



## **Ancient Order of Hibernians in Ohio State Board**

### **Report of the State Historian and Irish Language Chairman**

**April 2, 2005  
Youngstown, Ohio**

**Reverend Father, Worthy State President, Respected State Board Officers, and Brothers:**

Although many Catholics served in the U.S. military prior to the 1800s, it was not until then that the need for Catholic chaplains became evident. The man credited with being the first Catholic priest commissioned as a chaplain and officer in the U.S. Armed Forces was Father Adam Marshall, S.J. He served aboard the USS North Carolina from December 22, 1824 until his death on board ship, September 20, 1825.

In the 1846 war with Mexico, the number of Catholic soldiers in the U.S. military had dramatically increased. The largely Protestant officer corps had little use for their German and Irish Catholic soldiers, who they singled out for cruel and often unjust punishments. As a result of this abuse, hundreds of Catholic soldiers deserted to Mexico and joined the Mexican army. Catholic bishops formally complained to President James K. Polk about the unjust treatment. Polk met secretly in Washington with Bishop John Hughes of New York, Bishop Michael Portier of Mobile and Bishop Peter Kenrick of St. Louis. He requested that the Bishops assign two Catholic priests to the Army to serve as chaplains. They assigned two Jesuits, Father John McElroy and Father Anthony Rey. Father Rey was killed during the war. Father McElroy survived and later founded Boston College.

During the U.S. Civil War about 40 Catholic priests served the Union Army and about 28 served the Confederacy. Many chaplains, particularly in the Confederacy, served without any official recognition or commission.

On April 6, 1917 the United States declared war on Germany. Recognizing the need for more chaplains, the U.S. Catholic bishops formed the National Catholic War Council. The bishops assigned quotas to each diocese based on the number of priests in the jurisdiction. They also appealed directly to religious orders to contribute what personnel they could. According to the U.S. Military Archdiocese, at the end of the war a total of 1,026 priests were serving as chaplains with the armed forces. In addition, there were 165 priests serving without commission as civilians paid directly by the Knights of Columbus. About 30% of all chaplains in the First World War were Catholic priests.

Seventeen Catholic chaplains died in service during the war. The National Catholic War Council went through a couple of name changes after the war and eventually evolved into the present United States Conference of Catholic Bishops.

The most famous, and most decorated, Catholic chaplain of the Great War was “Fighting” Father Francis Patrick Duffy. Father Duffy, Senior Chaplain of the 42<sup>nd</sup> Division was awarded the Distinguished Service Cross, the Distinguished Service Medal and the French Croix de Guerre for his heroic actions in France.

Please remember our past and current military chaplains in your prayers.

### **Activities of the State Historian**

1. On February 14, 2005 Monsignor Donal A. O’Carroll passed away. Monsignor was past National Chaplain of the Order and was currently Ohio State Chaplain, a position he has held for over 20 years. He was a holy priest, a true Irishman and a worthy member of our Order. I attended Monsignor’s visitation at St. Mary’s Church in Marietta on February 18, 2005. I also had the sad privilege of writing Monsignor’s obituary that will appear in the next Hibernian Digest. Many thanks to Brother Pat Kelly, State Treasurer and President of the Monsignor Donal O’Carroll Division in Marietta, for his help and assistance in putting the obituary together. May the good Monsignor rest in peace.
2. **The nationwide search for Hibernian windows continues to be successful.** In February 2005, the National Archivist issued a news release regarding our search efforts. The release was picked up by the Associated Press and many major Catholic publications. The Associated Press, Our Sunday Visitor and, most, interviewed me regarding the window project. Most recently the Toledo Blade I also spoke with the religion editor at the Toledo Blade. As a result of the press release, many articles appeared across the country over the St. Patrick’s week regarding our search. I counted the AP article in at least 28 different US states, as well as, England and Scotland.



Information is still coming in, but, so far, the articles have resulted in the confirmation of over **10** windows nationwide, including one new window for Ohio. We currently have located **238** Hibernian windows. A new window has been located in Ohio. It’s at St. Colman of Cloyne Church in Washington Court House, Ohio, which is part of the Columbus Diocese. I do not have photographs of the window yet. This puts the number of windows in Ohio at **21**. We are tied for third place with Connecticut and Illinois. In first place is Massachusetts with **53**, and then Pennsylvania is in second place with **26**. Reports are that Pennsylvania is getting nervous about Ohio’s progress.

I am continuing to investigate the status of the St. Augustine window at New Straitsville, Ohio and the search for a portrait donated by the A.O.H. to St. Patrick’s Church in London, Ohio is continuing. So far, neither search has turned

up anything new. **Please urge everyone in the divisions to continue to assist in locating these windows in Ohio.**

3. I responded to an inquiry regarding past State Treasurer Edward F. Hannan of Ironton. A relative was searching for any information we had on him. Was able to provide her with a copy of a photograph from an old convention program. This turned out to be the first photograph she had seen of Hannan. We don't always get that lucky with our old records.
4. On November 6, 2004 I attended the 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebration of the Patrick Pearse Division in Columbus.
2. The Catholic Record Society published my biographical article on the life of Timothy S. Hogan, Past State President of the AOH and 25<sup>th</sup> Attorney General of the State of Ohio. This was in their November and December 2004 issues.
3. On Thursday, March 25, 2005 the Columbus Dispatch published my letter of complaint to the editor regarding their St. Patrick's Day article. The article made several racist associations about the Irish and drinking on St. Patrick's Day that were offensive and defamed the Irish.
7. On Saturday, March 26, 2005 I spoke to the Franklin County Historical and Genealogical Society regarding the history of the Ancient Order of Hibernians.

**Respectfully submitted in Friendship, Unity and True Christian Charity,**

**J. Michael Finn**  
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**and Irish Language**  
**Chairman**  
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