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Tecumseh: Shooting Star, Crouching Panther (Quest Library (Dundurn Press))

JIM POLING SR.

TECUMSEH



SHOOTING STAR, CROUCHING PANTHER



Synopsis

Shawnee war chief Tecumseh dedicated his life to stopping American expansion and preserving the lands and cultures of North American Aboriginal peoples. He travelled relentlessly trying to build a confederation of tribes that would stop the territorial ambitions of the newly created United States of America. Tecumseh tried both diplomacy and battle to preserve his Ohio Valley homelands. When he realized that neither could stop the American advancement, he turned to the British in Canada for help as the War of 1812 began. He and Isaac Brock, British general and Canadian hero, captured Detroit early in the war and historians believe they would have gone on to more impressive battles had Brock not fallen at Queenston Heights in 1812. After the loss of Brock, some success was achieved against the Americans, notably in the woods at Fort Meigs, Ohio, in May 1813. But when the Americans won the decisive Battle of Lake Erie later that summer, the door to Canada was opened. Chased by his nemesis William Henry Harrison, Tecumseh and the British retreated, making a final stand at the Battle of Moraviantown. Tecumseh was killed in the battle. His death marked the end of First Nations resistance to American expansion south of the Great Lakes. A great leader, Tecumseh left an indelible mark on the history of both Canada and the United States. The story of his struggle to preserve a vanishing culture is one that remains relevant today. One of the greatest tributes to Tecumseh came from his enemy, Harrison, who later became president of the United States. He called Tecumseh an "uncommon genius," who in another place, another time, could have built an empire.

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