

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM**

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE: Massachusetts	
COUNTY: Worcester	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE

1. NAME

COMMON:

AND/OR HISTORIC:
John B. Gough House

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:
215 Main Street

CITY OR TOWN:
Boylston

STATE: **Massachusetts** CODE: COUNTY: **Worcester** CODE:

3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Object	<input type="checkbox"/> Public <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	Public Acquisition: <input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Educational <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <input type="checkbox"/> Military <input type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input type="checkbox"/> Park <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private Residence <input type="checkbox"/> Religious <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____ <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Comments: residence for teachers

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME:
Shepherd Knapp Day School

STREET AND NUMBER:
215 Main Street

CITY OR TOWN: **Boylston** STATE: **Massachusetts** CODE: **01505**

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.:
Worcester Courthouse, Registry of Deeds

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN: **Worcester** STATE: **Massachusetts** CODE:

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY:
None.

DATE OF SURVEY: Federal State County Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN: STATE: CODE:

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7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> Ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed
	(Check One)			(Check One)		
	<input type="checkbox"/> Altered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unaltered	<input type="checkbox"/> Moved	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

An engraving of the John B. Gough House appears in Gough's Autobiography, published in 1869. Located in Boylston, Massachusetts, it remains virtually identical to its appearance at the time of Gough's occupancy. It is a spacious New England frame house, painted white, two stories tall with a single-story bay on each side. The roof is hipped and both the cupola and bracketing are Italianate in style, though quite restrained. A large porch on the front of the house features octagonal columns. The shutters have been removed, but this has been the only alteration. The size and arrangement of the 24 rooms remains unchanged.

John Gough resided here from 1848 until 1886--the major portion of his oratorical career. He speaks fondly of the house he had built for himself and his second wife, Mary Whitcomb:

"On the 22nd of August (my birthday) the corner-stone of my house was laid It seemed a great undertaking to make a home for myself and wife. Many friends have asked why I chose a spot so far from the city,--five miles from Worcester, and two miles from anywhere else. The fact is, I had become weary of city life, and longed for the country. Being pleased with this situation, I purchased twenty-six acres, built my house, and planted trees. Since that time, I have added to it, and now, I trust with a grateful heart, I sit with my friends under the shade of the tree my hand has planted."¹

The house currently serves as a residence for teachers at the Shepherd Knapp Day School.

¹John B. Gough, Autobiography and Personal Recollections of John B. Gough, with Twenty-Six Years Experience as a Public Speaker (Springfield, Massachusetts: Bill, Nichols & Co., 1869), p. 250.

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8. SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- | | | | |
|--|---------------------------------------|--|---------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pre-Columbian | <input type="checkbox"/> 16th Century | <input type="checkbox"/> 18th Century | <input type="checkbox"/> 20th Century |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 15th Century | <input type="checkbox"/> 17th Century | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 19th Century | |

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known)

1848-1886

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- | | | | |
|---|---|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal | <input type="checkbox"/> Education | <input type="checkbox"/> Political | <input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric | <input type="checkbox"/> Engineering | <input type="checkbox"/> Religion/Philosophy | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Historic | <input type="checkbox"/> Industry | <input type="checkbox"/> Science | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture | <input type="checkbox"/> Invention | <input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape Architecture | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Social/Humanitarian | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Art | <input type="checkbox"/> Literature | <input type="checkbox"/> Theater | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Commerce | <input type="checkbox"/> Military | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications | <input type="checkbox"/> Music | | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation | | | _____ |

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

For 44 years, from 1842 to 1886, John B. Gough captivated audiences all over the country by his impassioned appeals for temperance and the humorous stories with which he interwove his more serious message. Gough immigrated to New York from England at age 12 to seek his fortune. He learned the book-binding trade and played low comedy parts on the stage, both without much success. By age 25, he was unemployed, homeless, and a confirmed drunkard.

In 1842 he was invited to attend a temperance meeting in Worcester. That evening he signed a total abstinence pledge. Gough soon became "one of the most accomplished orators in America,"¹ and an eloquent proponent of temperance for the rest of his days. "He was a whole variety troupe in one little form. In the course of an address he enacted a dozen parts, with such fidelity that the last seemed best."² Exercising a strong emotional appeal--"he held audiences breathless"³--Gough set out to reform the individual, rather than to effect changes in the law. According to his own estimate, he delivered more than 9,600 lectures to over 9 million people. By 1853 his fame had spread abroad, and the London Temperance League invited him to lecture in England; Gough delivered his rousing sermons there for over 2 years and later returned on two other occasions.

The John B. Gough residence in Boylston, Massachusetts, has been well preserved. It is a large and rather plain New England frame house, with restrained Italianate details. Gough lived here for the major portion of his oratorical career, from 1848 until his death in 1886.

¹Jerome Davis, "Gough, John Bartholomew," Dictionary of American Biography, 1943, VII, 445.

²Carlos Martyn, John B. Gough, The Apostle of Cold Water (New York: Funk & Wagnalls Company, 1893), p. xii.

³Ibid., p. xiii.

(Continued)

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9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Daniel, W. H. The Temperance Reform and Its Great Reformers. New York: Nelson & Phillips, 1878.

Davis, Jerome. "Gough, John Bartholomew." Dictionary of American Biography. 1943. Vol. VII.

Gough, John B. Autobiography and Personal Recollections of John B. Gough, with Twenty-Six Years Experience as a Public Speaker. Springfield, Mass.: Bill, Nichols & Co., 1869.

Martyn, Carlos. John B. Gough, The Apostle of Cold Water. New York: Funk & Wagnalls Company, 1893.

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			O R	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES		
CORNER	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE		LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	
	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds		Degrees	Minutes	Seconds
NW	° ' "	° ' "		42°	19'	44"
NE	° ' "	° ' "		71°	45'	24"
SE	° ' "	° ' "				
SW	° ' "	° ' "				

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: less than 1 acre.

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE:
Carol Ann Poh and Robert C. Post, Survey Historians, Historic Sites Survey

ORGANIZATION: Division of Historic and Architectural Surveys, National Park Service DATE: 11/23/73

STREET AND NUMBER:
1100 L Street NW

CITY OR TOWN: Washington STATE: District of Columbia CODE: _____

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION

NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

As the designated State Liaison Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National State Local

Name _____

Title _____

Date _____

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.

Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date _____

ATTEST:

Keeper of The National Register

Date _____

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FOR NPS USE ONLY		
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8. Significance (page 1)

John B. Gough House

History

"The whole civilized world is groaning under the awful results of intemperance in the use of intoxicating liquors; a large portion of the crime, lunacy, suicides, pauperism, being caused by it.

"It is worth a life-effort to save a drunkard, to lift a man from degradation."

--John B. Gough, Sunlight and Shadow, 1869

The history of temperance in America has received little attention from scholars. Yet its importance to the 19th-century American should not be underestimated. By 1834 there were some 5,000 temperance societies, and one million persons had pledged themselves to temperance. Henry Steele Commager has called temperance "[o]ne of the most spectacular, if not one of the most effective, reform movements of this generation."⁴ Certainly John B. Gough stands out as one of the movement's most spectacular reformers. Carlos Martyn believes that Gough--"the Apostle of Cold Water," as he calls him--has never received due credit for the "sterling mental and moral facilities" which sparked his marvelous oratory. "Those who knew the great advocate of temperance found the man off the platform even more admirable than the orator on it...."⁵

Born at Sandgate, Kent County, England, John Bartholomew Gough (1817-1886) emigrated to America at age 12. He worked for a time on a farm in Oneida County, New York, then went to New York City with only a half dollar in his pocket. He learned the book-binding trade and, when he was making \$3 a week, sent to England for his family to join him. Although Gough's father remained at home in order to keep collecting his pension, his mother and sister came. Gough lost his job soon after their arrival, and in the resulting financial hardships his mother died. Gough began to drink heavily. For a time he acted low comedy parts on the New York stage, then in 1839 moved to Newburyport, Massachusetts, and opened a bindery of his own. He married Lucretia Fowler that year and had a child, but both died while Gough was off on a 10-day drunken binge. At age 25, John Gough--unemployed and homeless--became a victim of delirium tremens.

⁴The Era of Reform, 1830-1860 (Princeton, N.J.: D. Van Nostrand Company, Inc., 1960), p. 153.

⁵Martyn, John B. Gough, p. 318.

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8. Significance (page 2)

John B. Gough House

In October 1842, at the invitation of a kind stranger, Gough attended a temperance meeting at the Worcester town hall. Almost by accident he discovered a latent talent:

"... the poor drunkard (Gough) arose when the opportunity for speaking was offered and requested that he might be heard. He was invited to the stand, where he related the sad story of his experience in a manner so touching that the great audience was overwhelmed with emotion.... At the close of his remarks, while hundreds in the audience were weeping, the pledge was passed to him ... [and] he wrote himself down a free man"⁶

This was the turning point in Gough's life. He later wrote, "I had exerted a moral power which had long remained lying by perfectly useless, and the very idea of what I had done strengthened and encouraged me."⁷ Gough twice violated his total-abstinence pledge, but both times publicly confessed his weakness and continued his temperance work.

Gough soon attracted widespread attention. In 1843, his first year as a temperance lecturer, he traveled almost 7,000 miles, gave 383 addresses, and built a reputation as one of the most accomplished orators in America. In 1853 he was invited by the London Temperance League to lecture in England, and he did so for over 2 years. He returned on a second tour in 1857 and again in 1878. Gough was thus preeminent as an orator on both sides of the Atlantic.

Few individuals could compare to Gough in moral earnestness. "No sooner did he discover his peculiar talent than he consecrated it," one contemporary wrote. "He held life and opportunity to be synonyms of duty. Ability, in his view, was a sacred trust...."⁸ John Gough gained his notoriety not by the force of his logic, but by his exuberant emotional appeals. He "vitalized his matter by his manner"⁹ and could bring an audience to laughter or to tears as he wished. Yet one biographer has conceded that "he could not coin a striking phrase,"¹⁰ and Gough has indeed left few memorable sayings.

⁶W. H. Daniel, The Temperance Reform and Its Great Reformers (New York: Nelson & Phillips, 1878), p. 114.

⁷Ibid., p. 115.

⁸Ibid., p. 319.

⁹Martyn, John B. Gough, p. 325.

¹⁰Ibid., p. 323.

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8. Significance (page 3)

John B. Gough House

"One memorable sentence Mr. Gough did utter--not because of any sparkle in it, but because of its practical turn and accurate self-photography. All the events of his careers,-- the tragic mournfulness and failure of its opening, the moral jubilancy and triumph of its close, those five hundred thousand miles of wearisome travel, the nine thousand fervid lectures, the nine millions of eager hearers on both sides of the Atlantic,--are condensed and voiced in his last and dying words: 'Keep you record clean!'"¹¹

Gough lectured to the last, and died in Frankford, Pennsylvania, in the midst of one of his temperance tours.

¹¹ Ibid., p. 325.