

**THE 1845 AND 1860 VERSIONS
OF THE LEGEND OF JOHN MAYNARD:
PLACED SIDE BY SIDE FOR COMPARISON**

To fully comprehend just how draconian the 1860 abridgment was, it may be of help to the reader to see the two renderings placed side by side. Those portions of the 1845 sketch that were *not* used by John Bartholomew Gough are in gray.

**1845
(Anonymous)**

THE HELMSMAN OF LAKE ERIE.

It was on a pleasant May morning that a steam vessel was riding at anchor, opposite the town of Buffalo, on Lake Erie. You know, I dare say, that Erie is one of those sea-lakes for which America is so famous; and, as you stand on its shore, and see the green waves dashing in one after another, you might well think you were looking at the green ocean itself. The Jersey — for that was the name of the steamer — was dressed gaily with many bright flags: the Blue Peter, the signal for immediate sailing, was at her main-mast head, porters were hurrying along the narrow quay that juts out into the lake; boatmen quarrelling with each other for passengers; travelers hurrying backwards and forwards to look for their luggage; — friends shaking hands, and bidding each other farewell; idlers lounging about, with their hands in their pockets; cab-drivers jangling for a larger fare; and all the various kinds of bustle and confusion that attend the departure of a packet from a watering place.

But presently the anchor was hove, the paddles began to turn, the sails were set, and, leaving a broad track of foam behind her, the Jersey stood westward, and held

Those portions of Gough's rendering that are *not* in the 1845 sketch are also in gray.

The introduction and concluding exhortation or "appendage" (the latter is frequently deleted: cf. http://homepage.mac.com/joel_huberman/JohnMaynard/Gough_1860.xls.pdf) have been bracketed out and placed in blue.

**1860
(Gough)**

A HERO.

[— John B. Gough, the celebrated temperance lecturer, who has returned to the United States, from a visit to his native England, and who is announced to speak at Cooper Institute on next Monday evening, related in one of his recent speeches, the following anecdote:]

on her course for the town of Erie. It was a bright blue day; and, as hour after hour went by, some mingled in the busy conversation on politics; some sat apart, and calculated the gains of the shop or the counting-house; some were wrapped up in the book with which they were engaged; and one or two, with whom time seemed to hang heavily, composed themselves to sleep. In short, one and all were like men who thought that, let danger come to them when it might, at least it would not be that day.

It drew towards four in the afternoon, and the steamer, which had hitherto been keeping the middle of the lake, stood southward – Erie, the place to which it was bound, lying on the southern side. **Old John Maynard was at the wheel;** a bluff, weather-beaten sailor, tanned by many a burning summer day, and by many a wintry tempest. He had truly learnt to be content with his situation: none could ever say that they had heard him repine at his hard labor and scanty pay. He had, in the worst time, a cheerful word and a kind look for those with whom he was thrown; cast, often enough, into bad company, he tried, at least, and generally succeeded, to say or do something for its good. **He was known from one end of Lake Erie to the other, by the name of honest John Maynard; and the secret of his honesty to his neighbors, was his love of God.**

The land was about ten miles off, when the captain, coming up from his cabin, cried to a sailor, “Dick Fletcher, what’s all that smoke I see coming out of the hold!”

It’s from the engine room, sir, I guess,” said the man.

“Down with you, then, and let me know.”

The sailor began descending the ladder by which you go to the hold; but scarcely had he disappeared beneath the deck, when he came up with much greater speed.

“The hold’s on fire, sir,” he said to the captain, who by this time was standing close to him.

The captain rushed down, and found the account too true. Some sparks had fallen on a bundle of tow, no one had seen the accident; and now not only much of the luggage, but the sides of the vessel were in a smoldering flame.

John Maynard was well known in the Lake district as a God-fearing, honest, intelligent pilot. He was a pilot on a steamer from Detroit to Buffalo one summer afternoon. At that time, those steamers seldom carried boats.

Smoke was seen ascending from below,

and the captain called out, “Simpson, go down and see what that smoke is.”

Simpson came up with his face pale as ashes, and said—

”Captain, the ship is on fire!”

Then, “Fire! fire! fire! fire on shipboard!”

All hands, passengers as well as sailors, were called together; and two lines being made, one on each side of the hold, buckets of water were passed and re-passed; they were filled from the lake; they flew along a line of ready hands, were dashed hissing on the burning mass, and then passed on to the other side to be re-filled. For some few moments, it seemed as if the flames were subdued .

In the meantime the women on board were clustering round John Maynard, the only man unemployed who was capable of answering their questions. "How far is it to land?" "How long shall we be getting in?" "Is it very deep?" "Is there no boat?" "Can they see us from the shore?" The helmsman answered as well as he could. There was no boat, it had been left at Buffalo to be mended; they might be seven miles from the shore; they would probably be in in forty minutes, he could not tell how far the fire had reached. "But, to speak the truth," he added, "we are all in great danger; and I think if there was a little less *talking* and a little more *praying* it would be the better for us, and none the worse for the boat."

"How's her head?" shouted the captain.

"West-sou'-west, sir," answered Maynard.

"Keep her sou' and by west," cried captain. "We must go ashore any where."

It happened that a draft of wind drove back the flames, which soon began to blaze up more furiously against the saloon; and the partition betwixt it and the hold was soon on fire. Then wreaths of smoke began to find their way through the skylight and the captain seeing this, ordered the women forward. The engineer put on his utmost steam; the American flag was run up, and reversed, in token of distress; water was flung over the sails, to make them hold the wind. And still John Maynard stood by the wheel, though now he was cut off, by a sheet of smoke and flame, from the ship's crew.

Greater and greater grew the heat; the engineers fled from the engine room; the

All hands were called up.

Buckets of water were dashed upon the fire but in vain. There were large quantities of rosin and tar on board, and it was useless to attempt to save the ship.

The passengers rushed forward and inquired of the pilot,

"How far are we from Buffalo?" "Seven miles." "How long before we reach it?" "Three-quarters of an hour, at our present rate of steam." "Is there any danger?"

"Danger *here* — see the smoke bursting out! *go forward*, if you would save your lives!"

Passengers and crew, men, women and children, crowded the forward part of the ship. John Maynard stood at the helm. The flames burst forth in a sheet of fire; clouds of smoke arose; the captain cried out through his trumpet — "John Maynard!" "Aye, aye, sir!" "Are you at the helm?" "Aye, aye, sir!" "How does she head?"

Southeast-by-east, sir."

"Head her southeast and run her on shore."

passengers were clustering round the vessel's bow; the sailors were sawing planks on which to lash the women ; the boldest were throwing off their coats and waist-coats , and preparing for one long struggle for life . **And still the coast grew plainer;** the paddles, as yet, worked well; they could not be more than a mile from the shore; and boats were even now starting to their assistance.

“John Maynard!” cried the captain.

“Aye, aye, sir!” said John.

“ Could you hold on five minutes longer?”

“I'll try, sir.”

And he did try; **the flames came nearer and nearer;** a sheet of smoke would sometimes almost suffocate him ; **his hair was singed;** his blood seemed on fire with the great heat . Crouching as far back as he could, **he held the wheel firmly with his left hand,** till the flesh shriveled , and the muscles cracked in the flames; **and then** he stretched forth **his right, and bore the agony**

without a scream or a groan. It was enough for him that he heard the cheer of the sailors to the approaching boats; the cry of the captain, “The women first , and then every man for himself, and God for us all.” And they were the last sounds he heard. How he perished was not known; whether, dizzied by the smoke, he lost his footing in endeavoring to come forward, and fell overboard, or whether he was suffocated by dense smoke, his comrades could not tell. **At the moment the vessel struck,** the boats were at her side; the passengers, sailors, and captain leaped into them, or swam for their lives: **all, save he to whom they owed everything, escaped.**

He had died the death of a Christian hero – I had almost said, of a martyr; **his spirit was commended into his Father's hands** , and his body sleeps in peace by the green side of Lake Erie.

Nearer, nearer, yet nearer she approached the shore.

Again the captain cried out, “John Maynard!”

The response came feebly, “Aye, aye, sir.”

“Can you hold on five minutes longer, John?”

“By God's help, I will!”

The old man's hair was scorched from the scalp;

one hand disabled, his knee upon the stanchion, and his teeth set, with his other hand upon the wheel, he stood firm as a rock.

He beached the ship –

every man, woman and child was saved, as John Maynard dropped,

and his spirit took its flight to his God.

[Sensation.]

[He sacrificed his life to save the lives of others. It is worth a greater effort to save a man from moral ruin – to save a child from drunkenness than from fire.]

<p>[The text is the most likely reading of the 1845 sketch – combining both A & B versions]</p> <p><u>(1320 words)</u></p>	<p>[<i>The Albany Evening Journal</i>, Sept. 28, 1860 – perhaps the first printing in the United States upon Gough’s return from England]</p> <p>(The sketch with title – but without introduction and concluding exhortation: <u>334 words</u>)</p> <p>- Norman Barry, April 2010</p>
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