

Six Nations Legacy Consortium

War of 1812

October 5, 1813 Tehcumtheh's Betrayal

British Major General Henry Procter made a fateful decision to retreat from Amherstburg after the naval defeat on Lake Erie. Tehcumtheh wanted to stand his ground, but Procter took all tangible support on his retreat to Burlington Heights. To offset Tehcumtheh's complaints, Procter decided to retreat as far as Moraviantown.



Handcolored Print depicting the killing of Tecumseh titled "A View of Col. Johnson's Engagement with the Savages (commanded by Tecumseh) near the Moravian Town, October 5th, 1812 [sic]."

This fanciful scene depicts the moment before the death for Tehcumtheh. Col. Johnson is mounted and is being attacked by a warrior with a tomahawk. In the foreground, another warrior scalps a fallen drummer, while Tehcumtheh, holding a spear, looks on. American troops, in formation, fire on warriors armed with bows and arrows, while the cavalry pursue fleeing warriors. Col. Richard Johnson, who legend says personally killed Tehcumtheh, would later become Vice-President of the United States under Martin Van Buren.

William Henry Harrison's force totaled at least 3,500 infantry and cavalry, included Kentucky militia. The volunteer cavalry was led by Colonel Johnson. They faced the British with 800 soldiers and about 500 warriors under Tehcumtheh, and attacked at Moraviantown, on the Thames River. Quickly overwhelmed, Procter and half his troops fled the scene, while the other half surrendered. Tehcumtheh was left to fight on, but was soon fatally wounded.