

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.

victory, about which Perry made his famous report: "We have met the enemy and they are ours." Here also is memorialized the principle of international peace by arbitration and disarmament and the lasting peace of nations.

The Battle of Lake Erie

During the great struggle between Napoleonic France and Great Britain, 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. Forcing of American sailors into British service was one of the grievances 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 coastline was placed under an effective blockade.

The Battle of Lake Erie turned the tide of events in the northern part of the country in

favor of the Americans. Previously, the British had gained control of Lake Erie, of vital importance in the conduct of the war. A British squadron under Commodore Barclay blockaded Erie, Pa., where Commodore Perry was building ships to contest the British control of the lake. A low sandbar protected Erie harbor. The long-awaited opportunity arrived early in August when Barclay relaxed his watchfulness for a few days. Perry floated his ships across the bar and his fleet was at large in the lake. He was subsequently reinforced 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, the 2 fleets met about 10 miles west-northwest of Put-in-Bay. Perry had 9 vessels, the largest of which were the sister brigs, *Lawrence* and *Niagara*, of 480 tons each. The British fleet consisted of 6 ships—the *Detroit*, the *Queen Charlotte*, and 4 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 Elliott, was to fight the *Queen Charlotte*. The smaller vessels were to contest the smaller British ships. At 10 a. m. the battle flag of the *Lawrence* was raised. Upon it had been inscribed the memorable words of Captain Lawrence, the man for whom the ship was named: "Don't give up the ship." The battle began about 11:45 a. m. and lasted until 3 p. m. 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



Commodore Oliver Hazard Perry
(Portrait by Gilbert Stuart)

Niagara, which should have supported him, held back either because the wind would not fill her sails or because Elliott 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.

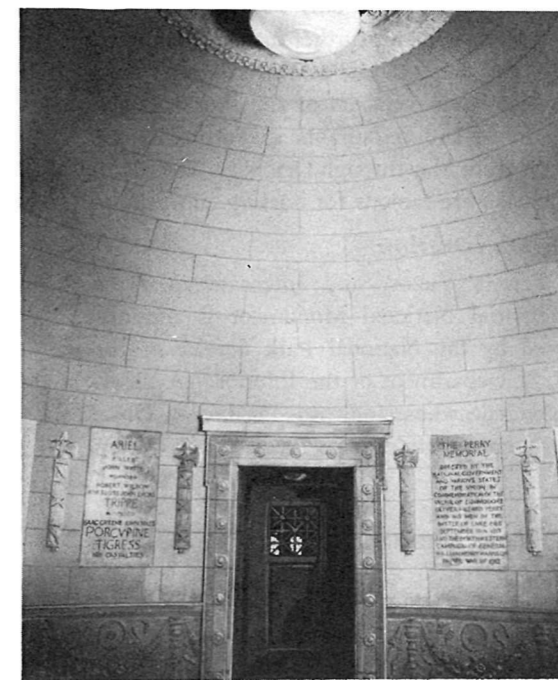
In another 15 minutes the battle was over. Barclay surrendered his entire fleet, having lost 41 men killed and 94 wounded. Perry lost 27 men killed and 96 wounded. More than two-thirds of the American casualties were on the *Lawrence*. From the deck of the *Niagara*, Perry wrote out a message for General 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 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 18 feet wide, 23 feet high, and weighing 11 tons. From the urn a glow of light is directed upward. Two navigation lights are at opposite corners of the penthouse. The Doric column can be illuminated throughout its entire height by floodlights, presenting a surpassingly brilliant spectacle at night. It gives protection to life and shipping on Lake Erie when lighted from April through November. It is said to be the greatest battle monument and the most massive column ever built by man.

The rotunda is made of Italian marble, granite, Indiana limestone, Tennessee mar-

The rotunda



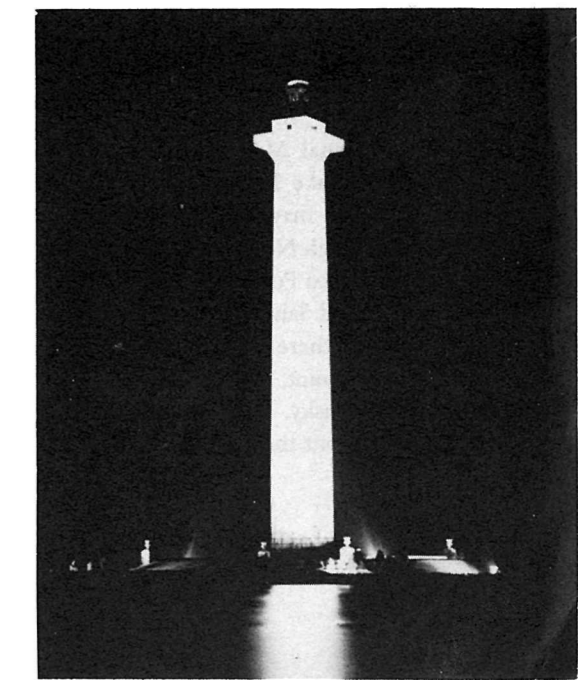
ble, and bronze. On the walls are several historical tablets. The names of the American ships and of the killed and wounded in the Battle of Lake Erie are carved in the stone walls. Beneath the floor of the rotunda, in a crypt, repose the remains of 3 American and 3 British officers killed in the battle. For a century they had lain where buried on the shore of Put-in-Bay after the battle. They were removed and placed in the memorial with impressive services on 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 memorial column.

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

The memorial at night
(Copyright, O. G. Herbstler)



The National Park System, of which this area is a unit, is dedicated to conserving the scenic, scientific, and historic heritage of the United States for the benefit and inspiration of its people.



The memorial and part of South Bass Island

ment 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.

The memorial 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.

How to Reach the Monument

Perry's Victory and International Peace Memorial National Monument is on South Bass Island in Lake Erie, 4 miles from the mainland. You may visit the monument from April through November by automobile ferry from Catawba Point, 8 miles; Port Clinton, 14 miles; and Sandusky, 24 miles. During the summer, there are 8 round trips daily from Catawba Point, 4 from Port Clinton, and 1 from Sandusky. Year-round air service is maintained from the Port Clinton airport.

About Your Visit

There is a nominal fee for elevator service to the top of the memorial. This fee is waived for children under 12 years of age and groups of school children 18 years of age or under when accompanied by adults responsible for their safety and orderly conduct.

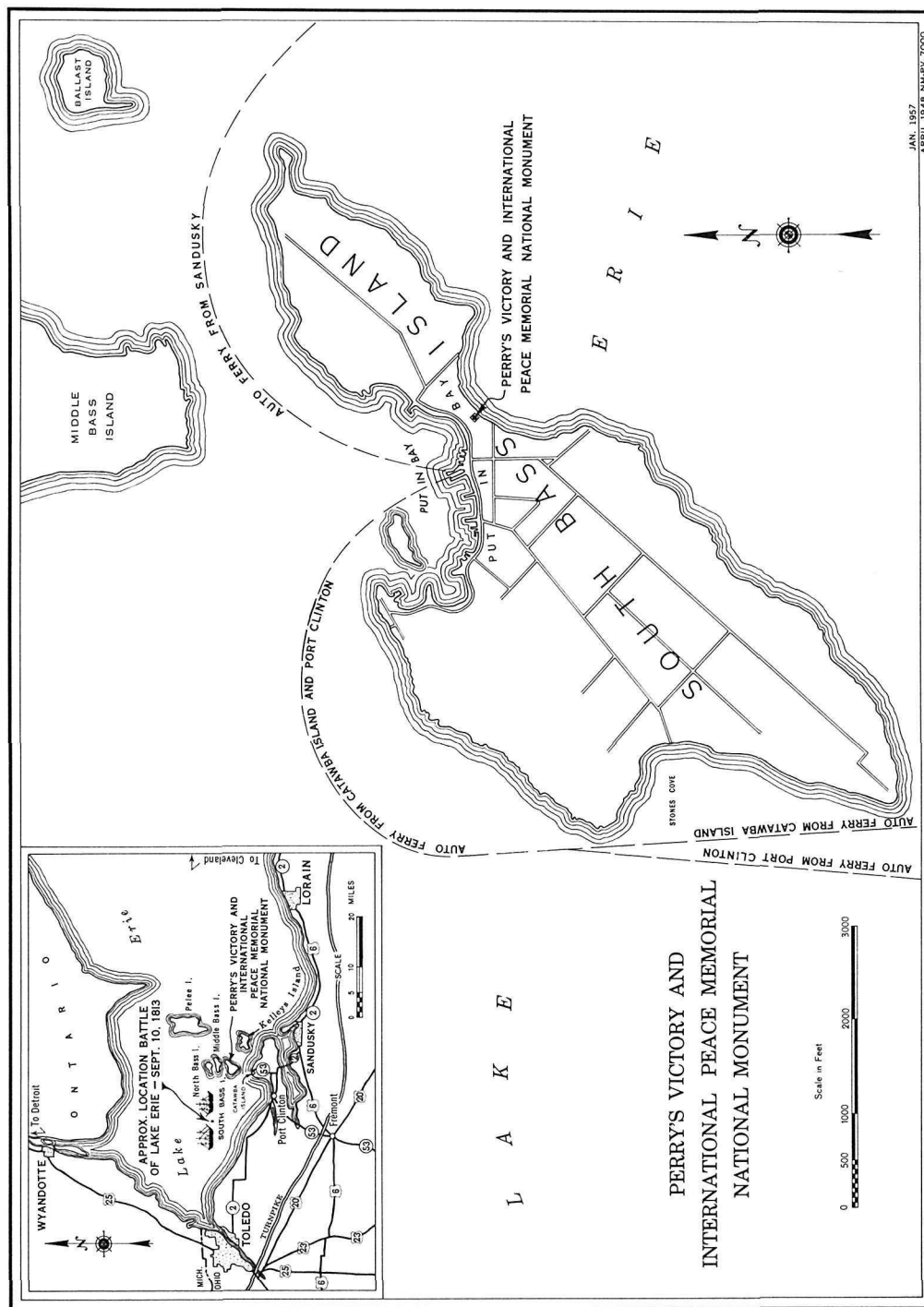
On a clear day you will be able to see from the observation platform many points of interest, including nearby islands and the point 10 miles west-northwest where the battle took place. The boundary between the United States and Canada is only 5 miles distant.

You may obtain further information about this and other areas of the National Park System from members of the staff on duty.

Hotels and restaurants at Put-in-Bay are open from May through October. The island and lake are famous for boating and fishing.

Administration

Perry's Victory and International Peace Memorial National Monument is administered by the National Park Service of the U. S. Department of the Interior. A superintendent, whose address is Put-in-Bay, Ohio, is in immediate charge.



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

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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
Fred A. Seaton, Secretary
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE, Conrad L. Wirth, Director

