

wonder that Louis XVI gave Jones's account little heed. He had enough troubles of his own at the time.

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Perry's Victory on Lake Erie: An Account of the Building of the Fleet in the Wilderness, the Decisive Battle at Put-In-Bay, and its Consequences. By DENYS W. KNOLL. (Erie, Pennsylvania: Erie County Historical Society, 1980. Pp. vi, 30. Acknowledgment, foreword, epilogue, bibliography. \$2.25.)

In this new publication of the Erie County Historical Society, Rear Admiral Denys W. Knoll provides a brief survey of the construction of Commodore Oliver Hazard Perry's fleet at Erie and its remarkable success in the pivotal Battle of Lake Erie on September 10, 1813. The obstacles to building ships on what was then the frontier were many, including shortages of tools, rigging, oakum, pitch, iron, and manpower. Nevertheless, through the unstinting efforts of Perry, Captain Daniel Dobbins, and shipwrights Noah Brown and Ebenezer Crosby the Americans put together a small but balanced fleet in a remarkably short period of time. Under Perry, the tiny armada engaged a British fleet and defeated it near Put-in-Bay, Ohio, in the process securing control of the Great Lakes at a critical point in the War of 1812.

Knoll generally writes well, and his account is accurate insofar as the events relating to the fleet and the battle are concerned. When he moves away from these occurrences, however, to a larger view of the war and its implications, he runs into trouble. For example, it is not true that Perry's victory was "crucial to winning the War of 1812" (p. v), since the war was not won by the United States in any military sense; and tying the outcome of the war directly to the Monroe Doctrine (p. 28) vastly oversimplifies the complex origins of that document (enunciated in 1823, not 1817 as Knoll implies).

In spite of such deficiencies, Knoll and the Erie County Historical Society deserve accolades for a study of the battle and the events preceding it that is both readable and refreshingly concise.

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