

THE LINE-UP,

commissioned in an attempt to establish the identity of an

EXTRAORDINARY MAN,

WANTED

**by researchers of
an AMERICAN LEGEND.**

Description,
as provided by an anonymous sketch entitled “The Helmsman of Lake Erie”:

Name: John Maynard

Age: Old

Years of Greatest Activity: 1841-1845

Location: Lake Erie

Occupation: Helmsman

Personal Characteristics:

- a) honest & kind
- b) a cheerful disposition
- c) well-known: “from one end of the Lake to the other”
- d) “content with his situation”
- e) religious: his “love of God”
- f) used to “hard labor” and “scanty pay”
- g) generally able to improve the morals of “bad company”
- h) enormous staying power
- i) a man endowed with great physical strength and able to endure extreme pain
- j) willing to sacrifice himself for others

SUSPECT No. 1

Not an actual person, but a name borrowed from a short story (published on April 1, 1844) by Martha Russell entitled “Lucy Maynard”

“The Surname *Maynard* in the Context of the Tales of Two Lucys: Miss Martha Russell’s ‘Lucy Maynard’ and Lucy Hardinge in James Fenimore Cooper’s *Afloat and Ashore or, The Adventures of Miles Wallingford*”

In “NORMAN’S COOPER CORNER”

The essay:

<https://johnmaynard.net/Lucy.pdf>

The short story:

<https://johnmaynard.net/Russell.pdf>

* * * *

SUSPECT No. 2:

**“Honest John Maynard”
(Jan. 8, 1786 – March 24, 1850)**

***The Auburn Journal and Advertiser* (Auburn, N.Y.), Wednesday, November 1, 1843, p. 2:**

Honest John Maynard

The following deserved tribute from a late No. of the *New York Tribune* will be read with unalloyed gratification by every person who enjoys the pleasure of the acquaintance with the individual of whom it treats. Mr. MAYNARD is every way worthy of our respect – our confidence – our votes.

JOHN MAYNARD is the right candidate in the Seventh District. If the people of that district but knew his unassuming worth as a Legislator and Statesman – if they had but witnessed his quiet earnest, efficient devotion to his duties, whether in the Senate or in Congress – if they but realized the profound esteem which he has inspired, both at Albany and Washington, we are sure he would be elected by thousands. – There is no man in the Senate better fitted to legislate with a just regard to all her interests, than John Maynard – there is none whom the People may trust with more implicit confidence that they will not be deceived or betrayed. A member of the old Republican party in this State, a supporter of MADISON, and an admirer of CLAY thirty years ago, he has kept on in the good old path, alike averse to Aristocratic assumption and Jacobinic lawlessness and disorder, and the election of the great Statesman of the West will be to him the fruition of twenty years’ undying hope and unwavering exertion. It must be that Mr. Maynard’s character and services will call out an unusually strong vote in that old Republican District, opposed as he is by a man of very moderate qualifications for the post. Mr. Maynard is the only Whig who has received a majority of the votes in the county of his residence (Seneca) during the last ten or twelve years, and we trust he will now receive like evidence from the whole District.

Note: It should be pointed out that the only short story in English currently accredited to James Fenimore Cooper is "The Lake Gun" (1850), which takes place on Seneca Lake. Cooper's brother-in-law, Bishop William Heathcote DeLancey of the Episcopal Church, resided in Geneva, New York, located at the northern end of Seneca Lake. The fact that the defining attribute "Honest" is joined to "John Maynard" and that articles referring to "Honest John Maynard" crop up in 1843 in a part of New York Cooper was familiar with and less than two years before publication of "The Helmsman" make this historic figure a leading suspect as inspiration for the helmsman's fictional name.

***The Daily National Intelligencer (Washington, D.C.), Fri., March 29, 1850,
p. 4:***

The Hon. JOHN MAYNARD, a Judge of the Supreme Court of the State of New York, died at his residence in Auburn on Sunday morning. This event was not unlooked for. Judge Maynard has been in feeble health for several years. The laborious duties of his high judicial station were too severe for his enfeebled constitution. He was compelled last fall to retire from the bench and has been gradually sinking ever since. From the first of January he belonged to the Court of Appeals, though he had not taken the seat. His death creates a vacancy in that court.

In this bereavement the State loses the services of an able, upright jurist, while the community in which he resided mourns an estimable citizen.

In the discharge of public duties we have never known a more inflexibly independent, nor a more scrupulously honest man than John Maynard. He was elected to Congress in 1826 and gave a zealous support to Mr. ADAMS's Administration. He was subsequently, for four years, a member of our State Senate, and again a member of Congress. At the first judicial election he was raised to the bench of the Supreme Court. In all these public relations he has displayed eminent ability and preserved a character above reproach.

[Albany Evening Journal]

* * * *

SUSPECT No. 3:

Not an American, but a heroic Brit:

Lieutenant Robert Maynard (Royal Navy)

Heroic deed of 1718: The man who hacked off Edward Teach's head. Teach, the "Scourge of the Spanish Main," was commonly known as the pirate "Blackbeard [1680-1718]."

A Maynard ballad composed by an exuberant
Benjamin Franklin [1706-1790]
at the age of twelve:

Will you hear of a bloody battle,
Lately fought upon the seas,
It will make your ears to rattle,
And your admiration cease.
Have you heard of Teach the Rover
And his knavery on the main,
How of gold he was a lover,
How he loved all ill-got gain.

.

Teach and Maynard on the quarter,
Fought it out most manfully;
Maynard's sword did cut him shorter,
Losing his head he there did die.

Found in: H. W. Brands, *The First American: The Life and Times of Benjamin Franklin*,
(Anchor paperback), p. 23.

* * * *

SUSPECT No. 4:

A member of the Coroner's Inquest (August 1841),
Buffalo, New York:

Robert H. Maynard of Buffalo

JOSEPH CLARY, Foreman

E. D. Efner,	C. C. Haddock,
William Williams,	N. Vosburgh,
Thos. R. Stocking,	S. Chamberlin,
S. S. Case,	R. H. Maynard,
S. N. Callender,	L. Storrs,
R. Pomeroy,	S. Mathews,
H. R. Seymour,	E. Hathaway,
—Alcott.	

The “accusation” was leveled by George Salomon under the assumption that the name “Maynard” was chosen by the author of the “Helmsman of Lake Erie” because its occurrence was so “uncommon”. It should be pointed out that – although the name is indeed in the list of members (as depicted above) – Maynard is nowhere recorded as even putting a question to a witness.

Robert H. Maynard was “obviously a respected citizen of Buffalo, who, during the previous year, had been a member of the board of trustees of the municipal orphanage.” [Quoted from George Salomon, “Wer ist John Maynard?” Fontane Blätter, (Potsdam), 1965, No. 2, p. 30]

* * * *

SUSPECT No. 5:

A man who was instrumental in building locks
for the construction of the Erie Canal
and piers on the Great Lakes.
A man of “remarkable physical strength” and “sterling character,”
well-known and with influential friends:

John Maynard [1794-1874]

Inter Ocean
(Chicago, Illinois)

Wednesday morning, March 18, 1874

**Vol. II, No. 311
(p. 4, c. 6)**

IN MEMORIAM

JOHN MAYNARD

One by one they pass away. The fathers of the giant infant city, who have seen its growth of business and baptism of fire¹ Yesterday were borne to the silent repose of the dead the remains of John Maynard, one of Chicago’s early settlers and one of her oldest citizens.

The deceased was the son of Captain John Maynard of the Revolutionary army, and was born in Lancaster, Pa., in 1794. Early apprenticed as a mason, he worked his prosperous way in life by integrity as a prominent and faithful contractor of public works, having built many of the public works of New York State, the canal locks at Lockport, N. Y.², and other points on the Erie Canal³. Having done his work faithfully and well, he accumulated a considerable fortune, which he invested in practical industries. But the profits of years of honorable toil were swept away in the disastrous panic of ’37. Re-engaging in work in 1843, he built the second pier on the west shore of Lake Michigan, at Sheboygan⁴, and did the work well. In 1853 he came to this city, and became associated with Colonel R. B. Mason, then Superintendent of the Illinois Central Railway, and was master of all heavy works at LaSalle.

For the last four years the deceased had been inspector of masonry works for the Board of Public Works of this city. He was ever remarkable for his bodily vigor and physical strength, and to the last maintained the sterling characteristics that had won him the respect and esteem of his associates. He had personally known and been the friend of such honored ancients as DeWitt Clinton⁵, Thurlow Weed⁶ Governor Seward⁷ and Millard Fillmore⁸. In life he preserved the vigor of manhood, and in the fullness of strength was gathered to the tomb of honored ancestors. His death occurred on Sunday morning, and the funeral took place from his late residence, No. 78 South Sangamon street, yesterday afternoon.

Annotations [Quotations are from *Encyclopedia Britannica*]

- 1) **“infant city” and “baptism of fire”**: “Four square miles of Chicago, including the business district, were destroyed by fire on October 8–10, 1871. Starting in the southwest, fed by wooden buildings and pavements and favored by a long dry spell, flames spread northeastward, leaping the Chicago River and dying out only when they reached Lake Michigan. About 250 lives were lost, some 90,000 people were made homeless, and almost \$200,000,000 in property was destroyed.”
- 2) **Erie Canal**: “Historic waterway of the United States, connecting the Great Lakes with New York City via the Hudson River. By the beginning of the 19th century the desirability of a transportation link between the Atlantic coast and the trans-Allegheny region was evident. Governor DeWitt Clinton of New York saw the potential in the proposal for a canal from Buffalo, on the eastern shore of Lake Erie, to Albany, on the upper Hudson, passing through the gap in the mountains in the Mohawk Valley region. In 1817 he induced the state legislature to authorize the expenditure of \$7 million for construction of a canal 363 miles (584 km) long, 40 feet (12 meters) wide, and 4 feet (1.2 meters) deep. To cross the 500-foot (150-meter) rise in elevation west of Troy, the work required 83 locks. No roads existed for supply; horse and human power alone were available. Streams were crossed via aqueducts; in several places rock was blasted with black-powder charges. Despite all difficulties, the canal was opened on October 25, 1825, by the canal boat Seneca Chief.”
- 3) **canal locks at Lockport, N. Y.**: “Lockport lies 25 miles (40 km) northeast of Buffalo. It was founded in 1821 and grew around the series of five double locks (1847) of the Erie Canal built to overcome a difference of about 60 feet (18 meters) between the levels of Lake Erie and the Genesee River.”
- 4) **Sheboygan**: “The city is located along Lake Michigan at the mouth of the Sheboygan River, 57 miles (92 km) north of Milwaukee. Established as a fur-trading post in 1818 by William Farnsworth, it was settled as a lumbering village in 1835; cooperage became a thriving business in the community. The city's Chippewa Indian name means “wind” or “rumbling underground,” referring to the falls upriver. German immigrants played a significant role in the city's cultural and economic development.”
- 5) **DeWitt Clinton**: “Born March 2, 1769, Little Britain, N.Y., died Feb. 11, 1828, Albany, N.Y., American political leader who promulgated the idea of the Erie Canal, which connects the Hudson River to the Great Lakes. DeWitt Clinton was the nephew of Governor George Clinton of New York. A Republican (Jeffersonian) attorney, he served as state senator (1798–1802, 1806–11), U.S. senator (1802–03), mayor of New York City (1803–15 except for two annual terms), and lieutenant governor (1811–13).

As mayor of New York City, he advocated free and widespread public education, promoted legislation that removed voting restrictions against Roman Catholics, and established various public-welfare institutions in the city. He was an unsuccessful presidential candidate in 1812, being defeated by James Madison.” It will be recalled that the steamer *DeWitt Clinton* was instrument in rescuing victims of the *Erie* conflagration of 1841.

- 6) **Thurlow Weed** : “Born Nov. 15, 1797, Cairo, N.Y., U.S.; died Nov. 22, 1882, New York, N.Y. American journalist and politician who helped form the Whig Party in New York. Weed learned the printer's trade, worked on various upstate New York newspapers, and became a leader in the Anti-Masonic Party (1828). When the Masons forced him out of his management of the Rochester Telegraph, he started an anti-Masonic campaign paper but soon realized that anti-Masonry was not a strong enough issue for a national party. Hence he became active with the Whig organization. His paper, the Albany Evening Journal, founded in 1830 to support anti-Masonry, became a leading Whig organ. Weed allied himself with William H. Seward, a leading New York Whig, and was influential in Seward's election as governor of the state (1838). When the Whig Party disintegrated, Weed joined the new Republican Party and helped manage Seward's unsuccessful campaign for the Republican presidential nomination in 1860; he eventually became a staunch supporter of President Abraham Lincoln. In 1861 Seward, then Lincoln's secretary of state, sent Weed as a special agent to England, where he was a propagandist for the United States. Following Lincoln's death (1865) and the rise of the Radical Republicans, Weed's influence in the Republican Party declined. In 1863 he sold his paper and retired from politics.
- 7) **Governor Seward** : “Born May 16, 1801, Florida, N.Y.; died Oct. 10, 1872, Auburn, N.Y. U.S. politician, an antislavery activist in the Whig and Republican parties before the American Civil War and secretary of state from 1861 to 1869. He is also remembered for the purchase of Alaska in 1867—referred to at that time as “Seward's Folly.” Admitted to the New York State Bar in 1822, Seward began the practice of law the following year at Auburn. He gradually developed a taste for politics and became active in the Anti-Masonic Party in 1828, serving in the New York Senate from 1830 to 1834. At about this time he allied himself with other opponents of the Jacksonian Democrats in forming the new Whig Party. Under this banner Seward served as governor of New York for four years (1839–43), soon becoming recognized as leader of the antislavery wing of the party.”
- 8) **Millard Fillmore** : “Born January 7, 1800, Locke Township, New York, U.S. died March 8, 1874, Buffalo 13th president of the United States (1850–53), whose insistence on federal enforcement of the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850 alienated the North and led to the destruction of the Whig Party. Elected vice president in 1848, he became chief executive on the death of President Zachary Taylor (July 1850).”

SUSPECT No. 6:

(A fascinating long shot)

A holy man

from the House of Hohenzollern, educated as a Benedictine monk on the Isle of Reichenau, a major center of learning in the Middle Ages. Founder of the pilgrimage center of Einsiedeln in Switzerland. Killed by thieves who took advantage of his hospitality.

Meinrad of Einsiedeln (Meinrad von Einsiedeln)
[797 AD, Rottenburg – 861 AD, Einsiedeln, Switzerland]

Patronage: Hospitality

Feast: 21 January

Attributes: two ravens

Mistakenly referred to by Cooper not as “**Meinrad**,” but as “**Meinard**” in his European novel, *The Heidenmauer; or, the Benedictines. A legend of the Rhine*, published in 1832. The German **Meinard** is the equivalent of the English **Maynard**.

Excerpt from *The Heidenmauer*, The Michigan Historical Reprint Series, (New York: Hurd and Houghton, 1868), pp. 365-366

...“During the reign of the illustrious and warlike Charlemagne, who governed Gaul, with so much of our Germany and the country of the Franks, there lived a youth of the ancient family of Hohenzollern, branches of which still possess principalities and marches in the empire. The name of this learned and pious youth was *Meinard*. Early fatigued with the vanities of life, he sought a hermitage, nearer than this to the banks of that lake which we so lately crossed at Rapperschwyl. But, overburdened by the number of the curious and pious who visited his cell, *the holy Meinard*, after seven years of prayer, retired to a clear fountain, which must still run to yonder church, where another cell and a chapel were built for him, expressly by command of Hildegarde, a royal lady, and the Abbess of the monastery in the town of Zurich. Here *Meinard* lived and here he died, filled with grace, and greatly bless by godly exercises.”

“Father, had he a profitable and happy end, in this wild region?”

“Spiritually, nothing could have been more desirable; temporally, naught more foul. He died by the hands of vile assassins, to whom he had rendered hospitality. The deed was discovered by means of two crows, who followed the murderers to Zurich, where they were taken and executed—at least, so sayeth tradition. In a later age, *the holy Meinard* was canonized by Benedict VIII. For nearly half a century, the cell of *Meinard*, though in great request as a place of prayer, remained without a tenant; but at the end of that period, Beurun, a canon of the house of Burgundy, which house then ruled most of the country far and near, caused the chapel and cell to be repaired, replaced the image of the blessed Maria, and devoted his own life to the hermitage. The neighboring Seigneurs and Barons contributed to endow the place, and divers holy men joined themselves to the service of the altar, from which circumstance the shrine obtained the name of our ‘Lady of the Hermits,’ its true appellation to this hour.”

Excerpt from Cooper’s *Gleanings in Europe: Switzerland*, published in 1836,
(SUNY, Albany, 1980), Letter XVI, p. 167

A reference to Meinrad/Meinard, without mentioning him by name

...As I can scarcely recall a day of stronger or more varied sensations than this, it may be well to give you a brief history of the causes which have brought the shrine of Einsiedeln into so much repute.

A hermit* of great sanctity lived near the spot many centuries since. This man was murdered, and respect for his memory induced a religious community to establish themselves around his cell.

*He is said to have been a contemporary of Charlemagne, and a member of the house of Hohenzollern, which is now seated on the throne of Prussia.

Updated March 2020, Bad Schussenried, Germany