



Ancient Order of
HIBERNIANS
Irish • Catholic • American



GENERAL MEAGHER'S DISPATCHES

January 2019

Volume 7/No. 1

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January 25th is National Irish Coffee Day¹



President's Corner:

Happy New Year to all my Hibernian Brothers! I trust you each had a joyous Christmas season. As I look back on 2018, I am very pleased with what we were able to accomplish as a Division. We spread Irish Culture and Heritage through our library displays, various parade participation and the Halfway to St. Patrick's Day Party. We supported life through our donations to Mary's Shelter, Paul Stefan Home and Birthright. Vocations through our donations to the Diocesan work camp. Catholic education through our scholastic grants to rising freshmen from Holy Cross and St. Patrick's School. And financial donations to our four parishes. We also had a banner year in our fund-raising efforts through the Shamrock Golf Tournament and Trip for Two raffle. We also welcomed six new brothers to the Division and had a great showing at the National Convention. Who's ready to do it all again?!? I want to thank each of you for helping to make 2018 such a success. As it is the beginning of the year, I hope you will all resolve to make 2019 just as successful. I ask you to attend our monthly business meetings, this is your Division, make your voice heard! They are the third Tuesday of the

¹ Irish coffee: hot coffee, Irish whiskey, and sugar, stirred, and topped with cream. The coffee is drunk through the cream. Originally straight cream was used; today whipped cream is most common.

month at the Knights of Columbus Hall on Harrison Rd. We have a brief meeting and then share food and fellowship. Please consider joining one of our many committees. Many hands make a light load! Whatever your interest may be, I am sure there is a committee that could use your unique talent and insight. Most of all, PARTICIPATE. Keep an eye out for emails of upcoming events and join us. No matter what it is, it always ends up being a great time!

I also ask that if you do not have the Major Degrees of the Order (sometimes referred to as the Tower Degree) to resolve to get them this year. After receiving them myself, I've observed the ritual several times and always glean a new insight into our history as Irish Catholics. I assure you it is not a waste of time. They are typically given once a quarter at the State Meetings. Your next opportunity is February 16th right up the road in Triangle, Va., 1pm St. Francis of Assisi Parish Center 18825 Fuller Heights Rd.

I am very happy that Brother Hugh O'Brien invited me to join the Division and that I may call each of you Brother. Here's to much success and happiness for you, your family and the Ancient Order of Hibernians in 2019!

In Our Motto,
Shawn Lenahan



Terrible Recent Headlines:

- ✓ DC canceled the annual St Patrick Day Parade citing the cost for security
- ✓ Alexandria City Council insults Irish-Americans and most survey respondents with its Col Fitzgerald park decision – classic case of “tail wagging the dog”
- ✓ Progressive Dems seek religious testing for federal public office nominees
- ✓ Democrats take control of House, immediately introduce bill to fund abortions worldwide

When Irish Eyes Are Smiling

Irish America by Thomas Hauser (downloaded 29 Dec 2018)

The world has been enriched by many distinctly Irish songs. “Danny Boy” and “MacNamara’s Band” are among them. But no

song is more deeply embedded in hearts than “When Irish Eyes Are Smiling.”

The history of “*When Irish Eyes Are Smiling*” begins with Chauncey Olcott. Olcott’s mother, Margaret Doyle, was born in Ireland. In the 1840s, when she was eight, her family immigrated to Canada and eventually settled in Lockport, New York. Later, she married Mellon Whitney Olcott and the couple moved to Buffalo where, in 1860, Chauncey (christened Chancellor John Olcott) was born. Soon after, Mellon Olcott died and Margaret married Patrick Brennan, who was chief engineer for the Buffalo Water Works. Chauncey was raised in Buffalo, where he attended public school. During the summer, he would visit his mother’s family in Lockport, where they lived in what he later described as “an Irish shanty on the banks of the Erie Canal.”

As a child, Olcott had a gift for song. Often, at the Lockport firehouse, he was lifted onto a table and encouraged to sing Irish ballads. Eventually his performances became more formal. In 1879, at 19, he joined the first in a series of minstrel companies that took him to Chicago, San Francisco, London, and other locales. His good looks, Gaelic personality, and light lyric tenor voice left him much in demand and led to a series of leading roles in plays and light operas.

In 1886, Olcott made his New York City debut with the Lillian Russell Opera Company as leading man in a production of *Pepita*. Thereafter, he starred in *HMS Pinafore* and *The Mikado* before returning to London, where he made stage appearances and studied voice from 1890 to 1893. Then, back in the United States, he starred in a series of shows with Irish themes. Among these were *Minstrel of Clare* (1896); *Sweet Inniscarra* (1897); *A Romance of Athlone* (1899), which was highlighted by a ballad Olcott himself wrote entitled “*My Wild Irish Rose*,” *Mavourneen* (1900), featuring the song “*The Auld Countrie*,” *Garrett O’Magh* (1901); *Old Limerick Town* (1902); *Edmund*

Burke (1905); *Eileen Ashore* (1906); *O’Neill of Derry* (1907); and *Barry of Ballymore* (1911).

The last of these productions showcased the songs “*Mother Machree*” and “*I Love the Name of Mary*,” both of which had lyrics written by Olcott with music by Ernest R. Ball. Meanwhile, the Olcott-Ball partnership was becoming a fruitful one. Ernest Ball was born in Cleveland in 1878 and studied music at the Cleveland Conservatory. As a young man, he moved to New York. Then, in 1905, he took a verse written by an obscure state senator named James J. Walker (who later became mayor of the City of New York) and turned it into the popular song “*Will You Love Me In December As You Do In May?*” Thereafter, Ball wrote songs for a Tin Pan Alley company called Witmark Music and appeared on stage as a vaudeville performer. He had a gift for writing heart-warming melodies, and that was what he wrote.

Ball and Olcott collaborated often on music and words, and it was Olcott as a performer who introduced many of Ball’s most popular ballads. “*When Irish Eyes Are Smiling*” marked the high point of the Olcott-Ball collaboration. Ball wrote the music and Olcott penned the lyrics with George Graff, Jr. The song was published in 1912 and introduced to the public with help from an Ohio socialite named Rida Johnson Young.

Young had pursued a career in theater, first as an actress and then as a writer. Starting with a play entitled *Brown of Harvard* that opened in 1906, she wrote the book and often the musical lyrics for more than 20 Broadway productions. In fact, the current Broadway hit *Thoroughly Modern Millie* features several of her songs. One of Young’s works was *Isle O’ Dreams*, which opened at the Grand Opera House on Broadway on January 27, 1913. The play starred Olcott, and audiences were mesmerized by his rendition of its signature ballad: “*When Irish Eyes Are Smiling*.”

Isle O' Dreams closed after 32 performances, but "*When Irish Eyes Are Smiling*" swept the nation. For several months in 1913, it was the best-selling recording in the United States. Recently, the Recording Industry Association of America cited it as one of the **top-selling songs of all time**.

Olcott enjoyed another number-one hit in 1914, when he recorded "*Too Ra-Loo-Ra-Loo-Ral (That's an Irish Lullaby)*." He also starred in *Shameen Dhu* (1913), *Terence* (1914), and *Once Upon A Time* (1918) produced by the legendary George M. Cohan. His last starring role on Broadway was in *The Voice of McConnell*, which opened on Christmas Day 1918. Seven years later, he collapsed on stage

while appearing in *The Rivals*, never fully recovered, and never graced a theater production again.

Olcott died in 1932. Among the pallbearers at his funeral at St. Patrick's Cathedral in New York were New York City Mayor James J. Walker and New York Governor Al Smith. Ball had died five years earlier, suffering a fatal heart attack moments after leaving the stage of a vaudeville theatre in California. Olcott was 72 at the time of his death. In 1947, Warner Brothers produced *My Wild Irish Rose*, based on a biography of Olcott written by his wife Margaret O'Donovan Olcott. The film starred Dennis Morgan as Olcott, Arlene Dahl as Margaret, and Andrea King as Lillian Russell.

BTW: Chauncey Olcott and George M. Cohan are both interred in Woodlawn Cemetery in The Bronx



"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."

Ireland's Ultimate Change Election - December 1918

From *Ambassador Daniel Mulhall's blog 21 December 2018* This blog is aimed at explaining the significance for Ireland of the General Election of December 1918, mainly for the benefit of those in America and elsewhere who may not be fully familiar with the contours of modern Irish history.

For more than three decades from the 1870s onwards, Ireland's electoral landscape was dominated by the Irish Parliamentary Party. It was a formidable political machine that consistently and comfortably won a majority of Irish seats at election time.

Its leaders, Isaac Butt, John Redmond and especially the charismatic Charles Stewart Parnell were all able political operators who sought to use the parliamentary arithmetic at Westminster to advance Ireland's cause. This strategy culminated in Redmond's success in securing the passage of the Irish Home Rule

Bill in the summer of 1914. It was Redmond's misfortune that the outbreak of World War 1 caused Home Rule to be deferred until after the war.

Britain and Ireland went to the polls on 14 December 1918 although the results were not declared until a fortnight later. The previous General Election had taken place in 1910 and on that occasion the Irish Party won 73 of the 103 Irish seats with 17 going to Unionists and 8 to the All-for-Ireland League, a Cork-centred offshoot from the Irish Party. That result had given the Irish Party the balance of power at Westminster between the Liberals and the Conservatives, a position that enabled Redmond to press for Home Rule to be delivered by Herbert Asquith's Liberal Government.

The years between 1910 and 1918 were eventful ones for Ireland. The Home Rule crisis of 1912-1914 wracked Britain and Ireland and led to the creation in Ireland of two rival militias, the Ulster Volunteers dedicated to resisting Home Rule, and the Irish Volunteers set up to mobilise nationalist support. The outbreak of the First World War divided Irish nationalists between those who followed John Redmond in his support for the war effort, which he saw as a means of proving Ireland's fitness for self-Government, and those who were determined to fight Ireland's corner at home.

The Easter Rising of 1916, to which the Irish Volunteers contributed the bulk of the insurgents, was a dramatic assertion of an Irish desire for independence which, following the execution of the Rising's leaders, captured the imagination of more and more Irish people, especially those of the younger generation.

The Sinn Féin party was founded by Arthur Griffith in 1904/05 with a policy of withdrawing from the Westminster

parliament and pressing for an Austro-Hungarian style dual monarchy, but it made little electoral impact in its early years. Even though it had not been involved in the Easter Rising, Sinn Féin got a new lease of life in the Rising's aftermath as it became the political face of a new national movement devoted to building on the legacy of 1916. A resurgent Sinn Féin inflicted four by-election defeats on the Irish Party during 1917. The Irish Party then staged a mini-revival by winning three hard-fought electoral contests in the opening months of 1918.

The election of December 1918 took place just one month after the armistice that brought the First World War to an end. The result was an extraordinary triumph for Sinn Féin, which won 73 of the 105 Irish seats. Its successful candidates included Constance Markievicz, the first woman ever to be elected to the Westminster parliament although she refused to take her seat there.

Sinn Féin's share of the vote, 48%, would have been significantly higher except that 25 safe nationalist seats were left uncontested by the Irish Party. Unionists won 26 seats, just two of which were in the country's three southern provinces. The Irish Party was reduced to six seats, four of which were won on the back of an electoral pact between the party and Sinn Féin designed to secure nationalist seats in border areas.

It was, as Charles Townshend has written, "one of the greatest electoral landslides of the century in Western Europe." (*The Republic; the fight for Irish independence*, p. 60) What caused this remarkable political turnaround?

There were essentially two reasons for this. First, Sinn Féin had youth and enthusiasm on its side. The Irish Party actually held or even increased its vote in places, but that was in an electorate that had multiplied threefold due to the extension of the franchise to men over 21

and to women over 30. Irish Party leader, John Dillon, admitted as much when he acknowledged the "absolute lack of organisation and helplessness on our side - against the most perfect organisation and infinite audacity on the other." The Irish Party were unmistakably the old guard made up of politicians many of whom had faced little or no challenge in previous elections. They were unable to cope with the new political environment in which they unexpectedly found themselves. Seeing the writing on the wall, many sitting Irish MPs decided not to stand on this occasion. As the Irish Party crumbled, membership of Sinn Féin clubs expanded dramatically in 1917 and 1918.

A second reason for the Irish Party's eclipse was the British Government's decision in the spring of 1918 to impose conscription in Ireland. This fatally weakened a Party that had staked its reputation on being able to wield effective influence at Westminster. The conscription crisis exposed their weakness and caused the Party to withdraw from Westminster, thus seeming to validate the abstentionist policy of Sinn Féin. The damage done by conscription, which was quickly abandoned in the face of concerted Irish resistance, was compounded by the arrest in May 1918 of most of the Sinn Féin leadership on the pretext of an illusory 'German plot.' This meant that 40 Sinn Féin candidates, including the party's leader, Eamon de Valera, were in prison on Election Day or on the run, but this merely gave the party added cachet. Irish Party stalwart, John J. Horgan reflecting on the impact of the conscription issue wrote that: "from that moment the fate of the constitutional movement was sealed." (*Parnell to Pearse*, p. 328)

Sinn Féin's election manifesto made an unbridled appeal to nationalist sentiment. The question before the Irish people was

whether "to march out into the full sunlight of freedom", or "to remain in the shadow of a base imperialism". It urged the electorate to pursue "with renewed confidence the path of national salvation by rallying to the flag of the Irish Republic." The manifesto went on to promise: withdrawal from Westminster; opposition to English power in Ireland; the establishment of a constituent assembly; and an appeal to the Versailles peace conference for the recognition of Irish independence. The Irish Party insisted that, as supporters of the war effort, they were better placed to present Ireland's case to the war's victorious powers, but that argument clearly did not wash with the electorate.

It is interesting to note how differently things turned out in Ireland compared with Britain. Whereas the enlarged Irish electorate, now accounting for 75% of the country's adult population, took the radical step of choosing a party that sought fundamental change, in Britain the vote buoyed the status quo. There, the governing coalition dominated by the Conservative Party made dramatic gains while the Liberal Party, which had split in 1916, suffered a major reversal and lost its historic role as the main progressive force in British politics, a position it never recovered.

This was Ireland's ultimate change election. It ushered in a new political reality from which there was to be no going back. The Irish people had expressed themselves in favour of independence, even if this took a further two years of strife to achieve. Dominion Home Rule, which the Irish Party was now promising, no longer satisfied an electorate whose ambitions for Ireland had been reshaped by the Easter Rising and First World War. The Irish Party, although it had polled a respectable 22% of the vote in 1918, quickly evaporated while Sinn Féin, "a popular front of nationalist forces" in 1918 (Joe Lee, *The Modernisation of Irish Society, 1848-1918*, p. 162) went on to become the

progenitor of the three leading parties in today's Ireland, Fine Gael, Fianna Fáil and Sinn Féin.

Those elected in December met in Dublin a month later to establish the First Dáil (Parliament) when they issued a Declaration of Independence, but that's a story to be told in 2019.

Post Script

The election of December 1918 took place just one month after the armistice that brought the First World War to an end. A year of many firsts, 1918 was the first time Irish women were permitted by law to vote and stand in parliamentary elections. That same year, Countess Constance Markievicz was the first woman ever to be elected to the Westminster parliament, although she refused to take her seat there. (Read more about the Irish women's suffrage movement in 1918 [here](#).) Irish representatives elected in December were invited to meet in Dublin a month later to establish the **First Dáil** (Parliament). One hundred years ago, on **21 January 1919, the first Dáil met in the Round Room of the Mansion House**. During the two-hour sitting, Dáil Members adopted a Constitution and read out a Declaration of Independence, first in Irish, then in French and, finally, in English.



BTW: Those who paid attention on 9 December at the City Dock will recall NPS Historian Frank O'Reilly's comment that "Meagher" is Irish for mother. The inquisitive know the Irish word for mother is *máthair*. Close, but no cigar.



Our DIVISION Prayers



Jack Grey, Committee of the Sick Chairman. Prayer requests should be sent to Jack not later than the Wednesday prior to the business meeting (RHGrey@cox.net//540-373-4496).

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

- **Nolan Banks**, 4-year-old son of former FS Jeff Banks. Nolan has soft tissue sarcoma (RMS). Essentially, Nolan needs a miracle. *Pray for the intercession of Father Augustus Tolton*, a candidate for future canonization (for the prayer visit: <http://www.toltoncanonization.org/prayer/canonizationprayer.html>)
- **John Tracy**, COPD
- **Joe Daley**, hospitalized with COPD complicated by pneumonia
- **Rusty O'Brien**, kidney cancer -- recovering from surgery
- **Jake Ruppert's** mother, cancer -- recovering from surgery
- **John O'Brien** Hugh O'Brien's brother-- recovering from stroke

- **Jerry O'Brien**, Paul O'Brien's brother -- cancer
- **Loretta Larzelere**, Bob Fitzgerald's sister-in-law -- recovering from pneumonia
- **Randy Brock**, Andy Link's friend
- **Robert Dorsch**, Bill Vanderveer's father-in-law -- died on 16 December
- **Donna Maffeo**, Joe Monaghan's sister-in-law and his father Joseph Sr. care giver for his mother and uncle (dementia/Alzheimer)
- **Patricia Stephen**, mother of Rusty O'Brien's friend Ann-Marie Sharratt -- acute myeloid leukemia
- **Amy Whittaker** -- cancer



Mark Your Calendars!

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

13 January: Religious Freedom March

15 January: Division meeting

18 January: March for Life, Washington, DC (Look for an announcement from National Pro-Life coordinator, JP Walsh)

21 January: 100th Anniversary of the first Dial (Irish parliament) meeting



General Meagher Division Attire

In a perfect world every brother would have these articles of clothing:

- For **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.

- At **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: The 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 waist line). Tri-color AOH sashes are available from:

- LAOH Sister Patricia Ankrom. Email Patricia at traceysbydesign@aol.com
She produces 7.5ft long sashes costing \$ 40.00 and guarantees satisfaction: if you're not satisfied send it back for a full refund.
- 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.