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## Oliver Hazard Perry and the Battle of Lake Erie

George Bancroft

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# OLIVER HAZARD PERRY

AND

## THE BATTLE OF LAKE ERIE

BY GEORGE BANCROFT



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1913

OLIVER HAZARD PERRY

AND

THE BATTLE OF LAKE ERIE

By

GEORGE BANCROFT

TOGETHER WITH

THE ADDRESSES OF DR. USHER PARSONS, FLEET SURGEON  
UNDER COMMODORE PERRY, AND OF GOVERNOR  
WILLIAM SPRAGUE OF RHODE ISLAND,  
DELIVERED IN CLEVELAND, SEPT.  
10, 1860, AND OTHER PA-  
PERS OF INTEREST



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1912

# OLIVER HAZARD PERRY

AND

## The Battle of Lake Erie

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BY GEORGE BANCROFT

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In the last weeks of 1812, OLIVER HAZARD PERRY, a lieutenant in the United States Navy, then twenty-seven years of age, despairing of a sea-going vessel, sent to the Secretary of the Navy "a tender of his services for the Lakes." Tired of inactivity, he was quickened by the fame which men even younger than himself had just gained on the ocean. At that time he held the command of a flotilla of gun-boats, in the harbor of Newport; "possessing an ardent desire to meet the enemies of his country," and hoping one day to lead to battle the able and brave men who were at that time under his orders, he took "unwearied pains to prepare them for such an event," training them to the use of small arms, the exercise of the great guns, and every warlike service on ship-board.

The authority of Commodore CHAUNCEY, who took charge in person of the operations on Lake Ontario, extended to all the upper lakes. He received PERRY'S application with delight, and accepted it with alacrity. "You," thus the veteran wrote to the impatient young man, "you are the very person that I want, for a service in which you may gain a reputation for yourself, and honor for your country." "The situation will suit you exactly," wrote the friend, who from Washington announced

to him that he was ordered on duty to Lake Erie; "you may expect warm fighting and a portion of honor."

His sweet disposition, cheerfulness and modest courage, his intuitive good judgment and quickness of will, had endeared him to his subordinates; and one hundred and forty-nine of them, officers, men and boys, for the most part, like himself, natives of Rhode Island, volunteered to go with him, in the dead of winter, on the unknown service.

Receiving his orders on the 17th of February, 1813, on that very day he sent forward one-third of the volunteers, under sailing-master ALMY, as many more on the 19th, under sailing-master CHAMPLIN, the rest on the 21st, under sailing-master TAYLOR, and on the 22d, delivering over his command in Newport, he began the journey across the country, took with him, from his father's house, his brother Alexander, a boy of twelve, met CHAUNCEY at Albany, and pursuing his way in part through the wilderness, he arrived, on the 3d of March, at Sackett's Harbor. The command on Lake Ontario was important, and to its chief officer was paramount. In consequence of a prevailing rumor of an intended attack by the British, on that station, to destroy the squadron, and the vessels on the stocks, CHAUNCEY detained PERRY, and all his old companions, for a fortnight, and one-third of those companions he never let go from his own ships on Lake Ontario.

Not till the 16th of March was PERRY permitted to leave Sackett's Harbor. On the 24th he reached Buffalo. The next day was given to an inspection of the navy-yard at Black Rock. On the 26th PERRY set out in a sleigh over the frozen lake, and on the following afternoon he reached the harbor of Erie. There he found that the keels of two brigs had been laid, and three gun-boats nearly finished by New York mechanics, under the direction of NOAH BROWN, as master-shipwright; but no precautions for de-

fence had been taken ; not a musket was employed to guard against a sudden attack of the enemy ; nor had the ice been used for the transportation of cannon from Buffalo. The supervising power of the young commander was at once exerted. Before night he organized a guard out of the villagers of Erie, ordered sailing-master DOBBINS to repair to Buffalo, to bring up forty seamen, muskets, powder, and, if possible, cannon ; and wrote to the navy agent at Pittsburgh to hasten the movements of a party of shipwrights, on their way from Philadelphia.

The country expected Perry to change the whole course of the war in the West, by obtaining the command of the water, which the British as yet possessed without dispute. The want of that supremacy had lost HULL and WINCHESTER, and their forces, had left to the British Detroit and Michillimacinac, and the North-west, and still impeded all the purposes of Harrison. The route from Dayton, in Ohio, to the lake, was so difficult that the line of road through the forest and prairies could be traced by the wrecks of wagons, clinging with tenacity to the rich miry soil ; while the difficulties of transportation by land, along the lake shore, were insurmountable. Yet, to create a superior naval force on Lake Erie, it was necessary to bring sails, cordage, cannon, powder, military stores, from a distance of five hundred miles, through a region of which a considerable part was uninhabited.

Under the cheering influence of PERRY, the work proceeded with harmonious diligence. He was the central point of confidence, for he turned everything to account. The white and black oak, and the chestnut of the neighboring woods, often cut down on the day on which they were used, furnished the frames of the vessels ; the outside planks were of oak alone, the decks of pine. To eke out the iron, every scrap was gathered from the village smithies, and welded together. Of blacksmiths, but two came

from Philadelphia ; others were taken from the militia, who were called out as a guard. TAYLOR, having, on the 30th of March, arrived from Sackett's Harbor, with twenty officers and men, PERRY left him for a few days in command, and, by a hurried visit to Pittsburgh, quickened the movements, on which he depended for more artificers, for canvas, muskets, small guns, shot and balls.

On the third of May the gun-boats were launched, and at sunset of the twenty-third, the brigs, each of 141 feet in length, of five hundred tons burden, pierced for twenty guns, were got ready for launching. Just at that moment PERRY received information that Fort George, the British post at the outlet of the Niagara, was to be attacked by the American army, in concert with the fleet on Lake Ontario. As soon as night closed in, he threw himself into a four-oared open boat ; through darkness, and against squalls and head-winds, reached Buffalo the next day, and on the evening of twenty-fifth joined CHAUNCEY as a volunteer. "No person on earth could at this time be more welcome," said CHAUNCEY to the young hero whose coming was unexpected. PERRY was taken to counsel on the best mode of landing the troops, and rendered essential aid in their debarkation, winning general applause for his judgment, gallantry and alacrity. The official report declares that "he was present at every point where he could be useful, under showers of musketry."

He escaped unhurt, and turned the capture of Fort George to account for his duty on Lake Erie. The British, being driven from both banks of the Niagara, PERRY could remove from Black Rock the public vessels which had hitherto been confined there by Canadian batteries. Of these the largest was the *Caledonia*, which Lieutenant ELLIOTT had captured from the British in the previous year. The others were three small schooners and a sloop, trading vessels, purchased for the government, and fitted

out as gun-boats by HENRY ECKFORD, of New York. They were laden with all the naval stores at Black Rock, and by the aid of oxen, seamen, a detachment of two hundred soldiers were tracked against the vehement current.

It took a fortnight of almost incredible fatigue to bring them up to Buffalo, where danger began. The little flotilla had altogether but eight guns. FINNIS, a skillful and experienced officer, who still commanded the British squadron, was on the watch, with a force five or six times as great. But PERRY, by vigilance and promptness, escaped, and in the evening of the eighteenth of June, just as the British squadron hove in sight, he brought his group of gun-boats into the harbor of Erie.

The incessant exertion of all his faculties, night watching, and unending care, wore upon Perry's frame; but there could be no pause in his efforts, for there was no end to his difficulties. His example sustained the spirit of the workmen; one-fifth of them were sick, but the work was kept up all day and all night, by the rest, who toiled on without a murmur, and not one deserted. The brig over which PERRY was to raise his flag, was, by the Secretary of the Navy, named *Lawrence*, in honor of the gallant officer who could die in his country's service, but could not brook defeat; the other, equal to it in size and strength, was called the *Niagara*. By the tenth of July all the vessels were equipped, and could have gone out in a day after the reception of their crews; but there were barely men enough for one of the brigs. All recruits were furnished, not directly from Philadelphia, as a thoughtful secretary would have ordered, but with much loss of time, roundabout, by way of Sackett's Harbor, and through CHAUNCEY, who was under a perpetual temptation to detain the best on Lake Ontario.

On the twentieth of July, the British, now commanded



by the veteran BARCLAY, rode in triumph off the Bar of Erie. PERRY bent his eyes longingly on the east; he watched the coming of every mail, of every traveler, as the harbinger of the glad tidings that men were on the way. "Give me men," he wrote to CHAUNCEY, "and I will acquire honor and glory both for you and myself, or perish in the attempt. Think of my situation; the enemy within striking distance, my vessels ready, and I obliged to bite my fingers with vexation, for want of men. I know you will send them as soon as possible, yet a day appears an age."

On the twenty-third CHAMPLIN arrived with a re-inforcement of seventy persons, but they were "a motley set of negroes, soldiers and boys." CHAUNCEY repelled all complaints. "I have yet to learn," said he, "that the color of the skin can affect a man's qualifications or usefulness. I have nearly fifty blacks on board of this ship, and many of them are among my best men." Meantime PERRY declared himself "pleased to see anything in the shape of a man." But his numbers were still incomplete. "My vessels," he again wrote, "are all ready, our sails are bent, BARCLAY has been bearding me for several days. I long to have at him; he shows no disposition to avoid the contest."

PERRY had not in his character one grain of envy. Impatient as a spirited race-horse, to win the palm in the contest for glory, no one paid a heartier or more genial tribute to the merit of every other officer, even where, like MORRIS, a junior officer received promotion over his head. He now invited CHAUNCEY himself to come up with sufficient men, beat the British on Lake Erie, and return to crush them on Lake Ontario. In his zeal for his country and the service, he subdued his own insatiable thirst for honor. Meantime he suffered most keenly from his compulsory inactivity; for letters from the Secretary of the

Navy required his active co-operation with the army, and when he explained to HARRISON the cause of delay, the Secretary chid him for letting his weakness be known.

The harbor of Erie is a beautiful expanse of water, offering shelter to navies of merchantmen, and would be the best on the Lake but for its bar. It remained to lift the armed brigs over the shallow, and it was to be done as it were in the presence of an enemy. Success required secrecy and dispatch.

On the first of August the British squadron disappeared. On the instant PERRY seized the opportunity to affect the dangerous achievement. Camels had been provided to lift the brigs; the lake was lower than usual, but the weather was still. The guns of the *Lawrence*, all loaded and shotted, were whipped out, and landed on the beach, and on the morning of the second the camels were applied.

On the first experiment the timbers yielded a little to the strain, and the camels required to be sunk a second time. From daylight on the second of August, to the fourth, PERRY, whose health had already suffered, was constantly on the alert, without sleep or rest; his example heartened his men.

Who would complain when their commander bore so much? After toiling all day, on the second, all the next night, the next day, and again another night, the *Lawrence*, at daylight, on the fourth, was fairly over the bar. On the fifth the *Niagara* was got over at the first attempt.

"Thank God," wrote Perry, "the other sloop-of-war is over; in a few hours I shall be after the enemy, who is now making off."

Ill provided as he was with men and officers, he gave chase to the British; but his daring was vain; they retreated to Malden, and he returned to anchor off Erie.

Till the new ship, which the British were equipping at Malden, should be ready, PERRY had the superiority, and

he used it to lade his vessels with military stores for the army near Sandusky ; but, for a battle on the Lake, he needed officers, as well as seamen.

“ I have been on the station,” he could say, “ for five months, without an officer of the least experience, except one sailing-master.”

Just then a midshipman arrived with a letter that Lieutenant ELLIOTT (soon promoted to a commander) was on the way, with eighty men and several officers, and a vessel was at once hurried off to bring them up. But a letter also came to PERRY from CHAUNCEY, marked in its superscription, and in every line by impatience, if not by insult. PERRY was justly moved by its tone, but, after complaint, remonstrance, and further letters, he acted like “ an officer whose first duty it is to sacrifice all personal feelings to his public duties.”

ELLIOTT, on his arrival, took command of the *Niagara*, and PERRY, with a generosity that was natural to him, allowed him to select for his own ship the best of the men who came with him.

On the twelfth, PERRY, having traced his plan of battle, in case of attack, ranged his squadron in a double column, and sailed for the upper end of the Lake. Arriving off Cunningham Island, one of the enemy's schooners appeared in sight, was chased, and escaped capture only by disappearing at nightfall among the islands.

On the evening of the nineteenth, as the squadron lay off Sandusky, General HARRISON came on board the *Lawrence* with CASS, MCARTHUR, GAINES and CROGHAN. At the same time came six and twenty chiefs of the Shawnees, Wyandots and Delawares, by whose influence it was hoped to detach the Indians of the Northwest from the British service. Between HARRISON and PERRY the happiest spirit of concert prevailed. The General pointed out to him the excellence of the harbor, Put-in-Bay, which

became his anchoring ground after he had landed the stores for the army, and reconnoitred the British squadron at Malden.

CHAUNCEY had promised to send fifty marines, but had recalled them when on their way to Lake Erie. HARRISON, who saw the want unsupplied, and observed how much the little squadron had been weakened by sickness, now sent on board from his army near one hundred men, all of whom were volunteers. Some of these, having served as boatmen on the Ohio, were put on duty as seamen; the rest chiefly men of Kentucky, who had never before seen a ship, acted as marines.

Just then PERRY was taken down by a violent attack of lake fever, but it was no time to yield to physical weakness; he gave up to the care of himself only the few days necessary to make the crews acquainted with each other, and to teach the new men the use of the guns.

On the first of September he was able to be on deck, and again sailed towards Malden. Here he found that the British had equipped their new ship, which they had proudly named *Detroit*, as a memorial of their conquest; but, though PERRY defied them, the British, as yet, showed no disposition to meet him, and he returned to Put-in-Bay.

But, meantime, the British army, which had been accustomed to the abundance and security which the dominion of the water had afforded, began to suffer from the want of provisions; and, to restore the uninterrupted communication with Long Point, General PROCTOR insisted on the necessity of risking a naval engagement, of which the issue was not thought uncertain. Of this PERRY was seasonably informed.

On the sixth, he again reconnoitred Malden, and finding the enemy still at his moorings, he returned once more to fill his anchorage, to make his final arrangements for the conflict, which was inevitably near at hand. On the even-

ing of the ninth, he summoned by signal the commanders of the several vessels, and gave them their instructions in writing. It was his policy to fight the enemy at close quarters; to each vessel its antagonist on the British side, was marked out; to the *Lawrence*, the *Detroit*; to the *Niagara*, the *Queen Charlotte*; and the written order said: "Engage each your designated adversary in close action, at half cable-length." He also showed them a flag of blue bunting, on which were painted in white letters the last words of Lawrence, "*Dont give up the ship.*" It was a bright Autumn night; the moon was at the full; as they parted, each to return to his vessel, the last injunction of their young commander was given, in the words of Nelson: "If you lay your enemy close alongside, you cannot be out of your place."

At sunrise, on the tenth, the British squadron was discovered from the masthead of the *Lawrence*, gallantly bearing down for action. To PERRY, all languishing as he was from the wasting attack of a severe bilious fever, the news was as welcome as the bidding of the most important duty of his life. His anchors were soon lifted, and his squadron began beating out of the bay, against a gentle breeze from the south-west. Three or four hours passed away in this contest with an adverse wind, when he resolved to wear ship, and run to leeward of the island. "You will engage the enemy from to leeward," said the sailing-master, TAYLOR. "To windward or to leeward," answered PERRY, "they shall fight to-day." But nature, on that occasion, came into an alliance with his hopeful courage, and the wind shifted to the south-east. A slight shower had fallen in the morning, the sky became clear. The day on which PERRY, forming his line, slowly bore up towards the enemy, then nearly three leagues off, was one of the loveliest of the beautiful days of autumn.

At first the *Niagara* led the van. When within about

a league of the British, PERRY saw that BARCLAY, with whose vessel he was to engage, occupied the head of the British line, and he promptly altered the disposition of his vessels, to conform to it. ELLIOTT had no cause to be piqued at the change, which was required by the plan that had been uniformly proposed; it was in itself most fit, and was made promptly, and without confusion.

The British squadron had hove-to, in close order, the ships' heads to the southward and westward, and waiting to be attacked, the sides of the vessels, newly painted, glittering in the sun, and their gay colors flying in the breeze. The *Detroit*, a new brig of nineteen or twenty guns, commanded by BARCLAY, an experienced officer, who had fought with NELSON, at Trafalgar, was in the van, supported by the *Chippewa*, a gun-boat, with one long eighteen, on a pivot. Next rode the *Hunter* of ten guns; the *Queen Charlotte*, of seventeen guns, commanded by FINNIS, a gallant and tried officer, who had commanded the squadron till BARCLAY'S arrival, was the fourth, and was flanked by the *Lady Prevost*, which carried thirteen guns, and the *Little Belt*, which had three. On the American side, PERRY, in the *Lawrence*, of twenty guns, flanked on his left by the *Scorpion*, under CHAMPLIN, with one long, and one short gun, and the *Ariel*, under Lieutenant ALMY, with four short twelves, and sustained on his right by TURNER, in the *Caledonia*, with three long twenty-fours, were to support each other, and cope with the *Chippewa*, the *Detroit*, and the *Hunter*; while ELLIOTT, in the *Niagara*, a noble vessel, of twenty guns, which was to encounter the *Queen Charlotte*, came next; and with ALMY in the *Somers*, with two long thirty-twos; the *Porcupine*, with one long thirty-two; the *Tigress*, with one long twenty-four, and the *Trippe*, with one long thirty-two, was to engage the *Lady Prevost* and the *Little Belt*. The American gun-boat *Ohio* was absent on special service.

In ships the British had the superiority, their vessels being stronger, and their forces being more concentrated ; the American gunboats at the right of the American line, separated from each other by at least a half cable's length, were not near enough for good service. In number of guns the British had 63, the Americans 54. In action at a distance, the British, who had 35 long guns to 15, had greatly the advantage ; in close action the weight of metal would favor the Americans. The British commander had one hundred and fifty men from the royal navy, eighty Canadian sailors, and two hundred and forty soldiers, mostly regulars, and some Indians, making, with their officers, a little more than five hundred men, of whom at least four hundred and fifty were efficient. The American crews, of whom about one-fourth were from Rhode Island, one fourth regular seamen, American or cosmopolitan, about one fourth raw volunteers from Pennsylvania, Ohio, but chiefly Kentucky, and about one-fourth blacks, numbered on the muster-roll four hundred and ninety, but of these one hundred and sixteen were sick, nearly all of whom were too weak to come on deck, so that the efficient force of the squadron was a little less than four hundred.

While the Americans, having the weather-gauge, bore up for action, PERRY unfolded to the crew of the *Lawrence* the motto flag ; it was received with hearty cheers, and run up to the top of the fore-royal, in sight of all the squadron. The decks were wetted and strown with sand, to insure a firm foothold when blood should begin to flow ; and refreshments were hastily served. For an hour the stillness of expectation continued unbroken, till a bugle was heard to sound on board the *Detroit*, followed by loud and concerted cheers from all the British line, and BARCLAY began the conflict, in which the defeat of the Americans would yield to the British the superiority in arms on the land, bare the shores of Ohio to ruthless havoc and

ravage, leave Detroit and the Far West in the power of the English king, let loose the savage with his tomahawk on every family of emigrants along the border, and dishonor the star-spangled banner on the continent and on the lakes.

At fifteen minutes before twelve, BARCLAY began the action by firing a single twenty-four pound shot at the *Lawrence*, which had then approached within a mile and a half, or less, of the British line. The shot did not take effect; but it was clear that he desired to conduct the fight with the American squadron at a distance, which his very great superiority in long guns marked out as his wisest plan. It was, on the other hand, the object of PERRY to bring his squadron as near to his antagonist as possible, for he had the advantage in weight of metal. In five minutes more the shot from the *Detroit* struck the *Lawrence*, and passed through her bulwarks.

At that moment the advantage lay altogether with the British, whose line headed nearly south-south-west; the Americans, as they advanced, headed about south-west, with the wind abeam; so that the two lines formed an acute angle of about fifteen degrees; the *Lawrence* as yet scarcely reached beyond the third vessel in the British line, so that she was almost as much in the rear of the *Detroit* as in advance of the *Queen Charlotte*. The *Caledonia* was in its designated place in the American line, at a half-cable's length from the *Lawrence*, and from the angle at which the line formed, a little less near the enemy. The *Niagara*, which followed the *Caledonia*, was abaft the beam of the *Charlotte*, and opposite the *Lady Prevost*, but at a slightly greater distance from the British than the ships which preceded her. As for the gun-boats, they would have spread beyond the British lines by more than a quarter of a mile, had they been in their places, each distant from the other a half-cable's



length ; but they were dull sailers, and the sternmost was more than two miles distant from the enemy, and more than a mile behind the *Lawrence*.

At five minutes before twelve, the *Lawrence*, which was already suffering, began to return the British attack from her long twelve-pounder ; the two schooners on her weather-bow, the *Scorpion* under CHAMPLIN, the *Ariel* under Lieutenant PACKET, were ordered by trumpet to open their fire ; and the action became general along the two lines. The two schooners bravely kept their place all the day, and gallantly and steadily rendered every aid, which their few guns and weight of armament allowed. The *Caledonia* was able to engage at once and effectively, for she carried two long twenty-fours ; but the caronades of the *Niagara* fell short of their mark. ELLIOTT therefore at first used only one long twelve-pounder, which was on the side toward the enemy ; but he soon moved another where it could be serviceable ; so that while his ship carried twenty guns, he discharged but two ; which, however, were plied so vigorously, that in the course of two hours or more, nearly all the shot of that calibre was expended. The sternmost gunboats could as yet take no part in the fight.

It was under these circumstances that PERRY formed the desperate but necessary resolution of taking the utmost advantage of the superior speed of the *Lawrence*, and leaving the *Caledonia*, he advanced upon the enemy ; so that however great might have been the zeal of every officer in the other ships of his squadron, he must necessarily have remained for a short time exposed alone. The breeze was light ; his motion was slow ; and as he fanned down with the flagging wind, the *Detroit* with her long guns, planted her shot in the *Lawrence* deliberately and at discretion. The *Scorpion* and *Ariel*, all exposed as they were for the want of bulwarks, accompanied the flag-

ship, but suffered little, for they were neglected by the enemy, who concentrated his fire on the *Lawrence*.

At noon, PERRY luffed up and tried the effect of the first division of his battery on the starboard side ; but it did not much injure his antagonist ; he therefore bore away again, and approached nearer and still nearer, and after firing a broadside at a quarter past twelve, once more continued his onward course, till he arrived " within canister shot distance," or within five hundred yards, or a little less, when he took a position parallel to the *Detroit* ; and, notwithstanding what he had suffered from loss of men and injury to his rigging, he poured in upon her a swift, continuous, and effective fire. Here the good effect of his discipline was apparent ; his men showed how well they had been trained to the guns, which were rapidly and skillfully served. In the beginning of the conflict, the *Niagara* came in for a share of the attention of the enemy ; whose shot very early took effect upon her and carried away one of her fore-top-mast-back-stays. But at half-past twelve, FINNIS who commanded the *Queen Charlotte*, perceived that the *Niagara*, which was apparently destined for his antagonist, " kept so far to windward as to render his twenty-four-pounder carronades useless," made sail for the purpose of assisting the *Detroit* ; so that PERRY, in the *Lawrence*, aided only by the schooners on his weather-bow, and the distant shots of the *Caledonia*, had to contend in close action with more than twice his force.

The carnage was terrible ; yet the commodore, as his men loved to call their young commander, was on that day nerved by a superior spirit ; wrought up to the highest state of mental activity, he was superior to every infirmity of mind or body, of passion or will ; he knew not that he was still languishing under the effects of a violent fever, he was unmoved in the presence of danger, and amidst the scenes of agony and death, he maintained a perfect cheer-

fulness of manner and serenity of judgment. His young brother, a boy of thirteen, was struck down at his side, but he was spared the trial of seeing him die; the blow came only from fragments, which had been dashed to pieces by a ball; and he soon recovered. YARNALL, his first lieutenant, came to him with the report that all the officers in his division were cut down; and asked for others. They were assigned him; but he soon returned with a renewal of the same tale and the same request. "I have no more officers to furnish you," said PERRY; "you must endeavor to make out by yourself." And YARNALL was true to the admonition; though at least thrice wounded, he kept on deck, ever directing his battery in person. FOREST, the second lieutenant, was struck down at PERRY'S side, by a grape shot; but the ball had spent its force; he was only stunned, and soon recovered. The dying, with whom the deck was strewn, rested their last looks upon the countenance of their beloved commander; and when men at the guns were swept away, the survivors turned silently round to catch his eye, as they stepped into the places of their companions who had fallen. BROOKS of Massachusetts,—son of a soldier of the Revolution, who is still remembered as an upright and popular Governor of that State,—an excellent officer of marines, a man of rare endowments and of singular personal beauty, was fearfully mangled by a cannon ball in the hip. Carried down to the surgeon's apartment, he asked no aid, for he knew his doom, and that he had life in him for only one or two half hours; but as he gave himself over to death, he often inquired how the day was going; and when the crowd of new-comers from the deck showed how deadly was the contest, he ever repeated his hope for the safety of the commodore.

In the midst of this terrible slaughter, concentrated in a single brig, both officers and crew looked along their line

for help, and asked one another, Where is the *Niagara*? She was to have engaged the *Queen Charlotte*; why is she not at hand? ELLIOTT knew full well that it had been PERRY'S "intention to bring the enemy to close action immediately," and, before the fighting began, had "mentioned it to his crew," in language suited to inspire them with confidence. He knew full well that he was specially directed to attack the *Queen Charlotte*, and from the superiority of his armament, he had boasted that if he could come along side of her, he could take her in ten minutes. The wind, it is true, was light; but no want of a wind compelled him to leave the *Lawrence* to bear "a great proportion" or the whole "of the fire of the *Queen Charlotte* and of the *Hunter*, as well as of the *Detroit*;" his ship was a fleet one; to restrain her from passing the *Caledonia* "he was obliged frequently to keep the main yard braced sharp aback." ELLIOTT was a young man, born the self-same year with PERRY, his peer in rank as master-commandant, except that PERRY, from having entered the navy in boyhood, was some years his senior in the service. How could he suffer the enemy, undisturbed, to fall in numbers on one whom he should have loved as a brother, whose danger he should have shared, in the brightness of whose glory he should have found new lustre added to his own name? Some attributed his delay to fear; but though he had so far one attribute to a timid man, that he was a noisy boaster, his conduct during the day, in the judgment of disinterested observers and critics, acquits him of having been spell-bound by downright cowardice. Some charged him with disaffection to his country, from sympathy with family connections in Canada; but this is an imputation justified by no concurrent circumstances, or acts of his earlier or latter life. Some thought him blinded by envy, which sews up the eyes with an iron thread, and leaves the mind

to hover on an undiscerning wing. He may, perhaps, have been disturbed by that unhappy passion, for a year before he had himself conspicuously won applause near Buffalo, and had then promised himself the command on Lake Erie, to be followed by a victory achieved under his own flag; that very morning, too, his first position had been, as we have seen, in the van; but it had been very properly changed for the purpose of placing him opposite to the *Queen Charlotte*. ELLIOTT had inherent defects of character. He wanted the generous impulse which delights in the fame of others; the delicacy of sentiment which rejects from afar everything coarse or mean; the alertness of courage which finds in danger an allurements; the quick perception that sees the time to strike; the self-possessed will, which is sure to hit the nail on the head. According to his own account, he at first determined to run through the line in pursuit of the *Queen Charlotte*; and having a fair and sufficient breeze, he directed the weather braces to be manned for that purpose; but he changed his purpose, when he observed that the *Lawrence* was crippled, and that her fire was slackening; and after a consultation with the purser MAGRATH, who was an experienced seaman, he agreed, "If the British effect the weather guage, we are gone." So he kept his place next in the line to the *Caledonia*, which lingered behind, because she was a dull sailer, and, in the light wind, was moreover retarded in her movements by the zeal of TURNER, her commander, to render service by his armament, which enabled him to keep up an effective fire from the distance.

It was a part of ELLIOTT'S orders to close with the *Queen Charlotte*, but he held it to be his paramount duty to keep his place, a half-cable's length behind the *Caledonia* on the line as designated in the original order of battle, even though the flagship of the squadron might be cut to pieces.

So PERRY lay exposed to thrice his force, at the distance of fifteen hundred or a thousand feet, aided only by the two schooners on his beam, and the constant help of the *Caledonia*. Under the heavy fire the men on deck became fewer; but PERRY continued the action with unabated serenity. PARSONS, the surgeon's mate, and the only man in the fleet who was then able to render surgical aid, heard a call for him at the small skylight, that let in the day upon his apartment; and as he stepped up he recognized the voice of his commander, who said, with a placid countenance and quiet tone: "Doctor, send me one of your men;" meaning one of the six men allowed for assistance to the wounded. The call was obeyed; in a few minutes it was successively renewed and obeyed, till at the seventh call, PARSONS could only answer that there were no more. "Are there any that can pull a rope?" asked PERRY; and two or three of the wounded crawled on deck, to lend a hand at pulling at the last guns. WILSON MAYS, who was so sick as to be unfit for the deck, begged to be of use. "But what can you do?" was the question. And he replied: "I can sound the pump, and let a strong man go to the guns." He accordingly sat down by the pump, and at the end of the fight was found at his post, "with a ball through his heart." The surgeon's apartment could offer no security to the wounded. In the shallow vessel it was necessarily on a level with the water, and was repeatedly perforated by cannon balls. Once as the surgeon stooped to dress a wound, a ball passed directly over his head, and must have destroyed him, had he not been bending down. A wounded midshipman, just as he left the surgeon's hands, was dashed against the ship's side by a cannon ball. On deck, the bullwarks were broken in, and round balls passed through the little obstructions; but as long as he could, PERRY kept up a regular and effective fire, so that

the *Detroit*, of whose crew many were killed or wounded, was almost dismantled. On board the *Queen Charlotte*, the loss was most important, for FINNIS, her commander, "a noble and intrepid officer," fell at his post, and Lieutenant STOKES, the next officer in rank, was struck senseless by a splinter. On board the *Lawrence* the shrieks of the wounded and the crash of timbers shattered by cannon balls, were still heard; but its own fire grew fainter and fainter; one gun after another was dismounted. Death had the mastery: the carnage was unparalleled in naval warfare; more than four-fifths of the effective officers and men on board were killed or disabled by wounds; the deck, in spite of the layer of sand, was slippery with blood, which ran down the sides of the ship; the wounded and the dead lay thickly strewn everywhere around. To fire the last gun, PERRY himself assisted. At last every gun in the ship's battery on the enemy's side were dismounted, every brace and bow-line was shot away; the vessel became unmanageable, in spite of the zeal of the commander and the great exertions of the Sailing Master. And still PERRY did not despair, but had an eye which could look through the cloud.

Meantime ELLIOTT watched the last spasms of the *Lawrence* as it lay gasping in its ruin; and now that its fire was dying away, that no fresh signal was hoisted, that no special message was sent from PERRY, he persuaded himself that his young superior lay among the slain.

Believing himself now the chief commander of the squadron, ELLIOTT hailed the *Caledonia* and ordered Lieutenant TURNER to bear up and make way for him. TURNER at once, without a word, put up his helm in the most daring manner, and made sail for the enemy's line, using his small armament all the while to the best advantage; while ELLIOTT, under a freshening breeze, passed to the windward of the *Caledonia*. The *Lawrence*

lay disabled and silent ; by all the rules of naval warfare, he should have given her protection by sailing between her and the British ; but instead of it, he kept to the windward, sheltered by the helpless flag-ship, to which he sent MACGRATH in a boat with a few brace men for twelve-pound round shot, to replenish his own nearly exhausted stock ; and, then firing as he went along, on the *Charlotte*, he steered for the head of the British line. PERRY, who saw with the swiftness of intuition the new method that must be chosen now that the first failed, and who had already resolved to transfer his flag, with the certainty that, in the crippled state of the British, "victory must perch on his banner," immediately entered his boat with his commander's pennant, and his little brother, and bade the four sailors whom he took as oarsmen to row with all speed for the *Niagara*. The command of the *Lawrence* fell to YARNALL, with full discretionary power to surrender or hold out ; but he had an admonition from above in the motto flag which the departing hero left flying at the mast-head, and which spoke the trumpet words: DON'T GIVE UP THE SHIP. The flag had been raised amidst the shouts of the whole squadron and the promise of the crew of the *Lawrence* to redeem that pledge. YARNALL consulted with FOREST and with TAYLOR ; there were no more guns than could be used ; and had there been, men were wanting to handle them.—Fourteen persons alone were left well and unhurt, and only nine were seamen. Further resistance was impossible ; to hold out might only expose life recklessly. Officers and men watched anxiously the progress of PERRY ; they saw the sailors force him to sit down ; they saw a broadside aimed at him, and fall harmlessly around him ; they saw marines from three vessels shower at him musket balls, which only ruffled the water of the lake ; and at fifteen minutes before three, they saw the oars dipping for the last time, and



their beloved commander climb the side of the *Niagara*. They had braved the enemy's fire for three hours; could they not confide in help from their commodore and hold out five minutes more? True, they had no means of offence; but the battle flag with its ringing words floated over their heads; they had a pledge to keep; they had an enemy whose dying courage they should refuse to reanimate; they had their country's flag to preserve unblemished; they had the honor of that day's martyrs to guard; they had a chief to whom they should have spared an unspeakable pain; they had the wounded to consider, who with one voice cried out: "Rather sink the ship than surrender! Let us all sink together!" And yet a shout of triumph from the enemy proclaimed to both squadrons that the flag of the *Lawrence* had been lowered; nor did they then forebode how soon it was to be raised again.

Meantime PERRY climbed the gangway of the *Niagara*, and the superior officer, whom ELLIOTT had thought to be dead, stood before him, radiant with the indomitable purpose of winning the day; with his fortitude impaired by the crowded horrors of the last two hours; black with the smoke of the battle, but unscathed, with not so much as a wound on his skin; with not a hair of his head harmed. His quick eye glanced at the ship's rigging, at her hale crew that thronged the deck, and his buoyant nature promised him a harvest of glory as he beheld the *Niagara*, "very little injured," even "perfectly fresh," its crew in the best condition, with scarcely more than three men hurt. ELLIOTT'S mind was stunned; and completely dumfounded he asked the foolish question: "What is the result on board your brig?" though he had seen that the brig was a disabled wreck, and had even thought that PERRY had fallen. "Cut all to pieces!" said PERRY whose mind had instantly condemned the course in which ELLIOTT was steering, and was forming his plan for re-

deeming the day. "I have been sacrificed," he added; but he checked all reproach of ELLIOTT, and blamed only the gunboats, which had been still farther astern. It marks how ill ELLIOTT was at ease, how much he was struck with shame, how entirely he lost his self-possession, that he caught at the word which seemed to relieve him from censure, and at once offered to go and bring up the gunboats. "Do so," said PERRY, for ELLIOTT had anticipated his wish, and proposed what was best for both. At this, ELLIOTT, the second officer of the squadron, whose right it would be to take the chief command if PERRY should be wounded, left his own brig, and went in a boat on the paltry errand, fit only for a subordinate, to bear a superfluous message to the gunboats, which, under their gallant officers, were already advancing as fast as possible.

As he stepped into the boat, PERRY, running up his pennant, and hoisting the signal for close action, which was instantly answered from all the squadron with loud cheers, hove to, and veered ship, altering her course eight points, set foresail, topsails and top-gallant sail, and bore down to cut the British line, which lay at the distance of a half mile.

The *Lady Prevost*, disabled by the loss of her rudder, had drifted to the westward and leeward from her place in the line; BARCLAY in the *Detroit*, when he saw the prospect of a contest with a second brig, had attempted to veer around, that he might bring his starboard broadside to bear; but in doing it he had fallen upon the *Queen Charlotte*. At this moment PERRY, whom seven, eight or ten minutes in the freshened breeze had brought up with the British, disregarding their fire, cut their line, placing the *Chippewa* and *Lady Prevost* on his left, the *Detroit* and *Queen Charlotte* on his right: and as he did so, he shortened sail to make sure of his aim, and coolly and with

fatal accuracy, at half pistol shot, he raked the *Lady Prevost* with his broadside port, while he poured his full starboard broadside on the *Detroit* and *Queen Charlotte* as they lay entangled and for the moment helplessly exposed. The loud many-voiced shriek that rose from the *Detroit* told that the tide of battle had turned; but what was worse for the British was that their gallant commander, the skillful and intrepid, but ill-fated BARCLAY, who had lost an arm at Trafalgar, received a desperate wound which was to deprive him of the other. The wound was so severe that he was obliged to be carried below, leaving the direction to an officer of little experience.

PERRY now ordered the marines to clear the decks of the *Lady Prevost*; but the survivors, terrified by the raking fire which they had suffered, fled below, leaving on deck no one but their commander, who, having for the moment lost his senses from a severe wound in the head, remained at his post, gazing about with a vacant stare. PERRY, merciful even in battle, stopped his guns on that side, but having luffed athwart the two ships, which had now got clear of one another, he continued to pour into them a close deadly fire. Meantime ELLIOTT, heedless of exposure to danger, had passed in an open boat down the line, and repeated to the schooners the orders which PERRY had sufficiently announced by signal. Their commanders themselves, with sails up and the use of large oars, hastened into close fight. The *Trippe*, under HOLDUP STEVENS, was following hard upon the *Caledonia*: so that ELLIOTT got on board the *Somers*, a schooner of two guns, where he showed his rankling discontent and unsettled frame of mind by sending the commanding officer below, and beating with his trumpet a gunner who disregarded an absurd order, and did just what was evidently most proper to be done.

The small vessels having by this time "got within

grape and canister distance," threw in close discharges from their side. The commanding officer of the *Queen Charlotte*, finding himself exposed to be raked ahead and astern, was the first to give up; one of her officers appeared on the taffrail of that ship, and waved a white handkerchief, bent to a boarding-pike, in token that she had struck. The *Detroit* had become completely unmanageable; every brace was cut away, the mizzen-top-mast and gaff were down, the other masts badly wounded, not a stay left forward, the hull very much shattered, and a few guns disabled; at three, or a few minutes after, Lieutenant INGLIS was therefore under the necessity of hailing the Americans, to say he surrendered. The *Hunter* yielded at the same time, as did the *Lady Prevost*, which lay to leeward under the guns of the *Niagara*. The *Chippewa*, on the right of the British line, and the *Little Belt*, on the extreme left, endeavored to escape; but the first was stopped by CHAMPLIN, in the *Scorpion*; the other by HOLDUP STEVENS in the *Trippe*.

As the cannon ceased, an awful stillness set in: the feeble groans of the wounded, or the dash of oars as boats glided from one vessel to another.

Possession having been taken of the conquered fleet, at four o'clock PERRY sent an express to HARRISON with these words:

"DEAR GENERAL—We have met the enemy, and they are ours; two ships, two brigs, one schooner and one sloop."

As he wrote to the Secretary of the Navy, a religious awe seemed to come over him, at his wonderful preservation in the midst of great and long-continued danger; and he attributed his signal victory to the pleasure of the Almighty.

It was on board the *Lawrence* that PERRY then received the submission of the captives. This was due to the

sufferings of her crew, to the self sacrificing courage of the unnamed martyrs who still lay unburied on her deck ; to the crowd of wounded, who thought their trials well rewarded by the issue. The witnesses to the act of the British officers in tendering their swords were chiefly the dead and wounded, and the scene of sorrow tempered and subdued the exultation of triumph.

The conqueror bade his captives retain their side-arms ; and added every just and unaffected expression of courtesy, mercy, and solicitude for their wounded.

When twilight fell, the mariners who had fallen on board the *Lawrence* and had lain in heaps on the side of the ship opposite the British, were sewn up in their hammocks, and, with a cannon ball at their feet, were dropped one by one into the Lake.

At last, but not till this day's work was done, exhausted nature claimed rest, and PERRY, turning into his cot, slept as sweetly and quietly as a child.

The dawn of morning revealed the deadly fierceness of the combat. Spectators from the island found the sides of the *Lawrence* completely riddled by shot from the long guns of the British ; her deck was thickly covered with clots of blood ; fragments of those who had been struck, hair, brains, broken pieces of bones, were still sticking to the rigging and sides. The sides of the *Detroit* and *Queen Charlotte* were shattered from bow to stern ; on their larboard side there was hardly a hand's breadth free from the dent of a shot. Balls, cannister and grape were found lodged in their bulwarks ; their masts were so much injured, that they rolled out in the first high wind.

The loss of the British, as reported by BARCLAY, amounted to forty-one killed, of whom three were officers, and ninety-four wounded, of whom nine were officers. Of the Americans, twenty-seven were killed and ninety-six wounded. Of these, twenty-one were killed and sixty-one

wounded in the *Lawrence*, and about twenty more were wounded in the *Niagara* after she received PERRY on board.

An opening on the margin of Put-in-Bay was selected for the burial-place for the officers who had fallen. The day was serene, the breezes hushed, the water unruffled by a wavelet. The men of both fleets mourned together; as the boats moved slowly in procession, the music played dirges to which the oars kept time; the flags showed the sign of sorrow; solemn minute guns were heard from the ships. The spot where the funeral train went on shore was a wild solitude; the Americans and British walked in alternate couples to the graves, like men who, in the presence of eternity, renewed the relation of brothers and members of one human family, and the bodies of the dead were likewise borne along and buried alternately, English and American side by side, and undistinguished.

The wounded of both fleets, meeting with equal assiduous care, were sent to Erie, where BARCLAY was seen, with tottering steps, supported between HARRISON and PERRY, as he walked from the landing-place to his quarters.

PERRY crowned his victory by his modesty, forbearing to place his own services in their full light, and more than just to others. When, in the following year, he was rewarded by promotion to the rank of captain, he who had never murmured at promotion made over his own head, hesitated about accepting a preferment which might wound his seniors.

The personal conduct of PERRY throughout the tenth of September was perfect. His keenly sensitive nature never interfered with his sweetness of manner, his fortitude, the soundness of his judgment, the promptitude of his decision. In a state of impassioned activity, his plans were wisely framed, were instantly modified as circumstances changed, and were executed with entire coolness and self-possession.

The mastery of the lakes, the recovery of Detroit and the far west, the capture of the British army in the peninsula of Upper Canada, were the immediate fruits of his success. The imagination of the American people was taken captive by the singular incidents of a battle in which every thing seemed to have flowed from the personal prowess of one man ; and wherever he came the multitude went out to bid him welcome. WASHINGTON IRVING, the chosen organ as it were of his country, predicted his ever increasing fame. Rhode Island cherishes his glory as her own ; Erie keeps the tradition that its harbor was his ship-yard, its forests the storehouse for the frames of his chief vessels, its houses the hospitable shelter of the wounded among his crews ; Cleveland graces her public square with a statue of the hero, wrought of purest marble, and looking out upon the scene of his glory ; the tale follows the emigrant all the way up the Straits, and to the head of Lake Superior. PERRY'S career was short and troubled ; he lives in the memory of his countrymen, clothed in perpetual youth, just as he stood when he saw that his efforts were crowned with success, and could say in his heart, "WE HAVE MET THE ENEMY AND THEY ARE OURS."

# ADDRESS

BY

DR. USHER PARSONS

FLEET SURGEON UNDER COMMODORE PERRY

DELIVERED

AT THE DEDICATION OF THE PERRY MONUMENT  
BY THE CITY OF CLEVELAND, OHIO

SEPTEMBER 10th, 1860



## DR. USHER PARSON'S ADDRESS

MR. PRESIDENT:—In responding to your flattering invitation to address this vast assemblage, vain would be any endeavor, after the rich banquet we have enjoyed, to entertain you with historic or classic allusions, or with the graces of a polished style. Mine, sir, is the more humble and appropriate task to describe briefly the battle of Lake Erie. A story so often told must fail to interest most of you, and I should decline repeating it, but for the expressed wish of many to hear it from the lips of the last surviving commissioned officer of PERRY'S squadron.

Prior to the 10th of September, 1813, the United States squadron on this lake, commanded by Commodore PERRY, anchored at Put-in-Bay, which is formed by a cluster of islands, fifty miles from this place. The enemy were in the port of Malden, forty miles further distant, preparing to meet and give us battle.

Our crews were reduced in number of men by a prevailing fever, which induced General HARRISON to send us thirty-six volunteers from his army. Some of these still live, and are here present.

Within a day or two previous to the fight, PERRY called a council of commanders, and assigned to each his station in the order of battle, and concluded his orders by stating his intention to bring the enemy to close quarter, in order not to lose by the short range of his carronades, and the last emphatic injunction with which he dismissed them was, that he could not, in case of difficulty, advise them better than in the words of Lord Nelson, "In case you lay your enemy close alongside, you cannot be out of your place."

Early in the morning of the 10th, a cry came from a masthead, "*Sail, ho!*" All hands sprang from their hammocks, and ere they could dress and reach the deck, six sail were announced. Signal was made to the squadron, "*enemy in sight,*" "*get under way,*" and soon the hoarse sound of the trumpets, and the shrill pipes of the boatswains resounded throughout the fleet with, "*All hands up anchor ahoy!*" After some detention by adverse winds; we cleared the islands, and directed our course toward the enemy, distant at ten o'clock, about five miles.

The American squadron consisted of nine vessels, carrying 54 guns and 400 men, and the British of six vessels, carrying 63 guns and 511 men. The line of battle was arranged with the Scorpion and Ariel ahead, followed by the flag ship Lawrence, Caledonia, Niagara, and four small vessels, and they were ordered to keep within half a cable's length of each other. By this arrangement it was understood that the Lawrence should fight the flagship Detroit, Commodore against Commodore, the Caledonia the Lady Prevost, the Niagara the Queen, and the four small vessels astern attack the Hunter and Little Belt. The Scorpion and Ariel were to support the Lawrence, and fight the Chippewa, the head vessel of the British line.

The Commodore now produced the burgee or fighting flag, hitherto concealed in the ship. It was inscribed with large white letters on a blue ground, legible throughout the squadron, "*Don't give up the ship,*" the last words of the expiring Lawrence, and now to be hoisted at the masthead of the ship bearing his name. The Commodore made a spirited appeal to the crew, and up went the flag to the fore royal amid hearty cheers, repeated throughout the squadron, and the drums and fifes struck up the thrilling call, "*All hands to quarters.*" The hatches or passage ways from below to the deck were closed, excepting the main one in the center, through which balls might be

passed up to the cannon, and the wounded down to the surgeon's apartment. Over this apartment was an opening, or skylight, ten inches square, to pass cartridges through from the magazine, and to let in light to the surgeon. The floor of this apartment was level with the water outside, and left the surgeon and the wounded quite as much exposed to the cannon balls of the enemy as those were on deck.

Every preparation being made, and every man at his station, a profound silence reigned for more than an hour—the most trying part of the whole scene. It was like the stillness that precedes the hurricane. The two squadrons moved on in their respective lines, gradually approximating till a quarter before twelve, when the awful stillness and suspense were relieved by a shot aimed at the *Lawrence* from the *Detroit*, about one mile distant. PERRY signalled to the squadron to make more sail and come into close action, at the same time pressing forward the *Lawrence* to within canister distance of the *Detroit*, and then opened upon her a rapid and destructive fire. The *Caledonia* followed the *Lawrence* in gallant style, and maintained her position nobly. The *Scorpion* and *Ariel* being small, attracted less firing from the enemy, whilst their large guns in constant play did great execution. The *Niagara* failing to grapple her antagonist the *Queen*, the latter vessel shot ahead and joined the *Detroit* in firing upon the *Lawrence*, and finally made a complete wreck of her. Fortunately, however, PERRY had escaped injury, and stepping into a boat he ordered the fighting flag to be brought to him, and then pushed off to the *Niagara*, which had by this time, come up nearly abreast of the *Lawrence*, but further from her than the enemy's flagship *Detroit* was on the opposite side. PERRY reached her deck, exposed on his way to balls and musketry, unscathed. He found her a fresh ship, with only two or

three persons injured, and every cannon in working order.

Her commander resigned the deck to him and hastened to press forward the four small vessels that were astern, which were dull sailers, and with the utmost exertion of their crews were unable to keep up in the place assigned them in the line. The *Lawrence* now lagged behind, and hauled down her flag in token of surrender, which drew forth boisterous cheers on board the enemy's ships. But PERRY immediately changed the course of the *Niagara* from the one in which she was steering, making nearly a right angle, and crossing ahead of the *Lawrence*, bore down, head foremost, to the enemy's line determined to break through it and take a raking position. The *Detroit* attempted to turn so as to keep her broadside to the *Niagara*, and avoid being raked. But in doing this, she fell against the *Queen*, and got entangled in her rigging, and thus were exposed both British ships to a raking and destructive fire from the *Niagara*; whilst heavy blows were received from the small vessels astern, which had by this time come up within good distance for effective shots, and the two ships were unable to fire in return. Their commanders were thus compelled to haul down their colors in token of submission or sink. PERRY then shot ahead to the *Lady Provost*, which having been crippled in her rudder, had drifted out of her place in the line to the leeward, and was pressing forward towards the head of the British line, to support the two ships. One broadside from the *Niagara* silenced her battery. The *Hunter* next hauled down her flag, and the two smaller vessels, in attempting to escape, were overtaken by the *Scorpion* and *Tripp*, and thus ended the action after three o'clock.

Let us now advert for a moment to the scenes exhibited in the *Lawrence*, of which I was an eye witness. The wounded began to come down before she opened her fire. Soon, however, the storm of battle burst forth, in deafen-

ing thunders of our own broadsides, in the crash of balls dashing through our timbers and bulwarks, and in the shrieks of the wounded. These were brought down for aid faster than I could attend to them, further than to stay the bleeding, or to support shattered limbs with splints, and pass them forward upon the berth deck. In less than two hours few men were left on deck in working order, and the six men stationed with me at first to assist in moving the wounded, were called away, one by one, to work the guns, and even some of the wounded themselves crawled back to the deck, to lend a feeble hand in pulling at the last guns.

At this time the surgeon's room presented a scene truly horrible. There lay the lifeless bodies of Midshipmen LAUB and CHAS. POHIG, both killed in the Surgeon's room after having had their wounds dressed. LAUB had hardly left my hands, when a cannon ball struck him in the side, dashing him against the wall, and cutting his body nearly in twain. Lieutenant BROOKS, son of the Governor of Massachusetts, an elegant and accomplished officer, lay with his hip mashed by a cannon ball, of which he died before the battle closed. HAMBLETON, the intimate friend of PERRY, lay bleeding, his shoulder being broken. CLAXTON, a promising officer, lay with his shoulder and arm shot away, and doomed soon to die, and several others, with limbs crushed and flesh lacerated, all lay weltering in their blood, and writhing in agony, and calling for cold water to relieve the sense of faintness. Whilst I was intent upon stopping the flow of blood, a new visitor came from the deck, reporting that the Commodore had gone to the Niagara, and that our own ship, unable to fight longer, was hauling down her colors. This added wailings of despair to the groans of the wounded. Death or Dartmoor prison seemed inevitable, and some were clamorous for sinking the ship, and all

going down together. But in a few minutes more a cry came from the deck that "the ship has struck!" I leaped upon deck, calling out, "What ship has struck?" and saw the Detroit's flag actually hauled down, and the Queen's flag coming down. It was enough! The day was decided!! The enemy beaten!!! and I rushed back to the wounded, shouting "Victory! Victory!!"

As the smoke cleared away, the two squadrons seemed mingled together undistinguishably. The shattered Lawrence lying to the windward was once more able to hoist her flag, which was cheered by a few feeble voices, making a melancholy sound compared with the tremendous cheers that preceded the battle. The shot holes between wind and water were immediately plugged to prevent our sinking, and the masts secured from falling overboard.

PERRY forthwith dispatched two messages to HARRISON and to the Secretary of the Navy, remarkable for their pith and brevity. To HARRISON he says, "We have met the enemy, and they are ours: two ships, two brigs, one sloop, and one schooner." To the Secretary—"It has pleased the Almighty to give to the arms of the United States a signal victory over their enemies on this lake. The British squadron, consisting of two ships, two brigs, two sloops and one schooner, have this moment surrendered to the force under my command, after a sharp conflict."

The proud, though painful duty, of taking possession of the conquered ships, was now performed. The Detroit was nearly dismantled, and the destruction and carnage had been dreadful. The Queen was in a condition little better—every commander and second in command, says Barclay in his official report, was either killed or wounded. The whole number killed in the British fleet, was forty-one, and of wounded, ninety-four. In the American fleet, twenty-seven killed, and ninety-six wounded. Of the

twenty-seven killed, twenty-two were on board the *Lawrence*, and of the ninety-six wounded, sixty-one were on board the same ship, making eighty-three killed and wounded, out of 101 reported fit for duty in the *Lawrence* on the morning of the battle. On board the *Niagara* were two killed and twenty-three wounded, making twenty-five, and of these twenty-two were killed or wounded after PERRY had command of her.

About four o'clock, a boat was discovered approaching the *Lawrence*. Soon the Commodore was recognized in her, who was returning to resume the command of his tattered ship, determined that the remnant of her crew should have the privilege of witnessing the formal surrender of the British officers. It was a time of conflicting emotions when he stepped upon the deck. The battle was won, and he was safe, but the deck was slippery with blood, and strewn with the bodies of twenty officers and men, some of whom sat at table with us at our last meal, and the ship resounded with the groans of the wounded. Those of us who were spared and able to walk, met at the gangway to welcome him on board, but the salutation was a silent one on both sides—a grasp of the hand—our hearts were too full for speech—not a word could find utterance.

PERRY walked aft, where his first remark was addressed to his intimate friend, HAMBLETON, then lying wounded on the deck. "The prayers of my wife," said he, "have prevailed in saving me." Then casting his eyes about, he inquired—"Where is my brother?" This brother was a young midshipman of thirteen years. He had during the battle acted as aid, running with orders to different parts of the ship; for you must know that in the din and uproar of battle, orders can hardly be heard at three feet distance. We made a general stir to look him up, not without fears that he had been knocked overboard. But he was soon

found in his berth, asleep, exhausted by the exercise and excitement of the day.

And now the British officers arrived, one from each vessel, to tender their submission, and with it their swords. When they approached, picking their way among the wreck and carnage of the deck, with their hilts towards PERRY, they tendered them to his acceptance. With a dignified and solemn air, and with a low tone of voice, he requested them to retain their side arms; inquired with deep concern for Commodore BARCLAY and the wounded officers; tendered to them every comfort his ship afforded, and expressed his regret that he had not a spare medical officer to send them; that he only had one on duty for the fleet, and that one had his hands full.

In a few days the two Commodores parted, never more to meet each other, nor with General HARRISON. Tokens and messages of friendship, however, were often interchanged between them.

PERRY served two years as Commander of the Java, taking with him the survivors of the flag-ship *Lawrence*. He after this commanded a squadron in the West Indies, where he died of fever in 1819. Possessed of high-toned morals, he was above the dissipation and sensuality prevalent with some officers of his day. His literary acquirements were respectable, and his taste refined. He united the graces of a manly beauty to a lion heart, a sound mind, a safe judgment, and a firmness of purpose which nothing could shake.

*Citizens of Cleveland, and of Ohio!* I rejoice to meet you on this interesting occasion, and to witness the demonstrations of gratitude and respect shown to the memory of Rhode Island's gallant son. His statue which you this day inaugurate, will perpetuate to future generations the record of your generous munificence and enlightened patriotism, as well as of his glorious achievement. It will



also strengthen the cordial and fraternal sympathy existing between Ohio and Rhode Island, which commenced in 1813, in the glorious victory we are now celebrating. Then it was that a squadron commanded, officered and manned chiefly by natives of that State, came to your rescue, and near your defenceless shores captured a combined British and savage foe, who threatened fire, and sword and tomahawk to the then infant settlement of Cleveland, and of the whole lake shore. The few log cabins which then dotted this place, and sent up their curling smoke among the rugged arms of majestic trees, that had been girdled by the pioneers of the forest, soon disappeared, and in their place rose a populous and thrifty town, which your enterprise and industry have enlarged and adorned, and converted into a beautiful city—the glory of the west! And now, when you are ready to ornament it with monuments and statues, commemorative of the glorious deeds of patriots and heroes, your thoughts first revert to the deliverer of these shores, the lamented PERRY, whose beautiful statue now greets our eyes. And you have kindly invited hither the citizens of his native State to assist in the ceremonies of its inauguration. Accordingly, our Governor and staff, legislators, generals and prominent citizens, under the escort of our Light Infantry—the pride of Rhode Island—have come hither (and our whole population were desirous to join us). We have come, citizens of Cleveland, to take you by the hand, and, in the name of the people of Rhode Island, to thank you most heartily for the distinguished honor you have done our State by thus commemorating the noble achievement of her gallant son.

“O, thus be it ever when freemen shall stand,  
Between our loved home and the war’s desolation,”

that Ohio and Rhode Island shall be found side by side, battling the foes of their country, and under leaders,

whether on land, or lake, or ocean wave, equal to HARRISON or PERRY; and when the storm of war is hushed, and the reign of mild peace is restored, may the warriors then meet as we are met on this glorious anniversary, to grasp hands in cordial friendship, and unite in paying enduring honors to the illustrious and victorious dead, by marble structures equal in beauty to the one before us.

This statue is a work of rare artistic skill. The marble, drawn from classic Italy, has a fine grain, and hue, and polish, and when struck gives the true ring of a pure and durable material. Its magnificent pedestal is taken from the bank of the Pawcatuck, in Rhode Island, thus associating the grateful and pleasing ideas of a noble marble Statue, erected by citizens of Ohio, to perpetuate the name and fame of PERRY, on a Rhode Island basis—ideas that in all future time will stir and warm the hearts of the sons and daughters of that State who in their westward pilgrimages will stop to survey and admire this beautiful specimen of native art. The likeness of PERRY, considering the limited sources of information available to the artist, is more accurate and striking than I expected to see. The conception of his attitude, his martial bearing and appropriate expression, is highly successful. Of his drapery I have a word of explanation to offer. You here see him in his usual official dress. But, in battle, you must know that all official insignia are laid aside, and the dress of a common sailor is assumed, to avoid being a mark for the enemy's musketry in the tops. PERRY wore in the fight a blue cotton round-jacket, which surrounded as brave a heart as ever beat in human frame; and here is the identical garment.

*Old companions in the conflict*, a little remnant of us still live, and are permitted once more to take each other by the hand. But how different the present scene from the one it commemorates, fought this day, this hour, forty-

seven years ago. Then were our ears stunned by the thunders of a hundred cannon, dealing out death and destruction by opposing squadrons, while our companions were falling and rolling in blood around us. We have passed through many vicissitudes since that eventful day, and having outlived the companions of our youth, now find ourselves among strangers of another generation. Desolate and lonely though we feel, and know we are near

“That undiscovered country from whose bourne  
No traveler returns,”

yet the tokens of assurance this day afforded, that our toil and peril of life are not forgotten, and that the memory of our much beloved commander is still fresh and precious in the affections of a generous and grateful people, stir and warm our hearts, and make us joyful and happy! Old friends, I bid you an affectionate farewell.



# RESPONSE

OF

GOVERNOR WILLIAM SPRAGUE

OF RHODE ISLAND

AT THE BANQUET GIVEN AT THE DEDICATION  
OF THE MONUMENT TO

COMMODORE OLIVER HAZARD PERRY

BY THE CITY OF CLEVELAND, OHIO

SEPTEMBER 10th, 1860

## GOVERNOR SPRAGUE'S ADDRESS

As the present seems to be the occasion of glorifying the State of Rhode Island and her heroes, I hope, Mr. Mayor, that in replying to your sentiment, I may be pardoned if I add a little to this glorification, by presenting a few facts in relation to her naval and military history.

Striking the first blow against British power in America, in the destruction of the Gaspee, in 1772, Rhode Island may justly claim to have led the way in the revolutionary drama that followed. She was also among the first to protest against the oppressive acts of the King and Parliament some years earlier. I have now to call your attention to some striking facts (not generally known) relative to the Colonial History of the State, for which I am indebted to its early records which have been arranged and edited by my friend, the Hon. John R. Bartlett, Secretary of the State of Rhode Island, whose deep research has given the State and country one of the best governmental works of our Colonial History extant. My friend is among the Rhode Island Delegation here to-day.

In examining the early records of Rhode Island, it will be found that during her whole Colonial period, she was prominent for the extent of her shipping, at one time even surpassing that of the great city which is now the commercial center of the new world.

As early as 1653, when Great Britain was at war with Holland, Rhode Island issued commissions to privateers to cruise against the Dutch, and during the same century sent her vessels to Europe, Africa and the West Indies for commercial purposes. From this period to the breaking out of the Revolution, and particularly during the wars between Great Britain, France and Spain, the seas swarmed with her privateers. The advantages of the fine

harbors of Narragansett Bay induced vessels from other places, not only to fit out, but to resort there with their cargoes. The success which attended these expeditions awakened a spirit of adventure and daring among our own people, which burst out in full force in the destruction of the British vessel, the *Gaspee*, in 1772, and in the creation of a navy in the war of the Revolution which followed. The great facilities with which letters of marque were obtained from the Government of Rhode Island during the wars alluded to, made it the resort of adventurers from all parts of the country as well as from Europe.

Towards the close of the seventeenth century, so numerous were privateers from our little colony, that Holland, France and Spain remonstrated with our mother country, to put a stop to them. The notorious Captain Kidd even sought a shelter in our beautiful Bay, and narrowly escaped capture. Some of his men were arrested there; and so numerous were the complaints against the colony for the facilities with which letters of marque were procured, and for the alleged protection to these early filibusters, that a commission was sent out from England to inquire into and put a stop to them. The most stringent laws were then passed by the Colony for the suppression of privateers. But these transactions were the means of making us a maritime people, and giving us a rank as such, which was maintained to the close of the last century.

From 1745 to 1760, during which period England kept a large fleet in the American waters, she recruited her seamen chiefly from Rhode Island. In our records are preserved the letters of the British Admirals at Halifax, New York and even in the West Indies, pressing our government to furnish seamen for the fleet. Many letters are also preserved from William Pitt, asking also for seamen. These calls were promptly responded to, as our records show.

In the memorable war between Great Britain and France, which ended with the taking of Quebec, and the fall of the French Empire in North America, Governor Hopkins wrote to William Pitt that the war had changed the course of trade into that of privateering, and that *fifty privateers* had been fitted out in the Colony.

In the reduction of Cape Breton and Louisburg she contributed her men and ships, and the British officers acknowledged the part she took in the memorable reduction of Havana in the year 1762. It may seem singular that so small a Colony as Rhode Island should be able to contribute any material aid to so great a power as Great Britain in the war in which she was engaged; but a simple statement from the records of the Custom House of Newport in 1763 will show of what we were capable. The books there show that Rhode Island then had 184 vessels bound on foreign voyages, and 352 employed in the coasting trade, which, with her fishing vessels, were manned with 2,200 seamen. I mention these facts to show the growth of our marine, but I have now to mention one which has a more direct bearing upon the great event which we have to commemorate.

Fort Oswego, it will be remembered, was built by the French and fell into the hands of the English, to be retaken by the French in 1756. While the English possessed it, a number of ship carpenters and seamen were sent there from Rhode Island, probably for a similar object to that which Commodore Perry had in view, when, fifty-four years after, he brought a party of shipwrights and seamen to Lake Erie, with such magnificent results. When the French re-took Oswego in 1756, they took our Rhode Islanders prisoners, and sent them to France, where they remained till the close of the war. Fourteen of those men, whose names we have, returned.

In 1775, the first squadron sent out by the revolted

Colonies was fitted out in, and sailed from Rhode Island, under command of Commodore Hopkins, in which Paul Jones was a Lieutenant. They took two forts in New Providence, in the Bahama Islands, with a large quantity of cannon, stores and ammunition, and captured two armed ships on their return. Rhode Island furnished two other Commodores, Whipple and Talbot, who also distinguished themselves in the War of the Revolution.

I have thus presented this brief sketch of the naval history of Rhode Island, to show that the Hero of the Battle of Lake Erie had before him examples of bravery in his native state, to spur him on, and which infused into him that daring spirit which led him to accomplish the great victory which we have here assembled to commemorate.

After saying so much, Mr. Mayor, of the naval exploits of Rhode Island, I should do injustice to its military which is here represented by one of its most gallant corps, the First company of Light Infantry, did I not say a few words in relation to the military history of the State, particularly as the present seems to be the occasion to glorify it.

In the year 1638, but two years after Roger Williams landed on our shore, a military organization took place, a day of general training was fixed, and all persons between sixteen and sixty were required to bear arms. Soon after this, inspectors visited every house to see that their fire-arms were in good order; a neglect of which subjected the owners to a fine.

Every man was also required to have in his possession a certain quantity of gunpowder and bullets, and he was further required to carry his musket or fowling-piece to church on Sundays.

So began our military organization, to protect the infant colony from its enemies, the Indians, and the terrible Dutch of New Amsterdam, who threatened to expel the English colonists, and whose valor and exploits in arms are so



truthfully set forth in that celebrated work known as Knickerbocker's History of New York. Trained bands, as they were then called, were organized in every town, and as we increased in population, companies similar to those of our day were also formed.

In the wars of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries which England was involved in, the American Colonies were required to lend their aid, and we find Rhode Island sending her troops to Cuba against the Spaniards, and to Nova Scotia, Cape Breton and Canada, against the French. In all the campaigns against those provinces, she furnished soldiers, but in the great campaigns in the war which terminated with the subjection of Canada, in 1760, her military were most prominent. At Oswego, Crown Point, Fort William Henry, and Ticonderoga, she was well represented, as well as in the force sent against Montreal and Quebec. In the latter campaigns Rhode Island furnished 2,000 men, a pretty large number when it will be recollected that the population of the Colony was then less than that of the city of Cleveland at this time. Besides this, I find by the returns that in the year 1760 there were fifty-two separate military companies in the Colony. Four years later the Colony was called upon to send four companies of soldiers for the defence of Niagara.

The part we took in the war of the revolution is well known. It has been written by the eminent historian who yesterday favored us with an address. Our Greene was second only to Washington in the services he rendered his country in that war. The splendid victory of PERRY was enough for us in the war of 1812.

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NOTE.—Gov. Sprague is still living [Sept. 10, 1912.] He enjoys the distinction of being the sole survivor of that noble army of War Governors who did so much for the preservation of the Union from 1861 to 1865.

## THE EFFECT OF THE VICTORY.

It need not be told the intelligent reader that PERRY'S victory turned the tide of battle in our favor ; that it gave us not only command of this Lake, but it caused the British to flee from Malden.

While PERRY'S fleet had been at the head of Lake Erie, Gen. HARRISON was concentrating his forces at and near the mouth of Portage river, now in Ottawa County. Immediately after the battle of the 10th, PERRY'S fleet was engaged in transporting HARRISON'S troops by way of the Islands to Malden, and on the 27th of September the troops landed on the Canada main land, marching to Malden, which they found evacuated ; and following up the advantage, on the 5th of October fought the famous battle of the Thames, at which TECUMSEH was killed and the British force routed. Gen. CASS and Com. PERRY acted as volunteer aids to Gen. HARRISON in that battle. These events restored Detroit to us and Gen. CASS was appointed Governor, and HARRISON and PERRY, the last of October, sailed for Erie and Buffalo.



## THE BATTLE OF LAKE ERIE

BY HARVEY RICE.

HOVERING o'er Erie's waters blue,  
War-ships equipped are seen,  
Bearing a bold and hostile crew,  
Led by the Charlotte Queen ;  
With ready guns and courage true,  
On pride of power they lean !

With stately pomp and snowy wing,  
And pennons fluttering gay,  
In battle line, they seem to fling  
Defiance on their way ;  
For dream of woes an hour may bring  
When comes the fearful fray !

Lo ! Perry now that fleet descries,  
And, like a tempest dire,  
'Neath stars and stripes, and favoring skies,  
Assails with sheeted fire  
The haughty foe who dared despise  
The Yankees—and their ire.

And now, as maddening volleys rave,  
Though Perry's Flag-ship reels,  
'Neath fire and smoke, with hand to save,  
From ship to ship he steals ;  
And now the fate of Britons brave  
With one broadside he seals !—

And now their decks are crimsoned o'er,  
Swept by that iron hail ;  
And as the last gun boomed the shore,  
'Mid shouts and saddening wail,  
Glad news to anxious hearts it bore,  
Afar on every gale !

Honor to him who fought to break  
The grasp of sceptered pride ;  
The Hero, whose brave deeds awake,  
Within the heart's glad tide,  
Proud memories, now with Erie's Lake,  
And Perry's name allied !

## PERRY'S VICTORY

*First Published in 1813*

Ye tars of Columbia, give ear to my story,  
Who fought with brave Perry, where cannons did roar ;  
Your valor has gained you an immortal glory,  
A fame that shall last till time is no more.  
Columbian tars are the true sons of Mars,  
They rake fore and aft when they fight on the deep ;  
On the bed of Lake Erie, commanded by Perry,  
They caused many Britons to take their last sleep.

The tenth of September let us all remember  
So long as the globe on her axis rolls round ;  
Our tars and marines on Lake Erie were seen  
To make the proud flag of Great Britain come down.  
The van of our fleet, the British to meet,  
Commanded by Perry, the Lawrence bore down :  
Her guns they did roar with such terrific power  
That savages trembled at the dreadful sound.

The Lawrence sustained a most dreadful fire ;  
She fought three to one for two glasses or more ;  
While Perry, undaunted, did firmly stand by her,  
The proud foe on her heavy broadsides did pour.  
Her masts being shattered, her rigging all tattered,  
Her booms and her yards being all shot away,  
And few left on deck to manage the wreck,  
Our hero on board no longer could stay.

In this situation, the pride of our nation  
Sure Heaven had guarded unhurt all the while,  
While many a hero, maintaining his station,  
Fell close by his side and was thrown on the pile.  
But mark you, and wonder, when elements thunder,  
When death and destruction are stalking all round,  
His flag he did carry on board the Niagara ;  
Such valor on record was never yet found.

There is one gallant act of our noble commander,  
 While writing my song, I must notice with pride ;  
 While launched in the boat, that carried the standard,  
 A ball whistled through her, just close by his side.  
 Says Perry, "The rascals intend for to drown us,  
 But push on, my brave boys, you never need fear !"  
 And with his own coat he plugg'd up the boat,  
 And through fire and sulphur away he did steer.

The famed Niagara, now proud of her Perry,  
 Display'd all her banners in gallant array ;  
 And twenty-five guns on her deck she did carry,  
 Which soon put an end to this bloody affray.  
 The rear of our fleet was brought up complete,  
 The signal was given to break through the line ;  
 While starboard and larboard, and from every quarter,  
 The lamps of Columbia did gloriously shine.

The bold British Lion roar'd out his last thunder,  
 When Perry attacked him close in the rear ;  
 Columbia's eagle soon made him crouch under,  
 And roar out for quarter, as soon you shall hear.  
 O, had you been there, I now do declare,  
 Such a sight as you never had seen before—  
 Six red bloody flags, that no longer could wag,  
 All lay at the feet of our brave commodore.

Great Britain may boast of her conquering heroes,  
 Her Rodneys, her Nelsons and all the whole crew ;  
 But none in their glory have told such a story,  
 Nor boasted such feats as Columbians do.  
 The whole British fleet was captured complete,  
 Not one single vessel from us got away ;  
 And prisoners some hundreds, Columbians wondered  
 To see them all anchored and moored in our bay.

May Heaven still smile on the shades of our heroes  
 Who fought in that conflict, their country to save,  
 And check the proud spirit of those murdering bravoës  
 That wish to divide us and make us all slaves.  
 Columbians sing, and make the woods ring ;  
 We'll toast those brave heroes by sea and by land ;  
 While Britains drink Cherry, Columbians, Perry,  
 We'll toast him about with full glass in hand.

## AMERICAN PERRY

*First Published Oct. 6, 1813.*

[PERRY—A fermented liquor made from pears—*Webster's Dictionary.*]

TUNE: "ABRAHAM NEWLAND."

Bold Barclay one day  
To Proctor did say,  
"I'm tired of Jamaica and sherry ;  
So let us go down  
To that new floating town,  
And get some American Perry.  
Oh, cheap American Perry !  
Most pleasant American Perry !  
We need only all  
Bear down, knock and call,  
And we'll have this American Perry.

"The landlady's kind,  
Weak, simple and blind—  
We'll soon be triumphantly merry ;  
We've cash in the locker,  
Our custom shall shock her,  
And we'll soon get a taste of her Perry.  
Oh, American Perry !  
The sparkling American Perry !  
No trouble we'll find  
Your orders to mind,  
So away for American Perry !"

All ready for play  
They've got under way,  
With hearts light and right voluntary ;  
But when they came there  
They quickly did stare,  
At the taste of American Perry.  
Oh, the American Perry !  
Sparkling American Perry !  
How great the deception,  
When such a reception  
They met from American Perry !

They thought such a change,  
 Was undoubtedly strange  
 And rued their unlucky vagary ;  
 " Your liquor's too hot,  
 Keep it still in the pot,  
 Oh, cork your American Perry !  
 Oh, this American Perry !  
 Fiery American Perry !  
 By all that is evil  
 It's a dose for the devil,  
 Oh, curse your American Perry !"

Full sorely they knew  
 The scrape would not do,  
 'Twould ruin his Majesty's ferry,  
 So they tried to turn tail  
 With a rag of a sail,  
 And quit this American Perry.  
 Oh, this American Perry !  
 Flashing American Perry !  
 But crossing the lake,  
 Was all a mistake,  
 They had swallowed so much of the Perry.

Then Barclay exclaimed :  
 " I cannot be blamed,  
 For well I've defended each wherry ;  
 My men are so drunk  
 And some so defunct,  
 If I strike to American Perry.  
 Oh, this American Perry !  
 Thundering American Perry !  
 Such hot distillation,  
 Would fuddle our nation,  
 Should it taste this American Perry."

The stuff did so bruise  
 His staggering crews,  
 That some with their feet were unwary,  
 While some had their brains  
 Knocked out for their pains,  
 By this shocking American Perry.  
 Oh, American Perry !  
 Outrageous American Perry !  
 Old tough British tars,  
 All covered with scars,  
 Capsized by American Perry.

The Indians on shore  
 Made a horrible roar,  
 And left every ground nut and berry ;  
 Then scampered away,  
 For no relish had they  
 For a dose of American Perry.  
 Oh, American Perry !  
 Confounding American Perry !  
     While General Proctor,  
     Looked on like a doctor,  
 At the deadly American Perry.

The Briton was sick,  
 Being *Pear-ed* to the quick ;  
 And his vessels were quite fragmentary,  
 So scolding his luck,  
 He prudently struck  
 To a stream of American Perry.  
 Oh, American Perry !  
 Persevering American Perry !  
     A whole British fleet,  
     Ship to ship has been beat  
 By an *American Commodore Perry*.

On American ground,  
 Where such spirit is found,  
 Let us toast deep the *Heroes of Erie*;  
 And never forget  
 Those whose life's sun did set,  
 By the side of their Commodore Perry.  
 Oh, brave American Perry !  
 Triumphant American Perry !  
     Let us ever remember  
     The *Tenth of September*,  
 When a Fleet struck to Commodore Perry.

