

**Lake Erie.** — Lake Erie, the fourth in order of the great chain of lakes, is situated north of New York, Pennsylvania, and Ohio, and forms a part of the boundary line between the United States and Canada. It is 250 miles long, and generally about 50 wide.

Its altitude is thirty-two feet lower than Lake Huron, and its greatest depth 270 feet. Near the shore, however, it is quite shallow, and is often frozen in the excessively cold winters, which are common to this region. According to several distinguished American engineers, Lake Erie rose several feet between the years 1825 and 1838; and this increase of magnitude, seems to be general in the American lakes, while those of the eastern hemisphere appear to be decreasing. Lake Erie has a number of good harbors, and some islands; though not generally very large. The largest island lies among a group of smaller ones, in the south-west corner, and is called Cunningham's island. There is more business done on this lake, than either of the others, and on the shores are numerous towns and villages, besides several cities of great commercial importance.

One of the most brilliant naval achievements of the last war, took place on Lake Erie. The American fleet, consisting of nine small vessels, carrying in all fifty-four guns, had been built and equipped entirely through the exertions of Commodore Perry, during the summer of 1813. The British fleet consisted of six vessels, carrying sixty-three guns, giving the Americans the advantage in the number of vessels, and the British the advantage in the size and number of guns. The British fleet was commanded by Admiral Barclay, a veteran officer who had served under Nelson at Trafalgar, while Perry, the commander of the American fleet, had never seen a naval engagement in his life. The battle took place on the 10th of September, 1813, and resulted in the total triumph of the Americans. In the heat of the battle, the flag ship becoming disabled, Commodore Perry left her in charge of his lieutenant, and proceeded to go on board one of the other vessels of his little fleet. This he accomplished in an open boat, passing the whole line of the enemy, and exposed to the fire of their musketry. During the whole time of passing from one vessel to the other, he stood up in the stern of the boat, and held aloft the flag of his country, on which were inscribed the dying words of the immortal Lawrence, "DON'T GIVE UP THE SHIP." What a magnificent spectacle, and what a feeling of honest pride must glow in the breast of the American, when he feels that this was one of the noble defenders of his country; and at the same time, while contemplating this scene, what feeling of contempt is