

JOHN MAYNARD

BY

ADA LINDEN

(The following translation is based on the text in Ada Linden's Collected Poems entitled *The Sound of Silence*, pp. 89-90.)

Published by Karl Schrattenthal
Rheydt, Germany
1896
W. Rob. Langewiesche

Her smokestacks belching, her banners flying in the breeze,
Across Lake Erie a proud boat sails with ease;
O'er the waves so bright, under the sky so red,
The *Swallow* is masterfully sped;
At her wheel, the pilot John Maynard.

A frightened cry rings out: "Ship on fire!"
All efforts to stop the blaze are a vain desire!
From the cracks smoke swirls up into the air;
From the afterdeck flames shoot out with a crimson glare;
"We are lost, John Maynard!"

"The foredeck is still safe and sound,
Seek refuge there and remain calm!" A westerly is coming round,
And driving astern the blazing inferno;
Even in the flames yet flies the *Swallow*!
Amidst the flames and standing firm, John Maynard!

"How far, how far, to reach port alive?"
"One more hour, then we'll arrive!"
"Take heart, my Captain, I'm resolute!"
Shaking his hot, calloused hand, his Captain does not dispute:
"May God protect thee, John Maynard!"

Undaunted he grips the wheel, sparks flying left and right,
Amidst the stinging breath of flames a wondrous sight;
The safe harbor on the approaching shore appears;
With a strong and skilful hand he steers
His burning ship, John Maynard.

"Death and pain have not exacted their toll!
A thousand times over, thank you, o' faithful soul!"
No response can they hear; as the smoke drifts away,
On the red-hot wheel, they see a dead man sway –
Thus died for all of you – John Maynard!

