



**THE HEENAN FAMILY INVITE YOU
TO THE UNVEILING OF THE MEMORIAL FOR
COLONEL DENNIS HEENAN
(G.G. GRANDFATHER)
COMMANDER OF THE 116TH PVI, 5 REG'T,
THE IRISH BRIGADE**

**CATHEDRAL CEMETERY
48TH & LANCASTER AVENUE
PHILADELPHIA, PA**

**ON SUNDAY SEPTEMBER 20, 2009
1PM**

**PARTICIPANTS IN ADDITION TO FAMILY INCLUDE
REVEREND EDWARD BRADY WILL GIVE INVOCATION
THERESA FLANAGAN MURTAGH SINGING ANTHEMS
69TH PA Civil War Reenactors - Color Guard
Andrew R. Coldren Curator Civil War Museum of Philadelphia
EMERALD PIPERS
FRIENDLY SONS OF ST. PATRICK
Ancient Order of Hibernians**

JOIN US FOR THIS MEMORABLE EVENT

**Following the Dedication Ceremonies will be a Reception at Kildares
Irish Pub in King of Prussia 2nd Floor**

Subject: REMEMBERING COLONEL DENNIS HEENAN, 116TH P.V. Irish Brigade

REMEMBERING COLONEL DENNIS HEENAN, 116TH P.V.

The sun seemed to gleam with special brilliance, and the American, Irish, and 116th Pennsylvania Volunteers flags swelled with pride in a gentle wind on Sunday afternoon, September 20th, 2009, in a green oasis in West Philadelphia. On that day, in the Cathedral Cemetery located at 48th and Lancaster Ave, members of a grand Irish-American family, the Heenans and their many kin, gathered with friends and well-wishers to observe a special ceremony: the dedication of a magnificent memorial stone for Colonel Dennis Heenan (1818-1872), who once proudly served as colonel of the 116th Regiment, Pennsylvania Volunteers.

Born in County Tipperary, Ireland, Dennis Heenan had immigrated to Philadelphia in an era when anti-Irish sentiments often led to discrimination and even violence, what we would call “hate crimes” today. However, Heenan worked hard and became a successful entrepreneur and community leader, as well as a devoted family man. When the Civil War broke out, he vigorously supported the Union cause, including recruitment efforts. He helped lead the charge of the Irish Brigade against the notorious stone wall at Fredericksburg in December, 1862, where he was wounded and disabled for further active duty. However, Heenan continued to raise money and recruits to defend his adopted country.

The Sunday ceremony was supposed to start at 1:00 pm, but inevitably there were delays. Great-great-grandson Joseph P. Heenan opened the service by saying, “We’re running a little late—about 137 years!” But what followed made up for that lost time: the singing of both the American and Irish national anthems led by Theresa Flanagan Murtagh; the reading of Colonel Dennis Heenan’s biosketch by Philadelphia Civil War Museum curator Andrew Coldren; a three-round volley salute by members of the 69th Pennsylvania Volunteers Civil War Reenactors; the unveiling of the headstone (with the help of two great-great-great-grandchildren); the placing of a wee bit of Irish sod on the grave; and blessings and prayers led by the Right Reverend Edward Brady, followed by acknowledgements. In a particularly touching moment, members of the honor guard laid the green sprigs of boxwood from their caps on the gravesite and then solemnly saluted.

There is a line in an old Irish saying (a benediction, really) that goes, “May the sun shine softly on your face...” It shone on the faces of all who were present to honor a patriotic patriarch on a beautiful day in September, 2009; perhaps somewhere Colonel Dennis Heenan felt that warmth too.

Kerry Bryan

Colonel Dennis Heenan Memorial Dedication

09-20-09

Program Schedule

- Standing of the Flags/Colors
- Theresa Flanagan Murtagh Singing the American and Irish National Anthems.
- Colonel Heenan Bio read by Andrew Coldren, Curator of the The Philadelphia Civil War Museum
- Three Round Volley Salute by Members of the 69th Pennsylvania Civil War Reenactors
- Unveiling of the Colonel Heenan Headstone
- Placing of the Irish Soil by Members of the 69th Pennsylvania Civil War Reenactors
- Blessings and Prayers by Right Reverend Edward Brady
- Acknowledgements

Dennis Heenan

Philadelphia Irish Patriot

By Don Ernsberger

Among the foremost of the leaders and heroes of the Philadelphia Irish community in the 19th century is the man we honor here today, Dennis Heenan. His lifelong record as a Civil War and community leader earned him the respect and the admiration of not only Philadelphia's Irish but of the entire populace of the city.

Born in 1818 in County Tipperary, Dennis Heenan, like so many Irishmen, emigrated to America in the troubled times of the 1840's. His arrival from a small town of Borrisokane in 1839 was the story of a young man seeking a better life. He and his brothers sought work as laborers in the building trades of Philadelphia and saw success through hard work and initiative. Rising from humble roots, Dennis Heenan began his career as a carpenter and rose in time to become a coal dealer; a liquor dealer; a hotel and tavern operator; and a public works contractor before his death in 1872. And in the midst of this rise to success Dennis Heenan helped organize, lead and fight with Irish militia companies and two famous Irish Civil War regiments.

His private life centered on family and on his love of Irish culture. He courted and married Margaret O'Donnell on June 17th 1845 at Saint John's church and with her had four children, two sons and two daughters. His sons Thomas and Dennis as well as his daughters Mary and Margaret each made contributions to the community.

These were troubled times indeed, when Dennis Heenan arrived in Philadelphia. Anti Irish and Anti Catholic sentiments were on the rise and by 1844 the very existence of the Philadelphia Irish community was in jeopardy. In that year "nativist" mobs burned down Irish catholic churches and threatened Irish neighbors with the torch. In May, "nativist" mobs had burnt down Saint Michaels and Saint Augustine churches. Over the fourth of July weekend 1844

another mob threatened to burn down Saint Philip de Neri church. Gunfire often erupted between Irish and Anti-Irish mobs.

In the midst of earning a living, starting a family and settling into America, young men like Dennis Heenan became active with local Irish militia companies for the protection of their neighborhoods. By the mid 1850's Dennis Heenan was active in leading a fund raising for several Irish militia companies in the city.

When the Civil War began in 1861, the Pennsylvania Commonwealth Militia had largely absorbed the local Irish militia companies under the framework of three Brigades each with one or two regiments with attached artillery. Dennis Heenan, who had been involved with the Hibernia Greens as Captain and served as Lieutenant Colonel of the 2nd Regiment of the second brigade under the command of Colonel P.W. Conroy. Brigadier General J.D. Miles led the Brigade.

Attached to this regiment were all of the famous Irish companies which formed the core of the Irish community of Philadelphia: "The Irish Volunteers", "The Hibernia Greens"; "The Emmet Guards"; "The Jackson Guards; "The Shields Guards" and the "Meagher Guards". Major James Harvey, long time Irish militia activist headed the artillery attachment.

As the war opened, Philadelphia was a hotbed of recruiting and drilling. Crowds of citizens pressured local businesses to stop commerce with southern states and searched for secessionist sympathizers.

On May 1, 1861 Dennis Heenan was commissioned as Lieutenant Colonel of the newly organized 24th Pennsylvania (Three Month) Volunteers Infantry and began supervising training in the village of Hestonville, near the intersection of Girard Avenue and Lancaster Pike. The Second Regiment had been thoroughly Irish with Colonel Conroy, Lieutenant Colonel Heenan, Major Harvey and ranking Captain O'Kane all outspoken Irish leaders but city politics resulted in Colonel Conroy resigning and being replaced by Welshman and Democrat ward leader and city councilman Joshua Owen.

By June 5th the regiment was ready to enter the war. By train they went to Harrisburg and then to Chambersburg and then marched to Harper's Ferry. Here they would remain until July. After the

disaster at First Bull Run most of the Pennsylvania three month regiments at Harper's Ferry refused the request to extend their terms for a week. Under the leadership of Owen and Heenan the 24th volunteered to continue service. At the end of July, the 24th Regiment returned home to Philadelphia to be disbanded. While many of the officers and men of the 24th would evolve into the 69th Pa "Irish Volunteers" under Colonel "Paddy" Owen, Lieutenant Dennis Heenan ultimately decided to organize a Pennsylvania Volunteer regiment apart from the 69th. Dennis Heenan's focus for the remainder of the year was to attend to his business concerns until June 11, 1862 when he was given authority to recruit a regiment of infantry. By July, the regiment went into camp in Jones's Woods near Hestonville and were sent on the sixth of September to Washington. After some duty as garrison troops in Fairfax Virginia as part of the Washington DC defenses, the regiment was sent to Harper's ferry where it joined the Irish Brigade under the command of General Thomas Meagher. By December 10th Colonel Dennis Heenan and the 116th regiment was on the north bank of the Rappahannock River opposite Fredericksburg. On December 10th orders were given to each man to prepare 60 rounds of ammunition and three days rations and on the 12th crossed the river and took position in town. The heroic charge of the Irish Brigade is well known to all of us and in that attack Colonel Dennis Heenan was wounded in the right hand as he approached the sluice ditch by an artillery fragment. Command passed to Lt. Colonel St. Clair Augustin Mulholland who was later also wounded.

Colonel Dennis Heenan was cared for and returned to Philadelphia. Pieces of bone had been shattered from his right hand and he would remain unable to grasp or close his little finger. His regiment had been so badly damaged in the Fredericksburg battle that it was reduced in January 1863 to a four company battalion headed by a Major. Dennis Heenan was honorable discharged January 26th 1863.

With his discharge from active service, Dennis Heenan returned home to Philadelphia to continue the war effort as the chairman of his old unit the 2nd regiment, 2nd brigade Pennsylvania State Militia.

He also continued his private business concerns. In early June 1863 he was busy with hotel management of the National Hotel in Atlantic City which prided itself as the finest excursion hotel of the vacation resort. But in late June of 1863 word was received that the Army of Northern Virginia was moving north into Pennsylvania. The officers of the 2nd Regiment, 2nd Brigade chaired by Dennis Heenan unanimously offered the services of the unit to Governor Curtin.

All of the officers of the 2nd Regiment had seen active duty in the first two years of the war and were prepared to march their men to Washington or to Gettysburg if called upon. The call never came and Dennis Heenan continued to play a key roll in raising money and support for the Irish regiments from Philadelphia.

At the end of the war Colonel Heenan had served his country well on the battlefield and on the home front. He continued to operate Hotels and taverns and became a public works contractor. He was involved in the construction of a large number of houses in West Philadelphia and was involved in a number of construction projects in Fairmount Park including the Promontory Point Tunnel. This tunnel, one hundred and forty feet in length and forty one feet in width, remains a famous landmark of the city. Dennis Heenan resided at 4700 Lancaster Avenue in West Philadelphia during this period.

In his post war years Dennis Heenan was active with the Hibernian Society and with the Friendly Sons of Saint Patrick in Philadelphia.

In July 1872 Dennis Heenan was involved in a carriage accident which resulted in fatal injuries. While riding in his carriage on Belmont Avenue in Fairmount Park at 6:30 in the evening he was thrown from the carriage and sustained a skull fracture and other injuries. He died of these injuries at his home at about 11: 00 o'clock that evening on the fourth of July 1872 and was buried in Cathedral Cemetery.

The Heenan legacy continued long after his death and that legacy continues today as witnessed by those here to honor him and their stories of struggle and success. His wife Margaret lived until June 24, 1903.

His oldest son Dr Thomas E. Heenan served for some 25 years in the US Diplomatic Corps with posting in Odessa Russia. His second son Dennis continued to be involved in the hotel and tavern business as did his son and grandson. His daughter Mary married St. Clair Mulholland, of Civil War fame. His daughter Margaret married had ten children and settled in Illinois. Today, Dennis Heenan's great grandchildren number over 50 and his great great grandchildren over 120.

The long legacy of the Heenan family is honored today as we gather here to honor a Philadelphia Irish Patriot – Colonel Dennis Heenan. Builder; Civil War Hero; Hibernian and Family man..... A Towering figure in the records of the Philadelphia Irish.

Prayers from blessing ceremony.

Given by The Rev. Edward E. Brady FSOSP

In Psalm 92 we read: "It is good to give thanks to the LORD, to sing praise to your name, Most High, To proclaim your love in the morning, your faithfulness in the night, With the ten-stringed harp, with melody upon the lyre. For you make me jubilant, LORD, by your deeds at the works of your hands I shout for joy. How great are your works, LORD! How profound your purpose!

These verses of Psalm 92 capture why we gather this day. We gather to acknowledge the profound purpose that God had:

- ◊ in the life of Colonel Dennis Heenan;
- ◊ in the life of his wife Margaret;
- ◊ in the lives of his sons Dr. Thomas E. Heenan and Dennis Heenan
- ◊ in the lives of his daughters Mary and Margaret.
- ◊ in the lives of his 50 plus Great Grandchildren
- ◊ and in the lives of his 120 plus Great Great Grandchildren and their descendants.

We pray this day in gratitude for the citizens of County Tipperary. We pray for all soldiers and first responders who defended and continue to defend our the rights we cherish today, especially the rights to gather in public and the right to pray freely, as we do at this moment.

Back during the Civil War we called certain acts as, Anti-Irish or Anti-Catholic sentiments. Today we call them hate crimes. So, as this Irish blessing is offered, let us pray that all races will one day live in the peace and harmony as Jesus Christ intended.

There are Irish Blessings such as: Do Not Stand at My Grave and Weep, or In Time of Sorrow. However the one chosen for today is From Saint Patrick's Breastplate where it states:

Christ be with me / Christ before me / and Christ behind me.

Christ in me / Christ beneath me / and Christ above me.

Christ on my right / Christ on my left.

Christ where I lie / Christ where I sit / and Christ where I arise.

Christ in the heart of every human who thinks of me.

Christ in the mouth of every human who speaks of me.

Christ in every eye that sees me.

Christ in every ear that hears me.

Salvation is of the Lord.

Amen.

Blessing of the Memorial: Lord Jesus Christ, by your own three days in the Tomb, you hallowed the graves of all who believe in you and so made the grave a sign of hope that promises resurrection even as it claims our mortal bodies. Grant that everyone who looks upon this memorial + will be reminded of the sure hope that Colonel Dennis Heenan and his family, who sleep here in peace will be awakened to glory, for you are the resurrection and the life. Then they will see you face to face and in your light will see light and know the splendor of God, for you live and reign for ever and ever. Amen.

Our response after each prayer is: 'Lord, Hear our Prayer'.

Lord, you consoled Martha and Mary in their distress; draw near to you all who remember Colonel Dennis Heenan this day. We pray to the Lord. R/.

You wept at the grave of Lazarus, your friend; comfort those who honor the Heenan family this day. We pray to the Lord. R/.

Remember all those who have defended and continue to defend our freedoms in the United States of America. We pray to the Lord. R/.

Increase our faith and strengthen our hope, in the Most Blessed Trinity. We pray to the Lord. R/.

For all who journey in the pilgrimage of life, especially those who emigrated from Ireland to the United States of America. Keep all of us faithful in your service. We pray to the Lord. R/.

Kindle in our hearts a longing for heaven. We pray to the Lord. R/.

Keep us always close to Our Lady of Knock. We pray to the Lord. R/.

Blessing of the Flags

Most gracious God, we ask you to bless these Flags, through the intercession of Saint Brigid, Our Lady of Knock, and Saint Patrick. May these flags always be a proud reminder to the Heenan Family of their ancestry and of the faith handed on to them from Ireland. We ask this through Christ our Lord.

Our Father . . . / Hail Mary . . . / Glory be . . .

Given this Twentieth Day of September 2009.
Reverend Edward E. Brady, FSOSP



Colonel Dennis Heenan Memorial Dedication

09-20-09

Acknowledgements

On behalf of all the Heenan Descendants there are a number of people they'd like to offer their sincere thanks

- To Theresa Flanagan Murtagh for Singing the American and Irish National Anthems.
- Members of the Friendly Sons of St Patrick in particular President Ed Last, Secretary Drew Monaghan and Members of the Emerald Pipe Band Del Campbell and Joe Tobin
- Members of the Ancient Order of Hibernians with special note of thanks to Div 3 of Montgomery County who since their origination have taken the namesake of the 116th Pennsylvania Regiment/Irish Brigade.
- A special note of thanks to Mr. Don Ernsberger, Author, Civil War Historian and to all the Members of the 69th Pennsylvania Civil War Reenactors, who without hesitation, signed on to help in all of today's ceremonies and who perform these services throughout the years. They truly keep the window of history open for all of us.
- To Andrew Coldren, Curator of the The Philadelphia Civil War Museum and the organizations here with us today including The Grand Army of the Republic, The Sons of Union Veterans, The General Meade Society.
- To all the extended Heenan Families, The O'Donnell's, The Nolan's, The Donnelly's, The Doyle's, The McPoyles, The Barrs, The Walsh's, The McGuiness, The Gallagher's, The Lannen's, The Mulholland's, The Dobbin's, The Bellwoars, The Bonners and to The Monaghan's of Havertown who hail from the famous clans of O'Donnell's and Nolan's.
- Lastly to the souls of all the Civilian and Military individuals that followed in Dennis Heenan's Leadership, in his name, we thank you again today.

Note of Thanks:

- Right Reverend Edward Brady, who brings in addition to his blessings a deep respect for this occasion.
- To Michael Higgins who lives in Belfast Ireland and dedicates his effort's into paying tribute to the Philadelphia Irish Civil War Veterans.
- To the Harvey Family Descendants joining us here today, whose GG Grandfather served in the various Irish Militias with Dennis Heenan and joined Dennis and his brothers in an occasional pint.
- To the Women of the Veterans whose burden in attending to the home affairs was daunting.



Heenan Memorial



Father Brady blesses memorial.



Theresa Flanagan Murtagh sings the national anthems of Ireland and the United States to the assembled family descendants and members of the 69th P.V.I. Regt. re-enactors .



Salute from the 69th P.V.I. Regt. re-enactors.



The 69th P.V.I. Regt. re-enactors attended the ceremony.



Two Emerald pipers leading the 69th P.V.I. Regt. re-enactors.



Joseph Heenan gt. gt grandson of Colonel Heenan along with nephews Brendan and Tyler unveil the headstone,



Joseph Heenan and senior officers of the 69th P.V.I. Regt. during the service.



No doubt men dressed in the Union blue walked away in sadness from the graves of many comrades they buried in the Old Cathedral Cemetery in days long gone by. Corporal Alex Peoples of the 69th P.V.I. Re-enactors and ex U.S. Army Vet. captures the reflective mood so well.



Emerald Pipers Del Campbell and Joe Tobin lead the 69th P.V.I. Regt. to the ceremony.

