



Ancient Order of
HIBERNIANS

Irish • Catholic • American



GENERAL MEAGHER'S DISPATCHES

September 2020

Volume 8/No9

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https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V6BDppr__ms

President's Corner:

My Brothers,

I pray that this finds each of you, your families and your friends healthy and coping well.

We conducted a 'virtual' monthly meeting of the division on Tuesday, August 18th at 7:30 PM as scheduled and it went very smoothly.

Because there has been little organized AOH activity of late, you should be able to concentrate on *your* individual efforts to support our ongoing and essential fundraising events *this month*:

- The sale of Trip for Two to Ireland raffle tickets. Many of you have sold the tickets that Brother Shawn sent you. For the rest, time is running out as the drawing is on the 19th of September! Buy more – your odds of winning are way up this year with the sales being so much lower.
- The seventh annual Shamrock Charity Golf Classic is on Monday, September 28th. The projections are dire. Sponsorships and player signups are way off this year. *You can turn this around.* If you have reached out to players or sponsors, then please follow up. A quick email to remind them that we need their help, especially this year. Golfer or not, you have a role getting people to play in the event and/or be a contributing sponsor.

Our plea to replace Brother John Hogan (thank you, Brother!) as the Saint Patrick parish liaison has been answered. Brother Bob Fitzgerald has taken over and already scheduled ticket sales and bulletin announcements.

Slainte, and In Friendship, Unity and Christian Charity,

Dave McLaughlin



In past months, I've reviewed the subject of Irish slaves in the West Indies. Because Irish is the second most frequent ethnicity in Jamaica, I looked into Senator Kamala Harris' Jamaican family history to see if there's a Irish connection. This is what I found: short, sweet *and* revealing especially in light of our experience with Colonel John Fitzgerald Square and the Alexandria City Council.

Kamala's paternal great grandmother Christiana (née Brown) is a descendant of Hamilton Brown (1776-1843). Brown was born in County Antrim, Ireland to an Ulster-Scots loyalist family. Most likely this family arrived in Ireland during the "transplantation" in the aftermath of the Cromwellian conquest.

With this loyalist pedigree the English sent Brown to Jamaica circa 1800. He was initially a bookkeeper, but later he acquired several sugar plantations. As a plantation owner, Brown was both a slave trader and slave owner -- including Irish slaves, probably bought in Monserrat. English records indicate he owned 1120 slaves. In his book *Three Months in Jamaica in 1832*, Henry Whiteley wrote about living on Brown's plantation and witnessing "harsh and arbitrary whipping of slaves".

Hamilton Brown founded Brown's Town and he financed building St Mark's Anglican church in that town. He's buried in the churchyard. Harris' paternal great grandfather, Joseph Alexander Harris, was land-owner and exporter of primarily pimento or all-spice. He died in 1939 and is also buried in the St Mark churchyard. Another Irish connection is Harris' great grandmother Iris (née Finegan (*sic*)).



Lincoln's Republican Party

(An excerpt from "Lincoln and the Irish: The Untold Story of How the Irish Helped Abraham Lincoln Save the Union," by Irish America publisher, Niall O'Dowd)

By 1856, Lincoln's Whig party had destroyed itself over slavery and the violence of the Know-Nothings, an extremist group of nativists with a deep hatred of immigrants and Catholics that existed as an independent force but who were closer to the Whigs and later the new Republican Party.

Lincoln was well steeped in Irish culture, history, and politics. It was one reason he would have no truck with the Nativists and the Know-Nothings. His favorite ballad as a young man was titled "The Lament of the Irish Emigrant," set to music. It is an elegy for a young girl, Mary, who died of starvation during the Famine.

We also know Lincoln contributed \$10 to Famine relief, the equivalent of \$500 today. He urged every American should follow suit. The Washington famine relief event was attended by many politicians. Letters were read from Ireland, including one from the women of Dunmanway, County Cork. Addressed to the Ladies of America, it read, “Oh that our American sisters could see the laborers on our roads, able-bodied men, scarcely clad, famished with hunger, with despair in their once-cheerful faces, staggering at their work. . . . Oh that they could see the dead father, mother, or child, lying coffinless, and hear the screams of the survivors around them, caused not by sorrow, but by the agony of hunger.”

Professor Christine Kinealy, Director of the Great Hunger Institute at Quinnipiac University in Connecticut, rates Lincoln’s contribution to famine relief highly.

“This was back in 1847, when Lincoln was only a newly elected politician to the House of Representatives. It was an insubstantial sum from an unimportant figure at the time, but it is retrospectively very interesting,” the Trinity College graduate stated. Kinealy asserts that this donation was not out of character for Lincoln, who had a lifelong rapport with the Irish. “I suppose Lincoln always had a great affinity for the Irish and their plight. He knew and recited Robert Emmet’s speech from the dock and his favorite ballad was Lady Dufferin’s poem ‘The Lament of the Irish Emigrant’ set to music.” Perhaps it was the poignant lyrics of that song that inspired the generous donation. A verse runs:

*I thank you for the patient smile
When your heart was fit to break,
When the hunger pain was gnawin’ there,
And you hid it, for my sake!
I bless you for the pleasant word,
When your heart was sad and sore—
O, I’m thankful you are gone,
Mary, Where grief can’t reach you more!*

Lincoln didn’t just absorb the maudlin side of the Irish. He also told Irish jokes, gently poking fun without any real malice. Lincoln may also have gotten his Irish affinity from his first schoolmaster Zachariah Riney, an Irish Catholic who Lincoln subsequently held in very great respect. According to the oral history of the Rineys of Kentucky emigrated from County Kerry in the late 1700’s. Riney insisted on correct spellings but also, with the older boys, distilling sentences down so that the bare minimum of words sufficed. Some historians have credited Riney with Lincoln’s uncanny ability, as with the Gettysburg Address, to distill profound thoughts into such simple sentences.

But despite the help of the much-respected Irish American schoolteacher and the immediate Irish connections through domestic help and a cultural affinity, there were deep and very strongly held differences between Lincoln and the Irish. During his early political battles, Lincoln could often be ambivalent about them. They favored the Democrats and were hostile to his Republican party. There were many in his own party who despised the Irish

In the twenty years before the Civil War, four million people from Europe emigrated. It was the Irish who made up the largest numbers and their massive influx right at the time that Lincoln was shaping his political career presented formidable problems to him. With an alien culture and religion, the Irish were ripe for sparking a wave of nativism. The Know-Nothings were born and quickly became identified with the fledgling Republican Party. Their aim was simple – to rid America of the despised foreigners. They believed the Irish in particular paid allegiance to the pope and not to their new country and they made a compact to destroy

them. The intensity of the hatred of Irish immigrants can be gauged by what happened in Louisville on August 5, 1855, in Lincoln's home state where, urged on by rabble-rousing newspaper editor George Prentice, the Know-Nothing mob descended on a shanty Irish neighborhood. Prentice called the Irish and German the "most pestilent influence of the foreign swarms," loyal to a pope he called "an inflated Italian despot who keeps people kissing his toes all day."

The bigotry, raw even for its time, of Prentice's comments inflamed the mob, who were determined to stop Irish and German Catholics from voting. What happened next became known as "Bloody Monday," with estimates ranging from twenty-two to one hundred Irish slaughtered, many as they tried to escape being burnt alive.

Of all the enormities and outrages committed by the American Party (the official name for the Know-Nothings) yesterday and last night, we have not time now to write. Upon the proceedings of yesterday and last night we have no time, nor heart, now to comment. We are sickened with the very thought of the men murdered, and houses burned and pillaged, that signalized the American victory yesterday.



Louisville Herald Newspaper, 1922; via Bloody Monday Memorial – Ancient Order of Hibernians. (Wikipedia.)

Similar Know-Nothing riots had taken place in Philadelphia, leaving fourteen dead and the destruction of two Catholic churches and neighborhoods. The Philadelphia Nativist Riots took place in 1844 between May 6 and 8, and July 6 and 7. The riots were the result of a rumor that Catholics were trying to remove the Bible from public schools.

The connection between the Know-Nothings and the fledgling Republican Party was well known to the Irish -- hatred of Irish Catholics topped their list. In order to be a member of the Know-Nothing Party, one had to meet the following criteria: be twenty-one years of age, believe in God, be a native-born Protestant American, be raised a Protestant, and never marry a Catholic. One Know-Nothing summarized the issue: "[In order to protect our country, we will hire only those not under] . . . the insidious policy of the Church of Rome, and [avoid] all other foreign influences against the institutions of our country, by placing in all offices . . . whether by election or appointment, none but native-born Protestant citizens." Even though the Know-Nothing Party denounced all immigrants, it especially hated Irish Catholics. Their credo was very similar to that of the Orange Order.

On August 24, 1855, in the wake of the killings in Louisville on Bloody Monday, Lincoln wrote to his close friend Joshua Speed, who had asked his opinion on the Know-Nothings. Lincoln could not have been clearer:

I am not a Know-Nothing. That is certain. How could I be? How can anyone who abhors the oppression of negroes, be in favor of degrading classes of white people? Our progress in degeneracy appears to me to be pretty rapid. As a nation, we begin by declaring that "all men are created equal." We now practically read it "all men are created equal, except negroes." When the Know-Nothings get control, it will read "all men are created equal, except negroes, and foreigners, and Catholics."

When it comes to this I should prefer emigrating to some country where they make no pretense of loving liberty – to Russia, for instance, where despotism can be taken pure, and without the base alloy of hypocrisy [sic] those and foreigners, and Catholics.

It was a remarkable stance for the time, and the total opposite of many in the new Republican Party he had just helped create.

Massachusetts was the hotbed of the Know-Nothings, the state where the most destitute Irish were landing. Not surprisingly, the Irish saw in them the mirror image of the landlords they had fled in Ireland after being driven off their land. Here now was a similar group trying to destroy them again. Little wonder the Irish signed up for the Democratic Party in droves, seeking a job and a new start, which that party was offering to many off the boat.

Lincoln believed the slave issue to be more importance than ethnic strife and the Irish, mindful of the rumors about his affinity for the Know-Nothings, kept their distance. It would take a civil war and inspired Irish leadership from Thomas Francis Meagher, Archbishop Hughes of New York, and others to bring them together.

It was not surprising, then, that Lincoln knew the Irish – he probably encountered more Irish personally than any other president.



“The Celt would forfeit his title to the respect of the civilized world, did he not fight with all his heart and all his soul and all his cunning against the empire which has

despoiled him and murdered his kin, now with arms, now with artificial famine. There can be no peace between the two people until either Ireland is a desert or is free. It is war to the knife, and the knife to the hilt. There can be neither truce nor compromise



Golf Anyone?

As we prepare for the *7th Annual Shamrock Charity Golf Classic*...here's a story about *The Forgotten Hero of Golf: John McDermott* written by Bill Kelly for *Irish America*, 22 August 2020 (*Edited for Dispatches*)



John McDermott with his 1911 U.S. Open trophy

The first American golfer to win the U.S. Open — and the youngest.

When Rory McIlroy walked down the 18th fairway at Congressional on June 19, 2011 the TV flashed a list of six young golfers who won the U.S. Open in their 20's.

John McDermott, the first American to win the U.S. Open, was forgotten. McDermott the first American to win the Open and he was also the youngest, at 19 and people said he had the potential of being the best player ever. He won the Open in June 1911, nearly one hundred years to the day that McIlroy won.

The son of a mailman, McDermott grew up in an Irish neighborhood in West Philadelphia. He dropped out of high school to work full time as a caddy and golf professional at the Aronimink Golf Club, just a few blocks from his home. He first came to the public's attention at the U.S. Open in 1910, which was held at the Philadelphia Cricket Club's St. Martin's course. McDermott tied Alex and Macdonald Smith, two brothers from a famous Scottish golfing family. Alex Smith won the three-way playoff but when he tried to console the 18-year-old saying, "Tough luck, kid," McDermott replied brashly, "I'll get you next year, you big lout." And he did.

Following the 1910 Open, McDermott took a job as the Merchantville (NJ) Golf Club pro before being hired as the professional at Atlantic City Country Club.

McDermott rented a room and took the trolley to Atlantic City every morning to attend Mass after which he practiced golf and gave lessons. They say McDermott would spread out newspaper over an area as a target, and then narrow it down until he could hit a small area at will.

The 1911 Open was played at the Chicago Golf Club and McDermott defeated Mike Brady by three strokes in a play-off. McDermott retained his title the following year at the Country Club of Buffalo, beating out Tom McNamara and Mike Brady.

In 1913 McDermott finished 5th in the British Open the first American to finish in the top five. McDermott was treated with dignity but there was a developing animosity between the American and British golfers, which was intensified by McDermott at Shawnee-on-Delaware in 1913.

Shawnee was considered a prequel to the U.S. Open. McDermott played against British professionals Harry Vardon and Ted Ray, two of the greatest golfers to ever play the game. McDermott won the tournament outright, defeating Vardon and Ray by eight strokes.

One morning in 1914 at the Atlantic City Country Club where he was a professional, McDermott was found unconscious. He apparently suffered a nervous breakdown. After that, he was institutionalized and spent the rest of his life living with his sister or in local mental institutions.

Atlantic City Country Club owner Leo Fraser made sure McDermott was taken care of in his later years. Fraser invited him to visit the club and named the McDermott Room after him. In return, McDermott's sisters gave Fraser one of his U.S. Open championship medals, valued at \$40,000, which the Fraser family donated to the USGA, and is now on display at the USGA museum in Far Hills, New Jersey.

In 1971 U.S. Open was held in Philadelphia's Merion Country Club. McDermott's sister left him alone in the clubhouse. A young assistant pro, Bill Pappa, thought McDermott was in the way and ordered him to leave. Arnold Palmer noticed the old man being ejected and recognized him. Palmer shooed away the club employee and escorted McDermott back inside. "They talked golfer to golfer, champion to champion," wrote golf historian John Coyne, "and Palmer then arranged for McDermott to stay at the tournament as his special guest." Two months later McDermott died in his sleep at his sister's home in Philadelphia.

On October 9, 2014 McDermott was posthumously inducted into the Philadelphia Sports Hall of Fame.



Upcoming Events



Mark Your Calendars -- But keep in mind we're in Phase II so all is tentative!

Bingo! Every Thursday and Saturday evening 6:30PM at St Michael the Archangel High School, 6301 Campus Drive, Fredericksburg. Bring the family!

15 September: Division meeting (location is TBD)

19 September: Trip for Two to Ireland Raffle Drawing (Colonial Tavern)

28 September: The Shamrock Charity Golf Classic at Meadows Golf Course.





Our DIVISION Prayers



Jack Grey chairs the Division Committee of the Sick: Prayer requests should be sent to Jack not later than the Wednesday prior to the business meeting (RHGrey@yahoo.com//540-373-4496).

Pray for the repose of the souls of all deceased Hibernian Brothers. Keep in your prayers our family members and friends:

- **Rusty O'Brien**, undergoing radiation treatment for prostate cancer
- **John Hogan**, pulmonary fibrosis
- **Joe Daley**, COPD
- **Gene McKenna** recovering from double by-pass surgery
- **Brian Kiernan**, VAAOH Vice President, lymphedemic edema
- **Norma Cristiano**, Dan Mulhern's 91 year old mother-in-law, fractured back and hip injury suffered in a fall
- **John O'Brien** Hugh O'Brien's brother-- recovering from stroke
- **Jerry O'Brien**, Paul O'Brien's brother – cancer
- **Ruth Pettinger**, Shawn Lenahan's aunt (Vietnam Vet) inoperable brain tumor.
- **Donna Maffeo**, Joe Monaghan's sister-in-law and his father Joseph Sr. care giver for his mother and uncle (dementia/Alzheimer)
- **Amy Whittaker** – cancer
- **Nolan Banks**, son of former FS Jeff Banks. Nolan's chemotherapy treatments for soft tissue sarcoma (RMS) resulted in a compromised immune system. *Pray for the intercession of Fr. Augustus Tolton, a candidate for canonization:*
<http://www.toltoncanonization.org/prayer/canonizationprayer.html>)



General Meagher Division Attire

Every brother should have these articles of clothing:

Semi-formal/formal occasions: the AOH "uniform" is green sport coat, tri-color sash, white shirt, Irish theme tie, black trousers and optional ball cap. These occasions include AOH State and National conventions, Masses, funerals, AOH dinners, parades, and other public events.

Informal events (i.e. Division outings (ball games, picnics, meetings, etc.) the division logo polo or sweatshirts (optional ball cap) are appropriate.

Division Logo Items:

Point of Contact for Division logo polo shirts, sweatshirts and ball caps is Shawn Lenahan (s.lenahan@verizon.net)

Green Jacket: Brothers procure their own green jackets. One source: http://blazerdepot.com/pages/mens_blazer/augustagreenblazer.html. Visit the website; call the 800 number; tell them you're with AOH and the \$5.00 small order fee can be waived. Kelly green is the color.

AOH Sash: Brothers procure their own sashes. The AOH tri-color sash represents the national colors of Ireland and should be worn over the right shoulder (green closest to neck/collar) crossing to the left hip. Measure from right shoulder to left hip in inches; keep in mind the sash will normally be worn over a jacket, possibly a raincoat/overcoat (and maybe a growing waistline).

Sashes are available from:

LAOH Sister Patricia Ankrom produces a 7.5-foot sash; satisfaction guaranteed. Send a personal check for \$60. Turnaround time is about 10 days. The sash will be sent to you via Fed Ex or UPS -- signature required. Her address: Patricia Ankrom, 7400 Airport Dr., Quinton, Va. 23141-2400. Email traceysbydesign@aol.com

Gettysburg Flag offers tri-color sashes and offers "special prices" for larger orders. <https://www.gettysburgflag.com/custom/irish-parade-sash>



This newsletter is an unofficial publication providing information to members of the Gen Thomas F Meagher Division and others who may have interest in division activities. It is published by Bill Halpin and unless shown otherwise, he is the author of the contents.