

# STAMP SCOOP



## THE BATTLE OF LAKE ERIE

The War of 1812 was an enormous test for the fledgling United States of America. British provocation of Native Americans against colonial Americans and efforts to restrict US trade led to a war that was critical in establishing America's strength, resolve, and territorial expansion.

One of the most important battles of the war was fought on Lake Erie on September 10, 1813 – and whose Bicentennial we celebrate this year. The United States was struggling to expand its reach into the Northwest Territories. American troops were facing Canada – then a British colony – and Native American forces. A young US naval officer named Oliver Hazard Perry was called upon to build a fleet of wooden naval ships in Erie Pennsylvania and sail into Lake Erie to reclaim the Lake and territory around it for the United States. .

On the morning of September 10, Perry and his flotilla of nine ships and 54 guns set sail to meet a British fleet of six ships with 63 canons. The battle lasted for hours, and Perry's own ship *Lawrence* was nearly destroyed. Transferring to the *Niagara*, Perry boldly sailed directly into the British line, firing broadsides. At the end of the day, British casualties outnumbered the American's 40 to 27, and the world's most powerful navy was forced to surrender. With the British concession, the Americans controlled Detroit and all the Northwest Territory. That day, Perry sent a dispatch to General William Henry Harrison, declaring the famous words "We have met the enemy, and they are ours."

© 2013 Powers Communications © 2013 USPS