

IRISH BRIGADE

Edited by Robert McLernon

IRISH BRIGADE

“...It Rushed Into The Fight With Its Well-known Gallantry...”

I often find tributes to the courage and gallantry of the Irish Brigade in combat.

William F. Fox Regimental Losses In The Civil War (1889) Page 118:

“The Irish Brigade was, probably, the best known of any brigade organization, it having made an unusual reputation for dash and gallantry. The remarkable precision of its evolutions under fire; its desperate attack on the impregnable wall at Marye’s Heights; its never failing promptness on every field, and its long continuous service, made for it a name inseparable from the history of the war.”

Joseph G. Bilby Remember Fontenoy! Introduction:

“It was, many said, the best brigade in the Army of the Potomac. Some said it was the best brigade in the whole Union army and perhaps the best infantry brigade on either side in the American Civil War. Others, with the perspective of history, have come to believe it may have been the best infantry brigade that ever was.”

William F. Fox Final Report on the Battlefield of Gettysburg – New York at Gettysburg, p. 485:
“It would be impossible to write the history of the Army of the Potomac without giving the highest of praise to the gallant Irish Brigade.” “Their deeds will be remembered in song and in story so long as the history of our country is read. Irishmen everywhere have reason to be proud of the Irish Brigade.”

Speech of Col. James D. Brady, 63rd New York

“The Irish Brigade’s loss of 961 soldiers killed or mortally wounded in action was exceeded by only two other brigades in the Union army.” Fox “Regimental Losses” The other two were the Vermont Brigade, and the Iron Brigade.

William F. Fox Regimental Losses in the Civil War:

“The Irish Brigade lost over 4,000 men in killed and wounded; it being more men than ever belonged to the brigade at any one time.”

The 69th New York lost 259 men killed and mortally wounded, and the 28th Massachusetts lost 250 men killed and mortally wounded. This places them in 6th, and 7th place, respectively, in a list of all Union regiments for men killed and mortally wounded. The 69th New York lost more men killed and mortally wounded than any other regiment from the State of New York. The percentage of killed in battle to the number of men enrolled was 17.1 percent, the most of any New York regiment. The 63rd New York lost 156 men. The 88th New York lost 151 men. The 116th Pennsylvania lost 145 men.

The Irish Brigade never lost a battle flag in combat, and captured more than twenty enemy flags.

D. P. Conyngham “The Irish Brigade” 1867 p. 224

The Irish Brigade never lost an artillery battery it was assigned to support, nor a position given them to hold until ordered to withdraw. New York at Gettysburg – Speech of Dennis F. Burke, on July 2, 1888, the dedication of Irish Brigade Monument at Gettysburg.

It never disobeyed an order in combat. A lot of the men were not Irish, for example, many men who enlisted in 1864. The 116th PA was not a green flag regiment, with many Americans and Germans in it.

All five Irish Brigade regiments are listed in Fox’ “Three Hundred Fighting Regiments.” These were the 63rd, 69th, and 88th New York, the 28th Massachusetts, and the 116th Pennsylvania. The Irish Brigade was the Second Brigade, 1st Division, Second Corps, Army of the Potomac. This division and corps were known for hard fighting.

“But the hardest fighting and greatest loss of life occurred in the First Division of the Second Corps, Hancock’s old division, in which more men were killed and wounded than in any other division in the Union Army, East or West.” Fox, “Regimental Losses.”

“From Yorktown to Appomattox the same old spirit prevailed throughout the brigade that characterized the Irish soldier the world over. It was full of fun, full of frolic, and full of fight. It was a noble brigade. It was a grand organization, magnificently officered, perfectly disciplined. On the march, in the camp, or in battle, it was ever cheerful and brave, ever ready to respond to the bugle call.”

“It is a grand and glorious record.” “Its name will live in history. Its record was unsurpassed.”

Robert Nugent, 69th New York New York at Gettysburg.

Other regiments were in the brigade at various times. The 29th Massachusetts (1862), The 7th New York Heavy Artillery (November, 1864), fighting as infantrymen, was detached, and the 4th NY HA (February, 1865) replaced it. These units were temporarily assigned to the Irish Brigade, and were not Irish.

Fair Oaks May 29 - June 1, 1862

“There was the Irish Brigade in all the glory of a fair, free fight. Other men go into fights finely, sternly, or indifferently, but the only man that really loves it, after all, is the green, immortal Irishman. So, there the brave lads from the old sod, with the chosen Meagher at their head, laughed, and fought, and joked, as it were the finest fun in the world.”

Dr. Thomas Ellis “Leaves From the Diary of an Army Surgeon.”

“We are in Meagher Brigade, Richardsons division, Sumners Corps. If there is another fight before Richmond I will be in it as we are in the fighting brigade; it was this brigade that turned the battle here. Meagher makes his men charge. He won’t let them turn off and fire.”

From William E. Short 29th Massachusetts Fair Oaks Station (written about June 6, 1862).

The Seven Days’ Battles, June 26 – July 1, 1862

Gaines Mill, June 27, 1862

“Saved the army”

The arrival of French’s and Meagher’s Brigades of Sumner’s Corps at the very end of this battle saved the Fifth Corps from destruction, and in saving the Fifth Corps, they saved the army.

General McClellan, in his Official Report of this battle, refers to the actions of French’s and Meagher’s Brigades:

“About 5 PM General Porter having reported his position as critical, French’s and Meagher’s brigades, of Richardson’s division (Second Corps), were ordered to come to his support. The enemy attacked again in great force at 6 PM, but failed to break our lines, though our loss was very heavy. About 7 PM they threw fresh troops against General Porter with still greater fury, and finally gained the woods held by our left. This reverse, aided by the confusion that followed an unsuccessful charge of five companies of the Fifth (US) Cavalry, and followed as it was by more determined assaults on the remainder of our lines, now outflanked, caused a general retreat from our position to the hill in rear, overlooking the bridge. French’s and Meagher’s brigades now appeared, driving before them the stragglers who were thronging toward the bridge. These brigades advanced boldly to the front, and by their example, as well as by the steadiness of their bearing, reanimated our own troops and warned the enemy that re-enforcements had arrived. It was now dusk. The enemy, already repulsed several times with terrible slaughter, and hearing the shouts of the fresh troops, failed to follow up their advantage; and this gave an opportunity to rally our men behind the brigades of Generals French and Meagher, and they again advanced up the hill ready to repulse another attack. During the night our thin and

exhausted regiments were all withdrawn in safety, and by morning all had reached the other side of the stream."

"The hill on this battlefield comes almost to the river. Its whole face was covered with the shattered remnants of Porter's force – infantry, cavalry and artillery – in one jumbled mass, fleeing for their lives. As soon as the newcomers were seen, panting for breath and covered with dust, after their run of four miles, the brave fellows who fought nobly all day took courage and began cheering as they never did before. "What troops are these?" a soldier called out, as the head of the Sixty-third came toward him. His appearance indicated he had done his duty, as his head was bandaged and his face was covered with blood and dust. "This is Meagher's Brigade," was the response of a sergeant of the regiment.

"Hurrah for the Irish Brigade! Hurrah for Tom Meagher! Boys, three cheers for the Union!" shouted the poor fellow with the gash in his head. They were given, and three times three."

Major John Dwyer, 63rd New York New York at Gettysburg

"General Meagher was at the head of his Brigade. When he saw (Colonel Cass, of the Ninth Massachusetts) ...he called out, "Colonel Cass, is this you?" "Hallo, General Meagher, is this the Irish Brigade? Thank God, we are saved." The Irish Ninth made a remarkable fight that day (*see poem below).

Conyngham, page 186

"During the withdrawal from the left bank of the Chickahominy the two brigades under General French covered the rear. When the last of the troops had crossed, the Eighty-eighth New York destroyed the bridge." Francis A. Walker "History of the Second Corps" p. 63

Savage's Station June 29, 1862

Medal of Honor James Quinlan Citation: "Led his regiment on the enemy's battery, silenced the guns, held the position against overwhelming numbers, and covered the retreat of the 2nd Army Corps."

"Baltimore, Md., August 1, 1883 Col. James Quinlan:- It gives me great pleasure to write your gallant services at Savage's Station, since you were distinguished beyond your fellow officers of the Irish Brigade, on that occasion.....I asked: "What troops are these?" The answer was: "Eighty-eighth New York!" "Who is in command?" "Major Quinlan!" I directed Major Quinlan to form his men facing toward Richmond, down the Williamsburg road, where a battery had been established, and was sweeping my line from the road as fast as formed across it. When Major Quinlan had formed his troops, I directed him to march toward the battery; first in quick time, then double quick, and when he reached my line of battle, the order: 'Charge!' was given; when, with a cheer, the gallant Irishmen rushed upon the battery, and it was driven from the road, to molest me no more." William W. Burns, Late Brig.Gen. Vols, Lieut.-Col. U.S. Army. Corby, p. 367. Quinlan Medal of Honor File, NARA

"We heard a cheer, and looking to the left saw Meagher's Irish Brigade moving forward on the run. The entire corps, forgetful of danger, sprang to their feet and cheered them wildly. On they went; grape and canister ploughed through their ranks, but they closed up the gaps and moved on up to the mouth of the rebel batteries, whose guns were captured, and the firing that had been so disastrous ceased. The Irish brigade held the line until night, when our army was withdrawn."

Reminiscences of the Nineteenth Massachusetts Regiment

White Oak Swamp June 30, 1862

The Irish Brigade withstood a surprise bombardment by Stonewall Jackson's artillery, posted on the other side of the swamp. The crashing shells panicked a herd of mules, which stampeded through the ranks of the brigade.

Malvern Hill, July 1, 1862

Medal of Honor Peter Rafferty, 69th New York Citation: "Having been wounded and directed to the rear, declined to go, but continued in action, receiving several additional wounds, which resulted in his capture by the enemy, and his total disability for military service."

Daniel George Macnamara History of the (Irish) 9th Massachusetts:

"General Porter sent to Sumner for some reinforcements and about 7 o'clock Meagher's gallant Irish Brigade crossed our lines going towards our left front. As they passed the survivors of the Ninth they were warmly welcomed and greeted with hearty cheers. The Irish Brigade took position well to the left and front of Morell, and opened on the enemy with a most gallant charge and ringing cheer and yell, driving them back with loss and in great disorder. Their charge was succeeded by a rapid rifle fire, and shot and shell from our batteries. For over an hour the Irish Brigade was engaged in supporting our line on the left, in a severe struggle with a superior force of the enemy, when they finally drove them back to the cover of the woods with great loss. In their last charge they came in close and bloody conflict with the enemy and brought off many prisoners.

General Meagher's brigade lost many brave officers and men before darkness closed upon them and ended their fighting. As the regiments of the Irish Brigade, with General Meagher at their head, left their places in the Second Corps to respond to the call of General Porter for assistance, they came forward on the "double quick," and were greeted by the cheers of our troops as they passed along. The survivors of the Ninth Massachusetts Volunteers gave them a hearty greeting as they went to the left and front. This was the second time during the "seven days' battles" that the gallant Irish Brigade rendered assistance to the 1st division of the Fifth Corps. It is needless to say that ever after the old Fifth Corps held them in kindly remembrance, and that the Ninth Massachusetts was proud of their brave and patriotic countrymen. Whenever the Irish Brigade was called upon to reinforce the weak places on the battle-line their coming brought renewed courage and confidence to the jaded troops. "Here comes the Irish Brigade!" "Don't you see the green Flags!" "Three cheers for the Irish Brigade!" was heard on all sides, and the cheers that filled the air followed them into the post of danger and death, where they were sure to turn the tide of battle in favor of the Union and victory. To have been in the Army of the Potomac and not know and hear of the valor of Meagher's Irish Brigade was among the impossibilities. Their renown will live forever in the pages of American history. Song and story will ever recite their sacrifices on the altar of freedom for their adopted country." pp. 157 – 158

William Corby "Memoirs of Chaplain Life" page 369 (Mulholland):

"With what ardor Gen. Fitz John Porter speaks of this eventful day: "On one occasion," writes the general, "I sent an urgent request for two brigades, and the immediate result was the sending of Meagher by Sumner. This was the second time* that he had sent me Meagher's gallant Irish Brigade and each time it rendered valuable service. Advancing, accompanied by my staff, I soon found that our force had successfully driven back their assailants. About fifty yards in front of us, a large force of the enemy suddenly arose and opened with fearful volleys upon our advancing line. I turned to the brigade, which thus far had kept pace with my horse and found it standing 'like a stone wall,' and returning a fire more destructive than it received, and from which the enemy fled. The brigade was planted. My presence was no longer needed." *The first time was at Gaines' Mill. General Porter was in command of the Fifth Corps.

As Porter and Meagher rode up to Malvern Hill, Porter said to Meagher: "I envy you the command of that brigade." Conyngham

"Here comes that damned green flag again!" called out a Confederate officer. Corby, p. 369

"I thank the Irish Brigade for their superb conduct in the field," says Gen. McClellan on the Peninsula. Corby Memoirs, p 351 (Mulholland) McClellan said this on July 4th. He also told Meagher on the same day "I wish there were 20,000 men in your brigade."

On the evening of July 25, 1862, General Meagher spoke at a meeting held in the armory of the Seventh Regiment, N.Y.S.M. During his speech, he read a letter from Lt. John H. Donovan, Company D, 69th New York. The following is from that letter: ...“I received a very severe wound during our second engagement with the enemy...The ball carried away a part of the right ear, entering the skull and passing through the right eye, totally destroying it...(Confederate) Generals Hill and Magruder visited the wounded the morning after the battle. General Hill went round to the several officers, and demanded their side-arms and revolvers, which they delivered up with reluctance. The general demanded mine. I told him I had taken occasion to have them sent to my regiment the night previous. He replied that, from the apparent nature of my wounds, I wouldn’t have much need of them in the future. I told him that I had one good eye left, and that I would still risk it in the cause of the old Union; and that, should fate deprive me of that, I would “go it blind,” until rebellion was put down, and the supremacy of the Federal Government established. He asked me the name of my regiment. I told him the name of my regiment and brigade with the greatest pride...” John H. Donovan came back to the Irish Brigade, and was wounded at Fredericksburg. Conyngham. p. 246

Second Bull Run August 29 – 30, 1862

The Irish Brigade did not directly participate in this battle.

On the 29th of August the following dispatch was telegraphed. It very clearly shows what General McClellan thought about the Irish Brigade:

Camp near Alexandria,
August 29, 1862 – 10:30 a.m.

“Franklin’s corps is in motion; started about 6 a.m. I can give him but two squadrons of cavalry. I propose moving General Cox to Upton’s Hill to hold that important point with its works, and to push cavalry scouts to Vienna, via Freedom Hill and Hunter’s Lane. Cox has two squadrons of cavalry. Please answer me at once whether this meets your approval. I have directed Woodbury, with the Engineer Brigade, to hold Fort Lyon. Sumner detached last night two regiments to vicinity of Forts Ethan Allen and Marcy. Meagher’s brigade is still at Aquia. If he moves in support of Franklin, IT LEAVES US WITHOUT ANY RELIABLE TROOPS in and near Washington. Yet Franklin is too weak alone. What shall be done? -----“

Geo. B. McClellan,
Major-General

Major-General Halleck, Washington, D.C.

Antietam, Maryland, September 17, 1862 “Bloody Lane”

“The Irish Brigade had the honor of leading the pursuit of the rebels from South Mountain thru Boonsboro and Keedysville, along this road and through these villages, in this pursuit, the brigade passed with the utmost alacrity and enthusiasm, Maj. Gen. Richardson, commanding the division, riding prominently at the head of the column and directing all its movements. .”

Robert E. Alter Heroes In Blue And Gray “Leave it to the Irish!”

McClellan’s Official Report “Here the brave Irish Brigade opened upon the enemy a terrific musketry fire...” “The Irish Brigade sustained its well-earned reputation.”

“...the perseverance of Meagher’s men to have maintained their position on the exposed slope within 75 yards of the Confederate riflemen within the depressed roadway and behind a fence-rail “barricade” for about 40 minutes, is well nigh incredible. Such a terrifying example of resoluteness and prolonged valor is not often recorded. So, if the Carman maps are not misleading, and I believe they are not, this exploit of the Irish Brigade (and the opposing line of Confederates who stood their

ground as well) should well be one of the most outstanding examples of extreme devotion to duty in the annals of modern military history.”

Robert L. Lagemann Historian, Antietam National Battlefield Site, in a letter to Charles G. Stevenson, Brigadier General, NYArmyNG, dated October 12, 1962.

An officer of the 2nd Mississippi Battalion, from the Carman Manuscript, by Bvt. Brig. Gen. Ezra A. Carman, 13th New Jersey Vol. Inf:

“I wish to bear witness to the gallantry of the men of Meagher’s Brigade and the superb courage of their commanding officers on that bloody day. They stood in line on their ridge, in plain view, with three flags as colors – One the Stars and Stripes, one a Pennsylvania(Massachusetts) State Flag and one the green flag with the Harp of Erin.

Our men kept those flags falling fast, while just as fast they raised them again. Several times the deadly fire of our rifles broke the ranks of those men and they fell behind the ridge, but quickly re-formed each time and appeared with shorter lines but still defiant.”

The flags of the 63rd New York were shot down 16 times, those of the 69th New York 8 times.

Corby, Memoirs of Chaplain Life, page 874 (Molholland):

“Here again, note the gallantry of John Hartigan, a boy of sixteen, of the same regiment, (63 New York) who, advancing in front of the line, defiantly waved the colors in the face of the enemy.”

Cavanaugh, Memoirs of General Thomas Francis Meagher, pages 461-62:

“The Sixty-third Regiment of this brigade, always conspicuous for deeds of daring in battle, was particularly so in the battle of Antietam. The colors were shot down sixteen times, and on each occasion a man was ready to spring forward and place the colors in front. John Hartigan, a member of Company H, and only sixteen years old, went some distance in advance of the regiment with the colors, and waved them defiantly in the face of the enemy. The whole brigade gave a cheer that was heard along the lines for a mile...”

“During the severe battle there were eight corporals and three sergeants, one carrying the national, one the state, and one the green flag of the Irish Brigade.” Colonel William Terwilliger, 63 N. Y. Vols.

“I believe that while we fired by file a little before we advanced across the road, yet we did not meet with great opposition here, probably because the Irish regiment we relieved had done considerable toward using up the line we first dealt with.” --

Irish Molly at Antietam

-- “I was told, too, that a woman, who followed the Irish Brigade as laundress or nurse, went up with it, and standing with it in the fight, swung her bonnet around and cheered on the men.”

Thomas Livermore, Days And Events 5th New Hampshire

“As our first brigade was forming to relieve them, (Meagher’s Irish Brigade attacking the Sunken Road) we saw “Irish Molly,” of the 88th New York, a big, muscular woman who had followed her husband in all the campaigns, and he a private soldier in the ranks. She was a little to the left of their line, apparently indifferent to the flying bullets, and was jumping up and down, swinging her sunbonnet around her head, as she cheered the Paddys on. Our regiment was maneuvering for position at the time, and the bullets that passed the Irishmen were pretty thick, so there was no time for anything else, as we were moving lively, but the glimpse that I got of that heroic woman in the drifting powder smoke, stiffened my back-bone immensely.” Charles C. Hale Company C 5th New Hampshire Volunteers “The Story of My Personal Experience at the Battle of Antietam.”

The Irish Brigade carried twice the usual amount of ammunition on this day – 80 rounds, and they still ran out. The three New York regiments were armed with M1842 .69 smoothbores, firing “buck and ball” one .69 cal. ball and three .31cal. buckshot – deadly at close range. When they ran out of

ammunition, they took cartridges from the dead and wounded. "The muskets were become red-hot in the men's hands...The men had often to fling away their muskets, and pick others up." Conyngham, p. 306

"An hour had nearly elapsed since the front had been reached; several of the captains had reported that the guns of their men were getting so hot that the rammers (ramrods) were leaping out of the pipes at every discharge." William H. Osborne "History of the Twenty-ninth Regiment" (Massachusetts).

"By this time the ranks of Meagher's Brigade had been greatly thinned. The 69th New York had nearly melted away and but a few heroic Irishmen were left, huddling about its two colors, when one of the enemy shouted from the Sunken road: "Bring them colors in here;" upon which the two color bearers instantly advanced a few steps, shook their colors in the very face of the enemy and replied:

"Come and take them you damned rebels."

Ezra A. Carman Manuscript

"A severe and well-sustained musketry contest then ensued, which, after continuing until the ammunition was nearly expended, this brigade, having suffered severely, losing many valuable officers and men, was, by direction of General Richardson, relieved by the brigade of General Caldwell, which until this time had remained in support."

General Winfield S. Hancock's Official Report

As the 88th New York left the line, they passed by 1st Division commander General Israel Richardson. "When relieved by the 5th New Hampshire, I reported to General Richardson by order of one of his aides. On approaching the general, he said "Bravo, Eighty-eighth; I shall never forget you." The rank and file responded by giving him three hearty cheers." Richardson would be mortally wounded later in the day. Winfield S. Hancock replaced him as division commander. Lt. Col. Patrick Kelly, O. R.

"The day after the battle, the officers of the brigade called upon Gen. Richardson, who had been mortally wounded. In his dying agony, he said to them: "I placed your brigade on the ground you occupied because it was necessary to hold it, and I knew that you would hold it against all odds, and once you were there, I had no further anxiety in regard to the position." Corby, Memoirs of Chaplain Life (Mulholland)

With all the original officers and men of the Irish Brigade, Antietam was its great day, its crowning glory, though it brought no captured flags away. At Fredericksburg where the brigade was nearly extinguished, when charging over ground upon which the Confederate artillery officers boasted that "a chicken could not live" under the fire of their guns, the rallying cry of the officers was: "Come on boys, this is nothing to Antietam."

Carman Manuscript

"We were always proud of Antietam." New York at Gettysburg.

The Irish Brigade shot thousands of rounds of "buck and ball." They suffered 540 casualties. The 63rd New York and the 69th New York had 60% casualties. A strong attack by several Union brigades, and a strong defense by several Confederate brigades. Now you know why it is called "Bloody Lane." This was one of the severest conflicts of the war.

63rd New York	Engaged 341	59 Killed or mortally wounded	- 17+ %
	Killed 35	Wounded 165	MIA 2 Total 202 59.2%
69th New York	Engaged 317	71 Killed or mortally wounded	- 22+%
	44 killed	Wounded 152	Total 196 61.8%
88th New York	Engaged 302	38 Killed or mortally wounded	- 12+%

General Sumner, 2nd Corps, goes on leave, October, 1862

Brooklyn Eagle October 11, 1862, page 3 "High Compliment To Irishmen (Correspondence of the Philadelphia Inquirer). Boliver Heights, Oct. 9, 1862.

GENERAL SUMNER AND THE IRISH BRIGADE.

"The above able, brave and efficient officer, after eighteen months of continual and active service, has been granted a leave of absence for thirty days, and leaves this noon for his home in Syracuse. But few General officers among us have a more exalted reputation for every qualification which goes to make up a good officer, while none are more esteemed by their comrades. While at his headquarters this morning, we were witness to a very pleasant little affair, which goes to prove the esteem in which he is held by his command. The field and many of the line officers of the Irish

brigade, hearing of his retirement, in a body paid their respects to him for the purpose of bidding him farewell.

Major O'Neil, of General Meagher's Staff, was the spokesman of the party, and in a neat and appropriate speech stated the object of their calling. He complimented the General upon his conduct upon all occasions, thanking him for the many kindnesses shown to the Brigade, and in behalf of each and every member of the same command bade him God speed. The General, evidently affected by the incident, replied as follows:

Gentlemen - For this pleasant visit, for the honor you have done me in thus calling to bid me farewell, and for the kind and complimentary remarks you have been pleased to make, I thank you kindly; whether I have deserved such you best know. That I have tried to deserve them I am confident.

I cannot reply to you in the same manner and in the same eloquent style that you have been pleased to address me, from the fact that my forte does not lie in the direction of speech making. You are here as the representatives of the Irish Brigade, and while regretting the unavoidable absence of your gallant commander, I will say to him, through you, and through him to your brave comrades, that ever since my connection with them, I have considered that I belonged to them and that they belonged to me. No matter when and at what time I may have called upon them, no matter what duty they were called upon to perform, I have ever found them true, faithful and obeying instructions in every particular, while in action their conduct has been such as to entitle them to the name of the BRAVEST OF THE BRAVE.

During the progress of the late battle it was my sole regret that I was not able to be among you. But I found that I had work enough to do to stay the storm of battle upon the right. At the same time I felt secure, as I knew that the Irish Brigade were in the right place, and, even without my presence, would do what they did do well, ably and faithfully.

Again, gentlemen, I thank you for this mark of your esteem, and while bidding you farewell, can but promise you that no action of mine shall ever make you regret the honor thus done me, and should it be my lot never to return to you, I shall have always pleasant memories of the brave Irish Brigade and its gallant commander." Gen. Sumner did return to the army, but not to the 2nd Corps.

The Irish Brigade received its second set of Green Flags in December, 1862. The three New York regiments were each given one. Inscribed on these flags were the following words:

Presented
By
Citizens Of New York
to the
63rd (or 69th or 88th) N.Y.V.
3rd Regiment of the Irish Brigade.
Brigadier Gen. Thomas Francis Meagher
Commanding.
In grateful appreciation of
Their gallant and brilliant conduct in
The Battlefields of Virginia and Maryland
In the War to maintain the National Domain
And the American Union Nov. 1862

“The splendid record of the Sixty-ninth at Bull Run and the bravery of the whole brigade on the Peninsula and at Antietam inspired a group of American gentlemen led by Henry F. Spaulding to honor the Irish Brigade by presenting them with new flags...The gift of the new flags was purely the gift of American born gentlemen who had politely but firmly declined aid in the matter from any of General Meagher’s countrymen...Present were George Law, once native American candidate for President, and James Brooks, who had engaged in a notable controversy with Archbishop Hughes, who was also present. Henry Spaulding, who had originated and directed the plan, concluded his remarks in a prophetic vein:

“When the unhappy turmoil – in which they have immortalized themselves - shall have passed away, the flags of the Irish Brigade will doubtless be displayed wherever such inspiring achievements of a people’s glory will be treasured.” From Rev. Patrick D. O’Flaherty “The History of the Sixty-ninth Regiment in the Irish Brigade 1861 to 1865”

These flags still exist. The 63rd New York flag is at Notre Dame University. The 69th New York flag is in the Leinster House, Irish Parliament, Dublin, taken to Ireland in 1963, by President Kennedy. The 88th New York flag is in the 69th New York Armory, New York City. They were not carried into combat. They were presented just after the Battle of Fredericksburg, and Meagher did not want them captured from weakened Irish Brigade regiments. They have no battle damage, no bullet holes. The flag of the 63rd New York at Notre Dame has been restored. There are several other flags are in the Armory of the 69th New York National Guard, 23rd & Lexington Avenue, Manhattan, New York City.

The gallantry of Irish units in the Civil War did much to dispel the anti-Irish Catholic hatred that was so powerful before the war.

Fredericksburg, Virginia, December 13, 1862

Medal Of Honor Timothy Donohoe, Company B, 69th New York. Citation: "Voluntarily carried a wounded officer off of the field from between the lines, while doing this he was wounded himself."

From "A Visit to the Camps and Cities of The Confederate States":

"Meagher's Irish Brigade attacked Marye's Heights with a gallantry which was the admiration of all who beheld it; but they were literally annihilated by the Washington artillery and the Confederates lining the sunken road, who themselves hardly suffered any loss."

William Miller Owen, of the Washington Artillery of New Orleans:

"On they came in beautiful array and seemingly more determined to hold the plain than before; but our fire was murderous, and no troops on earth could stand the feu d'enfer we were giving them. In the foremost line we distinguished the green flag with the golden harp of old Ireland, and we knew it to be Meagher's Irish Brigade. The gunners of the two rifle-pieces, Corporals Payne and Hardie, were directed to turn their guns against this column; but the gallant enemy pushed on beyond all former charges, and fought and left their dead within five and twenty paces of the sunken road."

"A Hot Day on Marye's Heights"

The correspondent of the London Times, January 13, 1863:

"Never at Fontenoy, Albeura, or at Waterloo was more undaunted courage displayed by the sons of Erin than during the frantic dashes which they directed against the almost impregnable position of their foe. After witnessing the gallantry and devotion exhibited by these troops, and viewing the hillside, for acres, strewn with their corpses thick as autumn leaves, the spectator can remember nothing but their desperate courage. That any mortal man could have carried the position before which they were wontonly sacrificed, defended as it was, seems to me, for a moment, idle to believe. But the bodies which lie in dense masses within forty yards of the muzzles of Col. Walton's guns, are the best evidence as to what manner of men they were who pressed on to death with the dauntlessness of a race which has gained glory on a thousand battlefields, and never more richly deserved it than at the foot of Marye's Heights, on December 13, 1862."

General Robert E. Lee, in command of the Confederate Army of Northern Virginia, from G. W. Pepper "Under Three Flags," p. 333:

"Meagher on your side, though not Cleburne's* equal in military genius, rivaled him in bravery and in the affections of his soldiers. The gallant stand which his bold brigade made on the heights of Fredericksburg is well known. Never were men so brave. They enobled their race by their splendid gallantry on that occasion. Though totally routed, they reaped harvests of glory! Their brilliant though hopeless assaults upon our lines excited the hearty applause of my officers and soldiers, and General Hill exclaimed, "There are those damned green flags again!"

*Confederate Major General Patrick Ronayne Cleburne, born in County Cork, Ireland, and known as the "Stonewall Jackson of the West." Promoted several times, up the ranks from private, and killed in action at Franklin, Tennessee, on November 30, 1864.

Confederate General George Pickett wrote his fiancée:

"Your soldier's heart almost stood still as he watched those sons of Erin fearlessly rush to their death. The brilliant assault on Marye's Heights of their Irish Brigade was beyond description. Why, my darling, we forgot they were fighting us, and cheer after cheer at their fearlessness went up all along our lines."

Writing of Meagher's Irish Brigade, Colonel C. C. Sanders says: "I was in command of the Twenty-fourth Georgia regiment, with other troops, at the foot of Marye's Heights, receiving the five heroic and gallant charges of the Irish Brigade, whose prodigies of valor have filled the country with admiration. I saw the devoted Irish charge up to our breastworks, to be mowed down by a line of Confederate fire that no soldiers could withstand. I saw the Irish battalions cut down like grain before the reaper, yet the survivors would magnificently close up their ranks only to have huge gaps again cut through them. When forced back they rallied and came bravely on again, only to be riddled with bullets and torn by artillery. Their fifth charge was made with greatly decimated ranks that slowly recoiled like

the waves of a tempestuous sea. When twilight descended upon the scene, a spectacle was presented unequalled in warfare. At least three fourths of my command was composed of men of Irish descent and knew that the gallant dead in our front were our kindred of the land beyond the sea. When, one by one, the stars came out that night, many tears were shed by Southern Confederate eyes for the heroic Federal Irish dead.” - From the American-Irish Historical Society 1907

Another statement from Colonel C. C. Sanders: “The writer was an eye witness to the charge of the Irish Brigade at Fredericksburg....We were pained to see the noble fellows coming up in steady columns to be mowed down before our lines of solid flames of fire from our entrenched position behind the rock wall and the terrible fire from the Washington Artillery on Marie’s Hill, just in our rear and commanding every inch of approach. The Irish Brigade would receive our well-directed fire steady and firm, and when great gaps were cut through their ranks by the artillery, would reform under the incessant fire, come again, sink down and rise again, trample the dead and wounded under foot and press the stone wall of liquid fire, then recede a few feet and come again, like an avalanche into the very jaws of death, until strength and endurance failed, having been forced back by shell and the deadly minie ball that no human being could withstand. The field of battle ran great streams of blood, and the immortal Irish Brigade recoiled before the living wall of fire in glory. I know of no charge upon the field of battle in history to compare to the charge of the Irish Brigade at Fredericksburg, unless it was Pickett’s Division at Gettysburg, or the Old Guard at Waterloo. The immortal Irish Brigade were soldiers indeed....I have always felt proud of my one-fourth Irish blood. The Irish have fought the battles of all countries. I wish you success in your address, and three cheers for the Immortal Irish Brigade!” American Irish Historical Society “The Irish in South Carolina, Georgia, Alabama, Louisiana and Tennessee” By Patrick Walsh

Confederate Lieutenant General James Longstreet says of the charge of Meagher’s Irish Brigade: “The manner in which Meagher’s Irish Brigade breasted the death storm from Marie’s Heights of Fredericksburg, was the handsomest thing in the whole war. Six times in the face of a withering fire, before which whole ranks were mowed down as corn before the sickle, did the Irish Brigade run up that hill—rush to inevitable death.” American Irish Historical Society By Patrick Walsh

“Bob Wheat’s Confederate Irishmen of Louisiana handed down to posterity the finest tribute paid to General Thomas Meagher’s “Irish Brigade” of the Union army at Fredericksburg when they saw them advancing with their usual intrepidity against Marye’s Heights. “My God,” cried the Confederate Irishmen, “here come Meagher’s men! What a pity!”

Ella Lonn “Reconciliation Between the North and the South” p 204 from “The Pursuit of Southern History,” Edited by George Brown Tindall 1964

The Fighting Sixty-Ninth

“It was Confederate commander Robert E. Lee who first called the 69th New York Infantry the “Fighting 69th,” a sobriquet the unit, today part of the New York Army National Guard, still carries proudly.” “Tradition holds that when Lee was informed that the 69th (which had performed gallantly during the Seven Days Battles and the Peninsula Campaign as well as at Bull Run) had taken the field at Fredericksburg, he remarked, “Ah, yes, that Fighting 69th.” The rest, as they say, is history.” From the 69th New York Veteran Corps.

“The bodies of Major William Horgan, and Adjutant John R. Young, of the Eighty-eighth New York, lay nearest to the stone wall, and, by actual measurement, within twenty-five paces of the guns of the Washington Artillery.” St. Clair A. Mulholland, from Corby, Memoirs.”

“A soldier of Meagher’s Irish Brigade was the nearest body to the stone wall, and, by actual measurement, it lay within twenty-five paces of the stone wall.” Lt. William Miller Owens, of the Washington Artillery of New Orleans.

“A green sprig was ordered by General Meagher to be placed in the caps of both officers and men, himself setting the first example.” Conyngham Meagher did this because the green flags had been shot to pieces at Antietam, and had been returned to New York. The 28th Massachusetts, with the only green flag in the brigade, was placed in the center.

The Battle of Fredericksburg was the first battle for the newly formed 116th Pennsylvania. “The color sergeant, William H. Tyrell, was down on one knee (his other being shattered), but still waving the flag on the crest. Five balls struck him in succession; a dozen pierced the colors; another broke the flag-staff, and the colors and the color sergeant fell together. The orders to retire passed down the line and the command began falling back. All the color guard was down, and the flag in the grasp of young Tyrell was still on the fire-swept crest. It was soon missed, and that fearless soldier, Lieutenant Francis T. Quinlan, ran back to save it. A hundred fired at him, but quickly seizing the broken flag-staff he threw himself on the ground and, with the flag tightly clasped to his breast, rolled back to where the command was halted, a noble deed, well done.”

St. Clair A. Mulholland “The Story of the 116th Regiment”

“On December 14th, the Irish Brigade was ordered to fall in...As we marched through, the word was passed by several of the other regiments along the route, “There goes the Irish Brigade in on another charge,” and they were given great cheers.”

There was no fighting on December 14th.

“Campaigning with the Irish Brigade: Pvt John Ryan, 28th Massachusetts” Edited by Sandy Bernard

Told by Lieutenant-General Longstreet: ...After the last charge of the Federals I saw an Irish lad lying within twenty feet of one of our guns. I went to him and said: ‘Are you hurt, my lad?’ His answer was: ‘It’s the truth I am telling you, General, I have seen better days.’ He belonged to the Sixty-ninth New York Volunteer Militia. He was severely wounded and died that night.”

American Irish Historical Society Stories of the Irish Brigade

From a letter from an officer in the Irish Brigade, dated Camp near Falmouth, December 17, 1862:

“It will be a sad Christmas by many an Irish hearthstone in New York, Pennsylvania, and Massachusetts.”

New York Irish-American, December 27, 1862

The Irish Brigade lost 545 of the 1,323 men they charged with

63rd NY	Killed 2	Wounded 38	Missing 4	Loss 44
69th NY	Killed 10	Wounded 95	Missing 23	Loss 128
88th NY	Killed 17	Wounded 95	Missing 13	Loss 127
28th MA	Killed 14	Wounded 124	Missing 20	Loss 158
116th Pa	Killed 7	Wounded 67	Missing 14	Loss 88

The Irish Brigade became famous for this charge. Now you know why.

“Hancock’s division suffered nearly 2,100 dead, wounded and missing – 42 percent of his division, the largest percentage of loss to any division in any battle during the war.”

W. Scott Ingram The Battle of Fredericksburg

On the fiftieth anniversary of the Battle of Fredericksburg, Virginia,
the Irish-American, a weekly newspaper in New York City,
published the following poem, from the pen of Eleanor Rogers Cox.

VETERANS OF FREDERICKSBURG

To the surviving members of Meagher's Irish Brigade on the fiftieth anniversary of the
Battle of Fredericksburg, December 13, 1862 – December 13, 1912.

WHO ARE THESE WHO HITHER MARCHING DOWN THE VALE OF MISTY
YEARS,
FROM THE HEIGHTS WHERE NOW THE CANNON'S LIPS ARE DUMB,
FROM THE FIELD WHERE MEAGHER LED THEM, FROM THE FIELD WHERE
VALOR SPED THEM,
ALL IN BROKEN BUT UNDAUNTED COLUMN COME.

OLD MEN, BRAVE MEN, MEN OF IRISH BIRTH!
MEN WHO ON THE FOREHEAD OF THEIR DEAR NEW LAND AFAR,
SET THE NAME OF IRELAND, OF THEIR KNIGHTLY SIRELAND
THERE TO SHINE FOREVER LIKE A STAR!

FREDERICKSBURG! THE NAME IS GRAVEN ON THE MEMORIES OF MEN,
IN IMMORTAL SCRIPT OF THUNDER AND OF FLAME,
AND YOUR COMRADES THERE WHO PERISHED, LO! OF GOD AND FREEDOM
CHRISHED,
GLEEMS THEIR DEED UPON THE FAIREST HEIGHT OF FAME!

FONTENOY AND FREDERICKSBURG! INSCRIBE THEM SIDE BY SIDE;
SARFIELD, DILLON, MEAGHER, ALL MEN OF THE BRIGADE-
WHO FOR EVERY FRIENDSHIP GIVEN TO THEIR LAND BENEATH HIGH
HEAVEN
IN THE COINAGE OF THEIR HEART'S FAIR VALOR PAID.

THROUGH YOUR VEINS WHAT HERO-FIRE LEAPED UPON THAT DAY!
WHAT IMMORTAL HERITAGE OF FEAR-DEFYING MIRTH
AS WITH CHEER OUTRINGING, YOUR BOUYANT RANKS WENT SPRINGING
FORWARD TO THE BRESTWORKS O'ER CORPSE BESTREWN EARTH!

"FORWARD TO THE BRESTWORKS!" FROM OUT THE SMOKE AND FLAME
BELCHED FORTH FROM MARYE'S HEIGHTS, WE PLUCK THE DEATHLESS
WORD!
AND THE MOTTO OF YOUR GIVING SHALL BE (THE) MOTTO OF OUR LIVING
WHERESOEVER SOUND OF IRISH SPEECH IS HEARD!

BRAVE MEN, TRUE MEN, MEN OF THE BRIGADE!
MEN WHO FOLLOWED MEAGHER OF THE SWORD!
LOOK, HOW GLOWS THE GOD LIT EMBER OF THAT DAY IN FAR
DECEMBER,
HOW ITS MEMORY IN OUR INMOST SOUL IS STORED!

There are many other great poems about the Irish Brigade.
I put this one in capital letters, to make the words stand out.

The Union defeat at Fredericksburg was the fault of General Ambrose E. Burnside, in command of the Army of the Potomac. Marye's Heights was impregnable, and everyone knew it except Burnside.

March 17, 1863

The Irish Brigade celebrated St. Patrick's Day. "General Hooker proposed "three cheers for General Meagher and his Irish Brigade, God Bless Them." General Hooker was then in command of the Army of the Potomac.

The Irish Brigade would celebrate St. Patrick's Day in 1863, 1864, and 1865. They were unable to have any festivities in 1862, because they were on the march, near Manassas.

Chancellorsville April 30 – May 6, 1863

Medal Of Honor St. Clair A. Mulholland, 116 PA Citation: "In command of the picket line held the enemy in check all night, May 4 - 5, 1863, to cover the retreat of the Army."

"About 8 o'clock on Sunday morning, May 3d, General Meagher received orders to advance the brigade to the front, to support the Fifth Maine Battery. This battery was placed at the opening of the wood commanding the plain towards Chancellorsville. It was well worked, and did good execution; for not until all the men and horses were killed or wounded did it cease firing.

As the Brigade, with its General at its head, marched through the woods under a shower of shot, shell, and broken branches, they were greeted with loud and repeated cheers from the columns that lined their way."

Michael Cavanagh "Memoirs of Gen. Thomas Francis Meagher" p. 484

The 116th Pennsylvania rescued the guns of the Fifth Maine Battery, near the Chancellorsville Mansion.

"Meagher's men halted...seized the ropes, and hauled the guns to a place of safety, getting a rousing cheer for the brave act from their comrades of the First Division."

New York at Gettysburg.

As the saved battery was passing the Third Corps, General Sickles gave the men a cheer which was echoed along the entire line.

Corby, p 383

"General Sickles, who had fought bravely, is reported to have lifted his hat as he passed the Irish Brigade and called out, "Brave Irish Brigade, God Bless you."

"The guns were hauled three miles by hand." Two men of the Fifth Maine Battery who stayed with the guns received Medals of Honor.

Gettysburg July 1-3, 1863

Thomas Knox Decisive Battles Since Waterloo (1887) Chapter 14, Battle of Gettysburg, page 249 * (July 2, 1863) "Just then Caldwell's division of the 2nd Corps arrived, having been hurried forward by Meade. Cross' brigade supported De Trobriand, and Kelly's brigade supported Ward. The latter was Meagher's old Irish brigade; it rushed into the fight with its well-known gallantry, and at once stopped Anderson's advance." *See the start of this chapter below.

MacKinley Kantor Gettysburg 1952 p. 88

"These boys were lions in any fight, be it on the battlefield or in the barroom..."

“After the failure of the assaults of the 18th of June, 1864, the Second Corps was withdrawn from the front and massed in rear of the left center of the general line. Although nominally “in reserve,” the troops did not found on this fact any great expectations of a long rest, for the corps had never forgotten the remark of a member of the Irish Brigade on the occasion when Caldwell formed his division in a line of battalions in mass, behind Sickles, at Gettysburg, and the men were told that they were to be in reserve. “In resarve; yis, resarved for the heavy fightin’.” This remark, emphasized as it was by Caldwell’s experience in the wheat-field, had become proverbial in the Second Corps.”

Francis A. Walker History of the Second Corps, p. 543

Before they went into combat, Father Corby, 88th New York, gave the men absolution. A statue of Corby was placed on the battlefield in 1910.

Auburn / Bristoe Station October 14, 1863

Medal of Honor Louis J. Sacriste 116 Pennsylvania At Auburn, Va., 14 October 1863 Citation: “Voluntarily carried orders which resulted in saving from destruction or capture the picket line of the 1st Division, 2d Army Corps.” Chancellorsville, Va., 3 May 1863 Citation: “Saved from capture a gun of the 5th Maine Battery.”

“Lieutenant Sacriste, of the 116th Pennsylvania, while the Second Corps was crossing Auburn Creek, was able to hold off the advancing enemy and win the commendation of Colonel James Beaver of the 148th Pennsylvania and of General Warren, who said, “It was one of the finest instances of effective picket and skirmish work I have ever witnessed.” Lieutenant Sacriste was awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor for his skill and daring. O’Flaherty History of the 69th p. 279

“In the fall raid of Lee we came in for the opening of the brisk little surprise at Auburn, on October 14, 1863, where Stuart...spoilt our breakfast on “Coffee Hill” with his artillery, when, to show our steadiness, we went through the manual (of arms) and gave General Warren a marching salute in great shape.” New York at Gettysburg. General Warren was in command of the Second Corps.

“Captain William L. D. O’Grady, 88th New York, summed up with pride: “A march of seventy-six miles in fifty-six hours, fighting two severe engagements in one day, and having to guard the entire baggage and reserve artillery of the army. This is unprecedented in the annals of war, beating the famous march of the Fifty-second to Talavera.” Paul Jones The Irish Brigade, p. 212.

The Wilderness, May 5 - 6, 1864

“The Irish Brigade, commanded by Colonel Thomas Smyth...attacked the enemy vigorously on his right, and drove the line some distance. The Irish Brigade was heavily engaged, and although four-fifths of its numbers were recruits, it behaved with great steadiness and gallantry, losing largely in killed and wounded.” Winfield S. Hancock’s Official Report.

“The brigade went into action to the left of the Brock Road, in the dense woods near the gold mines. On that bright May day, ten field officers were mounted and in line with the five regiments. Within six weeks every saddle was empty. Six of these officers, Cols. Kelly, Byrnes, and Dale, and Majors Touhy, Lawyer, and Ryder, were sleeping in soldiers’ graves; and the other four were torn and lacerated in the hospitals.” Corby “Memoirs or Chaplain Life” (Mulholland)

Spotsylvania May 12, 1864 “Bloody Angle” Mule Shoe Salient

The Irish Brigade was in the second wave of the 1st Division. “Then such a yell as only the Old Irish Brigade can give, and in we went, like as if the devil had broke loose, over the works in among the Johnnies, and many of them lost their lives by the bayonet. We captured and sent to the rear hundreds of prisoners....They belonged to Johnsons Rebel Division.”

“The Civil War Notebook of Daniel Chisholm,” p. 15 Chisholm was in the 116th Pennsylvania

“On the night of May 11th, 1864, the Second Corps was massed at Spotsylvania. The commanding officer of the regiment (63rd NY) called for Sergeant John Dillon in a whisper as we were to surprise the enemy. The officer said if you plant them colors on the enemies fortification I will try and get you promoted. Dillon replied promotion or not there is not a man in the Irish Brigade that shall get a head of me if the Lord spares me or I will die in the attempt. At day break the troops were ordered forward with arms at a trail when the order was given to charge. Dillon struck out like a race horse with the regiment in hot pursuit. Some one shouted at Dillon to look out for Colonel D. F. Burke of the 88th regiment who had the colors rushing to the front, but Sergeant Dillon was a glorious winner, he planted the 63rd regiment colors on the enemies fortifications first. He was afterwards introduced to General Thomas A. Smyth by the commanding officer of his regiment as the first man on the enemies fortification that planted the National colors.”
Smyth was in command of the Irish Brigade at this time.

“...I have the honor to recommend Sergeant John Dillon, Co. B., 63rd Reg't N.Y. Vols Color Bearer, as worthy of a Medal of honor, he being the first man of the 63d Regt. on the 12th day of May, 1864 at Spotsylvania to gain the enemies ranks and plant the Colors of the Regt thereon.”
December 28, 1864, letter of William H. Terwilliger Capt. Cmdg Regt.

Cold Harbor, June 3, 1864

Medal of Honor James M. Seitzinger, Pvt, Company G, 116 PA Citation: “When the color bearer was shot down, this soldier seized the colors, and bore them gallantly in a charge against the enemy.” “Family records show that Seitzinger’s Commanding Officer, Captain Frank R. Leib, concurred with the award and wrote: “In the charge on Cold Harbor on the morning of June 3, 1864, our color sergeant was shot down and through the midst of the shot and shell, James M. Seitzinger, then a private, grabbed the colors and waving it called to the regiment to follow him. If in your judgment you deem him worthy of a Medal of Honor, it would be well bestowed on a gallant soldier.”

“...here at Cold Harbor, Capt. Frank Lieb made a noble charge with the One Hundred and Sixteenth Pennsylvania Volunteers, capturing works, colors, and prisoners from the enemy.”

“John Dillon...was mustered in with Company F, September, 1861; served as color-sergeant with distinction in many battles. Promoted for planting our flag on the enemy’s works at Cold Harbor.”

Conyngham, page 571 John Dillon 63rd New York. Did Conyngham mistake Cold Harbor for Spotsylvania? I think so.

Cold Harbor was a terrible defeat for the Union, but the 1st Division, with the Irish Brigade, found a soft spot in the Confederate defense. This turned into a trap. Colonel Richard Byrnes, 28th Massachusetts, in command of the Irish Brigade, was mortally wounded, while trying to get the brigade out. I can think of many instances where this happened, when troops would break a line, be faced with enemy troops on three sides, and then be forced back with heavy losses. Most of the Union troops at Cold Harbor were stopped shortly after the attack began, and never got near the Confederate lines. There were some 7 thousand casualties within a half an hour.

Petersburg, June 16th, 1864

“On the evening of June 16, the brigade swept across the plain in front of Petersburg, and pushed upon the Confederate works; and here Col. Kelly, the last of the field officers who had started with it in the spring campaign, fell, pierced through the head. The carnage up to this time had been terrible. Not only were the field officers gone, but nearly all the line officers had been killed or wounded, and more than one thousand of the men had fallen.” Corby Memoirs (Mulholland)

Consolidation with 3rd Brigade, June 27, 1864

The Irish Brigade was consolidated with the 3rd Brigade because of the heavy losses suffered during Grants' spring campaign.

"Sunday, June 26th. "They have broken up the "old Irish" Brigade, and distributed us into the other Brigades, our Regt the 116th Penna goes into the Fourth Brigade."

"Monday, June 27th. The Irish Brigade's Regiments separated this morning....The old Irish Brigade is a thing of the past. There never was a better one pulled their triggers on the Johnnies."

From the Civil War Notebook of Daniel Chisholm

The Irish Brigade was reformed on November 2, 1864. The 116th Pennsylvania was not returned to it.

Reams' Station, August 25, 1864

"At Reams' Station, August 25, the brigade added another laurel to its crown of glory, receiving the thanks and congratulations of Gen. Miles and others." - Corby, p. 390 "The Irish Brigade celebrated its third anniversary on September 4, 1864. When General Miles was called for, he rose and said he had not intended to make a speech, but he was glad of the opportunity to testify to the unflinching bravery of the Irish troops and in particular to that of the Irish Brigade at the most recent battle – Reams Station. He saw them hold their position against the advancing foe; and so destructive was their fire that the enemy was laying down his arms and retreating when the troop on the left broke, forcing the brigade to retreat."

The 28th Massachusetts "This regiment was the last to leave the intrenchments at the fiercely contested Battle of Reams' Station, August 25, 1864. They were on this occasion publicly complimented for gallant conduct by the division commander, Gen. Nelson A. Miles."

Reams' Station was a defeat for the Second Corps, weakened by heavy casualties in hard fighting.

Skinner's Farm March 25, 1865

"..the First Division of the Second Corps had a brisk engagement at Skinner's Farm, near Hatcher's Run, where again, as of old, the Brigade added fresh laurels to its former chaplets, covered itself with glory in a stand-up fight of several hours' duration, and was publicly thanked on the field. The contest was conspicuous to the rest of the corps, who appeared to be, as it were, spectators at an exciting melodrama in a huge theatre, and on every side the most flattering admiration was expressed for such a splendid spectacle of unflinching bravery." Conyngham, p 516

Sailor's Creek April 6, 1865

Medal of Honor George W. Ford, 88 NY Citation: "The capture of an enemy flag."

April 7, 1865

"And here I am proud to state, that on the night of the 7th of April, the first communication sent by General Grant to General Lee requesting a cessation of further hostilities was delivered to me by Gen. Seth Williams, Adjutant General of the Army of the Potomac, accompanied by General Miles, with instructions to deliver the same to a commissioned officer of the Confederate picket line. Accompanied by Capt. John Oldershaw, one of my aides, we passed through our lines and hailed a commissioned officer of the Confederate pickets. The importance of this letter can be realized when I say it was General Grant's first letter to General Lee, asking the surrender of his army; and, being of so much interest, I will quote it in full.

“April 7, 1865

General,

The result of the last week must convince you of the hopelessness of further resistance on the part of the Army of Northern Virginia in this struggle. I feel that it is so, and regard it as my duty to shift from myself the responsibility of any further effusion of blood, by asking of you the surrender of that portion of the Confederate States Army, known as the Army of Northern Virginia.

U.S. Grant

Lieut. General.

General R. E. Lee”

The letter was duly delivered to a major in charge of that portion of the picket line directly opposite my brigade’s line of battle, where we had fought the whole day. It was the last fight of that grand old division, then in command of Maj. Gen. Nelson A. Miles, now in command of the Department of the East.

General Robert Nugent, “New York at Gettysburg,” 1888. Robert Nugent, 69th New York, was in command of the Irish Brigade at the time he delivered this letter.

Grand Review Washington, D. C. May 23, 1865

“The Irish Brigade passed the president’s stand at two o’clock. Every man wore a green sprig of box-wood in his hat.” ... “when the little remnant of Meagher’s Irish Brigade...advanced with their green flags, and sprigs of arbor vitae in their hats, the cheering was loud and long continued...”

The Boston Pilot, from Peter Lysy “Blue for the Union & Green for Ireland”

“Clubbed muskets, bayonets, shovels and picks, and a rake”

A Regimental Duel

“An interesting episode in the history of the Brigade was the encounter at Malvern Hill, in the dusk of the evening, between the Eighty-eighth Regiment, and the well-known ‘Louisiana Tigers’-as a battalion from New Orleans, commanded by the famous Colonel Wheat, was called. They were the desperadoes of the Southern service, and, meeting the Irishmen unexpectedly at close quarters, fought with their knives and pistols. The Irishmen, ignoring their bayonets, which they had not time to fix, clubbed their muskets, and so in the dark and thick timber the savage grapple went on. In the thickest of the melee, a gigantic member of the Eighty-eighth spied a mounted officer cheering on the Tigers. Striding up to him, he grasped him with his enormous hand, and with the exclamation, “come out o’ that, you spalpeen!” fairly dragged him from his horse, and captured him.

An incident connected with this encounter fastened the brigade to General Sumner with hooks of steel. On the prolonged Seven Days’ Retreat, some muskets were of course lost and thrown away, but astonishingly few, all things considered. Every case that came to General Sumner’s notice angered him beyond bounds. When one morning an officer of the Eighty-eighth came to him with a requisition for quite a number of muskets, Sumner broke out violently, denounced bitterly men who would lose or abandon their arms, and ended by saying, ‘You shall not have those muskets, sir, I’ll take them all away from you and make your men dig trenches. Such men are not fit to carry arms.’

The officer listened calmly to this tirade and then said, ‘You’re mistaken there, General. We’ve not lost them nor thrown them away.’

‘Where are they, then?’ said Sumner.

‘Outside, sir. I thought maybe you’d be wanting to see them.’

The General went out, and found a pile of muskets

with cracked and splintered stocks, bent barrels and twisted bayonets.

‘How is this?’ said he.

‘It’s the Eighty-eighth, sir,’ said the officer. ‘The boys got in a scrimmage with the Tigers, and when the bloody villains took to their knives, the boys mostly forgot their bayonets, but went to work in the style they were used to, and licked them well, sir.’

As Sumner gazed on these speaking witnesses of desperate pluck his rugged face softened, and, generous as he was hasty, he said a few words which warmed the hearts of every Irishman in the army that heard of them. From that time we used to say that the General thought he could whip Lee’s army with the Irish Brigade and Pettit’s Battery.” Cavanagh “Memoirs of Gen. Meagher” There were other units that fought this way, and I have heard it called “clubbed muskets.”

Brigadier General Thomas Francis Meagher resigned on May 8, 1863.
“Gen. Meagher’s departure was greatly regretted. A most brilliant leader he was, who seemed at his best in the midst of a combat. He had great faith in

“buck and ball and the bayonet,”

and frequently urged on the men the use of the latter weapon.

“Take everything with the bayonet,”

was the standing command when about to close with the foe; and that well-known and oft-repeated order was the occasion of a most amusing incident. One evening the brigade commissary had received new supplies; and among other things, some barrels of molasses beside which a young Irishman was placed on guard to prevent the men from getting at it until the proper time. Seeing no one around as he walked up and down, he thought he would enjoy the sweets of life, and succeeded in picking a hole in one of the barrels with his bayonet. Then dipping the weapon into the molasses, he would draw it out and transfer it to his mouth. Meagher happened to catch the boy in the act, and reproached him in rather strong terms for stealing the molasses over which he was placed to guard. The young man was astounded and overcome with terror for a moment at seeing the general, but quickly recovering himself, he quietly pushed the blade into the syrup, pulled it out dripping with the sweet liquid, took a big lick off it and reminded the General:

“Sure, don’t ye be always telling us to take everything wid the bayonet?”

From Corby, *Memoirs Of Chaplain Life*, p 384

Told by Major Robert Andrews, long time of the Corps of Engineers, U. S. A... “On one occasion just before what became a strong fight, I was ordered out with several hundred men to throw up entrenchments. Many of my men were Irishmen who had long been at work on Northern and Western railroads and who handled shovels and picks in good shape. The Irish Brigade had been ordered to furnish protection for us, and the order was duly given by Brigadier-General Meagher to look out for us. But he being called away to headquarters just then, his men were sent to us unarmed, but with entrenching tools. The Johnny Rebs were close to us, and seeing how things were, they started for us with a mighty rebel yell. I ordered all hands to fight for their lives with their tools, as it meant Libby Prison and Belle Island for every man Jack who did not lay about him for all he was worth, and the boys did lay about with all their might. I believe the Johnnies would have stood up better for a line fight if we had all been armed with rifles and bayonets. But when they closed in, thinking they had us dead to rights, and got an everlasting slambanging with picks and shovels and crowbars from lusty Yankees, Irishmen, and Germans, it seemed to rattle them badly, and before they got over their surprise down came General Meagher, hatless and coatless, on the fast run with lots of husky officers and men with him, and before you could say Jack Robinson the Johnnies were bagged by us, every man of them, some with broken heads and fractured jaws.”

American Irish Historical Society

September, 1862 The whole army was now back under the command of McClellan. "...fell back towards the Capital and the Brigade encamped at Tenallytown, a few miles from Washington. The boys...began to swap stories of their adventures while on picket duty. A sergeant of the Sixty-ninth, after a half a day in rather close contact with the rebel cavalry, finally allowed his men a rest in haystacks under the shade of some apple trees. The soldiers stacked their muskets, relaxed in the hay and began to sharpen their teeth on the apples, which were just beginning to ripen. One of the older men, tired from his exertions, was being kidded by the boys about his ability to keep up with the young fellows. "Begora," he replied, "I was a sodger before ye were born. I was out with me pike in forty-eight and served with the Eniskeleners in the Crimea. When we beat all the Russians on the very day the Light Brigade was slaughtered."

The great victory of the Heavy Brigade under General Scarlett was told for the edification of the lads, who scarcely believed the story, since like most people, they had never heard of the victory of the Heavy Brigade, while all the world knew of the disastrous charge of the Light Brigade. Interest soon shifted to the use of the pike which had been used so successfully by the Irish in the Revolution of 1798. The old soldier began a discourse on the use of the weapon, when seeing a long handled rake leaning against one of the stacks of hay, he picked it up to demonstrate his skill. "The pike," declared the old hero, "was great to clear the way, and it gave the man on foot a chance against cavalry." "I'd want some thin' better than that again' the Black Horse Cavalry we faced at Bull Run," replied a veteran of the old Sixty-ninth Militia.

At this a patrol of a dozen southern horsemen, on their way back to their own lines, entered the orchard from the rear. The Confederates, seeing only one man in his shirt sleeves wielding a rake, advanced at a smart trot. The Irish leaped up, made a dash for their muskets and the cavalry spurred to a charge. The Sixty-ninth men banged away with their muskets. The rebels replied with their pistols and carbines. Haste made the Federals miss and the galloping horses made it impossible to hit the Irish, half concealed by the stacks of hay. The pikeman, with his rake, found himself in the open with a very determined trooper bearing down on him, saber in hand. He watched calmly the direction of the charging horse, and then moving carefully to the right to keep away from the horseman's saber arm, he kept the rake low and as the enemy attempted to veer to ride him down, brought up his rake and tumbled the rebel trooper out of the saddle. The rest of the enemy, not knowing the Union party was so small, galloped off. The Irish reloaded in haste and prepared to move off towards their own lines. The pikeman, planting his rake at a defiant angle, did a couple of jig steps and informed his comrades that had he been at Bull Run he could have checked the whole of the rebel cavalry with his hay rake.

The Confederate, a boy of about eighteen, a bit shaken up, was escorted to the Union lines. The old soldier insisted on taking his rake along, and on his return, reenacted his victory so often that someone finally burned his trophy."

Msgnr. Patrick D. O'Flaherty "History of the Sixty-ninth Regiment," page 150-51

"Lincoln and the Irish Flag"

To the Editor of the Herald:-

An anecdote about Lincoln that seems to have escaped publication is told by one of the few survivors of Meagher's Irish Brigade, Lieutenant R. H. Birmingham, late of the Sixty-ninth New York Infantry.

At Harrison's Landing after a swim, Lieutenant Birmingham went with his underclothes drying on him to see his brother, a Lieutenant in the Regiment, afterward killed at Fredericksburg. Passing by Colonel Nugent's tent he saw President Lincoln and Generals McClellan and Sumner with the Colonel. He hid, with his unseemly garb, and also with some natural curiosity. He saw Lincoln lift a corner of the Green Flag and kiss it, exclaiming, "God Bless the Irish Flag."

Lincoln was not gushy, but the roll of the buck and ball muskets of the Brigade at Fair Oaks and their conduct on the seven days "change of base" were matters of recent occurrence, and official recommendation.

(Signed) W.L.D. O'Grady
Captain Eighty-eight New York,
(Irish Brigade)

New York City, Feb. 10, 1917

Copied from New York Herald of Monday, Feb. 12, 1917

By Richard Holland, Historian 69th Regiment,
Veteran Corps, N. Y. N. G.

The Army of the Potomac stayed at Harrison's Landing after Malvern Hill. President Lincoln came there for a visit.

Winfield Scott Hancock Commander of the II Corps

"Under Hancock the high-spirited Thomas Francis Meagher, lately associated with Daniel O'Connell in the cause of Irish independence, won glories for his celebrated Irish Brigade; and Nugent, Kelly, Burke, Cavananaugh and others, along with their predecessor Corcoran, wrote into New York history the fame of the "Fighting 69th" Regiment.

From Glenn Tucker "Hancock The Superb" p. 15

"A large body of infantry advance around our right and take up position in an open field. While we were wondering what troops they were, a breeze blew open the folds of a flag and we saw the green flag of Ireland. Then we knew it was Meagher's fighting Irish Brigade, and we felt that not a man in that brigade would yield while life lasted, and where that green flag would lead it would be followed by every true son of Erin, even into the very jaws of death..." Excerpt from the Regimental History of the 63rd Pennsylvania. Seven Days' Battles, 1862. Savage Station, Malvern Hill?

"The following incident occurred on the Brooklyn Bridge. It was on the occasion of the Comte de Paris' last visit to America. The royal party were strolling along the promenade, when near the New York end of the bridge a weather-stained policeman stepped up and saluted the Count. The latter, with quick military instinct acknowledged the salutation and was about to pass on, when the policeman said: I beg pardon, sir, I have had the honor to see you before, sir, I think." "Indeed," replied the Count, "I do not remember." "It is not likely that you would remember me, sir, for I was only a private soldier in the ranks and you were a staff officer. I was at the battle of Gaines Mills with the Irish Brigade in the Army of the Potomac in 1862. You were one of Gen. McClellan's aides-de-camp, Your Highness, and I remember seeing you ride with 'Little Mac,' God bless him!" The heir of the royal Bourbons was greatly pleased. He smiled and shook the old soldier's hand cordially as he replied: "I don't remember you, my friend, but I remember the Irish Brigade. I shall never forget, and neither will your country, what brave soldier's they were."

New Zealand Tablet November 2, 1894 Dublin Notes

"December 18, 1862 Samuel L. M. Barlow, New York, to Brig. Gen T. F. Meagher. A friend from New York writes to Meagher to find out whether he was injured at Fredericksburg and to inform him that the now dismissed General McClellan often praises the courage of the Irish Brigade."

A letter in the James B. Turner Papers, New York Public Library.

New York, March 17, 1863

“My Dear General – I regret that it was not in my power to reply to the kind invitation to be present at your celebration of today, in time for you to receive it at your meeting. Please convey to your officers my warmest thanks for their kind remembrance of me, and say to them that, whatever be my future fate, I can never, so long as life lasts, forget my Irish Brigade, whose green flags advanced so steadily and nobly at Antietam. My warmest friendship and admiration will follow your fortunes wherever you may go, and I know that every field in which the Brigade may be placed hereafter will only add new laurels to those already so proudly won.

I am, my dear general, most truly your friend,

George B. McClellan.”

“When anything absurd, forlorn, or desperate was to be attempted, the Irish Brigade was called upon.”

George Alfred Townsend

The Irish Brigade enlisted about 7,700 men.

There is a new book about the Irish Brigade, published last summer. It is called:

“The Greatest Brigade: How the Irish Brigade Cleared the Way to Victory in the American Civil War.”

It is by Thomas J. Craughwell.

Some of the Irish Brigade soldiers were veterans of the British Army, and had fought in the Crimean War. Others were veterans of other armies, and other wars. Meagher was a famous Irish Revolutionary, and several men came to America to serve under him. They never forgot their love for old Ireland, and it was their hope to gain enough military experience to free it from British tyranny.

John H. Gleason, Lt. Col., 63rd NY, John W. Byron, Major, 88th NY, Dennis F. Burke, Col., 88th NY, John Warren, Captain, Company B, 63rd NY, Patrick J. Condon, Captain, Company G, 63rd NY, and Lt. Thomas O’Brien went to Ireland after the war, and were arrested there. Photos of Byron, Burke, Warren, and Condon were taken at Mountjoy Prison, Dublin, in November, 1866. I am sure there were others I don’t know about.

“The tributes to its courage and gallantry, poured upon the Irish Brigade like a torrent of rain in a thunderstorm, reveals the true nature of this brigade. A list of them would be a very long document. I can see that I must make this list.”

I wrote that in a blog by Craig Warren, on February 16th, 2008. He writes about “Irish Brigade Mythology,” which you can look up in Google.

If you know of any other tribute, let me know, so I can add it here. I am going to find every one of them I can, and place them here. I will continue to add statements to this document as I find them. I have put a lot of time and effort into this file.

Monuments

Celtic Cross, Gettysburg To the three New York regiments. July 2, 1888

116th Pennsylvania Gettysburg

28th Massachusetts Gettysburg

Father William Corby 88th New York Gettysburg, with a replica at Notre Dame University.

Antietam “Bloody Lane” Sharpsburg, Maryland October 25, 1997

Monument at Fredericksburg, Va. Sofia Street, City Dock. Rededicated Sunday, December 9, 2012.

Patrick Clooney Balybricken, Waterford, Ireland. Funds are being sought to repair it.

Thomas Francis Meagher

Statue in front of the Montana State Capitol Building

Fort Benton, Montana

Waterford

Waterford Bust of Meagher, a copy of the one on the Antietam Monument.

Father William Corby, 88th New York, gave the men of the Irish Brigade absolution, before they fought in the Battle of Gettysburg, July 2, 1863. The one hundredth anniversary of the dedication of the monument to Father Corby, on the Gettysburg Battlefield, took place on October 29, 2010. The Irish Brigade always had at least one Catholic priest with them during the war, and there were times when it had three or more.

Father William Corby, C.S.C., 88th New York Notre Dame University

Father James Dillon, C.S.C., 63rd New York Notre Dame University

Father Thomas Ouellet, S.J., 69th New York

“An incident which occurred at the Battle of Malvern Hill is related by Major Haverty...Father Ouellet, with his stole on and a lantern in his hand, was out at the very front of the line of battle. To the wounded he would say: “Are you a Catholic? and do you wish absolution?” One man, whom he asked, was badly wounded, but replied: “No, but I would like to die in the faith of any man who has the courage to come and see me in such a place as this.” Father Ouellet gave the poor man conditional baptism, and then went on in his work of mercy...”
William Corby “Memoirs of Chaplain Life,” p. 306

An attempt was made to get a Medal of Honor for Father Corby, but it failed.

My name is Robert McLernon. I live in Springfield, Virginia, and I am 58 years old. My interest in the Irish Brigade stems from my childhood. During the Civil War Centennial, 1961 – 1965, my family participated in many events, as members of the Potomac Field Music, a fife and drum corps. My Father, F.D. McLernon, was a member, and my older brother Dean played the fife. Once you have heard the fifes and drums, and smelled gunpowder, you never forget it. I had the two books I mentioned above, Robert E. Alter “Heroes In Blue And Gray,” and Thomas Knox “Decisive Battles Since Waterloo,” both of which mention the Irish Brigade.

I have researched the Irish Brigade for twenty-nine years. I first went to the Library of Congress on November 14, 1984, after reading an article in the Washington Post about the LC card catalogue.

This research is expensive, and I need funding.

A contribution in any amount will help me to continue the kind of research represented in this document. There are many things I have been unable to do because of a lack of money.

There is one thing that is very certain. I will never run out of staples!

Springfield is very close to “Camp California,” the 1861 –1862 winter encampment of the Irish Brigade. I could ride a bicycle from my house, and get there in just a few minutes.

If you are interested in the Irish Brigade, please contact me, at

Rm69nyib@gmail.com If you know anyone interested in the Irish Brigade, please give them my email address. Rm69nyib@cox.net

Thomas Knox *Decisive Battles Since Waterloo* (1887) The start of Chapter 14, Battle of Gettysburg (Page 230).

“It is not our purpose to trace the causes of the civil war in the United States of America, in the years from 1861 to 1865, a war which deluged the land with blood and brought mourning into many thousands of homes from one end of the country to the other. Each side battled for what it believed to be the right, and each displayed valor, determination, and heroism, that will forever be the pride of all Americans, with out distinction of creed or party.”

Fontenoy, 1745

The gallantry of Irish troops has been noted throughout the world. The Irish Brigade takes its name from the famous French Irish Brigade, which existed from 1691, to 1791. The battle for which they are most famous is Fontenoy, fought on May 11, 1745. Part of this Irish Brigade was sent to fight in the American Revolution, and was at Yorktown, Virginia, in 1781.

The start of Chapter XLVIII, from Corby Memoirs

The Irish Brigade In The War For The Union
by General Mulholland

“The story of the Irish race is the history of a people fearless in danger and peerless in battle. In every age in which they have appeared, in every land where they have fought, under every flag they have defended, they have added to their glory and increased their renown.

“Magnificent Tipperary!” exclaimed Sir Charles Napier, when, at Meeanee, after four hours’ hard fighting, he saw 800 Irishmen driving before them 20,000 Belooches – the bravest soldiers of India.

“Curse the laws that deprive me of such subjects!” cried George II, when he heard of the whipping that the Irish Brigade, in the service of France, had given his troops at Fontenoy.

“Men,” says George Washington, “distinguished for their firm adherence to the glorious cause in which we are embarked.”

“I thank the Irish Brigade for their superb conduct in the field,” says Gen. McClellan on the Peninsula.

Ah, yes, in every age, in every clime, it has been the same thing. In India, in Africa, in China, and on all the fields of Europe, they have left their footprints and the records of their valor.

The shamrock and the fleur-de-lis have blended together on many of the bloodiest and most glorious fields of France. Along the banks of the Guadalquivir the cry of “Fag-a-Bealac!” is echoed even to this day, and Spain still remembers Ireland’s sons and Irish intrepidity.

Italy recalls Cremons and the regiments of Dillon and Burke, sweeping before them the Cuirassiers of Prince Eugene. Before their wild hurrah, the strongest defenses of Flanders trembled and fell, and Luxembourg entered Namur when the Irish charged the works.

On every field of the old lands, and in every battle in which our own country has taken part the sons of Erin have been present, gathering fresh laurels and reflecting new lustre on their race.”

“Ye boys of the sod, to Columbia true,
Come up, boys, and fight, for the Red, White and Blue!
Two countries we love, and two mottoes we’ll share,
And we’ll join them in one, on the banner we bear:
Erin, mavourneen! Columbia, agra!
E pluribus unum! Erin, go bragh!

Song of the Irish Legion, by
James De Mille - 1861

*The Ninth Massachusetts

Whose banner of green was foremost still
With forty battles its flag was red
Reddest of all at Gaines Mill
Where the Irish Ninth in rows lay dead.

The Irish 69th Pennsylvania blunted Pickett’s Charge, at Gettysburg, on July 3, 1863. Willie Mitchel, age 19, a son of Meagher associate John Mitchel, who lived in Richmond, was killed in action while bearing the regimental flag of the First Virginia regiment in that charge.

The 69th New York State Militia fought at Bull Run, on July 21, 1861. Colonel Michael Corcoran was captured in action. He refused parole under the terms that he no longer fight for the Union. When he was finally released in November, 1862, he went North to a thunderous reception, and was told that he had been a brigadier general from the time he was captured, with full rank and pay. He raised his own brigade, the Corcoran Legion.

In 1869 the United States Sanitary Commission reported that 144, 221 Irish-born American had served in the Union army during the Civil War.

Paul Jones The Irish Brigade 1969

I have seen this number distorted in many places.

There were about 38 ‘green flag’ regiments.

There were Irish in the Confederate armies as well. I have seen the figure of 40,000 men. General Patrick Roynane Cleburne, the “Stonewall Jackson of the West,” was Irish. Dick Dowell and a handful of men fought off a Union naval attack at Sabine Pass, Texas.

In Memoriam

I have met a lot of wonderful people over the years, some of whom have passed on.

Msgnr. Patrick D. O’Flaherty 69th New York Veteran Corps

Ken Powers Historian, 69th New York Veteran Corps. Died Friday morning, July 8, 2005 age 76

Barney Kelly 69th New York Veteran Corps Interred in Calverton National Cemetery

October 4, 1935 – March 9, 1999

Michael Piltz Toronto, Ontario, Canada He had the accoutrements of Lt. Henry McQuade, 69 NY

Brian Pohanka

Vic Olney Tara Hall, Inc

Jack McCormack West Chester, Pa. Wrote an article about the Irish Brigade for the April, 1969,
issue of the Civil War Times Illustrated.

Ben Maryniak 155 NY, Corcoran Legion Chaplain Philos G. Cook Buffalo NY

Ben Maryniak Dies at 61; an authority on Chaplains Died on May 25, 2009, after a short illness

Played William Corby in "Gettysburg," and "North and South" Authority on the Fenian Brotherhood

Kevin E. O'Brien Scottsdale, Arizona Wrote several articles about the Irish Brigade

He died on January 12, 2004

Matt Hannon Chairman, Irish Brigade Monument Committee

Maurice "Bud" Scully 69th New York, North-South Skirmish Association

James Jordan Ireland

Karl M. Lehr

Ron Tunison Sculptor of the Irish Brigade Monument at Antietam. He cast the bust of Meagher.

I miss them, and wish they were still here. I could use their expertise. With them goes a lot of the history of the Irish Brigade, and I can only hope their research collections have been preserved.

The Civil War Sesquicentennial, the 150th anniversary of Civil War events, started on April 12, 2011.

At 4:30 in the morning.

Antietam September 17, 2012

Fredericksburg December 13, 2012 www.Fredericksburg150.org

Sunday, December 9, 2012, at City Dock, Sofia Street. Rededication of the Irish Brigade monument. National Park Service historian Frank O'Reilly, Ralph Victory, from the Embassy of Ireland, 75 soldiers of the New York Army National Guard's 1st Battalion, 69th Infantry, members of the 69th New York Veterans Corps, members of the Irish Defense Force, and others. I was there, and passed out flyers. I met Joe Maghe, From Riverton, Kansas, who is a collector, and Bob Hickey, of the A.O.H. Father Corby Division, Fairfax County, both of whom I have known for a long time, although I had never met Joe Maghe.

Gettysburg July 1, 2, 3, 2013

www.VirginiaCivilWar.org

Support battlefield preservation! "The soil that soaks the brave mans blood is always holy ground."

The Civil War Trust www.civilwar.org

If you Google any of the names, regiments, or battles in this list, you will get a lot of information. You should look at "Thomas Francis Meagher," "Irish Brigade," etc. You can even Google my name. You know you have arrived when you can Google yourself!

The generation that fought World War Two is called the "Greatest Generation."

What, then, should we call the generation that fought the Civil War?

Robert McLernon

6435 Bowie Drive

Springfield, VA 22150

Please Forward

Current List

May 14, 2014