

to their berths in the harbor. Vessels and steamboats from the west would be seen to come down to the edge of the floating ice, and after reconnoitering would return. In this state of affairs, when Captain Wilkeson with his steamboat *Commodore Perry* came down, it being his second trip from Perrysburg that spring, he determined not to be balked a second time, and resolved to work his way through if possible, even though it broke all the buckets on the paddle-wheels, and cut through the planking of the boat. To resolve with him was to act. He plunged into the ice, and all hands exerted themselves with a will to force the boat through. After many hours of hard labor, and a general destruction of the buckets and some of the arms of the wheels, the *Perry* emerged from the ice-pack into clear water, and in a crippled state steamed slowly up the harbor.

The docks and vessels were covered with a multitude of people, who had been watching with anxiety the daring and successful attempt to reach the harbor. As the gallant steamer passed grandly on, the shores and crafts of all kinds rang with the loud huzzas of the spectators, which continued to greet the noble vessel and her plucky commander until she reached her dock.

Captain Wilkeson was the hero of the day. Through the energy and confidence he had displayed in this emergency, as in others, he had succeeded, by breaking the blockade, in setting the many captives free,—for the channel made through the ice by the *Perry* remained open, and within an hour several sail-vessels had taken advantage of it, and before the sun went down were out beyond the ice. Others continued to follow, and there was no further obstruction. The *Commodore Perry* was thus the first boat which came in that spring, arriving the 16th day of May.

Upon one occasion I was talking with the "Commodore", as he was sometimes called, about his breaking through the "ice blockade," and said to him that the dock men ought to