

“ And at that appeal three men crawled up the hatchway ladder on their hands and knees to grasp the ropes of the gun-tackles. These, aided by Purser Hambleton and Chaplain Breeze, rolled the muzzle of the gun out through the port, where Perry himself aimed and fired it. And that was the last gun fired from the *Lawrence*. The next broadside from the enemy left her with not a single gun that could be worked, and it severely wounded Purser Hambleton, who was at the side of Perry. At that Perry turned from the gun to look over the whole scene of battle.

“ The *Lawrence* was a wreck. Her bowsprit and masts were almost wholly shot away, and her hull was riddled. Out of a crew of more than a hundred men who had gone into the fight just fourteen remained unhurt. The remnants of twenty who had been killed outright were scattered about the deck. But the great blue burgee with ‘DON’T GIVE UP THE SHIP’ still fluttered aloft in the smoke, and Perry was the man for the motto.

“ As the firing ceased on the *Lawrence*, Elliott, who had kept the *Niagara* clear of the battle during those two long hours, made sail and, after ordering two of the near-by smaller vessels to new stations, headed with a happily freshened breeze for the right of the British line. The eyes of Perry, turning from ship to ship, saw the *Niagara*, with full, round sails and quickening pace, coming. She was headed to pass more than a quarter of a mile from the disabled *Lawrence*, but Perry saw in her the means of retrieving what had been lost by the concentration of the enemy’s fire upon his own ship. Stripping off the blue nankeen jacket he had worn all day he put on the epauletted coat of his rank, and ordered a boat lowered with four men in it on the side of the *Lawrence* that was in the lee of the iron storm. The lad, Perry’s brother, entered the boat with the men. At the same time the broad pennant of the flag-ship was hauled down, but the ‘gridiron flag’ of America was left flying where it had been throughout the long conflict. Then, turning to his faithful lieutenant, he said:

“ ‘Yarnall, I leave the *Lawrence* in your charge with discretionary powers. You may hold out or surrender as your judgment and the circumstances shall dictate.’

“ Perry, although half surrounded by the enemy and within easy musket range, had determined to shift his flag to the *Niagara*.

“ As he turned to go a quartermaster hauled down the big blue burgee with the *Lawrence* words of inspiration upon it and gave it to the commander. Climbing then over the ship’s side to the boat Perry stood erect in the stern-sheets, the draped flag and pennant across his shoulders and, still standing erect, ordered the men to pull away for the *Niagara*. Putting their oars against the ship’s side they pushed clear, and then, catching the stroke, rowed out from behind the sheltering hulk.