

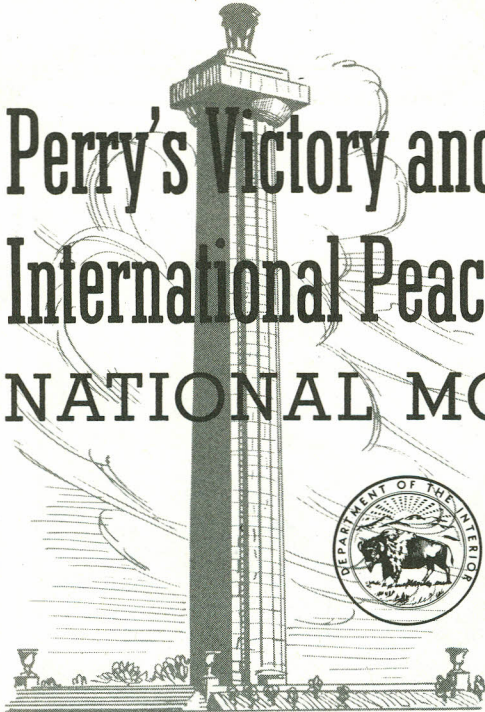


# PERRY'S VICTORY

## and International Peace Memorial

NATIONAL MONUMENT • OHIO

# Perry's Victory and International Peace Memorial NATIONAL MONUMENT



*Near Put in Bay, Perry won the greatest naval battle of the War of 1812; here also is commemorated the century-old 3,000-mile unfortified boundary of two nations.*

COMMODORE OLIVER HAZARD PERRY at the Battle of Lake Erie, near Put in Bay, September 10, 1813, won a decisive victory over the British naval squadron commanded by Commodore Robert H. Barclay that had far-reaching results on the War of 1812 and the future of the United States. It gained control of Lake Erie for the American forces and made possible General Harrison's invasion of Canada, with its subsequent victories. These events made it possible for the United States to hold the great Northwest upon the conclusion of peace by the Treaty of Ghent in 1814.

A few years later, in 1817, the Rush-Bagot Agreement inaugurated a movement which eventually resulted in the permanent disarmament of the 3,000-mile land and water boundary between the United States and Canada, a part of the British Empire.

U. S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

J. A. KRUG, *Secretary*

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NEWTON B. DRURY, *Director*

Thus it is that this area and its great memorial commemorate not only America's great naval victory of which Perry wrote laconically to Gen. William Henry Harrison, Commander in Chief of the American Army, "We have met the enemy and they are ours," but also the principle of international peace by arbitration and disarmament and the lasting peace of nations.

## THE BATTLE OF LAKE ERIE

In the great struggle between Napoleonic France and Great Britain, which extended from 1793 to 1815, the youthful United States was caught between the hammer and the anvil of British and French commercial and naval policy. Her rights were violated by both countries. Impressment of American sailors into British service was one of the grievances of the people of the United States against England which finally led to a declaration of war on June 18, 1812. On land, during the first part of the war, American military operations left much to be desired. Despite brilliant individual victories by American ships in duels with British sloops of war, the American coast line was placed under an effective blockade.

The Battle of Lake Erie turned the tide of



Commodore Oliver Hazard Perry  
Portrait by Gilbert Stuart

events in the northern theater of operations in favor of the Americans. Previously, the British had gained control of Lake Erie, of vital importance in the conduct of the war, and a squadron under Commodore Barclay blockaded Erie, Pa., where Commodore Perry was building ships to contest the British control of the lake. A low sand bar protected Erie harbor. The long-awaited opportunity arrived early in August when Barclay relaxed his vigilance for a few days. Perry floated his ships across the bar and his fleet was at large in the lake. He was subsequently reenforced with men, and his little fleet sailed west unopposed by the British fleet which had gone to a station on the Detroit River. Perry made the harbor of Put in Bay his headquarters. From here he could watch Barclay and yet be conveniently close to General Harrison, who was then in northern Ohio near Lake Erie.

On September 9, 1813, Barclay left his station and sailed out into the lake. The next morning, September 10, about sunrise, the two fleets met ten miles west-northwest of Put in Bay. Perry had nine vessels, the largest of which were the

sister brigs, *Lawrence* and *Niagara*, of 480 tons each. The British fleet consisted of six ships—the *Detroit*, the *Queen Charlotte*, and four smaller vessels. In point of armament Perry had a superiority. The number of effective men was about the same on both sides.

Perry had planned the battle so that his flagship, the *Lawrence*, was to fight the *Detroit*, the enemy's flagship; the *Niagara*, under Commandant Elliot, was to fight the *Queen Charlotte*; and the smaller vessels were to contest with the smaller British ships. At 10 o'clock the battle flag of the *Lawrence* was raised. Upon it had been inscribed Captain Lawrence's memorable words, "Don't give up the ship." The battle was joined about 11:45 and lasted until 3 o'clock in the afternoon. The *Lawrence* bore the brunt of the fight. Perry threw caution to the winds and took his flagship to close quarters with the enemy. The *Niagara*, which should have supported him, held back either because the wind would not fill her sails or because Elliot thought it best to use his two long-range guns at a distance. The close quarter fight was furious, and near the end Perry found that the *Lawrence* was unfit for further action. He then transferred in an open rowboat to the *Niagara*, which at last had come up, and continued the desperate fight.

In another 15 minutes the battle was over. Barclay surrendered his entire fleet, having lost 41 men killed and 94 wounded. Perry lost 27 men killed and 96 wounded. More than two-thirds of the American casualties were on the *Lawrence*. From the deck of the *Niagara*, Perry wrote out a message for General Harrison who was anxiously awaiting news of the outcome of the American bid for control of Lake Erie. It read, "We have met the enemy and they are ours." Thus, modestly and concisely, was this great victory announced to the world, and an immortal sentence in American naval history given to the Nation.

#### THE MEMORIAL

The memorial monument was constructed under the direction of the Perry's Victory Centennial Commission, between October 1912 and

June 1915, at a cost of approximately \$1,000,000, divided about evenly between the nine participating States and the Federal Government.

The memorial is constructed entirely of pink Milford granite from Massachusetts. In large mass this stone gives the appearance of purest white, especially from a distance. The memorial, built of 78 courses of stone, is in the form of a fluted Doric column 352 feet high and 45 feet in diameter at its base. Its cap serves as an observation platform. The penthouse above the observation platform is surmounted by a giant bronze urn 20 feet wide, 23 feet high, and weighing 11 tons. From the urn a glow of light is directed upward. Two navigation lights are situated at opposite corners of the penthouse. The Doric column is illuminated throughout its entire height by floodlights, presenting a surpassingly brilliant spectacle at night and affording protection to life and shipping on Lake Erie throughout the year. It is said to be the greatest battle monument in the world and the most massive column ever built by man.

The rotunda is made of Italian marble, gran-

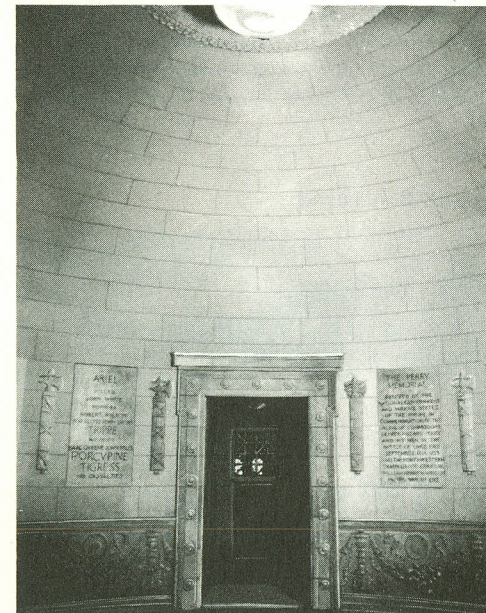
ite, Indiana limestone, Tennessee marble, and bronze. On the walls are several historical tablets. The names of the American ships and of the killed and wounded in the Battle of Lake Erie are carved in the stone walls. Beneath the floor of the rotunda, in a crypt, repose the remains of three American and three British officers killed in the battle. For a century they had lain where buried on the shore of Put in Bay after the battle. They were disinterred and placed in the memorial with impressive services September 13, 1913, 100 years from the date of their original burial.

#### THE NATIONAL MONUMENT

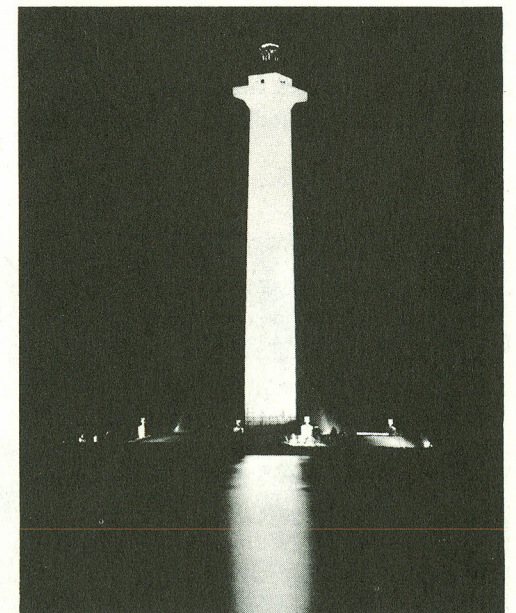
Establishment of Perry's Victory and International Peace Memorial National Monument was authorized by act of Congress, approved June 2, 1936. It consists of 14.25 acres situated at Put in Bay on South Bass Island in Lake Erie and includes the magnificent Doric column which was erected 1912-1915.

The movement for the Perry's Victory Memorial was initiated in 1908 in Ohio when the State

The rotunda



The memorial at night.—Copyright, O. G. Herbster



Legislature authorized the appointment of a Commission to study the project. During the next 2 years the States of Pennsylvania, Illinois, Wisconsin, Michigan, New York, Rhode Island, Kentucky, and Massachusetts joined and assisted in the enterprise. The Federal Government gave its assistance in 1911.

#### HOW TO REACH THE MONUMENT

Perry's Victory and International Peace Memorial National Monument is 3 1/2 miles from the mainland and is reached during the summer season by modern motorships and auto ferries from Sandusky, 24 miles distant; Port Clinton, 14 miles; and Catawba Island, 8 miles. Airplane service is also available from the Peninsular Airport at Port Clinton, Ohio.

#### FACILITIES FOR VISITORS

Several historical tablets in the rotunda of the memorial monument relate important facts about the Battle of Lake Erie. Information may be obtained from members of the staff on duty at the memorial, and free literature concerning the national monument is available for distribution. A stairway of 467 steps and an elevator inside the memorial carry visitors to the observation platform on top of the huge Doric column, which accommodates 300 people and on a clear day affords an uninterrupted view for 50 miles in an arc of 360 degrees. Many points of interest come within view, including the various islands

of the Lake Erie archipelago, the imaginary International Boundary Line separating Canada from the United States, and the point 10 miles west-northwest where the British and the American fleets fought the Battle of Lake Erie.

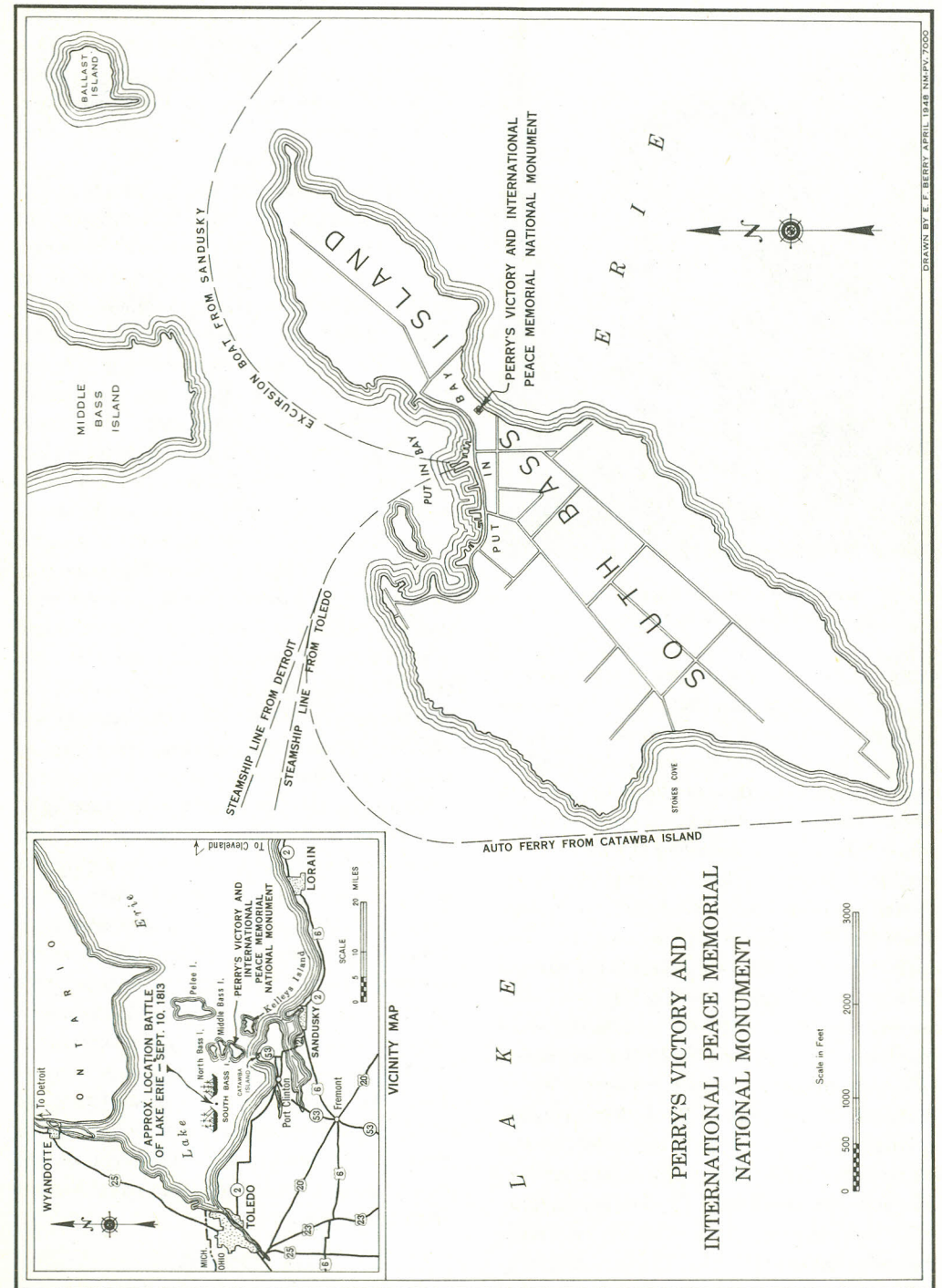
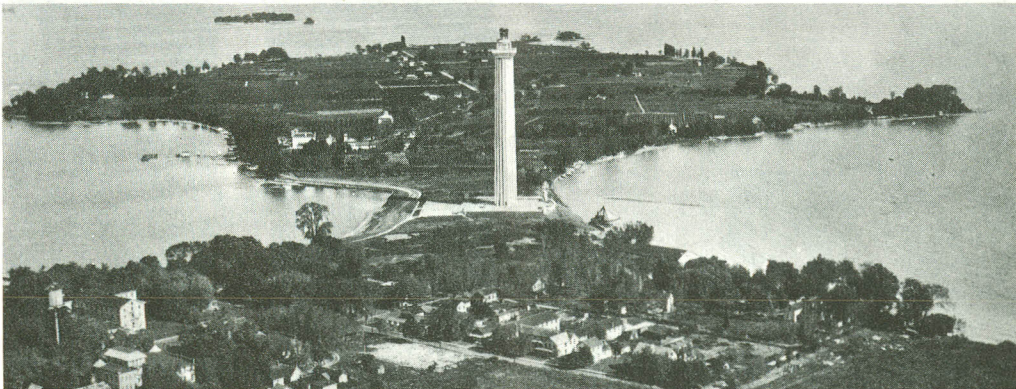
Suitable hotel accommodations are available at Put in Bay. The island and surrounding waters are famous for yachting and fishing.

#### ADMINISTRATION

Perry's Victory and International Peace Memorial National Monument is part of the National Park System, owned by the people of the United States and administered for them by the National Park Service of the Department of the Interior. A memorial commission, composed of representatives of the United States and of the nine States participating in the erection of the memorial, serves as an advisory board to the Secretary of the Interior in the administration of the area. Communications relative to the monument should be addressed to the Custodian, Perry's Victory and International Peace Memorial National Monument, Put in Bay, Ohio.

*National Park Service Popular Study Series No. 8, Perry at Put in Bay, giving additional information about the monument and the War of 1812, may be obtained from the custodian or from the Superintendent of Documents, Government Printing Office, Washington 25, D. C., at 10 cents a copy.*

The memorial and part of South Bass Island



COVER: Powell's painting "Perry Transferring His Flag at the Battle of Lake Erie." Courtesy, State of Ohio.

DRAWN BY E. F. BERRY APRIL 1948 NHP-NV-7000