God Save the King

"...written by Mr. Stansbury, at New York but a short time before the end of the war" (Sargent 88).

Time was, in defense of his King and the Right,
We applauded brave Washington foremost in fight:
On the banks of Ohio he shouted lustily
God save the King!
Disappointed ambition his feet has misled;
Corrupted his heart and perverted his head:
Loyal no longer, no more he cries faithfully
Glory and joy crown the King!

But Britain, with Glory and Conquest in view,
When nothing was wanted, but just to pursue—
To yield—while her Heroes chanted triumphantly
God save the King!
With curses consign to the Furies his Name,
Whose Counsels thus cover'd his Country with shame!
Loyalists still will chant, tho' heavily,
Glory and joy crown the King!

With Envy inflam'd 'tis in Britain the same;
Where leaders, despairing of virtuous fame,
Have push'd from their seats those whose watchword was constantly
God save the King!
The helm of the State they have clutchted in their grasp
When American Treason is at its last gasp:
When Firmness and Loyalty soon should sing valiantly
Glory and joy crown the King!

Sargent seems, even in 1860, to have been able to print these lines only with difficulty. (Remember that not only was Washington the revered general and first president of the US, he was also a southerner!) He includes a lengthy endnote discussing Washington's career and character, concluding pompously, "It is not, at this day, too much to say, that the common suffrage of all that is wise and good in human nature, authorizes us to question that man's soundness of judgement or rectitude of purpose, who impugns the character of George Washington" (187).

When Good Queen Elizabeth Governed the Realm

Joseph Stansbury

Presumably "Hearts of Oak," the air for this song, is the familiar "Heart of Oak," which Simpson referred to as "part of the basic repertoire of British national song" (299). It first appeared in a pantomime by David Garrick, summing up the many good tidings of 1759 for Londoners, including Wolfe's success at Quebec. It was shortly after used as a Whig anthem by Pennsylvania writer John Dickinson, whose broadside version included the following chorus (in "the clear imitation of Garrick's original song"; Simpson 300):

In freedom we're born, and in freedom we'll live;
Our purses are ready,
Steady, Friends, steady.
Not as slaves, but as freemen our money we'll give.

Stansbury undoubtedly felt that he was merely reappropriating the song for the Loyalist cause!

Sargent found this item in a manuscript and suggests that it was "probably composed for a meeting of the sons of St. George in 1774 or 1775. According to Tyler, it was written "...in the midst of the political exasperation connected with the tea-business..." (83). The "tea-business" was a tax imposed on tea coming into the colonies; vigorous and witty though it was, perhaps Stansbury's solution to this injustice ("just drink beer," a home made, presumably untaxed, product) seemed a little flabby to radical ears.

When good Queen Elizabeth govern'd the Realm,
And Burleigh's sage Counsels directed the Helm,
In vain Spain and France our Conquests oppos'd;
For Valour conducted what Wisdom propos'd.

Beef and Beer was their Food;
Love and Truth arm'd their Band;
Their Courage was ready—
Steady, Boys, Steady—
To fight and to conquer by Sea and by Land.

But since Tea and Coffee, so much to our Grief,
Have taken the place of Strong Beer and Roast Beef,
Our Laurels have wither'd, our Trophies been torn;
And the Lions of England French triumphs adorn.

Tea and slops are their food;
They unnerve every Hand—
Their Courage unsteady
And not always ready—
They often are conquer'd by Sea and by Land.