24, March 1813 The New Plan of Finance. xiv.
[117] Parliamentary Debates, Volume XXIII House of Commons 8 March 1813, Army Estimates, TNA/ZHC 2-24, 1156-1191, 1193.
[118] 14-3-1814, Parliamentary Debates, Volume XXVI, House of Lords, 14 March 1813. See plan of Finance Proposed to Parliament in March 1813 from the Rt. Hon. Nicholas Vansittart Chancellor of the Exchequer. Appendix TNA/ ZHC 2-24, i-xxv.
[119] Hickey, *The War of 1812, op. cit.* 275.
[120] Ibid, 252.
[121] Arthur, *How Britain won the War of 1812, op. cit.* 179-180.

for the American Department. However, inconsistently, Admiral Richard Howe was appointed to command the Navy and his brother William Howe to command the army, both being advocates of the conciliatory approach and at the same time, they were appointed Peace Commissioners.[122] The attempt to combine the conciliatory approach with the use of force resulted in the success of neither. The British Government depended on Lord North's Parliamentary skills in maintaining a majority by means of placements, patronage and King's Men.[123] Lord North could rely on these groups but the few Army officers sitting in the House did not always support the Government.[124] Petitions from merchants who were suffering from trade restrictions in both wars were an early manifestation of the phenomenon of pressure groups.[125] The press also exercised a thematic constraint since it influenced public opinion.[126] In the first war the Government and Lord North particularly was ceaselessly scrutinised and lampooned.[127] Opposition before and in the first war was substantial from politicians such as Edmund Burke, John Wilkes, and Charles James Fox and the Whig opposition.[128] Political opposition acted as a serious thematic constraint on the recruitment of naval and military personnel.[129] In the colonies in the first war, Washington did not have uniform political support for his policies since large numbers were neutral and many Loyalists supported the Crown. The lack of uniform support acted as a political constraint. Revolutionary political ideas motivated the American Army, but not the armies of the *Ancien Regime.* Clausewitz had argued for the

[122] Ira D. Gruber, 'Lord Howe and Lord George Germain, British Politics and the Winning of Independence' in *The William and Mary Quarterly,* Vol. 22, No. 2 (April, 1965), 225-243.
[123] Larrabee, *Decision at the Chesapeake, op cit.* 24.
[124] Olive Anderson, 'The Role of the Army in Parliamentary Management during the American War of Independence', in *Journal of the Society for Army Historical Research,* Vol. 34, No. 140 (December, 1956), 146-149
[125] Hansard. TNA/ZHC 1/67, 150.
[126] Troy. O. Bickham. 'Sympathising with Sedition? George Washington, the British Press, and British attitudes during the American war of Independence', in *The William and Mary Quarterly,* vol. 59, No. 1 (January, 2002), 101-122.
[127] A. O'Shaughnessy, *The Men Who lost America, op. cit.* 71.
[128] See the legal case of Wilkes v Wood. 1763 The case of General Warrants.19 Howell's State Trials 1763-1768.
[129] Stephen Conway, 'The Politics of British Military and Naval Mobilisation, 1775-83', in *The English Historical Review,* Vol. 112, No. 449, (November, 1997), 1179-1201.

effectiveness of "The People in Arms".[130] The narrow, aristocratic base from which Members of Parliament were selected, acted as a thematic constraint to the adoption of a conciliatory approach, since they tended to support the *status quo* of the Old Colonial System and the Navigation Acts which favoured their economic interests. The *status quo,* along with the restrictive legal and fiscal measures of the British Parliament, did not serve the economic interests of the plantation, land and property owners in the colonies and resulted in political conflict.[131] In the second war, political opposition to the War was widespread and substantial in both countries.[132] In the United States, the country was divided with the War Hawks pressing for war with the United Kingdom, whilst the New England States opposed the war and formed the Hartford Convention.[133] These states along with Vermont, continued to trade with the United Kingdom and supplied meat for the British army in Spain.[134] The dissension weakened the war effort and even appeared to threaten the Union itself.[135] In Great Britain, political opposition was also substantial and widespread.[136] The opposition was a reflection of British economic interests. The United States remained Britain's main overseas market. The United States supplied important raw materials used in British manufactured goods.[137] However, a wide variety of other reasons were put forward for opposing the war such as the high level of taxation, moral objections and an argument that Britain could not win the War in North America. Public scrutiny of the government's conduct of the war meant that ministers were

[130] Clausewitz, *On War, op. cit.* 185.
[131] Donald C. Wellington, ' The Pre-eminent Cause of the American Revolution', in *The Journal of European Economic History; Rome,* Vol. 39, Issue 1 (Spring, 2010), 103-105.
[132] Troy Bickam, *The Weight of Vengeance The United States, The British Empire, and the War of 1812,* (New York: Oxford university Press Inc., 2012), 171-228.
[133] Hickey, *The War of 1812, op. cit.* 275. See also Rossiter Johnson, *The War of 1812,* (USA: Black Oyster Publishing Inc. 2015), 191.
[134] Ibid, 1. Also Walter R. Borneman, *1812 The War that forged a Nation,* 44.
[135] Hickey, *The War of 1812, op. cit.* 270.
[136] Troy Bickham, *The Weight of Vengeance, The United States, the British Empire and the War of 1812, op. cit.* 203-228.
[137] Ibid, 204.

constantly called upon to defend their policies in Parliament.[138] Political constraints were substantial and extensive in both wars on both sides and for this reason they are considered to be the most important of the thematic constraints.

Although not as important as political constraints, intelligence also constituted a major constraint. The lack of intelligence compelled commanders to guess at the intentions of the enemy or forced commanders to fight a defensive war. Clausewitz, commenting on the uncertainty of information, stated that "…all action tends to take place…in a kind of twilight, which, like fog or moonlight, often tends to make things seem grotesque and larger than they really are." This fog of war means that "Whatever is hidden from full view has to be guessed at by talent or simply left to chance".[139] Intelligence was essential in naval matters and maintaining information about the location of the enemy fleet was crucial. In the second war on the British side, intelligence was also an important thematic constraint. For example, the failure to obtain adequate or any intelligence as to the enemy's intentions or movements acted as a thematic constraint in the combined operation carried out by Lieutenant General Sir George Prevost at Plattsburgh.[140] Technology was also an important thematic constraint in this engagement since the long guns of the British fleet were used inappropriately and there were insufficient carronades.

[138] 14-5-1813, Parliamentary Debates, Volume XXV, House of Lords, ZHC 2-26, 171-173, Lord Liverpool's speech in connection with Foreign Relations is an example. Also see the debate on Naval Administration, Ibid, 173-202.
[139] Clausewitz, *On War, op. cit.* 89.
[140] Hitsman, *The Incredible War of 1812, op. cit.* 255. In his Journal Major General Robinson wrote that "There were neither Guides, Spies or Plans" and Prevost believed that it was impossible to gain any intelligence that could be depended upon…".

There were important developments in technology in the form of the *Cheveau-de-frises,* carronades, the coppering of ships' bottoms, signalling and even submarines in the form of the *Turtle,* whilst in the second war, long range guns were used in ships and rockets made their appearance and also torpedoes or underwater mines.[141] A failure to maintain parity with developments by the enemy was a serious thematic constraint. However, the effects of technology as a thematic constraint, like that of the weather, tended to be transitory. The thematic constraint was removed in the long run when the enemy acquired the technology.

Although the impact of thematic constraints on combined operations in the North American theatre has been noted above, in practice it was not possible to consider the North American theatre in isolation. Other theatres needed to be taken into account when determining policy and strategy and acted as a thematic constraint. The West Indies were particularly important in this regard in the first war and also the requirements of the Channel Fleet and the defence of Great Britain and Ireland.[142] The King considered the West Indies to be more important than the risk of an invasion.[143] The French were also vulnerable in the West Indies. In the second war, the European theatre of war took obvious precedence over North America. It was not until the abdication of Napoleon in 1814 that resources could be diverted to the North American theatre.[144]

The great distance between North America and the mother country and the vast area of the North American theatre created problems for Britain in transferring troops and supplies across

[141] J. B. Fagal, 'Terror Weapons in the Naval War of 1812', in *New York History,* Vol. 94, No. 3-4 (Summer, 2013), 221-240
[142] NRS, Sandwich Papers, I, 363. The Minutes of Cabinet 18 March 1778, Lord Amherst's idea about change of war in America.
[143] Larrabee, *Decision at the Chesapeake, op. cit.* 4.
[144] 3-6-1814, Bathurst to Prevost, TNA/CO 43-23,154.

the Atlantic Ocean and in using them once they arrived.[145] Geography also dictated the conduct of combined operations at the tactical and operational levels. The importance of geography in the War of 1812 has been emphasised by Jean-Francois Lebeau who argues that the vast area over which the War of 1812 was fought represented a tremendous obstacle to all commanders which could be overcome by using amphibious warfare.[146] In the first war General Charles Lee had observed that New York Island which was surrounded by water which could be navigated, would be almost impossible to hold against a combined naval and land force.[147]

A further constraint lay in the accepted and established methods and practices of conducting warfare in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. International law, the law of war and the concept of the just war, whilst not as extant as in the contemporary world, were still important and ethical considerations precluded the burning of civilian properties.[148] The M.P. Samuel Whitbread told the House of Commons on 4 November 1814 that it was 'abhorrent to every principle of legitimate warfare'.[149] The prohibition of such activities, however desirable, were a constraint on the conduct of war and had to be taken into consideration by commanders to avoid retribution. Even the employment of Native Americans as allies was regarded as dishonourable.[150] When engaging in naval battles, Admirals were compelled to line fleets up in accordance with the regulations in the "Fighting Instructions" and any deviation from this

[145] Richard Harding, *The Evolution of the Sailing Navy 1509-1815,* (Basingstoke: Macmillan Press Ltd., 1995), 131.
[146] Jean-Francois Lebeau, 'Breaking the stalemate: Amphibious warfare during the War of 1812', in *Canadian Military Journal,* Vol. 14 No 1, (Winter 2013), 47-54.
[147] Scheer and Rankin, *Rebels and Redcoats, op. cit.*143.
[148] Robin A. F. Fable, 'The Laws of War in the 1812 Conflict', in *Journal of American Studies,* Vol. 14, No. 2 (August 1980), 199-218.
[149] Hitsman, *The Incredible War of 1812, op. cit.* 244. Great Britain, *Parliamentary Debates,* 1st series London 1815, Volume 29, 47.
[150] Bickham, *The Weight of Vengeance, op. cit.*117.

was severely punished.[151] Such conventions acted as a constraint on the conduct of combined operations.

The influence of the thematic constraints on the formulation and implementation of combined operations meant that war plans and military professionalism could only prepare commanders and the policy decision-makers so far. Once the shooting started or even when the ships deployed and the process of maritime logistics began, plans often went awry. It then became a matter of how both military and political leaders reacted and adapted, successfully or not.

[151] F. E. Chadwick Ed., 1916, *The Graves Papers,* xxiii.

Literature Review.

This thesis argues that combined operations were extremely important and their outcomes, whether successful or unsuccessful, could be overwhelmingly influential in deciding the outcome of the two wars. It also argues that whilst the objective of combined operations was to deliver a victory, the outcome of the combined operation could be affected by the intervention of the thematic constraints. Although writers in the past have discussed combined operations, the importance of combined operations in determining the outcome of the war itself has not always been recognised. Similarly, although individual thematic constraints have been identified, there has been no systematic attempt to identify thematic constraints as a group of factors which singularly or collectively acted to prevent the successful formulation or implementation of combined operations, or any attempt made to evaluate their relative importance. There is, therefore, a gap in the existing literature from not sufficiently acknowledging the influence of combined operations in determining the outcome of the two wars. In addition, the influence of thematic constraints on the outcomes of combined operations has also not been sufficiently acknowledged. These problems remain unaddressed in the existing literature and this thesis identifies these gaps and addresses them.

Political constraints were the most important of the thematic constraints. Ira Gruber has argued correctly that the American problem in the first war was mainly a political problem and not a military problem.[152] It became a military problem after the conciliatory approach of the Earl of Dartmouth and Lord North in 1775 failed and Lord George Germain who was an advocate of force was appointed Secretary of the American Department. However, the Howe brothers were appointed as naval and military commanders, both being sympathetic to the colonial cause and

[152] Ira Gruber, 'Lord Howe and Lord George Germain, British Politics and the Winning of American Independence', in *The William and Mary Quarterly,* Vol. 22, No. 2 (April, 1965), 225-243.

were at the same time appointed as Peace Commissioners in an attempt to reach a negotiated settlement. The attempt to combine both the conciliatory approach and the use of force caused both to fail. The influence of political constraints could sometimes be more subtle. Stephen Conway has correctly argued that it was the government's fear of arming groups of men who were political opponents led them to discourage recruitment of such groups.[153] Internal politics thus adversely affected British mobilisation. The size of the American Army was restricted, particularly in the first war, owing to the potential threat that standing armies posed to civil liberties. The thesis agrees with Gruber's and Conway's arguments. They support the argument that, overall, political constraints were wide-ranging and important and the most important of the thematic constraints. The thesis argues that political constraints operated at all levels in both wars to impede the successful formulation and implementation of combined operations. The constraints could involve political decisions interfering adversely with strategy and tactics, pressure groups opposing the war to defend economic or other interests or time spent by ministers defending government policies in Parliament.[154] In identifying and collating the political constraints and identifying new ones, the thesis builds upon the arguments and develops them, thereby adding to the existing historiography.

Ben Baack has examined the Continental Congress and the financing of the American War of Independence and the important thematic constraint of finance.[155] He argues that the Declaration of Independence in 1776 forced the colonies to develop the institutions for government and for systems of credit, money and taxation. The only options which were available to Congress were to tax, borrow, or print money. The latter led to the over-supply of

[153] Stephen Conway, 'The Politics of Military and Naval Mobilisation, 1779-1783', in *The English Historical Review,* Vol. 112, No. 449 (November, 1997), 1179-1201.
[154] 14-5-1813, Hansard, TNA/ZHC 2-26, 171-173.
[155] Ben Baack, 'Forging a Nation State: the Continental Congress and the financing of the War of American Independence', in *Economic History Review,* Vol. LIV 4 (2001), 639-656.

money and inflation.[156] The states developed a system in which they voluntarily collected the taxes and passed them to Congress. Previously the individual states had benefited from the ideas of independence put forward by Congress but contributed nothing financially towards it. The new arrangement allowed Congress to overcome this 'Free Rider' problem and at the same time allowed Congress to reduce its dependence on the issue of currency as a source of finance. Whilst Baack's analysis explains how the thematic constraint of finance was mitigated by Congress, it underestimates the ongoing importance of the gifts and loans of money from the French Court. He states, for example, that the covert gifts and loans from the French in 1776 were quite small.[157] Yet, as late as 1781, Washington noted in despair that 'We must have one of two things, peace or money from France.'[158] The thesis, while accepting the argument of Baack, considers French gifts and loans to be crucial in bringing the war to a conclusion.

The importance of naval and combined operations is clearly indicated in the work of Richard Harding. In a monograph based on his doctoral thesis, he has examined the British expedition to Cartagena in 1740-1742.[159] In this work, Harding argues that the Cartagena expedition has been misinterpreted and that political necessity made the expedition inevitable, but at the same time made it impossible to mobilise adequate resources. The argument raises the issues of political factors, time and resources as thematic constraints. This argument which is valid is examined in the section on the Cartagena expedition in Part I Preamble of the thesis. The expedition is further examined by Harding in the wider context of the War of 1739-1748.[160]

[156] Ibid, 643.
[157] Ibid, 644.
[158] W. Bodham Donne (ed), *The Correspondence of King George III with Lord North from 1768 to 1783,* Volume I, 369, Letter 676, 30 April 1781
[159] Richard Harding, *Amphibious Warfare in the Eighteenth Century-the British Expedition to the West Indies 1740-1742* (Woodbridge: the Boydell Press, 1991)
[160] Richard Harding, *The Emergence of Britain's Global Supremacy-the War of 1739-1748* (Woodbridge: the Boydell Press, 2010)

Writing of the American War of Independence, Harding raises the important issue of the re-establishment of the dominance of the Royal Navy over the combined fleets of France, Spain and Holland by 1782.[161] This indicates the importance of resources as a thematic constraint. In a further comprehensive monograph, Harding analyses the increasing pace of naval competition between the years 1763-89.[162] However, important as these arguments are, Harding did not actually compare the role of combined operations in both conflicts, and the analysis in the thesis sheds new light on the similarities and differences between the two wars, such as the extent to which combined operations could be made into an effective political and strategic tool. The thesis considers these issues and develops them, and in doing so adds to and builds upon Harding's important work.

Daniel A. Baugh has examined the issue of planning and strategy in the first war. He argues that the greatest naval error in the first war was the failure to deny the use of the sea to American naval vessels, which included merchant ships, privateers and naval ships but also included those neutral vessels carrying contraband.[163] This shortage was caused not by neglect but by the strategic and political decision to use military force. This meant that considerable naval resources were used in assisting the army, the opportunity-cost of which was that a naval blockade could not be carried out effectively. This argument is valid since the blockade would have denied food, finished goods and armaments and gunpowder to the colonists without alienating them in the way in which military action and bombardments did.[164] However, the use of a blockade would take time to be effective and the army would be needed to defend

[161] Richard Harding, *The Evolution of the Sailing Navy, 1509-1815, op. cit.* 135
[162] Richard Harding, *Sea Power and Naval Warfare 1650-1830,* (London: the UCL Press, 1999)
[163] Daniel A. Baugh, 'The Politics of British Naval Failure, 1775-1777', in *The American Neptune: A Quarterly Journal of Maritime History,* Vol. 52, Part 4 (1992), 221-246.
[164] Jeremy Black, 'Could Britain have won the American War of Independence? ', in *Journal of the Society for Army Historical Research',* Vol. 74, No. 299 (Autumn 1996), 149.

Canada and important naval bases. Baugh has also examined the thematic constraint of a lack of resources in his analysis of the reasons for Britain's loss of command of the sea during the American War of Independence.[165] Lord Sandwich, First Lord of the Admiralty in 1779, had asked the question as to why England had a greater force than it had ever previously had but the enemy force was superior. Answering his own question, he argued that England had never previously engaged in a sea war with the House of Bourbon thoroughly united, with an unbroken naval force without an ally to assist us.[166] Baugh argues that this submission was not a blanket statement that it was inevitable that Britain would be outmatched at sea by the combined fleets of France and Spain when those two powers entered the war. Baugh argues that Britain lost command of the sea because of an inadequate number of ships, a lack of co-operation within a feuding officer's corps, and failure to make the best strategic use of the available ships, arguments which are put forward by this thesis.[167] The lack of ships, Baugh argues, was due to two naval mobilisations in Britain, the first beginning in 1775 which was inadequate even to the needs of North America, and the second beginning in the winter of 1778-1779 which was sufficient but was begun too late.[168] Baugh's view has been challenged by Richard Middleton who argues that in the circumstances Yorktown was a disaster waiting to happen. He further argues that in spite of "claims made by some historians" that Britain had virtually re-established naval superiority by 1781, this was not achieved until after the war and only then did the building programme came to fruition.[169] However, the statistics quoted by Baugh do seem to indicate that British naval superiority was well on the way to being re-established, by mid-1781, if not by 1782, as the outcome of the naval Battle of the Saints in 1782 indicates. The blanket statement that the mere combination of the French and Spanish

[165] Baugh, 'Why did Britain lose command of the Sea during the War for America?' *op. cit.* 149.
[166] Ibid, 149. See NRS, Sandwich Papers, III, 170.
[167] Ibid, 154.
[168] Ibid, 155.
[169] Richard Middleton, 'Naval Resources and the British defeat at Yorktown, 1781', in *The Mariner's Mirror,* Vol. 100:1, (2014), 29-43.

fleets inevitably led to the British defeat is therefore incorrect. The thesis is in agreement with Baugh's argument and develops it further in the section on chronological analysis.

Although many of the thematic constraints intervened at the tactical and operational levels, they were also important at the strategic and planning levels. David Syrett has examined the failure of the British effort in America in 1777.[170] Syrett examines planning and strategy and argues that the decision to attack Philadelphia in 1777 arose from the failure of Germain, the Secretary for the American Department, to devise a comprehensive strategic plan and to ensure that it was effectively implemented by the American Commanders, William Howe and John Burgoyne. He failed to oversee the planning of the campaign and allowed two independent commands to develop. In defence of Howe, David Smith has argued that Howe's initial plan for 1777 was 'coherent' in light of the crumbling of the rebel resistance.[171] However, Howe altered his original plan which involved sending a force of 10,000 men up the Hudson to support General Burgoyne and thereby created two uncoordinated plans. Syrett also highlights how British strategy was forced to change when the French entered the war in 1778.[172] This indicates the importance 'other theatres' and resources as thematic constraints and the opportunity cost element involved in deciding how to allocate limited resources between two or more competing theatres. The entry of the French into the war compelled Britain to choose between prioritising the defence of Home Waters or the West Indies and American theatres.[173] In addition, as Syrett points out, in the main, the American War of Independence was the only

[170] David Syrett, 'The failure of the British effort in America, 1777'. In Jeremy Black and Philip Woodfine (eds.), *The British Navy and the Use of Naval Power in the Eighteenth Century* (Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1988), 171.
[171] David Smith, *William Howe and the American War of Independence,* (New York: Bloomsbury Academic, 2015), 109.
[172] David Syrett, *The Royal Navy in European Waters during the American Revolutionary War,* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1998), 18.
[173] David Syrett, 'Home Waters or America? The Dilemma of British Naval Strategy in 1778' in *The Mariner's Mirror*, Vol. 77. No. 4 (November, 1991), 365-377.

war of the eighteenth century that Britain engaged in where Britain sent out naval detachments to pursue French naval forces, rather than blockading them in French ports and ultimately defeating them in Europe.[174] The entry of the French into the war also indicates the importance of allies as a thematic constraint. This was important not only from the point of view of the American colonists who had the overt support of the French but also from the point of view of the British who had no continental ally.[175] However, H. M. Scott has pointed out that there was a difficulty in Britain in obtaining continental allies after 1763.[176] Before 1763, British foreign policy had been based on the fear of French power in order to gain the support of European powers. After 1763 this strategy could no longer be used because of Britain's pre-eminent position at the end of the Seven Years' War. Syrett has also carried out a comprehensive and substantial analysis of the Royal Navy operations in North American waters.[177] He correctly raises the issue of the conduct of the Howe brothers, not only in 1776 but in the entire war and which was lacking in aggression and ineffectual or as he notes the 'reluctance of Lord Howe to deal harshly with the Americans'.[178] He states that '…the greatest failure for the British in 1776 was…the lack of success of the Royal Navy's effort to blockade the coast', before the entry of France into the war. He is correct in stating that the reason for the failure was a shortage of ships.[179] The thesis is in the main in agreement with the above arguments of Syrett and Scott. Their arguments are applied and developed in the thesis in the section on Chronological Analysis.

[174] David Syrett, 'Count-down to the Saints: a Strategy of Detachments and the Quest for Naval Superiority, in the West Indies, 1780-2', in *The Mariner's Mirror,* Vol. 87, No. 2 (May, 2001), 150-182.
[175] David Syrett, *The Royal Navy in European Waters during the American Revolutionary War, op. cit.* 18
[176] H. M. Scott, *British Foreign Policy in the Age of the American Revolution,* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990), 342.
[177] David Syrett, *The Royal Navy in American Waters 1775-1783,* (Brookfield: Scolar Press, 1989)
[178] Ibid, 56.
[179] Ibid, 57.

A wider approach to that of conventional historians in analysing the thematic constraint of defects in character and leadership is the monograph of Norman Dixon.[180] Although later writers have developed his theories, the work remains a useful inter-disciplinary approach which lends itself well to the analysis of character defects in both wars. The use of Applied Psychology is now routine in American Military Academies.[181] These studies address the problem of what happens when character defects at any level intervene to prevent the successful formulation and implementation of combined operations. That they can be acute is illustrated by a study in the William and Mary Quarterly which analyses the 'obsessive-compulsive personality' of Sir Henry Clinton which drove him to seek positions of authority and yet hate it once he had achieved them.[182] Dixon's arguments about the importance of defects in character being an important thematic constraint are completely valid and the thesis is in agreement with them. The thesis has both applied and developed those arguments, for example in the analysis of the Battles of Bunker Hill and of Long Island.

Kenneth Breen has examined the thematic constraint of faults in the Command and Control structure. He particularly comments on the divided posts in the West Indies and North America in 1780-1781.[183] The Earl of Sandwich had commented on the need for the American stations to support each other.[184] In fact there was little co-operation and substantial hostility. Rodney commenting on the problems had even commented that if 'they intend the war should be concluded, there must be but one General and one Admiral commanding in chief in America

[180] Norman Dixon, *On the Psychology of Military Incompetence,* (London: Pimlico, 1994)
[181] See U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, *Leadership Principles: How Their Use by Lieutenant General John Burgoyne and Major General Horatio Gates Influenced the Engagement at Saratoga, 1777* (Great Britain: Amazon, 2014). See also United States Marine Corps Command, *Commanders in Chief of the American War of Independence: A leadership Study of George Washington and Sir William Howe* 2014. See also Buckley, *1776, A Critical Time in the American Revolution,* 2017, *op. cit.* 7-9.
[182] Frederick Wyatt and William B. Wilcox, 'Sir Henry Clinton: A Psychological Exploration of History', *William and Mary Quarterly,* Vol. 16, No.1 (January, 1959), 3-26
[183] Kenneth Breen, 'Divided command: the West Indies and North America, 1780-1781' *op. cit.* 191.
[184] NRS, Sandwich Papers, IV, 352.

and the West Indies'. This failure to co-operate had serious consequences when ships were delayed and as a result were unable to take part in the battle of the Capes.[185] Failures in the command and control structure were one of the most important thematic constraints. The thesis supports and develops this argument in Breen's analysis of the divided command in the West Indies and its consequences for the Battle of the Capes.

One of the results of the deficiencies in leadership qualities and in the command and control structure in the first war was the arguments over the attribution of the blame for the debacle at Yorktown. The principal parties involved were the commander-in-chief of the Army, Lieutenant-General Henry Clinton based in New York, his subordinate Lord Cornwallis operating in the South and the Cabinet Minister and head of the American Department Lord George Germain based in London. William B. Willcox has edited the Memoirs of Henry Clinton which cover the period 1775-1782. He is critical of Clinton and he argues that the responsibility for the Yorktown disaster lay substantially with Clinton and states of his Memoirs that "The book was written to redeem his military reputation at the expense of others, primarily Cornwallis…"[186] This assessment is part of the ongoing Clinton-Cornwallis Controversy as to which commander was responsible for the disaster and is part of the "blame-game" in which the senior commanders engaged during the war, after it, and, in Clinton's case, right up to his death. The Clinton papers are also reproduced in the pamphlets on the controversy and these include Sir Henry Clinton's own comments.[187] Before becoming commander-in-chief, Clinton had been a talented soldier, offering good advice to his less able

[185] Kenneth Breen, 'Divided Command: the West Indies and North America, 1780-1781' *op. cit.* 192.
[186] W. B. Willcox (Ed.). *The American Rebellion, Sir Henry Clinton's narrative of his campaigns, 1775-1782*, (New Haven; Yale University Press, 1954, ix.)
[187] *The Campaign in Virginia, 1781: Chronological Correspondence,* 4 June 1781, to 27 December 1781. Extracts from the journals of the House of Lords. Sackville, G. Sackville Germain.1st Viscount. "An exact reprint of six rare pamphlets on the Clinton-Cornwallis Controversy." (USA: Nabu Reprints, 2008)

superior, William Howe. When he became commander-in- chief, in 1778 and 1782 he constantly warned that a British Army operating outside New York would be compelled to surrender if there was a superior French Fleet off the coast of America.[188] The thesis agrees to a limited extent with the arguments of Willcox that Clinton was substantially to blame but argues that the blame lay in part with Sir William Howe, who failed to take the advice of Clinton when he was Howe's subordinate. Furthermore, Germain failed to co-ordinate the operations of Howe and Burgoyne, the two British commanders in North America, bringing about the capitulation at Saratoga, a disaster which could have been avoided if Howe had taken Clinton's advice to support Burgoyne. In addition, Germain and Lord Cornwallis, Clinton's subordinate based at Yorktown, corresponded directly with each other, instead of with the commander-in-chief, Sir Henry Clinton in New York, breaking the chain of command.[189] Furthermore, Germain and the Cabinet in London based strategy on incorrect intelligence resulting in a false assumption that there were large numbers of Loyalists in the South who were ready, able and willing to help the British cause. Although Cornwallis could rely on the Loyalists if a British Army was present, once it left, the Loyalists became the victims instead.[190] This argument will be examined further in the section on chronological analysis.

Combined operations required co-operation between military and naval forces. American naval forces were deficient at the outbreak of the first war. This acted as a thematic constraint on the conduct of combined operations. The development of the Colonial Navy has been examined

[188] Andrew Jackson O'Shaughnessy, 'To Gain the Hearts and Subdue the Minds of America: General Sir Henry Clinton and the Conduct of the British War for America', in *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society,* Vol. 158, No. 3 (September, 2014), 199-208.
[189] Sydney Howard Gay, 'Why Cornwallis was at Yorktown', in *The North American Review,* Vol. 133, No. 299 (October, 1881), 368-378.
[190] Ibid, 370.

by James C. Bradford.[191] At the outbreak of hostilities the Americans had great experience of sailing ships and the use of vessels for fishing and transport. The individual colonies built navies which consisted of whaleboats and galleys but the formation of the Continental Navy was slow. The first steps were taken on 13th October 1775 when Congress approved the fitting of two armed ships. Commerce raiding was relatively successful but the performance of frigates less so.[192] However, in 1778, the French entered the war and the importance of the Continental Navy declined substantially. George C. Daughan traces a similar development.[193] The idea of creating a navy was closely allied to that of independence. The creation of a navy was the equivalent of a declaration of independence as the possession of a navy was a characteristic of a nation state. As long as the idea of a reconciliation existed, the creation of a navy did not occur.[194] The King's rejection of the Olive Branch Petition on 23 August 1775 thus stimulated the move towards the creation of a Continental Navy.[195] A similar argument has been put forward by Sam Willis.[196] This thesis is entirely in agreement with this argument and also the importance of the absence of a substantial navy as a thematic constraint which contributed to the asymmetric nature of the American War of Independence.

In the War of 1812, the writer who comes closest to covering most of the thematic constraints mentioned in the thesis is J. Mackay Hitsman.[197] Hitsman identifies many of the thematic constraints. However, he correctly identifies the survey carried out by Prevost, the Commander in Chief and Governor-General in Canada, at the request of Bathurst, the Secretary for War and

[191] James C. Bradford, 'The Navies of the American Revolution', in Kenneth J. Hagan (ed.), *In Peace and War Interpretations of American Naval History, 1775-1984* (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press 1984), 3-26.
[192] Ibid, 13.
[193] Daughan, *If by Sea, The Forging of the American Navy from the Revolution to the War of 1812,* (New York: Basic Books, 2011).
[194] Ibid, 49.
[195] Ibid, 37-38.
[196] Sam Willis, *The Struggle for Sea Power A Naval History of American Independence, op. cit.* 81.
[197] J. Mackay Hitsman, *The incredible War of 1812 A Military History,* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2000)

the Colonies in London as being of huge importance.[198] Hitsman sketches out the requirement which was identified early on for a defensive war on the part of Britain, and after Napoleon's defeat, the strict circumstances under which Prevost could depart from this.[199] However, whilst the thesis agrees with the importance of the thematic constraints which are identified by Hitsman, he makes reference to the thematic constraints only on an *ad hoc* basis in the context of particular campaigns and battles and makes no attempt to apply the thematic constraints in a systematic manner in a structured context or to consider their relative importance, a defect which this thesis identifies and addresses.

Andrew Lambert raises the issue of what, in this thesis has been called misrepresentation and propaganda. In the early naval engagements at sea, the Americans misrepresented the engagements as a contest of equals between ships of equal size and crew but although the vessels on both sides were described as "frigates", the American vessels were substantially larger both in terms of size and the number of crew.[200] The American viewpoint was contested by William James.[201] James's book resulted in a response by Theodore Roosevelt, the future President of the United States, which attempted to refute the arguments put forward by James.[202] However, Lambert is correct in his assertion that the American ships were larger than the British ships, both in size and crew numbers. The argument has a contemporary relevance, however, insofar as Lambert presented a paper to an American audience in 1999 which

[198] Ibid, 25.
[199] Ibid, 42.
[200] Andrew Lambert, *The Challenge,* (London: Faber and Faber Ltd, 2012)
[201] William. James, *Naval Occurrences in the War of 1812 A Full and Correct Account of the Naval War between Great Britain and the United States of America,1812-1815,* (London: Conway Maritime Press, 2004) Published originally in 1817.
[202] Theodore Roosevelt, *The Naval War of 1812, or the History of the United States Navy, during the last war with Great Britain to which is appended an Account of the Battle of New Orleans* (London: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1900). Published by Forgotten Books, 2012). Originally published 1900.

received a warm reception, the warmth consisting of an attack on the honesty of James.[203] However, whilst his argument is valid, Lambert is open to the charge of chauvinism and faulty methodology as he employs only the British sources. The importance which Lambert attaches to naval engagements at sea may indicate that he, like James, may suggest that combined operations were not as crucial as the thesis argues. However, an emphasis on naval engagements would be expected from a naval historian and a naval practitioner and may not necessarily imply that combined operations were less important.

The manifestation of the thematic constraints of defects in leadership, planning and faults in the command and control structure in the second war are highlighted by Donald R. Hickey.[204] Hickey notes that that they emerge at the planning level on the American side in the defective planning of Major General Henry Dearborn and the Secretary of War, John Armstrong. The three multi-pronged attacks on Canada had innate defects which ensured their failure. Amongst these defects was the adoption of the indirect approach in attacking Kingston, the innate complexity of the plans and issuing ambiguous and unclear orders. Alfred Thayer Mahan was also critical of the indirect approach and correctly identified Kingston as the lynchpin in the control of Lake Ontario. He argued that …'if deprived of the water communications, the enemy could retain no position to the westward, because neither re-enforcements nor supplies could reach them'.[205] Mahan's comments illustrate the importance of the Great Lakes, especially Lake Erie and Lake Ontario. The thesis agrees with the arguments of Hickey and Mahan.

[203] William James, *Naval Occurrences of the War of 1812, A Full and Correct Account of the Naval War between Great Britain and the United States of America, 1812-1815,* 2004. Andrew Lambert Acknowledgements.
[204] Hickey, *The War of 1812 A Forgotten Conflict a Forgotten conflict,* (Springfield: University of Illinois Press, 2012)
[205] Alfred Thayer Mahan, *Sea Power in its Relations to the War of 1812,* 1905, *op. cit.* Volume 2, 41

One of the issues which dominated American naval policy was that between the Navalists and their opponents. The Navalists believed that building a powerful navy was necessary in order to further the strategic and political needs of the nation. They affected the historiography of the war of 1812 by re-assessing the influence of the Navy on the War. Mark Russell Shulman has examined the arguments of the Navalists.[206] Theodore Roosevelt was critical of Thomas Jefferson's advocacy of a small gunboat navy. President James Madison was also judged severely for his lack of preparation.[207] Roosevelt was important not only because he later became President of the USA but was a leading Navalist and the author of the seminal text "The Naval War of 1812."[208] In this work Roosevelt criticised small navies, advocated the use of a powerful navy and defended the record of the US Navy in the War of 1812 against criticisms levelled at it by the English writer, William James.[209] However, the Navalists had a political agenda which advocated building a large navy in an era after the ending of the War of 1812. The argument also ignores the impossibility of matching the large British Navy of 1812 and the expense of building such a Navy. The absence of a large American Navy in 1812 limited operations but the thesis argues that the main thematic constraint to the construction of a large American Navy was finance, as the American Secretary of the Treasury Albert Gallatin argued.[210]

Troy Bickham has analysed the importance of political factors for both sides in the War of 1812.[211] He addresses the issue of political opposition to the war. Such opposition weakened

[206] Mark Russell Shulman, 'The Influence of History upon Sea Power The Navalist Re-interpretation of the War of 1812', in *The Journal of Military History*, Vol. 56 Part 2 (April 1992), 191.
[207] Ibid, 191.
[208] Theodore Roosevelt, *The Naval War of 1812 or the History of the United States Navy during the Last War with Great Britain*, (Leipzig: Forgotten Books, 2012).
[209] William James, *Naval Occurrences of the War of 1812, A full and Correct Account of the Naval War between Great Britain and the United States of America, 1812-1815*, (London: Conway Maritime Press, 2004).
[210] Ibid, 203.
[211] Troy Bickham, The Weight of Vengeance, *op. cit.* 182

the political will of the government to conduct the war and was an important thematic constraint. In the United States opposition to the war was widespread. Some New England states traded with the enemy and supplied the British Army or even espoused secession. Editors and their correspondents and clerics in pulpits openly opposed the war.[212] Individual states had different interests and differing views and opposed it for a variety of reasons. These included a desire to continue trading with Great Britain but mainly because opponents could see no advantage in the war and thought the country was unprepared for it. The majority of Americans supported their government but believed they had the right to engage in criticism. The country, however, was bitterly divided and such division acted as a serious thematic constraint to the conduct of the war. In Great Britain, the opposition to the war was substantial, in the main for commercial reasons and concerns about both exports and imports.[213] The British suffered unprecedented taxation and huge loans.[214] In addition, manufacturers were concerned about ensuring cheap labour and merchants regularly petitioned for the repeal of the Orders in Council which maintained Britain's right to search American ships. The thesis is entirely in agreement with the argument that political constraints were the most important of the thematic constraints but that finance was a major factor in pressurising the British to end the War of 1812.

Health, disease and hygiene were important thematic constraints in both wars. Alan Taylor has also emphasised their importance.[215] Losses because of sickness and disease were sometimes greater than those caused by the military or naval engagement and this latter point renders them of great importance. In the second war, medical services had still not improved. Gary A.

[212] Ibid, 172.
[213] Ibid, 204.
[214] Ibid, 207.
[215] Alan Taylor, *The Civil War of 1812, op. cit.* 193.

Newfield has examined naval medical operations in Kingston during the War of 1812.[216] He correctly argues that there was a constant shortage of personnel, supplies and facilities which restricted naval medical operations at Kingston in the War of 1812, and that this, rather than a lack of effort or competence on the part of the medical staff was responsible for the death rate.[217] The thesis acknowledges the importance of health, disease and hygiene as a thematic constraints. However, they were rarely substantial enough, by themselves, to influence the outcomes of the two wars in the long-term.

Marc de Simone and Robert Dudley edited the compendium of essays from different writers addressing different aspects of leadership in the War of 1812.[218] The diversity in the profiles of the leaders and in the styles of leadership is an indication not only of the importance of leadership as a thematic constraint but also an indication of the large number of different ways in which leadership defects can intervene to prevent the successful formulation and implementation of combined operations. The collection contains the doubtful assertion that one of the British strategies in the war was to "take back the American colonies by slowly collapsing the economy".[219] The wide variety of ways in which leadership can intervene in the conduct of combined operations indicates its importance as a thematic constraint and the thesis recognises and develops this argument.

The Battle of Plattsburgh was a combined operation of the greatest importance. The thematic constraints of leadership, planning and weather intervened ensuring the failure of the British

[216] Gareth A. Newfield, 'Naval Medical Operations at Kingston during the War of 1812', in *Canadian Military History*, Vol. 18, no. 1 (Winter, 2009), 37-47.
[217] Ibid, 1.
[218] Marc de Simone and Robert Dudley (eds.), *Lessons in Leadership from the War of 1812*, (Milton Keynes: The International Leadership Development Press, 2018).
[219] Ibid, 265.

operation. Keith A. Herkalo has examined the significance of the Battle of Plattsburgh in September 1814.[220] He argues that the combined operation did not succeed because the British Commander, Prevost did not begin the artillery fire when the vessels commanded by George Downie appeared and instead delayed for an hour, in part because the cannon had not arrived and in addition no battery had been set up for them. Downie's failure to use his long guns due in part to the lack of a favourable breeze, permitted the American ships to draw close. As a result the Americans were able to employ carronades at short range with devastating effect. Colonel David G. Fitz-Enz has also examined the engagement.[221] Fitz-Enz argues correctly that the American victory halted a possible invasion of the United States. Winston S. Churchill agreed with this view.[222] Gary G. Ohls in his assessment of amphibious operations in the War of 1812 considers the battle to be a 'significant defeat' for Britain.[223] The thesis agrees with the arguments that deficiencies in leadership, planning and weather were major thematic constraints and that the battle had an overwhelmingly negative influence on the British plans to change to the offensive. However, it does not agree with the statement by Fitz-Enz that if the battle had succeeded, the 'United States would have reverted to their former status as British colonies'. This statement is a counter-factual conditional and mere speculation.

Although traditional accounts have stressed the importance of conventional naval engagements at sea ('blue water' battles) involving larger ships or a *guerre d'escadre,* or in commerce raiding or a *guerre de course,* Benjamin Armstrong has argued that in both wars, a *guerre de razzia,* or wars by raiding, and the irregular operations required to conduct such warfare which

[220] Keith A. Herkalo, *The Battles at Plattsburgh September 11th 1814,* (Charleston: The History Press, 2012)
[221] David G. Fitz-Enz, *The Final Invasion Plattsburgh the War of 1812's Most Decisive Battle,* (New York: The Cooper Square Press, 2001). Original printing c. 2000.
[222] Winston S. Churchill, *History of the English speaking Peoples,* Vol. III, 236
[223] Gary J. Ohls, *Amphibious American Warfare the Roots of Tradition to 1865,* (Annapolis, Maryland: Naval Institute Press, 2017)

often involved smaller ships were also important.[224] He argues that in the War of 1812, raids on supply lines and shipyards were crucial on the Great Lakes.[225] Although Armstrong was writing about the Great Lakes, Jon Latimer argues that raids on the coastline of America worked and were highly effective.[226] He noted that Charleston and others sent a deputation to British Rear-Admiral George Cockburn to assure him that no guns or militia were present and also noted that the British moved freely without meeting any opposition.[227] This thesis argues that small ships were essential in the conduct of raids and blockades, especially on the coastline of America. The raids in destroying ships and property, reducing morale and interfering with trade had great propaganda value and reduced the effectiveness of American combined operations. However, they did not consistently achieve the objective of acting as a diversion and the withdrawal of troops from the primary seat of operations in Canada.

C. J. Bartlett has commented on the influence of law and conventions as a thematic constraints.[228] He examines the influence of morality as a thematic constraint in the context of the differing social structure of the two protagonists. Great Britain was ruled by Gentlemen whilst their opponents were Democrats. By 1814 the British Press were questioning whether the Americans could be counted amongst the civilised peoples of the world, and whether the European conventions should be applied in military actions against them.[229] In contrast, Robert A. Fabel has argued that the British contravened the laws of warfare by conducting raids on

[224] Benjamin Armstrong, *Small Boats and Daring Men Maritime Raiding, Irregular Warfare, and the Early American Navy,* (Oklahoma: The University of Oklahoma Press, 2019)
[225] Ibid, 23.
[226] Latimer, 1812, *War with America*, *op. cit.* 162
[227] Ibid, 162.
[228] C. J. Bartlett, 'Gentlemen versus Democrats: Cultural Prejudices and Military Strategy in Britain in the War of 1812', in *War in History*, Vol. 1, No. 2 (July, 1994), 140-159.
[229] Ibid, 149.

the Chesapeake, but makes little mention of the burning of buildings at York by American forces.[230]

The thesis agrees with the arguments of Baugh, Syrett and Daughan. The research indicates that the primary sources make repeated references to both combined operations and the thematic constraints. The thesis identifies the combined operations and the thematic constraints and analyses their importance, explains their contribution to the different outcomes of the two wars and highlights how their contribution to each war differed. The thesis recognises the importance of the thematic constraints in the formulation and implementation of combined operations. It does so in a structured framework which assesses not only the significance of each thematic constrain but their relative importance. This structure allows for an easier and more systematic analysis and comparison of how the thematic constraints intervened in the conduct of combined operations and in doing so, it clarifies, develops and builds upon the existing historiography.

Unsuccessful combined operations could be as important as successful combined operations in influencing and determining the outcome of a war. The following Part I Preamble of the thesis examines and compares examples of unsuccessful and successful combined operations in the period of the eighteenth century prior to the American War of Independence and the impact of the thematic constraints on the outcome of the combined operations.

[230] Robin F. A. Fabel, 'The Laws of War in the 1812 Conflict', in *Journal of American Studies,* Vol. 14, No. 2 (August, 1980), 199-218.

Part 1 Preamble

A brief history of the evolution of combined operations by the mid-eighteenth century

Part 1 Preamble

A brief history of combined operations by the mid-eighteenth century

The combined operations in the two wars covered by this thesis were preceded by earlier similar combined operations in the eighteenth century. The War of the Austrian Succession and the Seven Years' War provide examples of combined operations which can be compared and contrasted with the combined operations of the American War of Independence and the War of 1812. Such comparisons can throw light on the reasons for the success or failure of combined operations.

The British combined operation against Cartagena in 1741-1742 was very large and as a result gave rise to expectations of success, however, it was a failure of egregious proportions. The operation is important since it indicates why combined operations fail. In contrast, the combined operation at Quebec in 1759 which was an outstanding success indicates what factors are necessary if a combined operation is to succeed.

The Cartagena expedition was undertaken following the declaration of War against Spain in the War of Jenkin's Ear in 1739. If the Spanish trade monopoly in the Caribbean and South America could be broken, the ports could as a result be opened to trade, a result which would benefit Great Britain. Of the four possible targets Cartagena in modern day Columbia was selected as being the most susceptible to attack.[231] A detailed account of the expedition is given in the letters from Major General Wentworth and Admiral Vernon etc.[232] The naval commander

[231] See 3-6-1740, Wager to Newcastle, TNA/CO 5-41 Part 2, 266. For an early discussion of these options.
[232] 3-10-1740 to 23-11-1743, Letters from Major General Wentworth Admiral Vernon etc., relating to the expedition against Cartagena and Porto Bello, TNA/CO 5-42 Part 1.

Admiral Edward Vernon was against any major expedition and in favour of smaller attacks as he believed that any occupying force would succumb to the Yellow Fever and Malaria endemic to that region.[233] Due to these differences in opinion, Lord Cathcart the military leader of the expedition was asked to attempt to co-operate with Vernon who was awaiting his arrival in the West Indies.[234] The sheer size of the expedition appeared to stack the odds in favour of Britain.[235] The political pressure to achieve a successful outcome in conjunction with the time, planning and resources required to ensure the success of so large an undertaking acted as thematic constraints.

Thematic constraints intervened to prevent the successful outcome of the expedition. The expedition was slow in departing and encountered many problems including the difficulty in obtaining ample provisions, sickness and contrary winds.[236] The military leader Lord Cathcart contracted an infection and died on 20th December 1740. Wentworth wrote to the minister the Duke of Newcastle to inform him "of Lord Cathcart's death which happened this morning of a bloody flux".[237] This was the eighteenth century term for dysentery. Wentworth succeeded to the command but he was an inexperienced commander. On the 9 January 1741 Wentworth located Admiral Vernon. He wrote that "the fleet arrived in the harbour on the 9th where we found Mr Vernon with his squadron in very good health".[238] However, the sickness was increasing as time went on as illustrated in a letter dated 20 January 1741 from Wentworth.[239] He does not state the nature of the sickness. A description of the conditions on board ships of

[233] Harding, *The Emergence of Britain's Global Supremacy, op. cit.* 89.
[234] Ibid, 89-90.
[235] 25-10-1740, A Return of the Eight Regiments on board the transport ships, Wentworth, TNA/CO 5-42 Part 1, indicates a force of 6,121 but these were to be joined by other troops including circa 3,000 American troops.
[236] 18-10-1740 TNA/CO 5-41 Part 2, Cathcart to Newcastle, 138. Reference is also made in this letter to the black soldiers from Jamaica and the volunteers from the North American Colonies the latter amounting to some 3,600 men. See also ibid, 200.
[237] 20-12-1740, Wentworth to Newcastle, TNA/CO 5-42 Part I, 2.
[238] 11-1-1741, Wentworth to Newcastle, TNA/CO 5-42 Part 1, 6-7.
[239] 20-1-1741, Wentworth to Newcastle, TNA/CO 5/42 Part I, 8-10.

the Cartagena expedition was given in "Roderick Random", a novel written by the surgeon's second mate, Tobias Smollet.[240]

Initially the expedition met with apparent success and captured the outer forts of the lagoons of Cartagena de la Indias.[241] However, disastrous news came in a letter from Wentworth dated 26 April 1741 who, writing from His Majesty's Ship *Torbay* in Cartagena Harbour to Newcastle informed the latter of a major defeat.[242] The Royal Navy had already been held up gaining entry to Cartagena's harbour as the enterprising Spanish commander Blas de Lezo had sunk his vessels at the entrance to the harbour to obstruct the British entry. This was an early example of the use of anti-access/area denial tactics and an indication of how efficient these could be in hindering attempts to clear a passage in narrow and shallow waters.

Tactical deficiencies made their own contribution to the defeat. Wentworth wrote that "About twelve hundred men …began the attack in two places but not directly where was intended"…[243] Any further advance was prevented by the arrival of enemy reinforcements.[244] The Americans threw down their scaling ladders and retreated.[245] Wentworth wrote that "…we were so far from being in a condition to attack the enemy that we had scarcely duty men sufficient for the ordinary guard of the camp.[246] Wentworth was keen to attribute the bulk of the casualties to sickness in order to avoid the possible issue of incompetence.[247]

[240] Tobias Smollett, *Roderick Random,* ch. xxv. In Mowat, *A History of Great Britain 1688-1924,* (1924), 458.
[241] Harding, *The Emergence of Britain's Global Naval Supremacy, op. cit.* 103.
[242] 26-4-1741, Wentworth to Newcastle, TNA/CO 5-42 Part 1, 13-15.
[243] 26-4-1741, Wentworth to Newcastle, TNA/CO 5-42 Part 1, 13.
[244] Ibid, 13-14.
[245]Ibid, 13-14.
[246] 26-4-1741, Wentworth to Newcastle, TNA/CO 5-42 Part 1, 13-14.
[247] 2-6-1741, Wentworth to Newcastle, TNA/CO 5-42 Part 1, 18.

The Councils of War which were used to decide which combined operations were to be undertaken and how they were to be implemented did not always result in a *nemine contradicente* outcome (no one dissenting). Sometimes the disagreement was vitriolic. After one particularly acrimonious interchange it was said of Admiral Vernon that "Mr Vernon broke into very scurrilous language".[248]

Richard Harding has challenged the conventional explanations of the failure. He has argued convincingly that "The operation failed because of the significant operational problems encountered in conducting combined operations in the Americas at short notice rather than the blunders of individuals. The political and military conditions of 1739-1740 made the operation essential, yet at the same time made it impossible to mobilise adequate resources".[249] The expedition would thus have failed, even if the other factors such as dissension in the command etc. had been absent. This argument is undoubtedly valid.

In contrast to the Cartagena expedition, the British combined operation against Quebec on 13 September 1759 in the Seven Years' War was an outstanding success. James Wolfe stated his objectives as being "to complete ye conquest of Canada and to finish the war in America".[250] It is immediately apparent that the expedition possessed all the advantages which were lacking in the Cartagena expedition. The expedition was led by a British officer of outstanding qualities in the form of General James Wolfe. He was cautious, yet at the same time innovative. He possessed none of the poor qualities in a Commander identified by Norman Dixon.[251] He was

[248] 5-2-1742, A Council of War, TNA/CO 5-42 Part 2, 111.
[249] Harding, *Amphibious Warfare in the Eighteenth Century, op. cit.* vii.
[250] U.S. National Archives R G 45 Office of Naval Records, Subject File U. S. Navy 1775-1910. H J Joint Military Naval Engagements 1758-1898 Box No 181, 29-51.
[251] Norman Dixon, *On the Psychology of Military Incompetence*, (London: Pimlico, 1976), 152-153. Dixon lists the personal characteristics which characterise an incompetent commander and which lead to operational failure.

careful of the welfare of his troops, undertook reconnaissance, heeded the advice of capable subordinates even when their ideas were superior to his own and maintained excellent relations with his naval counterparts, conferring with them on all occasions.[252] Wolfe was highly strung and volatile but he received sound and continuous advice from his naval counterpart, Admiral Charles Saunders.[253] The British chain of command was clear whilst that of the French was divided and unclear. British civil/military relations were excellent with Pitt the Elder-at least until his untimely expulsion in 1760-leading the government in London.

Wolfe's careful and painstaking reconnaissance in conjunction with the navy and the support offered by the latter allowed him to identify an opening in the defences of Quebec now called Wolfe's Cove and his army of 4,500 troops transported and supported by the navy landed and were able to ascend the mountainous terrain and to assemble in battle order on the Plains of Abraham outside Quebec. Wolfe's battle plans are a paradigm of excellence and a testimony to his outstanding tactical skills.[254] The French commander the Marquis de Montcalme was forced to emerge from Quebec as he wished to attack before the British had consolidated their position. In the attack both commanders were killed.[255] The defeat of the French forces and the fall of Quebec on 18 September 1759 ended French power in North America. Writing of Quebec James comments that "…officers of the day had before them (a classic example) of how to achieve success in the most difficult of all warlike operations".[256] The fall of Quebec

[252] Roger Keyes, *Amphibious Warfare and Combined Operations,* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1943), 9.
[253] Alfred Thayer Mahan, *The Influence of Sea Power upon History, 1660-1805,* (London: Bison Books Ltd., 1980), 140. Also Barry Gough, 'Vice-Admiral Sir Charles Saunders, Naval Victor of Quebec 1759', in *The Northern Mariner,* Vol. XIX, No. 1, (January 2009), 7-25.
[254] U.S. National Archives R G 45 Office of Naval Records, Subject File U.S. Navy 1775-1910. H J Joint Military Naval Engagements 1758-1898 Box No 181, 29-51.
[255] Daniel Snow, *Death or Victory The battle of Quebec and the Birth of Empire* (London: Harper Press, 2009), 373.
[256] James, *The British Navy in Adversity, op. cit.* 11.

was an outstanding example of how a single, successful combined operation can determine the outcome of an entire war where the thematic constraints are absent.

The British expedition to relieve the siege of Gibraltar from 1779 to 1783 in the American War of Independence is also worthy of mention. The Spanish began the siege after declaring war on Britain in 1779. Rodney led a large relief force of 21 ships of the line to relieve Gibraltar. On its way the British fleet captured a Spanish Fleet of fifteen ships which included seven warships and a large quantity of stores.[257] It also encountered a further Spanish fleet of eleven warships unaware of Rodney's presence. The resulting battle fought in 1780 at night known as the Moonlight Battle was a British victory and was a testimony to Rodney's capability. The Battle led to the capture of Spanish armaments which were subsequently used in the British Navy.[258] The British carried out a further operation taking supplies to Gibraltar as the previous supplies had run out or had become corrupted. The siege was ended by a further final relief force commanded by Howe in 1781.[259] The British operations were successful because of the superiority of commanders like Rodney, the large number of ships used in the operations and because of technological developments such as coppering.

Combined operations had evolved and developed from the late seventeenth century where "descents" were carried out on the enemy coastline in Europe to the sophisticated combined operations of the Seven Years' War and through to the outbreak of the American War of Independence on 19 April 1775. However, circumstances had changed radically regarding the

[257] John Drinkwater, *A History of the Siege of Gibraltar, 1779-1783,* 1785, (London: John Murray, 1905), 100. Reprinted London: F Band c Ltd, 2017. John Drinkwater was a Captain in the late seventy second Regiment of Royal Manchester Volunteers.
[258] 24-8-1780, NMM/ELL 501.
[259] Roy and Lesley Adkins, *Gibraltar,* (London: Abacus, 2017), 351.

state of military and naval professionalism and the state of Britain's financing from the first half of the eighteenth century to that of the second half of the eighteenth century. Improved military and naval professionalism was a hallmark of the period and certainly by the time of the outbreak of the Seven Years War in 1756, a clear officer class had emerged in the form of officers such as General James Wolfe. In addition the role played by the Bank of England as a ready source of finance had increased as the economy developed. However, circumstances at the outbreak of the Seven Years' War in 1756 were completely different from those at the outbreak of the American War of Independence in 1775. By the time that the Seven years' War had ended in 1763 to the outbreak of war in 1775, finance had become a major thematic constraint.[260]

The relaxed approach to the colonies and the careful avoidance of any attempt to tax them formerly adopted came to an end. Under these circumstances the thematic constraints assumed great importance. The thematic constraints which had been evidently absent in the Quebec campaign of 1759 again appeared in 1775. Although sophistication in combined operations implies improvement it also implies increased complexity and increased complexity meant that there was a greater opportunity for things to go wrong.

A further important difference between the Seven Years' War and the American War of Independence was that combined operations in the Seven Years' War were being used against great colonial powers, namely France and Spain. In the American War of Independence combined operations were, initially, being used against the American Colonists and following

[260] Daniel A. Baugh, 'Why did Britain lose command of the sea?', in Jeremy Black and Philip Woodfine (eds.), *The British Navy and the Use of Naval Power in the Eighteenth Century*, (Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1988), 155.

the entry of France and Spain into the War, against both the American Colonists and France and Spain. Combined operations in political terms may have been less effective against an army motivated in part by the Revolution. A number of colonials were motivated by revolutionary zeal and it acted as a thematic constraint to some degree.

Part 1

Chronological analysis of combined operations in the American War of Independence

Part 1

Chronological analysis of combined operations in the American War of Independence

The purpose of this Part and the next is to analyse in chronological order the significance of selected combined operations in determining the outcomes of the two wars and to examine the influence of the thematic constraints on those outcomes. In addition, they will examine how the use of combined operations and the intervention of the thematic constraints in the American War of Independence compared to those in the War of 1812. Combined operations were used by both sides in the two wars at different times and to different extents and also with varying degrees of success. The associated impact of the thematic constraints was also different. Engagements of a purely military nature such as the Battle of Guilford Court House in the first war, or of a purely naval nature such as that between USS *Constitution* and HMS *Guerriere* in the second war will not therefore be examined unless they are of great importance. The thematic constraints tended to intervene mostly at the tactical and operational level and for that reason some, but by no means all of the analysis, will be at that level.

The circumstances surrounding the outbreak of the two wars were completely different. The wars were fought with different objectives in mind. The first war broke out because the British Parliament maintained that it had the right to impose legislation on the colonies and employed force to suppress any opposition and the resulting war conducted by Britain was an offensive war.[261] The colonists were contesting such a right and, after 1776, attempting to gain independence. In contrast, in the War of 1812, the war arose substantially because Britain, which was fighting an existential war against Napoleonic France, insisted on the right to board

[261] Larrabee, *Decision at the Chesapeake, op. cit.* 18

American ships to impress British sailors who had deserted and to search for contraband.[262] America declared war on Britain to compel Britain to abandon those polices.[263] The frequency with which combined operations were used and the associated impact of the intervention of the thematic constraints was also different. The extent to which combined operations were used in each war depended on both the desired objectives and whether the war was offensive or defensive in nature, since an offensive war offered greater scope for the employment of combined operations. In the opening period of the American War of Independence, the lack of resources on the American side in the form of armaments and gunpowder, a small navy, newly formed Continental Army and undue dependence on the militia, a lack of experience, a relatively undeveloped economy, limited financial resources and an absence of political unity were the predominant thematic constraints and the war fought by the colonists, initially, was substantially defensive. The British were affected more by different thematic constraints such as the great distance of the colonies, the great area of the Atlantic Ocean, the vast area of the colonies and the long, indented eastern coastline of North America. They had, however, a well-developed economy, a ready access to finance, a large population, a well-established army and a large navy and were able to conduct an offensive war from 1775 to 1778. Britain decided to conduct the offensive war by using the navy in part to support military measures by way of transporting troops and supplies and assisting in the conduct of combined operations, rather than conducting a primarily naval solution by using a blockade.[264] In consequence, combined operations became immensely important as did the thematic constraints associated with them. In contrast, in the early period of the War of 1812, Britain fought a predominantly defensive war in Canada, because resources in the form of troop numbers there were small and resources were allocated to the European theatre in the fight against the French leaving few for the North

[262] Daughan, *If by Sea, op. cit.* 396
[263] Hickey, *The War of 1812, op. cit.* 40
[264] Ira D. Gruber, 'Lord Howe and Lord George Germain, British Politics and the Winning of American Independence' in *William and Mary Quarterly,* Vol. 22, No. 2 (April, 1965), 225-243

American theatre. In the second war, the thematic constraint of 'other theatres' in the form of the European theatre became of great importance. False assumptions acted as a thematic constraint in both wars. The British Government made false assumptions in the first war, such as that the resistance of the Americans was a rebellion and not a war, but the Americans also made false assumptions in the second war when Jefferson declared that the invasion of Canada would be a 'mere matter of marching'.[265] In the War of 1812, the British Army and Navy were already experienced and mobilised and the Royal Navy was the largest in the world. The Royal Navy instituted a blockade of the eastern coastline of the United States in 1812 in the Chesapeake Bay area which was gradually extended and this allowed for the conduct of combined operations in the form of raids on the coast. However, the same thematic constraints which had been present in the first war on the British side in the form of the great distance and vastness of the North American theatre and the problems of the long, indented coastline which made the conduct of blockades difficult, remained. As in the first war, the American Army was small as was the Navy and the economy remained relatively undeveloped with limited access to finance. However in the second war, leadership defects became a major thematic constraint on the American side as did bad planning, poor communication and a lack of experience in the conduct of war. In contrast, on the British side, the leadership defects and the bad civil-military relations which had existed under Lord George Germain in the first war, had largely disappeared, as had the three departments of the Secretaries of State which were now unified into the Secretary of State for War and the Colonies. The Prime Minister and the Cabinet were capable, in contrast to the leadership defects in the first war, and the King had been replaced by the Prince Regent. Furthermore, Canada became of the greatest importance in the second war since it was the only and obvious land target of the Americans. As a result the Great Lakes

[265] Alfred Thayer Mahan, *Sea Power in its Relation to the War of 1812,* (Leipzig, Filiquarian Publishing, 1905), 195

assumed greater importance in the second war than in the first war, as whichever side achieved naval superiority on the Lakes controlled all the adjacent territories in Canada, and could compel the enemy forces to evacuate the territory. The sale of large territories to the United States in the Louisiana Purchase reduced the French presence in North America and instead concentrated it in Europe. These changes affected the use and importance of combined operations in the North American theatre and created new opportunities. Thus, the use of combined operations differed and the influence of the associated thematic constraints also differed in the two wars. In some cases the same thematic constraints interfered, in other cases different ones interfered, acting in isolation or in conjunction with other thematic constraints and at varying levels. However, the intervention of the thematic constraints in the formulation and conduct of combined operations remained of the greatest importance in both wars.

Chapter 1. American resistance and the British response

Chapter 1. American resistance and the British response

The political decisions which resulted in the outbreak of the American War of Independence can only be understood in the context of events after 1763. The Seven Years' War which ended in 1763 resulted in the complete victory of the British and the American colonies over the French in North America. As a result of that war, the American Colonists benefitted greatly by the removal of the French and Native American threat to the American Colonies. However, the British government incurred a large National Debt in financing the war resulting in a heavy tax burden on the British taxpayer.[266] When no favourable response was received from a request to the colonies for a contribution to the cost of Imperial defence, the British Government attempted to raise money by imposing duties and taxes on the colonies which resulted in American opposition. In the course of these events two trends became clear. The first was the preference of the British Government to adopt a coercive response to American resistance. The second was the preference, following the outbreak of war, for the employment of a joint military and naval approach with the navy assisting the army, rather than a naval solution involving primarily a blockade.[267] The British Government responded to American resistance exemplified by the violent reactions to the Stamp Act 1765 by repealing it but at the same time passed the Declaratory Act of 1766 which maintained the right of Parliament to tax the colonies. However, it responded more aggressively to the 'gesture politics' of the 'Boston Tea Party' of 1773 by passing the Boston Port Act which closed down the Port of Boston until restitution had been made for the cost of the tea, and enacted other legislation known in Britain as the 'Coercive Acts' but in the colonies as the 'Intolerable Acts'.[268] An attempt to seize an illegal store of arms and gunpowder by a British expeditionary force led to the outbreak of war

[266] O'Shaugnessey, *The Men Who Lost America, op. cit.* 13
[267] Ira D. Gruber, 'Lord Howe and Lord George Germain, British Politics and the Winning of American Independence', in *The William and Mary Quarterly,* Vol. 22, No. 2 (April, 1965), 225-243
[268] O'Shaughnessy, *The Men Who Lost America, op. cit.* 52-54.

on 19 April 1775 at Lexington and Concord.[269] Following the outbreak of war, King George III wrote to Lord Sandwich on 1 July 1775 and stated that 'I am of the opinion that once those rebels have felt a sharp blow, they will submit and no situation can ever change my fixed resolution either to bring the colonies to a due obedience to the legislation of the mother country, or to cast them off'.[270] Lord Sandwich, First Lord of the Admiralty, and most Members of Parliament were in agreement. However, the Earl of Dartmouth and the Prime Minister, Lord North considered the alternative policy of conciliation and in 1775 suggested a peace plan but this failed.[271] Lord George Germain, an advocate of the use of force, was appointed Secretary of State for the American Department. Inconsistently, the brothers Admiral Richard Howe and General William Howe, who were sympathetic to the colonials, were appointed to command the Navy and the Army in North America, and at the same time were appointed Peace Commissioners.[272] They were to pursue a conciliatory approach, whilst at the same time, conducting naval and military operations against the colonies. This intrusion of politics into the formulation of strategy in making concessions to both the advocates of conciliation and the advocates of coercion had disastrous consequences.[273] The result was the failure of both the conciliatory and the coercive approaches. There was also confusion over the manner in which the policy of force was to be implemented. The decision to employ a joint military and naval approach, as opposed to a primarily naval approach, meant that a substantial part of naval resources would be used up in assisting the military operations of the army and conducting combined operations, which detracted from the use of the navy in carrying out an effective blockade. Lord Barrington, the Secretary at War, advocated a naval blockade which would

[269] 19-4-1775, A Circumstantial Account of an attack on 19-4-1775 on His Majesty's troops, TNA/CO 5-92, Part 2, 152.
[270] NRS, Sandwich Papers, I, 63.
[271] W. Bodham Donne (ed.), The Correspondence of King George III with Lord North from 1768 to 1783, Volume 1, 232-233.
[272] O'Shaughnessy, *The Men Who Lost America, op. cit*. 83.
[273] Ira D. Gruber, 'Lord Howe and Lord George Germain, British Politics and the Winning of American Independence', in *The William and Mary Quarterly,* Vol. 22, No. 2 (April, 1965), 225-243.

have limited the involvement of the army and permitted the full use of the resources of the Navy to distress the Americans, a feasible argument before the entry of France and Spain into the War. However, he was not a member of the Cabinet and was opposed by George III and Sandwich.[274] It was highly unlikely that a mainly military approach could have been successful because it would have required a greater number of troops than Britain could supply, even with the assistance of impressment and the use of mercenaries. General Howe informed his constituents that the army was 'so small that we cannot even afford a victory, if it is attended with any loss of men'.[275] On 13 September, 1777, Admiral Arbuthnot wrote to Lord Sandwich that '…it will require the greatest exertion of parts to put the colonies upon a permanent footing of utility to Great Britain. An army will not do it, I am convinced'.[276] In contrast, an effective blockade, wholeheartedly conducted by the navy, where Britain's strength lay, with political concessions may have afforded a resolution.[277] This was especially so if the blockade included the denial of the use of the ocean by American vessels including naval vessels, privateers and commercial vessels which could have been halted by the use of schooners.[278] It is true, however, that Admiral Richard Howe had struggled to impose a blockade with seventy ships, but the Navy was employed substantially in assisting the army and the strategy of using large numbers of cruisers had never been attempted. Barrington appeared, therefore, to be correct in his view that a military solution could not be successful. However, a blockade would take a long time before it became effective and the army was needed to prevent an invasion of Canada and to protect British possessions such as New York which provided a base for the Navy. In

[274] W. Bodham Donne (Ed.), The Correspondence of King George III with Lord North from 1768 to 1783, Volume 1, 265-266, 26 August 1775, King to Lord North. The King refers to Barrington's 'wish to have the American War alone carried on by sea'. In a letter to Lord North dated 6 August 1775, Lord Barrington wrote that 'my opinion always has been, and still is, that the Americans may be reduced by the fleet, but never can be by the army'.
[275] O'Shaunessy, *The Men Who Lost America, op. cit.* 104-105.
[276] NRS, Sandwich Papers, I, 296.
[277] Arthur, *How Britain Won the War of 1812, op. cit.* 13.
[278] Daniel A. Baugh, 'The Politics of British Naval Failure, 1775-1777', in *The American Neptune: A Quarterly Journal of Maritime History,* Vol.52, Part 4 (1992), 221-246.

any event, the land engagements were fought with relatively small numbers of troops in comparison with the major land battles of the Napoleonic War.[279] The lack of military resources acted as a thematic constraint on both sides in the Revolutionary War. The number of troops on both sides in both wars remained relatively small in comparison to the engagements of the Napoleonic War in Europe. There were no great, decisive land battles in North America such as Austerlitz, Wagram or Borodino in the Napoleonic Wars.[280] As a result, no military or political leader in North America was heard to state the equivalent of Pitt the Younger's remark after the important Battle of Austerlitz.[281] The choice of coercion using military forces and combined operations in the first war had important consequences. It meant that military measures would alienate the colonials and make a peaceful solution highly unlikely, as the response of the colonials after the bombardment of Falmouth confirmed.[282] It also meant that combined operations would become of the greatest importance, as would the thematic constraints which intervened to prevent their successful formulation and implementation.

The campaigns of 1775

In terms of political objectives and grand strategy, the initial objectives of the Government in London when the war broke out in America on 19 April 1775 at Lexington and Concord, were

[279] Larrabee, *Decision at the Chesapeake, op. cit.* xii. Napoleon is said to have scoffed at the smallness of the armies engaged in the battles of the American Revolution.
[280] Paul M. Kennedy, *The Rise and Fall of British Naval Mastery*, (London: The Ashfield Press, 1983), 132. On the importance of land battles in the Napoleonic war Kennedy comments that 'Napoleon was, after all, the personification of the latter element (land battles), conquering nations and dominating the continent in a way in which Philip of Spain and Louis XIV had never done'. The Battle of Austerlitz was decisive in the short run since it halted the war and led to negotiations but it was not decisive in the long run since a further coalition was formed against Napoleon.
[281] Harvey, *The War of Wars, op. cit*. 464 'Roll up that map, it will not be needed these ten years.' Pitt the Younger on hearing of the Battle of Austerlitz, in January 1806.
[282] Sam Willis, *The Struggle for Sea Power, op. cit.* 106. Also 8-11-1775, Graves to shepherd, TNA/ADM 1-485, Part 3, 438. See also 16-10-1775, Mowat to the people of Falmouth, TNA/ADM 1-485, Part 3, 441 and 19-10-1775, Mowat to Graves, TNA/ADM 1-485, Part 3, 443-447. The attack by the Royal Navy on Falmouth uncharacteristically ordered by Graves was meant to subdue the town but had the opposite effect and alienated the population.

to restore order and to crush what was perceived as a rebellion. The Government in London interpreted the insurrection as a mere rebellion and the solution was to send over more forces to crush it. The King particularly subscribed to this interpretation. Action was accordingly taken to implement this decision.[283] Neither the King nor the Government interpreted the event as the outbreak of a war but merely a rebellion. In taking this action the Government made certain incorrect assumptions. These were that the outbreak was a military problem and required a military solution, the rebels would be unable to stand up to British regulars, the rebellion would be quickly supressed and the fighting would be confined to a small area of North America.[284] These incorrect assumptions acted initially as a thematic constraint to the formulation of a coherent policy at the planning and strategic level. However, by the end of 1775, although the colonists were insisting that Parliament had no right to tax them or to regulate their affairs, indicating that the problem was a political one, most members of the Government believed that it was a military problem and no political solution was possible anyway, since the King and most members of Parliament believed that they could enact laws binding the colonies and no Ministry would have been able to accept the claims of the colonists.[285] Once the colonists had rejected Lord North's peace proposals and the colonies had been declared to be in open rebellion, the ministers made preparations for war. The war would be conducted by using the Army supported by the Royal Navy and not by conducting a predominantly naval war in the form of a blockade.[286] This decision made combined operations of the greatest importance. However, in 1775, there were few troops in North America. This lack of resources acted as a thematic constrain initially on the use of combined operations.

[283] July 1775. Precis of Correspondence with General Howe TNA/CO 5-253,7, (58 pages) In July 1775 The King requested that General Gage should return to England to lay before His Majesty a state of the Command and to assist in the consideration of such measures as might be necessary for a further plan of operations.
[284] Syrett, *The Royal Navy in European Waters during the American Revolutionary War, op. cit.* 1.
[285] Ira D. Gruber, 'Lord Howe and Lord George Germain, British Politics and the Winning of American Independence', in *The William and Mary Quarterly,* Vol. 22, No. 2 (April 1965), 225-243.
[286] Ibid, 231-232

When large reinforcements were sent in early/mid 1776, combined operations in the Battle of Long Island almost succeeded in the capture of Washington and his army and in ending the war.

The first engagement of the American War of Independence was at Lexington during the march of a British expeditionary column to Concord but this is predominantly a military engagement and will, therefore, be examined only briefly.

Lexington and Concord 18 - 19 April 1775

The coercive policy resolved on by London and the emphasis on a military solution was exemplified by the Lexington and Concord expedition implemented by General Thomas Gage. The thematic constraints of poor leadership, inadequate resources, time constraints, poor planning and a failure to keep the operation secret intervened to prevent the operation from succeeding.

The operation began with the transport of a mixed force of Grenadiers and Light Infantry from the docks at Boston across the Bay to Phip's Farm at Cambridge Marsh at approximately 10.30 p.m. on 18 April 1775.[287] Poor planning manifested itself as a thematic constraint when the existence and purpose of the expedition became widely known because of inadequate security.[288] In addition, the troops were delayed while they were issued with rations which most

[287] 19-4-1775, Gage to Dartmouth, TNA/CO5-92. Part 2, 134. For a detailed account of the transportation of the troops Boston Headquarters to the Cambridge shore see 18-4-1775 *The Diary of Frederick Mackenzie*, Boston, NDAR Vol 1 American Theatre 192. (Kindle page 239 of 1714). See also TNA/CO 5-92 Part 2, 152. Also NRS, Sandwich Papers, II, 57.
[288] Scheer and Rankin, *Rebels and Redcoats, op. cit.* 27.

of the men threw away as they already had them. The force began its march to Concord two hours late and after marching for 16 miles the advance force of 238 soldiers reached Lexington at approximately 4.30 a.m. on 19 April 1775.[289] Here the soldiers encountered a force of approximately 70 colonial militia and minutemen.[290] Major John Pitcairn gave the order for the militia to disperse following which a shot rang out after which each side fired on the other, believing themselves to be under attack. In the resultant engagement several rebels were killed and wounded along with one wounded British soldier.[291] In a further example of poor planning, Lieutenant-Colonel Francis Smith G.O.C. arrived late when the engagement was over, and the troops resumed their march to Concord with the intention of destroying the arms cache. Lord Hugh Percy had received intelligence from colonials that the rebels had removed the store of arms before the British troops arrived. However, this was only partially true and supplies of cannon, cartridges, musket balls and gunpowder remained at various locations. At the main location which was the jailhouse, the armaments were destroyed by the Grenadiers. The cannon included large guns, each weighing 5,600lbs. These were capable of firing a 24lb. cannon ball for more than a mile. These were large siege guns and their capture prevented the colonials from using them to fire upon Boston. They were, therefore, very important.[292]

Large numbers of rebels descended upon the three companies of British soldiers guarding the North Bridge at Concord-a completely inadequate force for such an important task-and after exchanging shots the outnumbered British troops began the retreat back to Boston.[293] Benjamin

[289] John Ferling, *Almost a Miracle the American Victory in the War of Independence,* (New York: Oxford University Press Inc., 2009), 30.
[290] Minutemen were so-called because they could be awake, dressed and armed ready to oppose British troops at a minute's notice.
[291] Scheer and Rankin, *Rebels and Redcoats, op. cit.* 30
[292] Hugh Bicheno, *Rebels and Redcoats,* (London: Harper Collins, 2003), 23.
[293] 19-4-1775, A Circumstantial Account of an attack on the 19-4-1775 on His Majesty's troops, TNA/ CO 5-92 Part 2, 152.

Franklin stated that Gage's troops made 'a vigorous retreat 20 Miles in 3 Hours, scarce to be parallell'd in History: the feeble Americans who pelted them all the way could scarce keep up with them'.[294] In the course of the retreat the relief column commanded by Percy arrived, delayed by poor planning and bad communication. His despatch indicated the difficulties encountered by the British troops during the retreat which was effected by forming a strong rear-guard and the use of light infantry to clear the rebels from behind walls and hidden in houses. He arrived back at Charlestown where the navy were able to cover the troops and evacuate them to Boston.[295] The formidable vessel the ship of the line *Somerset* intimidated the inhabitants of Charlestown who were reluctantly forced to allow the passage of the exhausted troops to Boston.[296] The operation is traditionally regarded as a British failure. A number of thematic constraints had intervened to prevent the operation being a success. However, the expedition had partially succeeded in destroying the arms cache and the cannon but at great cost.[297] The American armed farmers and militia now surrounded and hemmed in the British forces in Boston. The Americans occupied Breed's Hill near Bunker Hill, which overlooked Boston and fortified it. This immediately prompted a British attack in an attempt to dislodge them.

The Battle of Bunker Hill. 17 June 1775

The Battle of Bunker Hill illustrated the continuation of the British policy of coercion by military measures and combined operations. However, thematic constraints in the form of faulty planning assumptions, poor planning, lack of intelligence, and poor leadership

[294] Library of Congress hereinafter known as LOC. 15-5-1775, Franklin to Edmund Burke, The Benjamin Franklin Papers, 15-5-1775 to 27-10-1776, 41.
[295] 20-4-1775, Percy to Gage, TNA/CO 5-92 Part 2, 136.
[296] NDAR Vol 1 193 (Kindle 240 of 1714) Graves Conduct 1, 73, 74. MassHS Transcript.
[297] 24-6-1775, Trupp to Dartmouth, TNA/ADM 1-486, 7.

intervened to prevent the combined operation being implemented successfully. The Battle encouraged the Americans to expect and hope that the British generals would use such tactics in future and also encouraged a belief in the value of defending fortified positions as a means of winning the war.

Following the retreat from Concord, the British forces were entrenched in Boston. If the American forces could occupy one or more of the hills surrounding Boston and mount cannon upon them, the British Army and Navy would be forced to evacuate Boston since the army and the ships could be destroyed and the position would become untenable.[298] Gage's Proclamation declared martial law.[299] The arrival of three new Major-Generals Howe, Burgoyne and Clinton along with reinforcements indicated the British determination to continue with the policy of coercion and take a more pro-active stance.[300] Burgoyne had expressed a determination to create "elbow room" in Boston.[301] In order to drive the British out of Boston, the rebels occupied Breed's Hill. As soon as the British became aware that the rebels were raising a battery on the heights of Charlestown, preparations were immediately made for landing a British force to drive them off. A full account of the battle which ensued is given in the letter from Gage to Dartmouth.[302] The troops formed up as soon as they landed.[303] There then followed two failed attempts to take the entrenchment by direct frontal assaults involving the loss of a great many troops. Brigadier Robert Pigot took the redoubt at the third attempt when

[298] June 1775, Barclay to Graves, TNA/ADM 1-485 Part 2, 247. in which he wrote that "the people intend to create batteries to drive the ships out of the harbour" and that they are "throwing up entrenchments and creating "a battery of guns to annoy the King's Ships". Ibid, 247.
[299] 12-6-1775, General Gage A Proclamation declaring Martial Law, TNA/ADM 1-485 Part 2, 256. Also 12-6-1775, TNA/MFQ 1-131, 3. Virginia Gazette.
[300] 4-4-1775, Stephens to Gage, TNA/ CO 5-121, 79. The three Major-Generals arrived in Boston on 26 May 1775 on HMS Cerberus.
[301] Willis, *The Struggle for Sea Power, op. cit.* 55.
[302] 25-6-1775, Gage to Dartmouth, TNA/CO 5-92 Part 2, 189-191. This gives an excellent and detailed account of the battle from its commencement to conclusion.
[303] The Committee of Safety's Account of the Battle of Bunker Hill, 25-7-1775, Papers of John Adams, Volume 3, 1775-1776, 96 USA LOC.

the rebel forces ran out of ammunition. The rebels were then forced from other strongholds and were cleared off the Peninsula.[304] The ships and the batteries continued assisting throughout the assault indicating the combined operations nature of the assault.[305] General Burgoyne wrote that "Our Battery kept an incessant fire upon the Heights. It was seconded by a number of frigates and floating batteries and one Ship of the Line".[306]

It is strange that Howe, an experienced veteran of the Seven Years' War, attempted a frontal, uphill assault against an entrenched position. Norman Dixon in his work on the Psychology of military incompetence lists "a predilection for frontal assaults, often against the enemy's strongest point" as an important component of military incompetence.[307] He also lists a tendency to underestimate the enemy, an obstinate persistence in a given task, a failure to make adequate reconnaissance and a belief in brute force rather than the clever ruse.[308] Howe was guilty of all these faults. He underestimated the colonial troops. He persisted in a frontal assault three times when it was clear that it was going to be costly. He failed to make sufficient reconnaissance. These thematic constraints of false assumptions, bad planning, a failure to obtain and use intelligence and Howe's leadership defects were sufficient to ensure the failure of the combined operation. Howe, although a brave soldier, appeared to have been promoted beyond his level of competence and his conduct could be argued to be an egregious example of the Peter Principle.[309]

[304] Ibid, 190.
[305] First Note that the British library will hereafter be "BL". BL Newspaper Section. Maryland Gazette, 6-7-1775.
[306] An Account of the Battle of Bunker Hill by General John Burgoyne BL. Add. MS 5847 MICS Collection Vol XLVI, 279.
[307] Dixon, *On the Psychology of military Incompetence, op. cit.* 153
[308] Ibid, 153.
[309] Raymond Hull and Dr Lawrence J. Peter, *The Peter Principle: Why Things Always Go Wrong*, (London: Profile Books Ltd., 2020). In a hierarchy, every employee tends to rise to his level of incompetence.

A frontal attack had proved suicidal. The report of Thomas Gage indicated the shock which the British commanders received.[310] General Burgoyne noted that the plan for a frontal assault was drawn up by Gage and supported by Howe the second in command.[311] Sir Henry Clinton came up with a better plan based upon reconnaissance which would not only have avoided the frontal assault but would have cut off the line of retreat of the colonists but this plan was rejected by Gage.[312] The reason for this was that Gage considered that a frontal assault would be sufficient and that there was an element of risk involved in Clinton's plan.[313] This decision indicated defects in leadership, extremely poor judgement, underestimation of the enemy and a failure to use intelligence. In addition the relationship between Howe and Clinton was very poor. Clinton was the junior officer to Howe and at this time tended to be reticent in putting forward his views. When he travelled over to Boston in HMS *Cerberus* with his superior Lord Howe and his subordinate General Burgoyne he wrote that "At first (for you know I am a shy bitch) I kept my distance, seldom spoke till my two colleagues forced me out".[314] Thematic constraints intervened to ensure that the Battle of Bunker Hill, whilst resulting in the successful dislodging of the colonial troops, had been a costly operation. However, on 10 May 1775, even before the Battle of Bunker Hill had commenced, the Americans indicated that they understood the importance of combined operations by launching an invasion of Canada.

[310] 25-6-1775, Gage to Dartmouth, TNA/CO 5-92 Part 2, 187. "The number of the killed and wounded is greater than our force can afford to lose, the officers who were obliged to exert themselves have suffered very much and we have lost some extraordinary officers. The tryals have shown that the rebels are not the despicable Rabble too many have supposed them to be…. The conquest of this country is not easy and can be effected only by time and perseverance and strong armies…In all their wars against the French they never showed such conduct, determination and perseverance as they do now".
[311] BL Add. MS 5847 Collection Vol XLVI p 279.
[312] Jeremy Black, *War for America The Fight for Independence 1775-1783,* (Stroud: Sutton Publishing Ltd., 2001), 82.
[313] Scheer and Ranklin, *Rebels and Redcoats, op. cit.* 57.
[314] Larrabee, *Decision at the Chesapeake, op. cit.* 39.

The fall of Ticonderoga and the invasion of Canada 10 May 1775. [315] (Map 1)

Canada was by no means as important in the first war as it was in the second. In the first war Canada, although important, was only one theatre of war out of several in North America and other important theatres existed in the colonies. In the second war, Canada was the only British territory which had a common boundary with the United States and was the only place that the United States could attack Britain other than by sea or on the Great Lakes.[316] The latter also assumed a greater importance in the second war than the first, since, whichever side obtained control of the Great Lakes obtained control of the adjacent territory in Canada.[317] Nonetheless, Canada was an important target in the first war.

From a strategic and political point of view, the American invasion of Canada initially appeared to be a good plan. It took the initiative from the British, prevented an attack from the North and offered the possibility of adding Canada as a fourteenth state to the existing thirteen colonies. The British forces were limited in number in Canada and would not find it easy to defend. The population had a large number of people of French origin who had fought against Britain in the Seven Years' War. However, several members of the First Congress did not wish to abandon all hope of a reconciliation with Great Britain and on 8 July 1775 had sent the Olive Branch Petition to London. However the King rejected this.[318] In May 1775 however, after Ethan Allen had seized Fort Ticonderoga and obtained control of Lake Champlain and after hearing that Sir Guy Carleton was planning an offensive from the north, Congress finally ordered General Phillip Schuyler to carry out a pre-emptive attack and invade Canada.[319] The invasion by

[315] The invasion of Canada commenced before the Battle of Bunker Hill but because the decisive battle of Quebec was fought on 31 December 1775 it has been placed after the battle of Bunker Hill chronologically.
[316] 18-5-1812, Prevost to Liverpool, TNA/CO 42-146, 197-202.
[317] Hickey, *The War of 1812, op. cit.* 124
[318] Daughan, *If by Sea, op. cit.* 46.
[319] Scheer and Rankin, *Rebels and Redcoats, op. cit.* 111

Congress was launched to prevent and remove the threat from the north.[320] In 1774 the Quebec Act substantially enlarged the area of Canada southwards. However, Canada in this context means the Province of Quebec before its enlargement and consisted mainly of the area occupied by the St Lawrence River including Quebec and Montreal and immediately to the North of the states of New York, New Hampshire and Massachusetts.[321] The colonists hoped that Canada would be gradually brought under the control of the United Colonies.[322] The plan was an early indication of the skill of the colonials in combined operations at the planning level in the timing of the attack since, the lateness of the season made it impossible for Britain to send reinforcements to relieve Quebec due to the freezing of the St Lawrence River.[323] The invasion was unexpected by the British. The operation was a true combined operation and had a substantial naval component involving transporting and supporting a number of troops over very long distances in a terrain consisting of large areas of water.[324] The operation indicates the importance of the Colonial Navy and its employment from the very beginning of the war. This was particularly so since Congress had opposed the development of American naval forces since it would amount to a declaration of independence for which Congress was not prepared and it was not until 30 October 1775 that Congress created a Naval Committee. In 1775, the American naval forces consisted only of whaleboats and row-galleys and the small State Navies.[325]

[320] Amy Noel Ellison, 'Montgomery's Misfortune. The American Defeat at Quebec and the March toward Independence, 1775-1776', in *Early American studies, An Interdisciplinary Journal,* Vol. 15, Issue 3 (Summer, 2017) 591-616.
[321] Bicheno, *Rebels and Redcoats, op. cit.* 10.
[322] Rick Atkinson, *The British are Coming The War for America 1775-1777*, (London, William Collins, 2019), 144. Also USA LOC Ethan Allen Papers 4 July 1775, Ethan Allen to Eliphalet Dyer and Silas Dean, 41-42.
[323] 28-10-1775 to 27-12-1776, TNA/ADM 51-484, 27-28. Ships Logs of the Isis, Captain Douglas. See also 28-7-1776, Shuldham, TNA/ADM, 471, On the impossibility of relieving Quebec. This letter also describes an attack by Carlton on Arnold's forces.
[324] Middlekauf, *The Glorious Cause, op. cit.* 310-311. See Arnold's description of his troops as "amphibious animals".
[325] Daughan, *If by Sea, op. cit.* 50.

The thematic constraints of intelligence, planning, complexity and sickness intervened in the combined operation. The plan was unnecessarily complex and consisted of a two pronged attack. The first prong with 1,200 men under the command of General Philip Schuyler and his second in command Brigadier-General Richard Montgomery departed on 23 August 1775 from Fort Ticonderoga and sailed up Lake Champlain and up the Richelieu River to Fort St John. General Schuyler became ill and was forced to return to Fort Ticonderoga and General Richard Montgomery assumed command. Fort St John was taken and the expedition then proceeded to attack Montreal. Carleton had only one hundred and fifty men to defend the city and on 12 November 1775 these were taken and only Carleton managed to escape to Quebec.[326] The way to Quebec was now open and Montgomery and his forces arrived there on 3 December 1775.[327]

The second prong under the command of Brigadier-General Benedict Arnold marched with 1,050 men from Cambridge to Newburyport and sailed by sea in a fleet of eleven schooners to Fort Western in Maine and then up the Kennebec River to the Dead River and the Great Carrying Place. By portage he then proceeded to Lake Megantic and thence via the Chaudière River, marching from there to Point Levis facing Quebec at which point he arrived on 13-14 November 1775.[328] On reaching Quebec the two forces merged.

Carleton made the most of his limited forces to defend the walls of Quebec. From the American point of view, a siege would take too long as the furlough was about to expire on 31 December 1775. Furthermore, there was a shortage of provisions and ammunition and smallpox was

[326] 3-12-1775, Howe to Dartmouth, TNA/CO 5-92 Part 3, 358. See also NRS, Sandwich Papers I, 82. The Quebec garrison were relying on the 150 troops from Montreal to re-enforce them.
[327] Willis, *The Struggle for Sea Power, op. cit.* 62.
[328] Ibid, 63.

present among the troops. In addition, time was against the Americans as a British relief force would be arriving in the spring. Montgomery, the American commander, decided on a frontal assault.[329] In this attack on 31 December 1775 Montgomery was killed. He was replaced by General John Thomas who, after inspecting the siege lines declared the siege raised.[330] Great Britain had received news of the invasion at an early date.[331] On receipt of the news, Captain Charles Douglas was sent in the *Isis* to relieve Quebec.[332] The primary sources indicate the difficulties which Douglas encountered as the spring thaw had not yet properly melted the ice of the St Lawrence.[333] However, on 6 May 1776 Douglas arrived at Quebec with reinforcements.[334] Carleton attacked the Americans with a force of nine hundred men and the American forces retreated. These events ended the threat to Quebec.[335] Montreal was retaken and the communication with the Upper Country opened.[336] The American forces were compelled to retreat to Ticonderoga.

The American plan, although having some good points was inherently flawed. It was innately complex. The more complex the combined operation, the more likely it was that thematic constraints would intervene to prevent the success of the operation. The two separate prongs did not achieve anything since Montreal would have fallen anyway since it was only lightly defended, an indication of the limitations of Washington's plan and of his lack of experience.

---

[329] First note that The National Maritime Museum in Greenwich will hereafter be "NMM". See the account of the siege of Quebec by General Montgomery NMM/BGR/9.
[330] Scheer and Rankin, *Rebels and Redcoats, op. cit.* 128-129.
[331] The instant the letter arrived in England on 26-12-1775 notifying the dangerous state of Quebec immediate action was taken. See Precis of Measures taken for the relief of Quebec TNA/CO 5-253, 106.
[332] See the letter from Carleton 14-5-1776 notifying the arrival of the *Isis* on 6-5-1776 and the arrival of a part of the 29th Regiment and some marines and also the 47th and the remainder of the 29th TNA/CO 5-253, 23. Reference Letter M.
[333] 8-5-1776, Douglas to Stephens, TNA/CO 5-124 Additional Volume, 246. The difficulties caused by the freezing of the St Lawrence River.
[334] Ibid, 248. The raising of the siege of Quebec.
[335] 25-5-1776, Douglas to Stephens, TNA/CO 5-124 Additional Volume, 304. The flight of the rebel army from Quebec.
[336] 8-7-1776, Carleton to Germain, TNA/CO 5-253, 70.

The great distances made the plan difficult to implement, the terrain and the weather were unfavourable, some troops were infected with smallpox and provisions were running out. Furthermore, Quebec was in a strong defensive geographical position and time was now against the Americans since the British could send reinforcements once the ice in the St Lawrence River had melted.[337] The factors of innate complexity, a lack of experience, planning, time, sickness, intelligence, geography, shortage of resources and weather, all acted as thematic constraints which intervened to ensure the failure of the American expedition.[338] The fact that so many thematic constraints intervened is possibly an indication of how fundamentally weak the plan was.

However, the operation showed how weak the British forces were in Canada. The fall of Quebec would have been a disaster. It was the fall of Quebec in 1759-the year of victories-which had proved so decisive in the Seven Years' War. Its successful defence had a debilitating and morale destroying effect on the rebels. In a letter from "a friend to government" dated 26 April 1776 the writer commented that:

> From the best intelligence, they have been severely drubbed in that quarter, some say they have lost 1,600 men, some say more, some less, be that as it may they are quite crestfallen.[339]

The failure of the two combined operations of the Americans, together with the successful British combined operation relieving Quebec meant that at the end of the war the British retained Canada and no further attempts to invade Canada were made. They indicate clearly

[337] Willis, *The Struggle for Sea Power, op. cit.* 71.
[338] Middlekauf, *The Glorious Cause, op. cit.* 310
[339] 26-4-1776, a friend to the government, TNA/ADM 1-484, 586.

the importance of combined operations and the thematic constraints in determining the outcome of the war.

The multiplicity of thematic constraints intervening in the invasion of Canada ensured the failure of the combined operation. The importance of the thematic constraint of planning is evident in the Canadian invasion. The thematic constraint of planning is closely associated with defects in leadership since poor plans are often devised by poor leaders although other thematic constraints such as a lack of intelligence and a lack of experience may be the cause of poor planning. Although Congress had made the decision to invade Canada, Washington had suggested a two-pronged invasion. The innate complexity of the plan was an important thematic constraint. Innate complexity is a recurring feature of plans which fail and it is not only inexperienced leaders who devise such plans. The later plan to invade the colonies from Canada was devised by the experienced commander John Burgoyne and consisted of a three-pronged invasion which resulted in the defeat of the British army at Saratoga. By way of comparison, the American leadership in the War of 1812 was to devise three separate invasions of Canada, all of which involved the thematic constraints of innate complexity and all of which failed. These all involved multi-pronged attacks. They also involved the thematic constraints of defects in leadership, poor planning and a lack of intelligence. In contrast, the American invasion of 1775 contained these defects and several others as well. The invasion is an indication not only of the importance of thematic constraints in preventing the success of a combined operations, but of how, when they are present to such an extent, the combined operation must inevitably fail. However, in 1776 the British launched the largest combined operation of the war the objective of which was the capture of Washington and his army and the termination of the war.

The campaigns of 1776

From a strategic point of view, the overall political objective remained the restoration of the authority of the Imperial Government and the retention of the colonies. 1776 saw the continuation of the British policy of using force and particularly combined operations to reduce the colonies to obedience. The use of combined operations in the Battle of Long Island on 22 August 1776 which involved the greatest military force and the largest fleet ever employed by Britain to date almost resulted in the capture of Washington and his army and the termination of the war. The thematic constraints intervened especially in the form of the defects in leadership of General William Howe whose lethargic leadership and unsuccessful attempts to combine the role of military commander and Peace Commissioner ensured that the Battle of Long Island was only partially successful. After winning a partial, but nonetheless substantial, victory on Long Island, Howe successfully occupied New York, but again allowed Washington to escape. He was pursued up the Delaware River and only escaped because of the dilatory nature of Howe's pursuit. However, on 4 July 1776, before the Battle of Long Island, Congress issued the Declaration of Independence which indicated a sea change in the views of the colonials.[340] The Declaration indicated a hardening attitude on the part of Congress following the destruction of the town of Falmouth, the rejection of the Olive Branch Petition and the bellicose speech given by the King on the opening of Parliament on 8 October 1775. In his speech, the King stated that 'I have increased my naval establishment, and greatly augmented my land forces'.[341] The Declaration of Independence meant that Britain was now committed to fighting a brutal war of subjugation without the possibility of offering political concessions to terminate the war, or alternatively, conceding independence and withdrawing from the North American continent whilst possibly retaining Canada.

[340] Thomas Jefferson, *The Declaration of Independence,* (Carlisle M.A.: Applewood Books), 3.
[341] Daughan, *If by Sea, op. cit.* 46.

However, before the arrival of reinforcements, it was anticipated initially that the campaign for the year beginning 1776 would be restricted owing to the relatively small number of forces available in the North American Theatre.[342] Lord Howe wrote:

> …if a respectable supply of troops from Europe does not arrive soon in the Spring, another defensive campaign I conclude will be the consequence……..I beg leave to remark that with a proper army of 20000 men…the present unfavourable appearance of things will probably wear a very different aspect before the end of the ensuing campaign.[343]

Very substantial reinforcements were to arrive in time for the Battle of Long Island but, initially, until they arrived, resources acted as a thematic constraint to implementing the offensive stance which the government had adopted. Boston was in a poor position and difficult to defend and in March 1776, the decision was taken to evacuate the army in a combined operation.

The evacuation of Boston 25 March 1776

The British evacuation of Boston was necessary because of the poor topography and geographical location of the town. Boston and its harbour were not easily tenable once the enemy obtained an entrenched position in the hills surrounding Boston. The adverse topography of Boston illustrates the importance of geography as a thematic constraint.

[342] See State of the Army of Canada at the beginning and end of the campaign 1776, TNA/CO5-253, 66.
[343] 6-1-1776, Howe to Germain, TNA/CO 5-235, 111. The figure of 20,000 men had been suggested earlier in September 1775 when it was noted that an approach had been made to the Empress of Russia to supply such a number. See Precis of correspondence of General Howe, TNA/CO 5-253, 75. (59 pages). However, this suggestion did not materialise. See also the opinion of Gage on the need for large armies. 25-6-1775, Gage to Dartmouth, TNA/CO 5-92, Part 2, 187. Also 22-1-1776, Howe to Germaine, TNA/CO 5-235, 115-116.

General Sir Henry Clinton had suggested occupying the Dorchester Heights to prevent the colonials occupying them, but Howe had ignored this advice indicating poor judgement. The thematic constraints of leadership defects and geography meant that the rebel forces were able to compel the evacuation of Boston giving the impression of a great colonial victory and at the same time causing the loss of considerable quantities of supplies. The rebel forces around Boston numbered approximately 17,500 but they had poor clothes, several were sick, their equipment poor and they were not trained and disciplined. Furthermore they tended to disappear when their furlough expired. Thus, although they greatly outnumbered the British forces in Boston they were relatively ineffectual.[344] However, the rebel forces still constituted a potential threat on Boston.[345] At a later date after the arrival of re-enforcements Howe wrote that "This "town without the most unforeseen accident, will be in no danger from the enemy during the winter".[346] However, the Boston bookseller Henry Knox had managed to transport the cannon of Fort Ticonderoga to the Dorchester Heights and established a strong redoubt. A proposal by Howe to storm the Dorchester Heights with the attendant risk of a second Bunker Hill was a further indication of his poor judgment, but this was pre-empted by a storm. A decision to evacuate Boston was made and to transport troops, ordnances, provisions and Loyalists and their families to the safety of Halifax.[347]

Howe wrote to the Earl of Dartmouth that by occupying the Dorchester Heights the colonists had forced him to evacuate Boston.[348] The evacuation saved the British army at Boston and

[344] Lengel, *General George Washington, op. cit.* 106.
[345] 20-8-1775, Gage to Dartmouth, TNA/CO 5-92 Part 3, 260. Gage had early on expressed his doubts about the security of Boston as a suitable base. He wrote "I have made your Lordship's acquaintance with the disadvantageous situation of His Majesty's forces in this place and the more it is considered, the worse it is found to be". See also A Precis of correspondence with General Howe, TNA/CO 5-253, 74. (58 pages). See also 18-5-1775, TNA/ CO 5-121, 147. Grave's comments about a possible attack involving flat bottomed boats.
[346] 9-10-1775, Howe to Dartmouth, TNA/CO 5-92 Part 3, 308.
[347] 8-3-1776, Shuldham to Stephens, TNA/ADM 1-484, 445-446.
[348] 24-3-1776, Howe to Dartmouth, TNA/CO 5-93 Part 1, 86- 89.This source is eleven pages long and contains a detailed account of the evacuation.

was a tribute to the technical combined operations skills of the two services.[349] After the evacuation of Boston, the war expanded into new theatres and the British devoted greater resources to combined operations than had hitherto been the case. In addition, the war acquired the characteristics of a civil war in which some Americans both actively and passively supported the Revolution and others opposed it.

[349] 16-4-1776, Shuldham to Stephens, TNA/ADM 1-487 Part 2, 279. In which he wrote that "I have much satisfaction in acquainting you that not the least accident or loss happened during the passage".

Chapter 2. civil war

Chapter 2. civil war

The initial period of the American War of Independence ended in March 1776 with the successful evacuation of Boston and the war entered the period of a civil war. The war expanded in terms of the resources used by the British, and it also acquired the characteristics of a civil war in which some Americans fought on the side of the British (the "Loyalists"), whilst some fought against the British (the "Patriots") and others supported neither side and remained neutral. In addition, the first signs of a British shift in policy in moving the war to the South occurred in the British combined operation at Charleston. This attack was a deviation from the previous engagements since it switched the focus from the Northern Theatre of War to the Southern Theatre. It anticipated the major permanent shift in British policy which occurred in 1780 when regaining control of the Southern colonies became the major political and strategic objective.

The first British attack on Charleston, South Carolina 28 June 1776

Considering the advantages of a 'Southern expedition', King George III wrote to Lord North on 15 October 1775 that 'Every means of distressing America must meet with my concurrence, as it tends to making them to feel the necessity of returning to their duty'.[350] On 10 November 1775, Lord George Germain wrote to Sir Henry Clinton informing him that he was to 'Command an Expedition to the Southern Colonies'.[351] The orders for the offensive to commence reveal the thinking behind the operation. On 6 December 1775 in a letter to Clinton, Germain wrote that the King instructs that the 15th, 37th, 53rd 54th and 57th Regiments of Infantry

[350] W. Bodham Donne (Ed.), The Correspondence of King George III with Lord North from 1768 to 1783, Vol. 1, 274.
[351] Roger Smith, 'The Failure of Great Britain's Southern Expedition" of 1776: Revisiting Southern Campaigns in the Early Years of the American Revolution, 1775-1779'. in *The Florida Historical Quarterly 500 Years of Florida History-The Eighteenth Century,* Vol. 93, No. 3 (Winter, 2015), 387-414.

together with two companies of artillery should embark at Cork on 1 December in order to proceed upon an expedition for reducing to obedience the Southern Provinces of North America… and 'to effect the restoration of legal government'.[352] In language curiously redolent of the first English Civil War Germain continued 'If therefore Charleston refuses to admit the King's forces you will attack it, and I trust, with the assistance of the fleet, will soon reduce it'.[353] A considerable number of thematic constraints intervened to ensure the failure of the combined operation. Amongst them were false planning assumptions, bad planning, a lack of resources, adverse geography, a lack of accurate intelligence, leadership faults in the form of poor co-operation between the army and the navy and bad weather.

This operation was the first offensive operation in the period described as a civil war. The plan was for Clinton to sail firstly to Cape Fear in North Carolina with a force of 1,200 men. He was to link up with a force of eleven warships commanded by Sir Peter Parker which would sail from Cork.[354] The naval force would carry 2,000 troops and Lord Cornwallis who had requested permission to be included in the expedition. The thematic constraints of bad planning and poor intelligence intervened to prevent the success of the operation. The expedition was to link up with 1,700 Loyalists from North Carolina of mainly Scottish extraction. The number of Loyalists were estimated by the Governor to be of the order of 10,000, and 10,000 stand of arms had been sent to equip them.[355] Such an overestimation of Loyalist support was a form of incorrect intelligence and was a serious thematic constraint. The force of 1,700 rashly attacked the Whig forces entrenched in marshy ground at Moore's Creek which the Loyalists needed to

[352] 6-12-1775, Germain to Clinton, TNA/CO 5-92 part 3, 375-381.
[353] Ibid, 379.
[354] 10-7-1776, A list of Ships and Vessels under the command of Commodore Sir Peter Parker and the ships and Vessels stationed at Cape Fear, Savannah and St Augustine 10 July 1776, TNA/ADM 1-487 Part 1, 47.
[355] Roger Smith, "The Failure of Great Britain's 'Southern Expedition' of 1776: Revisiting Southern Campaigns in the Early Years of the American Revolution' ", in *The Florida Historical Quarterly*, Vol. 93, No. 3 (Winter, 2015), 387-414.

cross to get to the coast in order to reach Clinton.[356] However, the Patriots had removed the planks on the bridge and were strongly entrenched but in the absence of such intelligence, the attacking force was easily routed and their army taken prisoner. This defeat effectively eliminated the Loyalist population of North Carolina which would have helped to subdue the province and assisted in the British plans for the attack on Charleston.[357] Inadequate resources, faulty intelligence and poor planning intervened as thematic constraints to ensure the failure of the first phase of the operation.

The entrance to the Charleston Harbour was guarded by Fort Sullivan on Sullivan's Island which, it was believed, would prevent any ships sailing up the Middle Ground and gaining access to Charleston itself, a false assumption, as the successful offensive against Charleston in 1780 revealed. Several cannon were placed in defensive positions.[358] On 26 May 1776, the Navy carried out reconnaissance and made preparations for the assault on Charleston. On 9 June the Navy transported Henry Clinton and his forces to Long Island since this was adjacent to Sullivan's Island and close enough to launch an attack on it. Clinton incorrectly believed that the defences of Fort Sullivan may have been unfinished and susceptible to an attack.[359]

Thematic constraints in the form of adverse geography, bad weather, a lack of resources and inadequate intelligence intervened. Clinton discovered that the ford which connected the two islands and was thought to be eighteen inches deep at low tide was in fact seven feet deep. Nor could the troops be transported by flat bottomed boats since there were only fifteen of the latter

[356] Scheer and Rankin, *Rebels and Redcoats, op. cit.* 131.
[357] Atkinson, *The British are Coming, op. cit.* 252.
[358] 24-4-1776, TNA/ADM 1-484, 522.
[359] 8-7-1776, Clinton to Germain, TNA/CO 5-93 Part 3, 473.

which could carry only 700 men, an indication of bad planning and inadequate resources. The greatest part that the army could play would be to offer a diversion.[360] In addition the navy was experiencing problems. Adverse weather acted as a thematic constraint. Sir Peter Parker had written to Clinton on 23 June 1776 explaining to him the difficulties in finding a date for the attack when the wind and weather would be favourable, the ebb and flow of the tide would be favourable and ensuring that on any date selected, the army would also be ready.

The attack on the fort commenced on 28 June 1776. The primary source is a letter from Peter Parker to Stephens.[361] The bombardment was intensive. However, the vessels of the Royal Navy were unable to draw sufficiently close to the fort as the water was not sufficiently deep, something which adequate reconnaissance would have revealed. Several British ships suffered severe damage and loss. At the end of the engagement the ships withdrew to join Howe in his offensive against Long Island. Clinton decided to terminate the assault as the approach of the hurricane season rendered this impossible.[362] Lack of intelligence also acted as a thematic constraint. Fort Sullivan was resistant to an extremely powerful bombardment but the reconnaissance did not reveal it.[363] It did not reveal the depth of the crossing between Sullivan's Island and Long Island.[364] Several thematic constraints intervened to cause the operation to fail. False assumptions, lack of resources, poor planning, lack of intelligence, weather, a lack of naval and military co-operation and time constraints all intervened to prevent the successful implementation of the combined operation. Following the British combined operations failure at Charleston, the Royal Navy sailed for Long Island to join Howe's forces where British

[360] 16-6-1776, Narrative of Sir Henry Clinton, NDAR Vol 5 and 6, 782. (Kindle 815 of 3403).
[361] 9-7-1776, Parker to Stephens, TNA/ADM 1-487 Part 1, 41-45. (10 pages).
[362] 8-7-1776, Clinton to Germain, TNA/ CO 5-235, 159.
[363] 9-7-1776, Parker to Stephens, TNA/ADM 1-487 Part 1, 41-45 (10 pages).
[364] James, *The British Navy in Adversity, op. cit.* 44. James writes that "…it is difficult to understand why the depth of water between the islands at every state of tide was not previously ascertained when the crossing over of the troops was the main feature of the plan".

combined operations doctrine was to be put to the test in the largest combined operation of the war, when the British attacked Long Island.

The Battle of Long Island (Brooklyn) 27 August 1776. (Map 2)

The British policy of coercion by military means and combined operations which had so far been unsuccessful came closest to success in the Battle of Long Island and offered a real possibility that the war could have been terminated. However, a large number of thematic constraints, some of them at the strategic and planning level, intervened to prevent the successful implementation of the combined operation. These are examined below.

After the British evacuation of their army from Boston a new naval base was now urgently required. New York had a wide harbour, a Loyalist population and offered the possibility of expeditions up the Hudson. Howe therefore sailed from Halifax for New York.[365] Washington attempted to pre-empt him by sending troops and the commanders Charles Lee and John Sullivan to prepare defences. Manhattan Island was fortified in the south and also the Brooklyn Heights on Long Island which overlooked New York.[366] Forts Washington and Lee were constructed on the Hudson to prevent the British movements up the River.[367]

[365] Evidence of the existence of a strong loyalist population is shown in the Declaration of Loyalty on the 21 October 1776 New York Gazette, 2-12-1776 published with the Proclamation of the Howe Brothers of the same date. See LOC Newspaper Division.
[366] 29-4-1776, H. Park to Shuldham, TNA/ADM 1-484, 571. See also April 1776, TNA/ADM 1-484, 575-578. State of the fortifications at New York. See also TNA/ADM 1-487 Part 2, 308- 309. Extracts from Captain Barnes Journal in the *Renown* between 14-6-1776 to 18-6-1776 which mentions the batteries. The cannon and defences at New York and Long Island and the threat to passing ships are also mentioned in a letter W. Howe to Germain, TNA/CO 5-93 Part 1, 214.
[367] 14-6-1776 to 18-6-1776, Journal of the *Renown*, TNA/ADM 1-487 Part 2, 308-309.

Washington also ordered that all communications between the shore and the fleet should be cut and supplies and provisions cease. This was a shrewd move on Washington's part. The British were almost entirely dependent on the supply of provisions from merchants ashore who were Loyalists or other Americans keen to trade for profit. Merchants who traded or attempted to trade with the British were threatened with violence or the destruction of their property.[368] Howe arrived from Halifax and landed at Staten Island on 3 July 1776.[369] He awaited re-enforcements from Great Britain and from the recent debacle at Charleston.[370] The army engaged in the construction of bateaux.

The extent of the navy and the re-enforcements dismayed Washington and the militia. Washington expressed annoyance at the clear effect of it on his troops.[371] The re-enforcements consisted of Guards regiments and Hessian mercenaries.[372] The Disposition of HM Ships and Vessels under the command of Howe on 13 August 1776 indicates the impressive strength of the fleet immediately before the attack.[373] However, it also indicated the extent to which the resources of the Royal Navy were used in the conduct of combined operations.

At nine a.m. on 22 August 1776 in a well organised combined operation, the immensely able Commodore William Hotham landed the first 4,000 troops from six British warships at

[368] 8-4-1776, Washington orders to Israel Putnam New York, TNA/ADM 1-484, 585. Advertisement. "…it is become absolutely necessary that all communication between the Ministerial fleet and shore should be immediately stopped….the ships should no longer be furnished with provisions".
[369] 8-7-1776, Shuldham to Stephens, TNA/ADM 1-484, 658. See also 28-7-1776, Howe to Stephens, TNA/ADM 1-487 Part 1, 24.
[370] 8-7-1776, Shuldham to Stephens, TNA/ADM 1-484, 658.
[371] S. Willis, *The Struggle for Sea Power, op. cit.* 122.
[372] 14-8-1776, Howe to Stephens, TNA/ADM 1-487 Part 1, 49. Hotham arrived on 12-8-1776 with 85 sail and the Hessians. See also 14-8-1776, Howe, TNA/ADM 1-487 Part 1, 51-53. List of the transports and the distribution of the troops.
[373] 13-8-1776, Disposition of His Majesty's Ships and Vessels employed in North America under the Command of the Vice Admiral Viscount Howe, TNA/ADM 1-487 Part 1, 55-56.

Gravesend Bay at Long Island with little resistance.[374] By 12 o'clock some fifteen thousand men had been landed and by 25 August 1776 some 20,000 men had disembarked.[375] The format for such landings had been well established by the Royal Navy by the eighteenth century. A very detailed account of the landing is given in a letter to Stephens from Howe dated 31 August 1776.[376] The attack on New York, which Washington had anticipated incorrectly would be Howe's first move and on which his defensive preparations were based did not happen.[377] The plan drawn up by General Howe's competent subordinate Clinton involved the landing of troops on Long Island. Although a man of immense courage and determination, Washington's lack of experience was a serious thematic constraint.

General Howe gave a brief description of the subsequent operations.[378] The British forces were now divided into three. A force of two Brigades under the command of General James Grant was left on the Gowanus Road to engage the American right flank and a force of Hessians was left at Flatbush under the command of General Philip von Heister to engage the American centre. A third British force some 10,000 men strong left Flatlands to march through the Jamaica Pass. The pass was one of three which provided a means of passing through the Heights of Guan, a mountain range which provided an obstacle to the British forces engaging with the Americans. After reconnaissance General Clinton noted that the third and the most eastwardly pass was not properly manned by the enemy.[379] After a brilliantly executed midnight march through the Jamaica Pass carried out in absolute silence, 10,000 British troops

[374] 31-8-1776, Howe to Stephens, TNA/ADM 1-487 Part 1, 60. It is perhaps an indication of the relatively amateurish American command that no preparations had been made for attacking the landings at both Staten Island and Gravesend Bay when the British forces were at their most vulnerable.
[375] August 1776, *Original Manuscript Journal of John Collier,* NMM JOD-9.
[376] 31-8-1776, Howe to Stephens, TNA/ADM 1-487 Part 1, 60-61. The *Phoenix* had also been cruising the Hudson and a Journal of the proceedings of HMS *Phoenix* on the Hudson River by Parker for the period 13-7-1776-18-8-1776 is given in TNA/ADM 1-487 Part 1, 69- 75.
[377] Lengel, *General George Washington, op. cit.* 139.
[378] 3-9-1776, Howe to Germain, TNA/CO 5-93 Part 2, 257.
[379] Scheer and Rankin, *Rebels and Redcoats, op. cit.* 162-163.

emerged on the other side of the mountain on the morning of the 27 August 1776. Two cannon were fired to notify General Grant and von Heister that the British forces were ready to commence their offensive. All three commenced a co-ordinated attack. After furious fighting colonial forces turned and fled and were either killed, drowned in the mill-pond and swamp or taken prisoner including General Sullivan.

Howe obtained almost a complete victory.[380] He now faced the Americans in their final redoubt running from the Wallabout Bay to the Gowanus Creek. Two thematic constraints now intervened to prevent this, the largest combined operation in the War, from achieving complete victory and the capture of Washington and his army. Firstly Howe hesitated to attack what he thought was a strongly defended frontal position. However, the redoubts were not strongly defended and his intelligence was faulty. Secondly the weather intervened in two ways. A strong North easterly wind commenced which prevented the Navy from entering the East River which would have surrounded the enemy and cut off all chance of escape. A heavy fog also descended impairing visibility and that and the powerful wind were attributed by the colonists to Providence.[381]

The heavy fog offered Washington an opportunity to carry out an evacuation. The Memoir of General John Glover, of Marblehead is an excellent primary source. The source notes that:

[380] 3-9-1776, Howe to Germain, TNA/CO 5-93 Part 2, 257-264.
[381] Scheer and Rankin, *Rebels and Redcoats, op. cit.* 170.

> "The fog and wind continued to favour the retreat, til the whole army, 9000 in number, with all the field artillery, such heavy ordnance as was of most value, ammunition, provisions, cattle, horses, carts etc., were safe over".[382]

The Battle of Long Island indicates the importance of combined operations. In this instance, two combined operations were involved. On the British side the combined operation on Long Island had been executed perfectly and it resulted in an almost total British victory. On the American side, the evacuation by Washington of the trapped American Army was a perfect combined operation which prevented the capture of American forces. It indicates that the Americans appreciated the importance of combined operations and had the ability to implement them. At the same time, the Battle of Long Island indicates the importance of the thematic constraints and how they can intervene to prevent even the most perfectly executed combined operation from succeeding.

Leadership is among the most important of all the thematic constraints. G. Ksiazki in the U.S. Marine Corps in 2014 has analysed the leadership qualities of Washington and Howe using Leadership models.[383] In the various models of leadership examined, courage, determination and judgement appear consistently.[384] Washington scores highly on the United States Army Field Model of military leadership, Howe less so.[385] Washington's determination and courage manifested themselves clearly in the evacuation of Long island and his judgement cannot be faulted on that occasion. However, his judgement was not consistently sound. He divided his army between New York and Brooklyn, made a poor disposition of troops on Long Island,

[382] Brigadier John Glover, *A Memoir of General John Glover, of Maidenhead,* 1863, by William P. Upham, *op. cit.* p. 14, 12-13.
[383] Ksiazki, Marine Corps Command, *Commanders in Chief of the American war for Independence: A leadership Study of George Washington and Sir William Howe, op. cit.* p. 21, 2.
[384] Ksiazki, *op. cit.* 10.
[385] Ibid, 10.

dismissed the cavalry thereby depriving himself of intelligence of British intentions and movements, failed to post sufficient sentries at the Jamaica Pass and continued to pour reinforcements into the trapped American army on Long Island even after it was evident that its position had become hopeless, prior to its evacuation. However, he effected the evacuation of Long Island in the most difficult of circumstances and that, and Howe's hesitation in attacking the colonial positions from Wallabout Bay to Gowanus Creek, prevented the capture of Washington's army and the chance of an early termination of the war. They illustrate the importance of the thematic constraints of leadership and personality traits on the conduct of combined operations.

Howe failed to push his victory by attacking the entrenchments of the colonists to the exasperation of his troops some of whom had to be physically restrained from continuing the attack. Sir George Collier wrote in disgust of Howe's overall passive stance.[386] Howe was responsible for losing the best opportunity in the war to capture Washington and bring the war to a close.[387]

Several thematic constraints intervened. On the British side, there was a lack of inter-service co-operation and the Navy did not fully support the army.[388] Political factors also intervened.[389] The attempt to combine the roles of General and Peace Commissioner was undoubtedly one of

[386] Quoted in Scheer and Rankin, *Rebels and Recoats, op. cit.* 173. from the Journals and Original Papers of Sir George Collier, Long Island Hist. Soc., Memoirs, II (1869), 413-14.
[387] Buckley, U.S. Government, U.S. Military, Department of Defense, *1776 A Critical Time in the American Revolution, op. cit.* 14.
[388] James, *The British Navy in Adversity,* op. cit. p. 29, 46. James writes that "It is difficult to understand why the British commanders neglected to provide for this contingency".
[389] Buckley. U.S. Government, U.S. Military, Department of Defense, 1776. *A Critical Time in the American Revolution, op. cit.* 14.

the reasons why the Battle of Long Island did not fulfil its potential.[390] Other factors included leadership defects, intelligence, hostile weather and geography. Washington also exhibited leadership defects in the form of bad judgement and a lack of experience. Washington's evacuation was a combined operation in its own right. As is usual with a successful evacuation, the outcome led not to a victory but the avoidance of a defeat for Washington, as his army continued to survive. General Washington had escaped to New York but he had little chance of holding it as the Royal Navy controlled the sea and both he and his army were at risk of entrapment. On 15 September 1776, the Howe brothers moved to take New York and capture Washington.

The Battle of New York 15 September 1776

On 15 September 1776 4,000 British troops landed at Kip's Bay. Howe's letter to Stephens on 18 September 1776 is an excellent source on the landing.[391] The British not wishing to risk a frontal attack landed on North Manhattan Island on 12 October 1776. Washington realised that he could be surrounded and retreated north but left a large force at Fort Washington on Manhattan Island. Washington retreated to White Plains which the British attacked on 28 October 1776 taking Chadderton's Hill and forcing Washington to retreat.[392] Howe failed to attack Washington's retreating army but returned to attack Fort Washington. He had been slow to attack Washington after the British victory at Long Island and he was slow to pursue him after the landing at Kip's Bay.[393] Norman Dixon in his work "On the Psychology of Military Incompetence" lists this failure as one of the worst psychological defects in a commander and

[390] 11-8-1777, W. Howe to Germain, TNA/CO 5-17, 22.
[391] 18-9-1776, Howe to Stephens, TNA/ADM 1-487 Part 1, 153.
[392] 30-11-1776, Howe to Germain, TNA/CO 5-93 Part 2, 294. 15 Pages.
[393] O'Shaughnessy, *The Men who lost America, op. cit.* 96.

describes it as "A failure to exploit a situation gained and a tendency to "pull punches" rather than push home an attack".[394]

The landing at Kip's Bay is graphically described in the Diary of Joseph Plumb Martin. He wrote:

> All of a sudden there came a peal of thunder from the British ships that I thought my head would go with the sound. I made frog's leap for the ditch and lay as still as I possibly could. I began to consider which parts of my carcass was to go first.[395]

The powerful disposition of the King's Ships on the 18 September 1776 and their distribution between the North River, East River etc., is shown in the Return of that date.[396] The operations after the landing at Kip's Bay are given in a letter from Richard Howe to Stephens.[397] On 21 September 1776 Howe wrote that "I have the satisfaction to inform your Lordship that His Majesty's troops are in possession of the city of New York.[398]

However, Fort Washington in the north of Manhattan Island was still held by American forces. In combination with Fort Lee almost opposite on the mainland, the two forts were meant to prevent the British Navy sailing up the Hudson. The two British frigates the *Phoenix* and the *Rose* had easily forced their way up. The fort was thus rendered useless since the British Navy commanded the waters.[399] Washington made a vain attempt to retain the fort and sent reinforcements to increase the American forces in Fort Washington to 2,900, a further

[394] Dixon, *On the Psychology of Military Incompetence, op. cit.* 153.
[395] Joseph Plumb Martin, *The Diary of Joseph Plumb Martin*, 2001, 20.
[396] 18-9-1776, Howe, TNA/ADM 1-487 Part 1, 89. Disposition of His Majesty's Ships and Vessels. 18 September 1776.
[397] 23-11-1776, Howe to Stephens, TNA/ADM 1-487 Part 1 Additional Papers, 118.
[398] 21-9-1776, Howe to Germain, TNA/CO 5-93 Part 2, 274.
[399] Mackesy, *The War for America, op. cit.* 91.

indication of his poor judgement and also of his lack of experience as a commander. On 14 November 1776 Howe sent a large force of 13,000 transported by 30 bateaux to attack the fort.[400] The attack began on 15 November 1776 with a bombardment by the frigate the *Pearl* in the Hudson River. Howe transported 3,000 troops by bateaux to the north of the fort and defeated the colonial militia.[401] Following further attacks by Cornwallis and General Wilhelm von Knyphausen the fort surrendered on 16 November 1776. The surrender resulted in the loss of the colonial army of 2,900 and very substantial supplies.[402] The British losses at Fort Washington were 292 wounded and 58 killed.[403] On 20 November 1776, 4,000 troops under the command of Lord Cornwallis were transported by 20 flat boats across to Fort Lee nearly capturing the American garrison which fled leaving a large supply of armaments.[404] The greatly reduced American army retreated to New Jersey. As in the Seven Years' War the loss of a fort had an adverse psychological effect. In a letter dated 23 November 1776 Howe noted 'The sudden Effect of these two unexpected attacks seems to have made a great Impression upon them'.[405] The attack on Fort Washington illustrates how successful British combined operations could be. In this operation, however, the thematic constraints had been absent.

However, Washington's army was still in existence and British counter-insurgency measures had in that respect not completely succeeded. Poor geographical location, and poor planning, leadership and judgement on Washington's behalf acted as thematic constraints in rendering the defence of Fort Washington impossible. The British were winning battles and carrying out combined operations with success but these were not ending the war. Thematic constraints

[400] 23-11-1776, Howe to Stephens, TNA/ADM 1-487 Part 1 Additional Papers, 120.
[401] Scheer and Rankin, *Rebels and Recoats, op. cit.* 199.
[402] 30-3-1776, Howe to Germain, TNA/CO 5-93 Part 2, 300. 7 pages.
[403] 25-11-1776, Osborne to Germain, TNA/CO 5-93 Part 3, 504.
[404] 23-11-1776, Howe to Stephens, TNA/ADM 1-487 Part 1 Additional Papers, 120.
[405] Ibid, 120.

especially defects of leadership in the form of Howe's ineffective prosecution of the war were preventing the capture of Washington and as long as his army remained in the field, it was still possible that American independence could be achieved. It was essential, therefore, to capture Washington and his army. With this objective in mind, on 20 November 1776, Howe commenced the New Jersey campaign.

The New Jersey campaign 20 November 1776 to 24 December 1776

The objective of the campaign was to acquire an area rich in provisions for Howe's forces and which was sympathetic to the British cause, but also to capture Washington and his army.[406] Almost immediately after the fall of Fort Lee Cornwallis began the almost impossible climb of the New Jersey Palisades.[407] On reaching the top the soldiers waited for the sailors to haul up the guns and armaments and then commenced the pursuit of Washington's army. The slow manner of Howe's pursuit meant that he lost several chances to capture Washington and to terminate the war and his failure in leadership acted as a major thematic constraint.

On 8 December 1776, Washington reached and crossed the Delaware and entered into Pennsylvania with the British pursuing, whilst at the same time the latter entered Trenton. The British, however, were unable to cross the river because no boats could be found since Washington had already ordered the Marblehead Mariners to remove them. This was a good example of Washington using the embryonic local and State Navies to good effect. The term "State Navies" requires clarification as the British did not recognise the States and regarded

[406] W. Bodham Donne (Ed), *The Correspondence of King George III with Lord North 1768 to 1783 Volume II* Letter 832 1 January 1777. The King wrote to North that "I hope Sir William Howe is now in possession of so extensive a country that he will not require to be entirely provided from Europe."
[407] Willis, *The Struggle for Sea Power, op. cit.* 136.

them as colonies. The State Navies arose from the need to have a naval force owned by the individual states to use in the defence and protection of the coastline and harbours of the individual states. Rhode Island became one of the earliest to acquire a State Navy on 16 June 1775 by purchasing the *Catey* but other states soon followed.[408] Congress encouraged the State Navvies to defend and protect their coasts and harbours. The State Navies must be distinguished from the privately owned local navies and the privateers and the Continental Navy which was formed when Congress authorised the Marine Committee on 11 December 1775. However, it must be noted that in practice there was some amount of co-operation, interaction and competition between the State Navies and the Continental Navy. William Fowler has pointed that the arrangement of having twelve navies (eleven state and the Continental) which were competing for resources was "a scandalous and wasteful duplication of money and effort".[409] This makes a simple definition hard to arrive at but a State Navy can probably be satisfactorily defined as a navy the vessels of which are owned by the state which appoints its own commanders and naval personnel, the operations of the navy being controlled and directed by the state for the protection and defence of its coastline and harbours and for carrying out such offensive operations as the state directs in isolation or in conjunction with other states or the Continental Navy. The Continental Navy grew in importance compared with the State Navies but all three declined with the entry of France into the war in 1778 while the French Navy grew in importance.

Trenton was also an illustration of Washington's ability to plan ahead. The Delaware therefore represented the farthest limits of the British advance at the end of 1776. It presented the illusion

[408] George C. Daughan, *If by Sea*, (New York: Basic Books, 2011), 27.
[409] William M. Fowler Jr., *Rebels under sail The American Navy during the Revolution* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1994), 128

of an obstacle to any future attacks on the British held territory in New Jersey. It was an illusion because it created the impression that it was not possible to cross.[410] However, whilst Howe was unable to cross because he had no boats, the Americans were able to cross since they possessed the small boats of the Marblehead Mariners. Howe should have built as many boats as possible and taken the war to Washington by crossing the Delaware. Instead the British took up winter quarters in New Jersey on 14 December 1776.[411] Howe settled in for the winter season of balls and dances.

The operation in the Jerseys from Lord Cornwallis's brilliant reduction of Fort Lee to the taking up of winter quarters had been an unequivocal success. Cornwallis and Howe had chased Washington's defeated and reducing army of less than 3,000 sick and exhausted men to the Delaware. It must have appeared to both sides that the rebellion must shortly end.[412] However, although facing apparent defeat, Washington determined to attack what he believed was a weak position in Howe's defences. On the night of 25 December 1776, he commenced an attack on the British position at Trenton.

The first Battle of Trenton 25 December 1776

Washington wrote to his half-brother Augustine Washington that "the game is pretty near up".[413] Nonetheless he resolved on an attack on the Hessian position at Trenton, New Jersey this being the remotest of the posts that the British had established as winter quarters.[414]

[410] Ibid, 154.
[411] 18-12-1776, Howe to Stephens, TNA/ADM 1-487 Part 1 Additional Papers, 147. "The large detachment of the army which pursued the rebels through the Jerseys for an extent of near ninety miles to the banks of the Delaware being now of necessity retired into winter quarters".
[412] David Syrett, The failure of the British effort in America, 1777, *op. cit.* 171.
[413] Willis, *The Struggle for Sea Power, op. cit.* 154.
[414] A detailed account of the attack is give in the writings of Col. John Fitzgerald. This primary source is reproduced in Scheer and Rankin, R*ebels and Redcoats, op. cit.* 211 – 213.

Believing Howe to be in a weak position, Washington commenced the attack by crossing the River Delaware at McConkey's Ferry on the night of 25 December 1776 with 2,240 troops with the intention of attacking the 1,400 Hessian troops at Trenton. Washington's troops therefore outnumbered the Hessians. General John Glover and the Marblehead Mariners were given the most difficult task of performing "the transportation of the troops and artillery across the swollen and rapid Delaware, filled with broken and floating ice".[415] The attack by Washington on Trenton New Jersey was an audacious and enterprising initiative. It demonstrates Washington's courage and resourcefulness. It also shows his tactical skills since he correctly identified Trenton as being the weakest point in the British lines of defence.[416] It also shows Washington's skill in gaining intelligence, assessing, planning and implementing a combined operation which used the Marblehead Mariners to effect a crossing of the Delaware.

Lord Howe wrote "On the 25th instant in the evening a party of the enemy attacked an out guard from the post of Trenton where Colonel Johann Rall commanded with three battalions of Hessians, fifty Chasseurs, and twenty light dragoons having with them six fieldpieces, which party was beaten back".[417] Howe noted that the rebels cannonaded them in their situation upon which Colonel Rall moved to attack them with the regiments of Lossberg and Rall but these surrendered after a few discharges, the regiments of Knyphausen also surrendering.[418] After the battle the rebels retreated across the Delaware taking with them any troops and cannon

[415] John Glover, A *Memoir of General John Glover, of Maidenhead,* 1863 by W. P. Upham, *op. cit.* 14, 20.
[416] Howe was aware of these weaknesses and that his line was too extended. See Alfred Thayer Mahan, *The Major Operations of the Navies in the War of American Independence,* (Stroud: Nonsuch Publishing Ltd., 2006), 40. He wrote to London that "The chain, I own, is rather too extensive, but I was induced to occupy Burlington, to cover the county of Monmouth; and trusting to the loyalty of the inhabitants, and the strength of the corps placed in the advanced posts, I conclude the troops will be in perfect security".
[417] 29-12-1776, Howe to Germain, TNA/CO 5-94 Part 1, 28-30.
[418] Ibid, 28-30. See also the letter 20-12-1776, Germain to Howe, TNA/CO 5-94, 20, expressing concern that the victory may encourage the enemy and not to underestimate them. See also 3-3-1777, Germain to His Majesty's Commissioners, on the Proclamation and the effects of Trenton, TNA/CO 5-24, 77.See also 19-4-1777, Germain to Howe, TNA/CO 5-243,102. Germain wrote that "these winter efforts are the effect of despair rather than courage".

which they had captured. Howe's incorrect assumption that the Delaware offered security and that no offensive would be undertaken in winter were serious leadership deficiencies. The Hessian commander Rall underestimated the Americans and failed to act on intelligence about the imminent attack. Furthermore, the poor geographical location of Trenton also exposed it to attack. Incorrect assumptions, poor leadership, intelligence and geography all acted as thematic constraints to ensure the British defeat at Trenton.

The campaigns of 1777.

In the King's Speech which George III delivered to both Houses of Parliament on 31 October 1776, the King explained the reasoning behind the strategy based on coercion. "If their Treason be suffered to take Root, much Mischief must grow from it, to the Safety of my Loyal Colonies, to the Commerce of My Kingdoms and indeed to the present system of all *Europe*". Canada was saved but it was necessary to prepare for another campaign.[419] Rebellion would spread to the loyal colonies, to the West Indies and even to Ireland.[420] The West Indies acted as a serious thematic constraint on decision-making at the strategic level and no strategic decision could be taken without taking the West Indies into account, because of the financial contribution which they made to the war effort. However, the operations of the British in 1777 were dominated by the attack by Burgoyne from Canada down the Hudson River to Albany.

In terms of grand strategy, war planning and political objectives, the Burgoyne expedition was of the greatest importance. Its success would separate the New England Colonies which were

[419] 31-10-1776, TNA/ZHC 1-69, *His Majesty's Most Gracious Speech to Both Houses of Parliament,* Hansard, 31 October 1776, 3.
[420] W. Bodham Donne, *The Correspondence of King George III with Lord North from 1768 to 1783,* Volume II, 252, Letter 570 11-6-1779.

the hotbed of the Revolution from the other colonies, and allow them to be conquered first, followed by the other colonies. As originally conceived, it would concentrate force and as a result increase the chance of success. It might tempt Washington to move north and to engage in the decisive battle which he was so keen to avoid. If successful it could terminate the war.

Burgoyne's expedition. Bennington. Freeman's Farm. Bemis Heights and Saratoga. 1777. (Map No 3)

This combined operation was grand strategy approved at the highest level by the King and the Secretary for the American Department and continued the British policy of attempting to subdue the colonies by coercion using military means and combined operations.[421] However, the plan, which superficially appeared to be feasible, had serious deficiencies. From the outset it seemed beset with difficulties and a large number of thematic constraints intervened to prevent its success. The plan consisted of a combined operation involving a three-pronged assault. The first prong was Burgoyne's expedition itself down the Hudson River to Albany in New York State. The second prong was a diversionary attack along the Oswego Valley intended to support Burgoyne's advance and to meet up with Burgoyne's army at Albany. The third prong was an army under the command of Sir William Howe conveyed by the Navy up the Hudson River intended to meet up with Burgoyne and the Oswego expeditionary force at Albany. The colonies of New England which were the centre of the revolt would then be cut off from the rest of the colonies by the Hudson River along which blockhouses would be built, whilst the river itself would enable the British Navy to sail and transfer troops.[422] The New England colonies could then be reduced followed by the rest of the colonies in the centre and south. Burgoyne drew up the plan and submitted it to Germain describing it as "Thoughts on

[421] Scheer and Rankin, *Rebels and Redcoats, op. cit.* 250.
[422] Lengel, *General George Washington, op. cit.* 211.

Conducting the War from the Side of Canada". It was not his original idea and had been proposed previously by Lord Dartmouth, General Howe and Guy Carlton.[423] It was crucial to the success of the plan that a large force of 10,000 soldiers under the command of Howe proceeded up the Hudson River and effected a junction at Albany with Burgoyne's army moving south from Canada and St Leger's army moving along the Mohawk Valley.

Sir William Howe's Plans of Operations for 1777

The following plans are drawn up in the form of a precis of the original plans and retain the original format of those plans.[424] Such a format best expresses the intentions of the General. The plans show clearly the evolution of the plan beginning with the first plan which clearly mentions the 10,000 men who are to "go up the North River to Albany." The essence of the plans were as follows:

First Plan proposed the 30 November 1776.

> The Northern Army was not to be expected at Albany earlier than the month of September.[425]
> 10,000 Rank and File to act offensively on the side of Rhode Island.
> 2,000 more to remain on Long Island and make small excursions upon the neighbouring coast of Connecticut under the protection of the shipping.
> 10,000 to go up the North River to Albany.[426]
> 5,000 to remain for the defence of New York and its environs.
> 8,000 to act defensively in Jersey and alarm Philadelphia.
> 35,000

The key component of this plan insofar as it affected the operation from Canada was that 10,000 troops were allocated to go up the North River to Albany.

[423] Scheer and Rankin, *Rebels and Redcoats, op. cit.* 250.
[424] 1777, Wm. Howe's Campaign of 1777. Plan of Operations, TNA/CO 5-253, 152. (30 pages). See also 30 November 1777, Howe to Germain, CO/5-93 Part 2, 305.
[425] 30-11-1776, Howe to Germain, TNA/CO 5-93 Part 2, 304.
[426] 30-11-1776, Howe to Germain, TNA/CO 5-93 Part 2, 305.

The King had approved of the plan and had commented in his own writing explicitly that:

"The force from Canada must join him (Howe) at Albany".[427]

However, Howe in a letter dated 20th December 1776 to Germain, changed his original plan.[428] The second Plan was as follows:

Second Plan proposed the 20 December 1776.

2,000 to remain at Rhode Island with the appropriate number of ships to act defensively until the requested re-enforcement arrives.

4,000 at New York and posts adjacent.

3,000 on Hudson River.

10,000 to go against Pennsylvania.

19,000

This plan has no mention of the 10,000 troops which were to sail up the Hudson River in support of Burgoyne but there is mention of a smaller force of 3,000 which will be retained on the Hudson.

Howe wrote with understatement that "these operations may depend on the exigencies of the moment".[429] However on 2 April 1777 he made a further alteration.

Alteration in his plan contained in his letter dated the 2 April 1777.[430]

11,000 Pennsylvania.

3,200 New York and York Island.

300 Paulus Hook.

1,200 Staten Island.

2,400 Rhode Island.

3,000 Provincials New York and Environs.

21,100

This amended plan again makes no mention of the expedition up the Hudson by Howe in support of Burgoyne and 11,000 men are now allocated to the Philadelphia expedition. However, of the 15,000 men Howe had requested only 2,900 were ready. He informed Germain

[427] US Army Command and Staff College. 2015. *Leadership Principles.* p 55.
[428] 20-12-1776, Howe to Germain, TNA/CO 5-94 Part 1, 20 - 22.
[429] 20-12-1776, Howe to Germain, TNA/CO 5-94 Part 1, 20.
[430] 2-4-1777, Howe to Germain, TNA/CO 5-94 Part 1, 147.

that he was therefore relinquishing all expeditions "except that to the Southward, and a diversion occasionally upon Hudson's River" and that the move to Philadelphia would be by sea and not by land. Germain replied that he trusted that "whatever he may meditate, it will be executed in time to co-operate with the army ordered to proceed from Canada".[431] However, Howe replied that he would be unable to live up to such expectations.[432] This indicates a serious failure on the part of Germain who failed to issue clear orders to Howe to support Burgoyne and allowed two separate commands to operate independently of each other. However, Howe also displayed a lack of strategic understanding in failing to acknowledge the importance of his support for Burgoyne, although he had not requested such support. If the two armies had acted together, as the original plan proposed, Washington would have been compelled to have abandoned his intermediate position between Howe and Burgoyne and forced to engage in the decisive battle which the British had for so long sought. He could not have taken the risk of the unified powerful army in the north succeeding. The thematic constraint of leadership deficiencies intervened at the highest level to prevent the success of Burgoyne's expedition.[433]

An excellent account is given of the Canada expedition including the Plan of Operations in the primary source marked "Canada 1777".[434] The Return of the Army which indicates the state of the Army on 1 May 1777 shows the strength of the army for the defence of Canada as 3,424 effectives, Burgoyne's army as 7,250 and the strength of St Leger's army not including Native Americans as 968.[435]

---

[431] John Burgoyne, *A State of the Expedition from Canada as laid before the House of Commons* (London: J. Almon, 1780), 139.
[432] 3-8-1777, Howe to Germain, TNA/CO 5-94 Part 2, 211. Howe wrote: "….I cannot flatter myself I shall be able to act up to the King's expectations in this matter as my progress, independent of opposition from the enemy's principal army, must be greatly impeded by the prevailing disposition of the inhabitants who I am sorry to observe, seem to be excepting a few individuals, strongly in enmity against us".
[433] David Syrett, *The Royal Navy in American Waters, 1775-1783, op. cit.* 75.
[434] 1-7-1777, *State of the Army in Canada 1st May 1777*, TNA/CO 5-253, 165.
[435] 4-5-1777, *State of the Army in Canada 4th May 1777*, TNA/CO 5-253, 172.

General Burgoyne arrived in Quebec on 6 May 1777 and he took over the command from Governor Carleton.[436] Orders were issued by Burgoyne on 29 May 1777.[437] The army assembled between the 17 and 20 June 1777, at Cumberland Point, upon Lake Champlain.[438] He issued a long proclamation on June 20 1777.[439] The purpose of the expedition was stated to be:

> …the glorious task of …reistablishing the blessings of legal government…

Burgoyne threatened the enemies of Great Britain that the Native Americans under his control would be released against them.[440] On 30 June 1777 at Crown Point Burgoyne warned that this expedition was to commence on 1 July 1777, that it was crucial and that his troops must be prepared to give their lives. He warned that 'This army must not retreat.'[441]

The army commanded by Burgoyne was of outstanding quality and had high quality equipment and clothing.[442] The officers who served under Burgoyne were highly competent and included Major-General William Phillips, Major-General Friedrich Adolph von Riedesel and Brigadier-General Simon Fraser. The men were given very detailed orders which were explained to them.[443] The men were well trained.[444]

The thematic constraints of poor planning, a lack of resources, bad weather and time intervened. Burgoyne had expected 2,000 Canadians and over 1,000 Native Americans but

[436] 24-5-1777, Carleton to North, TNA/T 1-537,
[437] 29-5-1777 *The Peter Force Collection Series 8D,* Reel 31 of 112, USA LOC
[438] James M. Hadden, *Hadden's Journal and Orderly Books*, (Albany: Joel Munsell's Sons, 1882), 65.
[439] Ibid, 61.
[440] Ibid, 61-62.
[441] James M. Hadden, *Hadden's Journal and Orderly Books, op. cit.* 103, 81.
[442] Ibid, 193.
[443] Ibid, 309.
[444] Ibid, 219 - 224.

only 650 Canadians and 500 Native Americans enlisted. Transportation was a problem with a shortage of both carts and drivers. Wet weather and bad roads delayed the expedition which was encumbered with a substantial amount of artillery and there were no boats for the cannon.[445]

Having sailed from Crown Point Burgoyne's forces reached Fort Ticonderoga which he took without any loss.[446] In a brilliant operation Burgoyne's engineers scaled the heights of Mount Defiance mounting cannon opposite Fort Ticonderoga and forcing its evacuation. Burgoyne left a small force behind to hold Fort Ticonderoga and maintain command of Lake Champlain.[447] Admiral Arbuthnot wrote of '…the rebels abandoning it in the utmost precipitation…they are greatly alarmed at the loss of Ticonderoga'.[448]

In Skenesborough, Burgoyne was forced to choose between a water route and a land route to Fort Edward and thence to Albany. It is incomprehensible that General Burgoyne chose the land route through Wood's Creek when he could easily have been transported by boat. This was a serious error of judgement bordering on incompetence. Geography as a thematic constraint manifested itself in the form of dense woods, swamps and rivers. General Schuyler's men ahead felled large trees creating almost immovable obstacles in his way. The large baggage train carrying clothing and luxurious supplies and artillery followed.[449]

---

[445] Mackesey, *The War for America, 1775-1783, op. cit.* 130-131.
[446] USA NA Box 409 RG 45. Bulletin of Fort Ticonderoga Museum, Volume 3 Jan. 1933, 6. This indicates the vulnerability of the Fort.
[447] 25-7-1777, Phillips to Lutwidge, TNA/ CO 5-127, 184. The arrangements for the defence of Fort Ticonderoga and control of Lake Champlain. See also John Burgoyne, *A State of the Expedition from Canada,* Evidence, p. 102, question 18, 74. "The …garrison consisted of 462 British, rank and file, 448 Germans, rank and file, making 910 in the whole" *op. cit.* 102.
[448] NRS, Sandwich Papers, I, 296.
[449] The baggage train was also accompanied by 2,000 women. *U.S. Army Command and General Staff College.* 2015. Leadership Principles etc.

In order to obtain supplies, Burgoyne despatched a Hessian force of 700 men under the command of Fredrick Baum to Bennington. General Burgoyne was advised against the expedition by his senior advisors. In ignoring their sound advice Burgoyne demonstrated a weakness as a commander. The Hessians did not speak English, moved slowly and wrongly believed the population to be friendly.[450] They were attacked by the forces of Seth Warner and John Stark. [451] A relief force of 650 men was also defeated. Thematic constraints intervened in the form of defects in leadership, poor intelligence and false assumptions to ensure the loss of 1,350 men which Burgoyne would have great difficulty in replacing.

The second prong of the offensive was the expedition of 1,200 or 1,300 men under the command of St Leger from Fort Oswego along the Mohawk Valley.[452] The force initially had some successes but ran into difficulties. The expedition was meant to create a jealousy or a diversion but was not sufficiently strong to achieve its objectives and was forced to retreat back to Fort Oswego. The expedition failed because of the thematic constraints of inadequate resources in the form of an insufficient number of troops and because of poor intelligence which caused the British commanders to overestimate the strength of the enemy forces.

On the 12 September 1777 the American General Horatio Gates with a force of six thousand took up a position at Bemis Heights which overlooked the road from Saratoga to Germain's destination of Albany, thereby blocking Burgoyne's route and strongly fortified it. On 15 September 1777 Burgoyne issued his General Orders for a march in three columns against the

[450] John Burgoyne, *A State of the Expedition from Canada*, Evidence, question 31, 75. *Op. cit.* p. 102.
[451] Sheer and Rankin, *Rebels and Redcoats, op. cit.* 261. A fuller and a very detailed account is given in James M. Hadden. *Hadden's Journal and Orderly Books,* (1882), *op. cit,* 111-134.
[452] Ibid, 44- 48.

enemy.[453] The troops were reminded that no further supplies of ammunition would be available and instructed not to fire on a retreating enemy.[454]

At Freeman's Farm Daniel Morgan's riflemen hidden in trees fired at the advanced picket aiming for the glittering gorgets of the officers and killed every one and some of the men. However on encountering the main body of Burgoyne's centre, they were forced to retreat.[455] Whilst victory passed to the British it was a Pyrrhic one with Burgoyne losing 600 troops to Gates's 300. In this instance, the eighteenth century convention that officers should not be selectively killed did not intervene as a thematic constraint.

On the 21 September 1777 a letter from Clinton arrived informing Burgoyne that he was attacking Fort Montgomery and bringing 2,000 men with him. The news of the failure of St Leger's expedition reached him on the 24 September 1777. On the 2 October 1777 news reached him that that rebels had taken Fort Ticonderoga and all his supplies on Lake Champlain, cutting his lines of communication. Burgoyne decided on an attack on the American lines due to a lack of provisions. Burgoyne sent out an intelligence patrol and a force of 1,500 regulars on 7 October 1777. Following a severe engagement Burgoyne began to retreat on 10 October 1777. On 17 October Burgoyne surrendered and handed his sword to Gates with the words "the fortune of war, General Gates, has made me your prisoner."[456] The forces available to Gates just before the surrender are indicated in a return dated 16 October 1777.

[453] Ibid, 149.
[454] Ibid, 150.
[455] Scheer and Rankin, *Rebels and Redcoats, op. cit.* 274 – 275.
[456] For a coruscating critique of Burgoyne's conduct in regard to the campaign and the Convention Army by Douglas Cubbison see *A brief examination of the plan and conduct of the northern expedition in America in 1777,* London 1779. Sabine Americana. This also includes a full copy of the letter from Burgoyne to Germain dated 15-12-1777.

This indicates that the force available and "Present for duty" was 13,216.[457] This force was substantially more than that with which Burgoyne had commenced his expedition and indicates that the force used was inadequate. It also indicates that the expedition had been unlikely to succeed without the supporting prong from Howe. It also convinced those, such as the Secretary at War William Barrington, who had argued that the use of the army to subdue the colonies would be ineffectual, had been correct.[458] Even King George III was considering Lord Amherst's views. The King stated that Amherst believed that 'after the disaster of Burgoyne not less than an additional army of 40,000 men can carry on with any effect an offensive land war; that a sea war is the only wise plan; that the preventing the arrival of military stores, cloathing (sic) and the other articles from Europe, must distress them, and make them come into what Britain may decently consent to'.[459]

The capitulation of Saratoga has always rightly been identified as a turning point of the war.[460] It resulted in France entering the War overtly on the side of the rebels and this is the most important effect of the capitulation at Saratoga. The disaster resulted in a Parliamentary enquiry which involved hundreds of detailed questions which were subsequently laid out in the report of the Parliamentary investigation into the disaster.[461] Leadership and planning failures at the highest level, inadequate resources, geography, innate complexity, lack of intelligence, communication and underestimating the enemy, all intervened as thematic constraints to ensure the failure of the operation. The disaster at Saratoga had happened to a large extent because

[457] John Burgoyne, *A State of the Expedition from Canada,* 1882, evidence, question 98, 84. *Op. cit.* p. 102. A copy of from General Gates's return from his camp at Saratoga. For details of the original return see Ibid, Appendix no XVI.
[458] Syrett, *The Royal Navy in American Waters 1775-1783, op. cit.* 86.
[459] W. Bodham Donne (ed.), The Correspondence of King George III with Lord North from 1768 to 1783, Vol. II, 119.
[460] Mahan, *the Major Operations of the Navies in the War of American Independence, op. cit.* 15. "This event (Saratoga) has merited the epithet "decisive", because, and only because it decided the intervention of France".
[461] Burgoyne, *A State of the Expedition from Canada as laid before the House of Commons,* 1780, *op. cit.* p. 102.

Howe failed to support Burgoyne by sending troops up the Hudson River, which would have had the additional strategic advantage of forcing Washington into a battle he would have wished to avoid. Howe instead began the assault on Philadelphia which, in the long-run achieved very little and tied up a large number of ships for a long period of time.

Philadelphia 26 September 1777

Howe in his first plan dated 30 November 1776 had proposed to leave "8,000 to act defensively in Jersey and alarm Philadelphia". However, the Jerseys were subsequently abandoned and Howe decided on a new combined operation to take Philadelphia, which was also the seat of Congress. The decision to attack Philadelphia marked the end of any realistic prospect of Howe's forces coming to the assistance of General Burgoyne's expedition, although Burgoyne had wrongly stated that he did not require any assistance.[462] However, the final decision was the King's and Germain's and they had wrongly acquiesced in the idea on the incorrect assumption that Howe would have sufficient time to aid Burgoyne once he had completed the Philadelphia campaign. A multiplicity of thematic constraints at all levels intervened to ensure the failure of the plan. Apart from the impossibility of rendering assistance to General Burgoyne, in opportunity-cost terms, the plan meant the abandonment of the Jerseys, a plentiful source of food for the army and a strongly Loyalist region. In future all the food supplies for the army would have to be imported from England. The alternative would be allowing the troops to live off the land but this alienated loyalists, particularly in the South.[463] The plan would require logistical support from the Royal Navy for a protracted period, thereby removing ships which could have been employed in the blockade. The plan, therefore, had severe faults

[462] Lengel, *Washington A Military Life, op. cit.* 212.
[463] George W. Urwin, " 'To bring the American Army under strict Discipline': British Army Foraging Policy in the South, 1780-81", in *War in History,* Vol. 26, No. 1 (2019), 4-26.

at the planning and strategic level and demonstrated Howe's limitations as a strategist. If Howe had sent his army up the Hudson River instead of attacking Philadelphia, he would have created a large, unified army in the north which Washington would have been forced to attack since he could not have risked it succeeding, thereby forcing him into the decisive battle he wished to avoid. Now, Washington could remain in his safe position between Burgoyne's army and Howe's army, and move against either of them when he wished. Washington had been allowed to 'avoid a general Action or put anything to the risque, (sic) unless we are compelled by a necessity into which we ought never to be drawn'.[464] Every member of Howe's staff was against the attack on Philadelphia. The simplest cost-benefit analysis would have indicated that the costs greatly outweighed the benefits.

In a massive combined operation with 267 sail Howe departed from New York on the 23 July 1777.[465] Howe rightly feared the powerful defences in the Delaware River and the power of the Delaware Navy, but also feared an attack by Washington's forces.[466] He decided instead on sailing up the Chesapeake and landing on 25 July 1777 at the Head of Elk.[467]

An account of the engagements subsequent to the landing at Head of Elk is given in a very detailed dispatch by Howe to Stephens dated 25 October 1777.[468] There is also an extremely

[464] Lengel, *Washington, A Military Life, op. cit.* 149
[465] 9-7-1777, Howe to Stephens, TNA/ADM 1- 487 Box 1, 472.
[466] 30-8-1777, Howe to Germain, TNA/CO 5-94 Part 2, 313. Howe reported that Washington's army was in the vicinity of Philadelphia. See also 30-8-1777, Howe to Germain, TNA/CO 5-94 Part 2, 315. Howe's landing was reported in the Maryland Journal of Tuesday 16-8-1777 which states that the militia were preparing to act with the continental army. (This newspaper also reports the engagement near Fort Stanwyx and has a copy of Burgoyne's orders at Saratoga on 14-7-1777).
[467] 30-8-1777, Howe to Germain, TNA/CO 5-94 Part 2, 313. See also 28-8-1777, The Eagle above River Elke. The Disposition of His Majesty's ships and vessels employed in North America under the command of Vice-Admiral Howe 28-8-1777, TNA/CO 5-127, 224, 225. This shows the ships stationed at the Chesapeake and those under orders to proceed to the Delaware and stationed in the River Delaware.
[468] 25-10-1777, Howe to Stephens, An Account of the actions at Wilmington, Brandywine and Philadelphia, TNA/ADM 1-488, 72. Account of the actions at Wilmington, Brandywine and Philadelphia.

detailed account of the battles of Germantown, Brandywine and the occupation of Philadelphia in Howe's letter of the 10 October 1777 to Germain.[469] He wrote that "…the enemy …were charged the 11th…and retreated in great confusion toward the Town of Philadelphia…"[470] Howe took Philadelphia along with a frigate of 32 guns.[471]

However, it was necessary also to gain control of the adjacent coastline and ultimately the river itself in order to deliver provisions and other supplies to the army. Failure to do so might have resulted in the starvation of the army and the civilian population. The British navy in attempting to approach Philadelphia by river encountered the protective devices known as *Chevau-de-frises.* These were fiendish devices which were constructed with the assistance of French engineers and threatened to trap and sink naval vessels.[472] They were sunk in the river and supported by large amounts of ballast. They contained heavy spikes which prevented the ships from approaching the coastline too closely and inhibited the landed of troops.[473] Captain Andrew Hamond attempted to clear a passage for the ships by removing the obstructions, whilst the colonials attempted to prevent him by the use of fire ships and armed vessels and he was only partially successful.[474] Anti-access/area denial tactics like these hampered or at least complicated combined operations as they made it hard to clear passages in narrow and/or

[469] 10-10-1777, Howe to Germain, TNA/CO 5-94 Part 2, 318. (17 Pages).
[470] 25-10-1777, Howe to Germain, TNA/ADM 1-488, 72. The long march was the result of Howe choosing a poor landing site at Head of Elke and so exhausted the troops that they were unable subsequently to pursue the enemy almost resulting in Howe's defeat.
[471] 23-11-1777, TNA/ADM 1-488, 89. This indicated the length on the gun deck to be 121 feet and the extreme breadth 326 feet.
[472] 17-1-1776, Shuldham to Hamond, TNA/CO 5-126 Part 3, 354. As early as 17-1-1776 Shuldham had written to Hamond that the inhabitants of Pennsylvania had been building armed craft which are floating batteries and some machines have been sunk in the channel. Orders were given to destroy these. See 17-1-1776, Shuldham to Hamond, TNA/ADM 1-487 Part 2, 262 and 28-11-1776, Hamond to Shuldham, TNA/ADM 1-487 Part 2, 294.
[473] Construction of C*hevau de frises* in Delaware, TNA/ADM 1-484, 581.
[474] 25-10-1777, Howe to Stephens, TNA/ADM 1-488, 74.

shallow waters, especially when under fire. The Philadelphia operation illustrates the effects of new technology as a thematic constraint on combined operations.

Howe had already indicated that owing to the Philadelphia operation he would be unable to assist Burgoyne in the early stages of the Canadian expedition, unless Washington were to move to attack Burgoyne in which case he would support him.[475] Thematic constraints in the form of poor planning, leadership failures, faulty assumptions, poor intelligence, technology and underestimating the enemy had intervened to ensure the failure of the expedition. Benjamin Franklin was correct in stating that 'Howe has not captured Philadelphia. Philadelphia has captured Howe'.[476] The operation had been an unproductive and expensive failure in strategic terms as was proved when Philadelphia was evacuated on 18 June 1778.[477]

The capitulation of Burgoyne's army at Saratoga in 1777 persuaded the French in 1778 to enter the war. The entry of the French was the single most important event of the war. The capitulation at Saratoga resulted in a complete re-assessment in December 1777 of British strategy in the North American theatre. For the first time since the start of the war, the decision to use the army as the principal agent in compelling the colonists to submit was called into question. Sandwich wrote to Lord North and suggested that the Navy had not been used in the correct manner and that whilst the army would still be required, a completely new strategy was needed.

[475] 30-8-1777, Howe to Germain, TNA/CO 5-94 Part 2, 311 in which Howe states quite clearly that he will be unable to meet His Majesty's expectations that he will be able to come to Burgoyne's assistance if the Philadelphia expedition is put into operation.
[476] Scheera and Rankin, *Rebels and Redcoats, op. cit.* 242
[477] 5-7-1778, Howe to Germain, TNA/CO 5- 96, 27. Evacuation of Philadelphia.

Chapter 3. World War

Chapter 3. World War

The campaigns of 1778.

Even before the entry of the French into the war in 1778, Lord Sandwich had written to Lord North on 8 December 1777 that

> 'The mode of carrying on war in America has been such for the last two years that the fleet has not been employed in the purposes in which it can be most useful towards distressing the enemy and making them feel their inability of holding out against the mother country…We may certainly distress them infinitely more than has been done, and throw such burdens upon their trade and privateering as to make it difficult to carry on, either without considerable loss, which it is to be hoped, together with their want of necessaries from Europe would soon make them tired of the war…the army should secure the possession of several places along the coast which are tenable (independent of a fleet to defend them) against any force the Americans can bring against them. These places must be such as the King's ships can resort to at all times and seasons, and will give them shelter and refreshments for their men, and…should afford…conveniences for careening and refitting the ships…Such ports are absolutely necessary, and without them no such naval war as is recommended can be maintained'.[478]

Such an approach was revolutionary in nature and whilst still involving the army, would give a more important role to the Navy and restrict the army to the coast without risking taking it too far inland and away from the support of the Navy. It would subject the Colonists to the harsh rigour of a more efficient economic blockade, force them into the military engagements

[478] NRS, Sandwich Papers, I, 327-329. A Paper sent to Lord North on 8 December 1777 relative to the American war and urging more efforts to be made at home.

which they wished to avoid and at the same time render any retreat into the hinterland irrelevant. However, the suggestion was overtaken by events which would render the role of combined operations even more important.

On 20 February 1778 Sandwich wrote that 'We have especial reason for believing that a rupture between Great Britain and France is quite unavoidable…we have good reason to believe the bomb will burst in a few weeks'.[479] France had already taken the decision to enter the war overtly on the side of the Americans and on 6 February 1778 Louis XVI signed the Treaties of Commerce and Alliance.[480] The Commerce aspect of the Treaties was an indication that the colonies were acting as an independent state in entering into a treaty which was intended to benefit both commercially.[481] The information concerning the Treaties conveyed by Lord Weymouth along with a translation were laid before Parliament where it produced great resentment and indignation and support for the King.[482] The French court was keen to exact revenge for their humiliation resulting from their defeat in the Seven Years' War and to redress the imbalance of power between France and Great Britain which had resulted from the defeat.[483] The Alliance between the American rebels and the French Court was an important thematic constraint on all future British combined operations. It indicated how important allies were as a thematic constraint when they supported the enemy and conversely, how important the absence of allies could be. The primary source for the Treaties in both French and English

[479] NRS, Sandwich Papers, I, 348.
[480] Larrabee, *Decision at the Chesapeake, op. cit.* 57.
[481] Paul Cheney, 'A False Dawn for Enlightenment Cosmopolitanism?: Franco-American Trade during the American War of Independence', in *The William and Mary Quarterly*, Vol. 63, No. 3 (July, 2006), 463-488
[482] 17-3-1778, The Humble Address of the Right Honourable the Lords Spiritual and Temporal presented to His Majesty on 17-3-1778, Hansard, TNA/ZHC 1-70. ZHC is the reference to the hard copies of Hansard at the National Archives.
[483] NRS, Sandwich Papers, Vol. I, xix. Choiseul had chosen 1770 as the year in which France would be ready to avenge the defeats of the Seven Years' War but he was dismissed on 24 December 1770 by King Louis XV.

is to be found in the Benjamin Franklin Papers in the Library of Congress in Washington D.C.[484]

The declaration of war placed the French in a strong position since they entered the war with a powerful navy which had been strengthened by a shipbuilding programme which started immediately after the end of the Seven Years' War. They could strike at Britain where they chose but there were two particularly vulnerable targets. The first was to target the home fleet in the Channel and threaten Great Britain and Ireland with invasion, forcing Britain to divert ships from the North America Theatre. The second was to send an expeditionary force to North America to intervene in one of the theatres of war there or to threaten the West Indies.[485] The lack of intelligence as to the French intentions was a severe thematic constraint on British operations.

It is interesting to compare the effect and influence of French power in the first war with that of the second war. In the first war, the French maintained large military and naval forces in the North American theatre after 1778 and actively participated in combined operations. In contrast, in the second war, the French did not employ troops or ships directly in the North American theatre against Britain, other than the West Indies, and had actually withdrawn from North America in the sale of land to the US in the Louisiana Purchase in 1803.[486] In the second war, the large French military and naval forces on the continent and the attendant threat of

[484] 25-10-1778, *The Papers of Benjamin Franklin* Volume 25 October 1 1778 through February 28 1778, 584-625. Yale University Press Library of Congress Catalogue number 59-19697 standard Book Number 1132-6. This source contains the full treaty.
[485] David Syrett, 'Home waters or America? The Dilemma of British Naval Strategy in 1778', in *The Marine's Mirror*, Vol. 77:4, (1991), 365-377. Syrett points out that the decision was ultimately whether to risk the security of the Brutish Isles while facing the threat of an invasion. Sandwich was not.
[486] Daughan, *If by Sea, op. cit.* 362-363.

invasion acted as a thematic constraint in the form of "other theatres" by compelling Britain to prioritise the European theatre in terms of troops, supplies and ships over the North American theatre, although the thematic constraint of other theatres had also existed in the first war in the form of the invasion threat in 1778 and the urgent need to protect the West Indies. The different circumstances of the two wars affected the use and importance of combined operations and the manner and extent to which the thematic constraints intervened in the two wars. The entry of France into the war in 1778 and Spain in 1779 meant that the Allies had the powerful French and Spanish Navies available to use in combined operations which became more important. The thematic constraints of resources also became of much greater importance than previously since the combined navies of the Allies were now stronger than the Royal Navy. The thematic constraint of allies now became of the greatest importance as the Colonists had two new allies and Britain had none. In addition, other theatres now became of the greatest importance since the French and the Spanish could attack the channel fleet and also the West Indies. The comparable effect in the second war was the abdication of the Emperor Napoleon on 11 April 1814. This event released resources which had been previously tied up in the European theatre and made them available for use in combined operations in the North American theatre thereby increasing their use and importance. The influence of other theatres as a thematic constraint against the British became less important. The thematic constraint of resources now operated against the Americans. The use and importance of combined operations and the impact of the associated thematic constraints were different in the two wars and also within the wars themselves.

The entry of the French into the war was the most significant event of 1778 and possibly the whole war and its importance cannot be overestimated. It had a significant effect on British policy-makers. Even before the formal declaration of War, the French had sent supplies of

gunpowder and weapons to the rebels and had afforded every assistance to the American privateers in the West Indies.[487] Sandwich pointed out that the French were sending troops to the West Indies and that the fact that the French Navy was uncommitted whereas the British Navy was heavily committed posed the greatest of threats.[488] Sandwich thought it advisable to suspend the operations of the Army and the Navy in America.[489] In addition, the Cabinet carried out an extensive review of the forces in North America and it was agreed that three or four line of battleships and other vessels and 4,000 troops should be sent to defend the Leeward Islands.[490] No decision was made about the evacuation of America but General Jeffrey Amherst was against it. In a paper headed "Lord Amherst's Idea about Change of War in America" he had written "The object of the war being now changed and the contest in America being a secondary consideration, our principal object must be distressing France and defending and securing our own possessions".[491] The entry of France into the war also raised the possibility of Spain entering. The alarm which such a possibility caused is to be clearly seen in the letter dated 15 October 1778 from Sandwich to Lord North in which he anticipated that the combined fleets of the two powers would exceed the British fleet.[492] There would also be an immediate threat to both Gibraltar and the West Indies, particularly Jamaica.[493] The importance of the West Indies from the viewpoint of the government in London cannot be overemphasised.[494] From 1778 to 1780 the West Indies and other British possessions there were exposed to the

[487] 1-8-1777, Morris to Germain, TNA/SP 78-305, 128.
[488] NRS, Sandwich Papers, I, 333.
[489] NRS, Sandwich Papers, I, 359. See the undated and unsigned memorandum in Sandwich's writing headed "Advice given about the change of the War America".
[490] NRS, Sandwich Papers, I, 361. See the Cabinet Minutes 14 March 1778.
[491] NRS, Sandwich Papers, I, 365.
[492] Harding, *Sea Power and Naval Warfare 1650-1830, op. cit.* 244. The respective figures for the British and the combined French and Spanish Fleets in terms of the number of battleships for the years 1775, 1780 and 1785 were 106:119, 103:126 and 121:118.
[493] NRS, Sandwich Papers, II, 179. He wrote that "Jamaica is immediately at their mercy, if a squadron is not sent to defend it". Also *Sandwich Papers*, I, pp 69-70 where he wrote that "I lay down as a maxim that England ought for her own security to have a superior force in readiness at home to anything that France and Spain have in readiness on their side".
[494] Middlekauff, *The Glorious Cause, op. cit.* 414.

risk of French attacks and they remained an important theatre until the end of the war.[495] Troops were diverted from New York to attack St Lucia.[496] 5,000 troops were sent from New York under the command of Hotham and conveyed by Admiral Samuel Barrington.[497] In addition, Admiral John Byron had earlier been sent by Sandwich to join Howe. Although the French Fleet had appeared at St Lucia on 15 December 1778, the appearance of Byron caused d'Estaing to abandon St Lucia leading to its capture by the British.[498] However, Sandwich continued to prioritise the defence of Great Britain over the operations in the West Indies.[499] Key changes in military personnel occurred when Howe was replaced as Commander in Chief by his more capable subordinate Lieutenant-General Sir Henry Clinton.[500] Sir Guy Carleton in Canada was replaced by Lieutenant General Frederick Haldimand.[501] Orders were given to Clinton to evacuate Philadelphia and the primacy of New York as a key post was emphasised as was the retention of Rhode Island and Canada. However, the King and Germain supported by other Cabinet members on 8 March 1778 made a policy and strategic decision to shift the seat of British operations to the South and although this policy was not fully implemented until 1781, a decision was made to attack Savannah in the South.

British siege of Savannah, Georgia. November 1778

The British siege of Savannah in November 1778 indicated how successful a combined operation could be if circumstances did not permit the intervention of the thematic constraints.

[495] NRS, Sandwich Papers, III, 163.
[496] W. Bodham Donne (Ed), *The Correspondence of King George III with Lord North from 1768 to 1783,* 234. Letter 548 23 February 1779. See the *Sandwich Papers,* I, 366. 21st March 1778. The King's Secret Instructions to Sir Henry Clinton regarding the attack on St Lucia.
[497] NRS, Sandwich Papers, II, Chapter IV, 285.
[498] NRS, *Sandwich papers*, II, Chapter IV, 345.
[499] Larrabee, *Decision at the Chesapeake, op. cit.* 35. See also NRS, *Sandwich Papers* I, 236.
[500] 4-2-1778, Germain to Clinton, TNA/CO 5-95, 28.
[501] 10-9-1777, Germain to Haldimand, TNA/CO 5-127, 144. Haldimand was appointed Governor in Chief of the Province of Quebec and Commander in Chief of His Majesty's forces there on 10-9-1777.

On 8 March1778, Germain had conveyed to Clinton the secret dispatch for the King's plan which had the objective of "…an attack…upon the southern colonies with a view to the conquest…of Georgia and South Carolina".[502] Accordingly Lt. Col. Archibald Campbell commanded an expedition which departed with Parker to the South with the primary object of taking Savannah. Campbell sailed from the Hook on 27 November 1778 with Parker and arrived at Tybec on the 23 December 1778. He got across the bar and on the 27 December 1778 the rest of the fleet joined him. Campbell was in possession of good intelligence and had learned that the enemy forces opposing him commanded by Major General Robert Howe were weak, and on 26 December the troops having been conveyed by flatboats landed at Genidoe's Plantation two miles from Savannah.[503] A small force of fifty enemy were driven off and an attack of the enemy's galleys was defeated.

The rebels under the command of Maj. Gen. Robert Hook had taken up position straddling the major road leading to Savannah near Governor Wright's Plantation. Campbell was again in receipt of good intelligence and was guided by a black slave volunteer through the woods and swamps behind the enemy's right flank and attacked them from both the front and the rear causing them to flee to the town of Savannah. At the end of the day, 29 December 1778, Savannah was in Campbell's possession with a supply of armaments and provisions.[504] Sunbury was the only remaining possession of the enemy and was taken by Augustin Prevost ending the Savannah expedition.[505] Campbell was able to report that "the inhabitants of all

[502] Scheer and Rankin, *Rebels and Redcoats, op. cit.* 390.
[503] 16-1-1779, Campbell to Germain, TNA/CO 5-236, 157. (12 pages). See also 11 January 1779, Parker to Gambier, TNA/ADM 1-489, 189- 194. Col. Campbell moves towards Savannah. A full account.
[504] 16-1-1779, Campbell to Germain, TNA/CO 5-236, 157.
[505] 18-1-1779, Prevost to Germain, TNA/CO 5 236, 150-152. Prevost's account of his role in taking Savannah.

parts of the province flock with their arms to the standard and cordially embrace the terms which have been offered".[506]

Campbell was not only a brilliant general but he recognised the perennial problem that the military are inept at administering a civilian government. He was before his time in recognising that winning hearts and minds was as important as winning military battles and pressed for the restoration of a civilian government. He wrote of the"…necessity of sending out a Governor immediately for the province with every essential arrangement for the restoration of legal government. This will be a model to future conquests and from the happiness of its form may at this juncture conquer more provinces than twenty thousand troops".[507] The combined operation at Savannah was relatively a small operation. An event of far greater importance occurred in 1779 when Spain entered the war on the side of the Allies.

The campaigns of 1779

On 16 June 1779 Spain declared War on Great Britain. The home waters instantly became of great importance as Britain became open to invasion. The intervention of Spain with its large navy acting in conjunction with the French as allies of the Americans constituted a thematic constraint of the utmost importance. The Count of Aranda, the Spanish ambassador in Paris, believed that the North American conflict created an exceptional opportunity to eliminate British Naval superiority. He drew up a strategic plan for a full-scale naval war.[508] A French and Spanish invasion of Great Britain and Ireland remained a serious possibility until 3 October

[506] 16-1-1779, Campbell to Germain, TNA/CO 5-236, 157.
[507] Ibid, 159-161.
[508] I. Valdez-Bubnov, 'The Spanish Naval Strategy and the United States, 1763-1815', in *The Mariner's Mirror,* Vol. 101:1, (February, 2015), 5.

1779.[509] The convention of Aranjuez, the agreement between France and Spain which brought Spain into the war contained a clause, inserted at Spanish insistence, requiring an invasion of England, this being the only way England could be forced to return Gibraltar.[510] In addition, in September 1779 Savannah also came under threat from the French Fleet.

The American and French siege of Savannah, Georgia. September 1779

The arrival of the Count D'Estaing's fleet of the coast of Savannah presented an opportunity of a combined operation which was also a joint operation since it involved both the French fleet and the colonial forces. A number of thematic constraints in the form of defects in leadership, a lack of co-operation between the allies, bad planning, time constraints, weather and disease intervened to ensure the failure of the combined operation. The arrival of the French fleet is recorded in a letter to Byron from Prevost on 9 September 1779:

> "Count D'Estaing is now at anchor with twenty five sail of the line or two deckers in a line across the bay or entrance of the harbour and seven or eight frigates. If he intends to do anything it must be speedily as he cannot remain long on, in his situation at this season of the year. Some of his ships appear to be disabled".[511]

This account is also confirmed in a letter to Governor Tonyn from Governor Wright.[512] Despite the strength of the French fleet the inhabitants of Savannah were not overawed, but they were concerned about the French force acting in conjunction with the colonial forces.[513] On the 8 September 1779 the French landed and Lincoln in South Carolina set out for Georgia with the

[509] NRS, Sandwich Papers, III, 9.
[510] Syrett, *The Royal Navy in European Waters during the American Revolutionary War, op. cit.* 1998, 69.
[511] 9-9-1779, Prevost to Byron, TNA/CO 5-98 Part 3, 385.
[512] 11-9-1779, Wright to Tonyn, TNA CO 5-98 Part 3, 381.
[513] Ibid, 385.

militia to join D'Estaing and reached him on the 11 September 1779.[514] D'Estaing had already issued a very haughty demand to Prevost to surrender on 15 September 1779 but whilst waiting for their reply the British garrison from Beaufort had time to arrive and re-enforce the position.[515] Detailed orders were issued to the British army before and during the siege.[516]

On 3 October the French guns commenced firing but there was no British surrender. Arguments broke out amongst the allies and in spite of American objections, D'Estaing, under pressure from the approach of the hurricane season, decided to launch an attack on the 9 October 1779 using French and allied troops against Prevost's entrenchments. The result was disastrous with severe losses on the French and American side. Both the French and the Americans lost 1,500 men each.[517]

On 22 October 1779 a correspondent writing on "this very important and extraordinary siege" commented that the "…Count D'Estaing has been obliged to raise the siege and has taken his leave of us, he went on his boat a few days ago and all his shattered army followed him".[518] Acrimonious disputes arose between the French and their colonial allies after the failure of the siege.[519] Several thematic constraints intervened decisively to prevent the success of the combined operation. The thematic constraints which had intervened in the combined operations

[514] 30-10-1779, Fuser to Clinton, TNA/CO 5-98 Part 3, 378.
[515] Ibid.
[516] For an account of the detailed orders issued to the British Army just before and during the siege see *The Regimental Order Book, British Army, Siege of Savannah Georgia,* 2-7-1779 to 9-10-1779. Two Volumes (236 pages) Library of Congress, Washington D.C. Ref: Library of Congress 0 008 871 251 1.
[517] 30-10-1779, Tonyn to Clinton, TNA/CO 5 -98 Part 3, 376. See also 18-11-1779, The Royal Gazette, TNA/ADM 1-486, 219.
[518] 22-10-1779, Tonyn to Clinton, TNA/CO 5-98 Part 3, 387. A very detailed account of the siege.
[519] 30-10-1779, Tonyn to Clinton, TNA CO 5-98 Part 3, 376.

of the British in 1775-1778 now intervened in the combined operations of the French and Spanish.

The Campaigns of 1780.

In 1779 the French abandoned their plans for an invasion of Britain as the Fleet had proved too large and cumbersome and exhibited all the disadvantages of a joint operation, including the translating and harmonising of signalling codes.[520] The French government were disillusioned with the continual disagreements with their American allies and the Spanish withdrew the whole of their fleet from Brest to concentrate on the siege of Gibraltar.[521] The French and Spanish allies decided instead in 1780 to concentrate on the West Indies. This was a shrewd strategic decision since the West Indies were crucial to British interests and to defend them, the British would have to transfer resources from North America or the Channel Fleet. Admiral Guichen was despatched to Martinique where the French naval forces were to be kept at a level of twenty five ships and the Spanish committed to sending a further twelve and 10,000 troops.[522] The French and Spanish abandonment of the plans for the invasion of England left Britain free to resume offensive combined operations. In 1780, the British decided on a second attack on Charleston which they had failed to capture in 1776.

British siege of Charleston. February-May 1780. (Map 4).

The second British attack on Charleston was one of the most important combined operations of the American War of Independence. Clinton set sail from New York on 23 December 1779

[520] NRS, Sandwich Papers, Volume III, 9.
[521] NRS, Sandwich Papers, III, 47.
[522] Mackesy, *The War for America 1775-1783, op. cit.* 324

with 7,600 men after a delay caused by the presence of the French Fleet commanded by D'Estaing, who did not leave until December 1779, an indication that the mere presence of an enemy fleet could act as a thematic constraint in the implementation of combined operations. Weather also intervened as a thematic constraint and storms destroyed several ships including a vessel carrying cannon, transports, one of which drifted to St Ives in Cornwall and almost all the horses were lost.[523] Charleston under the command of General Benjamin Lincoln had improved its defences, and Lincoln had left an escape route to the north in case he needed to evacuate the city.[524] Clinton called up re-enforcements of 1,500 troops from Savannah and 2,500 from New York.[525] The continentals were estimated not to have more than 5,000 troops.[526]

On the 9 February 1780 the Royal Navy sailed to the Edisto River and on the 11 February 1780 Clinton landed the British army on John's Island. Arbuthnot allowed Clinton to use 45 Cannon from the British ships to replace the cannon on the ship which had been sunk. The heavier battleships were sent back to New York and the smaller vessels were sent by Arbuthnot to cross the bar.[527] On the 24 February 1780 the British army crossed to James Island and thence moved to establish itself on the river bank of the Ashley River just opposite Charleston. On 30 March 1780 the army crossed the Ashley River with the help of the brilliant naval commander Elphinstone and on 1 April 1780 began to construct siege lines.[528] On the 9 April 1780 Arbuthnot ordered the three battleships and three frigates commanded by Hamond to sail up the harbour. They passed Fort Moultrie and the batteries on Sullivan's island but did not attack

[523] Ibid, 340.
[524] 9-3-1780, Clinton to Germain, TNA/CO 5-99 Part 1, 51.
[525] Ibid, 51.
[526] Ibid, 51.
[527] 14-5-1780, Arbuthnot to Stephens, TNA/ADM-486, 358.
[528] 13-5-1780, Clinton to Germain, TNA/CO 5-99 Part 2, 181.

them. They landed at James Island blocking off all communication from Charleston except or the escape route to the north.

On 10 April 1780, after receiving notice that Lincoln had refused to surrender, Clinton opened fire.[529] The assault by the British was overwhelmingly ferocious and relentless. On the American lines Moultrie noticed that "fatigue …was so great that, for want of sleep, many faces were so swelled they could scarcely see out of their eyes.[530] The escape route to the north was defended by cavalry and Banastre Tarleton was sent on the 18 April 1780 to disperse and capture them resulting in many cavalry and horses being captured closing off the escape route.[531]

On the 21 April 1780 Lincoln confirmed his willingness to capitulate and proposed a six hour cessation.[532] This was agreed to by Clinton on the same day.[533] On 4 May 1780 200 seamen were transported at night across to Fort Moultrie which surrendered without a fight on 7 May 1780.[534] On the 9 May 1780 negotiations reached a deadlock and after declaring Lincoln's terms inadmissible the British resumed the bombardment. Moultrie noted that:

> The fire was incessant almost the whole night, cannon balls whizzing and shells hissing continually amongst us, ammunition chests and temporary magazines blowing up, great

[529] 10-4-1780, Clinton and Arbuthnot to Lincoln, TNA/CO 5-99 Part 2, 187.
[530] Moultrie, in Scheer and Rankin, *Rebels and Redcoats, op. cit.* 398.
[531] 13-5-1780, Clinton to Germain, TNA/CO 5-99 Part 2, 181.
[532] Ibid, 191.
[533] Ibid, 193.
[534] 7-5-1780, Arbuthnot Return of the Garrison of Fort Moultrie and Prisoners of War Continental Commissioned officers. TNA/ADM 1-486, 362. See also 7-5-1780, Return of Ordnance and other Stores taken on Fort Moultrie on Sullivan's Island by the Naval Brigade on 7-5-1780, Ibid, 362- 363.

> guns bursting, and wounded men groaning along the lines. It was a dreadful night! …on the eleventh of May, we capitulated.[535]

The taking of Charleston was an astonishing achievement. It confirmed Clinton's ability as a capable commander and also redeemed his failure to capture the city in 1776. The relations in general between the Army and the Navy were excellent not only in terms of co-operation and support but Arbuthnot remained irascible.[536] The British had acquired a first rate base and now controlled this centre of trade for cotton and indigo. A semblance of the restoration of civil society, the rule of law and the regulation of trade began to emerge.[537] Now there was no American army in the South to oppose Clinton.[538] In addition the British had access to the interior and could now proceed to implement the King's policy in earnest. The effect on the rebels was devastating. The capture of the city arguably ranks in importance with that of the British defeat at Saratoga. It is a stunning example of how effective a combined operation can be when the necessary elements for success are present and the effects of the thematic constraints are accordingly minimised.

Charleston had been a combined operations success because the thematic constraints had not intervened in the assault. However, in the final phase of the war the thematic constraints intervened in British combined operations and in particular the Battle of Yorktown and the associated naval Battle of the Capes.

---

[535] Moultrie, in Scheer and Rankin, *Rebels and Redcoats, op. cit.* 399.
[536] May 1780, Arbuthnot, TNA/ADM 1-486, 362-363. See also 25-6-1780, Arbuthnot to Rodney, TNA/ADM 1-486, 426.
[537] 3-8-1780, Germain to Clinton and Arbuthnot, TNA/CO 5 242, 176.
[538] Walter Edgar, *Partisans and Redcoats,* (New York: Harper Collins 2001), 52.

Chapter 4. British defeat

Chapter 4. British defeat

The campaigns of 1781

Yorktown, Virginia. 30 September 1781-19 October 1781. (Map 5)

In order to understand Yorktown it is necessary to ask the question why was Cornwallis at Yorktown at all? The answer lies in the shift of British strategy to the South. It was thought that the Loyalists were more numerous and active in the South and the distance from the North made communication and aid more difficult. The South could be subdued first and the other colonies afterwards.[539] The decision to transfer the seat of British operations to the South was a policy and strategic decision at the highest level and was made by the King and Lord George Germain supported by other members of the Cabinet on 8 March 1778. On 7 July 1781 in a letter to Robert Digby Germain laid out his ideas and planning for the future, these constituting his war objectives for that year. He wrote that "The great object of the King and his servants in the present campaign is the recovery and preservation of the southern provinces"… [540]

In mid-July 1781 Cornwallis had been ordered by Clinton to return 2,000 troops to New York which he believed was in danger of an imminent attack by the French and the Americans.[541] Cornwallis was ordered to proceed to a suitable post where the troops could embark for their journey to New York. The remainder of the troops would be transported to Charleston and the Chesapeake abandoned. If this had happened no troops or ships would have been stationed at Yorktown and the disaster therefore would not have happened, at least in the form in which it

[539] Sydney Howard Gay, 'Why Cornwallis Was at Yorktown', in *The North American Review,* Vol. 133, No. 299 (October, 1881), 368-378.
[540] 7-7-1781, Germain to Digby, TNA/CO 5-242, 186.
[541] 4-7-1781, Arbuthnot to Stephens, TNA/ADM 1-486, 679. Also H. L. Landers Historical Section, Army War College, *The Virginia Campaign and the Blockade and siege of Yorktown 1781,* (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1931), 111.

occurred. Clinton in this, as at Bunker Hill and at Long Island, was more perceptive than his superiors. However, all of the major ports-New York, Newport, Savannah and Charleston with the exception of Halifax possessed this innate quality of the risk of entrapment.[542] Benedict Arnold himself narrowly escaped that risk. In general, though, it is true that any schoolboy looking at the map of Yorktown could have foreseen the danger.[543]

Nonetheless Cornwallis opposed Clinton's plan as he wanted the centre of the war to move to Virginia. Cornwallis's views were the same as the King's and in mid-July 1781 Germain, in accordance with the King's instructions, informed Clinton that no troops were to be transferred to New York and that Virginia was now to become the main seat of operations. This decision led to the establishment of the poorly situated post at Yorktown.

On 20 July 1781 Clinton ordered Cornwallis to take up a position in the Chesapeake. Old Point Comfort was suggested but the engineers examined it and declared it unsuitable.[544] Cornwallis selected Yorktown, where he arrived at 1 August 1781, ten miles from the mouth of the York River and surrounded by swamps, a post he was later to describe as also unsuitable.[545] This,

[542] 10-9-1781, Hamond to Graves, TNA/ADM 1-489, 477, He wrote that Halifax is now extremely strong against an attack from the enemy, yet the engineer has in planning that defence always reckoned upon a number of Seamen to work the guns". The exigencies of Yorktown forced Cornwallis to resort to the same measures.
[543] Larrabee, *Decision at the Chesapeake, op. cit.* 83.
[544] 27-7-1781, Captain Charles Hudson to Graves, TNA/ADM 1-489, 411. In reference to the engineer's report Hudson wrote that "Old point Comfort is not a place equal to erect a post at, or near it, for the protection of any of His Majesty's ships". However he goes on to say that "In consequence thereof, the Earl as well as myself has come to a resolution to remove the troops that are now at Portsmouth and its vicinity to York and Gloucester, where we apprehend a better post can be established for the protection of the King's troops". It is not clear whether the report recommends the posts of York and Gloucester or whether this is the decision of Cornwallis and Hudson.
[545] See *Correspondence between His Excellency General Sir Henry Clinton K.B. and Lieutenant General Earl Cornwallis,* 61. 20-10-1781, Cornwallis to Clinton. However Clinton argued that Cornwallis did not inform him of his reservations until his notification of his surrender in the aforementioned letter. Ibid, 72. See W. B..Willcox, *The American Rebellion, Sir Henry Clinton's narrative of his campaigns, 1775-1782,* op. cit. p. 48, 54, ix. Willcox notes that "The book was written to redeem his military reputation, at the cost of others, primarily Cornwallis…" It is therefore part of the Clinton-Cornwallis controversy.

however, was said after the surrender.[546] The post of Gloucester on the opposite side of the river was also to be occupied.[547]

The second point to understand is the sheer complexity of the Yorktown denouement and the fact that it consisted of separate combined operations involving a large number of thematic constraints intervening to determine the outcome. So complex and numerous were the intervening thematic constraints that it is necessary to examine the combined operations separately.

The French and American combined operation

The engagement at Yorktown is often analysed purely from the point of view of the British operation and its defects but the French had also conducted their own highly successful combined operation. The success of this combined operation can be attributed to a variety of factors. The Comte de Grasse's fleet had arrived in the Leeward Islands in early July 1781.[548] Washington conferred with the Count de Rochambeau concerning an attack proposed by Washington on New York and on the 14 August 1781 news came that the Comte de Grasse's fleet was available for a short time before the start of the hurricane season. Washington was persuaded to abandon the impracticable plan for an attack on New York with difficulty and on 17 August 1781 it was decided that the French and American troops would began to march from the north to the Chesapeake.[549]

[546] Correspondence between His Excellency General Sir Henry Clinton, K.B. and Lieutenant General Earl Cornwallis, 67-76.
[547] 12-8-1781, Hudson to Graves, TNA/ADM 1-489, 413.
[548] 4-7-1781, Arbuthnot to Stephens, TNA/ADM 1-486, 678.
[549] Scheer and Rankin, *Rebels and Redcoats, op. cit.* 473.

The French and Spanish navies agreed to what was in effect a division of labour. The Spanish would remain in the West Indies to defend their joint possessions. The French Fleet would be released in full to sail to the Chesapeake. The Comte de Grass's fleet sailed from the West Indies to the Chesapeake with twenty eight ships of the line and three thousand troops. The divisions and arguments which so often accompany joint expeditions were thus avoided. Allocating the defence of the West Indies to the Spanish Fleet allowed the French to take the whole of their fleet to the Chesapeake, particularly since de Grasse also ignored orders to send part of the French Fleet back to Europe for repairs.[550] The Allies were able to receive funding from the wealth of the inhabitants of Cuba.[551] A supplementary flotilla under the command of Admiral Barras was to sail from Newport carrying the vital siege guns. The relations between the French naval commander de Grasse and the French military commander le Comte de Rochambeau were harmonious.

Saint-Simon landed French troops and cannon in the narrows. By 27 September 1781 it was reported that Washington had joined the French and had surrounded Lord Cornwallis.[552] The French and the Americans were continually anxious that Cornwallis would attempt to escape to North Carolina but Cornwallis did not react. If the French and Americans had succeeded in blocking in Cornwallis by land and sea his only hope of relief would be a large British fleet arriving to attempt to persuade de Grasse to engage in a sea battle. If a British victory was achieved Cornwallis could be relieved.

[550] Larrabee, *Decision at the Chesapeake, op. cit.* 133.
[551] Willis, *The Struggle for Sea Power, op. cit.* 448.
[552] 27-9-1781, Montague to Graves, TNA/ADM 1-489, 463. Intelligence from the *Pearl* frigate.

The Battle of the Capes. 5 September 1781. (Map 6)

The Battle of the Capes which was also known as the Battle of the Chesapeake was a naval battle fought entirely between the navies of Britain and France with no American involvement at all. The Battle was of immense importance and has been described as 'one of the decisive battles of the world'.[553] The Battle was fought in the area of the Chesapeake Bay to establish command of the sea. The outcome of the Battle had particular importance for Lord Cornwallis trapped at Yorktown by the allies on land and a French naval force which blockaded Chesapeake Bay. If the Royal Navy won the battle, Cornwallis could be relieved, if not he would be forced to capitulate. A mere draw would not be sufficient. At the time of the battle the French fleet under the command of Admiral Francois de Grasse had achieved a superiority in numbers of ships and had twenty four ships of the line compared to the nineteen ships under the command of the British commander Admiral Thomas Graves.[554] The battle had an indecisive outcome. Yet, as Larrabee has correctly remarked, it was 'decisive because it was indecisive'.[555] In order to relieve Cornwallis, the Royal Navy had to gain control of the Chesapeake Bay and it failed to do so.

There are a number of possible explanations for the outcome of the Battle of the Capes. Expressed in terms of thematic constraints, these include poor leadership, a lack of resources in the number of ships, luck, intelligence, other theatres, allies and a divided command. Although all of these played a part, this thesis will argue that the deficiency in the number of ships on the British side was of the greatest importance. Daniel A. Baugh has correctly argued that the loss of command at sea was due to a lack of ships, a lack of co-operation between a

[553] Larrabee, *Decision at the Chesapeake, op. cit.* xi.
[554] Ibid, 158.
[555] Ibid, xii.

feuding officer's corps and a failure to make the best use possible of the available ships.[556] The lack of ships was due to the failure of Britain to build up her fleet on the outbreak of the American War of Independence, in part due to the fiscal constraints imposed by Lord North.[557] Re-armament occurred in 1775, when it produced an insufficient numbers of ships, and in the winter of 1777 when it produced a sufficient number of ships, but too late to deal with the French and Spanish Fleets. In contrast, the French Navy had begun a huge build up from 1776 onwards. Parity with the combined French and Spanish Fleets in terms of effectiveness was reached only in 1781, at precisely the moment when the failure at the Battle of the Capes occurred.[558] Whilst Richard Middleton agrees that Lord North's measures restricted ship-building in 1775 and that construction and repairs increased very substantially in 1777, he argues in contrast that there was 'a gap that was never closed'.[559] The deficiency was caused partly by the British naval commander in the West Indies, Rodney, who returned home to England and took with him six major ships, the remainder being transferred to New York. Rodney relinquished command to Admiral Graves but his command was only for the interim until he could be replaced by Digby.[560] The naval force of the British was thus reduced by six ships and this deficiency was to prove crucial in the battle which followed.[561] His departure from the West Indies with the six vessels, ostensibly because of poor health, but in reality to

[556] Daniel A. Baugh, 'Why did Britain lose command of the sea during the war for America?' in Jeremy Black and Philip Woodfine (eds.), *The British Navy and the Use of Naval Power in the Eighteenth Century'* (Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1988). 154.
[557] Ibid, 155.
[558] Ibid, 152.
[559] Richard Middleton, 'Naval Resources and the British Defeat at Yorktown, 1781', in *The Mariner's Mirror,* 100:1 (2014), 29-43.
[560] 26-9-1781, Graves to Stephens, TNA/ADM 1-489, 445. The arrival of Digby. It is impossible not to feel some degree of sympathy for Graves when in the same letter he writes: "I dare hope that their Lordships will not suffer me to remain long in so painful a situation". Ibid, 446.
[561] F. E. Chadwick (Ed), *The Graves Papers,* lxvi. Chadwick wrote that "Had Rodney remained, had he himself gone to the American coast, taking his available ships, it is not unfair to assume another turn of events".

defend himself in the Commons against attack by Burke on his conduct over St Eustatius was to deprive the British Navy of a capable commander at a crucial time.[562]

In addition, deficiencies in leadership and poor tactics intervened as thematic constraints. Rear-Admiral Thomas Graves, who was lethargic and ineffectual and regarded as a poor commander, remained in command during the most important of the ensuing naval engagements. Whilst this deficiency in numbers may not have been critical with a capable and resourceful officer such as Rodney or Samuel Hood in command, in the case of a mediocre commander such as Graves who was determined to conduct the engagement in strict accordance with the rules of engagement, it was certain to guarantee an adverse outcome.

Intelligence also acted as an important thematic constraint. Admiral Hood had investigated the Chesapeake on 25 August 1781 and found no French ships and therefore sailed for New York. This conventional account of Hood's surveillance has been challenged by Michael Crawford who has queried the effectiveness and thoroughness of Hood's investigation.[563] However, de Grasse's Fleet arrived in the Chesapeake on the 30 August 1781.[564] It is interesting that Cornwallis had several ships already anchored at his post in Yorktown but the cannon on these had been removed to use in the works and the sails had been cut up to provide tents.[565]

[562] R. Cock, " 'Avarice and Rapacity' and 'Treasonable Correspondence' in 'an Emporium for all the World': The British capture of St. Eustatius, 1781", in *The Mariner's Mirror,* Vol. 104: 3, (August 2018), 265-278.
[563] Michael J. Crawford, 'New Light on the Battle Off the Virginia Capes: Graves vs Hood', in *The Mariner's Mirror*, Vol. 103:3, 337-340.
[564] 2-9-1781, Lafayette to Washington, USA LOC, *The Papers of Nathaniel Greene July to December 1781,* 279.
[565] 12-8-1781, Hudson to Graves, TNA/ADM 1 489, 413. Cannon were transferred from the Richmond and the *Charon* and some ships e.g. the *Loyalist* were left to guard the Bay. See also 8-9-1781, Symonds to Graves, TNA/ADM 1-489, 454 in which he writes "…most of the cannon and ammunition of the *Charon* are landed… "

On 1 September 1781, Graves set out from New York and joined Hood at Sandy Hook making a total of nineteen ships of the line and eight smaller vessels. The fleet sailed in complete ignorance of the location of de Grasse's fleet or of Barras's squadron since Hood had been unable to locate them.[566] This expedition did not set out initially to rescue Cornwallis since Graves was unaware of Cornwallis's predicament. Similarly Cornwallis had not been expecting the arrival of the French fleet and was instead awaiting the arrival of the West Indies fleet under the command of Rodney. Graves's fleet under press of sail made for the Chesapeake as the most likely place to locate the French fleet.[567] On 4 September 1781 three ships had to halt because of leaks indicating that even the comparatively small number of ships comprising the fleet were not fully effective, notwithstanding Hood's earlier assurances to the contrary.[568]

On 5 September 1781, Graves and Hood reached the Chesapeake and the *Solebay* reported enemy ships in Lynnhaven Bay.[569] These were assumed by the British to be the eight ships of Barras's squadron. The French ship the *Aigrette* also reported the presence of the British fleet but identified it wrongly as Barras's squadron. Graves was dismayed to find that the French had twenty four ships of the line against the nineteen in the British fleet. This caused him to wrongly assume that Barras's fleet had arrived. Thus both commanders in a comedy of errors made mistaken assumptions. The fleets which now faced each other were made up of a British fleet of nineteen ships of the line with approximately one thousand five hundred guns as against a French fleet of twenty four ships of the line with about two thousand guns.[570]

[566] 30-8-1781, Graves to Stephens, TNA/ADM 1-489, 403. "Whether the French intend a junction or whether they have left the coast is only to be guessed at".
[567] 14-9-1781, Graves to Stephens, TNA/ADM 1-489, 419.
[568] Larrabee, *Decision at the Chesapeake, op. cit.* 156 – 157.
[569] 14-9-1781, Graves to Stephens, TNA/ADM 1-489, 419.
[570] Larrabee, *Decision at the Chesapeake, op. cit.* 158.

The French Admiral de Grasse was forced to attack since Barras's fleet carrying the vital siege guns could have been attacked by Graves.[571] The sea battle which followed was fought without any American troops and without the involvement of the American navy.[572] The British fleet had already set out with a deficiency in numbers and with leaky ships which were not seaworthy and in addition were commanded by a man who was undoubtedly brave and moderately competent but who was not a first class commander.[573] The British had the weather gauge and had the advantage of surprise and arriving in battle order. In addition the British sailors were better trained and more British ships had been coppered than their French counterparts. Graves could have fallen upon the enemy fleet when it was emerging from the Chesapeake in complete disorder as the winds and the tide were against them. Several French ships ran aground and became embedded in the sandbanks. It took an hour for the flagship of de Grasse, the huge 105 gun three-decked *Ville de Paris* to exit.[574] It was difficult to exit from the channel in the Chesapeake and the French ships could be individually attacked on emerging. In a letter to George Jackson dated 16 September 1781 Hood wrote

> They began to come out in a line of battle ahead, but by no means regular and connected, which afforded the British fleet a most glorious opening for making a close attack to manifest advantage, but was not embraced.[575]

Graves however, did not attack but issued orders for a conventional sea battle.[576] Graves followed the regulations of the British Navy's "Fighting Instructions" and formed a line parallel

[571] However see F. E. Chadwick, (ed.), *The Graves Papers,* 1916, p. lxiv. Chadwick argues that de Grasse was in "a position he never should never have left" since he could have forced the surrender of Lord Cornwallis by remaining where he was.
[572] See Map No. 6. See also NMM/GRV 108 Complete details of line of Battle, signals and orders.
[573] Ibid, The disparity in numbers is clearly highlighted in the Orders of Battle of the two fleets in Appendix 1, 241-242.
[574] Larrabee, *Decision at the Chesapeake, op. cit.* 162.
[575] Hood in Chadwick ed., *The Graves Papers and other Documents,* 1916, 87.
[576] Larrabee, *Decision at the Chesapeake, op. cit.* 160.

to that of the French and gave the order for line ahead.[577] As the fleet was approaching a sandbank called the Middle Ground he gave the order for the fleet to wear i.e. for the fleet to pivot and change course so that the ships in the van were now in the rear and the ships in the rear were now in the van.[578] The best commander, Hood, was now farthest from the French fleet and the strong van of the French was now facing Grave's weakest ships.

In an enclosure which is described as Enclosure 1 and titled "Sentiments upon a truly unfortunate day" dated 6 September 1781, Hood commented on a serious error:

> …the enemy's van was not very closely attacked as it came out of Lynn Haven Bay, which, I think, might have been done with advantage, as they came out by no means in a regular and connected way.[579]

However, Graves did not attack as he was following the regulations laid down in the "Fighting Instructions" 1513-1816 and the "Further Fighting Instructions".[580] These instructions were quite rigid and failure to adhere to them could lead to the implementation of a system of penalties such as court-martial or even execution. The naval commander Matthews was punished and Admiral Byng was court-martialled for failing to do his utmost to relieve Minorca and executed on his quarter deck, an event causing Voltaire to comment drily that his execution was "pour encourager les autres".[581]

---

[577] See Julian S. Corbett. *Signals and Instructions 1776-1794,* (London: Conway Maritime Press, 1971), *Fighting Instructions,* 151 – 167. Original edition 1909.
[578] 14-9-1781, Graves to Phillip Stephens, TNA/ADM 1-489, 419 and see also F. E. Chadwick (ed.), *The Graves Papers and other Documents,* 1916, 181. The *London* The ship's log. 6-9-1781.
[579] F. E. Chadwick (ed.), *The Graves Papers and other Documents,* 1916, 89-90.
[580]Sir Julian S. Corbett, *Signals and Instructions 1776-1794, op. cit.* 364 et. al.
[581] F. E. Chadwick (Ed.), *The Graves Papers, (1916),* xxxiii. Chadwick wrote that "Scarcely any captains dared to deviate from what was laid down. There was no initiative".

It had been a serious mistake not to attack the French fleet when it emerged from the Bay and the opportunity presented itself. However, the van of the French fleet became separated from the rest of the fleet. Hood noted in "enclosure 1" "When the enemy van was out, it was greatly extended beyond the centre and rear and it might have been attacked with the whole force of the British fleet.[582] However, Graves did not act.[583] Instead he continued preparing a line of battle in accordance with the "Fighting Instructions".

Communication also acted as a serious thematic constraint. At 4.03 p.m. the order was given for "ye ships to bear down and engage close."[584] The signal for line ahead however, remained flying at the same time causing considerable confusion.[585] James commented that: "In the later stage one signal ruined everything."[586] At 4.15 p.m. action commenced as the fleets were close to each other.[587] Extensive damage was inflicted on ships of both sides.[588] Admiral Hood was not able to take part in the action and he stayed in the rear as he would have had to break the line in order to close and the "Fighting Instructions" gave precedence to maintaining the line of battle. At 8.00 p.m. firing ceased.[589] On 6 September 1781 it became clear that in consequence of the damage caused to the Fleet that it could not continue the engagement. The two fleets remained facing each other throughout this period nonetheless. However, by 9

[582] Ibid, 90.
[583] Willis, *The Struggle for Sea Power,* op. cit. p. 28, 454. Willis argues that Graves did attempt to attack the van but the confused signal between closing the line and engaging the enemy more closely confused Hood who, as a result, did nothing. Also Burke Davies, *The Campaign that won America*, (Washington: East Acorn Press, 1994), 153. Original edition 1970. A white penant was the signal for "line ahead", a blue and white chequered flag under the white pennant the signal for "Ships to bear down and engage close".
[584] Larrabee, *Decision at the Chesapeake, op. cit.* 168.
[585] 5-9-1781, NMM HOO-1, Minutes of the signals made on the 5-9-1781. Similar confusion had prevailed after an order to wear was followed by confusing signals at the Battle of Cape Henry on 16-3-1781 in which again only the vans of the fleets were engaged.
[586] James, *The British Navy in Adversity, op. cit.* 293 and see also F. E. Chadwick (ed.), *The Graves Papers and other Documents,* 1916, 204. A log book of His Majesty's Ship *Barfleur.* September 6 1781.
[587] Ibid, 67. The List of Killed and Wounded is shown on p 68.
[588] Ibid, 69-83.
[589] 14-9-1781, Graves to Stephens, TNA/ADM 1-489, 421.

September 1781 the two fleets had become separated and de Grasse set sail for the Chesapeake, to the annoyance of Admiral Hood.[590] Barras slipped into the Bay making delivery of the crucial siege guns. At a council of war on 11 September 1781 it was concluded that the *Terrible* had been so severely damaged that the ship would have to be destroyed.[591] Of the two fleets the British appeared to be the more badly damaged. It was decided on 13 September 1781 that the only action to be taken was to return to New York for repairs.[592] Hood was critical of the manner in which the operation had been conducted. He particularly criticised the lack of support for the van. James was in agreement and commented on the fact that "The second and third ships astern of the flagship received little or no damage, which proves that the centre was never properly engaged".[593] Hood wrote

> Now, had the centre gone to the support of the van, and the signal for the line being hauled down, or the commander-in-chief had set the example for close action, even with the signal for the line flying, the van of the enemy must have been cut to pieces…[594]

James considers that "This action in which only the van ships fought over one another, was the decisive battle of the war".[595] The confusion caused by the mixing of the signals was serious. Chadwick writes that "Thus moved by comparatively simple things are even the greater affairs

[590] F. E. Chadwick (ed.), *The Graves Papers and other Documents,* 1916. For a critical account of the battle see Rear-Admiral Hood to George Jackson. 86 – 89 and also Enclosure 1 "Sentiments upon the truly unfortunate day". 89 – 91 and in addition enclosures 2, 3 and 4, 92 – 94.
[591] 11-9-1781, Hood, TNA/ADM 1-489, 433. For details of damage etc., see 5-9-1781, Graves, The Line of Battle. An account of the killed and wounded at the Battle of the Capes. 5-9-1781, TNA/ADM 1-489, 423.This shows a complete list of the ships engaged in the British fleet and their commanders and the guns and men. See also 31-8-1781, An account of the damage sustained by the fleet. TNA/ADM 1-489, 425.This shows in great detail the damage to the vessels concerned. See in addition the damage to the Terrible in letters dated 9-9-1781 and 10-9-1781 and the engineer's report dated 11-9-1781, Finchy, TNA/ADM 1-489, 430-432. These documents indicate quite clearly why it was impossible for the British fleet to continue the action.
[592] 13-9-1781, Graves, TNA/ADM 1-489, 435.
[593] James, *The British Navy in Adversity, op. cit.* 292-293
[594] Ibid, 292.
[595] Ibid, 292-293.

of men…a missed signal loses an empire.[596] In addition, Hood, Graves's most capable commander, was not involved in the battle at all.

The military aspects of the siege. (Map 5)

The allied forces were now in a position to commence the siege.[597] Provided Cornwallis could escape from Yorktown, a victory at sea would not affect him. Once the blockade became a siege, Cornwallis was dependent on the relief force and if it failed to arrive on time he would be forced to surrender.[598] Clinton wrote that:

> No orders under which he acted [,] no instructions he had received [,] nor any intelligence I had sent could justify his neglecting to beat [escape] an Army or detail which was coming to besiege him [.] He could not have lost twelve hours in making the attempt.[599]

Tarleton's brother illustrated that the earthworks were useless by jumping over them. However, Cornwallis informed him that "in that case the blame would fall upon Clinton and not us".[600] On September 2 1781 an optimistic letter arrived from Clinton, who stated that "…it would seem that Mr Washington is moving an army to the southward. … Your Lordship may rest assured …that …I shall… reinforce the army under your command".[601] This was followed by a letter dated 6 September 1781 in which Clinton stated that:

---

[596] Rear-Admiral French E. Chadwick, USN**,** *The Graves Papers,* 1916.
[597] Joseph Plumb Martin, *The Diary of Joseph Plumb Martin,* op. cit. p. 94, 79. "Soon after our whole army arrived. We prepared to move and pay the British, at Yorktown a visit. Their wish was not have so many of us come at once. They thought "The fewer the better". We thought "The more the merrier". We had come a long way to see them."
[598] Charles Ross (ed.), *Correspondence of Charles, First Marquis Cornwallis,* (London: John Murray, 1859), 124. Lord Cornwallis wrote: "Nothing but a direct move to York River, which includes a successful naval action can save me".
[599] Jerome A. Greene, *The Guns of Independence,* (New York: Savas Beattie LLC, 2005), 22.
[600] Ibid, 139.
[601] Sir Henry Clinton, *Correspondence between His Excellency General Sir Henry Clinton, K.B. and Lieutenant-General Earl Cornwallis,* 1888. 46.

> As …I can have no doubt that Washington is moving with at least, 6,000 French and rebel troops against you, I think the best way to relieve you, is to join you, as soon as possible with all the force that can be spared from hence, which is about 4,000 Men. They are already embarked…..[602]

On 16 September 1781 Cornwallis wrote to Clinton that "If I had no hopes of relief I would rather risk an action than defend my half- finished works. But as you say Admiral Digby is hourly expected and promise every assistance to help me, I do not think myself justifiable in putting the fate of the war on so desperate an attempt".[603] Lord Cornwallis had received Clinton's assurances that the relief force was on its way and that he did not need an exit strategy.

Yorktown was situated on an elevated peninsula, which had two streams at the front of the town and which had carved gorges, both of which were overgrown. The two streams surrounded the town and formed the peninsula, the land connecting the peninsula with the mainland being overgrown with trees and bushes and also consisting of almost impassable swamps.[604] A series of ramparts had been constructed, with batteries with further batteries behind the ditches. Batteries overlooked the York River and the whole of Yorktown was surrounded by the ramparts. The trees in the areas in front of the ramparts were cut down creating a glacis making attack difficult. In addition, an outer series of fortifications or redoubts had also been constructed. The earthworks were constructed by approximately 2,000 black slaves who had been promised freedom. The whole fortification was constructed to withstand

[602] Ibid, 49.
[603] Ibid, 52.
[604] Scheer and Rankin, *Rebels and Redcoats, op. cit.* 471.

a short siege only.[605] Clinton had informed Cornwallis that a relief force was on its way. Cornwallis had over 8,000 soldiers of whom 700 were ill, and therefore he had over 7,300 effectives.

The siege which was about to commence was conducted according to strict rules.[606] These rules were devised by Sebastian de Vauban in approximately 1700.[607] Firstly, the fortress was surrounded and cut off, starving it of food, medicine and re-enforcements. A trench was then built which ran parallel to the enemy line and approximately eight hundred yards from it called the first parallel. This line was then filled with troops and batteries and a trench was then constructed at right angles to the first parallel. A second parallel was then constructed with troops, batteries and siege guns which could now bombard the enemy position and compel surrender.[608]

The outer works were abandoned on 29 September 1781 as Cornwallis did not have sufficient troops to defend them. The first parallel was constructed on 6 October 1781. On 11 October 1781 Cornwallis wrote that "Nothing but a direct move to York River which includes a successful naval action can help us".[609] On October 14 1781 the British redoubts 9 and 10 were stormed in order to complete the second parallel.[610] Fifty two siege guns poured fifteen thousand shells into the fortifications. On 19 October 1781 Cornwallis surrendered.[611] The

[605] Greene, *The Guns of Independence, op. cit.* 24 – 25. Also John D. Grainger, *The Battle of Yorktown, 1781,* (Woodbridge: Boydell and Brewer Ltd., 2005), 95.
[606] D. Chandler, *The Art of War in the Age of Marlborough,* (Staplehurst: Spellmount Ltd., 1976), 240 for details relating to Siegecraft. Also see 242, Ibid. The siege of an eighteenth century fortress.
[607] Ibid. 276, S. Vauban. Traite de l'attaque des places 1704.
[608] Larrabee, *Decision at the Chesapeake, op. cit.* 224.
[609] 11-10-1781, Cornwallis to Clinton, TNA/ADM 1-489, 473.
[610] BL Newspaper Section, The Pennsylvania Gazette and Weekly Advertiser, 31 October 1781.
[611] 20-10-1781, Cornwallis to Clinton, *Correspondence between His Excellency General Sir Henry Clinton, K.B. and Lieutenant General Earl Cornwallis,* 61.

troops are traditionally said to have surrendered to the march "The world turned upside down", based on an old English nursery rhyme.

If ponies rode men, and if grass ate the cows

And cats should be chased into holes by the mouse…

If summer were spring and the other way 'round

Then all the world would be upside down.

Clinton failed to attack the allied army making its way to the south. Clinton had enough troops in New York to attack the enemy. In order to deceive General Clinton and to watch his activities, Washington left 2,500 men in New York with General William Heath. Clinton knew that New York would not be attacked but he did nothing.[612] He had an excellent spy system and was kept fully informed but throughout stayed in New York. Clinton could have attacked the rear-guard of the allied army as he had 11,000 troops to Heath's 2,500 but he remained paralysed and inactive.[613] Clinton over relied on assurances from Rodney, Graves and Sandwich that the French would never be able to achieve superiority and command of the sea.[614] Cornwallis's failure to investigate the possibility of an escape at a time when it was still feasible was also responsible for the disaster. He considered such a plan in August 1781 but by that time it was too late.[615]

[612] Jacob Harris Patton, *Yorktown: A compendious account of the campaign of the allied French and American forces, resulting in the surrender of Cornwallis and the close of the American Revolution*, (New York, Fords, Howard and Hulbert, 1882), 23.
[613] Scheer and Rankin, *Rebels and Redcoats, op. cit.* 473.
[614] 4-7-1781, Arbuthnot to Stephens, TNA/ADM 1-486, 678. The army had early on received assurances from the navy that in the event of the French fleet sending a detachment to the Chesapeake, it would be followed by the British fleet.
[615] 20-10-1781, Cornwallis to Clinton, W. B. Willcox, Ed., *The American Rebellion*, op. cit. p. 48, Appendix, 585

The failure of British combined operations. The British relief force. 19 October 1781

A number of thematic constraints intervened to ensure the failure of the combined operation including leadership, lack of resources and time. Clinton intended that the fleet would depart on 5 October 1781, but this was extended to 8 October 1781 and then 12 October 1781. The severe shortages of materials and labour in the shipyards acted as a thematic constraint on the preparations of the relief force. Graves was lethargic in his oversight of the preparations. Admiral Hood in contrast remained pro-active. Graves raised the question whether it was possible to relieve Cornwallis at all, but the question was considered outrageous.[616] On September 24 1781, Digby arrived in New York and on 13 October 1781 two further ships from Jamaica. On 13 October 1781, Graves wrote that he had added three fire ships to the fleet.[617] By 18 October 1781 seven and a half thousand soldiers had been embarked upon the King's ships, and a fleet of twenty five ships of the line including three-deckers carrying ninety guns had been assembled. However, the British Fleet was too late and the sailing date, 19 October 1781, was the date on which Cornwallis surrendered. Although the British fleet was large with twenty five ships of the line, the French Fleet was larger with thirty six ships of the line and they were arranged in a formidable crescent. They refused to emerge to give battle.[618] Hood and Drake wanted to blockade the French fleet in the Chesapeake, but the superior officers Graves and Digby wanted to withdraw and on 29 October 1781, the British Fleet returned to New York.[619]

[616] Larrabee, *Decision at the Chesapeake, op. cit.* 195.
[617] 13-10-1781, Graves to Stephens, TNA/ADM 1-489, 469. In his rather plodding style he added that "I hope that their Lordships will be satisfied with the propriety of my conduct".
[618] Thomas J. Fleming, *Beat the Last Drum The Siege of Yorktown 1781,* (New York: H. W. Wolff, 1963), 337.
[619] Larrabee, *Decision at the Chesapeake, op. cit.* 198-199.

The capitulation at Yorktown completely altered the prospects of a British victory in North America and also the British viewpoint on the war. On Lord North receiving news of the British capitulation it was reported that he "received the news as one might a ball in the breast. He reeled, threw out his arms, exclaiming wildly, as he paced up and down the apartment for a few minutes, "Oh God! It's all over!"[620] Although George III and Germain remained unaltered in their determination to continue the war, Yorktown brought about the fall of the North Government which lost its majority.[621] In January 1782 Lord George Germain was forced to resign and to enter the House of Lords, whilst on 20 March 1782 Lord North also resigned.[622] In terms of cost-benefit analysis, it had simply become unprofitable for Great Britain to continue the war. The West Indies by 1781 had assumed a much greater importance in strategic and economic terms. The merchants and bankers who had lost the trade with America were keen to see the end of the war. Lord Shelbourne offered generous terms to the Americans with a view to driving a wedge between the American colonies and their French allies and also to encourage the resumption of trade with the former colonies as early as possible and as a result the Treaty of Paris was signed in 1783 terminating the war.[623] The thematic constraints in the form of incorrect assumptions, leadership failures, inadequate resources, failures in the Command and Control Structure, intelligence and communications ensured the failure of the British combined operations at Yorktown.

The Treaty of 1783 and the War of 1812

[620] Scheer and Rankin, *Rebels and Redcoats, op. cit.* 497.
[621] Henry P. Johnston, *The Yorktown Campaign and the surrender of Cornwallis, 1781,* (Miami: Hardpress Publishing, 1881), 161.
[622] W. Bodham Donne, *The Correspondence of King George III with Lord North from 168-1783,* Volume II, 415 Letter 719.
[623] Mackesy, *The War for America, 1775-1783, op cit.* 505.

The signing of the Treaty of Paris in 1783 did not remove all sources of dispute between Great Britain and her former colonies. The Whig Lord Shelbourne was responsible for the pragmatic nature of the treaty.[624] It was highly favourable to the independent colonies in order to encourage trade and the establishment of more amicable relations. The treaty provided for the payment of the debts owed to British merchants at the end of the war to be paid in full and also provided for compensation to be paid to the dispossessed Loyalists. In addition it also provided that the forts on American territory still in the hands of the British in the area of the Great Lakes would be evacuated and handed to the Americans.[625] However, none of these things happened. Furthermore, although Britain had overlooked her Native American allies in the Treaty of 1783, she was sympathetic to the Native Americans in the North West having territory of their own.[626] These and other factors contributed to a new conflict twenty nine years later.

The American War of Independence and the War of 1812 were in many ways completely different both in the way in which combined operations were used and the way in which the thematic constraints intervened in determining their success or failure. In the first war, Britain carried out an offensive war before the intervention of the French in 1778. The war was carried out with the army playing a substantial role supported by the Royal Navy, as opposed to a predominantly naval offensive involving a blockade. As a result, combined operations were of the greatest importance. On the British side, leadership defects, the distance across the Atlantic Ocean, the vast areas of the colonies and logistical problems, communication and the policing of the long, indented coastline of America acted as immediate thematic constraints. However, on the American side, the lack of a navy and army, the lack of a strong economic and financial

[624] O'Shaughnessy, *The Men Who Lost America, op. cit.* 361
[625] Hitsman, *The Incredible War of 1812, op. cit.* 3
[626] Barry Gough, 'Michilimackinac and Prairie du Chien: Northern Anchors of British authority in the War of 1812', in *Michigan Historical Review, Vol. 38, No, 1 (Spring, 2012), 83-105*

infrastructure and inexperience acted as immediate thematic constraints, whereas these thematic constraints did not immediately affect the British. The failure of British combined operations and the capitulation at Saratoga in 1777 led to the entry of France into the war in 1778. The British were thrown onto the defensive and combined operations, which are more suited to an offensive war, became less important to Britain until the threat of invasion disappeared in late 1779. In contrast, they became of great importance to the Allies and continued to be so right up to the British capitulation at Yorktown. On the British side, in the War of 1812, some of the same thematic constraints in the first war such as the great distance across the Atlantic Ocean and the vast area of the North American theatre, logistical problems, problems with communication and the difficulties in policing the long, indented North American coastline remained but leadership was no longer a problem since, unlike Lord North, the British Prime Minister Lord Liverpool was competent and had a reliable cabinet and British commanders were excellent. Lord Bathurst, unlike Lord George Germain, was an excellent political master and occupied a single unified post where the separate departments in the first war had disappeared. The British Fleet was the largest in the world and both the army and the Navy had substantial recent experience of fighting in the French Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars. However, other thematic constraints appeared. Britain was compelled to fight a defensive war in Canada as the European theatre was given priority in terms of resources. Canada with its long, largely undefended frontier was vulnerable, but it had some degree of protection as the British had forts at several points on the frontier such as at Kingston. Canada which had been only one theatre out of many in the first war now assumed great importance as the main target of the Americans and the Great Lakes became of the utmost importance since whoever obtained naval superiority controlled the adjacent territory and could compel the other side to evacuate their forces. Supplying ships, forces and supplies to the Great Lakes became a thematic constraint. On the American side, leadership defects now became a major thematic

constraint but the economy and the financial infrastructure, although more developed, still remained as a problem. Although the American Navy and Army had increased they still remained relatively small.

The outcome of the first war was completely different to the outcome of the second war and this is reflected in the Treaties. By way of contrast, in the first war, the outcome was a defeat for the British in the sense that they lost a large amount of territory and the treaty of 1783 recognised that in drawing up and recognising the boundaries of the newly independent United States. However, the outcome of the second war was a draw, in the sense that neither side lost any territory and the Treaty of 1814 recognised this by restoring the *status quo ante bellum.*

Part 2

Chronological Analysis of combined operations in the War of 1812

Part 2

Chronological analysis of combined operations in the War of 1812

Chapter 1. Britain on the defensive

Introduction

The causes of the War of 1812 lay in British trade restrictions and the use of the Royal Navy to enforce them by boarding American ships on the high seas to search for contraband. The Royal Navy also searched for British deserters attracted by the high rates of pay offered by the US Navy. President James Madison in the war message of 1 June 1812 stated that a declaration of war was in part the result of violating the American flag by harassing the eastern coastline, seizing British sailors from American ships and the use of blockades to plunder the commerce of neutrals.[627] This sometimes resulted in the mistaken impressment of American sailors.[628] The trade restrictions were issued by the British in the form of Orders in Council, a form of delegated legislation in English Law.[629] These trade restrictions were used against Napoleonic France as a type of economic warfare conducted by a British blockade. In response to British blockades the French issued the Berlin and the Milan decrees.[630] Some of the blockades declared by the French were "paper blockades" or mere declarations because the French did not have the naval forces to enforce them. These restrictions sometimes adversely affected neutrals such as the United States. In December 1807 the United States issued the Embargo Act followed in March 1809 by the Non-Intercourse Act.[631] Great Britain repealed the Orders

[627] Warren H. Goodman, 'The Origins of the war of 1812: A Survey of Changing Interpretations,' in *The Mississippi Valley Historical Review*, Vol. 28, No. 2 (September, 1941), 171-186 Also George C. Daughan, *1812 The Navy's War,* (New York: Basic Books, 2013), 44-48

[628] 6-7-1812, James Madison, *Copies and Extracts of Documents on the subject of British impressment of American seamen,* TNA/FO 5-104, 1-61. For extensive correspondence on the subject of impressment of American seamen. See also TNA/FO 5-104 continued, 99-116.

[629] 1-8-1812, Chetwynde to Robert Peel, TNA WO 1-744, is a typical example of an Order in Council. See also Arnold and Wiener (eds.), *The Encyclopedia of the War of 1812,* Vol. 3, 2012, 811. Documents and Primary Sources. British Orders in Council. 7-1-1807 and 11-11-1807. [Excerpt].

[630] Ibid, Vol. 3, Documents and Primary Sources. Berlin Decree 810-811 and Milan Decree 814-815.

[631] Ibid, Documents Embargo Act. 22-12-1807, 815-817, and the Non-Intercourse Act. 1-3-1809, 822-823.

in Council on 16 June 1812 but this did not terminate the war since Great Britain insisted on the right to search being retained.[632] The Americans were also aware of the British North American Colonies of Canada as a potential rival to the trade of the USA. The British North American Colonies of Canada at this time comprised Upper and Lower Canada and New Brunswick and Nova Scotia. In addition resentment also lingered over the failure of both sides to fully implement the terms of the Treaty of Paris 1783 which ended the American War of Independence. The Americans had not paid the compensation to the dispossessed Loyalists as laid down in the Fourth Article of that treaty and the British had failed to relinquish the British forts on American soil, especially in the area of the Great Lakes.[633] In addition the United States had failed to make payment of the vast sums owed to British merchants at the end of the American War of Independence as laid down in the Fourth Article of that Treaty, some states having passed laws preventing this.[634] This obligation was confirmed by the Sixth Article of the Treaty signed with the United States in 1794.[635] Furthermore the British were still continuing the policy of supporting the Native Americans in the North West by providing them with arms and encouraging the growth of a buffer state which hindered American expansion to the west.[636] In addition the British did not treat the Americans as a fully independent nation, for example, by failing to respect the coastal limits of the United States. Resentment still existed over the American War of Independence fought thirty years earlier. British attempts to enforce the Rule of 1756 also resulted in friction.[637] A clash at sea between HMS *Leopard* and the

[632] See Hansard. The House of Lords, TNA/ZHC 2-23, 715 where the term "our essential maritime rights" is used.
[633] J. Mackay Hitsman, *The Incredible War of 1812 A Military History* (Toronto: Robin Brass Studio, 1965), 3. Original edition 1965.
[634] Hansard, 28 April 1812 TNA/ZCH 2-22. Report on Claimants' Petition.
[635] Arnold and Wiener (Eds.) *The Encyclopedia of the War of 1812,* Vol 3, 2012 Jay's Treaty. November 19th, 1794, 791-799.
[636] Taylor, *The Civil War of 1812, op. cit.* 15.
[637] The Rule of 1756 stated that neutral nations were not allowed to trade with the colonies of a belligerent power from which in times of peace, they were excluded by the parent state. See 20 August 1806, To Howick from Lord Aukland, TNA/FO 5-51, 193, "A belligerent has a right to exclude neutrals from trade with the enemy which he has not permitted in times of peace". See also Hickey, *The War of 1812, op. cit.* 10. Trade closed to a neutral in time of peace could not be opened in time of war.

Chesapeake in 1807 over the right of the British Navy to search American vessels for British sailors resulted in outrage in the United States and was a step closer to what has been called a war to defend "free trade and sailor's rights".[638] A further clash occurred in 1811 between the US *President* and HMS *Little Belt.* The Madison government was also in difficulties because of criticism of Madison's foreign policy and under pressure from both the War Hawks favouring war with Great Britain and the Republicans of New England who favoured pro-British policy because of the trade with Great Britain. These eclectic causes led in 1812 to the American declaration of war against Great Britain whilst the latter was in the middle of an existential war against France. As in the first war, the Americans also had their eyes on the British possession of Canada. Canada at this time was a part of the British Empire and the occupation of Canadian territory was the major war objective of the Americans as it would punish Great Britain, increase the wealth and the territory of the United States, expel the British from North America, and remove British support from their Native American allies.[639] Taking Canada, said Jefferson, would be "a mere matter of marching".[640] Whilst the occupation of Canada remained the primary war objective, the acquisition of Canadian territory was only a means to an end to compel the British to repeal the Orders in Council and to halt impressment.[641] Changes in geopolitics in the inter-war years, particularly the Louisiana Purchase of 1803 which now rendered the Mississippi and New Orleans important targets had not altered the importance of Canada as the primary seat of operations. In addition the war, from a British perspective, was primarily a defensive one, the objective being to defend Canada and maintain the *status quo.* Furthermore, supplies of troops, seamen, ships and supplies to the North American theatre would always be limited because the European theatre would always

[638] Hickey, *The War of 1812, op. cit.* 44.
[639] Reginald Horseman, 'On to Canada: Manifest Destiny and the Unites States Strategy in the War of 1812', in *Michigan Historical Review,* Vol. 13, No.2 (Autumn, 1987), 1-24.
[640] Mahan, *Sea Power in its Relations to the War of 1812, op. cit.* Volume 1, 191. "The acquisition of Canada this year 1812, as far as the neighbourhood of Quebec, will be a mere matter of marching".
[641] Hickey, *The War of 1812, op. cit.* 43.

take precedence over it.[642] In addition the Americans possessed the advantage of having a large population in close proximity to the Canadian theatre, whereas British Canada was scarcely populated and was composed of many former American citizens.[643] Furthermore, British reinforcements would have to be transported across the Atlantic. The fact that Canada was the main object of contest for the two protagonists in the North American theatre emphasised the importance of the Great Lakes but Great Britain would still be carrying out extensive operations in the Chesapeake and New Orleans. In fact, the raids on the Chesapeake and New Orleans saw combined operations assume a new importance in conjunction with the efficient use of the blockade.

The circumstances of the war which started in 1812 were completely different from those of the war which began in 1775. In the first war, Britain fought an offensive war and its objective as perceived by London was to restore the authority of the Crown and to retain the colonies. The employment of the British Army in conjunction with the Navy to enforce the Coercive Acts meant that combined operations became of the greatest importance. The objectives of the colonists were to resist British coercive measures and, after 1776, to gain independence.[644] After the entry of the French into the war in 1778, large French naval and military forces were maintained in North America and the Spanish also entered the War in 1779 bringing with them the large Spanish fleet and both fleets were then available to conduct combined operations. As regards the North American theatre in the first war, the war was fought principally in the thirteen colonies and in Eastern Canada and also in the geographically proximate West Indies which, because of its wealth which contributed to the war effort, was of the utmost

[642] Hitsman, *The Incredible War of 1812, op. cit.* 31.
[643] 21-4-1813, Prevost to Bathurst, TNA/CO 42-150, 143-144.
[644] Atkinson, *The British are Coming, op. cit.* 348

importance.[645] In the context of the first war, Eastern Canada means the Province of Quebec prior to its extension by the Quebec Act of 1774 and the area of land to the north of the states of New York, New Hampshire and Massachussetts and also Nova Scotia. In the second war, Eastern Canada means Upper and Lower Canada and New Brunswick and Nova Scotia. In the second war, the objective of the British was to retain Canada and that of the Americans to force Britain to abandon the right of search and impressment and the interference with neutral trade. Canada was to be invaded either to absorb it into the United States or to use it as a bargaining counter in any peace negotiations. The concentration of French forces in Europe and the attendant risk of an invasion of the British mainland made Europe the principal theatre of war and resources were allocated to that theatre. The lack of resources in the North American theatre meant that Britain's war there was a defensive one. Following the abdication of Napoleon on 11 April 1814 Great Britain adopted a more offensive stance since resources previously used in Europe were available for North America.[646] The British blockade was especially effective in the second war which enabled extensive combined operations to be conducted in the form of raids on the eastern coastline of the United States. On both sides in both wars, different types of thematic constraints intervened at different times and at different levels to adversely affect the conduct of combined operations.

[645] Middlekauf, *The Glorious Cause, op. cit.* 414.
[646] 3-6-1814, Bathurst to Prevost, TNA/CO 43-23, 154.

Chapter 1. Britain on the defensive

Chapter 1 Britain on the defensive

1812 Pre-war. (Map 7)

The origins of British Strategy in North America in the early phases of the War of 1812

British strategy in the early phases of the War of 1812 in North America was determined firstly, by the demands of the European theatre of war which took precedence in terms of resources over the North American theatre and secondly, by the British military and naval position in North America immediately prior to the outbreak of War.[647] These factors were thematic constraints at the strategic level which limited the conduct of military, naval and combined operations in the North American theatre.

At the planning and strategic level, the Prime Minister and the Cabinet were exceptionally strong. The Prime Minister, Lord Liverpool, was a capable war leader. He displayed great competence at the highest strategic level in the war against the French and he took advice from Wellington in areas such as North America where he was not particularly strong.[648] His Cabinet was exceptionally capable. Lord Vansittart was Chancellor of the Exchequer. The Earl Bathurst was appointed Secretary of State for War and the Colonies, Castlereagh was at the Foreign Office and Melville was First Lord of the Admiralty. Mulgrave was Master General of the Ordnance. Civil-military relations were excellent. George III had gone and had been replaced by the Prince Regent. Thus, the problems which had been caused by the influence of the Crown in the first war were not present to the same extent. It is instructive to compare the situation at the start of the American War of Independence with that at the start of the War of 1812. Lord Liverpool exercised the role of Prime Minister fully, whereas Lord North did not even

[647] 18-5-1812, Prevost to Liverpool, TNA/CO 42-146, 197-202.
[648] Martin Hutchinson, *Britain's Greatest Prime Minister Lord Liverpool, op. cit.* 408

acknowledge it. He was firm and decisive whereas Lord North had been indecisive. Lord Bathurst issued clear orders to his commanders in the field. In contrast, Lord George Germain did not issue clear orders and he had poor relationships with the Commander in Chief, Sir Henry Clinton. The disputes which had existed between the Secretary for the American Department and the other two Secretaries disappeared as Bathurst occupied the single position of Secretary of State for War and the Colonies. The leadership defects and the faults in the command and control structure and the decision-making process largely disappeared. These important thematic constraints in the first war were not, therefore, replicated in the second.

In addition, Britain had the advantage that the country had already been involved in major wars since the 1790's with France. In terms of the relative preparedness of both sides going into 1812, therefore, Great Britain had the advantage since the pre-existing military and naval mobilisation and battle experience of the officer corps were very valuable. The situation was to some extent similar to that of the outbreak of the American War of Independence where Britain had an established and experienced Army and Navy and the Americans had neither. However, Britain's art of war was far more advanced in 1812 than it was by 1775.

Britain had been preoccupied since the outbreak of the French Revolution, firstly with the war against revolutionary France and then with the war against Napoleonic France. However, the increasing friction with the United States over the right to search American vessels and the issue of impressment, along with a number of clashes at sea led to an increasing likelihood of the possibility of war with her former colony.[649] Great Britain was keen to avoid a conflict with

[649] Parliamentary Debates, Volume XXIII, House of Lords Address respecting the War with America 18-2-1813, TNA/ZHC 2-24, 575-590. See also House of Commons 18-2-1813, TNA/ZHC 2-24, 593-649 for an indication of how much importance Parliament attached to impressment.

the United States while she was at war with France but nonetheless was compelled by circumstances to make preparations for that eventuality.[650] Sir George Prevost, the Governor-General of the Canadas and Commander-in Chief of British North America, had already been instructed by the Secretary of State for War that he must adopt a defensive strategy and that he was not to conduct offensive operations "except it be for the purpose of preventing or repelling hostilities or unavoidable emergencies".[651] On 13 February 1812 the Secretary of State for War requested a report from Prevost of the military situation in North America and Prevost's reply on 18 May 1812 accurately highlights in great detail the military and naval position.[652] This letter formed the basis of British policy and strategy in the event of war in North America and is therefore of the utmost importance. The Report made several important points. These are summarised in precis form below.

He noted, firstly, that the province of Upper Canada was most liable to attack as it was contiguous to the territory of the USA. With regard to Upper Canada, he noted that Fort Amherstburg at the head of Lake Erie was a dockyard and was currently undergoing repairs. (See Map No.7). Fort George at the head of Lake Ontario was in a bad state of repair. Fort Erie, Chippawa and Fort George formed a chain of communication between Lake Erie and Lake Ontario. Fort George was directly opposite the American Fort Niagara which was recently surrendered to the Americans (See Map No.9). In the event of war it would be highly desirable to gain possession of Fort Niagara to secure the navigation of the River Niagara. He noted that

[650] Taylor, *The Civil War of 1812, op. cit.* 116.
[651] 22-10-1811, Prince Regent's orders to Prevost. In Hitsman, *The Incredible War of 1812, op. cit.* 41.
[652] 18-5-1812, Prevost to Liverpool, TNA/CO 42-146, 197-202. The report is a first rate source and describes in great detail the strengths and weaknesses of the military position in North America less than a month or so before the outbreak of war.

York, on the north shore of Lake Ontario had a good harbour but required fortification. It was the Headquarters of Upper Canada and was a depot, a dockyard and a marine arsenal.

Prevost made an important observation in connection with Kingston. It was at the head of the boat navigation of the St. Lawrence and opposite an American settlement and was exposed to attack. He observed that if it was taken, it would cut the communication between Upper and Lower Canada. In the event of war, it would be necessary to preserve communication between the Upper and Lower Provinces, to establish a strong base for the militia and secure the navigation of the St Lawrence above the rapids to Lake Ontario.

He made two important observations in connection with Lower Canada. The first was that Montreal would be the first object of an attack and that it was on an island but had no defences. The only method of defence would be by an impenetrable line on the south shore stretching from La Prairie to Chambly with a flotilla to command the Rivers St. Lawrence and the Richelieu. The most important observation of all was with regard to Quebec. He observed that Quebec was the only permanent fortress in Canada. He stated that "It is the key to the whole and must be maintained. To the final defence of this position, every other military operation ought to be subservient". However, he pointed out that the fortifications were inadequate and the town was overlooked from the south shore at Point Levi which would need to be occupied in force as would Cape Diamond. The garrison consisted of 2,500 men. To emphasise the importance of Quebec he stated that "I have considered the preservation of Quebec as the first object and to which all others must be subordinate." He commented that defective as Quebec was, it was the only post that could be considered tenable for a moment, the preservation of it

being of the utmost importance. In connection with New Brunswick and Nova Scotia he noted that they were almost indefensible and that only Halifax had natural defences.[653]

The observations above particularly that on Quebec illustrate Prevost's analytical military mind and also his defensive strategy which was to some extent dictated by both London's orders and the limited resources available to him for such a large area.[654] The Report highlights the weakness of many of the positions. The exception was Halifax.[655] The Native Americans were also of great importance. The leader Tecumseh and his brother the prophet Tenskwatawa stated that warfare was the only way to defend their territory from the annexations of the Americans. Americans fought with Native Americans at the battle of Tippecanoe in 1811 which demonstrated their mutual hostility and the existence of a ready ally for Britain in some of the Native Americans of both the Old Northwest and the Creek nation of the Mississippi.[656] Thus Great Britain entered into war with the United States reluctantly but not entirely unprepared for the coming conflict. As previously, it is convenient to treat the analysis of combined operations on a yearly basis, since, as in the first war, the exigencies of the winter season marked the end of the campaigning season.

[653] 18-5-1812, Prevost to Liverpool, TNA/CO 42-146, 197-202.
[654] 10-8-1812, Bathurst to Prevost, TNA/CO 42-147 Continued, 98.The priority of making Quebec the centre of defensive strategy is confirmed in this letter in which Bathurst wrote of his approbation in making "the defence of Quebec paramount to every other consideration should the threat of invasion be put into execution".
[655] Nov 1794, TNA/MPH 1-808, A Sketch of the Town and Harbour of Halifax.
[656] 4-5-1812, Prevost to Johnson, TNA/CO 42-146, 180. Britain immediately realised the importance of maintaining good relations with the Native Americans, particularly those near the border with the U.S.A. In Instructions for the good government of the Indian Department Prevost wrote "You will continue to employ your utmost endeavour to promote His majesty's Indian interest in general by keeping up a friendly intercourse and communication with all Indian Nations assuring them of the King's paternal care and regard, as long as they continue to merit them as good and obedient children ought to do". See also 5-10-1812, Prevost to Warren, TNA/CO 42-147, 213-214. Re the Native Americans of the Western frontier of the United States etc.

However, if Great Britain was not entirely prepared for war in 1812, the Americans appeared to be even less so. On 8 June 1812 the Secretary at War, Eustis, declared that of the 10,000 men authorised for peace-time service, only 6,744 were in service and that he had no idea how many of the 25,000 men authorised by the current session of Congress had been called up. They were commanded by the inept James Wilkinson and the sixty year old Henry Dearborn. The Navy was tiny and Congress had no trust in it and refused it any increase.[657]

The defensive stance adopted by Great Britain on the outbreak of war in 1812 contrasts strongly with the aggressive posture taken by the British Government in 1775. The reason for this is that in 1775, the French had not yet entered the war, although they were covertly supplying the colonists with arms.[658] In the second war, from a British viewpoint, the primary theatre of war was the European theatre, since it was from continental Europe that the threat of an invasion arose and it was in Europe that the French military and naval forces were concentrated and where Napoleon had to be defeated. As a result, the European theatre was prioritised in terms of troops, supplies and ships and the North American theatre with fewer resources was compelled to adopt a defensive stance. The war commenced with the American declaration of War on 18 June 1812.

The campaigns of 1812

The Americans declared war on Great Britain on 18 June 1812. The British Government did not receive notification of the declaration until late July 1812 and new instructions were not received in Halifax until 26 September 1812. The delay created a window of vulnerability for

[657] Mahan, *Sea Power in its Relations to the War of 1812, op. cit.* 172
[658] Willis, *The Struggle for Sea Power, op. cit.* 43

the British forces in North America. As regards the Navy, the uncertainty was mitigated by a set of instructions given in May 1812 which in general terms ordered the Navy to repel any hostile aggression but not to commit it, and in the event of a declaration of war by the Americans to commence and direct hostilities and to protect his Majesty's subjects.[659] Once the declaration of war had been received Prevost moved his Headquarters from Quebec to Montreal to be closer to the seat of operations.[660] American states in New England e.g. Maine expressed an opposition to the war and a desire to continue trading with their counterparts in Canada. Vermont expressed similar sentiments and the British were careful not to alienate such sentiments and to avoid military action in those areas wherever possible.[661] Similarly the navy was ordered not to interrupt trade with New England since supplies and provisions for the British Army in Spain continued to be provided by America.[662] A cordon of troops was to be placed between the St Lawrence and the Richelieu Rivers.[663] Prevost noted that Brock's quick response had prevented an American attack on Fort George.[664] He noted in addition that British naval superiority prevailed on Lakes Ontario and Erie.[665]

The military position of Canada was sometimes compared to a tree. The roots were the sea lanes which connected Canada to Britain. The trunk was the St. Lawrence particularly Quebec and Montreal. The branches were the settlements on the Great Lakes.[666] Using this analogy, the United States did not possess sufficient ships to cut the roots from the tree by blockading

[659] Kevin D. MacCranie, 'Confronting Uncertainty with Decentralised Command, British Naval Decision Making at the Outbreak of the War of 1812,' in *Naval War College Review,* Vol. 70, No. 4 (Autumn, 2017), 78-100.
[660] 6-7-1812, Prevost to Liverpool, TNA/CO 42-147 continued, 15.
[661] 16-6-1812, TNA/CO 42-147 continued, 10. 16-6-1812. Boston. *The New England Palladian* "…such an offensive war under the present circumstances of the United States and the world would be unjust …we have no right to expend, unnecessarily, the blood and treasure of our citizens, most of whom do not enter into the argument, and may be considered as the mere victims of the ambition and caprice of those who are in power".
[662] A. Lambert, *War at sea in the age of sail,* (London: Cassell, 2002), 197.
[663] 15-7-1812, Prevost to Liverpool, TNA/CO 42-147 continued, 19.
[664] Ibid, 20.
[665] Ibid, 21.
[666] Hickey, *The War of 1812, op. cit.* 77.

the St. Lawrence and attacking the branches would not produce a decisive result. The best method appeared to be an attack on the St. Lawrence. Quebec was strongly defended which left Montreal as a potential target. However, the British Navy controlled the mouth of the St. Lawrence and in the Federalist area of New England there was little support for the war.[667] A compromise plan was adopted in the form of a three-pronged attack. The initial American plan of a three-pronged thrust into Canada, so redolent of the attack on Canada in the first war, was drawn up by Major General Henry Dearborn. Strategic decisions of this magnitude required the approval of the key decision-makers at the highest level and President James Madison duly approved the plan. The first prong was meant to attack Detroit, the second prong Niagara and the third prong the St Lawrence River and Montreal. The plan ending with the taking of Montreal was, however, a complex operation involving three or more co-ordinated military invasions. Innate complexity is a thematic constraint which enhances the possibility of failure because it increases the number of unforeseen factors which can go wrong. In addition the plan was susceptible to the intervention of those most important thematic constraints, weaknesses in the characters of the commanders and weaknesses in the chain of command.[668] As in the first war, the American plan to invade Canada did not survive contact with the enemy.

The first prong of the first American invasion of Canada

Hull's offensive. 12 July 1812. (Map 7)

Hull's offensive on 12 July 1812 was a reflection of the military and naval position of the United States. Any invasion of the British Isles was impossible with the inferior U.S. Navy. Other than commerce raiding, an option curtailed by the cruisers of the Royal Navy, only land

[667] Ibid, 80.
[668] Fitz-Enz, *The Final invasion*, 2009, *op. cit.* 17.

operations remained viable. The only British territory contiguous with America was Canada.[669] The old idea of conquering Canada in order to incorporate it into the United States was still alive, and if conquered, it could be either absorbed or used as a bargaining chip to pressurise Britain into reaching a more favourable peace settlement. Accordingly, Hull began the invasion of Canada.

The first prong involved an attack by the North Western army of William Hull with a force of 2,300 men crossing the Detroit River into Canada on 12 July 1812.[670] Although the operation involved a riverine crossing it was essentially military in character. It should be interpreted in conjunction with the operations in the east and subsequent operations. These were intended to commence at the same time but did not do so and this defect in formulating and implementing an effective plan acted as a thematic constraint on the operations. Hull's intention was to seize Fort Malden and afterwards the British base of Amherstburg. Although the Canadian Provincial Marine dominated the river the crossing was not opposed.[671] Hull occupied Sandwich and issued a Proclamation.[672] He stated that the 'arrival of an army of Friends must be hailed by you with a cordial welcome' but warned that 'If…you should take part in the approaching contest, you will be considered and treated as enemies, and the horrors and calamities of war will stalk before you'.[673] Only a few settlers joined Hull's army and only a few American settlers wanted to return to their own country. The biggest danger in British Canada was defeatism.[674] Hull's force which included volunteers from Ohio reached the Maumee River on 30 June 1812. Hull sent a schooner with his baggage and private papers ahead of his army to

[669] Mahan, *Sea Power in its Relations to the War of 1812, op. cit.* 187
[670] 17-8-1812, Prevost to Bathurst, TNA/CO 42-147 continued, 133- 138. (12 pages).
[671] Ibid, 133.
[672] 18-7-1812, Hull, TNA/CO 42-147 continued, 35. See also the newspaper report of the proclamation TNA/CO 42-147 continued, 18-19.
[673] 18-7-1812, Hull, TNA/CO 42-147 continued, 35.
[674] Hitsman, *The Incredible War of 1812, op. cit.* 67.

Detroit but this was taken on Lake Erie by the British giving them valuable information. These papers informed Brock of General Hull's advance and the size of his forces.[675] The intelligence acted as a severe thematic constraint on the conduct of American operations as the British were now fully informed of the size of Hull's invasion force and of his intentions.[676]

On 17 July 1812 Fort Mackinac on Mackinac Island was taken by a British joint force of traders, Native Americans and regulars. The map (Map no. 7 which describes the fort by the name of the old French Fort Michilimackinac which preceded it) shows its strategically important position between Lake Huron and Lake Michigan and the guns of the fort overlooked the harbour. This combined operation involved 10 bateaux, 70 war canoes and more than 500 men and was an important victory. The British were able to compel Fort Mackinac to surrender by landing a force on the opposite side of the island and dragging up heavy guns which then overlooked the fort.[677] The American commander on receiving the demand to surrender did so. He had no knowledge of the outbreak of war and this lack of intelligence acted as a thematic constraint to his defence of the fort. This was a perfect textbook example of combined operations in action which involved a small force, using mobility to exploit an enemy weakness even when in a well-stocked, fairly strong fortification. The capture of Fort Mackinac had important strategic effects.[678] This victory persuaded the Iroquois Native Americans who had hitherto been neutral to join the British side.[679] The British constructed the much stronger Fort

[675] 16-7-1812, Prevost to Liverpool, TNA/CO 42-147 continued, 32-33. Hull wrote subsequently to the commander of Fort Amherstburg asking for private correspondence to be returned under the private property convention. 16-7-1812, Hull to St John, TNA CO/42-147 continued, 43.
[676] Robert Fleitz, 'The War of 1812 and the Old Northwest', in *The Army Historical Foundation,* Vol. 14, No. 2 (Auumn, 2008), 34-41
[677] Hitsman, *The Incredible War of 1812, op. cit.* 73.
[678] Barry Gough, 'Michilimackinac and Prairie du Chien: Northern Anchors of British Authority in the War of 1812', in *Michigan Historical Review,* Vol. 38, No. 1 Special issue: the War of 1812 (Spring, 2012), 83-105.
[679] 17-7-1812, The Capitulation Agreement, TNA/CO 42-147 continued, 110. See also 8 February 1813, Prevost General Orders, TNA/CO 42-150, 98. The Prevost General Orders are an illustration that the parole system often did not work.

George near Fort Mackinac. The return of the garrison of Mackinac commanded by Lieutenant Hanks for the month of June 1812 indicated that the garrison strength was only sixty one regulars.[680] The return of ordnance, ammunition and stores taken possession of in Fort Mackinac and dated 18 July 1812 indicated a considerable quantity of stores.[681]

Hull was informed formally of the fall of Fort Mackinac on 2 August 1812. Since the Native Americans always supported the victorious side, Hull needed to achieve a victory and he proposed an attack on Fort Malden. However, news that Brock was on his way with forces to Amherstburg caused him to cancel this plan. Hull had made three approaches to Fort Amherstburg and had been driven off.[682] On 8 August 1812 he withdrew his men from Canada into Fort Detroit and at the same time ordered the garrison at Fort Dearborn to evacuate the fort. Hull's decision was based on a fear of the Native Americans which was confirmed on receiving news that they had attacked a supply column on its way to Detroit, near Brownstone, and driven off a relief column coming to its aid.[683] He then sent a further column of 600 men to restore communications but this was attacked by British forces commanded by Muir and Native American forces commanded by Tecumseh at Magagua on 9 August 1812. Although the Americans beat off the attack, they sustained heavy losses and retired to Detroit. The troops were attacked during their retreat in a combined operation which involved supporting fire from the Provincial Marine on Lake Erie which bombarded the road along which the troops were retreating.[684] Hull's character defect contrasted strongly with the pro-active character of the

[680] June 1812, Return of the garrison, TNA/CO 42-147 Continued, 112.
[681] 18-7-1812, Return of ordnance, ammunition and stores, TNA/CO 42-147 Continued, 113.
[682] 24-8-1812, Prevost to Bathurst, TNA/CO 42-147 continued, 147.
[683] 26-8-1812, Prevost to Bathurst, TNA/CO 42-147 continued, 159 – 164 (11 pages). This is a comprehensive account of the American invasion and related matters and describes Hull's fear of the Native Americans on receiving news of the fall of Fort Michilimackinac on p 162.
[684] 4-8-1812, From W. Hull to the Secretary of War, TNA/CO 42-147 continued, 153-155. He writes "I have every reason to suspect in a very short time a large body of savages from the North whose operations will be directed against this army".

British Commander Brock and illustrates the importance of the character of the commander as a thematic constraint.

On 15 August 1812 Isaac Brock demanded Hull's immediate surrender playing on Hull's fear of the Native Americans by stating in his demand that he could not be held responsible for their behaviour if he did not surrender Detroit.[685] This proclamation was remarkably similar to that issued by Burgoyne before the start of his Canadian expedition. However, Burgoyne's Proclamation had the effect of consolidating American opposition instead of terrifying them into subjugation. Brock's Proclamation succeeded in scaring Hull. On 15 August 1812 the Native Americans crossed the River followed by the British on the 16 August who were transported across the river in bateaux and a landing was made at Springs Wells. After an artillery bombardment on 15 August 1812, and an advance by a British column, Hull surrendered his army of 2,200 men, and all of Michigan Territory.[686] This victory was an important one for Brock who gained a vast area of United States territory and further Native American Allies who, as always, sided with the victorious side.[687] The Return of Ordnances indicates that the Americans lost substantial stores.[688] A Proclamation was issued on 16 August 1812 by Brock which confirmed the British rule of Michigan territory and which assured the inhabitants of their rights. The Adjutant General wrote on 25 August 1812 from St John's concerning the capitulation of Detroit on 16 August 1812 that this had been achieved without

[685] 17-8-1812, Brock to Prevost, TNA/CO 42-147 continued, 175 –180. Brock in a 12 page letter to Prevost describes in detail the combined and joint operation which he led against Fort Detroit following his occupation of Sandwich.
[686] 16-8-1812, Brock to Prevost, TNA/CO 42-147 continued, 165. Prevost was notified of the fall of Fort Detroit by Brock in a typical self-effacing letter.
[687] 16-8-1812, The Terms of the surrender, TNA/CO 42-147 continued, 181.
[688] 16-8-1812, Return of Ordnances, TNA/CO 42-147 continued, 185.

any British losses.[689] The success of the operation indicates the importance of the Native Americans as the absence of an ally can act as a serious thematic constraint.

The reason for the failure of the first prong of the invasion was the leadership failure of Hull which acted as severe thematic constraint. However, on the British side, Brock was an outstanding leader. Hull was an old soldier of the American War of Independence, although not a particularly distinguished one. He had poor leadership skills and was lacking in confidence and decisiveness. In addition, he displayed an exaggerated fear of the Native Americans.[690] In contrast, Isaac Brock was one of the most capable commanders on the British side. He appreciated the value of the Native Americans as allies and was able to use Hull's fear of them to his advantage. In addition, combined operations played an important part in both the acquisition of Fort Michilimackinac and in attacking the retreating American army by the use of the guns of the Provincial Marine on Lake Erie. The second prong of the American offensive began on 12 October 1812 with the attack on Queenston.

<u>The second prong of the first American invasion of Canada: the Niagara offensive. (Map 9). Queenston. 12 October 1812</u>

The second prong was the American attack on Niagara. This commenced with the Battle of Queenston Heights. This was essentially a military operation, however the military operation was entirely dependent on a successful crossing of the powerful Niagara River.[691] In autumn 1812 the Americans prepared for a second attack on Upper Canada in accordance with

[689] 25-8-1812, E. Baynes Adjutant General, TNA WO 28-304, 91.
[690] Hickey, *The War of 1812*, *op. cit.* 81.
[691] 30-10-1812, Albany Register, The Library of Congress Newspapers. LOC NP

Dearborn's plan.[692] The aim was to gain command of the Queenston Heights which would give the Americans control of the vicinity and also allow them to occupy the rest of the Niagara Peninsula.[693] Brigadier General Alexander Smyth commanded the US Army and Major General Stephen van Rensallaer the militia. The thematic constraints of faults in the command structure and deficiencies in the personalities of the commanders immediately intervened. Van Rensselaer was a Major General in the New York militia. Smyth would not take orders from a militia commander and Van Rensselaer was compelled to proceed alone.[694] On 10 October 1812 an attempt to cross failed owing to a lack of boat training and a shortage of oars. A further operation which involved crossing the river from Lewiston to Queenston began on 13 October 1812 under cover of fire from the American guns at Fort Niagara. Smyth's regulars remained behind and took no part in the assault.[695]

The operation involved the transport of troops in difficult circumstances by boats from Lewiston. Serious problems were caused by a shortage of boats, only thirteen being available and three of these were carried downriver.[696] The shortage in conjunction with the boats sunk by artillery meant that only 600 troops were able to cross initially.[697] The lack of resources seriously hindered the implementation of the operation. The extent to which the landing was dependent on the boats and their vulnerability to attack is shown by a report of the operation in "Extract of a letter from Fort George dated 14 October 1812".[698] However, Van Renssalaer's

[692] 13-10-1812, Sheaffe to Prevost, TNA/CO 42-352,164-165.
[693] Hitsman, *The Incredible War of 1812, op. cit.* 92.
[694] Richard V Barbuto, 'War on the Niagara, 1812-1814: The U.S. Army Comes of Age', in *Army Historical Foundation,* Vol. 18, No. 2 (Autumn, 2012), 36-43
[695] Hitsman, *The Incredible War of 1812,* op. cit. 95.
[696] Fitz-Enz, *The Final Invasion, op. cit.* 21 and 22.
[697] Hitsman, *The Incredible War of 1812, op. cit.* 95.
[698] 24-10-1812, Quebec Mercury extract of a letter from Fort George dated 14 October 1812, TNA/WO 44-245, 402.

forces managed to reach the far shores of Canada and fought their way to the top of Queenston Heights which overlooked Queenston village.

Brock ascended the Heights to the one gun redan to reconnoitre the position. American troops came over the hill and attacked. Brock was killed and was succeeded by Major General Sheaffe who ordered an attack on Queenston from both the north from Fort George and from the south and defeated the Americans.[699] On 28 November 1812 Smyth launched another independent attempt on Canada by crossing the River Niagara again but this also failed. The onset of winter brought operations to a close. The second prong of the American invasion of Canada ended with the failure of the offensive at Niagara. The loss of Brock was a thematic constraint to this and future operations as he was a leader of outstanding ability. The first two prongs of the American invasion of Canada had failed. However, the third prong of the invasion held out the possibility of capturing Montreal.

<u>The third prong of the first American invasion of Canada: the attack on Montreal. 20 November 1812. (Map 7)</u>

The third prong, the American attack on Montreal was led by Major General Henry Dearborn. The attack was meant to take place at the same time as Hull's offensive in the west. However, the attack was delayed giving Brock the time to defeat Hull in the west. This delay detracted from the overall effectiveness of the operations since the intention had been to conduct them simultaneously and the failure to do so acted as a major thematic constraint. In exasperation, Congress ordered Dearborn to attack Montreal. He marched from Plattsburgh to the Canadian

[699] Hitsman, *The Incredible War of 1812, op. cit.* 96.

border with 3.500 regulars and 2,500 militia.[700] The first Battle of Lacolle Mill on 20 November 1812 was indecisive and confused. In the battle, which was fought at night, two groups of Americans exchanged fire with each other for two hours, each group mistaking the other for Canadians. Dearborn called off the campaign returning to Plattsburgh.[701] The third prong of the American invasion of Canada had failed owing to the thematic constraints of poor leadership, planning and intelligence. The three-pronged attacks by the military had been badly planned and failed but the importance of the Great Lakes was acknowledged by the US Navy at an early date.

Lake Ontario. 8 November 1812. (Map 7)

At a strategic and planning level, the Great Lakes were of enormous importance in the War of 1812, because in that war Canada was the primary seat of operations. In contrast, in the American War of Independence, there were several seats of operations, of which Canada was only one. In the War of 1812 the conduct of military, naval and combined operations as well as the movement of supplies by each side were determined by whichever side achieved naval superiority on the Great Lakes. The Secretary of the Navy Paul Hamilton wrote to Commodore Isaac Chauncey on 11 September 1812 and stated that 'As heretofore advised, we must have possession of the Lakes Ontario and Erie this fall…At all event, be the cost what it may, we must have possession of the Lakes this fall'.[702] The side which achieved naval superiority could transfer troops and supplies and engage in combined operations at will. The side which failed to achieve naval superiority was immediately forced to suspend military operations since it was unable to transport troops and supplies and vessels were unable to operate on the Great Lakes.

[700] Hickey, *The War of 1812, op. cit.* 88.
[701] Hitsman, *The Incredible War of 1812, op. cit.* 112.
[702] William S. Dudley (Ed.), *The Naval War of 1812 A Documentary History,* (Washington: Naval Historical Center, *1985),* Volume 1, 307-308, 11 September 1812.

In practice, naval superiority was difficult to achieve. The manufacture and transport of armaments for vessels, sufficient mature timber, not enough artisans and limitations on effective intelligence in concealing designs from the enemy and security acted as thematic constraints.[703] Once vessels were constructed there were often insufficient seamen to man them, particularly on the British side. In addition, commanders on both sides were reluctant to hazard their fleets on a single engagement, unless the outcome was likely to be successful.

The developments on Lake Ontario did not involve a combined operation but they are commented on here because of their importance. Against the 16 gun HMS *Queen Charlotte* and the 22 gun HMS *Royal George* along with a three schooners on the Upper Lakes, Lake Ontario and a schooner on Lake Champlain the Americans had only the 16 gun American brig *Oneida* on Lake Ontario thus ensuring initial British naval superiority on the Lakes. The Americans and British immediately realised the significance of naval superiority on the Lakes, and both sides engaged in a shipbuilding competition. On 3 September 1812, Paul Hamilton, the Secretary of the Navy, ordered the competent Commodore Isaac Chauncey to assume command of the naval forces on Lakes Erie and Ontario, and to attempt to obtain control of them.[704] This important appointment indicates that the Americans were well aware of the strategic importance of naval mastery of the Great Lakes in particular Lakes Erie and Lake Ontario. Of these, Chauncey prioritised Lake Ontario as his choice of Headquarters at Sackets Harbor illustrates.[705] On October 6 1812 he arrived at the American naval yard at Sackets Harbor on Lake Ontario. The conversion of vessels to war ships was carried out and new vessels constructed in the navy yards. Chauncey organised the building of a naval yard at Black

[703] Ibid., Volume II, 10-4-1813, Master Commandant Perry to Commodore Isaac Chauncey, on the problems caused by these constraints.
[704] Hitsman, *The incredible War of 1812, op. cit.* 104.
[705] Ibid, 104.

Rock on the River Niagara and a second naval yard at Presque Isle on Lake Erie. (See Map No 7). On 8 November 1812 Chauncey sought out the *Royal George* and on the 10 November 1812 pursued her into Kingston Harbour but was forced to call off the action which was inconclusive. However, although this action was inconclusive, Chauncey now had temporary control of Lake Ontario.[706] However, on the British side, the conduct of the blockade had been successful from late 1812. The blockade allowed combined operations to be conducted by way of raids on the eastern seaboard.

The campaigns of 1813

The British blockade and raids. 1812-1814. (Map 8)

Blockades were considered to be of the greatest importance at a strategic level by the key decision-makers in London. The entire east coast of America was blockaded following the abdication of Napoleon in 1814. However, blockades could take some time before their effects on the economy and the financial system became apparent. In addition, the effectiveness of blockades varied in inverse proportion to the extent that the United States was an economic autarky i.e. a self-sufficient economic entity. Even in the first war the colonies already demonstrated an ability to exist without the importation of British finished goods encouraging the growth of home industries. For example in the first war under the constraints of the Old Colonial System and the Navigation Acts, the colonies had no gunpowder and had to import it all by smuggling or using supplies covertly supplied by the French. By the time of the second war however, the United States had developed to such a degree that there were over two hundred factories producing gunpowder. However, even before the outbreak of the first war, the colonies had a land area six times that of the mother country and a population which tended

[706] Ibid, 112.

to increase in geometric progression as Nicholas Cresswell observed in his diary.[707] The greater the area and the population and the economic development of the colonies, the more economies of scale accrued and the more immune they became to the effects of a naval blockade. The absence of resources as a thematic constraint was far more effective in the first war compared to its effect in the second. As an offensive tool, the blockade in the second war was more effective because in the first war the navy had other important duties to carry out, in particular co-operating with the army. In the second war, an extremely efficient blockade had the effect of confining American warships and commercial vessels to their ports, reducing the effectiveness of the *guerre de course* which was conducted by the Americans, halting imports and inter-coastal trade with a resulting decline in tax revenues and, in addition, the infliction of severe damage on the American economy, the banking system and on government finances.[708]

In the first war, there had been considerable debate about whether the powerful Royal Navy should be used to conduct a primarily naval blockade or whether the Navy should be used to conduct a blockade, but also to assist the army by way of transports of troops and supplies and to conduct combined operations. In the second war an effective blockade appears to have been implemented early on, and although only a partial blockade initially, it was gradually extended. The British blockade had begun in November 1812 with just twenty ships.[709] However, the use of combined operations was implemented early in 1813 when orders were issued to Admiral Borlase Warren to create a diversion to assist Prevost by attacking the American coast with

[707] Nicholas Cresswell, *The journal of Nicholas Cresswell 1774-1777*, (Carisle M.A.: Applewood Books, 1924), 271. Cresswell commented "The emigration from Europe, added to the natural population, is supposed to double their numbers every twenty years, some will say, every sixteen years".
[708] Brian Arthur, *How Britain Won the War of 1812 The Royal Navy's Blockades of the United States, 1812-1815, op cit.* Appendix B, 227-231.
[709] USA LOC Alexander Cochrane Papers 21 November 1812, Reel 6. 21 November 1812, To the Lord Commissioners of the Admiralty From Lord Bathurst.

regulars and marines. The combined operations nature of the enterprise was highlighted by the fact that both ships and troops were involved and that the attacking force was made up of a mixture of troops and marines. The emphasis was to be on the Chesapeake and the Delaware, which Warren was to blockade thoroughly.[710] In April 1813 Admiral Cockburn sailed up the Chesapeake to blockade the ports in the area and on 20 May 1813 the blockade was extended to New York, Charleston and the Mississippi. However, the blockade was not at this time extended to the New England states. The British forces in Spain and Portugal were dependent on American supplies of grain and the Eastern states were willing to supply them. Even in time of war these supplies continued and the British were careful not to interrupt them.[711] The blockade had a vicious effect where it was enforced and even interstate coastal trade was virtually ended. USA tariffs and taxes on such trade also ended as did US exports and general revenue declined accordingly.[712] The British combined operations in the form of raids kept the militia in a state of permanent alert although not sufficient to act as a diversion as was intended.[713] The defensive strategy adopted by Prevost was approved by the Duke of Wellington who stressed the need for the greatest caution. The Duke wrote to Lord Bathurst in a letter dated 10 February 1813 that 'I only hope that the troops will go in time and that Sir George will not be induced by any hopes of trifling advantages to depart from a strong defensive system'.[714] Whilst the British in Canada were conducting a defensive war, the

[710] W. S. Dudley, *The Naval War of 1812. A Documentary History*, op. cit. p. 163, Vol 2 1985, 80 – 81. This document indicates the extent of the blockade at the start of 1813. DS, UkLPR, ADM 1-4359. The document which indicates some 30 ships involved in the blockade was enclosed with a letter sent from Warren to Croker on 28 March 1813.
[711] W. S. Dudley, *The Naval War of 1812. op. cit.* Volume 1 1985, 491 – 493. See the letter from Sawyer to Allen 5 August 1812, 492 and see particularly the letter to all Officers of His Majesty's Ships of War from Allen His Majesty's Consul. 16 September 1812.
[712] Mahan, *Sea Power in its relations to the War of 1812, op. cit.* Vol. 2, 126.
[713] 1-8-1813, Prevost to Bathurst, TNA/CO 42-151, 96. He wrote that "The operations carried on in the Chesapeake not having hitherto corresponded with the just expectations of His Majesty's Government by creating a diversion in favour…"
[714] Hitsman, *The Incredible War of 1812, op. cit.* 119.

Americans were conducting an offensive one. In 1813, the Americans were preparing for a second invasion of Canada.

The American plan for 1813. (Map 7)

The American strategy for 1813 was based on the original plans submitted by the Secretary of War, John Armstrong and subsequently approved by Washington and which identified Kingston as the primary target followed by York as the secondary target, and Fort George and Fort Erie. However, the plan was subsequently altered by General Dearborn, the alteration being approved by Armstrong. The first objective now became York followed by Niagara and then Kingston, as the latter was thought to be strongly defended. [715] Mahan was later to identify Kingston as the lynchpin to the control of Lake Ontario and stated that if Kingston was taken, the British would have no communication to the west of it to send reinforcements or supplies.[716] The deviation from the direct approach of attacking Kingston to the indirect approach of attacking York reduced the effectiveness of the plan, and additional thematic constraints at the strategic level in the form of poor intelligence regarding the strength of the base at Kingston, ambiguous and imprecise orders and weakness in the chain of command intervened to prevent the effective implementation of the plan.

The period from approximately April 1813 to March 1814 was one in which both sides won victories and suffered defeats. The first engagement was an American raid on York which was a victory.

[715] Ibid, 136.
[716] Alfred Thayer Mahan, *Sea Power in its Relations to the War of 1812, op. cit.* Volume 2, 41. Kingston… "the capture of which would solve at a stroke every difficulty in the upper territory… the enemy could retain no position to the westward, because neither reinforcements nor supplies could reach them".

Chapter 2

Turning Point

Chapter 2. Turning Point

York. 27 April 1813. (Map 7)

The abandonment at the strategic level of the direct approach and the emphasis on the indirect approach meant that York and not Kingston was the primary target for attack by the Americans. This involved a raid in the form of a combined operation since York was remote and could only be reached by sea. It was an important British naval base with substantial supplies. York was the forerunner of the modern city of Toronto. The change in objectives was a planning mistake and was a severe thematic constraint at the strategic level. Although the strategy may have been at fault, at the operational level the combined operation was a success.[717] The emphasis on the indirect approach also meant that combined operations would be important mainly at the operational level and manifest themselves in the form of raids such as those on York and Sacket's Harbor.

The attack on York commenced with Chauncey landing troops at Sunnyside on 27 April 1813. The attack was a true combined operation since it involved a synthesis of military and naval power. Roger Sheaffe, the British commander, had suggested fortifying York but had only carried out the building of a few defences and York had no natural defences. The American force consisted of 1,800 troops made up of John Forsyth's riflemen and a small number of infantry whilst Sheaffe was thought to have had approximately 1,100. A British counterattack was beaten off and Chauncey in what was a true combined operation fired grape at the Native American forces in the woods. As the British retreated a magazine exploded killing about twenty British troops but also killing and wounding 260 Americans and the American

[717] Dudley (Ed), *The Naval War of 1812 A Documentary History, op. cit.* Volume II, 449. 28 April 1813 See Chauncey to Jones. See Ibid, 450 28 April 1813, Dearborn to Armstrong.

commander Zebulon M. Pike.[718] As a result the American troops behaved badly and York was sacked and burned.[719] The Parliament buildings were burned on 30 April 1813 and the military and government buildings on the 1 May 1813. The burning of York had no precedent and Britain was resolved to return the action as retribution. However, the attack on York was a successful American combined operation. The British return of killed, wounded and missing indicates killed 62, wounded 34, wounded and prisoners 43, prisoners 10 and missing 7.[720] The combined operation achieved its objective and achieved the capture of York but it was not perfectly executed as the boats carrying the landing troops had been carried away to the west by the wind. Nonetheless, American naval power had been successfully projected to a relatively far removed enemy post.

In terms of the development of combined operations, York was the first combined operation involving the US Army and Navy. In a further illustration of the increasing use of combined operations on 28 April 1813 the Royal Navy supported the army commanded by Major General Henry Procter in an unsuccessful attack on Fort Meigs on the Maumee River whilst the American forces moved on to attack Fort George in another combined operation which they took on 27 May 1813.[721] However, the British also conducted an offensive combined operation. They attacked Sacket's Harbor on 29 May 1813 by way of an opportunistic raid.

[718] Hickey, *The War of 1812, op. cit.* 135.
[719] 2-5-1813, Allen to Sheaffe, TNA/CO 42-150, 161. The terms of capitulation were entered into on 27-4-1813 but Dearborn did not ratify them until the following afternoon. Allen noted that "the inhabitants were exposed to every sort of insult and depredation". He notes that "these depredations appeared happened more from the insubordination of the men than the wishes of the officers". Ibid, 161. The public buildings were also burned. The civilian population were also treated badly as Allen notes that "Few houses in town escaped a minute search by two or three different parties under pretence of seeking for public property. Many have been pillaged and some have had everything taken from them and threatened with the loss of their lives". Ibid, 161.
[720] 27-4-1813, Return of killed, wounded, prisoners and missing of the troops engaged at York under the command of Sir Roger Hale Sheaffe on the 27 ult., TNA/CO 42-150, 165.
[721] 28-5-1813, Vincent to Prevost, TNA/CO 42-150, 189 - 191. This is a brilliantly detailed account of the attack on Fort George from the British commander of the fort, Brigadier General John Vincent from its inception on the morning of 27-5-1813 with the report of 90 to 100 enemy ships and the landing at Two Mile Creek.

Sackets Harbor. 29 May 1813. (Map 7)

The British also employed combined operations in the form of raids and in May 1813 attacked the American base of Sackets Harbor. This was an important combined operation of an opportunistic nature since it was based on the intelligence that Chauncey was absent from Sackets Harbor which was not only an important American naval base and dockyard but also contained the Corvette *General Pike* under construction which if successfully launched would give the Americans naval superiority on Lake Ontario.[722] The operation needed to be planned and implemented quickly before Chauncey's return and the force was not large enough to accomplish the objectives of the raid. The assault would also act as a diversion for John Vincent who had command of the Niagara Peninsula. The thematic constraints of inadequate resources, lack of time, poor weather and geography in the form of unsuitable terrain intervened to prevent the operation from being a complete success. The garrison of 750 men at Kingston was embarked at ten o'clock at night on 27 May 1813 and made a night crossing of Lake Ontario.[723] The British commanders were Commander Sir James Yeo of the Royal Navy and Prevost on board Yeo's ship but the assault was led by Adjutant General Edward Baynes.[724] Major General Jacob Brown arrived to command the American forces of approximately 500 regulars. On 28 May 1813 the fleet was off Sacket's Harbor at one o'clock in the morning the intention being to attack at daybreak, but a contrary wind caused the attack to be delayed in spite of Yeo's objections. Thus, a thematic constraint in the form of poor weather led to dissension among the two commanders. The British landed at Horse Island on 29 May 1813 and immediately found themselves under heavy enfilading fire.[725] The attack, however, was supported by fire from the

[722] Hitsman, *The Incredible War of 1812, op. cit.* 146.
[723] 30-5-1813, Baynes to Prevost, TNA/CO 42-150, 179.
[724] Ibid, 181. In his letter of the 30-5-1813 Baynes described the role of Yeo as follows: "Commander Sir James Yeo conducted the fleet of boats in the attack and accompanying the advance of the troops, directed the co-operation of the gunboats".
[725] Dudley (Ed.), *The Naval war of 1812. A Documentary History, op. cit.* Volume 2, 446. 1992. 23 June 1813, letter from John Johnston which attests to the power of the American fire.

gunboats.[726] Their objective was to get past the blockhouses and destroy the naval yard and the ship which was under construction. Yeo's fleet was unable to get close enough to destroy the blockhouses because of the prevailing wind and the fire from the gunboats previously so effective was ineffective against the blockhouses. Prevost decided that the operation was a failure and ordered the troops back onto the ships. The *General Pike* and the *Duke of Gloucester* were set on fire by the American defenders who anticipated that the dockyard was about to be taken, the former ship being partially destroyed and the latter ship completely.[727] The combined operation was regarded as a failure for British forces. It is true, however, as Theodore Roosevelt observed, that it ought to have been successful.[728] Baynes noted, however, in his letter dated 30 May 1813 that the terrain was unsuited for the employment of professional troops.[729] The return of killed, missing and wounded indicates a total of 44 killed and 185 wounded.[730] The raid had been partially successful but thematic constraints had intervened to prevent the operation from being a complete success. The raids on York and Sacket's harbour had both been conducted on the Great Lakes. However, the Lakes grew in importance in the War of 1812 since they were adjacent to Canada. Canada was the prime target of the Americans as it was the only possession of the British sharing a border with the United States. In the second war the Canadian Provinces of Lower and Upper Canada shared a border with the United States but so also did the Canadian Province of New Brunswick and this with Nova Scotia must also therefore be included in a definition of Canada.

[726] 30-5-1813, Baynes to Prevost, TNA/CO 42-150, 180. "The gunboats which had covered our landing afforded material aid by firing into the woods".
[727] Hitsman, The Incredible War of 1812, *op. cit.* 147, 149.
[728] Roosevelt, *The Naval War of 1812, op. cit.* Volume 1, 283."This attack differed especially from those on Fort George and York, in that the attacking force was relatively much weaker: still it ought to have been successful". However, it must be remembered that Prevost had been unable to wait for the reinforcements from Montreal due to the need to move quickly before Chauncey had the chance to return.
[729] 30-5-1813, Baynes to Prevost, TNA/CO 42-150, 181. "…a country abounding in strong positions of defence but not offering a single spot of cleared ground favourable for the operations of disciplined troops".
[730] 29-5-1813, Return of the killed, wounded and missing in an attack on Sackets Harbor on the 29-5-1813, TNA CO 42-150, 183.

The importance of the Great Lakes

In the first war the Great Lakes did not have the importance which they acquired in the second war. In the first war the prime objective of the Americans was to achieve independence. The conquest of Canada was an important part of this and the colonists hoped to make Canada as well as possibly the West Indies part of an independent United States. Lake Champlain was important, therefore, as it was the gateway to and from Canada. In the second war the prime military objective of the Americans was to conquer Canada both as an end in itself and to force Britain to halt impressment and the right of search.[731] It was the only British territory which could be attacked as it was contiguous with the United States and was also an attractive target because of its long vulnerable border which was difficult to defend.

The operations on the Great Lakes were of huge importance especially in the second war. The Lakes constituted an unbroken water barrier between the U.S. and British North America for hundreds of miles. Their control also affected the St. Lawrence River which in turn directly affected Montreal and Quebec. American control would seriously have enhanced their chance of victory but, conversely, British command of them would ruin American trade trans-Appalachia. Control of the Lakes by either side would also prevent the other side from carrying out combined operations and the vast distances involved, in conjunction with the hostile terrain consisting of impenetrable forest, removed any serious possibility of troops, equipment and supplies moving by land. The armies of both contestants were dependent on their respective navies gaining mastery since military operations and the transport of supplies were contingent upon it.[732]

[731] Hickey, *The War of 1812, op. cit.* 66.
[732] Hitsman, *The incredible War of 1812, op. cit.* 169.

There is an argument that if the Americans had gained control of both Lake Erie and Lake Ontario British control of Canada would have been lost. This is an argument with which the British commander, Brock, and probably the Duke of Wellington would have agreed. On 11 October 1812 Brock wrote to Prevost that 'The enemy is making every exertion to gain a naval superiority on both lakes which if they accomplish it I do not see how we can retain the country'.[733] In practice, however, in the main, great care was taken by both sides not to risk an engagement if the outcome was seriously in doubt and some engagements were, therefore, inconsequential. In practice, the irremediable loss of control of both lakes did not occur for protracted periods and the question therefore has the characteristics of a counterfactual conditional.

The question of who commanded the waters of Lake Ontario and Lake Erie was therefore crucial. From the first the Admiralty was aware of the importance of gaining and maintaining naval superiority on both the Great Lakes and at sea.[734] Planning and estimates had already been made for the new naval commanders required for the new vessels under construction on Lake Erie and Lake Ontario and the Quartermaster General whose opinion had been sought had given a detailed estimate of how the personnel being sent over were to be allocated.[735] On 20 July 1813 following the relative failure of the British raid on Sackets Harbor, Chauncey's ship the *General Pike* was ready for service and sailed to York which was occupied again on

[733] Dudley (ed.), *The Naval war of 1812, op. cit.* Vol. 1, 332. 11-10-1812, Brock to Prevost.
[734] 9-1-1813, Croker to Warren. "It is of the highest importance to the character and interests of the country that the naval force of the enemy should be quickly and completely disposed of". See J. M. Hitsman, *The Incredible War of 1812*, (1965), 156. See also 19-3-1813, Prevost to Bathurst, TNA/42 150, 104.
[735] 12-3-1813, Quartermaster General, TNA/CO 42-150, 108 – 110. In a remarkably detailed document the Quartermaster General calculated that the number of seamen required for Lake Erie was 170 and for Lake Ontario was 445, a total of 615. The existing number of seamen on both lakes was 150 and if that figure was deducted from the total figure of 615 that left a net figure of 465 which would be allocated from the reinforcements being sent over. In a further analysis Mr A. Gray calculated the number of guns on both sides on both Lake Ontario and Lake Erie once the new vessels had been completed. On Lake Ontario or example, it was estimated that the British fleet would have 118 guns by June 1813 and the American fleet 72 guns. These were only estimates however.

31 July 1813 where provisions were taken and buildings burned after which Chauncey returned to Niagara where Commodore Sir James Lucas Yeo also appeared on 7 August 1813.[736] Following an inconsequential game of cat and mouse with no engagement Yeo returned to Kingston. Both commanders were being extremely careful to avoid risking their fleets on engagements with uncertain outcomes on which so much depended. Prevost commented that British ships could not safely co-operate with land forces until the enemy naval force had been dealt with.[737]

Prevost was convinced that the Americans could not prevaricate for much longer in avoiding a critical naval decision without risking the loss of Fort George to a British combined operation.[738] Procter had written that if the superiority of Lake Erie was lost, it would be difficult to recover. So serious had the position become that on 13 July 1813 Procter was obliged to write to Prevost begging him for even one hundred sailors.[739] On the 16 July 1813 Captain Robert H. Barclay had written to Prevost informing him of the great superiority of the enemy.[740] The origin of the British defeat lay in a letter sent by Prevost to Yeo regarding distressing reports of food shortages and urging Barclay to seize the initiative and gain the ascendancy notwithstanding Barclay's warnings.[741] The serious situation regarding supplies

[736] 8-8-1813, Prevost to Bathurst, TNA/CO 42-151, 95-96. Prevost wrote that "It is scarcely possible that a decisive naval action can be avoided and I therefore humbly hope that His Royal Highness, the Prince Regent, will approve of it being courted by us".
[737] Hitsman, The Incredible War of 1812, *op. cit.* 163.
[738] 25-8-1813, Prevost to Bathurst, TNA/CO 42-151, 143. Prevost wrote that "I am in hopes in a short term to be able to be able to tell your Lordship that the long expected contest terminated gloriously for His Majesty's arms".
[739] 20-7-1813, Prevost to Bathurst, TNA/CO 42-151, 78 re information from Captain Barclay, the Senior Naval Officer on Lake Erie on the subject of what he requires to man and equip the squadron under his command. See also Hitsman, *The Incredible War of 1812*, *op. cit.* 166.
[740] 16-7-1813, Barclay to Prevost, TNA/CO 42-151, 80. Barclay stated that the "great superiority of the enemy may prove fatal".
[741] 14-9-1813, Prevost to Yeo, TNA/CO 42-151, 150. He wrote that "The reports which I have just received from the General Officers in command of the right and centre divisions of the army serving in Upper Canada confirm my apprehensions of the very critical situation both commands are placed in from the temporary naval ascendancy acquired by the enemy on Lake Ontario and Lake Erie".

was confirmed in a letter from Gilmour to Couch the Deputy Commissary General on 5 September 1813.[742] In September 1813 Britain entered into a contest with the Americans for the control of Lake Erie. The battle was important since whoever obtained control could force the other side to evacuate the adjacent territory in Canada.

The Battle of Lake Erie. 10 September 1813. Map No. 7

The question of who achieved naval superiority on Lake Erie was of the greatest importance.[743] The Battle of Lake Erie was not a combined operation but a purely naval battle. However, it demonstrates that even in engagements which lack the essential synthesis of military and naval forces necessary for a combined operation, the armies were dependent on the superiority of their respective navies for the effective continuation of military operations. The battle should be assessed therefore not merely at the tactical and operational level, but at the strategic level, since it had important strategic consequences. The Americans successfully completed the construction of two large brigs at Presque Isle and in Barclay's absence succeeded in floating them. This gave immediate naval superiority to the American fleet commanded by Oliver Hazard Perry who established a base at Put in Bay to support the American military commander William Harrison. His fleet appeared near Fort Malden on 25 August but Barclay refused to come out until he had reinforcements and the *Detroit* under construction was completed. The contest for supremacy on Lake Erie reached a climax on 10 September 1813. The Battle of Lake Erie was a naval engagement between the American commander Oliver Hazard Perry and the British commander Robert H. Barclay. The American commander William Henry Harrison

[742] 5-9-1813, Gilmour to Couch, TNA/CO 42-151, 152. He wrote that "Our situation here in respect to provisions is truly alarming". See also Hitsman, *The Incredible War of 1812, op. cit.* 2000, 169-170.
[743] 25-8-1813, Prevost to Bathurst, TNA/CO 42-151, 138. For Prevost's view of the serious situation on the lakes see the 13 page letter in which he wrote: "The great danger to which the Detroit frontier was exposed in consequence of the naval superiority acquired by the enemy from my inability to obtain officers and seamen to man the vessels I had prepared on it induced me to move forward to the centre division under Major General de Rottenburg".

commanding the North West Army depended on Perry and the British commander Henry Procter depended on Barclay since each needed naval superiority to move troops and supplies. The question of supplies was critical on the British side as large numbers of Native Americans and their families consumed large amounts of food.[744] Pressed by Procter, who was supported by Prevost, Barclay, who considered the risk to be very great, foolishly consented to gamble his inadequate fleet against the superior American fleet.

On 9 September 1813 Barclay emerged from Amherstburg with the *Detroit, Queen Charlotte* and the *Lady Prevost* and engaged Perry's fleet. Thematic constraints intervened in the form of a change in the direction of the wind and Barclay lost the weather gauge. In consequence, the Americans, although losing the USS *Lawrence* to Barclay's long range guns, were able to sail close to Barclay's fleet and use their carronades resulting in the speedy surrender of the *Detroit, Queen Charlotte* and the *Lady Prevost.* The thematic constraint of inadequate resources in the form of an insufficient number of ships and guns probably meant that it was unlikely that Barclay could have been victorious even if the wind direction had not changed.[745] The victory of Perry on Lake Erie gave the Americans control of the Lake for the rest of the War. He wrote to General William Henry Harrison that 'We have met the enemy and they are ours'.[746]

Although receiving the full support of Yeo and being promoted to the rank of commander, Barclay who was severely wounded was subjected to an automatic Court Martial for losing his

[744] Hitsman, *The Incredible War of 1812, op. cit.* 169-170.
[745] Hickey, *The War of 1812, op. cit.* 129.
[746] Dudley (ed.), *The Naval War of 1812 op. cit.* Volume 2, Perry to Harrison, 553. See also Perry to Jones. 10 September 1813. Ibid 554. See also Ibid, 13 September 1813, Perry to Jones, 557, for an account of the engagement.

fleet.[747] He was subsequently acquitted but the result of the battle was that Procter was forced to retreat and was defeated on 5 October 1813 at the Battle of Moravian Town in which Tecumseh was killed. The defeat illustrated clearly the overriding importance of naval superiority on the Lakes and the deleterious consequences which follow once that control is relinquished. The importance of naval superiority on the Great Lakes was shown by Perry's victory on Lake Erie on 10 September 1813. The immediate result of the American victory was that all British troops were withdrawn and no more British combined operations took place on Lake Erie for the rest of the war. Writing of the American victory on Lake Erie, Theodore Roosevelt commented 'It gave us complete command of all the upper lakes, prevented any fears of invasion from that quarter, increased our prestige with the foe and our confidence in ourselves, and ensured the conquest and of Upper Canada; in all these respects its importance has not been overrated'.[748] The issue of who controlled Lake Erie had been decided for the immediate future. However, the Americans still hoped to gain possession of Canada and in 1813 had drawn up plans for a second invasion.

The second American attack on Canada. Autumn 1813. (Map 10)

In August 1813 the American Secretary of War John Armstrong drew up a plan for a two-pronged offensive on Canada.[749] The plan was approved at the highest level by President Madison.[750] However, thematic constraints once again intervened at the strategic level to prevent its successful implementation. Although the plan rightly identified the importance of Kingston, Armstrong informed his senior general that "in conducting the present campaign,

[747] 14-11-1814, Hansard house of Lords, TNA/ZHC 2-29, 120 – 129 for comments and analysis of the Court Martial on Captain Barclay and Loss of the Flotilla on Lake Erie.
[748] Roosevelt, *The Naval War of 1812, op. cit.* Vol 1, 321.
[749] Hitsman, *The Incredible War of 1812, op. cit.* 178.
[750] Ibid, 178.

you will make Kingston your primary object, and that you will choose (as circumstances may warrant), between a direct and indirect attack upon that post".[751] Kingston was to be taken directly or to be isolated by being cut off from Montreal. Montreal had no natural defences and its capture would completely isolate Upper Canada.[752] In delegating the final decision as to whether to attack Kingston directly or indirectly, Armstrong had introduced an element of uncertainty into the plan and therefore the plan had inherent deficiencies at the strategic level which acted as a thematic constraint to prevent the successful implementation of the operation. Whilst allowing the commander on the spot discretion can sometimes be a strength, in this case it was not since President Madison had appointed as the senior general James Wilkinson who was universally regarded with contempt and dislike and who was now senior to Dearborn.[753] There were important thematic constraints at the strategic level and in the character deficiencies of the commanders. Wade Hampton, one of the American Commanders, had a problem with excessive alcohol consumption and he was a personal enemy of Wilkinson.[754] Furthermore, the plan was innately complex since it consisted of two separate prongs, both of which had to be co-ordinated. It seemed that little had been learned from the failure of the first plan which had similar thematic constraints.

The first prong under the American General Wade Hampton was to move his army from Lake Champlain down the Richelieu River to the St Lawrence River to meet up with General Wilkinson's army for a combined attack on Montreal. The second prong under the command of the American General Wilkinson was to sail down the St Lawrence River with 300 gunboats. This was the largest American effort of the war and involved over 11,000 troops.[755] Prevost

[751] Hitsman, *The Incredible War of 1812, op. cit.* 178.
[752] Dudley (ed.), *The Naval War of 1812, op. cit.* Volume II, 404.
[753] Taylor, *The Civil War of 1812, op. cit.* 282.
[754] Hitsman, *The Incredible War of 1812, op. cit.* 179.
[755] Ibid, 178.

moved his H.Q. to Montreal.[756] In accordance with the defensive strategy which Bathurst had earlier imposed on him, Prevost responded quickly and effectively. The first prong of the American invasion led by the American General Wade Hampton with 4,000 troops was halted at the Battle of Chateauguay on 26 October 1813 on the banks of the Chateauguay River to which Hampton had moved to obtain water for his army.[757] The second prong was halted at the Battle of Crysler's Farm on 11 November 1813.[758] The defeats at Chateauguay and Crysler's Farm halted the second American invasion of Canada. However, they were primarily military engagements and will not be examined in more detail. Following the American defeats, the Americans retreated to Plattsburgh. On 19 December 1813 the British attacked Fort Niagara which occupied an important strategic position.

The British attack on Fort Niagara. 19 December 1813. (Map 9)

An examination of map 9 immediately reveals the strategic importance of Fort Niagara. Fort Niagara was directly opposite the British possession of Fort George. It was located on the eastern bank of the Niagara River which entered into Lake Ontario. In his report to Bathurst dated 18 May 1812, Prevost had stated that "In the event of Hostilities, it would be highly advantageous to gain possession of Fort Niagara to secure the Navigation of the River Niagara".[759]

On 19 December 1813 British forces under the command of John Murray crossed the Niagara River to take Fort Niagara. A complete and detailed account is given in his letter of 19

[756] 8-10-1813, Prevost to Bathurst, TNA/CO 42-151, 163.
[757] 30-10-1813, Prevost to Bathurst, TNA/CO 42-151, 210
[758] Hitsman, *The incredible War of 1812, op. cit.* 190-191.
[759] 18-5-1812, Prevost to Liverpool, TNA/CO 42-146, 197-202.

December 1813.[760] The embarkation commenced on the 18 December 1813 and the troops landed three miles from the Fort early on the following morning. The force consisted in all of 550 British regulars all issued with scaling ladders and axes and the fortress was carried by assault on the 19 December 1813. On the American side thematic constraints intervened to ensure failure. Leadership was poor and the American commander was not even present at the camp. The camp security was poor and the password was extracted by the British. The American troops were asleep and were bayonetted by the British soldiers. This brutal retaliation was in response for the American treatment of civilians at Newark. However, in early 1814, the Americans planned a third and final invasion of Canada.

The campaigns of 1814

In March 1814 the Americans concluded their second attack on Canada with the unsuccessful second Battle of Lacolle Mills which resulted in an American defeat and signalled the final failure of their second plan to invade Canada.[761] The British engagements at Oswego and Sandy Creek were also unsuccessful. On 30 April 1814, the Secretary of War in Washington, Armstrong, drew up a plan for a third American invasion, but President Madison was not able to get the Cabinet to approve it until 7 June 1814. The plan consisted of a two pronged attack. It was therefore, again, innately complex. The first prong was an attack on the Niagara Peninsula. The aim was to drive the British out of the peninsula. The second prong was a combined attack on Fort Michilimackinac on Mackinac Island. However, the plan again ignored Kingston and Montreal and adopted the indirect, instead of the direct approach by attacking in the Northwest and the Niagara Peninsula.[762] The American Commanders selected

[760] 19-12-1813, Murray to Drummond, TNA/CO 42-156, 19.
[761] Hickey, *The War of 1812, op. cit.* 145.
[762] Hitsman, *The Incredible War of 1812, op. cit.* 216.

for the third invasion were competent but the orders issued by Armstrong were confusing. The replication of the mistakes in the first two plans indicated that the abilities of the key decision-makers were a serious thematic constraint at the strategic level.

The defeat of Napoleon at Moscow and Leipzig, his abdication on 11 April 1814 and the end of hostilities in Europe allowed for a re-evaluation of British strategy as large numbers of troops could now be sent to North America and this possibility stimulated the peace negotiations.[763] This event had the greatest implications for combined operations and thematic constraints. The event is comparable in importance with the intervention of the French in the first war in 1778. The thematic constraint of the influence of "other theatres" in the form of the European theatre which had previously been prioritised in the allocation of resources was thereby removed, and troops, supplies and ships became available for use in North America. This immediately allowed Britain to change from a defensive posture to an offensive one, and to conduct combined operations, within the restrictive parameters laid down by Lord Bathurst in his letter to Prevost dated 3 June 1814. The effect of this on the peace negotiations illustrates that the American key decision-makers were acutely aware of the opportunities that the abdication of Napoleon offered to the British and also of the dangers that it presented to the Americans.

The situation on the Lakes was critical. Early in the year Prevost and Gordon Drummond along with Major General Nichol of the Militia who had detailed knowledge of the terrain had discussed British strategy for the coming year and in particular a Plan for the destruction of the enemy vessels and craft on Lake Erie.[764] Prevost was amenable to a suggestion from

[763] 3-6-1814, Bathurst to Prevost, TNA/CO 43-23, 154.
[764] 21-1-1814, Drummond to Prevost, TNA/CO 42-156, 74 – 81. Plan for the destruction of the enemy's vessels and craft on Lake Erie. Drummond laid out a detailed plan in this long letter to Prevost.

Lieutenant-General Gordon Drummond and Commodore Sir James Yeo that they should lead an expedition to destroy the American vessels frozen helplessly in ice at the end of Lake Erie and using the existing troops in Upper Canada. However, on 29 January 1814, Prevost wrote to Drummond that 'whilst the enemy continues to concentrate a large disposable force near the frontier of Canada…thereby indicating his intentions…you must be sensible of my total inability of augmenting your present force'.[765] However, in an informative letter of 12 March 1814 Prevost wrote to Bathurst that the American forces were evacuating their positions at the frontier of Lower Canada at the French Mills on the Salmon River near St Regis at the Four Corners and were burning blockhouses, barracks and destroying craft and bateaux and that 2,000 men had gone to Sacket's Harbor and the rest to Burlington and Plattsburgh.[766] It was estimated that 4,000 men had gone to Burlington and 5,000 men to Plattsburgh and that General Wilkinson had also taken up residence there. The large force was employed to continue the second attack on Canada. The attack resulted in the second Battle of Lacolle Mills and in the defeat of the Americans and with it the end of the second invasion.

<u>The continuation of the second American attack on Canada. The Second Battle of Lacolle Mill. 30 March 1814. (Map 10)</u>

The Americans had gathered a sizeable force at Plattsburgh and started an attack on Canada.[767] The attack was an attempt by Wilkinson to save face following his defeat at Crysler's Farm and followed on from that. On 30 March 1814 Wilkinson with 4,000 troops moved from Champlain and crossed the Lacolle River near Isle aux Noix but the attack was

[765] 29-1-1814, Prevost to Drummond, TNA/CO 42-156, 83-85.
[766] 12-3-1814, Prevost to Bathurst, TNA/CO 42-156, 136.
[767] 31-3-1814, Prevost to Bathurst, TNA/CO 42-156, 165.

beaten off by troops using rockets.[768] This was an example of technology acting as a thematic constraint on Wilkinson's operation. The Americans retreated back to Plattsburgh.[769] The engagement, like the previous ones at Chateauguay and Crysler's Farm was a failure and marked the end of the second American invasion of Canada. The engagements which followed were raids on Oswego and Sandy Creek. Although small they were potentially important.

Oswego. 6 May 1814. (Map 7)

The Oswego operation, like the Sandy Creek operation which followed it were further examples of combined operations in the form of raids. Oswego was an old Fort on Lake Ontario. It was important because it contained supplies of heavy guns collected from inland and destined for Chauncey's shipbuilding programme at Sacket's Harbor. If the large quantities of naval stores and ordnance at Oswego could be captured, then Chauncey's shipbuilding programme at Sacket's Harbor might be seriously disrupted. The lack of intelligence acted as a thematic constraint to the operation, since, unknown to the British, an even greater quantity of guns remained at the Falls twelve miles up the River Oswego, awaiting transport to Sacket's Harbour.

Yeo and Drummond devised a plan to raid Oswego and capture the guns. 4,000 troops were available from Kingston. Prevost refused to support the operation which he regarded as being of a risky and offensive nature. On 3 May 1814 the *Prince Regent* and *Princess Charlotte* were

[768] 31-3-1814, Williams to Vincent, TNA/CO 42-156, 167. This attack illustrated how so many of these attacks were true combined operations. Williams wrote that "Major Hancock feels fully indebted to Captain Pring Royal Navy for his ready and prompt assistance in moving the sloop and gunboats from the Isle aux Noix to the entrance of the La Cole River, the fire from which was so destructive. Lieutenant Creswick Royal Navy was most actively zealous in forwarding the stores, and landing two guns from the boats and getting them up to the Mill", 168.
[769] 30-3-1814, The Return of Killed, Wounded and Missing at La Cole attack on 30-3-1814, TNA/CO 42-156, 169. The return shows 11 killed, 46 wounded and 4 missing. See also J. M. Hitsman, *The incredible War of 1812*, 2000, 206.

ready giving Yeo's fleet naval superiority over Chauncey's and a decision was made by Drummond and Yeo that they had sufficient troops and that the attack on Oswego could proceed.[770] The British assault force was substantial.[771] The expedition sailed on the 4 May 1814 and arrived at Oswego on the next day. Drummond wrote to Prevost that the depth of water was sufficient to approach the shore and engage the batteries, keeping the militia in check, and close enough to allow the use of brigs to transport the troops and give them sufficient cover.[772] It was the lack of deep water which had prevented the ships approaching the fort in the first war in the British attack on Charleston thereby causing the operation to fail. The operation involved the army and the navy working in close co-operation, the naval guns attacking the fort whilst the army landed.[773] Drummond wrote that "The place was gained in ten minutes, from the moment the troops advanced, the fort being almost everywhere open……the whole of the garrison effected their escape".[774]

However, the large quantity of guns at Oswego Falls had not been touched. The British losses in the Return show Royal Navy Personnel as killed 3 and wounded 11.[775] The British losses in troops indicate killed 15 and wounded 55.[776] The Return of the Ordnances dated 6 May 1814 indicate taken 9 guns, destroyed 2 guns, 299 shot and grape, 8 barrels of powder and provisions 1,045 barrels of flower, rope and 2 small schooners.[777] Even a crude cost- benefit analysis would indicate that this was possibly a relatively small return for the cost incurred and the

[770] Hitsman, *The Incredible War of 1812, op. cit.* 209.
[771] 7-5-1814, Drummond to Prevost, TNA/CO 42-156, 299-303.
[772] Ibid, 300.
[773] Ibid, 301.
[774] 7-5-1814, Drummond to Prevost, TNA/CO 42-156, 301.
[775] 6-5-1814, Return of the killed and wounded of the Royal Navy in action at Oswego on 6 May 1814, TNA/CO 42-156, 307.
[776] 6-5-1814, Return of the killed and wounded of the troops in action with the enemy at Oswego on 6 May 1814, TNA CO/42-156, 307.
[777] 6-5-1814, Return of Ordnances and Ordnance Stores taken and destroyed at Oswego, Lake Ontario this 6-5-1814, by His Majesty's troops under the Command of Lieutenant General Drummond, TNA/CO 42-156, 311.

assets employed. Yet the contemporary commanders were unanimous in assessing the operation as a success. The Oswego raid was followed by the raid on Sandy Creek.

Sandy Creek 30 May 1814. (Map 7)

This operation is best regarded as a continuation of the attack on Fort Oswego above. Intelligence soon arrived of the large quantity of guns at the Falls and to prevent their transfer to Sackets Harbour, Yeo blockaded the Falls. An attempt by the Americans to break the blockade was betrayed by some American sailors. However, an attacking force which was commanded by the British commander Stephen Popham having entered Sandy Creek on 30 May 1814 contrary to operating instructions was taken and forced to surrender. This is a good example of how minor engagements by small boats can have disproportionate effects.[778] The results of the attempt at Sandy Creek was that Yeo lost several boats and 200 sailors and that the USS *Superior* with 62 guns would give Chauncey the command of Lake Ontario. However, even before these raids had taken place, Napoleon abdicated on 11 April 1814 which ended the War in Europe which had important consequences for the use of combined operations in the North American theatre.

British strategy following peace in Europe

The defeat of Napoleon and his abdication on 11 April 1814 meant that large numbers of British troops could be sent to North America. The influence of the European theatre as a thematic

[778] Benjamin Armstrong, "'Zeal, Intelligence and Intrepidity': Naval Irregular Warfare and the War of 1812 on the Lakes', in *The Mariner's Mirror,* Vol. 103:1 (January 2017), 30-42.

constraint on American operations therefore ended. In a letter dated 6 June 1814 to Yeo Drummond still advocated caution. General Drummond wrote:

> 'there exists at present no motive or object connected with the security of this Province which can make it necessary for you to act otherwise than cautiously on the *defensive* (but at the same time closely watching all their movements) until the moment arrives, when by the addition of the large Ship now on the Stocks, you may bring the naval contest on this Lake fairly to issue, or by a powerful combined Expedition (if the Enemy, as is probable, should decline meeting you on the Lake) we may attack and destroy him in his stronghold'.[779]

Drummond was, therefore, advocating caution but at the same time suggesting a move to offensive action when naval superiority had been achieved, or, if the enemy refused action, to attack him by using a combined operation. Lord Bathurst had previously sought the opinion of the Duke of Wellington as to the best policy to follow in North America after the restoration of peace in Europe and the Duke replied in a letter dated 28 January 1814. So perspicacious is this letter and so accurate is it in its analysis that it worth reproducing the most relevant section:

> …Any offensive operation founded upon Canada must be preceded by the establishment of a naval superiority on the lakes. But even if we had that superiority, I should doubt our being able to do more than secure the points on those lakes at which the Americans could have access. In such countries as America, very extensive, thinly peopled, and producing but little food in proportion to their extent, military operations by large bodies are impracticable, unless the party carrying them on has the

[779] Hitsman, *The Incredible War, op. cit.* 212. 6-6-1814, Drummond to Yeo.

> uninterrupted use of a navigable river, or very extensive means of land transport, which such a country can rarely supply.[780]

On 3 June 1814 Bathurst in an extremely important primary source wrote to Prevost that in order to take advantage of the European peace very substantial reinforcements were to be sent to North America well in excess of 10,000 men. This letter is crucial. It confirms that Prevost's stance must continue to be defensive but also outlines the circumstances in which Prevost can depart from his defensive stance to an attacking one. He wrote:

> When this force shall have been placed under your command, His Majesty's Government conceive that the Canadas will not only be protected for the time against any attack which the enemy may have the means of making, but it will enable you to commence offensive operations on the Enemy's Frontier before the close of this Campaign. At the same time it is by no means the intention of His Majesty's Government to encourage such forward movements into the Interior of the American Territory as might commit the safety of the Force placed under your command. The object of your operations will be; first, to give immediate protection: secondly, to obtain if possible ultimate security to His Majesty's Possessions in America.[781]

This letter, although suggesting the possibility of an offensive operation repeats the warning that the primary objective of operations is "to give immediate protection" and "to obtain if possible ultimate security" i.e. the objective of operations is primarily defensive. In what seems to be a clear reference to repeating the dangers posed by a Burgoyne-style expedition, Bathurst warned against "such forward movements into the Interior of the American Territory as might commit the safety of the force under your command". Clearly Prevost was being instructed to

[780] Wellington to Bathurst. 22-2-1814. In Hitsman, *The Incredible War of 1812*, op. cit. p. 147, 213-214. John Gurwood, ed. *Dispatches of Field Marshall the Duke of Wellington During His Various Campaigns,* 12 vols. London, 1838), vol. 11, 525.
[781] 3-6-1814, Bathurst to Prevost, TNA/CO 43-23, 154.

maintain a primarily defensive campaign but at the same time if an opportunity presented itself to pursue an offensive action which did not put the safety of his force at risk, then he was to exploit such an opportunity. These instructions seem impossibly difficult to implement because any offensive action must involve the possibility of incurring an additional risk. They required steering a fine line between being cautious whilst at the same time not letting an opportunity be missed to engage in a safe offensive action. The instructions almost certainly account for the conservative conduct of Prevost, a naturally cautious commander and explain why he was so quick to withdraw from the Plattsburgh engagement, once the naval part of the combined operation went so horribly wrong. In 1814, meanwhile, the Americans continued with their plan for the attack on Canada.

The third American attack on Canada. 1814

The plan put forward on 30 April 1814 by the Secretary of War, John Armstrong, was confusing. Furthermore, the plan employed the indirect approach rather than the direct approach and did not unequivocally prioritise Kingston as the primary target. The lack of reliable intelligence on the strength of the forces at Kingston acted as a further thematic constraint in formulating a reliable plan. The character defects of the American military commanders in the first two plans had acted as a thematic constraint. It is a testimony, therefore, of the limitations of the American key decision-makers at the strategic and planning levels that they were to approve a third plan which again consisted mainly of two prongs and which again used the indirect rather than the direct approach.[782]

[782] Hitsman, *The Incredible War of 1812, op. cit.* 216.

The first prong was an attack on the Niagara Peninsula, the aim being to drive the British out of the Niagara Peninsula. Following this, Fort Erie could be taken and then Burlington and York. The reasoning was that the United States already had command of Lake Erie and this offensive would give them command of Lake Ontario.[783] The second prong was a combined operations attack on Fort Michilimackinac on Mackinac Island. This attack would reduce the influence of the Native Americans in the North West and also the fur trade and also reduce the opportunity of the British to interfere in the North West. However, Mahan had been correct in later identifying Kingston as the lynchpin to victory. He wrote that:

> The Secretary of War, General Armstrong, despite his vacillating course the previous year, had never lost sight of his perfectly accurate conviction that Kingston, if not Montreal, was the true objective for the northern army.[784]

In 1814 the Americans decided yet again to direct their efforts against the Niagara peninsula and not Kingston or Montreal. Mahan noted that the decision "was to direct the main effort against the enemy's right and centre, Mackinac and the Niagara peninsula, instead of against his left, at Montreal and Kingston".[785]

In assessing this decision it should be remembered that Prevost in his report to Bathurst on 18 May 1812 had also identified Kingston as being of the utmost importance.[786] The American plans concentrated on the north-west and Niagara instead of the key targets of Kingston and Montreal i.e. they adopted the indirect approach rather than the direct approach. In addition, the plan diverted forces away from the main attack on Niagara by attacking Fort Mackinac

[783] Ibid, 216.
[784] Mahon, *Sea Power in its Relations to the War of 1812, op. cit.* Vol 2, 182.
[785] Ibid, 188.
[786] 18-5-1812, Prevost to Bathurst, TNA/CO 42-146, 197-202.

which reduced the chances of the Niagara offensive succeeding and which offered no obvious major advantage. However, it was decided to proceed with the attack on Niagara and on Michilimackinac and the offensive against Niagara commenced with the Battle of Chippawa.

Chippawa. 5 July 1814. (Map 9)

The Battle of Chippawa on 5 July 1814 was the first battle of the Niagara campaign and its objective was to drive the British out of the Niagara peninsula. The Americans had approximately 3,500 men and the British approximately 2,000. The battle involved a river crossing and was fought on the shores of the Niagara River but is considered primarily a military engagement and is therefore mentioned only briefly. Interestingly, however, the American military Commander, Major-General Jacob Brown, had suggested that in this engagement the American naval Commander Chauncey undertake a combined (or "joint") operation against the British. In an acerbic reply Chauncey resenting the implication that the navy was a mere transport service for the army stated that:

> "The Secretary of the Navy has honored us with a higher destiny - we are to seek and to fight the enemy fleet – This is the great purpose of the Government in creating this Fleet and I shall not be diverted in my efforts to effectuate it, by any sinister attempt to render us either subordinate to or an appendage of the army".[787]

Crawford describes this as "the U.S. Navy's inability to co-operate" and states that "Brown's forces captured Lake Erie and defeated the British in the Battle of Chippawa but were unable to attack Fort George without naval support".[788] This response from Chauncey is surprising given the earlier Agreement Governing Joint Operations which laid down clearly the rules

[787] Hickey, *The War of 1812, op. cit.* 189. 14 August 1814, Chauncey to Brown.
[788] Crawford (Ed.), *The Naval War of 1812 A Documentary Analysis, op. cit.* p. 163, Volume 3, 370. See also ibid, 544. Secretary of the Navy Jones to Lieutenant Edmund P. Kennedy.

governing command by army and naval officers and clearly anticipated such operations.[789] This comment is extremely important in assessing the development of combined operations doctrine in the United States. If even a naval commander of Chauncey's standing was resistant to their use and unappreciative of their value, then the concept cannot have become embodied in American theory and practice to the same degree that it had in the British Navy and Army. The lack of a co-ordinated combined operations doctrine on the American side acted as a severe thematic constraint. The Battle of Chippawa is traditionally assumed to be an American Victory. However, the Battle of Lundy's Lane which followed on 25 July 1814, was a draw and no further attempt was made by the Americans to invade Canada. The other prong of the plan was the American attack on Fort Michilimackinac.

Fort Michilimackinac. 21 June 1814. (Map 7)

The first prong if the American plan of 1814 had been the assault on Niagara. This had been inconclusive and failed. Apart from ensuring the integrity of British territory in the Niagara Peninsula, it had no effects. The second prong of the American attack consisted of an attack against Fort Michilimackinac in the West. The resources used in the Fort Michilimacinac expedition could have been used instead to strengthen the Niagara operation. It once again employed a complicated plan involving two prongs and may have been indicative of defective planning as a thematic constraint. Its objective was to remove the Native Americans as a force in the North West and to destroy the Canadian fur trade and the support of the fur traders. The main American attack was a combined operation undertaken by George Croghan who sailed from Detroit on 3 July 1814. He reached Mackinac at the end of July 1814.[790] The guns of Croghan's ships were too low to engage the fort of Michilimackinac since the latter bore a great

[789] Ibid, Vol 2, 435. Letters sent by the Secretary of War Relating to Military Affairs, 1813.
[790] Hitsman, *The Incredible War of 1812, op. cit.* 235.

resemblance to Gibraltar and a frontal attack was not therefore possible, an indication of geography as a thematic constraint. He therefore landed at the far end of the island to try and persuade the British commander to attack. Robert McDouall, the British commander, was waiting nearby for him and attacked the Americans. The American attack was defeated and the Americans sailed away. However, on their way back they destroyed the only British vessel on the Lake a schooner the *Nancy* commanded by Captain Miller Worsley which had maintained communications with Michilimackinac. However, in a subsequent British attack involving the use of bateaux, Worsley captured the two American vessels the *Tigress* and also the *Scorpion* which ended any further attacks against Michilimackinac.[791] The division of their forces for the attacks on Fort Michilimackinac and Niagara had not been particularly good combined operations on the part of the Americans, especially when compared with the British operations against Mackinac Island. After the attack on Fort Michilimackinac, the American invasions of Canada ceased. From July 1814 Great Britain was able to assume a more offensive stance.

[791] Hickey, *The War of 1812, op. cit.* 2012, 184.

Chapter 3. Britain on the offensive

Chapter 3. Britain on the offensive

Bladensburg, Washington and Baltimore

Combined operations became of great importance in the North American theatre when early in 1814, the British changed from a defensive to an offensive stance. The change was made possible by the ending of the war in Europe following the abdication of Napoleon on 11 April 1814. The influence of the thematic constraint of 'other theatres' which had operated at the strategic level to inhibit the supply of resources to the North American theatre ceased. In consequence, resources in the form of troops, supplies and ships became available for the North American theatre which had previously been tied up in Europe. The British appreciated the strategic importance of the Chesapeake Bay and a plan was devised to begin major combined operations in that area. Major-General Robert Ross was ordered to "effect a diversion on the coasts of the United States of America in favour of the army employed in the defence of Upper and lower Canada", the point of attack to be determined by Vice-Admiral Alexander Cochrane.[792] The advantages of the expedition are listed in an undated "Statement of the general reasons for in the expedition to the American coast".[793] The objectives of the expedition were to act as a diversion for the Northern operations, keep the militia permanently on alert and to open up the east coast to the potential destruction of property and the demoralisation of the inhabitants. The expedition would also allow for the possibility of an attack on the American capital Washington and Baltimore and open up the Mississippi and New Orleans to attack. The authorisation of the expedition to the Gulf of Mexico was contained in a letter dated 10 August 1814 from John Wilson Croker in the Admiralty Office to Vice-Admiral Alexander Cochrane.[794]

[792] Hitsman, *The Incredible War of 1812, op. cit.* 240.
[793] Undated, TNA/WO 1-142 continued, 194.
[794] 10-8-1814, Croker to Cochrane, TNA/WO 1-141, 7-12.

Ross reached Bermuda on 24 July 1814 and on 3 August 1814 he sailed for the Chesapeake Bay, the aim being to destroy Barney's fleet and to attack Baltimore. The battle of Bladensburg and the subsequent occupation of Washington illustrate the excellent co-operation between the army and the navy and also the good relations which existed between the forces in the field and the political commanders in London. This contrasts radically with the position in the first war where the commanders argued with each other, the army and the navy had poor relations, and Lord George Germain had a vitriolic relationship with his commander-in-chief. The first task facing the British forces was the destruction of the American flotilla commanded by Captain Joshua Barney which had retreated up the Patuxent to mooring close to Pig Point.[795]

The commander of the navy Sir Alexander Cochrane conferred with the commander of the army Major General Ross to reach a consensus on the course of action, namely to disembark the army. The navy intended to co-operate with the army in the attack on Barney's flotilla. It is also noticeable that the army remained close to the navy. As the army marched north the navy supported it from the river, giving it the chance to retreat if that became necessary.[796] On the 22 August 1814 the army moved on to Upper Marlborough for a few miles distant from Pig Point on the Patuxent when Admiral Cockburn defeated the flotilla and destroyed it.[797] The close co-operation of the army and navy resulted in the complete destruction of Barney's flotilla. Ross then advanced to within sixteen miles of Washington and having ascertained the force of the enemy determined to attack it and accordingly put the troops in movement on the evening of 23 August 1814.[798]

[795] 30-8-1814, Ross to Bathurst, TNA/WO 1-141, 15.
[796] 2-9-1814, Cochrane to Croker, TNA/ADM 1-506, 598-599.
[797] 30-8-1814, Ross to Bathurst, TNA/WO 1-141, 15.
[798] Ibid, 15.

Although, as noted below, the naval commander Cockburn was confident that the army could take Washington, Ross's decision to continue the march to attack it caused some anxiety to Cochrane. It is clear, however, that great care was being taken to avoid the army being cut off and isolated and to avoid any repeat of a situation similar to Saratoga arising again. The first stage of the British offensive was the attack on the American defences at Bladensburg. Once this was taken, the American capital would be defenceless.

Bladensburg. 24 August 1814. (Maps 11(1) and 11(2)

The next target of the British expeditionary force was to approach the village of Bladensburg since this opened the way to Washington. In describing this Ross wrote that:

> On the 24th the troops renewed their attack and reached Bladensburg a village situated on the left bank of the Eastern Branch of the Potomac about five miles from Washington. On the opposite side of the River the enemy was discovered strongly positioned on very commanding heights formed in two lines his advance occupying a fortified House which with artillery covered the bridge over the Eastern Branch across which the British troops had to pass, A broad and straight road leading from the bridge to Washington ran through the enemy's position which was carefully defended by artillery and riflemen".[799]

However, the Americans had a more negative assessment of their position. The Secretary of War, Armstrong, informed President Madison that "as it was between regulars and militia, the latter would be beaten".[800] The American attempt to maintain their defensive position was impeded by a variety of thematic constraints. The Secretary of War exhibited deficiencies in

[799] Ibid, 16.
[800] Hitsman, *The Incredible War of 1812, op. cit.* 243.

leadership by failing to provide an adequate defence of the capital. Armstrong made the false assumption that the British would not attack Washington because it had little strategic significance and would instead attack Baltimore. The President exhibited poor leadership skills by waiting until July to organise a special military district.[801] When he did so, he showed poor judgement by appointing General William Winder who had no military skills and who was lacking in experience. In addition, lack of resources acted as a thematic constraint as Winder had only 500 regulars and provisions were scarce. There was insufficient time to organise the defences. Winder made no attempt to plan strategy or organise defences and instead continuously changed location to inspect the terrain and consequently failed to receive Armstrong's directives. In addition, President Monroe intervened to make the organisation of the lines worse.[802]

A well organised thrust by the Light Infantry under the command of Colonel William Thornton caused the enemy to retreat to the high ground whilst an attack by the Light brigade and the 44th on the enemy's left under the command of Colonel Arthur Brooke in conjunction with an attack by the 4th on his right caused the enemy to abandon his ground. The attack also comprised "the well-directed discharge of rockets" which caused confusion. Technology acted as a thematic constraint which prevented the Americans from successfully maintaining their defensive position. Ross wrote that "The enemy's army amounting to 8 or 9000 men with 3 or 400 cavalry was under the command of General Winder being formed from troops drawn from Baltimore and Pennsylvania".[803]

[801] Hickey, *The War of 1812 A Forgotten Conflict, op. cit.* 204.
[802] Ibid, 205
[803] 30-8-1814, Ross to Bathurst, TNA/WO 1-141, 16.

The retreat of the American army was so fast that a Georgetown newspaper described it as "the Bladensburg Races".[804] Few prisoners were taken, however. This was due partly to the rapidity of the retreat but also due to the fact that the British troops were fatigued due to marching but was also due to the temperature which was over 100 degrees.[805] The return of the killed, wounded and missing on the British side indicates 64 killed, 185 wounded and 0 missing.[806] Cockburn was now emphatic that Washington could be taken.[807] Cochrane was unsure and sent a note to Cockburn stating that "the sooner the army gets back the better".[808] At the back of every commander's mind lay the example of Burgoyne at Saratoga where a cautious retreat would have prevented the disaster. The possibility of being surrounded or cut off from the ships by the militia was a real possibility. The fact that it did not happen was an indication of how much more cautious, careful and selective the British Commanders were in the use of combined operations in the second war. Bladensburg illustrated how a well organised combined operation using regulars could easily defeat a poorly organised defence using militia. The poor leadership which involved General Winder who was a poor choice of military commander, and the inept disposition of the troops by the President himself were serious thematic constraints on the effectiveness of the American defence. The American capital was now open to attack. Following that the city of Baltimore could also be attacked.

[804] Hickey, *The War of 1812, op. cit.* 206.
[805] Ibid, 205. See also Peter Snow, *When Britain burned the Whitehouse*, (Great Britain: Murray Publishers, 2012), 43- 44. For the effect of the heat on the British soldiers who wore heavy red tunics.
[806] 25-8-1814, TNA/WO 1-141, Return of the killed, wounded and missing of the troops under the command of Major General Ross in action with the enemy on the 24th August 1814 on the heights above Bladensburg, Washington, TNA/WO 1-141, 20.
[807] 22-8-1814, Cockburn to Cochrane, TNA/ADM 1-506, 602-605.
[808] Jon Latimer, *1812 War with America,* (Harvard: Harvard University Press, 2007), 311.

Washington. 24 August 1814. (Map 12)

Ross marched into Washington at 8.00 p.m. Just as Napoleon on entering Moscow found no Boyars with whom he could negotiate, so Ross could find no American delegates with whom he could negotiate surrender terms. Both the President and his wife had fled Washington, the latter taking Washington's portrait with her.[809] The British forces entered the White House, then known as the President's Palace, the British consuming the ready prepared meal and taking as many of the contents as possible, partly as proof of the army having been there. Ross wrote in his journal that:

> "So unexpected was our entry and capture of Washington and so confident was Maddison (*sic*) of the defeat of our troops, that he had prepared a supper for the expected conquerors; and when our advanced party entered the President's house , they found a table laid with forty covers. The fare, however; which was intended for *Jonathan* was voraciously devoured by *John Bull;* and the health of the Prince Regent and success to His Majesty's arms by sea and land, was drunk in the best wines".[810]

The Commander of the Navy Yard burned it in a pre-emptive attempt to destroy the contents falling into the army's hands. The furniture in the White House was stacked up and ignited with incendiaries and other public buildings burned. The burning of public property was in response the earlier burning of York by the Americans. It is difficult to imagine a more humiliating national defeat. Armstrong was blamed.[811] Winder fled to Baltimore to organise its defences. However, even in the United Kingdom the action was condemned. The condemnation is a reminder that the War of 1812 was not conducted in accordance with the

[809] Cheney, *James Madison, op. cit.* 409.
[810] Latimer, *1812, op. cit.* 318.
[811] Cheney, *James Madison, op. cit.* 411.

standards of the age of total war and that some rules of civilised warfare still prevailed as a veneer however anachronistic that may appear to the observer in the twenty first century.

In a letter dated 28 August 1814 to Bathurst, Cochrane commented that he hoped that he was "not over sanguine in his expectations of the benefits I expected from a joint co-operation of army and navy" and commented that "The destruction of the enemy's flotilla has been a severe stroke".[812] It is interesting that it was Cockburn and not Cochrane who was confident of the success of the Washington expedition. Ross wrote to Bathurst in a somewhat laconic style in a letter dated 30 August 1814 informing him of the taking of Washington:

> "I have the honour to communicate to your Lordship that on the night of the 24th instant after destroying the army of the United States on that day the troops under my command entered and took possession of Washington".[813]

Ross in a despatch to Bathurst confirmed that the purpose of the expedition was "to attract the attention of the Government of the United States and to cause a diversion in favour of the Army in Canada".[814] In addition, the Americans could be punished for their incendiary activities at York and deterred from any similar future activities by the burning of the President's Palace. Ross regarded this as a legitimate instrument of retribution as did Bathurst. Bathurst appeared to suggest to Ross in a letter dated 29 September 1814 that if the assault on Baltimore was successful, the city should be punished even more severely than Washington and wrote that Ross could "make its inhabitants feel a little more the effect of your visit than what has been experienced at Washington".[815] However, the action was condemned by some British

[812] 28-8-1814, Cochrane to Bathurst, TNA/WO 1-141 continued No 2, 14 -15.
[813] 30-8-1814, Ross to Bathurst, TNA/WO 1-141 continued 2, 15.
[814] 30-8-1814, Ross to Bathurst, TNA/WO 1-141, 15.
[815] 29-8-1814, Bathurst to Ross, TNA/WO 6-2, 23-24.

newspapers and by Samuel Whitbread in the House of Commons.[816] This indicated a divergence between the idealism of some members of the political class in Parliament and the pragmatism of the Government and the military commanders on the ground who were keen to discourage the destruction of civilian houses and property.

Ross did not remain in Washington for long, however. He wished to ensure that there was no possibility of the militia coming between him and the navy. The expedition against Washington was an outstanding success and demonstrated what could be achieved by combined operations where there was complete harmony between the military and naval commanders. In terms of wealth, the city of Baltimore was an even more important target and the British resolved to attack it. It was, however, harder to take than Washington since it was well defended by a strong force and it was also difficult to attack.

Baltimore. Fort McHenry 12 – 14 September 1814

On 25 August 1814 Ross withdrew from Washington and re-joined the naval force in the Patuxent River. Cochrane's fleet and the army moved up the Patuxent River to threaten Baltimore.[817] Thematic constraints intervened to prevent the success of the operation. The combined operation was of great importance as Baltimore was a major naval dockyard, a town containing a vast amount of stores and was the base for privateers. The American Commander Samuel Smith had recruited 10,000 to 15,000 militia and the town was therefore very strongly defended. The British army of 4,000 troops and 500 seamen landed at North Point on 12 September 1814 fourteen miles from Baltimore. The British encountered resistance half way

[816] Hitsman, *The Incredible War of 1812, op. cit.* 244.
[817] Hitsman, *The Incredible War of 1812, op. cit.* 245.

on their march to Baltimore and the British Commander Ross was killed. The effect of the loss on the morale of the British troops was devastating, an indication of how important leadership is as a thematic constraint.[818] Brooke who replaced him launched a frontal attack on the American lines and took the American positions at some cost.[819] After resuming the march on Baltimore reaching it on 12 September 1814, Brooke was able to see the entrenchments built by the citizens around the city and the British Commander considered that they looked formidable.[820] Cochrane had sailed up the Patapsco River with the supporting bomb ships and the innovative rocket ships. To support Brooke Cochrane needed to get into the harbour to destroy the guns of Fort McHenry which commanded the entrance to the harbour. Cochrane's ships were unable to advance closer since vessels had been sunk in the harbour and batteries also commanded the harbour.[821] The sunken ships acted as a form of anti-access/area-denial in the way that the C*heveau-de-frises* hampered the British attack on Philadelphia in the American War of Independence and is an indication of the limitations of the projection of naval power in combined operations. The inaccessible position and distance of the fort acted as a geographical thematic constraint to the effective implementation of the operation. The bombardment which was highly intensive continued all night but the attempt was abandoned, notwithstanding the fact that the American guns could not return fire because the British ships were outside their range. The strong star shaped structure of the fort similar in design to forts built by Vauban, was strong enough by itself to resist the 400 shells which struck it out of a total of 1,500 over

[818] Hickey, *The War of 1812, op. cit.* 210-211.
[819] 17-9-1814, Brooke to Bathurst, TNA/WO 1-141 Continued, 34-41.
[820] 12-9-1814, The Return of the military killed and wounded in action against the enemy near Baltimore on the 12 September 1814, TNA/WO 1-141 continued 2, 42 – 43. Total killed are recorded as 39. Total wounded are recorded as 251. The figure of 39 includes Major General Ross. See also 17-9-1814, State of the Division of the troops on the coast of the United States of America under the command of Colonel Arthur Brooke 44th Regiment 17-9-1814, TNA/WO 1-141 continued 2, 44. The return shows the total force remaining of 3,991 men. Losses were not restricted to those killed in action. See 1-9-1814, Ross to Bathurst, TNA/WO 1-141 continued 2, 24-26, Losses which the army has sustained independent of those killed in action. Wounded left at Bladensburg 131 and men who fell out from a fatiguing march on 25-8-1814 110.
[821] Hickey, *The War of 1812, op. cit.* 210 – 211.

a twenty five hour period.[822] The British re-embarked on 14 September 1814. This assault bore some resemblance to the failed British attack on Fort Moultrie in the first attack on Charleston in the American War of Independence where a strongly positioned harbour fort was able to resist a very efficient naval bombardment. Baltimore demonstrated how difficult it sometimes was to co-ordinate military and naval forces to achieve a successful combined operations outcome, and how influential the thematic constraints could be in preventing the success of such operations. However, the blockade allowed for other raids to be conducted. In September 1814, the occupation of Castine and Bangor was effected.

Occupation of Castine. 1 September 1814 and Bangor. 5 September 1814. (Map 8)

On 1 September 1814 Lt. Gen. Sir John Sherbrooke and Rear Admiral Edward Griffith arrived at Castine on the Penobscot River. The Americans abandoned the Fort and retreated. The British troops proceeded to Hampden and Bangor and the inhabitants surrendered. The troops then marched to Machias, the only remaining American force.[823] The British troops approached the Fort though the woods but the Americans had fled. A letter from the militia dated 13 September 1814 stated that they had capitulated. The use of occupations as a means of exerting pressure on the enemy was an increasingly common feature of the blockade in the second war. It illustrated the continuing use of a variety of combined operations in the war in the form of raids, the threats of raids, the use of small boats to carry out irregular warfare, riverine operations, expeditions, occupations or the more ambitious operations such as the Washington operation or the New Orleans offensive. However, on 11 September 1814 Britain carried out a major combined operation which radically altered the course of the war. In the Battle of Plattsburgh on Lake Champlain, the complexity of the combined operation allowed the

[822] Ibid, 211.
[823] Hitsman, *The Incredible War of 1812, op. cit.* 246.

thematic constraints to intervene which resulted in a severe British naval defeat which caused the whole combined operation to fail.

Plattsburgh. Lake Champlain. 11 September 1814. (Map 13)

This battle illustrated the change from a defensive to an offensive strategy which Bathurst had suggested Prevost might undertake, within the parameters laid down in his letter dated 3 June 1814. This battle was an important operation and it will therefore be examined in detail. It was considered so important by Winston Churchill that he believed it to be the decisive operation of the war.[824] It was a true combined operation since it involved on the British side a synthesis of military and naval forces.[825] It was the poor co-ordination of these forces acting in conjunction that led to a major British defeat. It is important to assess the operation in the light of the overall strategy since the latter explains the rationale for the operation and also explains why the outcome was so important. Until Britain had complete naval control of Lake Ontario and Lake Champlain only defensive operations could be undertaken. Prevost wrote to Lord Bathurst that nothing could be undertaken without the aid and protection of the fleets on the lakes.[826] Lord Bathurst had written to Prevost in a letter dated 3 June 1814 outlining the very limited circumstances under which Prevost could assume an offensive posture.[827] These orders resulted from a change in British policy at the strategic level following the termination of hostilities in Europe and the release of thousands of troops which as a result became available

[824] Churchill, *A History of the English Speaking Peoples, op. cit.* Vol. III. The Age of Revolution, 236. "This crippled the British advance and was the most decisive engagement of the war"...
[825] 12-9-1814, Pring to Yeo, *The Naval War of 1812 A Documentary History, Volume 3,* 610. For Pring's comments on the combined operations nature of the Plattsburgh operation.
[826] 5-8-1814, Prevost to Bathurst, Select British Documents of the Canadian War of 1812. In Hitsman, *The Incredible War of 1812, op. cit.* 249. …"our Fleets on the Lakes cannot attain a sufficient strength to co-operate with the Divisions of the Army assembling for the destruction of Sacket's Harbor, and the occupation of Plattsburg, before the 15 of next month, and without their Aid and protection, nothing could be undertaken affording a reasonable hope of substantial advantage".
[827] 3-6-1814, Bathurst to Prevost, TNA/CO 43-23, 154.

for use in the North American theatre. The letter which is so important that it is partially reproduced again here stated that the reinforcements which

> "shall have been placed under your command …will …enable you to commence offensive operations on the Enemy's Frontier…" and that "Should there be any advanced position on that part of our frontier which extends towards Lake Champlain, the occupation of which would materially tend to the security of the Province, you will if you deem it expedient expel the enemy from it, and occupy it by detachments of the Troops under your command, always however taking care not to expose His Majesty's Forces to being cut off by too extended a line of advance".[828]

The last sentence is a clear reference to the capitulation at Saratoga and an indication that Lord Bathurst was concerned not to repeat the same mistake in the War of 1812.

It was thought by Prevost that Plattsburgh complied with these requirements. Plattsburgh was an important position which would aid the security of the province. Vermont was against the war and trade with it was extensive and therefore offensive operations would be opened on the western side of Lake Champlain where Plattsburgh was located. Vermont lay on the Eastern side of Lake Champlain. Prevost wrote to Bathurst in a letter dated 27 August 1814 that "…two thirds of the Army in Canada are, at this moment, eating beef provided by American contractors, drawn principally from the States of Vermont and New York".[829] Large numbers of British troops were being prepared for the attack on Plattsburgh and on Sacket's Harbor once naval superiority had been achieved on Lake Ontario and Lake Champlain. The urgency of

[828] 3-6-1814, Bathurst to Prevost, TNA/CO 43-23, 154.
[829] 27-8-1814, Prevost to Bathurst, TNA/CO 42-157 continued, 158.

obtaining naval superiority on the Lakes is illustrated in a letter from Robinson to Prevost dated 27 August 1814 concerning the urgency of obtaining supplies for the army.[830]

The naval commander, Commodore Sir James Lucas Yeo had been building the *St Lawrence* with 112 guns to be used on Lake Ontario. He was also building the *Confiance* on Isle aux Noix on Lake Champlain. Once the *St Lawrence* had been constructed, naval superiority on Lake Ontario would *ipso facto* swing in favour of the British.[831] The completion of HMS *Confiance* with her long guns and carronades would swing naval superiority in favour of the British on Lake Champlain against the American fleet commanded by Captain Macdonough. HMS *Confiance* was launched on 25 August 1814.[832] In a letter to Bathurst dated 27 August 1814 Prevost noted that '…the *Confiance* was launched yesterday…She is to mount thirty long pounders and may be ready to take to the lake on the fifteenth of next month…'[833]

A number of thematic constraints intervened to ensure the British defeat including time, weather, technology, leadership and intelligence. Prevost himself did not consider that the *Confiance* would be ready before 15 September 1814 but was sanguine about the achievement of overall naval superiority.[834] The long guns of the *Confiance* would be able to deal easily with anything the enemy fleet possessed since the thirty 24 pounders of the British fleet could attack the American fleet before the British fleet came within range of the American guns. Furthermore the *Confiance* had four 32 pounders and six 24 pounder carronades.[835]

[830] 27-8-1814, Robinson to Prevost, TNA/CO 42-157, 165.
[831] Hitsman, *The Incredible War of 1812, op. cit.* 251. The *St Lawrence* was more powerful than even Nelson's flagship at Trafalgar.
[832] 27-8-1814, Prevost to Bathurst, TNA/ CO 42-157 continued, 156.
[833] Ibid, 156.
[834] 11-9-1814, Prevost to Bathurst, TNA/CO 42-157 continued, 187. For details of the ships in each fleet. See also Hitsman, *The Incredible War of 1812, op. cit.* 257.
[835] 11-9-1814, Prevost to Bathurst, TNA/CO 42-157 continued, 188. For details of the guns available to each fleet.

However, Yeo crucially, replaced Captain Peter Fisher, a competent but junior commandeer who was familiar with Lake Champlain and who Yeo had appointed earlier, with Captain George Downie who was not familiar with the Lake. The decision was to have serious consequences as Downie's lack of familiarity with the Lake was a serious handicap.[836] Captain George Downie had arrived from Kingston on 2 September 1814 to take command. He arrived at Isle aux Noix on 2 September 1814. Downie's actions demonstrated conclusively that Plattsburgh was a true combined operation. On 3 September 1814 he ordered Captain Pring to take the gunboats to support the advance of the British Army. The American Commander George Izzard had created strong fortifications at Plattsburgh in order to resist a combined operation but the Secretary of State for War ordered Izzard to move his army to the St Lawrence River to threaten communications between Kingston and Montreal. This movement of troops weakened the American position and acted as a thematic constraint. Izzard set out for Sacket's Harbor with 4,000 troops and left a small contingent of 1,500 men to defend Plattsburgh.[837]

Prevost had reduced the morale of the men he had been sent from Wellington by insisting on the trivial enforcement of regulations relating to military dress and also issues concerning promotion which acted to cause disaffection. This illustrates both pomposity and incompetence.[838] These qualities certainly indicated a defect in leadership. Dixon in his seminal work "On the Psychology of Military Incompetence" identifies a love of "bull, aversion to reconnaissance and intelligence as two of the main characteristics of military incompetence.[839] Major General Frederick P. Robinson noted that there did not appear to be any attempt to use espionage to gather intelligence and that there appeared to be no co-ordinated plan.[840] On 6

[836] Fitz-Enz, *The Final Invasion, op. cit.* 94.
[837] Hitsman, *The Incredible War of 1812, op. cit.* 252.
[838] Ibid, 254. See the Letter from Lieutenant William Grattan of the 88th Regiment.
[839] Dixon, *On the Psychology of Military Incompetence, op. cit.* 67.
[840] Hitsman, *The Incredible War of 1812, op. cit.* 255.

September 1814 the British army entered Plattsburgh. The American army retreated across the Saranac River. The British prepared their batteries and awaited the arrival of the flotilla. The latter action demonstrates the synthesis of military and naval actions. The gunboats possessed by Prevost were enough to deal with the batteries of the Americans however the American naval force would prevent them effecting this. The intention was to destroy the American naval force and then to co-operate with the army.

Captain Downie notified Prevost the *Confiance* was not ready. Prevost was already aware of this. Nonetheless he still pressurised Downie to continue and on 9 September *Confiance* joined Captain Daniel Pring off Chazy and the carpenters worked hard to finish the work on the *Confiance.* On 9 September 1814 Downie wrote to Prevost that "I rely on any assistance you can afford the Squadron".[841] On 10 September 1814 Downie agreed to go into action.[842] The *Confiance* would notify the army of the flotilla's approach by a signal or "scaling" from the guns i.e. firing the cartridge but without shot. The signal was given at 5.00 a.m. The army would then immediately begin its attack as Prevost had promised. This interaction between the army and the navy and the mutual interdependence of the navy and the army clearly indicates the combined operations nature of this action. On 11 September 1814 Downie set sail from Chazy and signalled his approach. That Downie took the combined operations nature of the engagement seriously as regards the co-ordinated timing of the military and the naval attacks is shown by his address to his men when he told them "There are the Enemy's Ships, our Army are to storm the Enemy's works at the moment we engage, and mind don't let us be behind".[843] Captain Thomas Macdonough USN had anchored his four vessels in a line parallel to the

[841] Ibid, 257. 9 September 1814, Downie to Prevost, NAC/CO Vol 158.
[842] Fitz-Enz, *The Final Invasion., op. cit.* 96-97. There is a discussion of the effect of the partially completed work of the carpenters on the performance of the *Confiance* in the battle.
[843] Hitsman, *The Incredible war of 1812, op. cit.* 259. NAC/CO 42, Vol 158, Statement of Lieutenant Robinson.

Plattsburgh defences in the order of the *Eagle, Saratoga, Ticonderoga* and *Preble* followed by some gunboats. Downie intended to sail the *Confiance* past the *Eagle* and after giving the *Eagle* a broadside to attack the *Saratoga.* The *Linnet* and the *Chubb* would attack the *Eagle* whilst the *Finch* and the gunboats attacked the American rear. The *Confiance* had long range guns which outranged those of the Americans. It appeared, however, that Downie had determined on a close action engagement.[844] The absence of sufficient carronades and the over-reliance on long guns was a thematic constraint in technology.

Prevost in a detailed six page dispatch to Bathurst dated 11 September 1814 gave a full account of the battle. The essential points are reproduced as follows. He wrote that:

> "I found the enemy in the occupation of an elevated ridge of land …with their flotilla at anchor out of gunshot from the shore, consisting of a ship, a brig, a schooner, a sloop and ten gun boats.
>
> I immediately communicated this circumstance to Captain Downie who has been recently appointed to command the vessels on Lake Champlain consisting of a ship, a brig, two sloops and twelve gunboats and requested his co-operation and in the meantime batteries were constructed for the guns brought from the rear".[845]

The above two paragraphs indicate that, on paper at least, the two fleets were fairly evenly matched. However, the British fleet commander might have had an insufficiently forceful personality and allowed himself to be pressurised into a hurried battle. A lack of familiarity with the Lake and an inability to resist pressure were important thematic constraints. Downie commanded a warship only partially completed, the decks of which still contained the tools of

[844] Dudley, *The Naval War of 1812, op cit.* Vol. 3, 610, Pring to Yeo
[845] 11 September 1814, Prevost to Bathurst, TNA/CO 42-157 continued, 187.

the carpenters who had been forced to leave the *Confiance* in a hurry. Time was also another thematic constraint. A lack of time creates a pressurised environment and increases the likelihood of making incorrect decisions.

In a note in the margin to the letter Prevost notes the guns available for each fleet. These are as follows:

	Guns
The Saratoga	26
Surprise	20
Thunderer	16
Preble	7
10 Gunboats	14
	Guns
The Confiance	36
Linnet	18
Broke	10
Shannon	10
12 Gunboats	16 [846]

Prevost continued:

> "On the morning of the 11th our flotilla was seen over the isthmus…steering for Plattsburgh Bay. I immediately ordered…the Brigade under Major General Robinson … to force the ford of the Saranac and advance provided with scaling ladders to escalate the enemy's works upon the heights…The batteries opened fire the instant the ships engaged.[847]

It is this apparent attempt at synchronicity that conclusively proves the combined operations nature of the Plattsburgh operation. The military and naval elements were totally interdependent on one another and the success or failure of the one would ensure the success or failure of the other. However, the failure of the wind threw Downie's approach into disarray

[846] 11September 1814, Prevost to Bathurst, TNA/CO 42-157 continued, 188.
[847] Ibid.

minimising the effective use of the long guns on the *Confiance.* The subsequent close quarter fighting allowed the American flotilla to bring their more numerous and deadly carronades into use. Prevost continued:

> …notwithstanding the intrepid valor with which Captain Downie led his flotilla into action…I had the extreme mortification to hear the shout of victory from the enemy's works in consequence of the British flag being lowered on board the Confiance and Linnet and to see our gunboats seeking their safety in flight.[848]

Prevost identified this precise moment as the moment when the combined operation failed. He believed that the naval defeat made any further advance by the troops pointless.[849]

It is by no means clear that Prevost gave the order to Robinson to attack when the latter heard the navy give its signal. If Prevost did not then this was sufficient to cause the combined operation to falter. Downie was compelled to engage the American fleet without the support of the army. In addition a complex combination of the north breeze and the north-south current running in opposition to the Lake's south-north current created a mix of eddies which caused difficulties in anchoring. However, Downie appears to have agreed with Prevost that he would engage with the enemy at close range within the bay.[850] This decision nullified the advantages which the long guns bestowed on Downie's fleet and exposed it to the deadly fire of the enemy's carronades. Downie was killed in the engagement with the *Saratoga.* Furthermore the *Confiance* and the *Linnet* surrendered. The naval engagement had resulted in a British defeat.[851]

[848] Ibid.
[849] Ibid. 188-189.
[850] Herkalo, *The Battles at Plattsburgh, op. cit.* 105 and 107.
[851] Hitsman, *The Incredible War of 1812, op. cit.* 260.

The return of killed, wounded and missing for the British side indicated killed 37, wounded 151 and missing 55.[852]

Prevost called off the attack. However in a subsequent letter to Bathurst on 22 September 1814 he explained that no offensive operations could be carried on within the enemy's territory for the destruction of his naval establishment without naval support. He wrote that "Having ascertained that our flotilla in the Richelieu was in every respect equal to the enemy's and having received from its commander the assurance not only of his readiness but of his ability to co-operate with the army, I did not hesitate in advancing to Plattsburgh…" [853]

It is clear that the statement that Prevost had received confirmation from Downie that the fleet was ready was a misrepresentation that bordered on a lie. Prevost concluded with the statement that:

> I have forwarded a comparative state of the two squadrons in order that your Lordship may be satisfied with my reasons for not discouraging a naval contest in which, if all had done their duty, I might have had a very different report to make.[854]

However, one must ask to what extent, if any, these are post facto rationalisations. One cannot but be suspicious when Prevost commented that he had "received from (the) commander the assurance… of his readiness" when Downie had stated that he did not consider the *Confiance* ready. In addition the comment in the letter concerning "a naval contest in which, if all had

[852] 14-9-1814, TNA CO 42-157 continued, 192. Return of the killed, wounded and missing of the Left Division of the Army under the Command of Major General de Rottenburg in action with the enemy from 6 to the 14 September 1814 inclusive.
[853] 22-9-1814, Prevost to Bathurst, TNA/CO 42-157 continued, 209.
[854] 22-9-1814, Prevost to Bathurst, TNA/CO 42-157 continued, 210- 211.

done their duty, I might have had a very different report to make" was a dishonourable comment on a junior officer. Furthermore, the Americans had already been defeated and Prevost's argument appears to be invalid.[855]

The failure of the British to gain naval superiority on Lake Champlain dealt a serious blow to their offensive operations. The defeat halted the British offensive and greatly reduced the negotiating strength of the British Peace Commissioners. The thematic constraint of defects in character had come into play to ensure the failure of the combined operation. Prevost was by nature a defensively orientated commander although he was ordered to conduct a defensive campaign by Lord Bathurst in London and this he had successfully carried out in the previous engagements thereby successfully achieving the main objective which was to ensure the retention of Canada.[856] The defensively orientated nature of Prevost was a thematic constraint on the conduct of combined operations, once Britain changed to an offensive posture.[857]

However, the naval commander Downie was younger than Prevost and had a less forceful character. If a more assertive naval commander had been embedded into the ranks the disaster might have been avoided.[858] The Battle of Plattsburgh illustrated the significance of combined operations. However, the Battle also illustrated the extent to which the thematic constraints

[855] This view is also supported by A. Lambert. See William James, *Naval Occurrences of the War of 1812, op. cit.* Introduction, III. Lambert notes: "Prevost had formally requested Captain Downie to co-operate in a combined attack on the American position, and then delayed his own operation until the naval attack had failed, a period of some two hours. Had he acted as he had promised Downie he would, the American position on the Saranac would have been taken, and the American squadron would have been no further trouble. Instead Prevost sent his men to breakfast".

[856] 21-4-1814, Prevost to Bathurst, TNA/CO 42-150, 146. Prevost indicated his awareness of the need to act offensively if the circumstances changed since he wrote that "When he reinforcements from the Mediterranean and the Baltic arrive in Canada, I shall be enabled to act against the enemy with vigour, and to convert my defensive into offensive operations if such be the wishes of His Majesty's Government".

[857] Hitsman, *The Incredible War of 1812, op. cit.* 267.

[858] Willis, *The Struggle for Sea Power, op. cit.* 183-184. Willis gives a clear exposition of this argument.

could intervene to prevent the success of combined operations. Winston Churchill remarked that it 'crippled the British advance and was the most decisive engagement of the war'.[859] The Duke of Wellington concurred when he wrote that 'The War was practically ended by Prevost's retreat. What remained was purely episodal in character, and should be so regarded'.[860] Although the Battle of Plattsburgh was a failure the British raids had been a success. The British blockade made possible the conduct of combined operations.

British raids: the importance of combined operations. (Map 8)

The blockades and the associated raids in the Chesapeake were an important part of British strategy. The raids acted as a diversion from the operations in Canada. The blockade was an offensive operation which had an intrinsic value in itself since, in the second war in particular, it resulted in confining American vessels to American ports and seriously interfered with inter-state coastal trade and the revenue in taxes it generated.

The raids on the Chesapeake in 1813 and 1814 were expanded in 1814 with the extension of the blockade to New England after the end of hostilities in Europe. The supplies from New England for the troops in the Peninsular War were no longer needed and the blockade was therefore extended.[861] All the towns on the American coast could now be raided for supplies and as a retaliation for the towns and bases burned by the American troops. Such raids were true combined operations. In some cases an expedition was not necessary to induce submission and the mere threat of a raid or the use of naval artillery was sufficient to effect a result. Small American islands were exposed to such raids as they obtained supplies from the mainland

[859] Churchill, *History of the English Speaking People, op. cit.* Volume III, 236.
[860] Fitz-Enz, *The Final invasion Plattsburgh, op. cit.* 171.
[861] Cochrane Proclamation of extended blockade USA LOC Cochrane Papers Reel 1, 81. April 1814.

which could be cut off. Examples were Nantucket which immediately handed over provisions and agreed to stop paying federal taxes.[862] Other towns such as those in Cape Cod or Block Island in Rhode Island quickly succumbed and provided provisions and intelligence to the British. Nantucket as an island was particularly susceptible to loss of food supplies.[863] Such submissions occurred because of raids or the threat of raids and thus constituted combined operations. The inhabitants, however, showed little allegiance to America and regularly put self-interest first. Although such raids were rarely decisive they had a cumulative effect and could put pressure on the American Government or act as a diversion and keep militia employed when they could have been used elsewhere.[864] Raids and expeditions were also carried out in the area of the Mississippi. The Louisiana Purchase in 1803 had expanded the area of the United States but it had also created fresh opportunities for the British to use combined operations and in mid-1814 an expedition was sent to the Mississippi with the intention of taking New Orleans.

Fort Bowyer. Preliminaries to the Battle of New Orleans: Lake Borgne. Villere's Plantation. The Rodriguez Canal. (Map No 14)

The New Orleans operation and the associated preliminaries were a continuation of the offensive strategy decided on by the British. It demonstrated that the Liverpool administration could respond pro-actively at the strategic level to the opportunities presented by the new targets offered in the Gulf theatre. The main target of the British was New Orleans. The operation illustrates the importance of leadership defects at the command level as a thematic

[862] 29-9-1814, Coffee (Town Clerk) to Hotham, TNA/ADM 1-507, 454. The inhabitants of Nantucket undertake not to pay any direct tax to the USA Government.
[863] 5-10-1814, Cochrane to Croker, TNA/ADM 1-507 continued, 249. He wrote of Nantucket that the inhabitants were "then in the most distressed state for want of food".
[864] Hickey, *The War of 1812, op. cit.* 201 - 204.

constraint. Commanders need to exhibit flexibility in the face of changing circumstances and to rapidly modify tactics if possible, once it becomes clear that continuing with those tactics can only lead to disaster.

The objective was to act as a diversion for the army of Canada but the attack would also result in the capture of a major city in the south and give control over the Mississippi, as well as substantial provisions and stores. The wealth which flowed from New Orleans was enormous.[865] Croker wrote in a letter to Cochrane headed "The expediency of undertaking an expedition against the American settlements in the Gulf of Mexico General observations" that Major General Ross was to proceed to carry into operation such expeditions to the Gulf as was agreed with Cochrane.[866] The despatch is extremely long (12 pages) and very detailed. Cochrane was granted the authority from the Lords of the Admiralty to sail to the Gulf of Mexico with Major-General Ross.[867] This letter was sent before news arrived of the death of Major-General Ross. His replacement was Major General Edward Pakenham. The loss of Mobile compelled Admiral Cochrane to direct his attack through Lake Borgne. Before Pakenham's arrival the British attacked through Lake Borgne where they fought a successful combined operation followed by the battle at Villere's Plantation where they fought off an attack by General Andrew Jackson.[868] The thematic constraints of limited resources in the form of insufficient small boats, adverse terrain and cold weather intervened and made the operations

[865] William C. Davies, *The Greatest Fury The Birth of New Orleans and the Rebirth of America,* (New York: Calibre, 2019), 4.
[866] 10-8-1814, Croker to Cochrane, TNA/WO 1-141 continued No 2, 7.
[867] Ibid.
[868] 26-12-1814, Keane to Pakenham, TNA/WO-141 Continued No. 2, 68-71.

difficult.[869] Admiral Cochrane ordered Cockburn to carry out a diversionary action against the Georgia coast.[870]

Pakenham who arrived on 25 December 1814 was in an awkward position not of his making. The British offensive had already begun with Cochrane's landing on the Banks of the Mississippi on 10 December 1814. If the British had advanced on the left bank on 23 December 1814, New Orleans, only 7 miles away, could have been taken before Major-General Andrew Jackson had carried out his defensive preparations. General Jackson now had a strongly fortified position manned by sharpshooters which could not easily be outflanked and geography and adverse terrain acted as thematic constraints. In addition, the heavy guns brought from Cochrane's ships could not breach the American positions.[871] Pakenham now appeared to be faced with the choice of a costly frontal assault or withdrawal. However, he had 6,000 troops and two Regiments from the West Indies. Time also acted as a thematic constraint since the delay gave Jackson the opportunity to strengthen his defences. A lack of intelligence also acted as a thematic constraint. On 28 December 1814, Pakenham decided to conduct a 'Reconnaissance in Force' in order to test the strength of Jackson's line but the troops were subjected to heavy fire and withdrew. The subsequent Battle of Rodriguez Canal involving an artillery duel which commenced on 1 January 1815 was inconsequential. Packenham decided on a feint against Jackson's earthworks on 8 January 1815. Simultaneously, Colonel William Thornton with 1,500 troops crossed the river to outflank the Americans. In this, Thornton almost succeeded and drove off the American militia, seized the naval guns and even advanced behind Jackson's position. However, the British attack on the opposite bank of the river had

[869] Hickey, *The War of 1812, op. cit.* 218.
[870] A. J. Peck, 'A naval sidelight in the 1812 War with America', in *The Mariner's Mirror,* Vol. 73:3 (1987), 287-291.
[871] Hitsman, *The Incredible War of 1812, op. cit.* 272.

stalled and Thornton was ordered to withdraw.[872] In view of the mounting difficulties, it seems incredible looking back that anyone would attempt to make a frontal assault against so strongly defended a position.[873] The engagements at Cartagena, General Abercrombie at Ticonderoga and Generals Gage and Howe at the Battle of Bunker Hill indicated that such a policy was unwise. However, on 8 January 1815 the Battle of New Orleans commenced.

The Battle of New Orleans. 8 January 1815. (Map 14)

The details of the battle are recorded in full in a despatch dated 10 January 1815 by the British commander John Lambert to Bathurst.[874] A powerful frontal attack of 5,300 British troops commencing an hour and a half after Thornton's attack, against Jackson's main line of 4,700 was unsuccessful as the troops were mown down whilst trying to manoeuvre the ditch made slippery from rainfall and having lost the earlier protective cover of a fog. Thornton was ordered to withdraw. Packenham was killed by a piece of grapeshot. The British retreated led by Major General Lambert from their untenable position having suffered 2,000 casualties, whilst the American defenders lost only 71.[875] The fact that Packenham was forced to resort to a frontal attack at all is a clear indication that the British combined operation had failed. The Battle of New Orleans was a total disaster for the British. The thematic constraints of leadership, planning, geography and adverse terrain, resources, time, weather and intelligence intervened to prevent the success of the operation. However, it did not affect the outcome of the peace negotiations. The Treaty of Ghent had already been signed on 24 December 1814. However, although the Treaty had been signed, it had not been ratified by the American

[872] Hickey, *The War of 1812, op. cit.* 220-221.
[873] Churchill, *A History of the English Speaking Peoples, op. cit.* Vol. 3. The Age of Revolutions, 237. He described it as "one of the most unintelligent manoeuvres in the history of British warfare".
[874] 10-1-1815, Lambert to Bathurst, TNA/WO 1-141 Continued, 62-66.
[875] Hickey, *The War of 1812, op. cit.* 220.

Government. The outcome of the Battle might have tempted them to seek more favourable terms. Although this was a concern of the British Government, the Treaty was ratified by the Americans without delay.

Chapter 4. Stalemate

Chapter 4. Stalemate

The Treaty of Ghent. 24 December 1814

The Prince Regent's speech to the House of Lords on the opening of Parliament on 8 November 1814 stated that the main objective was the establishment of peace.[876] Copies of the correspondence passing between the parties indicate the convoluted nature of the proceedings.[877] The position of the Americans was severely undermined by the burning of Washington and the possession of Maine and it was only the British defeat on Lake Champlain and the American occupation of a small amount of British territory in the North West which prevented a British claim of *uti possidetis* i.e. retention of territory taken. In his speech to the opening session, the Prince Regent stated that "The operation of His Majesty's forces by sea and land in the Chesapeake, in the course of the present year, have been attended with the most brilliant and successful results…The flotilla of the enemy in the Chesapeake has been destroyed. The signal defeat of his land forces enabled a detachment of his Majesty's army to take possession of the city of Washington".[878] He noted, however, that "Notwithstanding the reverse which appears to have occurred on Lake Champlain., I entertain the most confident expectation as well as from the amount as from the description of the British force now serving in North America that the ascendency of his Majesty's arms throughout that part of North America will be effectually established".[879] However, both sides came to acknowledge that the likely outcome would be that of the *status quo ante bellum.* Wellington restated the importance of the naval command of the lakes which was a *sine qua non* for military operations. He considered the war to have been a British success. Wellington noted, however, that the enemy still possessed British territory at Fort Erie and Fort Malden.[880] Furthermore, the

[876] 8-11-1814, Hansard, TNA/ZHC 2-29, 1-3.
[877] 10-10-1814, Hansard, TNA/ZHC 2-29, 367-387.
[878] 8-11-1814, Hansard, TNA/ZHC 2-29, 2.
[879] Ibid, 3.
[880] Hitsman, *The Incredible War of 1812, op. cit.* 271.

condition in France was deteriorating and war could break out again illustrating that, as with the West Indies in the first war, other theatres and potential theatres, needed to be taken into account and that the North American theatre could not be considered in isolation. The influence of other theatres outside the North America theatre acted as a major thematic constraint at the strategic level. On the American side the extremely severe problems with the economy and the difficulties in raising troops, along with the opposition to the war expressed in the Hartford Convention led to the Americans agreeing to a draft treaty based on the *status quo ante bellum.*[881] The Treaty of Ghent consisted of eleven articles.[882] The treaty meant that all conquests were to be returned. In addition all hostilities against the Native Americans by both sides were to cease. On the American side, they abandoned their insistence that Great Britain terminate the practice of impressment.[883] Great Britain abandoned the idea of a Native American buffer state. An independent Commission was to be established to resolve any frontier disputes. However, nowhere in the treaty were any of the original causes of the war addressed. The Americans had not achieved a single war objective and in particular had failed to annex Canada. The intervention of the thematic constraints in the combined operation at Plattsburgh had substantially prevented a successful British claim of *uti possidetis.*

[881] Hickey, *The War of 1812, op. cit.* 297.
[882] Arnold and Wiener (Eds.), The treaty is reproduced in full as a primary source in *The Encyclopedia of the War of 1812,* Vol. 3. Documents. 2012. 942 – 946. Treaty of Peace and Amity between his Britannic Majesty and the United States of America.
[883] Johnson, *The War of 1812, op. cit.* 202.

Conclusion

Conclusion

This thesis has argued that combined operations were overwhelmingly influential in determining the outcome of the two wars. It has also argued that the thematic constraints, in turn, were overwhelmingly important in influencing the outcomes of combined operations.

The research demonstrates a clear historical development and evolution of English, and (after 1707) British combined operations. By the seventeenth century, English combined operations had become well-established in the form of the "descents" (coastal landings of troops on enemy shores).[884] By the mid-eighteenth century, they had evolved into sophisticated operations accompanied by a combined operations doctrine. A professional officer class had evolved exemplified by outstanding commanders such as General James Wolfe. This professionalism delivered the important British victory at Quebec in 1759, a victory in which the thematic constraints were almost entirely absent.[885] However, when the American War of Independence broke out in 1775, it was expected that combined operations would continue to deliver victories. Combined operations were used extensively in the war. There were notable British successes such as at Savannah in 1778, the second attack on Charleston in 1780 and partial successes such as the Battle of Long Island in 1776. However, the influence of a large number of thematic constraints which were noticeably absent from the previous war, intervened to ensure that, in the main, combined operations did not succeed to the same extent.

The research indicates that in both wars on both sides in almost every combined operation undertaken, difficulties were encountered which hindered or prevented the formulation and

[884] K. A. McLay, 'Combined Operations and the European theatre during the Nine Years' War, 1688-97, in *Institute of Historical Research,* Vol. 78, No. 202 (November, 2015), 507-539
[885] Snow, *Death or Victory The Battle of Quebec and the Birth of Empire, op. cit.* 105

implementation of the combined operation. In fact, the concept of thematic constraints has a broader, generic application since the concept can be applied to purely military and naval operations as well as to combined operations. Combined operations required the close co-operation of military and naval forces to produce a desired outcome which would not have been possible without such co-operation. In the naval engagements carried out by both sides in the second war on the Great Lakes, some of the engagements were clearly combined operations such as the Battle of Plattsburgh in 1814.[886] The Battle exhibited the characteristic of the synthesis of military and naval forces in the form of mutual dependency necessary to satisfy the definition of a combined operation.

The thesis indicates the enormous importance of the thematic constraints. The thematic constraints operated in a complex and varied manner. Sometimes the same thematic constraints were present in both wars and at other times different thematic constraints intervened. They could operate either singly or more usually in conjunction with other thematic constraints. Their effects could operate in the short term or in the long term. More importantly, their effects could be assessed at both the tactical and operational levels, or at the planning and strategic levels. This was because the outcome of the thematic constraints on the combined operation might extend beyond the merely tactical and operational level and could affect the outcome of the campaign or even the war itself. For example, in the Battle of Plattsburgh in the second war, the thematic constraints intervened in the Battle so much that it caused the combined operation to fail, and had strategic effects since it halted the British invasion of the United States. Where large numbers of thematic constraints operated in conjunction with each other, this was often an indication that the combined operation was fundamentally flawed since if it

[886] 11-9-1814, Prevost to Bathurst, TNA/CO 42-157 continued, 187

were not, the thematic constraints would not have had so many opportunities to intervene. Examples of combined operations where many thematic constraints acted together include the American invasion of Canada in 1775 and the first British assault on Charleston in 1776 or the Battle of Plattsburgh in 1814 in the second war. Sometimes the thematic constraints were closely associated with each other. For example, the thematic constraint of defects in leadership was closely connected with the thematic constraint of weakness in the decision-making process and the chain of command. The reason for this is that the key decision makers operated within the organisational structure which could restrict or exacerbate the impact of faults in the characters of the decision-makers. An example of this occurred when the Secretary of State for the American Department in the first war, Germain, argued continuously with the other two Principal Secretaries of State over who controlled the transport of troops and supplies to the North American Theatre.[887] In the second war the offices of the three Secretaries were combined and the disputes were terminated.

The research indicates that some thematic constraints were of greater importance than others and that there was a hierarchy of thematic constraints. Different writers have identified various thematic constraints as being of the greatest importance. Jonathan R. Dull identifies economic growth and decline, geography and demography as being the enduring factors which underlay sea power.[888] David Syrett attributes poor communications, faults in the decision-making process, delays, administrative failures and poor weather as being the cause of the failure of British naval strategy in 1780-1782.[889] Certain thematic constraints occur regularly and are of long duration and affect the outcome of the combined operation to a greater degree. An example

[887] Larrabee, *Decision at the Chesapeake, op. cit.* 29
[888] Jonathan R. Dull, 'Mahan, Sea Power and the War for American Independence', in *The International History Review,* Vol. 10, No.1, (Feb. 1988), 67
[889] David Syrett, ' Countdown to the Saints: a Strategy of Detachments and the Quest for Naval Superiority in the West Indies, 1780-2' in *The Mariner's Mirror,* 187.2, 160

of this is the thematic constraint of finance. In the absence of a strong economy and the access to ready and plentiful sources of finance, combined operations cannot be undertaken in the long run. An indication of the long term importance of finance is Washington's statement in 1781 that 'We must have one of two things, peace or money from France.'[890] The criterion adopted by the thesis for assessing the relative importance of the thematic constraints is the frequency and extent to which the thematic constraints intervened in combined operations and the level at which the thematic constraints intervened and their long-term influence on the outcome of the combined operation, the campaign and even the war itself. The most important thematic constraint has been identified as political constraints but other important thematic constraints are leadership defects, weaknesses in the decision-making process and the command structure and the chain of command, faulty assumptions, bad planning, a lack of allies, a lack of resources in the form of troops, supplies and ships, a weak economy and a lack of finance and geography. This is not to say that the other thematic constraints were unimportant but their impact on combined operations was infrequent, transitory or restricted to the tactical level. For example, the weather was important but its intervention had a short-term impact although it could disperse fleets or delay the implementation of combined operations. The thematic constraint of technology tended to be transitory since the side without the technology acquired it sooner or later. The other thematic constraints could also be important. For example, the thematic constraint of defects in communication does not occur frequently and yet the failure to communicate effectively in the Battle of the Capes in the first war, substantially contributed to the British defeat in this Battle, and according to James, to the loss of America itself.[891] The thematic constraint of other theatres became important particularly after the entry of the French into the war in 1778 and following the abdication of the Emperor Napoleon in 1814.

[890] W. Bodham Donne (ed.), *The Correspondence of King George III with Lord North from 1768 to 1783*, Volume 1, 369, Lett, 30 April 1781.
[891] James, *The British Navy in Adversity*, *op. cit.* 293.

However, chance and luck were also of the greatest importance. They could intervene by themselves or in conjunction with other thematic constraints and produce outcomes with strategic consequences of the greatest importance. Their influence could never be completely eliminated. However, the influence of the thematic constraints on the formulation and implementation of combined operations meant that there was a limit to the extent to which the planners and strategists could prepare the commanders in the field. Once the combined operation got underway, the plans could go awry and the final outcome then depended on the response of the commanders to any unforeseen changes in circumstances.

The research indicates that there were important differences between the two wars and that these differences in the form of the different causes, the different objectives and whether they were offensive or defensive in nature affected the frequency and extent to which combined operations were used and therefore, necessarily, the impact of the thematic constraints. In the first war, the primary cause of the war was the claim by the British Parliament that it had sovereignty over the colonies and could enact laws and impose taxes upon them. The British Parliament resolved to use force when it encountered resistance, leading to the outbreak of war. The decision to use the army with support from the navy, rather than a mainly naval based solution in the form of a blockade to enforce its will, meant that combined operations became of the greatest importance.[892] The British conducted an offensive war and the objectives were to restore imperial authority and to retain the colonies and were able to use their large navy and well-established army to conduct a large number of partially successful combined operations. In contrast, the colonists fought in the main initially a defensive war and their objectives were to resist British measures and, after 1776, to achieve independence. Initially, they were subject

[892] Ira D. Gruber, 'Lord Howe and Lord George Germain, British Politics and the Winning of Independence' in *The William and Mary Quarterly,* Vol. 22, No. 2 (April, 1965), 225-243.

to thematic constraints such as a lack of resources in the form of ships, a regular army and supplies of gunpowder and arms.[893] This meant that they were unable to conduct many combined operations, although they conducted the unsuccessful attack on Canada in 1775 and Washington used the Marblehead mariners to successfully evacuate his army from Long Island in 1776.[894]

In contrast, in the War of 1812, the Americans declared war on Britain partly as a result of the British policy of boarding American ships on the high seas to impress sailors and to search for contraband.[895] The British fought, initially, a defensive land war in Canada and their objectives were to defend and retain Canada as their resources there in the form of troops and supplies were low and unlikely to be increased since most of their resources went to the European theatre.[896] They were able in 1812 to conduct a partial blockade of the American east coast and as a result conduct combined operations in the form of raids against the coast. The Americans, however, in this period of the second war, suffered from the thematic constraints of a small army and navy and this affected their ability to conduct combined operations. Instead, as in the first war, they resorted to a *guerre de course* and employed privateers.

There were other differences between the two wars which affected the importance and the use of combined operations. In the War of 1812, Canada became of the greatest importance, since it was the only British land possession that the Americans could attack. This, in turn, made the Great Lakes highly important, since whoever obtained naval superiority on the Lakes

[893] Willis, *The Struggle for Sea Power, op. cit.* 41
[894] Glover, *A Memorial of John Glover of Marblehead by William P. Upham,* (FB &c Ltd: London, 2018).
[895] Hickey, *The War of 1812,* op. cit. 40
[896] Hitsman, *The incredible War of 1812, op. cit.* 41

controlled the adjacent territory in Canada and could compel the enemy to evacuate their army. This change in circumstances affected the extent to which combined operations could be used and the impact of the thematic constraints. The Louisiana Purchase virtually eliminated French possessions in North America. However, while it increased the territory of the United States, it produced fresh opportunities for the use of combined operations.

The thesis has identified two key events in the two wars. These key events had a direct effect on the importance and use of combined operations and the impact of the associated thematic constraints. The French entered the war in 1778, and later the Spanish in 1779 on the side of the colonists and the whole strategic situation altered. The powerful French Navy was now available to conduct combined operations and as a result these became of the greatest importance to the new allies and Britain was at risk of invasion. A large number of thematic constraints intervened against the British including the lack of an ally, the lack of resources and the thematic constraint of other theatres, since the West Indies were now at risk. Only in 1779, when the risk of an invasion of Britain disappeared did Britain resume large offensive combined operations in 1780.[897] In addition, after 1778, the French maintained large military and naval forces in the North American theatre, and this in turn, made combined operations of the greatest importance. This was incomplete contrast to the second war where the French did not maintain military and naval forces in the North American theatre and instead concentrated them in Europe. A comparable key event in the second war was the abdication of the Emperor Napoleon on 11 April 1814 which resulted in the end of hostilities in Europe. Resources previously used in Europe became available for use in the North American theatre and could be used now in combined operations in the area of the Chesapeake Bay and the Mississippi

[897] NRS, Sandwich Papers, III, 9

area. This thesis argues that these two important events had an immediate effect on the importance and use of combined operations and the impact of the associated thematic constraints.

Certain engagements were also of the greatest importance. The first of these occurred in 1781 with the British surrender at Yorktown.[898] The siege conducted by the Allied Armies in conjunction with the French Navy, and the naval Battle of the Capes which gave the French temporary command of the sea in the Chesapeake Bay, resulted in the capitulation of Lord Cornwallis's army. The failure of the Royal Navy to gain command of the sea and the failure of the combined operations British relief force were entirely due to the intervention of a large number of thematic constraints. These included leadership defects, poor planning, a divided command, a lack of resources, a lack of allies and time. The key comparable engagement in the second war was the British defeat at Plattsburgh in 1814.[899] A British fleet was defeated by an American fleet on Lake Champlain at Plattsburgh which caused the entire British combined operation to fail. The defeat also had strategic implications since it halted the British invasion of the United States. A large number of thematic constraints intervened against the British including leadership defects, faulty planning, a lack of resources, time and bad weather.

However, combined operations were particularly important to Britain in the second war. Britain in 1812 had the great professionalism, civil-military compatibility and logistical sophistication which enabled it to conduct combined operations more efficiently than in the first war. Combined operations allowed Britain to make the most of her resources in the form of being a

[898] 14-9-1781, Graves to Stephens, TNA/ADM 1-489, 421
[899] 11-9-1814, Prevost to Bathurst, TNA/CO 42-157 Continued, 187

richer, more populated and ready-mobilised first rate power by 1812, in contrast with the United States. As a maritime nation, Britain needed to wage war across the Atlantic and defend areas as large as the Canadian frontier and this necessitated the use of successful combined operations. These factors meant that combined operations would be used extensively by Britain in both wars. However, they were of particular importance in the second war.

A further difference between the two wars could be attributed to the revolutionary nature of the American War of Independence. In the first war, combined operations were being employed against armies involved in a revolutionary struggle. In the second war, they were used against essentially conventional state powers. Combined operations could be arguably less effective against "revolutionaries", politically speaking if not also strategically. The revolutionary spirit which most certainly existed in the first war would be less affected by a successful combined operation than a conventional army. This argument has definitely some validity.

Brian Arthur has argued for the primacy of blockades as the most important factor in determining the outcome of the War of 1812.[900] This would therefore question whether the significance attributed to combined operations by this thesis was correct. The British blockade had begun almost immediately on the outbreak of war in December 1812-January 1813 with just twenty ships. (Map No. 8). After the failure of British diplomatic approaches, Admiral Borlase Warren was ordered to conduct "the most complete and rigorous Blockade, of the Ports and Harbours of the Bay of the Chesapeake and of the River Delaware."[901] The blockade was

[900] Arthur, *How Britain won the War of 1812 The Royal Navy's Blockades of the United States 1812-1815,* (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2011).
[901] 26-12-1812, Admiralty to Warren, TNA/ADM 2-1375 337-8, 'Secret Letters and Orders' which enclosed a copy of a letter of 25-12-1812, Bathurst to Lords Commissioners of Admiralty, 280-283 which confirmed these orders. See Arthur, *How Britain won the War of 1812, op. cit. 77*

further extended to ships of the neutral powers. The blockade was subsequently extended further as indicated by the details on map No. 8. However, it was done so on a selective basis which allowed the New England States to continue supplying troops in the Peninsular War with beef. Whilst it is true that the blockade in the second war was conducted more thoroughly than the blockade in the first war since the Royal Navy was even larger than in the first war, the same constraints operated, though possibly to a lesser degree. On 29 December 1812, for example, Admiral Warren complained to Croker that the "force under my Orders is extremely small, the extent of coast very considerable."[902] However, the blockade had been in operation from the start of the war in 1812 until its end in 1814 and it took time before its effects were fully felt, by which time other thematic constraints were coming into play such as the long-term effects of the stronger British economy and financial system, and financial constraints were also acting as an inducement on the British side to bring the war to an end. Whilst combined operations had also been in existence since the start of the war, blockades could not by themselves prevent the immediate threat of an invasion of Canada and this caused Britain to fight a defensive war there until 1814. Blockades enhanced the effects of the thematic constraint of finance but Arthur's argument that this, by itself would have been sufficient to terminate the war in 1814 is not entirely convincing.[903] Furthermore, blockades did not replace combined operations but increased them since the blockade now enabled combined operations in the form of raids to be carried out from early in 1813. In addition, arguably the most significant event in the War of 1812, occurred in the form of a British combined operations defeat at the battle of Plattsburgh in 1814, which ensured that Britain could not win the war. This, in conjunction with the deteriorating political situation in France, encouraged the British government to end the war on the basis of a restoration of the *status quo ante bellum.*

[902] 29-12-1812, Warren to Croker, TNA/ADM 1-503, Part 1, 99-102. Also Arthur, *How Britain won the War of 1812, op. cit.* 79.
[903] Arthur, *How Britain won the War of 1812, op. cit.* 181

Blockades, as a long term tool of coercion, in conjunction with political concessions may have been able to conclude both wars in the long run. However, the importance of combined operations must not be underestimated.

The thesis has demonstrated that combined operations were used extensively and successfully by both sides in the two wars and could deliver spectacularly successful results, such as the second Battle of Charleston in the first war and the raid on the American capital in the second war. They were an effective use of the Navy in power projection. In contrast to the use of blockades, their effect could be immediate. However, the extensive use of combined operations gave great scope for the intervention of the thematic constraints. In consequence, a number of combined operations were unsuccessful. Nonetheless, they were indispensable to Britain and they continued to be used extensively because of the great distance of Britain from North America, the large area of the Atlantic Ocean, and the vastness of the North American theatre.

However, even when they failed, combined operations were of the greatest importance since the consequences of a failed combined operation could be just as important as a successful one. The two most important combined operations in the two wars were the success of the Allied combined operations at Yorktown in conjunction with the naval Battle of the Capes, along with the failure of the British relief force, and the British defeat at the Battle of Plattsburgh in the second war. Yorktown persuaded the British Government to end the first war since it was no longer profitable to continue it and it ended in the loss of the thirteen colonies. The British defeat at Plattsburgh ended the British invasion of the United States in the second war and ensured that the outcome of the war would be the restoration of the *status quo ante bellum.* Both of these involved combined operations which had strategic consequences of the greatest

importance. Combined operations, whether successes or failures, and the associated thematic constraints, were overwhelmingly influential in determining the outcomes of the two wars.

Bibliography

Bibliography

Archive sources

U.K. National Archives London, Kew

Admiralty (ADM)

Colonial Office (CO)

Foreign Office (FO)

High Court of Admiralty (HCA)

Maps (MF and MPH)

Public Records Office (PRO)

State Papers (SP)

War Office (WO)

Hansard British Parliamentary Debates (ZHC)

The British Library (BL)

Additional manuscripts series (Add. Ms.)

Frederick Haldimand Papers, Volume 1 (Add. Ms. 21807)

Frederick Haldimand Papers Volume 2 (Add. Ms. 21808)

Miscellaneous Collections Volume XLVI (Add. Ms. 5847)

The British Library Rare Books Department

Pennsylvania Gazette (PENN NT 280)

Maryland Gazette (PENN NT 300)

The National Maritime Museum (NMM)

Biography Collection (BGR)

General Augustus Elliot correspondence (ELL)

Thomas Graves correspondence (GRV)

Samuel Hood correspondence (HOO)

Journals and Diary Collection (JOD)

Sir Charles Middleton correspondence (MID)

The Library of Congress. Washington D.C. (LOC)

Alexander Cochrane Papers Reel 6 and 7

Cochrane Papers Reel 1

Ethan Allen Papers. Printed

George Washington Revolutionary War Printed

Nathaniel Green Papers. Printed

Order Book of British Army R. Davies

Papers of Benjamin Franklin. Printed

Peter Force Collection Series 8D

The Papers of John Adams. Printed

The Papers of Thomas Jefferson. Printed

The Writings of George Washington. Printed

The Library of Congress Newspaper Division

The National Archives USA. Washington D.C.

RG 45 U. S. Navy 1775-1910 series Boxes 174, 181, 377, 409, 412, 414

M124 Roll No 49 Miscellaneous letters received by the Secretary of the Navy 1801-1884

M127 Roll No 1 Letters sent by the President to the Secretary of War 1800-1863

M337 Roll No 12. Enrolled Original Acts and Resolutions of the U.S. Congress 1789-1823

Navy Library, Naval Heritage and History Command, Washington D.C. (NHHC)

The Papers of George Washington, Revolutionary War Series, Volume 1, June-September 1775. Philander D. Chase (ed), University Press of Virginia, Charlottesville, 1985

Naval War 1812, A Documentary Naval History, William S. Dudley and Crawford and Michael J. Crawford (eds.), Naval Historical Center Department of the Navy, Washington 1985

Official Publications

Hansard British Parliamentary Debates.

Naval Documents of the American Revolution. (NDAR). U.S. Government, Department of Defense DoD, U.S. Military, U.S. Navy. Progressive Management.

Printed primary sources

James Arnold and Robert Wiener (eds.) The Encyclopedia of the War of 1812 A Political, Social and Military History Volume III Documents, Oxford: ABC-CLIO. 2012

Burgoyne, John. *A brief examination of the plan and conduct of the Northern expedition in America in 1777 and of the surrender of the army under the command of Lieutenant- General Burgoyne.* 1789

Burgoyne, John. *A State of the Expedition from Canada as laid before the House of Commons.* London (1789)

Chadwick, French Ensor (ed). 1916 Thomas Graves. *The Graves Papers and Other Documents.* New York: The Naval Historical Society

Clausewitz, Carl von, *On War* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008)

Clinton, Henry. 1781 in The Campaign in Virginia in B.F. Stevens (ed.), The Campaign in Virginia, 1781; The Clinton Cornwallis Controversy, *Chronological Correspondence, 4th June 1781 to 27 Dec 1781. Extracts from the Journals of the House of Lords. Sackville. G. Sackville Germain, 1st Viscount.* London: Nabu Public Domain Reprints

Clinton, Henry, in The American Rebellion in W. B. Willcox, ed., in *Sir Henry Clinton's Narratives of his Campaigns, 1775-1782, with an Appendix of Original Documents.* London: Oxford University Press

Clinton, Henry, In *Correspondence between His Excellency General Sir Henry Clinton, K.B. and Lieutenant General Earl Cornwallis, 1781.* USA: Gale ECCO Print Edition

Congreve, William, *A Treatise on the General Principles, Powers and Facility of Application of the Congreve Rocket System, 1827* (London: Elibron Classics, 2007)

Cornwallis, Charles., 1859 in C. Ross (ed.), *Correspondence of Charles, first Marquis Cornwallis,* Milton Keynes: Lightning Source UK Ltd.

Cresswell, Nicholas, 1924 *The Journal of Nicholas Cresswell,* Carlisle MA: Applewood Books

Drinkwater, John, 1905 *A History of the Siege of Gibraltar*, 1779-1783. London: F B & c Ltd.

Dudley, William S. Crawford, Michael, 1985. *The Naval War of 1812*. A Documentary History. Volumes 1, 2 and 3. Washington D.C: Naval Historical Center Department of the Navy

Glover, John. 2018 *A Memoir of General John Glover, of Marblehead.* London: FB & c Ltd.

Hayter, Tony. Ed. *The Papers of William, Viscount Barrington.* London: The Army Records Society The Bodley Head 1988

Hadden, James M. 1884 *Hadden's Journal and Orderly Books*, London: Sagwan Press

Jefferson Thomas et al 1776 *The Declaration of Independence*, Carlisle, M.A.: Applewood Books

Martin, J. P. in C. Roop and P. Roop eds., 2001 *The Diary of Joseph Plumb Martin*, New York: Marshall Cavendish Corporation

Molyneux, Thomas More. 1759. *Conjunct Expeditions*, London: Gale ECCO Print

W. Bodham Donne, (Ed), *The Correspondence of King George III with Lord North from 1768 to 1783,* Volumes I and II, (Originally Published in London: John Murray 1867). Reprinted by New York: Cornell University Library Digital Collections

Sandwich Papers, *The Private Papers of John, Earl of Sandwich,* Volumes I, II, III and IV The Navy Records Society

Books and monographs.

Roy and Leslie Adkins, Lesley, *Jack Tar* (London: Abacus, 2009)

_____, *Gibraltar The Greatest Siege in British History* (London: Abacus, 2019)

Robert J. Allison, *The American Revolution* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2015)

Benjamin Armstrong, *Small Boats and Daring Men. Maritime Raiding, Irregular Warfare, and the Early American Navy* (Oklahoma: University of Oklahoma Press, 2019)

Brian Arthur, *How Britain won the War of 1812 The Royal Navy's Blockade of the United States, 1812-1815* (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2011)

Rick Atkinson, *The British are coming* (London: William Collins, 2020)

Daniel A. Baugh, Why did Britain lose command of the sea during the war for America? In Jeremy Black and Philip Woodfine (Eds.), *The British Navy and the Use of Naval Power in the Eighteenth Century* (Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1988)

Hugh Bicheno, *Rebels and Redcoats* (London: Harper Collins, 2003)

Troy Bickham, *The Weight of Vengeance The United States, The British Empire and the War of 1812* (New York: Oxford University Press Inc., 2012)

Jeremy Black, *Combined Operations. A Global History of Amphibious and Airborne Warfare* (London: Rowman and Littlefield, 2018)

_____, *War Past, Present and Future* (New York: St Martin's Press, 2000)

_____, *War for America The Fight for Independence 1775-1783* (Stroud: Sutton Publishing Ltd., 2001)

_____, Jeremy Black, *Introduction*, Jeremy Black and Philip Woodfine (eds.), in *The British Navy and the Use of Naval Power in the Eighteenth Century* (Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1988)

Walter R. Borneman, *1812 The War that Forged a Nation* (New York: Harper Collins, 2005)

James C. Bradford, The Navies of the American Revolution', in Kenneth J. Hagan (ed.), *In Peace and War Interpretations of American Naval History, 1775-1984 (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1984)*

Kenneth Breen, 'Divided Command: The West Indies and North America, 1780-1781', in Jeremy Black and Philip Woodfine (eds.), *The British Navy and the Use of Naval Power in the Eighteenth Century* (Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1988)

David Chandler, *The Art of Warfare in the Age of Marlborough* (Staplehurst: Spellmount Ltd., 1990)

Lynne Cheney, *James Madison A Life Reconsidered* (New York: Penguin Books, 2015)

Winston S. Churchill, *A History of the English Speaking Peoples* (London: Bloomsbury Publishing Plc. 2015)

Julian S. Corbett, *Signals and Instructions, 1776-1794* (London: Conway Maritime Press, 1971)

George C. Daughan, *If by Sea The Forging of the American Navy-from the Revolution to the War of 1812* (New York: Basic Books, 2008)

_____, *1812 The Navy's War* (New York; Basic Books, 2011)

Burke Davies, *The Campaign that Won America* (Washington: Eastern Acorn Press 1994)

William C. Davies, *The Greatest Fury The Battle of New Orleans and the Rebirth of America* (New York: Dutton Calibre, 2019)

Marc A. De Simone and Robert Dudley (eds.), *Lessons in Leadership from the War of 1812* (Milton Keynes: The International Leadership Development Press, 2018)

Norman Dixon, *On the Psychology of Military Incompetence* (London: Pimlico, 1994)

Wade G. Dudley, *Splintering the Wooden Wall The British Blockade of the United States,* (Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 2003)

____, 'The Flawed British Blockade, 1812-1815', in Bruce Ellemann and S. C. M. Paine (eds.), in *Naval Blockades and Sea Power Strategies and Counter-Strategies, 1805-2005* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2006)

Walter Edgar, *Partisans and Redcoats* (New York: Harper Collins, 2001)

John Ferling, *Almost a Miracle* (New York: Oxford University Press Inc., 2007)

David Fitz-Enz, *The Final Invasion: Plattsburgh, the War of 1812's Most Decisive Battle* (New York: Cooper Square Press, 2009)

Thomas J. Fleming, *Beat the Last Drum* (New York: H. Wolff, 1963)

William M. Fowler, *Rebels under sail The American Navy during the Revolution* (New York: Scribner and Sons, 1944)

J. D. Grainger, *The Battle of Yorktown, 1781,* (Woodbridge: Boydell and Brewer Limited, 2005).

Jerome A. Green, *The Guns of Independence* (New York: Savas Beatie LLC., 2005)

Julian Gwyn, ‘The Royal Navy in North America, 1712-1776’ in Jeremy Black and Philip Woodfine (eds.), *The British Navy and the Use of Naval Power in the Eighteenth Century* (Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1988)

Richard Harding, *The Evolution of the Sailing Navy 1509-1815* (Basingstoke: Macmillan Press Ltd., 1995)

_____, *The Emergence of Britain’s Global Naval Supremacy. The war of 1739-1748* (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2010)

_____, *Sea Power and Naval Warfare 1650-1830* (London: UCL Press, 1999)

_____, *Amphibious Warfare in the Eighteenth Century* (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 1991)

Robert Harvey, *The War of Wars* (London: Constable and Robinson Ltd., 2006)

Keith A Herkalo, *The Battles at Plattsburgh* (Charleston: The History Press, 2012)

Donald R. Hickey, T*he War of 1812 A Forgotten Conflict* (Illinois: The University of Illinois, 2012)

John Mackay Hitsman, *The Incredible War of 1812 A Military History* (Toronto: Robin Brass Studio, 2000) First published 1965 Republished 1999 and reprinted 2000

Richard Holmes, *Redcoat* (London: Harper Collins Publishers, 2001)

Martin R. Howard, *Walcheren 1809* (Barnsley: Pen and Sword Books Ltd., 2012)

Michael Howard, *Clausewitz A Very Short Introduction* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002)

Raymond Hull and Dr. Lawrence J. Peter, *The Peter Principle: Why Things Always Go Wrong* (London: Profile Books Ltd., 2020)

Martin Hutchinson, *Britain's Greatest Prime Minister, Lord Liverpool* (Cambridge: The Lutterworth Press, 2020)

William J. James, *Naval Occurrences of the War of 1812* First published 1817 (London: Conway Maritime Press, 2004)

W. M. James, *The British Navy in Adversity* (London: Longman, Green and Co Ltd., 1933)

Henry P. Johnston, *The Yorktown Campaign and the Surrender of Lord Cornwallis, 1781* (Miami: Hardpress Publishing, 1881)

Rossiter Johnson, *The War of 1812* (USA: Black Oyster Publishing Inc., 2015)

J. R. Jones, 'Limitations of British sea power in the French Wars, 1689-1815' in Jeremy Black and Philip Woodfine (eds.), *The British Navy and the Use of Naval Power in the Eighteenth Century* (Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1988)

Alan Kemp, *Yorktown* (New Malden: Almark Publishing Co Ltd., 1976)

Richard M. Ketchum, *Victory at Yorktown* (New York: Henry Holt, 2004)

Paul M. Kennedy, T*he Rise and Fall of British Naval Mastery* (London: The Ashfield Press, 1976)

Roger Keyes, *Amphibious Warfare and Combined Operations* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1943)

G. Ksiazki, *Commanders-in-Chief of the American War for Independence: A Leadership Study of George Washington and Sir William Howe* (Great Britain: Amazon, 2014)

Andrew Lambert, *War at Sea in the Age of Sail 1650-1850* (London: Cassell, 2002)

_____. *The Challenge* (London: Faber and Faber, 2013)

H. L. Landers, T*he Virginia Campaign and the Blockade and Siege of Yorktown 1781,* (Washington D.C: United States Government Printing Office, 1931)

Herold A. Larrabee, *Decision at the Chesapeake* (London, William Kimber, 1965)

Jon Latimer, *1812 War with America* (Harvard: Harvard University Press, 2007)

Edward G. Lengel, *General George Washington A Military Life* (New York: Random House, 2005)

Piers Mackesey, *The War for America 1775-1783* (Nebraska: University of Nebraska Press, 1993)

Alfred Thayer Mahan, *The Influence of Sea Power upon History* (London: Hamlyn, 1980)

_____, *Sea Power in its Relations to the War of 1812* (Leipzig: Filiquarian Publishing, 2006)

_____, *The Major Operations of the Navies in the War of American Independence* (Stroud: Nonsuch Publishing Ltd., 2006)

Linda Maloney, 'The War of 1812', in Kenneth J. Hagan (ed.), in *In Peace and War Interpretations of American Naval History, 1775-1984* (Westport, Connecticut, Greenwood Press, 1984)

Robert Middlekauff, *The Glorious Cause. The American Revolution, 1763-1789* (New York: Oxford University Press Inc., 2005)

R. B. Mowat, *A History of Great Britain 1668-1924* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1924)

Gary J. Ohls, *American Amphibious Warfare. The Roots of Tradition to 1865* (Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 2017)

Andrew O'Shaughnessy, T*he men who lost America* (London: Oneworld Publications, 2013)

Jacob H. Patton, *Yorktown: A Compendious Account of the Campaign of the Allied, French and American Forces, resulting in the Surrender of Cornwallis and the Close of the American Revolution* (New York: Fords, Howard and Hulbert, 1881)

J. B. Pritchard, (ed.), *Ancient Near Eastern Texts relating to the Old Testament* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1969)

Nicholas A. M. Rodger, *The Wooden World An Anatomy of the Georgian Navy* (London: Fontana Press, 1988)

Theodore Roosevelt, *The Naval War of 1812 or the History of the United States Navy during the Last War with Great Britain* (Leipzig: Forgotten Books, 2012) Originally Published 1900

H. M. Scott, *British Foreign Policy in the Age of the American Revolution* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990)

David Smith, *William Howe and the American War of Independence*, (New York: Bloomsbury Academic, 2015)

Daniel Snow, *Death or Victory The Battle of Quebec and the Birth of Empire* (London: Harper Press, 2009)

Peter Snow, *When Britain burned the White House* (Great Britain: John Murray Publishers, 2012)

John Charles Anderson Stagg, *The War of 1812* (New York: Cambridge University Press, (2012)

N. Stewart, 2001 *The Changing Nature of Warfare 1700-1945*, Abingdon: Bookpoint Ltd.

David Syrett, The failure of the British effort in America, 1777, in Jeremy Black and Philip Woodfine, *The British Navy and the use of Naval Power in the Eighteenth century* (Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1988)

_____, *Shipping and the American War 1775-83 A Study of British Transport Organisation* (London: The Athlone Press, University of London, 1970)

_____, *The Royal Navy in American Waters 1775-1783* (Vermont: Scolar Press, 1989)

_____, *The Royal Navy in European Waters during the American Revolutionary War* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1988)

Alan Taylor, *The Civil War of 1812* (New York: Vintage Books, 2010)

Andrew Thompson, 'The Development of the Executive and Foreign Policy, 1714-1760', William Mulligan and Brendan Simms (eds.), in *The Primacy of Foreign Policy in British History, 1660-2000. How Strategic Concerns shaped Modern Britain* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010)

Richard L. Tonsetic, *1781 The Decisive Year of the Revolutionary War* (Havertown: Casemate Publishers, 2011)

U.S. Army Command *Leadership Principles: how their use by Lieutenant General John Burgoyne and Major General Horatio Gates Influenced the Engagement at Saratoga, 1777* (Lavergne, Tennessee: Penny Hill Press, 2015)

USAF College of Aerospace Doctrine, Research and Education, (CADRE), *Air and Space Power Mentoring Guide,* Vol. 1 (Maxwell AFB, AL: Air University Press, 1997), (excerpt).

J. Steven Watson, *The Oxford History of England The Reign of George III 1760-1815* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1960)

Charles Webster, *The Foreign Policy of Castlereagh 1812-1815* (London: G. Bell and Sons, Ltd, 1963)

Sam Willis, *The Struggle for Sea Power* (London: Atlantic Books Ltd., 2015)

George S. Wood, *The Radicalism of the American Revolution* (New York: Vintage Books, 1993)

_____, *The Idea of America* (New York: Penguin Books, 2011)

Journal Articles.

Olive Anderson, 'The Role of the Army in Parliamentary Management during the American War of Independence', in *Journal of the Society for Army Historical Research,* Vol. 34, No. 1 (December, 1956), 146-149

Benjamin Armstrong, " 'Zeal, Intelligence and Intrepidity': Naval strategic warfare and the War of 1812 on the Lakes ", in *The Mariner's Mirror,* Vol. 103:1 (February 2013)

Ben Baack, 'Forging a nation state: the Continental Congress and the financing of the War of American Independence', in *Economic History Review,* Vol. LIV, 4 (2001)

Friederike Baer, "The Decision to Hire German Troops in the War of American Independence", in *Early American Studies, An Interdisciplinary Journal,* Vol. 13, Issue 1 (Winter, 2015)

Richard V. Barbuto, 'War on the Niagara, 1812-1814: The U.S. Army Comes of Age', in *Army Historical Foundation,* Vol. 18, No. 2 (Autumn, 2012), 36-43

C. J. Bartlett, "Gentlemen versus Democrats: Cultural Prejudice and Military Strategy in Britain in the War of 1812", in *War in History,* Vol. 1, No. 2 (July, 1994)

Daniel A. Baugh, "Great Britain's 'Blue-Water' Policy, 1689-1815", in *The International History Review,* Vol. 10, No.1 (February, 1988)

_____, ‘The Politics of British Naval Failure 1775-1777, in *The American Neptune: A Quarterly Journal of Maritime History,* Vol. 52 Part 4 (1992)

Martin Bibbings, “ ‘An awkward Engine: Captain Broke’s troublesome relationship with the Carronade’ “, in *The Mariner’s Mirror,* Vol. 102:3 (August 2016)

Troy O. Bickham, ‘Sympathising with Sedition? George Washington, the British Press, and British Attitudes during the American War of Independence’, in *The William and Mary Quarterly,* Vol. 59, No1 (January, 2002), 101-122.

Jeremy Black, ‘Could the British have won the American War of Independence?’ in *Journal of the Society for Army Historical Research,* Vol.74, No. 299 (Autumn, 1996)

C. E. Brodine Jr., “The War’s most challenging theatre”, in *Naval History Magazine,* Vol. 27, No. 5 (September 2013)

Paul Cheney, ‘A False Dawn for Enlightenment Cosmopolitanism?: Franco-American Trade during the American War of Independence’, in *The William and Mary Quarterly,* Vol. 63, No. 3 (July, 2006), 463-488

Randolph Cock,” ‘The finest invention in the world’: The Royal Navy’s early trials of copper sheathing, 1708-1770”, in *The Mariner’s Mirror,* Vol.87:4 (1973)

_____, “ ‘Avarice and Rapacity’ and ‘Treasonable Correspondence’ in ‘an Emporium for All the World’ “, in *The Mariner’s Mirror,* Vol. 104:3 (August 2018)

Stephen Conway, “ ‘The British Army, ‘Military Europe’, and the American war of independence’ in *The William and Mary Quarterly,* Vol. 67, No. 1 (January, 2010), 69-100.

_____, ‘The Politics of British Military and Naval Mobilisation, 1775-83’, in *The English Historical Review,* Vol. 112, No. 449 (November, 1997)

Michael Crawford, “New Light on the Battle off the Virginia Capes: Graves v. Hood “, in *The Mariner’s Mirror,* Vol. 103:3 (August 2007)

Jonathan R. Dull, “Sea Power and the War for American Independence”, in *The International History Review,* Vol. 10 No. 1 (February, 1988)

Nicola Eustace, “Interchange: The War of 1812”, in *Journal of American History,* (September 2012)

Robin F. A. Fable, “The Laws of War in the 1812 Conflict”, in *Journal of American Studies,* Vol. 14, No. 2 (August, 1980)

Andrew J. B. Fagal, ‘Terror Weapons in the Naval War of 1812’, in *New York History,* in Vol. 94, No. 3-4 (Summer, 2013), 221-240

Larrie de Ferreiro, “The Race to the Chesapeake between Destouches and Arbuthnot, March 1781”, in *The Mariner’s Mirror,* Vol. 104:4 (November 2018)

Robert Fleitz, ‘The War of 1812 in the Old Northwest’, in *The Army Historical Foundation,* Vol. 14, No. 2 (Autumn, 2008), 34-41

Sydney Howard Gay, “Why Cornwallis was at Yorktown”, in *The North American Review,* Vol 133, No. 299, (1881)

Christopher T. Golding and Christopher T. Goulding, Amphibians at Heart: The Battle of Copenhagen (1807), the Walcheren Expedition, and the War against Napoleon”, in *Journal of the Society for Army Historical Research,* Vol. 90, No. 363 (Autumn, 2012)

Warren H. Goodman, ‘The Origins of the War of 1812: A Survey of Changing Interpretations’, in *The Mississippi Historical Review,* Vol. 28, No. 2 (September, 1941), 171-186

Barry Gough, “Vice-Admiral Sir Charles Saunders, Naval Victor of Quebec 1759” in *The Northern Mariner,* MXIX, No. 1 (January 2009)

_____, “Michilimackinac and Prarie du Chien: Northern Anchors of British Authority in the War of 1812”, in *Michigan Historical Review,* Vol. 38, No. 1 (Spring, 2012)

Ira Gruber, ‘Lord Howe and Lord George Germain, British Politics and the Winning of American Independence’, in *The William and Mary Quarterly,* Vol. 22, No. 2 (April, 1965)

Richard Harding, ‘Sailors and Gentlemen of Parade: some Professional and Tactical Problems Concerning the Conduct of Combined Operations in the Eighteenth Century’, in *The Historical Journal,* Vol. 32 (March, 1989)

John B. Hattendorf, ‘The Naval War of 1812 in International Perspective’, in *The Mariner’s Mirror,* Vol. 99:1 (February 2013)

_____, “The Idea of a ‘Fleet in Being’ in Historical Perspective”, in *Naval College Review,* Vol. 67, No.1, Article 6 (2014)

Reginald Horseman, ‘On to Canada: Manifest Destiny and United States Strategy in the War of 1812’, in *Michigan Historical Review,* Vol. 13, No. 2 (Fall, 1987), 1-24.

R. G. B. Knight, ‘The Introduction of copper sheathing in the Royal Navy 1779-1786’, in *The Mariner’s Mirror,* Vol. 59:3 (1973)

Jean-Francois Lebeau, “Breaking the Stalemate: Amphibious Warfare during the War of 1812”, in *Canadian Military Journal,* Vol. 14, No 1 (Winter 2013)

B. J. Lohnes, “British Naval Problems at Halifax during the War of 1812”, in *The Mariner’s Mirror,* Vol. 59:3 (1973)

Staughton Lynied and David Waldstreicher, “Free Trade, Sovereignty, and Slavery: Towards an Economic Interpretation of American Independence”, Vol. 68, No. 4 (October, 2011)

Kevin D. McCranie, ‘Confronting Uncertainty with Decentralised command, British Naval Decision Making at the Outbreak of the War of 1812,’ in *Naval War College Review,* Vol. 70, No. 4 (Autumn, 2017), 78-100.

T. H. McGuffie, “The Walcheren Expedition and the Walcheren Fever”, in *The English Historical Review,* Vol. 62, No. 243 (April, 1947)

K. A. J. McLay, ‘Combined operations and the European theatre during Years’ War, 1688-97’, in *Institute of Historical Research,* Vol. 78, No. 202 (November, 2005), 506-538

Richard Middleton, “Naval Resources and the British Defeat at Yorktown, 1781’, in *The Mariner’s Mirror,* Vol. 100:1 (2014)

Gareth A. Newfield, “Naval Medical Operations at Kingston during the War of 1812”, in *Canadian Military History,* Vol. 18, Issue 1 (2009)

Amy Noel Ellison, “Montgomery’s Misfortune: The American Defeat at Quebec and the March towards Independence, 1775-1776”, in *Early American Studies,* Vol, 15, Issue 3 (Summer, 2017)

Andrew Jackson O’Shaughnessy, “ ‘To Gain the Hearts and Subdue the Minds of America’: General Sir Henry Clinton and the Conduct of the British War for America’ ”, in *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society,* Vol. 158, No. 3 (September, 2014)

Frank Lawrence Owsley, Jr., “The Role of the South in the British Grand Strategy in the War of 1812”, in *Tennessee Historical Quarterly,* Vol. 31, No. 1 (Spring, 1972)

A. J. Pack, “A Naval Sidelight in the War with America,” in *The Mariner’s Mirror,* Vol 73:3 (1987)

Jacqueline Reiter, " 'Day after Day adds to our Miseries': The Private Diary of a Staff Officer on the Walcheren Expedition, 1809", in *Journal of the Society for Army Historical Research,* Vol. 96, No. 386 (Autumn, 2018) See also ibid, Vol. 96, No. 387 (Winter, 2018).

Mark Russell Shulman, "The Influence of History upon Sea Power: The Navalist Reinterpretation of the War of 1812", in *The Journal of Military History,* Vol. 56 No. 2 (April, 1992)

Roger Smith, " 'The Failure of the Great British Southern Expedition' of 1776: Revisiting the Early Years of the American Revolution, 1775-1779", in *The Florida Historical Quarterly,* Vol. 93, No.3 (Winter, 2015)

David Syrett, 'Countdown to the Saints: A Strategy of Detachments and the Quest for Naval Superiority in the West Indies. 1780-2' in *The Mariner's Mirror,* Vol 87:2 (2001)

_____,'The Methodology of British Amphibious Operations during the Seven Years and American Wars', in *The Mariner's Mirror,* Vol. 58:3 (1972)

_____. 'Home Waters or American Strategy? The Dilemma of British Naval Strategy in 1778, in *The Mariner's Mirror,* Vol. 77:4 (1991)

George J. W. Urwin, " 'To bring the American Army under strict Discipline': British Army Foraging Policy in the South, 1780-81", in *War in History,* Vol. 26, No. 1 (2019), 4-26

Ivan Valdez-Bubnov, "Spanish Naval Strategy and the United States 1763-1815", in *The Marine's Mirror,* Vol.101:1 (February 2015)

Donald C. Wellington, " The Pre-eminent Cause of the American Revolution", in *The Journal of European Economic History,* Vol. 39, Issue 1 (Spring, 2010)

James J. Wirtz and Jon. J. Rosenwasser, "From Combined Arms to Combined Intelligence: Philosophy, Doctrine and Operations", in *Intelligence and National Security,* Vol. 25:6 (2010)

Frederick Wyatt and William B. Willcox, Sir Henry Clinton: A Psychological Exploration in History", in *William and Mary Quarterly,* Vol. 16, No.1 (January 1959) 3-26

Donald A. Xerxa, *'Vice-Admiral Graves and the North American Squadron 1774-1776,* in *The Mariner's Mirror,* Vol. 62:4

Theses

Keith McLay, "Combined Operations: British Naval and Military co-operation in the War of 1688-1713", Glasgow University Ph.D. thesis (2003)

Charles Buckley, "1776-A Critical time in the American Revolution", United States Marine Corps Command and Staff College M.A. thesis (2007)

Appendix.

1. List of maps.

Map No 1 The American Invasion of Canada 1775 – 1776.
Map No 2 The Battle of Long Island (Brooklyn) 27th August 1776.
Map No 3 Burgoyne's Expedition from Canada to Saratoga 1777.
Map No 4 The Battle of Charleston February 1780 to May 1780.
Map No 5 The Battle of Yorktown 30th September 1781 to 19th October 1781.
Map No 6 The Battle of the Capes September 1781.
Map No 7 The Northern Theatre of War 1812 – 1814.
Map No 8 The British Blockade 1812 – 1814.
Map No 9 The Niagara Frontier.
Map No 10 The American Campaign against Canada.
Map No 11(1) and 11(2) The Battle of Bladensburg 24th August 1814.
Map No 12 Washington D.C. 24th – 25th August 1814.
Map No 13 The Battle of Plattsburgh and the Battle of Lake Champlain 11th September 1814.
Map No 14 The Battle of New Orleans 8th January 1815.

Map Sources.

Map No 1 George F. Scheer and Hugh Rankin Rebels and Redcoats 1957 p 116.
Map No 2 memeguy.com/photo/images/the-battle-of-long-island—94125.gif
Map No 3 George F. Scheer and Hugh Rankin Rebels and Redcoats 1957 p 252.

Map No 4 Photos-36 CharlestonSiege.gif The United States Military Academy Department of History.
Map No 5 Edward G. Lengel George Washington 2005 p 334.
Map No 6 Photos-3-battle-of-virginia-capes.grainger.jpg from the Political Magazine, London, 1782.
Map No 7 J. Mackay Hitsman The Incredible War of 1812 1965 p xxviii – xxix
Map No 8 C. Brown The War of 1812 2002 p 58.
Map No 9 Jon Latimer 1812 2007 p 70.
Map No 10 J. Mackay Hitsman The Incredible War of 1812 1965 p182.
Map No 11(1) and 11(2) P. Snow When Britain burned the Whitehouse 2014 p 78 and p 95.
Map No 12 Ibid p 105.
Map No 13 Jon Latimer 1812 p 355.
Map No 14 Jon Latimer 1812 p 382.

2. Maps.

MAPS

Map No 1 The American Invasion of Canada 1775-1776

Map Redacted

The map shows the routes taken by the two American forces in the invasion of Canada.

Map No 2 The Battle of Long Island (Brooklyn) 27th August 1776

Map Redacted

The map indicates the British landing at Long Island, the passage of General Clinton's forces through the Jamaica Pass and the subsequent attack on the colonial line at Brooklyn.

Map No 3 Burgoyne's Expedition from Canada to Saratoga 1777

Map Redacted

The map shows the attack of the forces commanded by Burgoyne and St. Leger which are attempting to meet up at Albany. The third prong of the attack which was meant originally to be commanded by William Howe and was intended to sail up the Hudson River to meet up at Albany did not occur.

Map No 4 The Battle of Charleston February 1780 to May 1780

Map Redacted

The map shows the second British attack on Charleston which was successful since Fort Moultrie was ignored. The British Army took up a position on James Island, moved along the Ashley River and then crossed it to build siege lines which trapped General Lincoln and he surrendered after a heavy bombardment.

Map No 5 The Battle of Yorktown 30th September 1781 to 19th October 1781

Map Redacted

The map indicates the siege of Yorktown by the French and American Armies whilst at the same time the French Navy prevented access to the River York.

Map No 6 The Battle of the Capes September 1781

Map Redacted

The map shows the approach of the British Fleet. The fleet was forced to alter formation in order to avoid the Middle Ground. At the same time, the French Fleet was hastily emerging from the Chesapeake Bay and forming a line of battle.

Map No 7 The Northern Theatre of War 1812-1814

Map Redacted

The map indicates the Northern Theatre of War which included the Great Lakes and the St. Lawrence River.

Map No 8 The British Blockade 1812-1814

Map Redacted

The map shows the British blockade and its gradual extension northwards.

Map No 9 The Niagara Frontier

Map Redacted

The Map indicates the Niagara Frontier. The River Niagara connects Lake Ontario and Lake Erie. It is the location of important positions such as Fort George.

Map No 10 The American Campaign against Canada

Map Redacted

The map indicates Lower Canada and Lake Champlain and the important post of Plattsburgh which was the site of the unsuccessful British combined operation in 1814.

Map No 11(1) The Battle of Bladensburg 24th August 1814

Map Redacted

The map shows the first phase of the Battle of Bladensburg and General Ross's approach to the position of the Americans.

Map No 11(2) The Battle of Bladensburg 24th August 1814

Map Redacted

The Map indicates the second phase of the Battle of Bladensburg and the attack on the American forces commanded by General Winder. After taking this position, the road would be open to the American capital.

Map No 12 Washington D.C. 24th August – 25th August 1814

Map Redacted

The Map shows the British attack on Washington.

Map No 13 The Battle of Plattsburgh and the Battle of Lake Champlain 11th September 1814

Map Redacted

The Map indicates the important British combined operation at Plattsburgh.

Map No 14 The Battle of New Orleans 8th January 1815

Map Redacted

The Map shows the Battle of New Orleans which involved the loss of over 2,000 British troops. The British commander, Edward Pakenham was killed. The defeat meant that New Orleans could no longer be taken.

END