



Shillelagh Sentinel



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Message from the President

What can be said about the effect Saint Patrick has had, and is having, on our Irish identity? For this essay I could quote and paraphrase our Saint, but I have a compelling urge to portray today's troubled world to a time in our past. I will bring together two opposing combatants who after hostilities, devoted their lives to reconciliation and peace. Think of them as living in the present and you will find significant parallels to today's world. They are Thomas Francis Meagher and James Longstreet.

'Those who do not learn history are doomed to repeat it.'-George Santayana

General James Longstreet served under Confederate General, Robert E. Lee. Regarding the War of Rebellion, Longstreet remarked after the war, "I never heard of any other cause of the quarrel than slavery."

In the post-war years, Longstreet lived in New Orleans and was a vociferous proponent of reconstruction. He published letters urging people to lay down grievances of the past and embrace the Union. For his message of rights, unification, and acceptance of a lasting peace he was ostracized by many. Regardless, he remained a steadfast messenger of healing who was encouraged to convert to Catholicism by Father Abram J. Ryan. He was welcomed into the Catholic Church in March 1877 and was a devout believer until his death.

I must believe that General Meagher and General Longstreet through their telescopes saw each other across the killing fields. They, in my opinion, were instruments of peace who were briefly separated by a violent ideology. I believe it is the Holy Spirit who draws men to Christ, guides their words and works of peace. As James Longstreet was a pariah, so was Meagher. Their common bond may have been as soldiers, but their common grace is what ultimately defined them.

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In Meagher's speech on February 16, 1846 in Conciliation Hall, Dublin, Ireland the room echoed with these words. They should reverberate through every Irish soul.

"An honourable forbearance towards those who censure us, a generous respect for those who differ from us, will do much to diminish the difficulties that impede our progress. Let us cherish, and, upon every occasion, manifest an anxiety for the preservation of the rights of all our fellow-countrymen....."

"Above all, let us cherish, and in its full integrity maintain, the right of free discussion."

The Thomas Francis Meagher Division of the AOH will not raise the Tricolour or celebrate the feast of Saint Patrick in the Capitol rotunda this year, but in our hearts and on our lips at 8:00 a.m. on March 17, I ask that we pray the prayer of Saint Patrick and recall the Irish TriColour to represent more than a symbol of our ancient heritage. We raise it to those who with a common bond sacrificed their lives for faith, country, and freedom.

So too we must serve in Friendship, UNITY and Christian Charity.

Síocháin (Peace)

St Patrick's Parade

Our St Patrick's Parade will not happen again this year. Due to the Pandemic still going on. Pray that everyone stays safe. We will get through this together.

SAVE THE DATE

VIRGINIA CITY

IRISH WEEKEND

FRIDAY JUNE 11TH AND

SATURDAY JUNE 12TH

We are Irish

Not because we were

born in Ireland,

But because Ireland

Was born in Us!



Beannachtai na Féile Pádraig

HAPPY ST PATRICK'S DAY



HIBERNIAN DATES TO REMEMBER

AOH MEETING

KC HALL

TUESDAY, MARCH 9, 2021

6:30 PM

Regular monthly meeting.

This Month in Irish History

- March 1, 1704 - Penal Laws passed in 1695, restricting Catholic civil rights, are strengthened.
- March 4, 1778 – Robert Emmet born
- March 7, 1848 – Thomas Francis Meagher first flew the Irish Tricolour on this day at 33 The Mall, Waterford City, Ireland.
- March 12, 1689 - James II lands at Kinsale and proceeds to Dublin
- March 17, 1828 – Maj Gen Patrick Cleburne, highest ranking Irishman in the Confederacy born in County Cork, Ireland. Killed November 30, 1864 at Franklin, TN. Buried Helena Arkansas
- March 17, 1866 – Thomas Francis Meagher gives speech in Virginia City, Montana
- March 17, 1882 – Newspaper told of the first formal St. Patrick's Day parade in Butte.
- March 17, 1889 – Formal Dedication of Anaconda's AOH Hall.
- March 20, 1920 - Tomás MacCurtain, (20 March 1884 – 20 March 1920) Lord Mayor of Cork, is killed on his 36th birthday in front of his family by Black & Tans disguised as policemen. The inquest into his death returns a verdict of willful murder against the RIC, and indicts Lloyd George and the British government
- March 23, 1847 - Choctaw Indians collect money to donate to starving Irish Hunger victims.
- March 1901 - Missoula Division, Division #1 of the AOH, Missoula Montana Formed,
- March 25, 1840 - Birth of Myles Keogh in Leighlinbridge, Co. Carlow. Soldier in the US army, it is said by the Sioux that he is the last man killed at the Battle of Little Big Horn, where his horse is the only US survivor



**HAPPY AND BLESSED ST PATRICK'S DAY
FROM THE THOMAS FRANCIS MEAGHER
DIVISION OFFICERS**

**JIM JOE DAN PJ
JASON PATRICK MIKE TOM**



This is the site that Thomas Francis Meagher flew the Tricolour for the first time. On March 7th 173 years ago at 33 the Mall in Waterford City, Ireland

Thomas Francis Meagher

Irish Patriot

American Civil War General

Montana Governor

Thomas Francis Meagher, who was born in Waterford, Ireland in 1823, eventually became a leading figure in the Irish independence movement of the early 19th century, due much to his extraordinary oratorical abilities. In the Irish Uprising of 1848, this gifted political activist was tried and convicted of treason along with eight other Irish patriots. All were sentenced to be hanged, drawn, and quartered by the English courts. Passionate protests from all over the world convinced Queen Victoria to commute the death sentences and, fortunately, all were banished to Van Diemen's Land (now Tasmania), an island off the coast of Australia. Within four years Meagher escaped and eventually made his way to New York where he would rise to prominence as a journalist and lawyer. Incidentally, all of Meagher's co-defendants also escaped and, to a man, would later become significant political or military leaders in Australia, Canada, or the United States.

The people of New York welcomed Meagher with open arms as a young, handsome, and romantic victim of British tyranny. He soon earned himself a nationwide reputation as a lecturer, traveling across the nation, addressing huge audiences wherever he went.

When the Civil War erupted in 1861, Meagher formed a company composed of 145 men of Irish descent, was chosen captain, and led his company to join the 69th Regiment at New York. This became a very popular military unit that attracted thousands of recent Irish immigrants as well as Irish-Americans. Meagher appealed to them to fight as Irishmen for the Union they believed in. To this end he proposed the formation of an Irish Brigade. He received permission from the Secretary of War to raise the brigade and immediately began recruiting. In February of 1862, President Lincoln himself appointed Meagher a Brigadier General in this unit of the Army of the Potomac. "The Irish Brigade", as it was soon known under its colorful Commanding General, proceeded to fight in and bring much glory upon itself at such historical battles as Fair Oaks, Mechanicsville, Gaines Mill, White Oak Swamp, Antietam, and Fredericksburg. This hard-charging outfit, with Meagher always at its lead, was involved in some of the fiercest fighting of the Civil War. Meagher's fame and military record prompted President Andrew Johnson to appoint him Secretary of the Montana Territory in 1865, and eventually he became the Acting Territorial Governor, a post he held from September of 1865 to July 1867.

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Meagher's tenure as Territorial Governor in Montana was marked by turmoil due to the political nature of the times. The Territory was a political maelstrom. Lawlessness was rife in these post-war years and the lawless were little worse than the vigilantes who were supposed to protect the innocent. In addition, the legislature and the executives were at each other's throats. In the meantime, refugees from the Confederate armies were pouring in. But in spite of all, Meagher is given greatly deserved credit for leadership in the progress that Montana made toward statehood. He called for the second legislative session in the state's history, and shortly after summoned a constitutional convention to meet in Helena.

In the midst of such efforts to establish a bona fide state, this colorful figure's career came to a sudden and still unexplained end. On July 1st, 1867, while in Fort Benton, Meagher mysteriously disappeared from his boat. He apparently fell or was thrown from the docked vessel during the night and drowned, though how and why still remains unknown. Since Meagher was no friend of political disturbers, nor of certain other adverse factions in the state, it has been theorized by some that he was murdered. His body was never recovered from the waters of the Missouri River. But Thomas Francis Meagher, Irish patriot and Civil War hero, as well as a noted Montana historical figure, remains distinguished to both the Irish in this country and in his homeland. The impressive statue that now stands before the State Capitol celebrates his memory.

Thomas Francis Meagher is noted for many things as shown above, but there is one other item that is little known about him. The present-day national flag of the Irish Republic is known as the "Irish Tri-Color", composed of three distinct bands of color. From where does it come? Well, in Meagher's Irish political days, the Confederation, as his movement was known, was in need of a banner. During an address to his brotherhood, Meagher unfurled a splendid flag made of rich silk, the colors being orange, white, and green. As he explained— "The white in the center signifies a lasting truth between the orange and the green, and I trust that beneath its folds the hands of the Irish Protestant and Irish Catholic may be clasped in generous and heroic brotherhood". He further prophetically proclaimed: "I hope to see that flag one day waving as our Nation Banner."

CATHEDRAL OF ST HELENA AND THE FEAST DAY OF ST PATRICK

It is very special to be able to celebrate the feast day of St Patrick at the Cathedral of St Helena. The Cathedral has many connections to Ireland that you may not know existed.



It starts with Thomas Francis Meagher wanting the church to create a diocese in the Montana Territory and writing letters that moved that reality forward. We have people like Thomas Cruse that was the major contributor to the building of the Cathedral of St Helena. Thomas Cruse was from County Cavan, Ireland.

We have many details of the Cathedral of St Helena that have a relation to Ireland. The beautiful stain glass window depicting St Patrick on Easter Sunday at the Hill of Tara in County Meath, Ireland using a shamrock to explain the mystery of the Holy Trinity. Also, some of the statuary on the outside of the Cathedral. Of course, there is St

Patrick, but also the statutes of Daniel O'Connell, the Great Irish Liberator and John Barry, the father of United States Navy. John Barry is from County Wexford, Ireland.

What is so special to celebrate the St Patrick's Day mass at the Cathedral is that it has a relic of St Patrick.

Relics are classified into three classes. The first being the physical remains of the saint. The Cathedral's St Patrick's relic is a first-class relic. The Cathedral of St Helena was dedicated on Christmas Day in 1914. The following June the Cathedral received the St Patrick's relic from Rome. With all the connections the Cathedral has to Ireland and having the relic of St Patrick just makes you feel that much closer to the Patron Saint of Ireland.

