



# Hibernian News



Volume 8 Issue 10

**For the Price of Ireland: The Fenian Invasions of Canada (Part 3 of 3)**

October 2007

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From this position, Starr also controlled the Buffalo-Huron railroad depot which would prevent the British from reinforcing against the Fenian Army by train. Starr's men busied themselves with ripping up railroad tracks and cutting telegraph wires to further frustrate Crown attempts at a counterattack. O'Neill and his force crossed shortly after Starr and established a defensive positions extending from Fort Erie to Frenchman's Creek. O'Neill originally intended to move due west and seize the town of Port Colborne – considered the most likely assembly point for Crown forces in the greater Niagara area and a key rail and logistics center. Scout reports coming back to O'Neill indicated that while Crown forces were gathering in Port Colborne, a sizeable force of experienced British regulars was massing to his northwest in the vicinity of Chippawa; combined strength of the Port Colborne and Chippawa forces was estimated at 3,000 men (with supporting artillery). O'Neill quickly understood that the British intended to execute a double envelopment – a "pincer movement" against the Fenians, by launching simultaneous attacks from Port Colborne and Chippawa against Fort Erie. O'Neill was faced with the daunting task of single-handedly defeating an enemy that outnumbered him nearly 3 to 1. He decided upon a bold course of action. Assessing the Port Colborne force, largely inexperienced militia, as the weakest element, he would feint an attack from Fort Erie against the

stronger force at Chippawa. Anticipating that the British would interpret this as his main attack and reinforce Chippawa with the Port Colborne units, he would then turn southwest, ambush the reinforcements and move into the town of Port Colborne unopposed. He would then be in an excellent position to defeat any subsequent attacks from the stronger Chippawa units.

On the evening on 01 June, O'Neill began his diversionary move north towards Chippawa. As he had predicted, the British began moving the units from Port Colborne to reinforce. At about 0300 hrs on the morning of 02 June, O'Neill stopped short of Chippawa and turned his army west, marching to a small village called Ridgeway where he prepared to ambush the British coming from Port Colborne. Miscommunication on the part of the Crown forces facilitated O'Neill's plan, as the actions of the Port Colborne commander were not properly synchronized with the forces at Chippawa. The Port Colborne forces were also poorly supplied with ammunition, with most soldiers carrying only 60 rounds apiece with them. O'Neill had portions of Starr's command as a security element in front of his positions. The intent was to have this screen engage the Port Colborne forces and then withdraw

Continued on pg. 3

## *"Let Us Do the Cooking"* **Authentic Irish Breakfast**

**October 14, 2007**

An authentic, delicious Irish breakfast is now being served every second Sunday of the month at an unbelievable price of only \$7.00 p/p!

**9:30 AM-12:30 pm**

**Something for the whole family!!!**



The traditional breakfast consists of Eggs, Irish Bacon, Irish Sausages, Home-fried Potatoes, Black & White Puddings and the Grilled Tomato...a must! Children's Breakfasts of Pancakes & Sausage are only \$3.00 each. Juice, coffee and tea included.

(The next Irish Breakfast will be held on November 11th)

## A Message from the AOH Division 2 President

Dear Brothers and friends,

October 2007

Autumn is here and with it comes cooler evenings. Time to get our Irish sweaters out again! I've often wondered whether it's the wool or Irishness of the sweater that keeps us warm. Either way, they are by far the best garments ever made. Score another one for the Irish!

This month is filled with Irish history, but Oct. 20, 1933 is truly one date of importance. On this day, the Irish Free State government purchased the copyright to "The Soldier's Song" (by Peadar Kearney) and adopted it as their national anthem. Even those of us who can't carry a tune (and I am one of them) sing it loudly and proudly in America today.

Our September Irish Breakfast was a huge success. The crew is looking forward to serving everyone again on Oct. 14th. Plans for the Adult Halloween party on the 26th are coming together and should prove to be a good time. It's great to see everyone on Friday nights and the soups and other culinary delights are wonderful! Thanks to all who made it possible.

We're always looking for new members. Feel free to pick up some applications for family and friends.

"Love is never defeated, and the history of Ireland proves it! (Pope John Paul II, to the people of Galway, Sept. 1979). See you at the Oct. 17th meeting.

God bless all,  
Michael Shannon,  
President, Division 2

## Upcoming Events

(subject to change)

- Oct 14** Irish Breakfast 9:30—12:30. \$7.00 adults - \$3.00 children.
- Oct 17** Monthly Meeting - Hall: 7 pm. Members are encouraged to attend.
- Oct 20** State AOH Bowling Tournament—12:30. Chester. \$30 per person—mixed doubles format
- Oct 21** Orange County AOH Meeting—2:00 pm. Division 2 Hall
- Oct 26** Adult Halloween Party—7:00 pm
- Oct 27** Children's Halloween Party—12 noon—3:00 pm.

## Congratulation Major Degree Members

Congratulations to our division members James Kiernan, Ronald Bashista, Robert Morgan, John Marlow, Timothy Hogan, Greg Kopf and Ken Martin who completed their Major Degree at Burke H.S. on Sunday, September 23rd. Well done!

## Adult Halloween Party

### Adult Halloween Costume Party

Friday, October 26, 2007  
7:00 pm—11:00 pm

Music, Door Prizes,  
Best Costume Prizes

Sharing Table, Snacks,  
Ghoulish Drinks,  
50/50 Raffle

Food sign-up sheet at hall



## Children's Halloween Party

### Children's Haunted House and Halloween Party

Saturday  
October 27, 2007  
12:00 PM—3:00 PM

Piñata ~ Games ~ Prizes ~ Snacks  
Haunted House & Horror Show

The kids love it! Don't let them miss out on all the fun.  
Admission—please bring one can or non-perishable item which will be donated to the local food pantry. Monetary donations accepted.



## Irish Night at Division 1

The Wolfetones' Derek Warfield and The Sons of Erin Band

Saturday, November 10 2007 at 8pm  
Division 1 Hall, Monroe, New York

Also:

The Linnane Family  
AOH Pipes And Drums + Irish Dancers  
DJ Entertainment by Byrne Bros. DJ!

Tickets on sale now \$20 Advance or \$25 the day of the show

Available from the bar at Division 1 hall  
Details: 845-800-2124



## AOH-DJW Corp Bylaws

The officers of the AOH—DJW Building Corp have created a Bylaw Committee comprised of Kevin Cummings (Chair), John Greehy, Denis Malone and Michael Shannon. The committee is accepting suggested bylaw changes, in writing up until **November 15, 2007**. A copy of the present corp. bylaws is available for viewing at the hall. Please participate in this important endeavor by reviewing and suggesting needed changes.

## Orange County AOH Board Meeting

The Orange County Fall Board meeting will take place in Division 2 Hall in Cornwall on **Sunday, October 21, 2007** at 2:00 pm. All Division 2 members are encouraged to attend this important meeting.

## For the Price of Ireland (cont'd from Pg. 1)

thereby luring them into O'Neill's ambush. The plan worked well and by 0800 hrs on 02 June, ten companies worth of the Queen's Own Rifles (QOR) had fallen into the trap. Suspecting a potential mounted attack by the Fenians, the QOR formed into defensive squares and soon broke ranks under a bayonet assault by O'Neill's men. Crown casualties at Ridgeway were 18 dead, 75 wounded and 6 captured. Fenian losses were 7 killed and 17 wounded. Concerned with maintaining an escape route back to the United States and unsure of the most recent disposition of the British force at Chippawa, O'Neill then proceeded back to Fort Erie. He was confronted there by the British forces which were massing on the position from the north and northwest. By this point, the US government had sealed the border with Canada, ensuring the O'Neill's force would receive no additional support. Being low on ammunition, realizing that he would receive no further reinforcements from Buffalo and having no idea of the status of Spear's planned attack from Vermont, O'Neill negotiated a truce with Crown officials. British and Canadian prisoners were released and O'Neill began to plan his withdrawal back across the Niagara. US officials allowed a canal boat to be towed across the river to evacuate O'Neill and his men. At 0200 hrs on 03 June, the Fenians left Canada for their short journey back to US soil – the war had lasted three days. Or had it? On 06 June, Spear launched his assault on Lower Canada from St. Albans, Vermont. Capturing several towns, including St. Armand and East Stanbridge, the Fenians anticipated that the Irish population of Montreal would support by rising up in revolt against the British; this did not happen. Approximately 10,000 Canadian militiamen reinforced British troops in Montreal and British warships sat in the St. Lawrence River, prepared to bombard the city. Spear withdrew his force back to Vermont, only to be greeted by US officials who confiscated the Fenian weapons. The Fenian Invasion of Canada had ended.

What did William Randall Roberts's scheme to free Ireland really achieve? For his exploits at the Battle of Ridgeway, O'Neill gained a temporary popularity among Irish nationalist circles in the US and was elected to the Presidency of the Fenian Senate. He, Spear and their men received virtually no punishment for their actions from US officials. O'Neill would attempt two other raids into Canada – one in 1870 and another in 1871. These raids did not approach the scale of the 1866 undertaking and both failed dismally. On 06 June 1866, as Brigadier General Spear and his 2,000 Fenians crossed the border into Canada, the US government negotiated a settlement with the British government. In exchange for \$15 million in British reparations for support of the Confederacy during the American Civil War, the US government would enforce the

Neutrality Act of 1818 and prevent further Fenian incursions into Canada. This explains why Spear's army had their weapons confiscated by US officials upon the return to Vermont. In light of these events, it might be said that the country the benefited the most from the Fenian effort to free Ireland was the United States.

This article was written by Ronald J. Bashista with material gathered from Thomas Keneally's *The Great Shame – And the Triumph of the Irish in the English-Speaking World*, Nan A. Talese, Publisher, 1999, as well as various internet sources associated with the Fenian Raids. To read the three part article in its entirety visit: [www.div2aoh.org/fenian.htm](http://www.div2aoh.org/fenian.htm)

## NYS A.O.H. Mixed Doubles Bowling Tournament

October 20th 2007

Colonial Lanes, Chester, NY

12:30 pm Registration...1:00 pm start

\$30.00 p/p includes a buffet dinner and awards at Division 1 Hibernian House in Monroe NY  
(Join us for dinner only—\$15.00 p/p)



### Dinner, Awards and Live Music

*Penne ala Vodka w/Shrimp  
Sausage and Peppers  
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Meatballs*

*Roast Pork Marsala  
Roasted Reds*

*Vegetables of the Season*

*Bread, Salad, Coffee, Tea, Wine and Beer*



**Trophies will be given for Highest Team, Lowest Team, Highest Individual**

Lane Sponsors are \$25.00 per organization/person

For more information please contact—

Patrick Burns, Chairman Sports Committee  
(315) 406-8226

-or-

Dennis Browne, Chairman Charities and Missions (845) 774-9436

Bowling Reservations by 10/13/07



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