

lieutenant; Samuel Hambleton, purser; Usher Parsons, acting-surgeon; William V. Taylor, sailing-master; Thomas Breeze, chaplain; Augustus Swartwout, midshipman; Peleg K. Durham, midshipman; Henry Laub, midshipman; Thomas Claxton, midshipman; James Alexander Perry, midshipman; John Fox, gunner; Joseph Cheeves, boatswain; John Brooks, lieutenant of marines; James Tull, sergeant of marines; and William S. Johnson, sergeant of marines.

On the evening before the engagement between the fleets, and at the close of a conference with his officers, it is said Captain Perry displayed before them a large blue battle-flag, between eight and nine feet square, which at his request, Samuel Hambleton, the purser, had caused to be made privately, at Erie, for the flagship. On it, in large white muslin letters, were the alleged dying words of Captain James Lawrence, the gallant commander of the *Chesapeake*, "DON'T GIVE UP THE SHIP."

"The morning of the tenth of September, 1813, dawned fine and fair," at Put-in-Bay, on the north side of Put-in-Bay Island, in Lake Erie. "A light breeze was blowing from the south. Very early a number of sail was seen out on the lake beyond the point, and soon the strangers were discovered to be the British fleet.

"Everything depended now upon the speed with which the Americans could prepare for action. In twelve minutes every vessel was under way, and sailing out to meet the oncomers; the *Lawrence* led the line. As the two fleets approached, the British concentrated the fire of their long and heavy guns upon her. She came on in silence; at her peak was flying a huge motto-flag: plain to view were the words of the brave commander of the *Chesapeake*: DON'T GIVE UP THE SHIP.

"The responsibility that rested upon the young commander's shoulders was great; his position was most precarious. This was the first action between the fleets of the two hostile countries; it was a battle for the dominion of the lakes; defeat meant that the English could land at any time an expeditionary force at any point they chose along the shores of our natural northern barrier."

"At 11.35 A.M. the *Lawrence* was near enough to the *Detroit* to satisfy Perry, who opened fire with the long twelve on the bow; the *Caledonia*, that was astern of him, followed, while the *Niagara*, next in line, began to fire the long twelve also, though it was at a very long range. Meantime the *Scorpion* and *Ariel* were doing their best, of course. The squadrons became fogged in with smoke—a smoke bank in which the darting flashes of the guns tore long rifts, and which the variable breeze swayed hither and yon as it swelled on the air.

"In a few minutes the advantage which the British commander held in his