



## Tecumseh: A Life

*John Sugden*

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## **Tecumseh: A Life** John Sugden

If Sitting Bull is the most famous Indian, Tecumseh is the most revered. He does not stand for one tribe or nation, but for all Native Americans. He remains the ultimate symbol of endeavor and courage. Over thirty years in the writing, this is the first authoritative biography of the principal organizer and driving force of Native American confederacy. For anyone studying the early years of the Republic or Native American history, it is essential reading.

## **Tecumseh: A Life Details**

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## From Reader Review Tecumseh: A Life for online ebook

### Tony Laplume says

Thoroughly comprehensive in a general kind of way, Sugden immerses his reader in Tecumseh's life and times, synthesizing the historical record without really getting to the heart of it in a dispassionate or piercing way. But maybe that's as good as it's going to get.

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### Simon Griffin says

After reading many others books about Tecumseh and enjoying them, I was unable to immerse myself in John Sugden's prose. Even though the subject matter is fascinating, the book moved slowly and was too dry. I made it through about 1/3 of the book and put it back on the shelf.

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### Yasmin says

This book has more background and personally history of Tecumseh than the book I read about Tecumseh and Brock. A very interesting and detailed account of his life. A worthwhile and recommended read for anyone interested in Canadian history, U.S history and the history of the aboriginal peoples. It is a pity from all the accurate and comprehensive studies on Tecumseh that he is not more widely recognised for his contributions to history whether it was the one war of 1812 or the other war for the aboriginal peoples that lasted until 1818 or his contributions of localised history of the U.S and the First Nations.

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### Glen says

This is a very long book, or at least it seemed so to me. I learned a good deal about the period of American and Canadian history spanned by the Shawnee leader's life, but I found Sugden's prose to be less than lively and the book more full of detail than a non-historian like me really wanted to wade through. Not my cup of broth, but I respect the scholarship and the subject.

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### Jerome says

An excellent well-researched biography of one of the most interesting characters in American history. More than a biography, Sugden's book is also a tale of how the British, the Indians, and the Americans struggled for power in the Old Northwest.

Sugden does a great job documenting Tecumseh's life and putting it in the context of the Indian-white struggle for power in the Old Northwest. The meat of the book is Tecumseh's dream of an Indian confederacy to resist white expansion into that territory.

Sugden's biography features many remarkable characters such as Tecumseh's brother Tenskhatawa ("The Prophet"). It also shows the various different approaches the tribes took in dealing with the white man.

Tecumseh slowly built a following to resist white expansion. He was leery of the British, but concluded that he needed their weaponry in order for his vision to work. Tecumseh proved to be skilled fighter and a brilliant tactician. But in the end, Tecumseh was flustered by supply lines that were too long and by his partnership with the indecisive General Proctor, who lacked resolution and vision and made decisions that made little sense to the British high command or to Tecumseh, who had proved himself to be the best asset the British had.

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### **Kevin says**

John Sugden's biography of the great Shawnee chief Tecumseh is an authoritative investigation of his life and legend. Sugden investigates the legend and highlights what he understands to be the facts, based on painful investigation of the known sources relating to Tecumseh. This he successfully does, while providing the reader with an understanding of Tecumseh the man, alongside Tecumseh and his mission.

For me the book also provides an insight into the machinations of early American government, expansion and imperialist ambition. As has usually been the case with native peoples, the Shawnee nation (and other native American nations) was exploited and treated extremely poorly by the young American nation.

I would recommend this book to those living in the United States as a very helpful book for providing an insight into how poorly native Americans were treated in the early years of the independent United States of America, and how the native peoples of that country were exploited and dispossessed of their country in such an unfeeling manner. Perhaps there are lessons to be learnt for today and forgiveness to be sought for yesterday, as there is in my own country's treatment of its indigenous peoples.

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### **Tom says**

For me, Tecumseh was always one of those tragic "noble savages" who was turned into a one-dimensional mythological character down through the years. Like many Indian leaders, he was venerated only after he was dead and thereby no longer a threat to the "Manifest Destiny" of America. Sugden goes a long way towards humanizing Tecumseh, without engaging in apotheosis or character sniping. Still, he comes off as a larger-than-life figure. Can you imagine anyone today taking on the combined roles of President / Secretary of State / General to the degree that Tecumseh did -- and nearly pulling it off? Sugden appears to have command of both the larger geo-political conditions of the day and the blood and tactics of individual battles and Indian village life. Sugden is a dramatic storyteller. He gives such a vivid portrait of Tecumseh's life that by the end, when T. is killed in battle, you feel as if you're reading a novel.

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### **Frank Fischer says**

Author John Sugden presented a very thorough well researched document that at times could be a little dense and dry. The content was very intriguing. I want to read more about Tecumseh and the War of 1812.

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### **Gail says**

One of the most factual accounts of the life of Tecumseh that I've come across. Told with quite a bit of information from Canadian sources, which gives an entirely different viewpoint than the American versions. One friend I lent the book to came back with an entirely new opinion of William Henry Harrison.

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### **Al Gritten says**

This one took me a while to read because it is very in-depth and a very detailed look at the life of both Tecumseh and his younger brother, the Prophet or Tenskwetawa. The book is an academic account that is well documented with ample footnotes and notations of interest. This is probably the fullest and most authoritative account of the Shawnee prince that I have read. A good read for the historian.

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### **Peter says**

Good bio & excellent overview of 19th century "NW" USA

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### **Wendy says**

I hated this one. It was dry, and heavy, and Sugden would present a bunch of stuff as fact, only to later tell you that it was conjecture. Let's waste our readers' time, shall we?

So that ticked me off. Really, just the whole tone of the thing ticked me off. Who does Sugden think he is? He wasn't at all objective, and seems to think his opinions are law. I always find that distasteful to read, even when I agree with the person, and I didn't agree with him most of the time.

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### **Alexus says**

Interesting subject matter, but Sugden's prose is tedious and makes this one very hard to get through. My interest waned as I worked through it because of this, even though I am very interested in this period and the subject. Maybe it's the difficulty of writing a biography of a figure with a largely undocumented life that is the problem (?). I was thinking about picking up his volumes on Nelson, but I'm not sure if I can make it through if the writing is the same as in this book.

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### **geekboy42 says**

I gave up on this book after 8 chapters. The writing just didn't seem to have a flow, and that quality is not good for a biography of a critical figure in late 1700 - early 1800's North America.

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### **Andrew says**

Excellent biography and history of the lower Great Lakes / Old Northwest region of the period leading up to the War of 1812 -- one of the most fascinating in North American history, before either Canada or the United States were fully defined and the tribes of the Old Northwest, particularly as they became united under Tecumseh, exerted real political and military power. A great contribution to the literature of native resistance.

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