**Chapter Outline**

to accompany

*Indigenous Peoples within Canada: A Concise History*, Fifth Edition

Dickason, Newbigging, and Miller

**Chapter 9: Indigenous Alliances and Resistance to Settler Expansion in the Western Great Lakes**

This chapter examines the War of 1812 and, in particular, the role that Tecumseh had in this event. By the early 1800s, the intentions of the Americans were clear. The Americans were expanding, and it would be to the west where they would seek land. The War of 1812 can be viewed as a continuance of the American War of Independence, as this inconclusive war had left unresolved several important matters, such as those relating to Indigenous Peoples and their lands. For Indigenous Peoples, the period between the American Revolution and the end of the War of 1812 was one of almost constant warfare in the region of the Great Lakes. In a similar fashion to Obwaandi’eyaag, Tecumseh, a part-Shawnee and part-Maskó:kí (Creek) leader, rose to the forefront as an advocate and diplomat for an Indigenous coalition movement. Like Obwaandi’eyaag, Tecumseh was linked to a prophet. Tenskwatawa was known as the Shawnee Prophet and happened to be Tecumseh’s brother. Tenskwatawa argued that no particular tribe had the right to give up land as its own. Tecumseh had a particular disdain for Americans as both his father and brother were killed in US frontier wars. He chose to side with the British not because he favoured them but rather because he saw them as the lesser of two evils.

Tecumseh challenged the cessions of lands that the Americans were obtaining, particularly those claimed in Indiana Territory. Throughout 1812 to 1813, Tecumseh led Indigenous forces to victory after victory over the Americans. Tecumseh eventually met his demise at Moraviantown where, unsupported by British troops that had been promised, he was killed in October 1813. The death of Tecumseh had immediate impacts since no leader could fill his role as a catalyst for a movement of confederated Indigenous nations. He had more than thirty Indigenous nations following him. Although many of these nations continued to support the British, they were not as effective after the loss of Tecumseh’s leadership. The Americans took advantage of this opportunity and convinced a group of Haudenosaunee, predominately Onondowaga, to fight on the American side. This resulted in Haudenosaunee fighting other Haudenosaunee for the second time, as had happened during the American War of Independence.

The chapter concludes by discussing the impact that the war had on Indigenous populations. In 1814, the Treaty of Ghent was signed, bringing a close to the War of 1812. However, it did not stop the American appropriation of lands as expected by Indigenous Peoples. The conclusion of the war put British North American Indigenous Peoples at a disadvantage because as long as there had been colonial wars, they could maintain their positions in return for alliance. With that bargaining tool gone, they were placed in a position of serious disadvantage. The fact that Indigenous Peoples were no longer viewed as allies is reflected in the shifting of Indian administration in 1830 from the military to a civilian arm of British administration.