THE WEARING O' THE GREEN

ST. PATRICK'S DAY IN NEW HAVEN, CONNECTICUT 1842 - 1992

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New Haven's Book of Days

FOR 350 years, New Haven, Connecticut, has truly been a new haven for immigrants. Its earliest refugees were its Puritan founders who sought to build both a godly city and a thriving seaport around the beautiful harbor at Quinnipiac, as the Native Americans called the place. To this colonial seaport there came, too, an occasional German doctor, French or Irish sea captain, Jewish or Italian merchant and many African-American men and women brought in bondage. Later still, when New Haven had become a bustling manufacturing and transportation hub there came wave upon wave of immigrants from the four corners of the Earth, all seeking the same things — political and religious freedom and economic opportunity. By the middle of the 19th century, almost a quarter of the city’s population was foreign born and by 1930, 70 percent of its people were either immigrants or the sons and daughters of immigrants.

Nowhere is the city’s immigrant heritage more evident than in its folk festivals. From late January when Scots celebrate the birthday of Robert Burns and Chinese ring in their new year to Black History Month in February through summer festivals of Puerto Ricans, Poles and Greeks to the Italian community’s Columbus Day festivities, the calendar in New Haven is one long listing of special days on which immigrants and their descendants celebrate their ethnic heritage and their Americanness.

The principal folk festival of New Haven’s Irish, the celebration of St. Patrick’s Day, began, at least in public, 150 years ago this year. It may well have begun, in private, long before that. As early as the 1650s, city records reveal that there were Irish workers employed in
the city’s first manufacturing concern, the iron foundry on Lake Saltonstall. Given the love of most Irish people for their patron saint, it is likely the rude cottages of these early immigrants reverberated with the sound of the fiddle and the dancing of jigs and reels on St. Patrick’s Day long before anyone thought about parading through city streets to honor their patron saint.

The public celebrations of the day which began in 1842 have always been more than just marching, singing and dancing. They have been in reality a 150-year chronicle of the lives and times of New Haven’s Irish people, a history of their causes and concerns, their hopes and fears, their triumphs and failures.

The Irish immigrants of the 1840s who organized a St. Patrick’s Day parade were a struggling minority staking out their claim to a share of the American dream in the face of open and sometimes violent discrimination. It is easy for those of us who march in or watch the gala parades of the 1990s to forget that there was a time when it was dangerous for Irishmen to march through the streets of New Haven. One description of a St. Patrick’s Day parade in the city in the early 1850s states, “Trees were disfigured with effigies of the good saint bearing around his neck bags of potatoes, stumps of cabbage and other similar tokens of derision, both of the saint and the race.”

Later, when the Irish had won tolerance in the community at large, the St. Patrick’s Day observances sometimes became the occasion for lobbying for their causes and voicing their complaints. In 1910, the celebration featured a confrontation between Connecticut Gov. Frank B. Weeks and a chaplain of the Ancient Order of Hibernians who charged that the governor ignored Irish-Americans when it came to patronage appointments. And speakers even used the occasion to chide the Irish for petty bickering among themselves, for not supporting their own, for dissolute habits or for being too easygoing and not as industrious as their Yankee fellow townspeople.

A perennial theme of St. Patrick’s Day observances has been the seemingly never-ending struggle for freedom and prosperity in Ireland itself. The well-being of the land they left behind has never been far from the minds and hearts of New Haven’s Irish-Americans, even those for whom that land was but a distant memory known only through faded photographs and the reminiscences of parents or grandparents. In the 1860s, for example, New Haven was a hotbed of Fenianism, the movement that attempted to free Ireland by force. The day before St.
Patrick's Day in 1865, one city newspaper reported, "The Fenian Brotherhood make their first appearance in public parade to-morrow in the procession for the observance of St. Patrick's Day. They will appear as far as possible with muskets ..." Just a few months later, those same Fenians boarded trains at New Haven for an expedition up into Vermont and an abortive invasion of Canada. Similarly, in the 1880s, when Ireland was racked by tenant-farmer revolts, St. Patrick's Day in New Haven was marked by huge rallies to form local chapters of the Land League and to raise funds for evicted families. Still later, over the St. Patrick's Day weekend in 1922, New Haven was host to a statewide convention that raucously debated the issue of Irish independence vs. Irish Free State status.

This little book, the first but hopefully not the last published by the Connecticut Irish-American Historical Society, attempts not only to tell the story of the outward manifestations of St. Patrick's Day in New Haven, but to catch in some small way the pride, joy, patriotism, religion, conviviality, devotion and plain old homesickness that have moved New Haven's Irish-Americans to make this day such an important folk festival in the city's book of days for 150 years.

The book makes no pretense of being a deep or penetrating historical or sociological study of the St. Patrick's Day phenomenon in America nor even in New Haven. That we leave to the professional scholars with the consoling thought that deep and penetrating historical and sociological studies not infrequently ignore what is most important — the words and deeds of the everyday people who make history.

The book is uneven in the sense that there is much detail for some years and little detail for others. In certain cases, this is because particular years seem pivotal and deserve more detail; in other cases, it is simply because not a lot of information has come to light about the celebration for those years.

The sources for the book are primarily the city's newspapers: the Herald, Register, Journal-Courier, Union, Palladium. For the most part, those papers have narrated faithfully the events of the day and in their editorial columns and feature articles have added perspective to the events. Because contemporary newspapers are the major sources, footnotes have not been used. Those wishing to trace further the events described need only consult the bound volumes or microfilms of the papers available at the Connecticut State Library in Hartford and the Yale University libraries.
Many people contributed in many ways to the publication of this book. I thank them. They include: Joan Moynihan, George Waldron and Michael Lynch, who along with the author founded the Connecticut Irish-American Historical Society in 1988. Without them the book never would have been. Jeanne Roche Hickey, current president of the society, has been a source of constant encouragement and guidance. Very early on, when the research was still being done, James K. Reardon came forward with financial help. Later, others, especially attorney Hugh Keefe, responded to an appeal for the money needed to ensure that the book would be published.

Marylou Conley, whose artistic talents equal if not surpass her talent for Irish dancing, designed a lovely cover, special pages for the beginning of each chapter and sketches of people and buildings and offered advice on the book's design. Librarians Barbara Costello of the Connecticut State Library and Judith Schiff of Yale University deserve special thanks. Vincent and Mary McMahon provided computer expertise along with large doses of laughter and friendship. Phyllis Swebilius did a wonderfully thorough job of proofreading, and in her perky and good-natured way greatly improved the manuscript. Patricia Heslin lent a valuable second set of proofreading eyes and took on the difficult and thankless task of keeping track of finances. Bob Leeney offered valuable suggestions. Bill Delaney and Rita Kelly did some much-needed translating. Jim Campbell, whose roots are in the rich Scots-Irish heritage, and Carol McHugh-Grieger, were, as usual, extremely helpful at the New Haven Colony Historical Society. My daughters, Tracey Hogan Petit and Maureen Hogan Reed, are constant sources of inspiration, humor and joy not only during a project such as this, but all the days of my life.

Finally, and most important, thanks go to the thousands and thousands of New Haven Irish-Americans who for 150 years have kept burning brightly the lantern of their heritage. Above all, "The Wearin' o' the Green" is their book.
1840s.

The Tradition Begins
On Jan. 25, 1841, a few Irish immigrants who had settled in New Haven organized the Hibernian Provident Society, the first Irish-American organization in the city. On Feb. 3, the members adopted a constitution and bylaws and elected Bernard Reilly president.

Born in County Cavan in 1818, Reilly left Ireland in 1835. Coming to New Haven after a brief stay in New York City, he first worked as a drayman, or wagon driver, but soon went into business as a road contractor. He was the contractor for the extension of Kimberly Avenue to Savin Rock and also won contracts for construction of segments of the Airline Railroad tracks from New Haven to Middletown. Later still, he was in the grocery and feed business at Congress Avenue and Lafayette Street. But, if Reilly was a successful businessman, his greatest contributions were on behalf of the city's first immigrant minority, the Irish who were arriving in ever greater numbers. He led the way in involving his countrymen in city politics, becoming the first Irishman to be named a justice of the peace, serving as a police commissioner and as tax assessor, and winning a seat on the Board of Aldermen from the 3rd Ward. He was for many years foreman of volunteer Fire Co. 7, known as the Washington Co. In matters of religion, Reilly was active in the city's first Catholic parish, Christ's Church, and is said to have negotiated and have given his personal note for purchase of the land for the first Catholic cemetery. In return, the cemetery was named St. Bernard's in his honor. He was one of six signers on the note securing property for St. Patrick's Church and mortgaged his own home to secure the old St. Mary's Church on Church Street. That he was also one of the movers, if not the prime mover, in founding the city's first Irish organization is evident from his selection as the first president of the Hibernian Provident Society. Elected with Reilly were Patrick Murphy, vice president, John Green, secretary, and Michael Cogan, treasurer.

On April 17, the Hibernians made their first public appearance, in the procession at the death of President Harrison. The appearance, it was reported, "attracted much attention as it was the first Hibernian Society ever seen in New Haven ..." The following month, the Connecticut General Assembly, on the request of Roger S. Baldwin of New Haven, granted the society's petition for incorporation.

At a meeting on Dec. 7 of the same year, the society made plans for the first public celebration of St. Patrick's Day in New Haven. The
observance was to include a parade through the city's streets to the only Catholic church, Christ's Church at Davenport Avenue and York Street, for Mass and an oration in the afternoon. The officers, acting as a committee for the observance, drafted a letter to William Erigena Robinson. "At a meeting of the New Haven Hibernian Provident Society on Tuesday evening the 7th of December, 1841," the letter began, "we were appointed a committee to invite you to deliver an oration before the Society on St. Patrick's Day, the 17th of March 1842. Hoping that we may be able to receive your services for that occasion, we await your answer."

The man whom the fledgling Hibernian Society invited to be the speaker at that first St. Patrick's Day observance in New Haven was, ironically, a Scots-Irish Presbyterian. Born in Unagh, County Tyrone, on May 6, 1814, he was the son of Thomas and Mary Sloss Robinson. He studied at the Royal Academical Institution in Belfast, but was forced to return to the family farm by an attack of typhus fever. He immigrated to New York in 1836 and came to New Haven shortly thereafter to enter Yale. While a student, he founded the Yale Banner and the university chapter of Psi Upsilon and was active in politics, supporting the campaign of William Henry Harrison for president.

A great lover of all things Irish and a despiser of the sectarian differences that have caused so much animosity between Protestant and Catholic Irishmen, Robinson adopted the middle name Erigena, meaning "Erin-born," while at Yale and after graduation in 1841 frequently lectured throughout the United States on topics relating to Ireland. He became a journalist, covering Washington for the New York Tribune and earning a national reputation for his dispatches which he signed, "Richelieu." On one occasion, he was expelled from the House of Representatives after writing an article ridiculing a congressman for going behind the speaker's chair to eat sausages and then wiping the grease on his hair. During the Potato Famine, he used his contacts in
Washington to organize relief efforts for those starving in Ireland. Later, Robinson went into politics and was elected a congressman from Brooklyn, N.Y.

In his reply to the Hibernians, Robinson wrote: "I have received your note of Dec. 14th requesting me in the name of the Hibernian Provident Society of this city to deliver an oration before them on St. Patrick's Day in March next. I have oftentimes expressed my regret that the memory of the great and good Saint who covered Ireland with blessing and glory, should not be celebrated with more unanimity by all true sons of the Emerald Isle. I hope that the day is not far distant when the party names among Irishmen will all blend together in the more comprehensive term of Irish Patriotism, and that the Irish Catholic and the Irish Protestant, forgetting their political and religious dissensions, will join together in commemorating the virtue of her patriots and benefactors, among whom St. Patrick stands preeminent. Permit me to express to the Society, through you, my thanks for the honor conferred and to say that my humble services are at their disposal."

In addition to securing Robinson as the orator for the occasion, the committee commissioned the creation of a banner and badges for members. The banner was painted by John L. Mitchell, a George Street sign painter. Fortunately, a description of it has been preserved: "On one side, it represents St. Patrick, in his sacerdotal robes, with his Bishop's mitre and Apostolic crosier, preaching before King Leogaire, his Queen and the Druids, at Tara Hall. He holds in his right hand the three-leaved Shamrock from which he deduces the doctrine of the Trinity in opposition to that of the Druids, the faithful wolf dog of Ireland crouched at his feet, the darkness of Paganism and the serpents of the Isle flying before the face of the Apostle. On the reverse side is a portrait of Gen. Montgomery, representing the adopted citizen, attended by the Genius of Ireland resting on a Harp, clothed in white and green, delivering to Washington, who represents the native citizen, a scroll inscribed with the word Quebec — in the distance the temple and goddess of Liberty. Over all, the National Eagle spreads his wings, bearing in his beak a scroll with the mottos, 'E Pluribus Unum,' and 'Erin Go Bragh.'"

On St. Patrick's Day, a Thursday that year, the Hibernians gathered at 8 a.m., said the New Haven Herald, in the Society Hall in Street's Building, which was located at the southwest corner of Chapel and State streets and about 9, "led by the Band of the New Haven Blues proceeded
through Chapel and York sts. to the Catholic Church ... Bernard Riley, the President, carried a harp, with the Vice Presidents, Patrick Murphy and John Greene, and the Treasurer, Michael Cogan, with the key. Wm. Cauldwell and Charles Fagan were the Marshals."

The original roster of the society includes about 90 names. Presumably most of them turned out for that first St. Patrick's Day celebration in New Haven. They were Timothy Barney, William Boyd, John Boylan, Nicholas Brady, Francis Brasil, Richard Burke, Thomas Burke, Richard Burns, John Caffrey, James Callahan, Peter Carberry, Alexander Cauldwell, Thomas Cauldwell, William Cauldwell, John Collins, Bernard Conlan, Michael Conlan, Joseph Conroy, Bernard Cosgrove, William Cosgrove, Daniel Costello, Patrick Costello, John Coyle, Daniel Crowley, Patrick Crowley, Michael Daly, Thomas Danger, Michael Downes.


At Christ's Church, the Palladium reported, "The Rev. Mr. Smyth, under whose judicious ministrations his countrymen here owe much of their improvement, made a very sensible and effective address ... in which the wrongs of Ireland were feelingly portrayed and her oppressors scarified most energetically and justly." During the Mass, the church choir with Mr. Cooke at the organ, sang "Hail Glorious Apostle," and several other hymns and "after the exercises in the Church, the Society proceeded through Broad, George and State streets to their room, where they dispersed."
At 2 p.m., the Hibernians gathered again and marched through State, Elm, York and Chapel streets to the Exchange Saloon, a hall in the third story of the Exchange Building at Chapel and Church streets. There they were entertained by John Phoebus, a local music teacher who rendered a song written for the occasion by New Haven geologist and poet, James G. Percival. Then, Robinson delivered the oration of the day. His talk, the Herald reported, "chained and charmed the attention of a large and respectable audience for nearly two hours. We have not time to give a synopsis of this discourse, and can only at present say that it was all that could either be desired or expected on such an occasion, and gave the utmost satisfaction to all who heard it."

At the conclusion of the speech, John J. Stone sang a song that Robinson had written for the occasion, and which told of the love of Irish immigrants both for their native land and their adopted home:

``Dear Isle of the ocean, farewell to thy mountains!
Farewell to the graves where my forefathers sleep!
Farewell to thy green hills, thy pure sparkling fountains!
Soon may the light of thy noon-day be blended
In glory, with rays of thy morning so splendid;
Soon may thy winter of anguish be ended,
Erin Mavourneen, Erin go Bragh.

``Columbia, hail! See a heartbroken stranger,
Rejoicing in hope, sets his foot on thy shore;
Thy free Institutions shall guard him from danger,
The chains of oppression shall bind him no more.
For thee his heart swells with a patriot’s devotion;
For thee are his prayers offered up on the ocean;
Yet tearful and sad is the silent emotion,
Which still bears his heart back to Erin go Bragh.

``Great land! Where the ashes of Barry now slumber;
here Irish Montgomery hallows the ground;
Where Erin's MacNevin and Emmet we number,
With those whom American laurels have crowned.
Great land of their graves! While I live I shall bless thee;
Dear land of my fathers, I grieve to address thee.
With Erin Mavourneen, Slan-lat go Bragh."
The entertainment portion of New Haven's first public St. Patrick's Day observance took place in the Exchange Saloon, not a bar but a hall, on the third floor of the Exchange Building, shown above, at Chapel and Church. (Marylou Conley)

After another song written by the Rev. John Pierpont of Boston, there were "several hearty cheers for the Orator of the day, for Mr. Percival and the Rev. Mr. Pierpont, the gentlemen who sang the songs, the music and the editors of the public press." The Hibernians marched
back to their hall and ended the day about 6 p.m. with a rendition of "Yankee Doodle."

The city's newspapers were duly impressed by the activities. "We believe," commented the Herald, "every portion of our fellow citizens were gratified yesterday with the display of the Hibernian Society comprising the great body of our Irish population and showing the rank and character which they are assuming in society. No congregated body of our citizens has ever appeared in a more orderly manner, nor in a more respectable character."

"The Hibernian Society," chimed in the Register, "turned out handsomely. A better looking procession of men with their noble banner and their green scarfs, never passed through Chapel Street." And the Palladium noted, "Those jealous persons who have been taught to associate in the Irish character naught but the elements of ignorance and vice, would have looked in vain in their sedate procession for any marks other than those belonging to well-ordered and respectable citizens; and could each heart have been seen, we doubt not that it thrilled as patriotically for the land of its adoption, as it wept fervently for the sorrows of its own beloved 'isle of the ocean.'"

The papers contained no reports of anti-Irish incidents although in New York City, effigies known as "stuffed Paddies" were hung from Liberty Poles at the Centre Market and several other locations. Near Pike Street in the Seventh Ward, the pole was greased after the effigy was hung and the New York Herald reported that a crowd of several hundred Irishmen "who had assembled, considering it an insult to themselves as a people and as a nation, very quietly levelled the pole and all by the use of a piece of steel familiarly known as an axe."

1843 This seems to have been the only year in the century and a half that St. Patrick’s Day has been celebrated in New Haven that the festivities had to be canceled because of weather. March that year was particularly snowy and rainy. On Thursday, March 16, the New Haven Herald announced that the Hibernian Provident Society, accompanied by the New Haven Blues, would step off from the Exchange Building the next morning at 9 and proceed along Chapel and York streets to the Catholic church for Mass. After Mass, the marchers would return to their clubrooms for an address by William E. Robinson, Esq. Robinson would also address an audience in the evening on the topic of Ireland's wrongs and oppressions.
That evening, however, New England was buried by a late winter northeaster. A foot of snow fell and was swept into huge drifts by gale force winds. Trains were marooned, steamboat runs were canceled and the region spent the rest of the weekend digging out.

"The celebration of St. Patrick's Day by the New Haven Hibernian Provident Society is postponed till Friday next, the 24th inst," reported the Herald. "The route of the procession will be the same as announced yesterday and the exercises will be the same if the weather should then prove favorable."

On March 23, the city was hit by another storm, which left an additional two inches of snow, enough to convince the Irish people to give up their celebration for the year.

"The New Haven Hibernian Provident Society," said the Herald, "held an extra meeting last night at the Exchange Saloon where it was resolved, owing to the still unfavorable state of the weather, that their annual celebration of St. Patrick's Day should be indefinitely postponed." Finally, on March 27, William E. Robinson gave a lecture at the Exchange on the topic of the Irish female character as seen in history, poetry and real life. Tickets were 25 cents.

1844 "The Hibernian Provident Society of this city," said the Columbian Register, "celebrated the anniversary of their patron saint on Monday. A procession was formed in the morning by the members, with their green badges, the Blues Band playing that glorious old tune, 'St. Patrick's Day,' which passed through the principal streets to the Catholic church, where religious services were performed. In the afternoon, an address was delivered before the society, in the temple, by Mr. Fitzgibbon, editor of the Green Banner, which is highly spoke of ... A more respectable looking body of men than composed the procession is seldom met with on public occasions ..."

1845 Oddly, neither the Register, Palladium nor Herald made any mention of a public observance of St. Patrick's Day. Perhaps the reason can be discerned in a cryptic notice in the Register on March 15.

The headline on the small item was "Adopted Citizens," and it stated, "Persons intending to take out nationalization papers this spring are
requested to leave their names with either of the Town Committee or at the Committee room. Adopted citizens should lose no time in securing the elective franchise before Nativism deprives them of their privilege.

The Register generally stood up for the immigrant Irish and the item seems to suggest that the Nativist, or Know Nothing, anti-Irish sentiment was at a high pitch, perhaps causing the Irish to cancel or at least be less open about the celebration of their holiday.

Even as New Haven's Irish were fighting their battle with Nativism, a tragedy of terrible proportions was unfolding in Ireland. In a country where the potato had become the staple of the peasants' diet, the success or failure of the potato crop was a matter of life and death. In the summer of 1845 ominous indications began to appear of widespread disease in the potato crop. By November, two doctors who toured the fertile farmland in Louth, Meath, Westmeath and Kildare reported, "We can come to no other conclusion than that one half of the actual potato crop of Ireland is either destroyed or unfit for the food of man." The destruction was caused by a fungus, phytophthora infestans, which first appears as a tiny whitish growth on the leaves of the potato plants.

The Columbian Register reported, "St. Patrick’s Day has been celebrated in good style by the Hibernian Society of this city. They left their room at half past 8 o'clock in the morning, a fine array of as substantial-looking men as is often seen, with their green flowering badges and other symbolic insignia, preceded by the artillery band, playing that glorious old march of 'St. Patrick's Day in the Morning.' The services at the church by their respected pastor, Rev. Mr. Smyth, were highly appropriate and interesting. In the afternoon, the society marched in procession through the principal streets and attracted much attention."

Meanwhile, Ireland stood on the brink of disaster. The peasants had managed to survive the winter after the failure of the potato crop in 1845, but famine and its accompanying maladies were spreading. Just four days before St. Patrick's Day, a member of parliament reported that dysentery and fever had appeared in almost every county and people in Limerick and Clare were said to be eating scraps that were not fit for animals. On the same day, in one of the most ruthless examples of the evils of landlordism in Ireland, 300 tenants who were not arrears in their rents were evicted from their homes in Ballinglass, Galway, by English troops.
Driven by the twin evils of famine and eviction, the cottiers rebelled as best they could. One landlord, the Marquess of Clanricarde, declared that a large part of the country was in a state of insurrection and demanded passage of a bill allowing the authorities to proclaim martial law wherever they felt it necessary. The bill sailed through both houses of parliament. William Smith O'Brien, an Irish member of the House, commented that while famine menaced Ireland, the government sent soldiers rather than food.

1847 The Irish had been optimistic that the crop failure of 1845 would not be repeated. Firm in the belief that years of want were followed by years of plenty, they seeded two million acres of potatoes for the 1846 crop. At first, their optimism seemed warranted. The fields were lush with the green leaves and purple blossoms of what promised to be a bountiful crop.

Then in early August disaster struck as the blight returned even worse than the previous summer. Father Theobald Mathew traveled from Cork to Dublin on July 27 and reported that the potato plants...
“bloomed in all the luxuriance of an abundant crop.” Returning on Aug. 3, he beheld, “one wide waste of putrefying vegetation. In many places, the wretched people were seated on the fences of their decaying gardens, wringing their hands and wailing bitterly the destruction that had left them foodless.”

Another traveler was astonished at the virtually overnight destruction. “I shall never forget,” wrote Capt. Mann, a Coast Guard officer, “the change in one week in August. On the first occasion, on an official visit of inspection, I had passed over 32 miles thickly studded with potato fields in full bloom. The next time, the face of the whole country was changed, the stalk remained bright green, but the leaves were all scorched black.”

Unlike the previous year, there was now virtually no hope of survival for the Irish peasants. Already weakened by one winter of famine and having expended whatever other food resources they had, the people died by the thousands — an estimated 400,000 just in the winter of 1846-47. A Connecticut social reformer and peace advocate, Elihu Burritt of New Britain, was in Ireland that winter and in his diary left horribly graphic descriptions of the carnage. On Feb. 16, he wrote from Kilkenny: “The poor people, the laborers, appeared to be worse housed and fed than beasts ... At every stopping place, the coach was surrounded by scores of these starving beings, who implored for alms as if asking for salvation.” And on Feb. 21, he wrote from Skibbereen, County Cork: “In every hovel we entered we found the dying or the dead. In one of these straw-roofed burrows eight persons had died in the last fortnight and five more were lying upon the pestiferous straw upon which their predecessors to the grave had been consumed by the wasting fever of famine.”

Those who could, fled. Thousands sold what few belongings they had, trudged to the nearest seaports and booked passage for America. Fares were cheaper to Canada than to the United States and the most popular destination was Quebec. Stephen de Vere of Limerick described conditions on the famine ships: “Hundreds of poor people, men, women and children of all ages from the drivelling idiot of 90 to the babe just born, huddled together, without light, without air, wallowing in filth and breathing a foetid atmosphere, sick in body, dispirited in heart ... the fevered patients lying between the sound in sleeping places so narrow, as almost to deny them a change of position by their agonized ravings disturbing those around them...living without
food or medicine except as administered by the hand of casual charity, dying without spiritual consolation and buried in the deep without the rites of the church."

Another passenger, Robert Whyte, who sailed from Dublin for Quebec, wrote in his diary, "110 passengers are shut up in the unventilated hold of a small brig, without a doctor, medicines or even water."

When his ship reached Canada, Whyte watched a procession of rowboats take the sick and the dead ashore. "Hundreds were literally flung on the beach," he wrote. "left amid the mud and stones to crawl on the dry land as they could."

The Canadian government set up a receiving station on Grosse Isle in the St. Lawrence River near Quebec, and there the emaciated, fever-ridden immigrants set foot in what they hoped would be the safety and plenty of the New World.

On the site of an immigrant cemetery on Grosse Isle, there stands a monument whose inscription tells the sad story of thousands of the Irish peasants. "In this secluded spot," it says, "lie the mortal remains of 5,294 persons who, flying from pestilence and famine in Ireland in the year 1847, found in America but a grave."

In New Haven, the St. Patrick's Day observance was muted, the people's thoughts and prayers with those left behind. All festivities were canceled.

"The members of the Hibernian Society," said the Palladium on March 18, "having resolved that on account of the present distress in Ireland they would dispense with the customary procession, music, etc., met last night in the Exchange Hall, in full numbers, where they were addressed in a very able manner by their countryman, James O'Reilly, M.D., of this place. A great number of our citizens were likewise present. The address was a classical product of high merit, abounding in fine passages and powerful appeals to patriotism and philanthropy. It gave.a short outline of the life of St. Patrick, the past and present conditions of Ireland, its future hopes and its vanished greatness. The address was delivered with dignity and eloquence and drew long and hearty applause."
1848 "The Hibernian Society," reported the Palladium, "turned out in good numbers this morning to celebrate St. Patrick's Day ... under direction of Mr. James Calihan as Chief Marshal and Robert McNulty and John Sheridan as Assistant Marshals. The procession numbered 150 persons exclusive of the Band, a very handsome turnout. This band was comprised in part of the Union pipes, which made to our ears rare, but very rich music. In the evening a lecture on Irish history was delivered by Mr. William Downes, a self-taught young Irishman, who while learning the trade of a bookbinder has devoted many hours to the cultivation of his mind." The Palladium concluded with a boost for the Hibernian Provident Society. "The Hibernian Society," it said, "has been productive of great good among the adopted citizens of Irish birth."

1849 "The anniversary of the birth of the patron saint of Ireland," said the Palladium, "was greeted by the assemblage of the sons of the green Island who are resident in this city at an early hour this morning and the formation of a procession in accordance with the arrangement which has been published. The Hibernian Provident Association turned out in full strength. They were proceeded by a good band of instrumental music from Bristol, the beautiful banner of the society being borne in the front rank ... The address by the Rev. Mr. O'Reilly was characterized by sound common sense and contained many excellent suggestions bearing upon the duties and responsibilities of his fellow countrymen, both toward their adopted land and those whom they left behind them." In the evening, the society members and other Irish people heard an address by an "exile patriot," Thomas Darcy McGee at Exchange Hall. The hall was crowded with the mayor and several members of the Common Council and the Yale faculty in attendance.
1850s

Struggle Against Nativism
1850 As in 1845, none of the papers mentioned a public St. Patrick's Day celebration. The Register, however, did note one affair that certainly had all the markings of a St. Patrick's Day observance, even without the name. "The spirited Engine Company No. 7," said the paper on March 15, "of which Mr. Bernard Riley is foreman, partook of a capital supper last evening at the City Hotel; and no one knows how to do such things in better style than Mr. Squires. This company is composed mostly of naturalized citizens, who are fine able-bodied men and as worthy citizens as we have among us; and when they lay hold of the bars, something has to give way! Success to No. 7 and its worthy foreman ... ''

1851 "This being St. Patrick's Day," said the Register, "notwithstanding the inclemency of the weather, it is duly celebrated by the Irishmen of this city. The Montgomery Society turned out this morning in large numbers and attended divine service at the Catholic church. Rev. Father O'Reilly officiated and preached from the 13th Chapter, 2nd Verse of St. Paul's epistle to the Hebrews. His discourse was replete with historical knowledge and was listened to with deep interest ... In concluding, the Rev. gentleman referred in a most feeling manner to his own missionary labors and experience during a period of 40 years in his native land; and contrasted the misery there to the happiness enjoyed in this country by his fellow countrymen, and exhorted his hearers to lead holy lives and live worthy of the liberty and privileges they enjoy here.''

In the afternoon, Michael Doheny, one of the Irish patriots of 1848, lectured at Brewster's Hall. The oration, according to the Register, "was a spirited and noble effort. He depicted the wrongs of Ireland in a strain of eloquence seldom surpassed and decorated her image with the richest flowers of hope. In the evening, he was feasted at the Park House by the society where he received, with his lady, the congratulations of those who sympathize with the cause for which he is suffering exile."
During the 1850s, St. Patrick's Day gatherings were held in the large and commodious room known as Brewster's Hall on the second floor of this building at Chapel and Union streets. (Marylou Conley)

1852 "The Hibernian Provident and Montgomery Societies celebrated St. Patrick's Day in fine style," said the Columbian Register. "The procession was a very long one, and preceded by the New Haven Brass Band, made a circuit of the principal streets. High Mass was performed at St. Mary's Church — the Rev. Messrs. Carmody, O'Brien, Rev. Hart and O'Reilly officiating. The oration by William E. Robinson (which was an able and eloquent effort) came off in the afternoon at Brewster's Hall. A supper at the Union Hall (we understand) closed the celebration."
Father Matthew Hart was pastor of the new St. Patrick's Church when the first St. Patrick's Day Mass was celebrated there on March 17, 1853.

1853

"The appearance of the sons of green Erin to-day in honor of the anniversary of St. Patrick, was in the highest degree creditable to them," said the Palladium on Thursday, March 17. "The Washington Guards, composed entirely of adopted citizens, numbered some 60 or 70 muskets and the corps, with the members of the two benevolent societies, formed a very imposing procession. They marched to the music of two fine bands, through the several streets designated in their programme, to St. Patrick's Church in Grand St., where they attended divine worship, and this afternoon they assembled at Brewster's Hall to listen to an address by William E. Robinson Esq."

"The house was completely filled," the Palladium said the next day, picking up the story at Brewster's Hall. "Peter Harvey, Esq., president of the Montgomery Association, before whom especially the address was being delivered, being chairman. His Honor the Mayor was also present on the platform. The New Haven Band was in attendance and enlivened the occasion with some of their excellent music. The speaker on being introduced was greeted with much applause as evidence of the hearty welcome with which Mr. Robinson is always received among our adopted citizens.

"He then spoke at considerable length upon the general superiority of the Irish character, and of the favorable influence exerted by
emigrants on our own country. The speaker strongly deprecated the feeling of jealousy and squabbling too often seen to exist between natives and foreigners in relation to political and religious subjects ... The speaker also asserted his ardent love for the Irishmen of New Haven and would confidently appeal to them for a vindication of his character from the foul aspersions which political opponents had sought to cast upon it ..."

1854 March 17, 1854, was the most tragic St. Patrick's Day in New Haven history. On that Friday evening, Patrick O'Neil, a 24-year-old Irish lad who had immigrated with his family to New Haven about 1846, was stabbed to death during a melee after a theater performance. The coroner's jury investigating the killing concluded that young O'Neil died "from wounds received by him at the hands of some person or persons unknown — the said Patrick O'Niel (sic) being at the time engaged in and leading and aiding and abetting a riot." No Irish residents of New Haven sat on the 12-member jury.

Down through the years, New Haven historians have accepted the official version that O'Neil was one of the leaders of a brawl between Yale students and town youths. A reading of the newspapers of the time, however, reveals a strong current of anti-Irish sentiment related to the Nativist movement in New Haven at that time and raises the question whether anyone really ever got to the bottom of the story of the stabbing of Patrick O'Neil.

On March 16, the Register published an item about St. Patrick's Day, which seems designed to ward off criticism of the Irish and trouble during the observance. "Tomorrow," the item reads, "the anniversary day of Ireland's patron Saint, will be celebrated by our adopted citizens in this and other cities. This is a national and not a sectarian festival. Protestant and Catholics joining alike in its observance, as well here, as in Ireland. It is to the credit of our city, as well as to the Benevolent Societies who take part in this festival that they have always been conducted with the strictest order and propriety and been of interest to all who have attended on the ceremonies."

That evening, there was trouble at Homan's Atheneum, a theater recently opened in the Exchange Building at the northeast corner of Church and Chapel streets. "From the best information we can get," said the Register, "the difficulty originated on Thursday night ... from
a person refusing to 'sit down in front' and a subsequent altercation in the street near the Exchange in which blows were struck between the parties and some of the police. A man named O'Neil was arrested, but on his promise to go home and keep the peace for the future, he was dismissed ...

In its St. Patrick's Day edition, the Register pointed out that in both New Haven and Hartford some scurrilous individuals were circulating rumors designed to raise suspicion and anger against Irish immigrants. Quoting the Hartford Times, the Register stated, "It seems from the following that the same ridiculous hoax has been played in Hartford that has been circulated in this city. Such things are not only 'foolish' but wicked — 'The miserable hoax about criminal acts on the part of Catholics on St. Patrick's Day should be postponed to 'April First.' There has, however, of late years, been an attempt to get up such 'gull traps' on the 17th of March. It is a very foolish practice.'"

Contemporary accounts mention no trouble during the St. Patrick's Day observance. The Irish societies formed at Custom House Square in the morning and marched to St. Mary's Church for Mass. "The Erina Guard, Capt. Duffy," said the Register, "and the Jackson Light Guard, Capt. Garvey, made a fine appearance and were accompanied with good music. The Societies were out in regalia and full ranks and marched through the principal streets of the city. Everything was orderly and creditable to the occasion and the character of our adopted citizens."

However, an article published in the New Haven Union on March 17, 1874, gave a different story: "At that time," the article stated referring to the 1854 observance, "the American Nativity feeling was very strong in New Haven. On the day of the parade ... the thirty-three original members (of the Irish society) came together, each bringing a substitute that the procession might not seem insignificant. A brass band headed the whole, which paraded through the city amid the jeers and curses of the citizens. Trees were disfigured with effigies of the good saint, bearing around his neck bags of potatoes, stumps of cabbages and other similar tokens of derision, both of the saint and the race. In some streets, violence was apprehended, and for a number of years following the memorable parade the members of the association were armed when passing through the streets in procession."

That evening trouble broke out again. "It seems," reported the New Haven Courier, "that a number of students who attended Homan's
Atheneum last evening were followed from the Exchange, after the performance was over, by a crowd of men and boys, who, on account of a disturbance that occurred among them the night previous, were exasperated at the Collegians, and took the occasion to vent their spite by hootings and hissings and the throwing of stones. The crowd proceeded up Chapel Street, as far as Temple, when a general fight with stones and brickbats ensued. (Police Chief) Capt. Bissell, who was on the spot with his assistants, did all in his power to quell the riot, but had not a sufficient force to accomplish his purpose.

"During the melee a number of pistol shots were fired, most of which were discharged in the air and without doing injury to any person. Several were hit with stones and other missiles, but no one was seriously injured until the crowd arrived in front of the bookstore of Mr. L.W. Fitch when O'Neil was seen to stagger and fall upon the pavement. He was picked up and immediately conveyed to the Police Office where he expired in a few moments. Drs. Knight and Jewett were called in and upon an examination found that the deceased had been stabbed in or near the heart."

At least some people believed the affair was not simply a town-gown dispute, but a brawl with ethnic undertones. The New York Herald reported, "A serious riot occurred in New Haven on the evening of the 17th instant, between some of the students at Yale College and a party of Irishmen, during which pistols were discharged and dirks freely used." On March 20, the Register commented, "Some unprincipled fellow writes to the New York Herald that the disturbance in this city was between the students and Irishmen! What pleasure or profit there can be in such kind of falsehood is more than sensible people can discover. There is not a syllable of truth in the statement ..."

The Register also denied another rumor that the Irish militia units had been unwilling to respond to the emergency when the fighting broke out. "We understand," the paper said, "injustice has been done to Capt. Duffy and to his company, by a false rumor. He promptly called upon the mayor, among the first, offered the aid of his company to preserve the peace ..."

A few days later, the Palladium, the voice of the Nativists in New Haven commented, "... But the fact, after all, as we understand it, is that the Register is laboring to please the Roman clergy and their adherents."
Seventy years later, in an article in the New Haven Union on Sunday, March 9, 1924, George Corbusier, a retired city fireman, told a reporter what he recalled of the events. "A popular English actor named Plunkett was playing in Homan's theatre in the old Exchange Building. A comic Irish singer got too many recalls from firemen in the gallery to suit a body of students in the orchestra chairs. There was considerable hissing and jeering from both factions and after the close of the performance, the firemen, aided by a number of stevedores, staged a scrap on the sidewalk with the students. O'Neil was arrested and taken to the police station and placed under $300 bond to keep the peace.

"The real tragedy occurred the next night when about 115 students attended the show in a body to see the thing through. In the meantime, the fire bells sounded a warning of impending trouble, and a mob gathered on Chapel street near Trinity Church bent on mischief. The chief of police advised the students to leave the theatre by the back door and keep together in a solid body until the campus was reached. They took his advice and had proceeded as far as Trinity Church when they were met by a shower of bricks, stones and fervid language. O'Neil seized a student by the name of Sims, of Mississippi, and tried to pull him back into the mob. Right here accounts of the affair differ. Some say that O'Neil struck Sims with an iron bar and as another tells the story, O'Neil tried to choke him. Sims finally drew a Bowie knife and stabbed O'Neil through the side to the heart.

"Mr. Corbusier has a vivid recollection of this disturbing event and saw O'Neil's body afterwards in the police station. Sims was acquitted on the ground of self-defense and because O'Neil was aiding and abetting a riot.

"Some idea of the intense excitement caused by this tragic killing may be gleaned from the fact that a great mob congregated that night on College Street in front of South College, pelting the ancient structure with brickbats and stones. The crowd burst into the armory and dragged out two cannon and loaded them heavily with chain and stone bent on demolishing the college buildings.

"President Woolsey appeared among the students and ordered them to keep quiet unless attacked and in that event to defend themselves. The mob endeavored time and time again to fire the cannon but were unsuccessful. Capt. Bissell of the police managed to get hold of one of the guns and some of the cooler citizens, the other thereby
Col. Thomas W. Cahill, a Boston native whose parents had emigrated from County Waterford, was captain of the Washington Erina Guards in 1855 when that militia unit was disbanded by Gov. William Miner on the grounds that its Irish members might be disloyal. Cahill later became colonel of the 9th Connecticut Regiment in the Civil War.
preventing terrible casualties. For over a week, no student dared at night to go outside the campus."

1855 Know Nothing feeling against the Irish and Catholics was running high throughout the country. The Palladium reported on March 15, "Part of the Irish in New York think that instead of celebrating St. Patrick's Day on Saturday, they had better attend to their work, such is the state of public feeling in that city."

The paper went on to report, "St. Patrick's Day is to be celebrated in this city tomorrow as usual by a procession of all the Irish civic and military organizations and an oration at Brewster's Hall. The speaker is Dr. McElheran of New York and his subject: 'Christian Heroism in the History of St. Patrick and the Celtic race.'"

Two days after St. Patrick's Day, the Palladium commented, "St. Patrick's Day was celebrated on Saturday by a procession of the Washington Erina Guards, the Jackson Guards, the Montgomery and Laborers' Union societies, who after marching through the various streets, attended church services in St. Patrick's. After service, the procession marched again through the city to Brewster's Hall, reaching there at 5 p.m. and listened to the address. The hall was well filled and the address gave good satisfaction."

If the day was peaceful in New Haven, it wasn't elsewhere. On March 19, the Palladium reported, "At Poughkeepsie, N.Y., an effigy with a string of potatoes around its neck, was found in the morning, hung to a tree in front of the Gregory House." And on March 21, the Palladium reported from Stamford, "An effigy of St. Patrick was found suspended to a tree, near the Stage House, Saturday A.M."

In September of that year, the anti-Irish sentiment in Connecticut reached its peak when the Know Nothing governor, William Minor, ordered the disbanding of the Washington Erina Guards under Capt. Thomas Cahill and five other companies of militia units comprised of Irish-Americans on the ground that they might not be dependable in time of crisis.
The announcement of St. Patrick's Day activities in
the Palladium on March 17 gave no hint of contro­
versy: "St. Patrick's Day has been celebrated to­day by the Irish
Benevolent Societies, the Hibernian, the Provident and the Montgom­
ery. William E. Robinson, Esq., of New York delivers the oration."

Two days later, however, the Palladium in an editorial revealed
the extent of the debate then raging over Nativism. "We do not observe
that the Register has attacked this young Irish orator (Robinson), since
his last visit here," said the Palladium. "We have heretofore had to
defend him from the most ferocious assaults of that paper. But times
have changed. Mr. Robinson has changed, and the Register has
changed. We are told that Mr. Robinson ridiculed the amendment of
the Constitution which requires that men shall know how to read before
they can vote!"

The marshals of the day were Peter Sheridan of the
Montgomery Provident Society and Michael
Dougherty, Bernard Reilly and Owen Kelly of the Hibernian Provident
Society.

Hibernian Society members assembled at 7:30 a.m. at their hall,
then marched to Military Hall where the Montgomery Society was
assembled. Together the societies marched to St. Patrick's Church for
Mass celebrated by Father Matthew Hart, the pastor, at 10 a.m. In the
afternoon, they marched again to Brewster's Hall for an oration by J.B.
Tully, Esq., of New York City. The Columbian Register reported,
"Mr. Tully was very warmly received and spoke with great force and
eloquence for more than an hour and a half ... The audience were made
indescribably enthusiastic by (his) stirring and eloquent appeals; and
the enthusiasm, we have no doubt, was heightened by Mr. Tully's
youth, as he is not more than 23 ... He commenced by a poetic allusion
to the land whose anniversary they that day celebrated, and to the joy
with which the Irish at Home and abroad saw the sun arise that morning
to usher in a day that awoke such fond though sometimes sad memories
...

"He took occasion to advert to the unhappy provincial jealousies
that sometimes exist between Irishmen in this country. He told them
the evils that have already resulted and must ever result from those
shameful quarrels; described the atrocious outrages committed by those
vicious misguided men; said that Americans would never respect the Irish character while they continued perpetrating such barbarities ... He paid a high compliment to the harmony and good feeling that exists between Irishmen from all parts of Ireland in this city ... His allusion to Know Nothingism was very happy. He pointed to Irish services in the Revolution; to Irish services in the halls of the legislature; to Irish services in the internal improvements of the country ... He adverted to the bigotry that disbanded Irish-American soldiers and hoped the government would never have occasion to regret it as King George had at Fontenoy. He told some amusing anecdotes illustrative of the nonsensical prejudice of narrow-minded Americans toward Irishmen and Catholics."

The Nativist Palladium commented with scarcely concealed malice, "The 17th of March is a blessed day for all the wanderers from their home in the sea, as well as for those who have never left it. Those who celebrate here say they are as ready to celebrate in honor of St. Washington or St. Fourth of July. As a portion of the city press, we acknowledge the receipt of tickets to the oration and festival."

1858 The Register reported that the orator of the day, Mr. Downes, attracted unusual interest in his talk before the societies "by those who had the good fortune to hear it. His theme was 'civil and religious liberty' and he traced the history of 'persecution for opinion' in the Old and New World, with a master hand; and every bigot in the country ought to have heard it. It is said to have been the best production of the kind ever delivered on such an occasion in the city."
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The Downes family played an active role in early St. Patrick’s Day celebrations. Michael Downes, a native of County Clare, was a charter member of the Hibernian Provident Society. His son, William, was the speaker at the 1858 observance. His other son, Edward, continued to run the family newspaper vending business as shown in this advertisement from a city directory.
The Know Nothing scare had faded somewhat, replaced in the public mind by the more serious and immediate crisis of the slavery question. Even the Palladium, which just a year or two before had been vicious in its reporting of St. Patrick's Day events, now welcomed the March 17 observance. "The day has been a most lovely one," it reported in its March 17 editions, "and the sons and daughters of 'Green Erin' seem to have enjoyed it thus far exceedingly. The procession this morning was a splendid affair, especially the cavalcade which brought up the rear. Two large bands accompanied its march and the whole presented a very fine appearance."

Leading the procession was the Hibernian Society with Chief Marshal Owen Kelley and his aides, Philip Reilly and Patrick Kelly, accompanied by the New Haven Brass Band. Next came the Montgome r Society led by Roger Newman, Patrick McGowan and Thomas Judge. Interesting additions to the parade were the Hibernian Society of Derby and the Cartmen's Association. Col. Michael Doheny of New York City gave the oration at Brewster's Hall where admission was 15 cents.

Interestingly, the Emmet Guard spent the day in New York City. On March 19, the Palladium reported, "The Emmet Guard seem to have produced a very favorable impression during their visit to New York if we may judge from the remarks in the press. They certainly enjoyed themselves and returned in the boat last night ..."
1860s

Civil War
and
Fenianism
The 1860s were among the most tumultuous years in American history and the Irish, many of them immigrants, shared in the sectional strife, anger, suffering and grief that marked the era. In 1860, reports of St. Patrick's Day festivities in New Haven were sandwiched between such grim headlines as "Black Republican Treason," "The Constitution Openly Defied," and "Letter from an Honest Slaveholder to an Honest Abolitionist."

"Nonetheless," commented the Register, "St. Patrick's Day was everything that could have been desired as the anniversary in honor of Ireland's Patron Saint. The various Societies made an imposing appearance, escorted as they were by the Emmet Guards in full ranks. The Montgomery Guard of Bridgeport was also in the line and looked well. The mounted Cartmen were a prominent feature of the occasion — while the New Haven Brass Band and others discoursed excellent music. The address by Mr. Harrington of New York was an effort of high literary order. His subject was St. Patrick, and in treating his theme, he displayed much eloquence and scholarly attainment. It was universally spoken of in the highest terms by those who heard it. In the morning, High Mass was celebrated at St. Patrick's Church and the day throughout was observed with more than usual ceremony."

The Civil War began in early January when South Carolinians fired upon a federal supply ship sent to reinforce the federal garrison at Fort Sumter in Charleston Harbor. Before St. Patrick's Day, the Confederate States of America had been established and Abraham Lincoln had been inaugurated. Not surprisingly, the heated politics of the day spilled over into the St. Patrick's Day observance.

Indeed, the orator at exercises sponsored by the Montgomery Society and the Hibernian Society at Music Hall on Monday afternoon, March 17, was a Southerner, Thomas Yeatman. Yeatman was a fascinating character — a lawyer practicing in New Haven and, according to John Niven, in his book "Connecticut for the Union," a partisan for the Confederacy. His topic for the occasion was "The National Crisis — Peaceful Separation or Civil War."

"Mr. Yeatman's well-known ability and eloquence should attract a large audience," commented the Palladium. "and our citizens will be
The National Crisis—Peaceful Separation or Civil War.

An ADDRESS,
Delivered in Music Hall,
On St. Patrick’s Day,
Before the Hibernian and Montgomery Societies
Of New Haven,
By Thomas Yeatman, Esq.

Published by Request.

“Our country’s welfare is our first concern,
And who promotes that best, best proves his duty.”

New Haven:
Printed by Thomas J. Stafford.
1861.

Thomas Yeatman’s 1861 St. Patrick’s Day oration about secession and civil war was printed in booklet form with this cover.
pleased to hear his views of the condition of our country, whether they may agree with them or not."

In his talk, a copy of which has survived, Yeatman blamed both sides for the unfortunate situation the country found itself in. "'Yes, ignorance and misapprehension of each others' purposes and policy," he said, "misrepresentation of each others' characters and sentiments, the systematic agitation of a peculiarly sensitive institution, have plotted the ruin of our country. Such are the causes, political and artificial, why this glorious vision of constitutional liberty, which has filled Christendom with light and hope, has begun to shrivel like a parched scroll.'"

He then outlined the courses open to the federal government in light of the secession of seven Southern states. Of that secession, he commented, "I shall not stop to inquire if this was an act of treason, rebellion and revolution or the legitimate exercise of a constitutional right. I accept the fact that these states have declared that they will no longer submit to Federal authority, or recognize the binding obligations of the Constitution."

The options, Yeatman said, were to coerce those seven states or to accept their secession and let them go in peace. History, he went on, was full of examples of the failure of coercion, including that of the Penal Laws in Ireland. Speaking as if he were the English government, he stated, "Maintain the government, enforce the laws, no liberty of conscience for the Catholic, hunt the priest from hovel to hovel, punish him with stripes and the stocks if he dares to administer the sacred rites of his faith, offer premiums to apostasy, set brother against brother, said Protestant England through her laws against Catholic Ireland, and Ireland sank, and writhed and wailed beneath the spiritual bondage; but the cry of repeal, repeal, ran from hill and valley from mountain and plain, the British throne was shaken and the great O'Connell lived to see the divine principle of toleration crowned in all the majesty and protection of law. I do not assume that there is a strict analogy in principle between the position of the seceding states and the historical illustrations I have cited. But the moral is complete — let nations beware how they attempt by force to test their strength and enforce their laws and constitutions upon an unwilling people.'"

Should the United States persist in a policy of coercion, Yeatman predicted, that coercion "will unite the South and separate them from the North by a gulf of fire." The end result, he added, would be a civil
war of such ferocity that he would not even attempt to describe it. "In such a contest," he said prophetically, "it would be difficult to imagine which were the greater sorrow — victory or defeat. And well might the victors and the vanquished sit down together on the battlefield and weep over the result."

Far better, Yeatman continued, that the North let the South go in peace, "a wiser and juster policy, a policy gentle in its spirit, loving in its nature, resistless in its influence, divine in its benedictions — the policy of peace. Let us adopt this policy of peaceful separation, let us accept these principles of patience, forbearance, gentleness, serenity amid provocations and injuries, confiding in the influence of time, to bring light out of darkness, reason out of madness and though the present may be surrounded with trials and dangers, there is a silver lining to the angry cloud, the assurance of a bright and peaceful future ... And when that hour cometh, when passion and madness and wickedness and folly have been stilled in every heart, when the clouds, which now hang so loweringly and heavily above us, are swept from the heavens, or weep only in gentle and reviving showers, then in the first golden hours of that re-union may we stand beneath the stars of our national constellation, as they sing together with joy ..."

Interestingly, in April shortly after he had delivered his St. Patrick's Day oration, Yeatman wrote Confederate President Jefferson Davis that he could raise two companies of Confederates in New Haven. Quite likely he thought many of the city's Irish would join the Confederate cause.

Another speech that year was delivered by Robert Blakeslee, marshal of the Cartmen's Association. The Register reprinted the brief speech, identifying Blakeslee as the one "who carried the big bouquet and rode so gallantly at the head of his stalwart troops." The speech is interesting for what it shows of the thinking of the man on the street on the eve of the Civil War. Blakeslee placed the blame for the situation squarely on the shoulders of the ruling classes, but ended with an affirmation that the workingmen would not allow the nation to suffer the loss of any of its states. "Gentlemen of the Cartmen's Association," Blakeslee began, "another year has passed since we before assembled in public to commemorate the Patron Saint of Ireland. And what a year of hardships and trouble has come over the land of our adoption. But no one can lay it to the cartmen of New Haven! If the men who have caused it had to work as hard as we do, we should hear little of secession or coercion — though we have suffered severely by the prostration of
business in our beloved city. I must say we still belong to the Peace Society — and although we are all Irishmen to-day, our American friends need not be suspicious for we will all be Yankees on the Fourth of July — In conclusion, we must not forget to thank the generous merchants and manufacturers of our city, for our present position, which we will maintain without the loss of a single star for our banner."

1862 The line of march for the annual St. Patrick’s Day parade formed at 8 a.m. at Custom House Square and proceeded to St. Patrick’s Church for Mass. The committee included: James Wrinn, Patrick Burns, James Carol, John Caffrey, James Reynolds, Patrick Cunningham and Thomas McWeeney.

On Monday, March 15, the Register carried one of the most touching items in the entire 150-year history of St. Patrick’s Day in New Haven: a letter from a soldier in the 9th Connecticut Regiment, a unit which consisted primarily of Irish-American lads from New Haven. The letter was written at Ship’s Island, La., where the 9th Regiment was stationed. It read: "The adopted citizens of New Haven need not fear but what the Ninth will do their part, when they are led forth in defence of the country which gives more freedom to the stranger than any other on the face of the Earth. Irishmen have fought for France under Sarsfield, for Russia under Delacy and for Spain, in their short sleeves, under O’Donnell, at Bull Run under Corcoran; and the adopted 'sons of Connecticut' will prove themselves as good as their ancestors, either in France, Spain, Russia or America. Signed G."

1863 In the midst of the war years, the only reference to the traditional celebration of St. Patrick’s Day was a brief item in the Palladium: "St. Patrick’s Day will be celebrated in New York City to-morrow with a splendid military and civic display ... The Hibernian Provident Society of this city celebrates as usual."
An unidentified standard-bearer of the 9th Connecticut Volunteers displays the regiment's battle flag. (Connecticut State Museum)
"The various Hibernian societies in this city duly celebrated yesterday in honor of St. Patrick, the patron saint of Ireland," reported the Palladium. "The societies were in full regalia, and the processions of the morning and afternoon were quite large. The procession of the afternoon stopped in front of the residence of Mayor Tyler in College Street. His Honor the Mayor addressed them briefly and in a happy manner and was answered by three hearty cheers from the people. In the evening, Music Hall was filled with the societies and their friends to listen to the address of Henry Giles, Esq., of Massachusetts on Irish character, mental and moral. Mr. Giles was enthusiastically received by the audience."

The Fenians — Irish activists dedicated to the military overthrow of British rule in Ireland — made their first appearance in the St. Patrick's Day parade. The Civil War had put thousands of Irish immigrants into uniform — both in the North and the South — and had given them military training. With the war ending, many of these Irish citizen-soldiers turned their attention to the land of their birth which still was under English rule. Using their well-honed military skills, the Irish-American soldiers thought they could link forces with Irishmen already plotting rebellion in Ireland and overthrow the English.

On the day before the parade, the Register commented, "The Fenian Brotherhood make their first public parade to-morrow in the procession for the observance of St. Patrick's Day. They will appear as far as possible with muskets, though not yet fully organized. During the day, a splendid banner will be presented the order in behalf of the ladies. It has been painted on silk by William Magraw and Dennis J. O'Keefe. On one side is a sunburst, with the inscription, 'Aid Yourselfs and God Will Aid You.' On the reverse are the harp and shamrock with the insignia, 'Presented by the Fenian Sisterhood and Patriotic Irish Ladies of New Haven, to the Sarstfield Circle, Fenian Brotherhood, March 17th, 1865.'"

The appearance of the Fenians marked the beginning of a long and colorful history in the single-minded pursuit of a free and independent Ireland.

In addition to the Fenians, the 1865 parade included the Emmet Guards led by Capt. James Wrinn and accompanied by the Fair Haven Brass Band, the Hibernian Provident Society accompanied by the
Centerville Band, the Montgomery Society with Grand Marshal Roger Newman and the New Haven Brass Band, the Cartmen's Society with Grand Marshal Robert Blakeslee. The line of march was extensive — from Hibernian Hall up State to George to Congress Avenue to Lafayette to Rose to Cedar to York to Morocco to Factory to George to Church to Chapel to State to Summer to Hamilton to Grand Avenue to Fair Haven and countermarch back to Wallace to Chapel to Church to State and back to Hibernian Hall.

As if that wasn't enough of a day's work, in the afternoon the societies formed again and marched to Music Hall where the oration was delivered by William C. Robinson, Esq., of New London, whose topic was, "The Hero Kings of Ireland." Tickets for the lecture were 25 cents and proceeds went to the Catholic orphans of New Haven. In the evening, there was entertainment at Music Hall where "Mr. George W. Jones is to impersonate 'Roderick O'Conner' and 'Jerry Clip' in the 'Whiteboys of Ireland,' supported by a good company, including the well-known favorite comedian, John Cooper.

1866 On the night before St. Patrick's Day, New Haven's Fenians — Sarsfield Circle of the Fenian Brotherhood — held a public meeting at Hibernian Hall "for the purpose of affording an opportunity to all who desire becoming members previous to the parade on the 17th instant. It is expected that F.L. O'Reilly, state organizer, will be present and deliver an oration. The Brotherhood will meet at Hibernian Hall at 8 1/2 o'clock on the morning of the 17th per order Michael Fitzpatrick, center."

St. Patrick's Day morning was bright and warm and as a result, the Palladium commented, "our streets were alive with the people whose traditions of St. Patrick lead them to devote one day a year to keep green and fresh his memory. Hundreds of new faces were to be seen, indicating that the country towns had been liberally contributing to help celebrate."

The day's events began with High Mass at St. Patrick's Church at 10 a.m. The afternoon Palladium took great delight in highlighting an error made by the morning Courier and Journal. Father J. O'Farrell of New York City had been announced as the preacher and the Couri
the morning paper's mistake and announced, that the sermon was preached by the pastor, Father Matthew Hart, because Father O'Farrell was "detained by sickness."

After Mass, crowds gathered for the parade. "The turnout," said the Palladium, "was one of the most imposing ever seen in this city. There were upwards of 1,300 men in line. Hundreds of our citizens not of Celtic blood viewed it as it passed. The banners and streamers floating in the breeze, the display of men on horseback in their white frocks, the military step and soldierly appearance of the Sarsfield and Emmet Guards, the half-civic, half-martial aspect of the hundreds of Fenians on the march, the hundreds of society men moving on, four abreast with hands upon each other's shoulders, the blare of trumpets and the rattling of drums, the clatter of horses' feet and the inspiring music of half a dozen bands, all produced a very marked impression on beholders. On the line of march, the procession was halted at the City Hall and was there reviewed by His Honor the Mayor and the Common Council. Altogether the turn-out was one highly creditable to the Irishmen of our city. At about half-past twelve o'clock, the line was dispersed to be reformed after dinner."

By the time the Palladium reporter finished his story, the weather apparently had taken a turn for the worse because he added and the paper printed, "P.S. It snows."

Not only snow, but politics got mixed up in the celebration later in the day. In the afternoon, the Palladium reported, "The line was formed again and after showing to excellent advantage and after receiving many tokens of friendly regard all along the route, filed into Music Hall amid the playing of the bands and the huzzas of excited spectators. The body of the hall was reserved for the men of the procession. When they were all in, nearly every available seat was occupied. Then the galleries were thrown open and at once crowded to excess, and the entrance ways and aisles were also crowded with standing spectators.

"It was quarter past four before all was ready for the oration. At that time, Daniel Healy, one of the chiefs of the day, introduced the Rev. Mr. Carroll, who was received with rapturous applause and at once proceeded to deliver the address ... The address was a very successful effort, judging from the evidence of satisfaction with which it was received; and it must be admitted was entitled to the approval accorded it, although some portions of it were not at all in keeping with
the orator's oft-made denunciation of what he is pleased to term political preaching. In fact, he re-asserted, in his rotund effort his contempt for political preaching and yet, in almost the same breath, gave sly hits at the Republican Party, and openly exulted in Copperheadism — asserting that Copperheads were right — that Copperheadism had got into the White House in the shape of an individual named, 'Veto,' and that St. Patrick, if he had had copperheads to deal with wouldn't have driven them out of Ireland. The snakes he did drive out of Ireland were black snakes, said the reverend punster.

"Also, in continuation of his oft-asserted principle, that preachers should let politics alone, he went on to declaim that the people of Connecticut were going to place a Copperhead — so he termed an English — in their gubernatorial chair by a majority of votes at the coming election. Talk about consistency! That's a fair specimen of the Rev. J.H.C. Politics outside, his St. Patrick's oration was a very fine and creditable effort, all but its length, which may be guessed from the fact that it took the reverend gentleman one hour and three quarters to get it off.

"His review of the gallant deeds by land and sea of sons of Ireland and of their soul-stirring lofty patriotism; his recitation from the immortal bards of that beautiful land, his touching, heart-winning appeal in behalf of motherless, fatherless children, his eulogy of the devoted ministering angels of the Catholic Church, the Sisters of Mercy, his comparison of the position of Ireland today with that of the 13 colonies in '76 and his inspiring appeal to the Fenians to do their duty to their beloved land called forth the most heartfelt outbursts of applause and marked the speaker as a very skillful and accomplished word user. After the oration, hearty cheers were given for Mr. Carroll and then his Honor, Mayor Scranton, who had been seated upon the platform, was called forth amid uproarious applause ... Cheers were then given for the marshal of the day, Patrick Ward, and for others and the vast audience moved out, the band playing 'God Save the Green.'"

In an editorial on the day's events, the Palladium stated, "The 17th of March has almost become a national holiday. In all our cities and larger towns, the citizens of Irish birth turn out with hearty zeal to celebrate the birthday of their patron saint. We of New England birth, of puritanic ancestry, naturally do not enter fully into the spirit of the festivities of the occasion while at the same time we rejoice in the
Daniel Healy, who ran a wood and coal business at Hamilton and State was one of the "chiefs" at the 1866 celebration.
enjoyment of our foreign friends and respect the devotion they bear to their holy guardian ..."

Then, after explaining some historical background about St. Patrick, the Palladium concluded, "So runs the tradition. Whether historically true or false, it is certain that St. Patrick's name will be honored and his birthday celebrated by all true Irishmen so long as the shamrock grows."

1867 "A large and enthusiastic meeting, was held in Music Hall last evening," said the Register on Saturday, March 16, "in behalf of the cause of Ireland and of the Fenians who represent that cause on both sides of the Atlantic." William Gleeon, head center of New Haven's Sarsfield Circle of Fenians, was chairman of the meeting and the speakers included Mayor Sperry, Gen. E.M. Lee of Guilford, R.W. Wright, Esq., of New Haven and O'Neil Larkey of Boston. Despite a snowstorm Saturday night, the city's Irish turned out for the annual parade and the line of march, as printed in the newspaper, gives an indication of the size of the parade. The parade was led by "pioneer" John Carroll, followed by the New Haven Band, 18 pieces; the Wolfe Tone Guards under Capt. Thomas Dunn, 120 men; Emmet Guard, Capt. McCartan, 65 men; Tompkins Band, 16 pieces; Sarsfield Guards, Capt. J.H. Keefe, 85 men; Montgomery Guard, Capt. Michael Williams, 80 men; Company E, 8th Regiment, National Guard, Bridgeport, Capt. Cahill, 80 men; Branford Brass Band, 15 pieces; New Haven Montgomery Society, 150 marchers; Russell's Drum Corps, 5 pieces; Hibernian Society, 150 men.

1868 On a rainy Tuesday, the Wolfe Tone Guards under Capt. P.B. O'Brien "in their red pants and green jackets, were the most noticeable company in the line. The ranks are made up of young men of spirit and fidelity to the land of their nativity, as well as the land of their adoption. The Clark Luby Rifles under Capt. Colwell, although in smaller numbers than the rest, showed their martial bearing in their neat and well-fitted uniforms."

In the annual address, the orator of the day, James H. Olmstead of Stamford, stated, "Owing to the mysterious destinies of its scattered race, there is not a spot from the westernmost part of Asia, to the pillar of Hercules, in which some merry Irishman does not on this day, fix
the green shamrock in his cap and salute the glorious memory of St. Patrick with a shout, which is taken up and reverberated throughout the length and breadth of Ireland, where it attains additional power and is swept across the Atlantic, to the shores of our beloved America, where it assumes the majesty of thunder as it rolls in peaks across the boundless prairies and is echoed and re-echoed over the craggy cliffs of the Rocky Mountains until it dies away into silence on the golden shore of California."

1869

The parade continued to grow. The Register estimated that the line of march contained 3,000 marchers and that not less than 6,000 spectators had assembled when the procession stepped out from the Green at 1 p.m. The chief marshal was Thomas Judge and the marchers were led by Lt. Mullen and a platoon of policemen. An honored spot in the parade was reserved for Lt. John Carroll whom the Register said was three score years of age, and, in a cryptic remark, commented, "had served on both continents."

Missing from the line was Robert Blakeslee and the members of the Cartmen's Association. In previous years, the Register noted, Blakeslee "with his short breeches, chapeau, sash and general ornamentation" had earned "the admiration of the female sex and the envy of his own!"

In the evening, the Celtic Club held a banquet in the Register building with Michael Nolan presiding and with speeches by James I. Hayes, James Sisk, John Cunningham, and M.J. O'Sullivan. Music was provided by Lt. James T. Mullen and a Mr. Sargent of New York and by James Sisk "who gave the air of 'Cruisken Lawn' with good effect."

1870s
End of the Parades
1870

St. Patrick's Day 1870 "happily, and unlike many that have immediately preceded it," commented the Daily Morning Journal and Courier, "dawned beautifully and the cheerfulness of an unclouded sun added to the general gladness by those deeply interested in all the observance of the occasion. The forenoon was far on toward its close when the streets began to be enlivened by the appearing of Irish lads and maidens arrayed in their best attire, who sauntered up and down the streets, similarly greeting each other with nods of recognition and indulging in pleasant chit-chat while patiently waiting for the processional display. As the time wore on, the crowd increased in numbers until the walks in Chapel and Church streets were thronged with young maidens, upon whose cheeks the cool March breezes planted very bright roses, attended by admiring gallants who defended them from the shoulder pushes of the passing throng of people.

"About 1 o'clock the different organizations began to arrive upon the Green, which became the center of attraction to the crowds upon the streets. At half past one, the chief marshal of the day, David Moreton, commenced getting the companies into line and in about half an hour, through the aid of his associates, it was accomplished. The scene presented then upon the snow-covered square was a very pretty one. A few minutes after two, the procession, numbering about 2,000, commenced moving out of the south gate of the Green. (The procession) was the biggest ever before marshaled upon St. Patrick's Day and it presented a very admirable appearance. The military with their bright uniforms, marching with excellent military precision, the societies with handsome banners and bright-colored regalia, formed a column very striking and attractive in appearance."

That evening, a large number of people attended special services at St. John's Church where the Rev. Mr. Murphy delivered a lecture on the First Vatican Council, which was then in session in Rome.

At the Revere House in Orange Street, the Sons of Erin held their second annual banquet with Col. J.G. Healy presiding. The festivities lasted far into the evening and, according to the press, "were highly enjoyed by all present."
The honored guest at the banquet of the Sons of Erin was one of the heroes of the Fenian uprising in 1867: Gen. Thomas F. Bourke. A native of Fethard, Co. Tipperary, Bourke came to New York at the age of 10 and served in the Confederate Army during the Civil War. He returned to Ireland in 1867 when on March 6 a band of Fenians he commanded was attacked by a British column at an ancient Danish earthwork named Ballyhurts outside of Tipperary town. The Fenians fire a volley at the approaching troops but then retreated in disarray. Bourke was shot from his horse as he tried to escape. He was sentenced to be hanged, beheaded and quartered. Before the court, he declared, "I accept my doom and I hope that God will forgive me my past sins. I hope that inasmuch as He has for 700 years preserved Ireland, notwithstanding all the tyranny to which she has been subjected, as a separate and distinct nationality, He will also assist her to retrieve her fallen fortunes, and raise her in her beauty and mystery, the sister of Columbia, the peer of my nation in the end."

As was the case with many Fenians, Bourke's sentence was commuted and he returned to the United States. He arrived in New Haven by train from New York about 8:30 p.m. St. Patrick's Day and was met at the depot by the City Band, the Hibernian Society and the Sons of Erin, all of whom escorted him to the Tontine Hotel for the Sons of Erin banquet. Unfortunately, none of the city papers seems to have published what an eloquent speaker said that evening.

Another famous Irish patriot, Jeremiah O'Donovan Rossa, visited New Haven on Sunday, March 17 and addressed a crowd at Brewster's Hall on the subject, "Prison Life in England." It was a topic with which he was intimately familiar. Arrested in September 1865, he had spent four years in prison in England and had proved a particularly intractable inmate. On one occasion, for throwing the contents of his chamber pot at the prison governor, he spent 35 days with his hands manacled behind his back. It was said that he passed some of the time reading books by turning pages with his teeth.

Before O'Donovan Rossa described his prison experiences, Maria Coffee presented a flag to the St. Patrick's Temperance Society. "In presenting to you this flag of an adopted country," she said, "we feel confident that it will be safe in your hands. Irishmen were among the first to establish its independence, and they have always been
foremost to protect it. We have thought fit to adorn it with the leaves of the shamrock to remind you that though your fortunes are cast in America, yet you are not to forget that beautiful isle across the ocean, which we all love and to which we look back with emotions of pride. That you may daily increase in numbers and strength, and that you may receive many blessings for your labors in the holy cause of temperance, is the earnest prayer of the lady friends of your society."

John McGrath, president of the Temperance Society, "replied handsomely, accepting the flag with feelings of gratitude and saying that the sight of it should ever be an incentive to them to contribute to the happiness of their relatives by practicing temperance."

That same evening, Father S. Sheffrey lectured on "Poets and Statesmen of Ireland," before a large audience at St. John's Church, and William C. Robinson spoke on the Jesuits at St. Francis Church.

The annual parade was held on Monday, March 18, with Patrick Burns as grand marshal assisted by Patrick McDonald, John Dargan, Michael Kiloran, James Smith, Dennis Nolan, Thomas Foley and Bernard J. Sheehan.

1873 On Monday, March 17, "the streets were crowded with old and young and green was the predominant color. The vendors of patent medicines and geegaws took up their abode on street corners and cried their wares in hoarse tones. Bunting was displayed on many buildings and the city assumed a holiday aspect."

As an indication of the popularity of the New Haven parade throughout the region, the papers noted the arrival of the out-of-town companies from Branford, Meriden and Wallingford on the morning trains. The visitors were hosted by Irish societies in the city. For example, the 85 members of the St. Mary's Temperance Society of Branford, including a brass band led by Frank Hadley, were guests of the St. Francis Temperance Society of Fair Haven.

The procession itself numbered 2,000 marchers and, according to the Journal and Courier, "was by far the most imposing ever seen in New Haven on St. Patrick's Day ... While the middle of the streets resounded with the tread of the marshalled hosts, the sidewalks were thronged with a procession scarcely less interesting, headed by a noisy,
rollicking crowd of urchins, who were followed by men, women and children hurrying in the wake of the great procession. Here was a group of three or four fresh maidens who, with locked arms, swept the sidewalk, while just behind them, following in mute admiration, were an equal number of youthful swains, to whom the rippling laughter, the rosy cheeks and the gay ribbons of the fair ones before them were far more attractive than the tones of the drum, cymbal or horn or the brilliant colors of the uniformed columns. A little further on came a couple who years ago had celebrated their first St. Patrick's Day and were now anxiously watching for their oldest boy that they might look with parental pride on his noble form and soldierly mien. Then came more children and more beautiful damsels and more parents and so the vast concourse moved on."

After the parade, the 1sr, 2nd and 3rd divisions of the Ancient Order of Hibernians escorted their brother Hibernians from Meriden and Wallingford to the Tontine Hotel for "a bountiful repast."

In the evening, Wendell Phillips lectured on the subject of "Froude," at Music Hall under the auspices of the Catholic Literary Association. At Lockwood's, the Sons of Erin were entertained by Elizabeth Healy who, accompanied on the piano by her sister, Maggie, sang "Come Back to Erin" and "Lakes of Killarney." During the evening, the group received a telegram from John Mullaly, president of the Knights of St. Patrick of New York City: "The Knights of St. Patrick of New York send cordial greetings to the Sons of Erin, New Haven, and, in the undying hope of a glorious national independence in the near future for our native land, wish you a pleasant celebration of the day that is dear to the hearts of Irishmen the world over."
St. Patrick's Day in New Haven was notable on several counts. First, there was a mutiny on the parade committee. Second, when the committee members finally got organized, they put together what was the largest parade up to that time, a parade that attracted marching units and Irish organizations from all over the state. Finally, it marked the appearance of a new organization: the Knights of St. Patrick.

The mutiny broke out in late February at a meeting of the parade committee at Exchange Hall when the subcommittee on the parade route came in with its report. Concerned with the length of the march, the subcommittee recommended that Fair Haven be eliminated from the route. That recommendation sat so poorly with the Fair Haven delegates that they promptly withdrew from the meeting and caucused in another part of the building. Parade Chairman Daniel Cahill appointed a three-member committee — Messrs. Hurley, Kennedy and O'Brien — "to wait upon the other wing and ask them to join the convention." At length, the three returned from their mission and, as the New Haven Union put it, "reported that the seceding delegation was ready to join the convention. (Applause)." There followed a lengthy debate, numerous votes on resolutions and amendments and, eventually, the acceptance of a line of march to include Fair Haven.

On the day of the parade, even a drizzling rain that began that Tuesday morning and continued most of the day failed to dampen the spirits of those who marched and those who came to watch. "The early morning trains into this city," commented the Register, "brought thousands of people to take part in or to witness the parade. The 9:20 a.m. train on the Shore Line road came in with six cars all crowded. The Hartford train had nine cars filled to excess, and following it was a special train containing two divisions of Ancient Order of Hibernians from Hartford and one division from New Britain. A special train came down the Air Line railroad arriving here about a quarter past 10 o'clock and brought the Middletown and Portland divisions. With the last mentioned arrival, the number of members of the different visiting divisions amounted to 750. Each division was met at the depot by delegations from the order in this city, who escorted the visitors into line. At half past 10, the various organizations began to file into the Green, preparatory to taking up their line of march. The mud on the Green was two inches deep in some places and forming the line proved
to be a tedious affair. It was fully 12 o’clock ere the procession was formed and the order given to march. As fates would have it, a brisk fall of rain set in just as the procession started and umbrellas were in demand...

Nearly 4,000 men marched that day under the direction of Grand Marshal Michael Egan assisted by Patrick O’Connor and Patrick Considine. At least half the line of march comprised the various divisions of the Hibernians who were led by their state officers: President Patrick Daley of Hartford, Secretary T.K. Dunn of New Haven and Treasurer P.J. O’Connor of Norwich.

The streets were gaily decorated. One of the most noteworthy banners was strung across Chapel Street near Church Street with a Gaelic inscription surrounding clasped hands. The inscription “Ar nDia, Ar d’Tir, Cead Milte Romhat A Dheartharacha,” meant “Our God, Our Country, A Hundred Thousand Welcomes Brothers.”

“At the residence of Mr. Bernard Reilly on Cedar Street,” reported the Register, “the national bunting was exhibited in profusion. Three very large flags were stretched across the street at this place, while the front of Mr. Reilly’s residence was resplendent with the 'red, white and blue.' Alderman Dillon’s residence next door was decorated in a similar manner and presented a very neat and patriotic appearance. At 329 Cedar St. and at the stores of Robert Stevens and Isaac Davis the national colors were displayed. J.R. Gildea’s saloon on Congress Avenue was festooned with green, a green flag was displayed at J. Morrisey’s store on the same street while numerous banners floated from Healy’s and Herrity’s blocks.”

That evening, the Knights of St. Patrick made their debut in New Haven. An announcement of the formation of the new group was published in the newspaper on March 9 with the note, “Annual banquets are proposed.” On the day of the parade, the new organization displayed in front of the Register building, where it met, “a fine, large, full length portrait of St. Patrick, from the easel of Morehouse, the equinoctial painter. The painting represents the worthy patron of Ireland in a studying position, holding a prayer book, while to his right is the harp of Erin, and in the background a glimpse of Irish scenery.”

The Knights gathered for their first banquet that evening at Lockwood’s and the papers the next day gave a full account of the affair: “The first annual banquet of the Knights of St. Patrick was held at Lockwood’s. The founders of this society were formerly members of
the organization known as the Sons of Erin, and the names of many honorary members of the latter society have been transferred to the books of the new society. Its officers are Col. John G. Healy, president; C.T. Driscoll, Esq., vice president; John A. Maher, secretary; John D. Kane, financial secretary; James Reynolds, treasurer. The reception committee last evening was a most efficient one. It was composed of James Reynolds, Owen Gannon and Bernard Carlin. The banquet was an exceedingly pleasant affair. The tables were spread in Mr. Lockwood's cosy dining room and were loaded with delicacies. The room itself was handsomely decorated for the occasion, one of the principal ornaments being the full length portrait of St. Patrick which adorned the front of the Register building during the day, and which is the property of the club. The tables were arranged in the form of a cross, and when the members and their ladies and invited guests were seated, the scene was brilliant as it was joyous. Col. Healy presided at one end of the table with Mayor Lewis at his right, while Vice President Driscoll sat at the opposite end with Hon. Martin Griffin as his right-hand man.

"When the elegant repast had been partaken of and the appetites of all appeased, Col. Healy arose and in his usual clear and felicitous style gave a statement of the reason of the formation of the new society and bade all welcome. He then announced the toast, 'The Day We Celebrate'... and called upon Mr. Driscoll to respond. Mr. Driscoll replied in a speech which was a tribute worthy the occasion and listened to with deep attention. He spoke of the past of Ireland, of her noble sons and of the future. St. Patrick's Day should be a New Year's Day to all Irishmen, when they should lay out a bright programme of high and noble resolves. Each individual should strive to be perfect. Nations were an aggregation of individuals. It was the moral power of individuals and nations which gave lasting glory and permanent renown. Let each do something to reflect credit and add to the sum total of the glory of the Irish race."

Although their ranks must have been somewhat depleted by the founding of the Knights of St. Patrick, the Sons of Erin held their annual banquet at the Madison House. The festivities there included "Some Reminiscences" by John Waddock and the singing of "The Bells of Shandon" by William Starkey, clerk of the city court. Meanwhile, at Music Hall, the guest lecturer was Martin Griffin, editor of the Boston Leader. Griffin expounded on the duties of Irishmen in their new homeland. He pointed out that 2.5 million Irish people had arrived in
America in the past decade, and added, "though our numbers are large, it is a painful fact that our race has not taken the position in the country that it should."

Asking the audience's indulgence to discuss what he perceived to be some faults of the Irish, Griffin blamed these faults on petty bickering among the immigrants, the failure of Irish people to become citizens and perform the duties of citizenship and, especially, alcohol. Urging his listeners to resist the vice of intemperance, he commented, "Drink has the same effect on an Irishman that a lighted match has on a powder magazine." When Griffin had finished, C.T. Driscoll of St. Mary's Temperance Society invited those who wished to denounce strong drink to come forward at the close of the meeting and give their names to the secretaries of the various temperance societies.

1875 The line of march that was published in the city newspapers shows the numbers and types of units participating in the St. Patrick's Day parades in this era. The units included large contingents of temperance societies and of Hibernians. The order was as follows: grand marshal, Bartholomew Mulcahey; chief aides, Patrick O'Connor, John O'Connor; aides, James Wilson, Thomas Canavan, James Smith, Michael Dunnigan, Michael Dillon, William Quinlivan, Michael Egan, Thomas Gorman, Patrick Kilcran, John Moran, James O'Keefe, Daniel Igoe, Bartholomew Foley, Patrick J. Flemming.

Police escort, 10 men commanded by Sgt. Sellect; drum corps; Emmet Guard, Capt. Maloy, 40 men; Sarsfield Guard, Capt. Brennan, 50 men; St. Patrick's Band; St. Patrick's Total Abstinence and Benevolent Society No. 1, John Gibbons, marshal, and John Muldoon, aide, 250 men; Felsburg's Band; St. Patrick's Parochial T.A.B. Society, Daniel Dynan, marshal, and J. McNamara, aide, 130 men; St. John's T.A.B. Society, Patrick Burns, marshal, 220 men; St. Joseph's Temperance Cadets, John Hayes, marshal, and B. Lynch, aide, 150 lads; St. Mary's T.A.B. Society, Martin Flynn, marshal, 100 men; St. Aloysius T.A.B. Society, John Keegan Jr., marshal, and Frederick Murphy, aide, 63 men; St. Joseph's T.A.B. Society, Westville, James Colwell, marshal, and Michael Foley and Roger Carrigan, aides, 55 men; St. Francis Band, Fair Haven, B. Lynch, leader, 19 pieces; St. Francis T.A.B. Society, Thomas Coleman, marshal, and John Dwyer and P. Ryan, aides, 200 men; Pope Pius IX T.A.B. Society, Fair
Haven, Arthur Hunt, marshal, 150 men; Temperance Band; Sons of Temperance, Fair Haven, 200 men.

Montgomery Benevolent Society; Butler's Band, Wallingford, 16 pieces; 1st Division, Ancient Order of Hibernians, P.M. Givney, marshal, 110 men; Lennon's Band, Peter Lennon, leader; 2nd Division, AOH, 180 men; 3rd Division, AOH, Patrick Quinn, marshal, 120 men; 4th Division, AOH, B. Foley, marshal, 80 men; Douglas Manufacturing Company Band, Seymour, M. Harris, leader; 5th Division, AOH, T. Sheridan, marshal, 97 men; clergymen, guests and officers of organizations in carriages.

"There were many decorative tokens," said the Journal and Courier, "in honor of the day to be seen all along the route of procession and many more at stores and saloons on the route where regard for the day was held. Among the more noticeable were those at Edward Malley's store, Maj. Maher's residence, the rooms of the Knights of St. Patrick and Clan-na-Gael society in the Register building ... at the rooms of the 'Red Knights' a new and flourishing secret society of young men originating among members of the Sarsfield Guard, in Hoadly building, at the Solid Comfort club rooms in the Harmon & Foy corset factory building, at Gerard's corner on Meadow Street and Congress Avenue, at T.P. Merwin's dry goods store, George Lester's insurance office, E.A. Thompson's feed store, the buildings of S. Bartlett and Edward Nugent on Franklin Street, the residence of the Sisters of Mercy on Franklin Street and W.J. Bohan's music and toy store on State Street — in most cases large American flags being exhibited."

The question which had caused so much trouble the year before about marching over to Fair Haven apparently was settled amicably when that segment of the parade was omitted, said the Journal and Courier "by mutual agreement to shorten the tramp, which was tiresome on account of the mud." 

That evening, the Knights of St. Patrick held their second annual banquet at Lockwood's and the Sons of Erin gathered at Redcliffe's for their annual dinner.
St. Patrick’s Day arrived, said the New Haven Union, with “slush under foot and threatening sky overhead. The time for assembling on the Green was 11 o’clock. Previous to that hour, however, snow began to fall rapidly and when 11 o’clock arrived it was evident that an immediate parade was impossible. Accordingly, the green feathers, which had been parading about town were housed in the rooms of the various societies and for a time things came to a doleful pause. The snow fell rapidly until noon and the slush and mud accumulated, but about noon it was decided by Grand Marshal Michael Canavan to have the parade occur, the societies to assemble on the Green at 2 o’clock.”

The delay caused a good deal of confusion and when the marchers finally did assemble “the appearance of the ranks was somewhat less imposing than usual. There was also a noticeable absence of flags, banners, etc … Considering all things, however, the turnout was exceedingly creditable, it requiring no little enthusiasm to enable one to brave the mud, etc. to be encountered in a long tramp about the city.”

That evening, Dion Boucicault’s “Colleen Bawn” was presented at Music Hall by a cast including J.T. Hine of the Port Royal Theatre of Dublin and Annie Mack of the Grand Opera in New York City. Also that evening, the Sarsfield Club, Clan-na-Gael held its annual reception at its new quarters on Dwight Street and the discomfort of the day was forgotten amid the gaiety of the evening. “At one end of the hall,” reported the Union, “was a large allegorical painting, the Sunburst of Ireland, while at the other was a full-length portrait of St. Patrick. On the side walls of both the hall and parlor adjoining were suspended engravings of prominent men well known in the history of Ireland’s struggles for liberty. There was a large attendance of the members of the club and their lady friends and other invited guests and when the order for the Grand March was given, the line of promenaders extended almost entirely around the hall. Capt. L. O’Brien and lady led the march, the band playing 'Marching Through Georgia,' which was taken up by the company and sung with much enthusiasm.

“The dancing continued until midnight when an intermission was taken and refreshments good and plentiful were furnished to all present. Short addresses were then in order and Mr. James Reynolds being called upon welcomed all present. He said he earnestly hoped that those social occasions would be often repeated; it was a pleasure, he said, to have the co-operation of the ladies in these pleasant gatherings and he hoped they would continue to exhibit an interest in the welfare of the
Fifty cents bought an evening of first-class Irish theater at Music Hall on St. Patrick's Day 1876.
association ... Mr. Thomas Campbell was called upon for a song and gave, 'The Dear Little Shamrock,' in fine style. Then came an address from C.T. Driscoll, Esq., who expressed his great satisfaction at being permitted to be present, and continuing his remarks in a semi-humorous way created no little merriment for those present.

"Loud calls for a song from Miss Anne Flood were then made, and that lady responded by singing, 'The Beautiful Girl of Kildare,' which was very finely rendered, eliciting the loud plaudits of the company. After brief addresses by Mr. Haggerty of Brooklyn, N.Y., Col. John G. Healy of this city and others, dancing was resumed and kept up until 3 o'clock this morning. The gathering was a most pleasant and enjoyable one in every particular and the committee having the same in charge are entitled to much credit for the pleasant manner in which the programme was carried out."

1877 Apparently discouraged by frequent bad weather and by the onset of a severe economic downturn, the Irish societies met on Feb. 12 "and heard addresses by Rev. Dr. Carmody, Revs. Mr. Murphy, Mulholland and Fitzpatrick and Judge Robinson in favor of abandoning the customary parade on St. Patrick's Day, that the money used for bands, entertainment, hall hire, etc. might go to the destitute of the city. " The societies, however, clung to the tradition and "voted to hold the parade and a committee was appointed to secure a popular lecturer to speak in Music Hall in the evening of the day, the receipts to be used for charitable purposes. The following officers were selected: Daniel Cahill, president; John McWeeney, vice president; John Dargan, secretary; Patrick Welsh, grand marshal."

As it turned out, weather was again a thorn in the side of the parade organizers. Snow in the morning and a cold, raw wind forced a two hour delay. "As if to atone for its perverse conduct in the morning," commented the Journal and Courier, "the weather became quite pleasant in the afternoon, the sun shining brightly and the winds toned down and this with a tolerable fair state of the walking — the absence of the usual supply of March mud particularly noticeable — made the marching not so very unpleasant after all." The parade was smaller than in other years, owing, suggested the Register, "possibly to the hard times rather than the condition of the streets." Among the missing units were the Sarsfield and Emmet guards who had marched in the parade for years. Still it was not without
its highlights. "A conspicuous feature of the procession," said the Journal and Courier, "was the body of (St. Patrick's Church T.A.B.) cadets, the red of their uniforms making a vivid contrast in the line. They carried wooden guns and though occasionally their alignments varied extensively, they make a very creditable show. The appearance of the regalia of various of the bodies indicated that an increased attention is being given to the style and quality of the material and a wholesome rivalry on the subject was suggested."

After the parade, a lecture was delivered by Judge W.C. Robinson at Music Hall and the proceeds were given to the St. Vincent de Paul Society.

Also missing this year was any mention of the traditional banquets of the Sons of Erin and the Knights of St. Patrick.

1878 On a cold, rainy Monday morning, March 18, the Journal and Courier matter-of-factly pronounced an obituary for the St. Patrick's Day parade which had been a tradition for more than 30 years in New Haven. "Yesterday being St. Patrick's Day," said the paper, "the services in the Roman Catholic churches were not conducted without more or less regard to the circumstances. The omission this year of any public parade by the various Catholic societies has been an innovation on the custom which has always prevailed and it would appear that much of the merely social observance of the day has declined among the Irish people. At the Church of the Sacred Heart, at vespers, St. Patrick's hymn with chorus was finely sung, the solos being well rendered by Misses O'Donnell and Merritt. At St. John's Church, solemn High Mass was celebrated by Rev. Dr. Carmody, assisted by two of the Mission Fathers, and Father Charles of the Passionist Fathers pronounced a panegyric on the religious life and character of the good saint, who after his captivity, converted the inhabitants of Ireland to Christianity and founded many churches and schools of learning.

"At St. Patrick's Church, High Mass was celebrated by Father Shaw, the St. Patrick's hymn being sung with fine effect by Miss Nellie McGuire. Father McGill of the Lazarist Fathers preached a sermon suitable for the day, giving not only the more familiar historical facts connected with the career of the apostle, but pointing out for the edification of his hearers those beautiful examples of self sacrifice and Christian heroism, the influence of which remains to this day. At St.
President Francis Donnelly, left, and Secretary M.W. Malley greeted members at the first banquet of the reorganized Knights of St. Patrick at the City Hotel in 1878.

Francis Church, Rev. Mr. O'Connell preached and the usual consideration was given to the thoughts naturally suggested by the recurrence of the natal day of the great churchman in whose honor all loyal Catholics unite."

On Monday, the Irish Rifles conducted a target shoot at the Quinnipiac Rifle Range. The Irish-American Rifle Club of New York City was scheduled to compete against the New Haven marksmen, but was unable to keep the engagement. Despite a strong wind which played havoc with the targets, the local club went through with the matches and awarded prizes to the sharpshooters: E.A. Folsom, William E. Lyons, L. O'Brien, A. Allen and P. O'Connor.

That evening, the Knights of St. Patrick held their annual banquet at the City Hotel. The Register, apparently in recognition of previous banquets of the Knights, called it the group's annual banquet while the headline in the Journal and Courier described it as "Their First Annual Banquet." In any case, from that time forward, the Knights of St. Patrick have always referred to 1878 as the year of their first banquet. The officers who were in attendance, according to the newspapers,
included: President Francis Donnelly, Vice President P. McKenna, Secretary M.W. Malley, Treasurer James Reilly. Members included: Bernard Reilly, Thomas F. McGrail, Michael Herrity, City Auditor Edward McCarthy, former Prosecuting Attorney T.J. Fox, Town Registrar William O'Keefe, Capt. Brennan, Francis McCue, Michael Dillon, Col. John G. Healy, Michael Healy, former Road Commissioner Doyle, former Alderman John Reynolds, former Assessor Michael Reynolds, Patrick McKiernan, Michael Coleman, Patrick Cullom, former Alderman Edward Hammill, Daniel Gilhuly, former Alderman Peter McCue, William Moran "and others."

After dinner, toasts were drunk beginning with that by President Donnelly, "The Day We Celebrate — St. Patrick's Day 1878, Cead Mille Failthe." An eloquent response, said the Journal and Courier, was made by T.J. Fox who, "touched feelingly upon chords which formed a sympathetic throb and responsive echo in the breast of every one present holding claim upon dear remembrance of the green isle. The speaker in conclusion hoped for the perpetuation of the society and the perpetuity of the celebration of the day so dear to the heart of every loyal Irishman." During the festivities, a telegram was received from the Hartford Knights of St. Patrick, who were also celebrating. The telegram read, "The sturdy Charter Oaks greet the infant Elms. J.E. Higgins, president."

1879 For the second consecutive year, the newspapers make no mention of a St. Patrick's Day parade. The weather — "a rainy, sloppy day" with a snow shower in the evening — seemed to justify the cancellation of that event. Once again, the major activity was the Knights of St. Patrick banquet. The affair was again held in the City Hotel and, it was reported, "A fine scene was presented at the banquet with the lavishly spread tables, beautifully decorated hall adorned with flags, festoons of red, white and blue pictures and hanging baskets of plants, the handsome array of Knights whose faces wore joyous expressions and eyes were sparkling with health, prosperity and happiness. Many of the best representative men of the city among those who particularly cherish the name of St. Patrick and hold dear the memories of Erin, were gathered around the festive board which never, well hardly ever, groaned so extensively with good things to tempt the appetite as on this auspicious occasion."
IRISHMEN! ATTENTION!

All societies who expect to participate in the St. Patrick Festivities.

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What's St. Patrick's Day without a new hat?
President Patrick McKenna presided and the evening was opened with a blessing by the Rev. Dr. Fitzgerald. That the Knights considered themselves distinct from the earlier Knights of St. Patrick organized in 1874 is evident by the toast, "The Knights of St. Patrick of New Haven; Our First Birthday; How We Have Grown." Francis Donnelly responded to the toast, "On the 18th of March 1878 to my great pleasure and pride, I found around me here 34 young Knights of St. Patrick who, from their prattle for Ireland and the relish for good things, must have been knighted the day before St. Patrick's Day. And since that time I must confess that they have grown far beyond my fatherly expectations ... They grew so fast that before they walked they danced to the music of Ireland's best musician, P.S. Gilmore of New York, and how well they did it I need not tell you, but you may rest assured the older the Knight the more he wanted to dance. And they have continued to grow strong and manly, so much so that they had to have another father, our worthy president ... And if my prayers will be heard I shall sincerely pray that they may all continue in prosperity, growth and strength and every year a new father be found until even the oldest bachelor Knight among them shall have a christening of his own ..."
1880s

Suffering
Ireland
In 1879, scarcely 30 years after the Potato Famine, Ireland stood at the brink of another disaster. An extraordinarily wet growing season in 1877 reduced the potato crop to less than half that of 1876. To make matters worse, the opening of the American West for corn crops and the development of rapid transit of that corn to Europe drove down prices for crops grown in Ireland. Their own revenues reduced, Irish peasants were unable to pay their rents and a new wave of tenant evictions racked the troubled country. Evictions were especially widespread in County Mayo. On April 20, 1879, at Irishtown near Claremorris, Mayo, tenants led by Michael Davitt held a protest meeting and demanded a general reduction of rents on an estate administered by a Catholic priest, Canon Burke. Within a few days, Burke reduced his rents by 25 percent.

Encouraged by that success, Davitt organized similar meetings throughout the country. In August, Davitt and 150 Mayo farmers organized the Land League of Mayo with the objective of transferring the ownership of Ireland’s land from the landlords who held title to it to the peasants who worked it. On Oct. 21, the movement was organized as the National Land League of Ireland with Charles Stewart Parnell as its president.

The distress of the tenant farmers and the formation of the Land League reverberated across the Atlantic and struck a chord with those Irish people who had fled their destitute homeland earlier.

In the early years of the 1880s, much of the energy that went into the celebration of St. Patrick’s Day in New Haven was directed to the benefit of the Land League. For example, on Tuesday evening, March 16, 1880 — just five months after the formation of the Land League in Ireland — 500 New Haven Irishmen and Irishwomen crowded the Grand Opera House to display their solidarity with the league. The program was sponsored by “the United Irish Societies” of the city, “the proceeds to be devoted to the relief of Ireland’s distress and the same to be distributed through the Land League.’’

In its St. Patrick’s Day edition, the Register gave a full account of the meeting: “Upon the stage were seated His Hon. Mayor Bigelow, who presided, Capt. Lawrence O’Brien, Joseph J. Sweeney, Alderman C.T. Driscoll, James Reynolds and many other prominent Irish citizens. The audience was called to order shortly after 8 o’clock by Mayor H.B. Bigelow who introduced Mr. Stephen Joseph Meany of New York, who
spoke substantially as follows, his subject being 'Ireland, Past, Present and Future:

"The condition of Ireland at the present time is as it was in 1847. They are dying off from starvation in a land where there is plenty. This is the sad news that comes to us from over the sea, and an effort should be made to give them relief. It is humiliating to know that a Protestant bishop said there was plenty within the walls of Ireland to feed ten times its population, and there is only one reason for all this: it is British mismanagement, and their power should be rooted out.'

"The speaker alluded to his recent trip to Ireland, some five months ago, and the signs of distress that he witnessed then. He said, 'I have been in Ireland before and I suppose I need not tell you that I have been an Irishman ever since I was born. In former years in Ireland, I remember there were many happy scenes; how the girls and the boys used to gather at the crossroads and dance to the music of the pipers. There are no dances there now; the boys and the girls are in tatters and sorrow and sadness prevails, and the once erect forms of the father and mother are bent and stooping. Where there were merry makings 20 years ago, there is sorrow and desperation now. If these things go on much longer where will Ireland be?

"Toil as they will, there is no bread because of the landlords. The herds of cattle instead of being kept upon the soil where they have lived and grown are daily sent from the ports of Ireland to England to the landlords where they live in luxury and debauchery, some of whom have never seen Ireland. The landlord system is all wrong and brings distress upon the poor people and it is well to relieve this distress.

"Let no man decry Charles Stewart Parnell for his efforts in their behalf. Let no man dare fling into his teeth the political sting. It is politics that will give the Irish peasant his land and soil without regard to the landlords or bailiffs. Charles Stewart Parnell will be impeached by parliament for the part he has taken. I can see from what I know of the British parliament what is in store for him.

"In 1864, I took part in certain movements for the interest of Ireland. I spoke in Cooper Institute, New York, and many other cities. In the course of time, my business called me to London, where I was arrested as a traitor and sentenced to 15 years penal service. I stand before you tonight as a traitor to England, according to their laws, but I am an Irishman, by the grace of God; I am for my country. I don't care what stands in the way, and I am now speaking to my countrymen
in honor of the old flag. If Ireland is ever to be free, she must strike the blow. We must not look to foreign countries for help. France helped us once and we know with what results. We must make a noble effort ourselves and free Ireland within ourselves.

"I think Ireland shall be purified by its suffering and those who have suffered imprisonment for Ireland’s cause will live to see her triumph. Some have advised constitutional agitation. What do they amount to? We have petitioned and petitioned and they have been laid aside and finally swooped down, and the last heard of them they were used to kindle fires in the lobbies of parliament.

"I do not believe in observing St. Patrick’s Day to-morrow in an exuberant way and there is no reason why we should not turn jubilations into charity."

The theme of sober reflection on the distress of Ireland was carried out at the other events marking St. Patrick’s Day that year. At Harry Flynn’s City Hotel, President Patrick McKenna opened the annual banquet of the Knights of St. Patrick with the comment, “The memories of the past year and the present, have been fruitful of sorrow to our native land, for without any fault of hers, she has been stricken with want, and her sons and daughters are starving in the midst of plenty, but not without a helping hand stretched out to save them.

"America, noble and generous America, has contributed of its abundance, has opened the floodgates of her sympathy and made many a sad heart rejoice by her benevolence and kindness. All honor to the flag of our adopted country. May its symbols never be forgotten. Were Ireland left to the management of her own resources, no country would be more capable of supporting its own population. Naturally fertile, the industry of her sons has made her, even in distress, the granary of England. Her hardy fishermen, if encouraged, could find plenty of employment in their vocation. Her mineral wealth could be readily turned to advantage. The tempest-tossed mariner from every clime could find shelter from ocean storms in her numerous bays and inlets. Brother Knights, while we rejoice at each recurrence of this anniversary, which is celebrated by the sons of Ireland so extensively through this vast continent and throughout the world, we cannot forget, we never shall forget, the land of our birth, and though she is now in the midst of her affliction, she shall still have the sympathy and if necessary a repetition of our assistance. Let me thank you, brother Knights, for your attendance here, and let us welcome these guests who honor us by
their presence. Trusting and hoping that we may all live to hear better news from the dear old land by the next anniversary of our patron saint, we begin the evening's programme."

In responding to the toast, "Ireland: Its Wrongs will be Righted," M. Fahy wished he could find fitting words to portray the wrongs to which Ireland has been subjected for the past hundreds of years. Ireland is ruled by England with a rod of steel and the land is full of trouble and woe. Ireland is still unconquered and is bearding the lion in his den. She has not the right to make her own laws, but she is a nation for all that ..."

At their hall in the Dwight Building, the Ancient Order of Hibernians held an informal program "which took the place of the usual parade." The walls of the hall were adorned "with portraits of O'Connell, a number of Irish martyrs and members of the order. Behind the chair of the presiding officer was a fine representation of Liberty sitting on a globe and holding the colors of the United States and Ireland in both hands." Honora and Alice Crotty sang "Meeting of the Waters," Daniel S. Gilhuly sang "The Minstrel Boy," Miss Mullen sang "The Dear Little Dewdrop and "Killarney." A number of toasts were made and "dancing was kept up to a late hour."

The other entertainment that evening was at the Grand Opera House where St. Joseph's Total Abstinence Society presented "Pyke O'Callaghan: or the Patriot of '98" for the benefit of St. Mary's Church. Said the Register, "All the participants deserve credit, but J.F. Hopkins as Neil O'Connor, a rebel, was especially good. M.J. O'Connor as Pyke O'Callaghan acted the part in a masterly way for an amateur and Miss Julia Reily as Lady Boughton, not only received well-merited approbation, but also a handsomely arranged basket of flowers. The program embraced, in addition to the historical drama, a grand clog by the New England Eight, which was so well rendered that the audience compelled a jig as an encore piece. Miss Kitty O'Donnell, leading soprano at the Church of the Sacred Heart, was in fine voice and
rendered several selections in excellent taste. Two baskets of fine flowers were sent to her by admirers. After the clock-work jig came the roaring farce 'The Irish Groom.' W.B. Haggerty as Paddy Ryan, Bob Kelly as Alderman Marrowfat, and Miss Dailey as Nancy were very fine in their impersonations. The business management of T.J. Coffey was without fault. The stage was under the direction of J.H. Finnegan. Father M.J. McGivney conducted the rehearsals."

1881

The Land League was still very much on the minds of exiled Irishmen and one of the highlights of St. Patrick's Day was the formation of a branch of the league at a meeting at Ives Hall in Mount Carmel on March 16. Father Hugh Mallon of Wallingford presided at the meeting and the main speaker was Joseph J. Sweeney, who had been on the stage at the meeting in the Grand Opera House the year before.

"When the American colonies resolved to shake off the yoke of English tyranny, oppression and coercion," Sweeney began, "when the mustering of men for the great and mighty conflict began and when orators equal to any that Athens ever produced fired the hearts of patriots with Liberty's touch, none responded with more alacrity to freedom's call than Ireland's emigrant sons and their descendants. We find in Watson's Annals of Philadelphia, page 290, that the arrivals at the port of Philadelphia alone for the year ending December 1729 are set down as English and Welsh 267, Scotch 43, Palatines (Germans) 343, and Irish 5,655 ... This large emigration at so early a day, we are informed was due to the laws enacted by the British parliament for the suppression of Irish manufactures and industries, and in consequence of the unjust rack rents. Well, they came to America imbued with the same hatred for the oppressor, the despoiler, that has actuated every exile to this time ..."

After reciting the contributions of Irish-Americans to the cause of American liberty, Sweeney stated, "You would be ungrateful if you heeded not the voice of that great old mother as she to-day in her anguish and torture stretches forth her hands imploringly to you and says, 'My American sons, in your glory and grandeur and pride, forget me not. Help me bear this terrible and unmerited cross that drags me to the ground, reflect the light of freedom upon me. Cheer me on in this great struggle that eventually will result in the bursting of my chains and the
obtaining of civil liberty.'" At the end of the meeting 76 of those in attendance joined the Land League and $75 was donated to be sent to Ireland.

On St. Patrick's Day evening, the Land League was the main topic at a meeting at Carll's Opera House where the speakers were the famous Irish patriot and editor of the Boston Pilot, John Boyle O'Reilly and Father Lawrence Walsh of Waterbury, who served as treasurer of the Land League in the United States. Before the meeting, the city's Irish societies sponsored a short parade. The marchers formed at 7:30 p.m. on the city Green and under Chief Marshal James P. Landers "passed through Elm, State and Chapel streets to the Opera house ... While not as long as in some years in the past, the procession was quite creditable."

Charles Atwater presided at the meeting in the crowded opera house and O'Reilly and Walsh did not disappoint their listeners. Although his lecture was titled "The Illustrious Irishmen of the Present Century and the Present Irish Land Question," O'Reilly began with Brian Boru and went forward reciting 700 years of British iniquities in Ireland. For his part, the Waterbury priest told the audience, "God grant the Irish drones may soon be driven out of Ireland and that fixture of tenure, fair rents and free ale may soon prevail. But more than all, may the people be able to make the Irish tenant farmers the proprietors of the soil. And we shall keep our eyes on a point further and some day demand that Ireland shall be free ...."

In the midst of the meeting, a resolution was read and adopted: "Resolved, That to our struggling brothers in South Africa, the brave Boers, be extended our hearty sympathy, and that the overthrow of the same despotic power that is oppressing Ireland would not alone benefit that country, but all mankind."

After the meeting at the opera house, O'Reilly was the guest of honor at the annual banquet of the Knights of St. Patrick at the Union House where about 50 members dined on "a toothsome array of edibles" and President Michael Dillon introduced the speakers. In brief remarks made before he caught the train back to Boston, O'Reilly departed from the traditional salute to Ireland's heroes and recitation of its problems and challenged the Knights to a broader perspective of their Irishness. "After alluding to the 157-year-old Boston Association of Irishmen, which contains both Protestants and Catholics," the Register reported, O'Reilly said, "that Ireland, much as it reveres and
loves its patron saint, had outgrown St. Patrick in a certain sense. St. Patrick was the representative of Catholic Ireland, but Ireland was too broad and Irish hearts too deep to be confined by sectarianism. He meant no disrespect to St. Patrick or to Catholics when he said that the Irishman of to-day might learn a lesson from pagan Ireland. In the time of the Druids, before Patrick had come to the island, there was one day of the year, the ante-type of St. Patrick's Day, when the fire on every hearth in Ireland was extinguished in order that the people might have their attention called to the blessing of light and heat. Upon that day, the chief Druid, in the presence of the people at Tara rekindled the sacred fire, and from his torch the fire was communicated to every hearth in Ireland. This typified the fire of Irish patriotism. The same fire should burn in every Irish heart, a fire that would overshadow all other lesser flames. He expressed the hope that in the presence of the great peril which threatened Irish liberty all religious divisions would be subordinated for the common good.

That same evening, the Sarsfield Guard Association held its first annual banquet in the dining room of the City Hotel "there being present 50 or more members of the newly formed organization including Sheriff Joseph H. Keefe, Fire Commissioner James T. Mullen, Thomas F. Granfield, P.J. Cronin, J.J. Kennedy, John F. Moore, E.J. Coffee, J.F. McGrail, T.J. Callahan, James J. Hayes, John Cox, William H. Burns, Councilman John Keefe, J.J. Flannigan, Daniel Colwell, William H. Bohan, Daniel O. Reed and other well-known veterans and present members of the company."

The dinner was prepared by "landlord Harry Flynn" and after the meal toastmaster James I. Hayes introduced Maj. Keefe, president of the association, who recited the history of the unit. "I am very pleased to see so many of the familiar faces of those who did duty with me in days gone by as members of the Sarsfield Guard, sitting about this festive board," he said, "together with those who have taken our places in the company. It is now a little over 16 years since our Connecticut legislature passed an act creating the Connecticut National Guard. I then thought the time had arrived when the Irish-American element should be represented in the 2nd Regiment by a company that should be organized from our best men. Accordingly, I spoke to several of my associates about it, and the result was about 40 signed the petition, which was sent to the governor, and he immediately directed the adjutant general to issue an order designating the company Company C, 2nd
Regiment. On Aug. 21, 1865, officers were elected and the company christened the Sarsfield Guard. I hope and trust ... the old veterans and the present members of the company will meet often to act together for the best interests of the company."

At the Knights of St. Patrick banquet at the City Hotel, the toast "to the pioneers of our race in New Haven," brought an interesting response from Patrick Doyle regarding some of the city's early Irish people. Doyle said "about 1830 a few families driven from Ireland came to New Haven, then a town of about 9,000 inhabitants. They went to work to build up a name and a fortune with an intelligence characteristic of their race. They encountered narrow-mindedness and bigotry by reason of their nationality and faith, but by industry won the respect of the community."

The first Catholic priest to visit Irish residents of New Haven, he said, "was a Father Wiley, a missionary who stopped here in the course of his journey from New York to Boston ... The Catholics had great difficulty in getting a site for a modest house of worship. What a contrast between that time and today, the city now having six handsome edifices raised by the Catholic faith. Considering what they had to contend with, the progress of the Irish people was wonderful. To illustrate the spirit of the Irish pioneers in New Haven, Doyle told the story of a young American who was hired by a firm on the wharf with a promise of high pay if he would run off an Irish greenhorn recently employed on the same job. But the greenhorn remained at his post at the end of that day and for many subsequent days. He became the first president of the Knights of St. Patrick and was present to-night. He referred to Francis Donnelly."

At Peck's Grand Opera House, a standing-room-only crowd witnessed the presentation of the drama, "Eileen Oge," by the St. Joseph's Society. "It is one of the conventional Irish plays," explained the Register, "with its outlawed hero contending for the hand of the heroine with a rascally young landlord. Most of the participants in last night's entertainment had been before the public on previous similar occasions. We believe, however, that Miss Mary Sullivan, who played the title role, made her first appearance on the stage last evening. Her acting gave proof of the society's discernment. She gave a beautiful rendition of 'Eileen.' Miss Murphy and Miss McCann played well and
Carlin, Mulvey, Daly, Doyle, Donnelly and O’Brien knew their parts and played them with extraordinary cleverness for amateur performances. The haying scene and the drinking of the 'Irishman's toast' in the second act were highly picturesque. The singing also deserves praise. The proceeds go to St. Mary's Church. At the conclusion of the entertainment the St. Joseph's Society gave a banquet at Loomis Temple to the ladies who took part in the play and their guests...''

The Shamrock Club held its first game and athletic supper at Buell’s Lodge in Morris Cove. James P. Pigott was toastmaster and the entertainment included a round of toasts and singing by W.C. Kelly. The Young Men’s Literary Association of St. Patrick’s Church sponsored an interesting discussion in honor of the occasion. Topic for the evening was: "Do servant girls or store girls make the best wives?"

1883 St. Patrick’s Day, reported the Register on Friday March 16, "will be more generally celebrated in New Haven than for many years past. The great distress in Ireland has of late years caused the different Irish societies to omit the parade, and in many cities this year there is no street parade. The New Haven societies, however, like those of New York and most of the larger cities, have resolved to have a street parade this year."

Parade units included the 1st, 2nd, 3rd and 4th divisions of the Ancient Order of Hibernians; the St. Patrick, St. Francis and St. Mary’s total abstinence societies, the Cartmen’s Association, an Ancient Order of Hibernians division from Branford; the Howe Band of Bridgeport and sundry other clubs, bands and drum corps. The marchers, 500 strong, assembled on the old Green at 1:30 under the direction of Grand Marshal Thomas K. Dunn and his aides Peter J. Clyne, James Landers, Daniel Doody, John Reynolds, Patrick Higgins, Denis O’Connor and John McCarthy.

The Shamrock Club, an organization that apparently drew members from throughout the state, held its annual banquet at the Bassett House in the Birmingham section of Derby. A special train carrying the 35 New Haven members of the club left the city at 9 p.m. on March 16 and returned at 7 the next morning. During the festivities, officers were elected including: President P.F. Bohan, Vice President W.D. O’Brien, Secretary J.C. Dowd, Treasurer John Leary; Trustees

The St. Joseph’s Society presented "My Geraldine" at the Grand Opera House with the cast including: "Geraldine the Deelish, Miss Jennie A. Campbell; Mary Carroll, the silent woman, Miss Emily M. Ellrod; Norah Brophy, a Colleen, Miss Mary McCann; Mrs. Beebe, a model housekeeper, Miss Mary E. Ledwith; Phil Carroll, a man of Iron, John F. Hopkins; Maurice Arden an enthusiast, John F. O'Brien; Squire Arden, who repents, Edward Cassidy; Terrence Cregan, a man of importance, Francis J. Carlin; Teddy Cregan, with a touch of the blarney, James E. Mulvey; Mike McShane, a schemer, Thomas Daly; Larry Loane, with the soul of a poet, the heart of a woman and the form of a satyr, Thomas F. Newman; Little Geraldine, Christine Daly; Farmers, Peasants, etc."

Another highlight of the day was a shoot sponsored by the Irish-American Rifle Club at the Quinnipiac range. The winners included: "200-yard individual match, James O'Connor, 21, Turkish pipe; William F. Murphy, 20, bronze statue; P. O'Connor, 20, mantel clock; Michael O'Connell, 17, match safe; William Lynch, 15, box cigars; L. O'Brien, 14, bronze match safe. Side match for an oyster supper — James O'Connor, 38; William F. Murphy, 39; John Donaher, 34; James Bradley, 24. Total, 135. P. O'Connor, 34; L. O'Brien, 37; S. Cohan, 28; James Reynolds, 31. Total, 130."

Among the festivities this year was the first banquet of the New Haven chapter of the Friendly Sons of St. Patrick. Just why the chapter was formed is uncertain, but one later report indicates that its members split off from the Knights of St. Patrick because of a disagreement over the selection of a brand of champagne for the Knights annual banquet. In any event, the Friendly Sons held their first banquet at "Barkentin's parlors" and members of the new organization were greeted by President Edward McCarthy who stated, "We assemble here this evening in an informal manner to honor the memory of Ireland’s great apostle, St. Patrick, and to promote a good disposition and friendly feeling with each other, and while enjoying ourselves in social intercourse to give full expression to our feeling in response to Erin’s hopes and aspirations for liberty."

McCarthy traced the history of the Friendly Sons of St. Patrick, noting that during the Revolutionary War, 20 Irish-American merchants
of Philadelphia, many of them members of the Friendly Sons of St. Patrick, had subscribed $450,000 to feed the Continental Army and that in gratitude, George Washington became a member of the society.

There was also a parade that year and while it was described as "one of the finest ever seen here," it was not without an interesting twist. The line of march followed the usual route through downtown, but the parade did not go through Fair Haven. The reason was that the St. Francis Temperance Society "did not turn out as was expected." Another feature of the parade remarked upon by the newspapers was the presence of a "colored man, marching with the rest and like them wearing regalia."

At the annual banquet of the Knights of St. Patrick at the City Hotel, the menu included: soup, oysters, sirloin roast beef, brown gravy, lamb with mint sauce, turkey with cranberry sauce, chicken, boiled lamb's tongue, ham and beef tongue, mashed potatoes, sweet potatoes, mashed turnips, parsnips, boiled onions, green peas, succotash, stewed tomatoes, celery, lettuce, cauliflower, rice pudding, apple pie, custard pie, fruit cake, sponge cake, oranges, apples, grapes, nuts, lemon ice cream, chocolate ice cream, tea, coffee and wine. Cigars were passed out after the repast.

The Wolf Tone Rifles had a dance in Clan-na-Gael Hall, the 3rd Division of the Ancient Order of Hibernians had its third annual social in Schifferband Hall, the Atlantic Athletic Association held its annual "soiree" at the National Armory and even the New Haven Turn Verin held a masquerade party.

1885 "Patriotism for St. Patrick's Day," commented the New Haven Union, "was variously suggested. Hat bands contained sprigs of green; buttonholes held green ribbons; neckties of green silk were worn; Catholic churches were crowded with worshipers who listened to eloquent historical reminiscences of Ireland's patron saint."

What the annual observance didn't include was a parade. Said the Union: "The absence of a public demonstration in New Haven was a noticeable void. Years have come and gone when March 17 locally has been emphasized by enthusiastic Irish citizens, who paraded prominent thoroughfares in brilliant regalia and with a dozen bands. A month
ago, the Irish societies voted almost unanimously their disapproval of any such recognition of this anniversary.

"A cheerful and encouraging sign of the progress of good advice by Catholic priests was also very apparent throughout the city. Not a man who venerated the memory of St. Patrick was seen intemperately plodding through the streets of New Haven. Father Russell, in fact, nearly all the local clergy took occasion last Sunday to deplore a habit that years past occasioned severe reflection on the Irish race. Their good counsel was heeded everywhere and the shamrock was not ignominiously drowned."

Father M. Mulholland lectured on St. Patrick at special services at St. Francis Church. The Young Men's Catholic Institute presented the play "Peep O'Day" at Carll's Opera House. The Young Rovers Social Club had a dance at the National Armory with Miss M. Hines and Leonard Goebel leading 125 couples in the grand march. In the afternoon, the Irish Rifle Club had a shoot at the Quinnipiac range and in the evening the club sponsored a social at Clan-na-Gael Hall. The Knights of St. Patrick and the Friendly Sons of St. Patrick held their customary banquets, the Knights at the City Hall dining room, the Sons at Barkentin's.

1886 Again there was no parade in New Haven, although the Ansonia parade was a marked success with 500 marchers "dressed in gay and handsome uniforms with flags, banners and brass bands." One New Haven Irishman fatalistically bemoaned the absence of a parade, commenting, "Had we had a parade to-day, it would have snowed and blowed and rained blue blazes. It always does when we have a Patrick's Day parade."

The major events of the day were the banquets of the Knights of St. Patrick at the City Hall dining room and of the Friendly Sons of St. Patrick at Barkentin's Grand Union. The Knights' affair drew a crowd of 100, while 40 attended the Sons' banquet. In welcoming members to the banquet of the Friendly Sons, President Fox quoted, "The dear old Scotch poet, James Montgomery," relative to the love of all men for their native land:

"Man through all ages of revolving time,
Unchanging man in every varying clime,
Deems his own land of every land the pride,
Beloved by heaven o'er all the world beside,
His home the spot of earth supremely best,
A dearer, sweeter spot than all the rest."

The poem, Fox said, "strikes our heart today more forcibly than ever before with the news from the other side and gives us good cheer that the star of Ireland's glory for centuries set is about to rise once again in all its ancient grandeur under the guidance of Charles Stewart Parnell and we hope that in our day the martyred Emmet's epitaph shall be written."

In the midst of the festivities, a messenger boy arrived from the Knights of St. Patrick's dinner bearing "a missive of good will and congratulations to the Friendly Sons. When it was read, it was heartily cheered and an answer was sent back to the Knights that showed how cordial the relations between the two organizations have become."

One of those missing from the banquet was Bernard Reilly, the first president of the Hibernian Provident Society, which had held the first St. Patrick's Day parade back in 1842. The 73-year-old Reilly had hoped to attend the banquet, but was taken ill the day before. His condition quickly deteriorated and on March 21 he died at his home at 337 Cedar St. He was, said the Register, "one of the most prominent Irish-American citizens of the city."

1887 The day was marked by the usual banquets and no parade, but the show was stolen on Sunday, March 20, when the Rev. Dr. Newman Smyth of Center Church preached a sermon on the life of St. Patrick. Smyth paid tribute to the patron saint of the Irish, but expressed doubt about some of the claims of Catholic historians. The next day, the Register ran a lengthy account of Smyth's sermon under the headline, "Patrick Not a Papist."

"After saying that St. Patrick seems to have been a humble and genuine Christian who left upon the history of a people works of his devotion which remain until this day, the preacher entered into some of the authentical facts of his history."

"The people soon learned to love him," said Smyth. 'He himself in his confession says but little of his wonderful success and attributes it all to God. Yet never has a missionary of the cross achieved triumphs
more wonderful. In his brief summary of the results of his labors, St. Patrick exhorts his followers to be diligent fishers of men and to spread out their nets that they may take for God a copious multitude...

"Dispelling the mists of tradition through which his Roman Catholic biographers have seen the magnificent and distorted image of their saint and which have led others to regard him as a wholly fabulous character, we see disclosed in the new light of history, the founder of the Irish church — we behold a Christian as a man simplehearted and humble, tempted, tried, loving his fellow men with a passion in which the thought of self was consumed and passed in sacrificial flame away — a man of prayer, a man unlearned and conscious through life of his deficiencies, yet strong in faith and great in goodness — a man led by God's providence to an arduous work and obedient to the heavenly union — a man kept by God's grace faithful unto the end and entering at last in thankfulness and exaltation of heart into his renewal — a man in whose large heart Christ dwelt and in whom Christ was magnified as the Savior of men — a man worthy of an everlasting crown among the noblemen of those who through faith subdued kingdoms and wrought righteousness.''

1888 The Great Blizzard of '88 struck a full week before St. Patrick's Day but was so severe that it put a crimp in some St. Patrick's Day plans. The Henry Grattan Association postponed its celebration at the Seldon House from March 17 until March 20, presumably because of the remaining snow. As the Journal and Courier put it on Saturday, March 17, the first day that trains got through to New Haven after the blizzard, "The Henry Gratton Association have decided to celebrate St. Patrick's Day in a fitting manner, but it has been deemed advisable to have the celebration occur on Monday evening instead of this evening.''

The Friendly Sons of St. Patrick didn't let the storm stop them, but went ahead and held their banquet at Redcliffe's on March 16 and the Knights of St. Patrick dined at Deibel's on Monday, March 19. Guest speaker at the Friendly Sons' banquet was Father J.D. Hoban, a Dominican from St. Mary's Church. At the Knights of St. Patrick, Town Agent James Reynolds spoke in response to the toast, "Erin":

"Through the gloom of the Dark Ages Ireland was the home of learning — the nursery where teachers and missionaries trained for the
work of harmonizing and civilizing and Christianizing the rude conquerors of Rome. And they went forth like heroes and martyrs and spent their lives in the glorious work. It is safe to say that Europe owes the renewal of learning and civilization to the work of Irish scholars and saints and it is a record of which all Irishmen may feel proud ... Ireland has been subdued by superior force and fraud, but during seven centuries of unparalleled misery and persecutions that she has suffered since the English invasion, she has never submitted tamely to tyranny or ceased to protest against the deprivation of her liberty. She has passed through the ordeal of penal laws and refused to accept a religion of which her conscience did not approve and yet without for one moment being tempted to intolerance or to resent persecution by refusing freedom of religious belief to all men who settled on her shores.

1889 On Monday morning, March 18, a gentleman walking across the Green spied Police Officer Hyde and Detective Reilly raising the American flag and inquired as to the reason. In those days, the flag was flown on the Green only on special occasions. Reilly replied that it was in honor of St. Patrick’s Day and also of the anniversary of Grover Cleveland’s birth. He added that the gentleman could take his choice as to which occasion he wished the raising of the flag to commemorate. The flag was ordered flown by city auditor John W. Lake, an Irishman, and with the tacit blessing of Mayor Henry F. Peck.

Many green flags were seen in the city that day. “One man on Chapel Street, between State and Church,” reported the Register, “hung out an English flag and an Irish flag. A spectator said the man must be a mugwump,” referring to those Republicans who had bolted the party in the 1884 presidential election.

The Knights of St. Patrick, the Friendly Sons of St. Patrick and the Friendly Sons of Henry Grattan, who had changed their name after
THE HYPERION.

MEETING OF CITIZENS
UNDER THE AUSPICES OF THE
United Irish Societies
OF NEW HAVEN,
IN AID OF
THE
PARNELL DEFENSE FUND,
ON
"ST. PATRICK'S NIGHT,"
Sunday Evening, Mar. 17.

MAYOR PECK
Will preside.

ADDRESSES WILL BE DELIVERED BY
Hon. Robert J. Vance,
Hon. John A. Tibbits,
Hon. W. C. Robinson,
James D. Whitmore, Esq.,
And other eloquent speakers,

ADMISSION FREE.

Rally for Ireland's Cause and
Ireland's Leader.

Doors open at 7 o'clock; will commence at 8

Journal-Courier advertisement, March 16, 1889.
their first year in existence, all banqueted on Monday evening, March 18. The Knights of St. Patrick even sent a congratulatory note to the Grattan group which was meeting at Deibel's: "We congratulate you upon having passed the creeping state of childhood, upon your ability to stand up and walk as any 2-year-old can do . . ."

The major event of the day, however, was a mass meeting at the Hyperion Theater in support of Charles Stewart Parnell, the great Irish parliamentarian whose influence was now threatened by revelations about his personal life. For years, Parnell had carried on a love affair with Katharine O'Shea, the wife of a fellow Irish member of the English parliament. In 1889, Capt. William O'Shea filed for divorce naming Parnell as the man with whom his wife had committed adultery. For the New Haven meeting, said the Journal and Courier, "the theater was filled with old Ireland's sons and grandsons and from pit to dome the spirit of enthusiasm for the beautiful Emerald Isle across the sea pervaded the entire assemblage."

Edward McCarthy opened the meeting and called upon Mayor Henry Peck who said of Parnell, "The man who is now attracting the attention of the world as working on the line of universal peace is Charles Stewart Parnell. He is as true to Ireland as the needle to the pole."

The main speaker, former U.S. Rep. Robert J. Vance of New Britain, told the crowd, "The London Times when it issued that pamphlet entitled, 'Parnellism and Crime,' knew that it was a forgery and that it was doing something that would put a man in jail. It knew Parnell needed money and it thought that, backed by its own great wealth, it could crush the patriotic Irishman by this means . . . Now, ladies and gentlemen, the contest is very nearly won, but they ask you still to keep in line. The members of the British Parliament are rich men and live highly. The Irish members are poor men and compelled to live humbly in London, laughed at and scorned. Yet they are willing to make the sacrifices there and ask you to make some here. They need your aid and they should receive it . . ."

"During the evening," said the newspaper, "a collection for the Parnell fund was taken up and the total receipts amounted to $700."
1890s.

Bring Back the Parades
St. Patrick’s Day in New Haven began with a mishap that was easily solved by a sprightly Irish sailor. The American flag was run up the flagpole on the Green in observance of the day, but a brisk wind was blowing that Monday morning and hardly had the flag reached the top, said the Register, "when the halyard broke and down came the flag. The colors had to be hoisted, however, and John Devine, a patriotic Irishman, who has spent many years of his life in climbing masts, volunteered to place the flag where it belonged. He shinnied the pole with a rope tied around his waist and while an admiring group stood around he slowly but surely mounted his way to the top. The pole swayed and bent with the weight of Devine, but he continued to climb until he reached the very top, and after arranging the ropes, he began his descent. This was not so difficult as the mounting, but it was perilous enough and when Devine again reached the bottom of the pole he received many congratulations, which he accepted modestly. Among the congratulations was a five-dollar bill and as it had a green back, Devine accepted it with pleasure."

Except for that episode, the observance was, in the words of the front-page headline in the Register, "A Quiet Celebration." "There was a time," the paper told its readers in a nostalgic backward look, "when St. Patrick’s Day brought either snow, sleet, rain or mud, or else all together, but, since the parades have been abandoned, that kind of weather has been abolished from the meteorological calendar and for the past year or two the feast of Ireland’s patron saint has been accompanied by the finest weather that is to be seen in the month of March."

Quiet as it was, the variety of Irish organizations or groups with some Irish connections flourishing in New Haven in the Gay Nineties is evident from the announcements of St. Patrick’s Day activities that year.

Fifty members of the James F. Maher Association of the St. Patrick’s Young Men’s League held their first banquet on March 17. Councilman Frank M. Dooley was toastmaster and addresses were given by James F. Maher, John J. McPartland, T.H. Smith, J.F. McLaughlin, D.A. McWilliams, Eugene McKenna, Joseph W. Downes, P.J. Donnelly, John J. Lane, W.M. Kenna and P.H. Hatch.

John J. McAvoy was toastmaster at the St. Patrick’s Day banquet of the East End Association which claimed, "it was the only gathering in the city where each member was provided with a shamrock."

84
The Knights of Columbus of Roderigo Council had an "informal, but jolly meeting" including impromptu speeches, songs and recitations by James E. Hiney, Thomas Harrison, Thomas Molloy and Thomas Mullen.

About 150 couples attended the "sociable" of the Michael Davitt Club, Clan-na-Gael, at Arion Hall. John P. Farrell was "grand conductor" and was assisted by John J. Reynolds, Michael H. O'Neill, Michael F. Creamer, James F. McHugh, Eugene McNeill, John J. O'Neill, William F. Dwyer, Owen Bradley and John Bohan.

Another 50 couples enjoyed a "bus ride to the Forbes house" under the auspices of the Friendly SODS of Henry Grattan. "A supper and sociable," reported the Register were enjoyed at the house.


The two traditional groups — the Knights of St. Patrick and the Friendly Sons of St. Patrick — held their usual banquets. The Friendly Sons met in the "rear dining hall of Prokasky's" which was decorated with intertwined American and Irish flags and the bust of Charles Stewart Parnell "which occupied a very prominent place in the foreground and looked down upon a jolly festive gathering." The banquet was opened by President F.J. Taylor and the toastmaster was William Clarke of New York.

The Knights of St. Patrick, meanwhile, sat down at three long and handsomely decorated tables in the Atheneum. John G. Healy was toastmaster and President Thomas Brennan welcomed members. In response to the toast, "Irishmen in America," Cornelius T. Driscoll commented, "Some persons, owing to prejudice or ignorance, think that the Irish, on account of their religion, are hostile to American institutions, and particularly to the public schools. This is a false opinion. Irish Catholics should not be considered hostile to the public schools simply because some of them send their children to parochial schools, any more than their Protestant fellow citizens, many of whom send their children to private, and some even to denominational schools. I attended the public schools myself and think that they should be forever
maintained, so that all who wish to send their children to them may do so, and I believe the great majority of my countrymen hold the same opinion."


Also, J.P. Carney, Michael Pendergast, W.J. Sheehan, Jerome Leary, Edward Donnelly, William Donnelly, James Kerrigan, Dr. Thomas Cahill, Registrar J.J. Carr, T.W. Lane, Dennis Martin, James Brannigan, James T. Mullen, T.F. Campbell, Dr. Madden, Peter Hersity, Daniel Colwell, Peter McQuaid, Thomas M. Kenna, Patrick S. Cronan, David Callahan.


The vitality of the Knights was obvious in the announcement that day in the Register: "The Knights of St. Patrick of this city are soon to establish a club house on an extensive basis. One member has offered to contribute $500 and another $300 towards the scheme. Nearly all of the 100 members have offered to contribute liberally, and it is expected that $3,000 can be raised for the purpose."
A travelogue before a large crowd at the Hyperion was the highlight of the day. The show was presented by J.D. Plunkett, a member of the Knights of St. Patrick from "information obtained ... during his extended tour of Ireland." "The descriptive lecture was of itself very instructing and interesting," commented the Daily Morning Journal and Courier, "and was rendered much more so by the many beautiful views which accompanied the address ... The presentation of the picture of the Irish jaunting car was greeted with liberal applause. Mr. Plunkett's theme was 'Ireland As I Saw It.' The lecturer described his tour in Ireland, beginning at Cork, directly through the southern, south-central and eastern part of the island and the Giant's Causeway on the north, ending at Dublin."

Plunkett concluded his travelogue with a view of the grave of "the Liberator," Daniel O'Connell, in Dublin and with these comments: "Here at last the Liberator is at rest. The clarion tones that shook the throne of England and wrested from her the freedom of 7 millions of people, that turned the tide of oppression into praises, are silent. The manly form, the frontal brow of Jove, lies here in this hallowed spot, where the liberty-loving people of the world, in spirit, at least, will come to reverence his memory. As liberator or emancipator he may be known, but when titles shall have vanished, when monuments of stone and metal shall have wasted away under the disintegrating action of the elements, when the niche of fame in which he stands shall have fallen in decay, he will still be known by the name enshrined in the hearts of the people from whence he came, the proudest and noblest of all the noble names: O'Connell."
After Plunkett's program, the Knights of St. Patrick retired to Music Hall for their annual banquet. "The tables were artistically arranged by Mr. McManus, superintendent of the hall," said the Journal and Courier, "and were beautifully supplied with elaborate viands by Donnelly, the caterer, with C.W. Pickett for assistant. During the banquet, J.P. Stack's orchestra furnished delightful music, which added much to the pleasure of the occasion."


The fourth annual ball of the Michael Davitt Club, Clan-na-Gael Association, was held at Arion Hall. The grand march, in which 200 couples participated, was led by William F. Dwyer and Miss B. Reynolds to the music of Landrigan's Orchestra.

And for the athletically inclined, the Mayflower Social Club of Fair Haven, "gave an athletic entertainment at Quinnpiac Rink. In the mile run, there were three entries, and the race was won by Joseph Maher of the Jocelyn Square Athletic Club, time 5:10. M. Samson won in the shot-putting contest, the distance being 32 feet. The mile walk was won by John H. Ward of the Jocelyn Square Athletic Club in nine minutes."

1892 Six inches of snow, the heaviest snowfall of the season, blanketed New Haven on St. Patrick's Day, tying up traffic and making it extremely difficult to get around the city. The inclement weather didn't prevent the city's Irish from celebrating.

The St. Patrick's Young Men's T.A. & B. Society had a grand success with its presentation of "Our Irish Visitors" at the Hyperion. "The house was crowded from pit to upper gallery," said the Union. "The performance was excellent. Mart Gray as Lord Gilhooley was a decided success. McCarthy, in the character of a New Haven
alderman was equally good, if not a little better. He understood his role perfectly and deserves to occupy a seat in the 7th Ward delegation. Patrick Skane demonstrated that there is a close relationship between the dude and the politician. He filled both characters admirably. John Burke was a veritable knight of the highway. William Shea churned butter in the good old-fashioned way and was a regular farmer. The Jocelyn Square quartette were called out again and again. Miss Mary Conran as the alderman’s wife, and Miss Lizzie Maliff, as the boss of the farm, did good work. Miss Alice Graham sang the 'Rose of Killarney,' and captivated the audience. The affair was a success throughout."

The Crescent Club held its first ball at Warner Hall with the 2nd Regiment orchestra providing the music and Matthew Donahue and Mamie Ketchelie leading the grand march. During intermission, Thomas Collins rendered a solo, "The Ivy Leat," and Jeremiah Stevens and Richard Welch gave an exhibition of reel and jig dances with Collins accompanying them on the tin whistle.

Two hundred couples attended the fifth annual ball of the Wolfe Tone Club in Arion Hall. Professor Burns prompted the 24 dance numbers and Landrigan's Orchestra provided the music. One hundred couples danced at the Welcome Association's ball where the grand march was led by the association's officers: President J.H. Dunn, Vice President J.T. Spillane, Recording Secretary W.E. Dunn, Financial Secretary T.H. McCue and Treasurer J.B. Donnelly.
A new event was the first banquet of the Troubadours at Loper’s restaurant. President J.P. Daly presided and those attending included: J.S. Carroll, R.E. Phillips, Joseph Colgan, Edward Regan, F.P. Cronin, J.J. Murray, C.M. Daly, John McKeyn, C.E. Swain, J.M. Dorsey, J.P. Casey, J.P. McHugh and Thomas Healy.

Fifty members and guests attended the banquet of the Friendly Sons of St. Patrick at the Elliott House and about 150 attended the Knights of St. Patrick banquet at Music Hall. In response to the toast “The United States,” at the latter affair, Father A.V. Higgins of St. Mary’s Church pointed out how Irish immigrants had succeeded in America and commented, “This fair blessed country like the tender, gracious, loving mother she is, folded the sad-hearted, spirit-broken, dejected outcasts to her bounteous breasts, soothed the anguish of exile and separation; breathed into them the spirit and the ambitions of freedom and independence; put into their hands chances and opportunities golden and multiplied beyond the dreams of imagination, and with the assurance of her watchful protection over them everywhere sent them forth strengthened and rejoicing upon the fulfillment of a destiny which has issued in their becoming a mighty element of force and life and power among a people who yet make up but one united homogeneous, one-minded, one-hearted nation…”

A pall was cast over the festivities the next day when it was learned that Edward J. Donnelly, a Center Street tailor, had suffered a stroke after attending the Knights of St. Patrick banquet. Donnelly, 32, died the next day. “He was of an exemplary character,” said the Union, “and his death was shocking in its suddenness.”

1893 The newly organized Catholic Club of Sacred Heart Church held its first St. Patrick’s Day program at its quarters on Columbus Avenue with President James T. Moran presiding. In a short time, the club, which was reported to be the first Catholic club organized in the state, had enrolled 200 members and a committee appointed to secure better quarters was preparing to lease a house on Howard Avenue opposite Carlyle Street for a permanent clubhouse.

The club’s St. Patrick’s Day program included an address by Father M. McKeon; accordion solo, M. Keefe; address, James Donnelly; song, George Durkin; banjo solo, M. Heath; recitation, D. Garvey; duet, J. Gibson, violin, and F. Wrinn, piano; human cornet, T.
McAviney; guitar solo, William Coe; mandolin solo, R. Reilly; recitation, H. Coyle; banjo club, selection; guitar solo, William Daley; banjo duet, J. O'Meara, W. Cahill; solo, J. Ahearn; trio, J. O'Meara, W. Daley, W. Cahill; piano solo, James Campbell; song, George Durkin; guitar solo, William Coe; banjo club, selection.

Also on St. Patrick's Day evening, the Young Men's T.A.B. Society of St. Patrick's Church presented the Irish drama, "Peep O'Day," at the Hyperion and the St. Patrick's Literary Society sponsored a straw ride and banquet at Savin Rock. The Wolfe Tone Club had its sixth annual ball in Arion Hall and the Sacred Heart T.A.B. Society had a banquet and dance at the Viking Hall. The St. Aloysius T.A.B. Society had an open house for out-of-town visitors during the day and in the evening sponsored a program featuring James Hogan's piano recitals and Andrew K. Flannigan's address on St. Patrick.

The Knights of St. Patrick held their annual banquet in Warner Hall where "the menu served by Mrs. M. Gallagher was very elaborate." The Friendly Sons of St. Patrick held their banquet at Heublein's Cafe. In greeting the members and guests, Friendly Sons President P.H. Cosgrove alluded to the fond hope that was never far from the minds
of most Irish-Americans: the freedom of Ireland. The Home Rule Bill of 1893, a proposal which would give Ireland a large measure of self-government, had been introduced in the British Parliament and chances of its passage seemed better than ever. "We gather here tonight," said Cosgrove, "to celebrate a grand event in the history of our fatherland: that country now standing on the very edge of national liberty, with a glory undimmed after years of oppression. Looking down on the grave of past sorrows with eyes sparkling with hope and forgiveness, but with hearts and memories alive to the wrongs of ages, yet noble race that they are, they are still ready to bury the agony of the past in the promises of the future. God grant that this day of our liberty is at hand and that the grand old man may live long to enjoy the glory of being hailed as the Washington of brave old Ireland ... Then brothers let us hope that the day is not far distant when the dark clouds of blighted hopes and disappointed expectations of our fatherland may be forever lifted and that a just God look down with love on a faithful, regenerated people and brush from their eyes the trace of past sorrows with the flag of Ireland's liberty." Neither Cosgrove nor his audience could have guessed that Irish independence was more than a quarter century away and that it would come only after a bloody revolution.

1894 At the Knights of St. Patrick banquet on the eve of the saint's day, Dr. Stephen J. Maher painted a nostalgic picture guaranteed to touch the hearts of Irish immigrants. "It is now almost dawn in Ireland," he began, "the dawn of another St. Patrick's Day. In the darkness the sea is dashing on her rocky coast. The ships approaching her harbors are still depending for guidance on the flames of her lighthouse ... throughout the land the early risers are already astir; the chapel doors are opening. An hour from now day will be lighting up the Wicklow mountains and rushing into Dublin and Belfast and Cork, and driving the night before it from Leinster and Munster and Ulster and Connaught.

"Many who are present tonight can readily conjure before them the scenes that will be enacted in the places of their birth 3,000 miles away before we shall have left this banquet hall. They see again the old homestead; the already green fields, the hedges, the hitches, the crowds on the way to Mass, the flash of the jarvie's whip and the hurry of his car, the priest's man at the chapel door, the twinkling lights of the altar,
the hushed congregation, the tears that steal down the cheeks of father and mother as the old priest, eloquent in himself and doubly so by reason of his surrounding, tells of St. Patrick the gentle missionary whose virtues are help and balm to the lonesome ones at home and incentive to their exiled children. The last blessing is given and the people dismissed. Happy and in the spirit of the angelic salutations of Christmas morning, they exchange the cheeriest greetings of the day and inquire concerning ... loved ones who have crossed the seas, perhaps to a place called New Haven in Connecticut."

The St. Patrick's Dramatic Society presented a four-act comedy, "The Shamrock and the Rose," at the Hyperion. "All who attended," commented the Journal and Courier, "reported an excellent presentation of the piece which evoked roars of merriment. Some of those who appeared in the cast were P.J. Kane, Miss Lizzie Marliffe, the Misses McDonough, J.J. Kelly, H.J. Healy, J.H. McWeeney and W. J. Cronin."

The St. Aloysius Total Abstinence and Benevolent Society adopted an African-American folk custom for its St. Patrick's Day observance. The society sponsored a cakewalk — a traditional African-American promenade in which dancers competed to do the most complex and unusual dance steps with a cake as the prize.

The Wolfe Tone Club held its seventh annual ball at the Union Armory with John McQueeny and Suzie Creehan leading the grand march.

1895 The weather in Ireland put a crimp in the St. Patrick's Day observance in New Haven. There was more snow than usual in Ireland and as a result the usual large quantities of shamrocks were not sent from the Emerald Island. On March 16, New Haven's Irish were still waiting hopefully for the shamrocks. "It was thought probable that to-night's mail might bring them," said the Register, "but unless it does many of the local residents will be obliged to pass the day without this treasured symbol."

A new Irish organization was born in New Haven with the formation on St. Patrick's Day of the Sons of Irishmen. James H. Lane was elected president and its members included P.J. Cronin, Joseph Ahern, John Martin, Thomas J. McVety, Isadore Schwed, John J. Kinney, Louis Pellecci, Owen T. Walsh, Frank Van Dyck, Joseph E.

One of the speakers at the Knights of St. Patrick banquet was a prominent Jewish New Havener, attorney Harry W. Asher, who in response to the toast to fraternal greetings, noted the close ties of friendship that united Jews and Irish people. "Is it surprising," Asher asked, "that the relations of our people, the Hebrews, and all people with yours should be so cordial, so friendly, so affectionate, when one stops to think of the universal popularity of those from Celtic origin, a temperament so adaptable to persons and circumstances? For although that may not be the letter, yet I take it and on account of my selection, feel it to be the spirit of the toast. To your credit and honor and our enduring gratitude, have you sincerely and zealously defended our race. Oppressed as you have been for many centuries your hearts have gone out to us, brothers in pain and misery and we have always looked to you as our sympathizers and champions. Do you wonder at our filial relations and does our respect, esteem and cordiality require further evidence? Are we proud of such a defense? Do we rejoice to feel that one so radically opposed in religion, so kindly and generously makes amends for many of our faults and shortcomings?

"And let me here make public mention of the fact that never in my life has an Irishman in my presence or hearing by word or action, by print or manifesto, brought the blush of anger or discomfiture to my face on account of my faith and I cannot say the same of other races and religions. Our persecution has made us wondrous kind. In social and charitable affairs we have always looked to each other for help and assistance and I am proud to count some of my dearest and best friends among the Irish. Race prejudice will forever disappear in this broad land of ours, when we sink our identity as members of a race existing elsewhere. Teach our children to be Americans. Teach the foreigner when he lands that he should be truly and thoroughly American. We have a great task ahead of us, and let celebrations of this kind be reminders of our love for our native country, but the best and greatest love and respect should be always and ever reserved for the country of our adoption, our country forever."
The banquets of the Friendly Sons of St. Patrick and the Knights of St. Patrick continued to constitute the main features of the observance of the birthday of Ireland's patron saint. The Friendly Sons met at the Hotel Majestic where the pillars and walls of the banquet hall "were bright with a blending of the emblems" of America and Ireland. Responding to the toast, "The Day We Celebrate," T.J. Fox said, "For today wherever the foot of civilized man has trod, the sons and daughters of Ireland or their descendants assemble around the festive board to honor the day whether they are on the banks of the Shannon and the river Lee and near the round towers of their native land, or in the mild and genial climate of Spain, Italy or France, or the sheepwalks of Australia or the snows of the Canadas or the islands of the sea or in the full brightness of our own varied climate in the Land of the Free beneath the Stars and Stripes of the glorious republic of America. For centuries, yea for more than 700 years, Ireland has been battling for civil and religious liberty and for national independence. Her sons have proved themselves worthy of what they claim in every land as well as on their own green hills of Ireland, but unfortunately without success at home.

"This century seems to have brightened the prospects of the Emerald Isle and we hope it may not be a dream that Emmet's epitaph may soon be inscribed upon the black slab in Glasnevin (cemetery) and that a shaft higher and grander than the ancient round towers of Ireland shall be erected beside it by grateful countrymen to record his principles and perpetuate his memory. And then the sad exiles of Ireland shall cease to sing the sad language of the poet:

``My dream is an island place,
Which distant seas keep lonely;
A little island on whose face,
The stars were watchers only.
Those bright, still stars!
They need not seem Brighter
Or stiller in my dream."

The Knights gathered at the New Haven House for what was described as "the most successful of all (banquets). The menu was remarkably good, the musical selections above the average and the speaking bright, witty and thoughtful. The organization seems to be in a highly creditable state of progress."
A crisp, sunny St. Patrick's Day set some people to yearning for the good old days when parades were traditional. The Register reported, "An old settler said this morning that he remembered how much the present day differed from the St. Patrick's Days of old. Men then marched through slush and mud and it was fortunate if the mire did not reach their knees under the pressure of their feet. The streets were not hardened in those days and at times, especially St. Patrick's Day, they were exceedingly soft and hard of travel. But in later years, loyal followers in this city have agreed on another way to celebrate the day and it is by evening song, entertainment and banqueting, rather than by marching the streets. Within two or three years, several attempts have been made to hold a parade in New Haven on St. Patrick's Day, but it has failed. Each year, it has been said that the next year will be the year for the parade."

Despite the absence of a parade, the city's Irish people found plenty of ways to celebrate. "Union Armory Hall," reported the Register, "is always crowded on St. Patrick's night when 'Tom' Coleman, the well-known promoter, gives his annual masquerade. During the past few years, this masquerade has grown in popularity. This year the indications point to a large crowd and better costumes than ever. Fitzgerald's full orchestra will furnish music for the concert and for the dancing which follows."


The Knights of St. Patrick dined at the New Haven House and the Friendly Sons at Jensen's Cafe. The menu for the Friendly Sons dinner included oysters on the half shell, soup, olives, consomme, celery, boiled salmon, filet de beef with mushrooms, Parisienne potatoes, Roman punch, roast Philadelphia turkey, cranberry sauce, mashed potatoes, salads, lobster, chicken, neapolitan ice cream, fancy cake, cheese, fruit and coffee.
1898 A parade, of sorts, was conducted by Division 5 and Division 6 of the Ancient Order of Hibernians. Accompanied by the Senior Holy Name Society of the Church of the Sacred Heart, the Hibernians met at the Knights of Columbus hall at Church and George streets at 7:15 p.m. and marched to the church via Congress Avenue, Washington Street, Howard Avenue, Putnam Street, Liberty Street and Columbus Avenue. The guest speaker was Father Carberry, a Paulist priest, and he was escorted in the procession by a squad of police: Sgt. Williams and officers Horan, Birmingham, McGovern, Roche, Smith, Colwell, Marlow, Murphy, Eagan, Dargin. The Daughters of Erin, an auxiliary to the Hibernians, also attended the services.

The St. Aloysius Glee Club presented a minstrel show in its hall on Meadow Street. "Fully 400 people were present," reported the Register. "There were 16 men in the minstrel show under the direction of Seymour Spier. The interlocuter was Frank Marooney; tambos, Thomas Stafford, William Mokley, Dan Gorman; bones, William Schroeder, John Cummings, John Duffy. Solos were rendered by Peter Connelly, Austin O'Brien, John Clark, William Conlon, Frank Marooney."

The Wolfe Tone Club sponsored a dance in Harugari Hall with Albert Williams' orchestra providing the music for 300 dancers.


1899 The Spanish-American War was much on everyone's mind. Speakers at the Knights of St. Patrick and Friendly Sons of St. Patrick banquets emphasized the patriotism of Irish soldiers and the righteousness of American intervention in Cuba, Puerto Rico and the Philippines. In neither case did they see any parallel between the circumstances of the natives of those islands and the natives of Ireland.
The Friendly Sons' 16th annual banquet was held in "the cozy little dining room in Thomas H. Sullivan's cafe." About 30 members and guests heard the featured speaker, Alexander Troup, state, "In Cuba and Puerto Rico you would undoubtedly find Irishmen assembled in the mess rooms of taverns, and in the jungles of Manila there are others who assembled about a drumhead honoring the patron saint ... We want the Filipinos and the Cubans to be as free in their own countries as we are today...."

The Knights — 200 members and friends — dined at the Tontine Hotel. In response to the toast, "The Day We Celebrate," Dr. Thomas M. Cahill commented, "We have promised that the native of Cuba and of the Philippines shall be free from the hand of the oppressor. We have guaranteed that these savages and semi-savages shall govern themselves just so soon as they give evidence that they are capable of doing so. We were in it for humanity alone and the Congress of the United States has so declared."

The Journal and Courier editorialized on the absence of a parade: "St. Patrick's Day in the morning was all right and it was all right the rest of the day. If the discontinuance of the St. Patrick's Day procession has brought pleasant weather on the 17th of March perhaps it will be well if it is not resumed. But there are some who miss the parade with its gaily prancing steeds, its earnest marching men and the wondrous hats that were wont to stick up here and there in the line. Who remembers, though, when a Patrick's Day procession wasn't rained or snowed on and shorn of its pride and glory?"
1900s.

Even the Queen Wore Green
Even the queen of England wore shamrocks on St. Patrick’s Day. Queen Victoria recognized the success of Irish troops in the Boer War in South Africa by declaring March 17 “Shamrock Day” and New Haven Irish people learned while reading the morning paper over breakfast that day that the queen herself “observed the day by wearing a sprig of genuine four-leafed shamrock.”

Indeed, most of England was agog with a newfound appreciation of all things Irish. “In the churches,” said the Register, “preachers referred to the occasion, thanking Providence that the English had learned to love and respect their Irish fellow subjects” and “on the stock exchange the enthusiasm shown in celebrating the day gave the house the appearance of a greenhouse.” Even a new flag was unfolded for the occasion, “a new loyal Irish flag with the Union Jack in the upper corner and a crowned harp in the center of a field of green, as distinguished from the Irish flag, which bears the harp without the Union Jack or crown.”

Dr. Matthew C. O’Connor, president of the Knights of St. Patrick, noted in his remarks at the group’s banquet the sudden interest of the English in the Irish. “While the hope of Ireland’s independence has been quiescent for quite a while past … it is hoped that (because of) the recent union of all elements of Ireland’s patriots that the permanent results will be greater than that which England’s present enthusiasm for Irish valor as displayed on the bloody fields of South Africa and the permission of England’s queen to her Irish soldiers to wear the shamrock as a badge of honor on St. Patrick’s Day, and may home rule be once again the cherished aim to be attained, a stepping-stone to Irish independence.”

A banquet for the 40 members of the Friendly Sons of St. Patrick was laid out at the Hotel Davenport with President Stephen F. McCann presiding, and 200 members of the Knights of St. Patrick gathered at Warner Hall with Dr. J.F. Sullivan as toastmaster.

The Catholic Club of Sacred Heart Church, which, said the New Haven Union, “is fast becoming a leading organization,” held a
banquet in its clubrooms. Michael F. Sullivan was toastmaster and President Edward P. O'Meara gave the welcoming address. Toasts were offered by Father M. McKeon, H.E. Norris, James T. Moran, James J. Kennedy, Daniel Colwell, Joseph Criddle and Dr. William J. Sheehan.

The Ladies Auxiliary of Santa Maria Council, Knights of Columbus, sponsored a concert at Poli's theater. "Miss Edith B. LeJeune of Norwich sang in this city for the first time," commented the New Haven Union, "and her clear, ringing soprano was heard to the best possible advantage in the two solos which she gave, as well as in the duet, 'I Feel Thy Angel Spirit,' which she sang with Joseph C. Criddle ... Miss Agatha Brahaney of Meriden, another newcomer, proved to be the possessor of a strong contralto voice which she used with exquisite grace and power. Her song, 'My Home is Where the Heather Blooms,' was applauded vigorously."

"Messrs Frank E. Edgar, Wallace Moyle and J.C. Criddle are too well known in New Haven as singers of a high grade to need much comment. Mr. Criddle sang two Irish songs, which were well received and Mr. Edgar's two numbers were exceptionally well rendered. Mr. Moyle's magnificent tenor was heard to advantages in Balfe's 'Let Me Like a Soldier Fall,' and he was compelled to respond to an encore. The other features of the program, especially the playing of the Lyric Mandolin Club were up to the standard set by the soloists and gave great satisfaction. At the close of the concert, the ladies who had charge of arranging the program were showered with congratulations."

Another concert was held at St. Joseph's Church where the choir directed by Joseph B. Clark presented a program that included: "Come Back to Erin" sung by Kathleen O'Connor; "Minstrel Boy" sung by William F. Smith; "Meeting of the Waters" sung by Annie Oths; "The Harp That Once Through Tara's Halls" sung by William F. Smith, Richard F. Maher, Joseph B. Clark and Peter F. Brown; "Kathleen Mavourneen" sung by Minnie Corcoran; "Killarney," sung by William F. Smith; "Last Rose of Summer" sung by George Dooley; "Hail Glorious Apostle," sung by the choir with Mrs. George Dooley as soloist. Father M.J. Daly gave a lecture on the life of St. Patrick. At the Tontine Hotel, the Knights of St. Patrick heard Professor William Lyon Phelps of Yale describe a "cultivated and educated Irishman" as "about the most attractive man in the world. He has all the culture and
learning of an Englishman with the abounding wit and humour that has always characterized the Irish genius. The Irish native wit and sprightliness with his well known generosity of the heart and temperament combined with education and culture, make the Irishman almost the ideal type of the civilized man."

1902 The Knights of St. Patrick marked their 25th anniversary with a banquet at the Tontine Hotel. "From 9 o'clock last evening until after 3 this morning," said the Register, "the banquet continued and the former successful banquets of the Knights were overshadowed in the glory of the Knights' silver anniversary." President Dennis B. Martin greeted the 150 members while Sen. James P. Bree was toastmaster and Dr. Frederick Robertson, professor of Old English and Celtic at Harvard, was the main speaker.

In his introduction, Bree spoke of the mission of St. Patrick and commented, "We, American-Irishmen, have also our mission to perform. In this land of liberty, a liberty which men of our race, in no small degree helped to secure, the descendants of Irishmen should be continually alive to the new dangers which threaten. These are becoming manifest in the development of would-be aristocracy, and in the deceitful proffer of friendship made by our motherland's ancient enemy and America's secret foe. We are to do our part in promoting the welfare and progress of our republic in perpetuating its institutions and in defending its interests from assault. This is, and should be for us, a task of joy ..."

The Friendly Sons of St. Patrick held their 19th annual banquet at Sullivan's. Malone's orchestra provided music and George Fitzsimmons sang. One highlight of the evening was a poem read by Frederick Hirsh who "proved to the satisfaction of the guests that Noah's Ark was built in Ireland and that the Green Isle across the sea was the scene of all the great events in the world's history."
1903 The St. Patrick's Day banquets of the Sacred Heart Club had grown so popular over the years that on this 10th anniversary of the banquets the affair was moved from the club's rooms on Howard Avenue to the Hotel Oneco where 150 guests were expected. The committee in charge of the affair included J.P. Bergin, W.F. Hickey, V.R. Keane, J.F. McDonough, J.F. Fahy, G.J. Botts, F.W. Wrinn, J.F. McKenna, G.E. Cahill and W.F. Gleason.

At St. John's Church, Father John D. Coyle lectured on Tissot's paintings of the life of Christ. The lecture was illustrated "by 120 slide views in their original coloring on a canvas 400 feet square," the same views "that have been shown in London, Paris, New York, Boston and other principal cities of the world." The program was preceded by a medley of Irish airs by the full chorus and was "interspersed with some splendid music, consisting of selections by the joint choir, quartets, duets and solos "all of them picked with a view to their appropriateness." Among the soloists were Julia Kennedy, A.J. Bowen, Charles Lauterbach and Alice Keenan.

At St. Mary's Church, parishioners heard an address by Father Kearney of Lexington, Ky., provincial of the Dominicans, while about 100 couples attended the concert and ball of the Henry Grattan Club at Harmonie Hall. Stanford's Orchestra provided music with Robert E. Keating the grand conductor, assisted by James H. MacGowan.

The Knights of St. Patrick, banqueting at Warner Hall, heard Professor Edward Bliss Reed make a plea for a chair of Celtic at Yale University. Reed pointed out that Harvard was endowed with such a post and, noting that the interest from a $5,000 endowment would be sufficient to establish the chair, "hoped that some Irishman would supply such a fund for the local university. This touched the Irish hearts and thunderous applause was showered on Professor Reed." While the Knights were celebrating, their wives also held a banquet at Heublein's cafe.

The 3rd Division of the Ancient Order of Hibernians celebrated the occasion at Music Hall with Henry C. O'Sullivan presiding and Mary O'Connor and her brother, John, singing several Irish melodies "that were received with many outbursts of approval." Division President John C. Kennelty responded to the toast "The Day We Celebrate," by citing the many lessons to be drawn from the life of St. Patrick and Dr. Thomas M. Bergen sang "The Harp That Once Through
Tara's Halls.'' About 25 members of the Friendly Sons of St. Patrick dined at the Hotel Oneco with John G. Garrity as toastmaster.

When the celebration was over, the New Haven Union, in an editorial, professed itself disappointed with the changes that had taken place in St. Patrick’s Day celebrations since Irish people first began observing the occasion in the 1840s. “It has developed into the 'night we celebrate' nowadays, instead of the 'day we celebrate,'” commented the paper. "Years ago it was the 'day we celebrate,' whether it rained or whether the sun came out. Generally it rained. But fair weather or nasty, there was the celebration that brought comfort and joy to the hearts of Irishmen and Irish-American citizens all over the United States.

"There were the parade, the green banners flying, the resplendent regalia, the prancing steed that sometimes got a bit too frisky for the comfort of the rider and the fine old Irish airs that made many a son and daughter from the Emerald Isle think of the dear home far away across the sea. It didn't make any difference how long was the St. Patrick's day parade and it was generally long enough to test the vigor of the most active and strenuous of the boys, every inch of the ground was covered and at the end there was a cheer for the old sod and the green flag. Here and there nowadays that famous parade is still the pride of the men and women of Ireland in some of the cities of this country, and it cheers the heart and makes joyous the mind of the sons and daughters of Ireland.

"Here in New Haven, the parade has dropped out of sight, some say because the men who used to take part in them got tired of walking. Others hold that the parade was too much of the material and that if the memory of the day and all the glory that it stands for are to be perpetuated, the sentimental side of the historical occasion should always be in evidence. There should be, according to the sentimentalists, plenty of song, plenty of oratory and other intellectual affairs by which to keep ever fresh the memory of St. Patrick’s Day.

"Well, isn't that a debatable point? Is there anything so rousing, so exhilarating, so emphatic as a St. Patrick's Day demonstration, one of the old-fashioned 17th of March parades? You remember, unless you were born early last week, something about the grand old times this town, for instance, used to have years ago on St. Patrick's Day in the morning while the preparations were going on for the parade. The bands went thundering through the streets playing 'The Wearing of the
Green,' 'St. Patrick's Day in the Morning' and other lively airs that were native to the green isle. There were the divisions of the Hibernians and the gallant old Emmet Guard, the temperance societies, the officers riding in carriages and the streets thronged with thousands of spectators. You must remember the galloping animals that dashed across the New Haven Green bearing the grand marshal's aides and the orders to get in line for the parade. The escapes of the small boy who happened in the way of that enthusiastic aide and his commands were thrilling, for sometimes it was difficult for the inexperienced horseman to thread his way down the line and guide his mettlesome and dancing steed away from collision.

"Say what you care to, it was all a glorious sight, a spectacle for the enthusiastic citizen who occasionally likes to see something with life and color in it. It didn't make any difference to those hardy sons of Ireland if there was a light or, for that matter, a heavy fall of rain or snow, the parade went on just the same. They never faltered with the mud several inches deep, they went through it with all the elasticity of youth and determination and with heads high in the air in defiance of the discomforts of the streets. Then when it was all over and they went to their homes, they felt a trifle tired but they were happy.

"That was what some of the critics called the material side of the celebration of the 17th of March. These critics might be called the sentimentalists. They wanted — instead of the parade, the rain, the mud and the bands — banquets, literary exercises, dances, speeches, memorial ceremonies, etc. etc. And they had them last night in this town and elsewhere throughout the country. They were fine social functions, the oratorical efforts sparkled with brilliancy and the great work of Ireland's patron saint was detailed in comprehensive and carefully prepared addresses that showed much thought and feeling. Eminent gentlemen in all the high professions of life said many deserving and forcible things about Ireland and St. Patrick at these delightful affairs. There was an elevation in the thoughtful sentiments expressed that gratified those listening to such noble expressions. They left the banquet table sometime after midnight satisfied that their observation of the day was in accordance with enlightened sentiments. Briefly, of course, you have the past with its parades and the present with its patriotism and its veneration of the saint and its love of the Old Dart. Isn't there stowed away down deep somewhere in the region of your heart a tender spot just the same for the parade?"
1904 As had gradually become the case over the years, a number of Yale students marked the day. "Yale men showed a most kindly spirit to the genial St. Patrick this morning," remarked the Register, "if their coat decorations are to be taken as evidence. There were several hundred green ribbons, green leaves or green flags worn by the undergraduates on the campus today and there were none who were so venturesome as to wear a red necktie on the campus. Peter Brandt of the junior class of the Sheffield Scientific School paraded the campus with a large green ribbon streamer waving from his coat lapel. A ribbon of even broader and longer dimensions streamed behind the Irish terrier which he held by a stout cord. Mr. Brandt and his dog went to pay a friendly St. Patrick's Day call on Mike Murphy, the Yale trainer, at the gymnasium to exchange congratulations of the day.

"There are four lusty Irish giants on the Yale football eleven, Kinney, Hogan, Shevlin and Rafferty and not one of them forgot that it was St. Patrick's Day. Stuyvesant Fish Jr. of the Yale varsity crew caught the spirit of the day by walking the aisle in Battell Chapel this morning with a green flag in his hand. He turned it over to his classmate, James J. Hogan, the football captain, who pinned it in his buttonhole and wore it during the morning at recitations."

Only 15 members and guests attended the annual banquet of the Friendly Sons of St. Patrick at the Hotel Oneco, preshadowing the gradual eclipse of that organization by the more popular Knights of St. Patrick. The Knights were nearly 200 strong at their outing at the Tontine. Among those rendering Irish songs for the occasion was Michael Dillon, one of the charter members of the Knights.

At St. Joseph's Church, the pastor, Father Daley gave a short address on the life of St. Patrick, while the church choir gave a concert.
with Mrs. George Dooley, Katherine O'Connor, William Smith and Joseph P. Clark as soloists. But, the major social event of the holiday was the annual grand ball of the St. Patrick's Young Men's Temperance Association. An estimated 1,000 people attended the ball at the new music hall. The grand march was led by James J. Hogan and Margaret Callahan and "a delightful programme of 18 dances, with fine music by Alpin's orchestra, was enjoyed."

Division 9, Ancient Order of Hibernians, sponsored a ladies' night program in Union Hall, which was "crowded to the doors." The program commenced with a tenor solo, "Killarney," and an encore, "If You But Knew," by Joseph Skelly accompanied by Jennie Donahue. Elsie McGlynn sang a solo, Joseph Cullen gave an address, Nellie Lehane presented a recitation, and Mr. Cuneen gave a tambourine solo. Dancing followed. Santa Maria Council, Knights of Columbus, held a whist party in the Republican Club Hall. Twenty-five tables were filled and prizes were awarded as follows: Anna McCullough, fan; Mrs. Miller, salad dish; Maud Meehan, celery dish; F. Neil, stein; William Buchmaster, cards and card case; and J.B. Leake, beer mug.

1905 The main topic of conversation in New Haven was an incident in the Naugatuck Valley where three students at Seymour High School were dismissed by Principal W.E. Parker when they refused to remove large green ribbons they were wearing in celebration of the day.

The Irish-American community in the Valley was considerably exercised by the dismissals, which Parker defended by "stating that the three children dismissed were lavishly displaying the colors and that the discipline of the whole schoolroom was placed in jeopardy."

Another confrontation occurred in New Haven where "Irish flags were flung to the breeze this morning in every department of the car shops of the Consolidated Railroad." The flags waved "full and free till the middle of the forenoon" when orders were received from the
railroad's front office to take them down. Most of the railroad workers complied with the order, but the boilermakers refused and the green flag in their department waved throughout the day. In the passenger train yards, both an American and Irish flag were raised, “the Stars and Stripes above the green harp.”

The Knights of St. Patrick dined at the Tontine and heard New York lawyer Daniel F. Cohalan speak of Ireland's continued struggle for freedom and how “sons of Erin turn their eyes toward their motherland with the never-lessening hope that some day she will be released from bondage.” The Friendly Sons of St. Patrick met at the Hotel Oneco where the head table included: toastmaster John G. Healy, former Gov. Abiram Chamberlain, U.S. Rep. George L. Lilley, Mayor J.P. Studley, Col. C.W. Pickett, Alexander Troup, David Fitzgerald, John J. Splain and Edward L. Hearn.

1906 An alligator almost became a victim of the St. Patrick's Day celebration. It seems that Max Schwartz, a German staff member at Yale, had a pet alligator, which he kept in a tank in the university gymnasium. One of the janitors, an Irishman named Richard Brady, thought he would observe the day honoring the saint who banished reptiles from Ireland by draping a green ribbon about the alligator.

When Schwartz looked in on his alligator in the morning he found that the reptile had been attracted by the bright color of the ribbon and had tried to eat it. However, because of the length of the ribbon, the alligator was unable to swallow it and was instead choking on it. Schwartz, with the help of a couple of gym staffers, was able to get hold of the ribbon and pull it from the creature's throat. After the alligator had been rescued, Schwartz agreed to wear a green ribbon himself if only his Irish friends would leave his alligator alone.

The national directors of the Knights of Columbus revealed that “plans are on foot to start the order in Ireland. Inquiries from that country in regard to the necessary plans have been received at the office of the national officers in this city and also an inquiry from London. These new councils will not be organized at once, but it is intended to establish the order in several towns in both Ireland and England as soon as the preparations can be made.”
As usual, a number of packages of shamrocks arrived in the mail direct from Ireland, including some from the noted Irish home rule advocate John E. Redmond, who always remembered his friends in New Haven. The crew of one Bridgeport to New Haven trolley "tacked the Irish colors on both ends of the car and said that at each stop there was a great scramble of Irish to get aboard."

The guest speaker at the Knights of St. Patrick banquet at the Tontine was the Rev. John P. Chidwick, chaplain on the battleship Maine when it was blown up in Havana Harbor. At the Friendly Sons of St. Patrick banquet at the Hotel Oneco, Francis P. Guilfoyle spoke on, "The Spirit of Irish Nationality and Why It Should be Preserved."

The New Haven Union editorialized on the occasion: "Years ago, it was the custom to observe St. Patrick's Day by parades in the principal cities of this country. It is true that the custom has not altogether died out, for in many a spot today there will be immense parades of the warmhearted sons of Erin. But the parades, the street demonstrations with their marching thousands and their flying banners are gradually being supplanted by banquets and intellectual exercises. At these literary gatherings there is much said about what St. Patrick accomplished in a religious and educational way for Ireland; what amazing progress has been made by the sons and daughters of Ireland; what hope there is in the Irish heart and in the heart of all liberal thinking citizens of every clime, that the land where St. Patrick spread the gospel of Christ, will soon be free, will soon be independent, will soon have such a government as St. Patrick himself would approve."

1907 Members of the Ancient Order of Hibernians were not at all pleased with the reception they got at St. Patrick's Church. Six hundred members of the order from all over the city attended the 8 o'clock Mass on St. Patrick's Day, which fell on Sunday, and expected to hear a sermon on St. Patrick and the virtues of their organization. Instead they heard nary a word that would indicate the special nature of the occasion.

"Members of the order," reported the Register the next day, "stated ... that yesterday was the first time in years that the order has failed to receive recognition in a sermon upon the occasion of their visit to a church in a body ... It appears that every year when the AOH attended church in a body sermons appropriate to the occasion had been
preached. The omission of the sermon yesterday, especially as it was the festival of the church’s patron saint, was therefore disappointing to the Hibernians, who pay special devotion to St. Patrick. At Sacred Heart Church two years ago, Father McKeon, the pastor ... preached a long sermon about the order."

Father Martin O’Brien, curate at St. Patrick’s, said no sermon had been preached simply because considerable time had been taken up in the distribution of Communion to so large a delegation of Hibernians.

However, the Hibernians suspected a bit of politics in the omission. They reasoned that no sermon congratulating their order was preached because the national convention of Hibernians the previous year had not re-elected Archbishop Farley of New York as its chaplain as desired by the clergy, but instead had elected Father John D. Kennedy of Danbury. Kennedy was a New Haven native whose family lived in St. Patrick’s parish.

If the Hibernians wanted to hear a sermon appropriate to the day, they would have been better off marching down to the Grand Avenue Congregational Church where the pastor, the Rev. Isaiah Sneath heaped unstinting praise upon the apostle of Ireland.

"St. Patrick was a great man; and better still, a good man ...," said Sneath. "He achieved three great results. He organized the Christians in Ireland into churches. He converted the remaining un-Christian tribes into Christianity. He united Ireland to the Roman Empire and to the Christian church. And there followed after his death an intense missionary zeal on the part of the Irish clergy.

"Judged by what he actually accomplished, he must be placed along with the most efficient of those who took part in spreading the Christian faith beyond the boundaries of the Roman Empire. He was a strong personality and a heroic servant of God to the Irish in the bonds of druidical heathenism."

An Irish high school student, Theresa McNally of the Academy of Our Lady of Mercy, Lauralton Hall, in Milford, had special reason for celebrating. McNally was one of 63 Americans picked to receive a Carnegie Hero Medal, presented by coincidence on St. Patrick’s Day. Two years before, she had rescued a little girl and boy who had gotten into a boat that drifted out onto Long Island Sound and then capsized.
1908 Both Jews and Irish celebrated on March 17 when the feast of Purim and St. Patrick's Day fell on the same day. When asked about the coincidence by a reporter, who sensed a story there, Rabbi David Levy of Temple Mishkan Israel stated, "St. Patrick's Day doesn't have anything to do with it at all. The feast of Purim is determined by the lunar calendar. It happens this way about once every seven years."

The highlight of the Knights of St. Patrick banquet at the Tontine Hotel was a musical greeting for each knight by the organization's glee club. Louis Linder, the only German member of the Knights, was honored with a special arrangement of the "Merry Widow Waltz." At the banquet, guest speaker Edward L. Hearn, supreme knight of the Knights of Columbus, described the strange fate of Ireland in the history of Europe: "History tells us that after Patrick, for centuries Ireland enjoyed a profound peace and national prosperity. At the fall of the Roman Empire most of the kingdoms of Europe rose up to establish their national rights and continental Europe was paralyzed and devastated with the disasters of war. During this period, Ireland cultivated the arts and sciences. She was the key seminary where Europe was educated and for whatever progress in letters and religion was made by them, the world owes Ireland a debt of gratitude, for if it were not for the reflected light from Ireland's institutions of learning, Europe would have been in darkness and civilization would have been retarded in its progress for a century.

"The history of most countries is learned from a happy people, comfortable firesides and increasing population; from the development of natural resources and the extension of commercial relations. Not so with Ireland, whose history is learned from deserted villages, decreasing population, prostitution of the country's natural resources, from a government whose hands are crimson with the blood of millions of innocent victims, so unjust in its administration that it has driven the people from their homes until a path of bleached bones marks the Atlantic from Queenstown to Halifax. Why such a condition is allowed to exist must ever remain a mystery to Him who guides and protects the destinies of all nations. Certain it is that some mysterious destiny has scattered the Irish race, until today no country of the civilized world but in honest pride boasts of deeds of her devoted Irish sons."

The Friendly Sons of St. Patrick held their banquet at the Hotel Oneco with Professor William Lyon Phelps delivering an address on
"Ireland and Literature." "I can remember the first time I saw an Irishman," Phelps said, "and the story will show the real strength of the race. I was a small boy, a very small kid, and I had been presented with a three-cent piece. To me, the sum was large and I did not care to part with it at once. I called at a grocery store and asked the clerk to give me three coppers in exchange and he curtly refused, telling me that he did not have the change. Of course, I was disappointed and as I was standing on the sidewalk I showed my grief. Just then a husky son of Erin came along and when I related my predicament to him, saying that the clerk had refused to change my small piece of money, the Irishman id, 'Come with me.' Well, we returned to that store, the friendly son of St. Patrick leading me by the hand. He walked up to the clerk who had told me a few minutes before that he could not change a three-cent piece and in the energetic manner of all men of the race, he said, 'This boy wants three coppers for his three-cent piece,' and the clerk who had refused me said, 'Certainly, sir.' From that moment I have always loved an Irishman."

1909 "Wit, song and wisdom," reported the Morning Journal-Courier, "were interspersed at the fine banquet of the Friendly Sons of St. Patrick at the Hotel Oneco last night and it was generally agreed that the annual gathering of the younger society named after Ireland's patron saint was one of the most successful ever given by that body. About 100 members and guests of the society were assembled around several festive boards and at the head table were several representatives of the church, the university, the bar and the press ... During the evening, Miss Illa Grannan, the winsome singer now at Poli's theater, brought down the house with two clever songs. As Miss Grannan was being escorted from the banquet room by toastmaster John J. Splain, she was obliged to shake the hand of all the banqueters at the tables. Her appearance was one of the many pleasant features of the enjoyable evening. Speakers included Col. John G. Healy, president of the organization, Yale Professor Henry A. Beers and Waterbury Mayor Francis Guilfoyle."

The featured speaker at the Knights of St. Patrick banquet at the Tontine Hotel was former U.S. Rep. William McAdoo who told members, "I went to Ireland last year and thought as our steamship approached it, that even if it were a rich and powerful country, I could not love it more."
1910s

World War and Revolution
A sharp political exchange marked the observance of the day. Speaking at an Ancient Order of Hibernians reception in Thompsonville on Tuesday, March 15, Father Edward Flannery of Hazardville assailed Gov. Frank B. Weeks for what he described as the governor's remarkable power of forgetting the existence of the Irish — one-third of the population of Connecticut — in his appointments. "The large audience," reported the Union, "cheered Father Flannery's remarks enthusiastically."

As it so happened, Weeks was the guest speaker at the Knights of St. Patrick banquet in New Haven two days later and he denied any bias against the Irish in his appointments. "Let my record speak for itself," he said. "Never in my official career have I paid any attention or even thought of nationality or race in making appointments. The public knows just what I have done. I am perfectly satisfied to rest the matter with the individual judgment of the citizens... Connecticut owes a great deal to her Hibernians for the dash and spirit infused into this land of steady habits, a something of humor, a something of lovelableness she did not possess before. We have no more Irish in the state as a distinct race living side by side with Americans. We are all Americans now, but those who have Irish blood are not sorry for it, but on the contrary, have reason to feel proud of it."

The governor's response did not satisfy Father Flannery, however, and at the Knights of St. Patrick banquet in Hartford, he repeated his accusation: "Gov. Weeks says that my remarks were nonsense. It is not nonsense, I say, when more than 375,000 people are not represented. They should not be content with one little commissionship occupied by a man whose service the state could not well dispense with."

"The steamer with the Irish mails arrived in New York last night just in time for the delivery of a great many boxes of shamrocks in this city today," the Union reported on March 17. "The European mail arrived here at 8 a.m., just in time for the carriers to take out the consignments of shamrocks from relatives and friends in Ireland. There were fully 2,000 boxes of the little vine."

The Friendly Sons of St. Patrick celebrated their 25th anniversary at their banquet at the Oneco. If St. Patrick were hovering over the event, declared the Register, "the patron saint of the Emerald Isle heard as impressive and as eloquent a series of eulogies as has ever been
delivered at the annual festivity in many a March." Among the speakers were former Gov. George P. McLean, Hon. Frank S. Butterworth, James F.T. O'Connor, John Splain, Mayor Frank J. Rice, Philip Troup and toastmaster David F. Fitzgerald and, it was reported, "the hall resounded with eloquence until 1 o'clock this morning." More than 100 men attended the anniversary banquet including "a representative number of German and Italian citizens." At the beginning of the program, members drank a silent toast to Col. John G. Healy, a longtime member of the Friendly Sons who died since the last banquet.

For some unknown reason, the clocks at New Haven's railroad depot, Union Station, didn't work properly on St. Patrick's Day. A railroad employee, assistant caller Connolly, eased the situation somewhat by pasting green paper over them in honor of the day.

A sad note to the day was the report that James J. Hogan, the Tipperary native who had been a football star at Yale and a hero of the city's Irish, was critically ill at his home in Torrington. On the eve of St. Patrick's Day, the Union reported "the great gridiron hero grows weaker every hour and his death probably will take place before morning." Hogan lingered on a few more days and was finally transferred to Elm City Hospital in New Haven where he died on March 20.
A unique twist to the day’s festivities occurred at Harmonie Hall where Germans and Irish joined to celebrate the occasion at the first St. Patrick’s Day banquet of Division 5, Ancient Order of Hibernians. “It has been a long time,” remarked the Journal-Courier, “since this order has undertaken an event of this character in this city. Feature of the exercises was the interspersing of German and Irish songs during the festivities. There were about 175 people present in a dining room which was decorated with Irish, American and German colors.” John S. McCarthy was toastmaster and Alexander Lohman, representing the German community, offered a toast to “The German-American, Irish-American Alliance.”

An original skit, “The Strike, or the Walking Delegate Put to Work,” was presented at the fourth annual banquet of the Sons of Irishmen at Pyramid Hall on State Street. The skit was written by one of the group’s members, Peter H. Campion, and the roles were played by other members. The cast included: former Alderman Joseph H. Mulvey as Mr. Kelley; Edward J. Fredinburg as Mr. Mulcahy; John J. Martin as Anastasia Mulcahy; Edward Maley as Mrs. Mooney; Joseph Sexton as Isidore O’Brien; James H. Lane as Mr. Connelly; Patrick J. Cronin as Keyren Kelley; Joseph Mulvey as Mrs. Kelley; Thomas Whalen as Casey; Frank Bohen as Moohan; William Maley as Dohan; Richard Cronin as Mooney and Peter J. Conlin as Officer Reilly. Another feature of the banquet was the singing of a song composed by member John J. Martin to the tune of “Auld Lang Syne”:

“Oh, let us sing and ne’er forget
The memories so dear,
Of dear old Ireland o’er the sea.
Whose brave sons gather here,
From North to South and East to West,
With eagerness we see
Her sons awaiting for the time
When Dear Old Ireland is free.”

The sending of postcards on St. Patrick’s Day was a popular practice in this era and the Register reported, “Fifty thousand postcards were handled in the post office today which related to St. Patrick’s Day. Many packages of shamrocks also went through the mails.”
Editor Joseph Smith of the Boston Traveler had a few words of criticism for the Irish in a speech at the Knights of St. Patrick banquet at the Taft Hotel. "While admitting that the Irish people are a great people," reported the Register, "Mr. Smith suggested that instead of dreaming all the while they instill a little action into their ambitions. A little less dreaming and a little more elbow grease would be a good thing for the Irish people ...." Having gotten that off his chest, however, Smith turned to humor and "contented himself with a cartload of brand new wit and handed out such epigrams as that New England is now practically New Ireland." Knights President William B. McCarthy was toastmaster and other speakers included Judge Robert L. Munger of Ansonia and James H. Reilly, a Boston lawyer. John J. Gilson led the Knights choir and one of the songs that made a big hit was, "The Ladies and the Knights Ball." Dr. W.J. Sheehan sang several selections between speeches.

At the Friendly Sons of St. Patrick banquet at the Hotel Oneco, U.S. Rep. Rainey of Illinois made a stirring appeal for world peace: "We are engaged now in building great fortresses at either entrance of the Panama Canal. We are engaged in threatening the island empire of the Pacific Ocean with great frowning fortresses erected on the islands of Guam and of Hawaii far out in the world's greatest ocean. Men educated in our military and naval colleges are demanding on the floor of Congress and throughout the country larger and larger navies and a larger and larger expenditure for the support of our increasing armies. But all our achievements in the last decade in view of the recent defeat of the arbitration treaties in the Senate of the United States fade into insignificance when compared with the achievements of the two Latin countries of South America, which resulted in the erection of this colossal figure of the Christ high up on the slope of the Andes. But the fight for peace in the world will continue until success crowns the efforts of the millions of men throughout the world who have devoted their lives to the achievement of a world peace and whenever that is attained, whenever the Hague courts assume their true function in the world, the real march of progress in all the nations will commence."

At the Eagles Hall, 250 members of the Ancient Order of Hibernians and its auxiliary attended the annual banquet. Lt. Gov. Blakeslee was the main speaker and entertainment was provided by Minnie T. Crean who sang, "The Wearin' o' the Green," and by Margaret Shea who sang, "The Harp That Once Through Tara's Halls."
St. Patrick's Day in New Haven was perhaps never celebrated with more optimism about the future of the Emerald Isle than this year as a bill that would grant home rule for Ireland appeared ready for implementation in England. More than 300 members of the various divisions of the Ancient Order of Hibernians in New Haven gathered at the Taft Hotel where attorney Bernard E. Lynch was toastmaster and Gov. Simeon Baldwin was the main speaker. Baldwin's topic was near and dear to the hearts of all Irishmen: the cause of home rule for Ireland.

"Ireland has had sad years, years brightened by little except the steadfast devotion and patriotism of a long-suffering people," the governor said. "Twenty-seven years ago in 1886, she thought the hour of justice had arrived. Gladstone, the great orator of England, whose eloquence could move people if they were to be moved by anything brought forward his home rule bill ... It failed and its defeat in the House of Commons drove the liberals from power. Before long they came back and this time carried it through the House of Commons, but the House of Lords rejected it. Since then, the House of Lords has come in contact with the 20th century. It has come in collision with it and from the position of an ancient fortress of aristocratic privilege, it has sunk to that of an ancient ruin, very stately, very interesting historically, and very useless for present day purposes, except to look at ...

"America has had her share in this triumph so long delayed of home rule for the Irish people. The sons of Ireland in America have looked across the Atlantic with a calm, good judgment, as striking as has been the intensity of their desire for Ireland's self-government. They were the great contributors to the home rule fund last year, a fund amounting to over $100,000 nearly three times as much as was subscribed years ago, at the height of the Land League agitation. American money to maintain the Irish cause in parliament and out of parliament has never been wanting. It never will be, but it looks to me as if the occasions for sending it would henceforth be comparatively rare. In 1914, repassage of the home rule bill puts the destinies of Ireland in Irish hands on Irish soil. The dreams of a century and more will have passed into sober fact, and Ireland will need little thenceforth from her sons in America except that sympathy and patriotic sentiment, which will never fail"
In response to the traditional toast, "The Day We Celebrate," attorney Walter J. Walsh also spoke of home rule, although in somewhat less optimistic tones. "The Irish have struggled at great odds where others would have gone down to extinction," he said. "Ireland has deserved a better fate, and stranger things than home rule for Ireland have happened and we may see the day when it will come to pass."

Home rule was also a topic much discussed at the Friendly Sons of St. Patrick banquet at the Oneco. One of the speakers, Kenneth Wynne, spoke on the topic, "A Dream Coming True," and reviewed the history of the home rule bill pending before the British Parliament. Little did anyone present that evening realize the pain and suffering yet facing Ireland before self-government would become a reality, and the pain and suffering that would go on even long after self-government was attained.

1914 A long tradition came to an end when Miss Anne Flood for the first time in 40 years did not sing "St. Patrick's Day in the Morning" at Mass at St. Patrick's Church on Grand Avenue. "Miss Flood is now an old lady," explained the Register, "and illness and death in her family forced her regrettfully to forgo her accustomed song. The song was for the first time sung by a younger woman, but so well had Miss Flood done her work that the great St. Patrick's Day congregation filed out, most of them believing that they had again listened to Miss Flood."
While banquets were the order of the day as usual, the Sons of Irishmen, dispensed with speeches and put on a play, "Boogan Bun-coed," at their dinner at Eagles Hall on Crown Street. The play was written by a member of the organization, Peter H. Campion, and featured the following members: Joseph Ahern as Napoleon B. Nutty; Patrick J. Cronin as Bartholomew Boogan; J.J. Martin as Mrs. Mary Ellen Boogan; Frank J. Altman as Tim O’Brien; E.J. Fredinburg as Heinie Krasmeyer; Moxie Silverstein as Joseph Sexton; Edward Carroll as Snowball Jackson; William Maley as Giovanni Spaghetti; James O’Connor as Superintendent Buggs; Walter Gibbons, accompanist.

The Knights of St. Patrick banqueted at the Taft Hotel with Edward J. Moriarty as toastmaster, while the Friendly Sons of St. Patrick gathered at the Hotel Oneco, 150 strong.

Speaking at the Ancient Order of Hibernians banquet at the Taft, Father Pliny Cooney of St. Peter’s Church declared the Irish to be a splendid race, but deplored their lack of loyalty to each other. "Let a Jew but set up a little shop," he explained, "and the Jews for miles around will flock to give him patronage, but let an Irishman set up a similar shop and the Irish will run away from it to make someone else rich. They'll say a kind word for everyone but an Irishman, but let anyone else say a word against the race as a whole and they are anathematized." Father Cooney even blamed the repeated failures of home rule upon this trait of the Irish failing to stick together. "I cannot find an explanation for this trait," he said, "but Ireland needs an infusion of some new blood into her veins before she will ever secure home rule, which means agreement on all sides."

Home rule was also the topic of a note in a gift from Ireland for Tax Collector William H. Hackett. Hackett received a package of shamrocks from a relative, Joseph Donnelly of County Longford, and attached to them was a verse:

"A little sprig of shamrock
From Ireland far away;
A little sprig of shamrock
To wear on St. Patrick's Day.
The first that I have sent you;
The last you'll get from me
Til Ireland is a nation,
Great, glorious and free."
A relic was the center of attention on St. Patrick's Day in New Haven. For forty years, one of the first submarines in the United States, named the Fenian Ram because it had been built for the Fenian cause back in the 1870s, had been stored and all but forgotten in a shed on the Mill River. When the existence of the ancient submarine came to the attention of Simon Lake, himself a submarine builder, he suggested at a Chamber of Commerce luncheon on March 14 that the Fenian Ram be taken from its shed and placed on the New Haven Green as a monument to its inventors. "I think it would be a splendid idea to place this boat on the Central Green instead of away in this barn and I think it would be a good thing for the New Haven Chamber of Commerce to interest itself in," said Lake.

Because of the terrible war in Europe, the Friendly Sons of St. Patrick decided to forgo their usual banquet. "When the matter was discussed by the committee," reported the New Haven Union, "it was thought they would be justified in postponing the celebration until
another year. The society is cosmopolitan in its makeup and in view of the war in Europe and the condition of business it was deemed best to omit the celebration. The members in their relations with each other are neutral and politics and the war in Europe are matters not to be discussed ... The committee sent notices by card to every member of the society and the replies showed the consensus of opinion to be in favor of postponing the banquet." For whatever reasons, this seems to have marked the disappearance of the Friendly Sons of St. Patrick from the scene in New Haven for there are no indications that they ever again observed St. Patrick's Day.

The Knights of St. Patrick held their banquet at the Taft with Dr. John F. Sullivan as toastmaster and Dr. Amos Parker Wilder, former U.S. consul in Hong Kong and Shanghai, as guest speaker. The president, Dr. James S. Maher, welcomed members and guests and the invocation was given by Father John J. McGivney of Westville, the chaplain.

Division 1 of the Ancient Order of Hibernians held its celebration at Eagles Hall on Crown Street with Father John Ryan of St. Francis Church, New Haven County AOH President John J. Splain, Thomas F. Frawley of Ansonia and Connecticut AOH President William T. May of New London as guest speakers. The division, reported the New Haven Union, had grown to more than 200 members under its "most efficient leader," Michael J. Connolly. Committee members for the celebration included: Chairman Patrick J. O'Connor, Secretary James Considine, E.J. Coffey, Timothy Cronan, William F. Dwyer, John J. O'Connor, Maurice Murphy, Michael Maloney, James J. Deegan, Michael F. Darcy, Daniel Carroll, William P. Looney, William White, John J. Maroney, John Halpin, Terrence McMahon, Patrick Malone and Charles F. Pender.
The Sons of Irishmen produced another play written by Peter H. Campion, "One Strike for Mrs. Kelly, or The Original Suffragette." The play, it was reported, "teemed with comedy situations and rapid-fire dialogue that had its audience shaking with mirth from the moment the curtain went up."

For all the gaiety, however, there were still those who longed for the good old days when a parade was the centerpiece of the St. Patrick's Day festivities. The Register quoted one old-timer who commented, "I can't see when New York has a big parade almost every St. Patrick's Day, why we in New Haven cannot do the same. There seems to be a feeling that we have outgrown the parades. I can't see why such a notion should prevail. The day is becoming more and more celebrated and not alone by the sons of Ireland and the latter should show the faith that is in them by having a parade. Now that so many years have gone by since we had a parade here, I think such a demonstration would prove a big hit. And it is not too early now to begin planning for next year. Let the slogan go forth that there will be a St. Patrick's Day parade in 1916."

1916 There was no parade in New Haven on St. Patrick's Day and, given the weather, it was perhaps just as well. Sunshine greeted the arrival of the day, but at noon it began snowing and by evening the city was covered with a blanket of white. The storm was so bad that Division 1 of the Ancient Order of Hibernians, holding its 44th annual celebration at the Elks Hall on Crown Street, received word from some members, among them Postmaster Philip Troup, that they were snowbound and could not attend.

Police Sgt. Michael J. Connolly presided and introduced the guest speakers, Father Walter McElroy, assistant pastor of St. Francis Church and attorney Walter J. Walsh. Father McElroy discussed "Ireland's force as a civilizing factor in the world's history": "Contrasting the force of militaristic conquest with the peaceful, civilizing influence of the Irish, he characterized the Irish nation as the most potent factor for civilization the world has ever known. The fact that they are patriotic Americans does not prevent them, he said, from honoring and emulating the zeal and fidelity of their Irish forefathers in preserving the ideals of culture, learning and religion for the world ...
"Wherever Irishmen have gone they have fought, not for empire, but for ideals. Ireland has not an empire upon which the sun never sets, and too true, she may never have startled the world by the magnificence of her armies, but she has never raised the sword over the prostrate form of innocent nations too weak to resist, nor has she engaged in the wholesale rapine and desolation which follow the course of territorial expansion, but she has stood forth in history as defending the home honor and the home altars. The true test of a nation's claim to fame is its influence upon the world as a civilizing factor. Shall it be said that this little nation's lack of the lust for militaristic conquest shall cause her to be barred from fame's riches? She has contributed more by her learning in science, in the arts, in religion, than other nations have by their military accomplishments."

Music was provided by Minnie Sullivan, who sang several Irish selections and played her own accompaniment upon the violin; Jerry Fryer who gave unique harmonica selections; Patrick Bowes of Waterbury and Miss Kane of Waterbury.

At the Knights of St. Patrick banquet at the Taft Hotel, the principal speaker, J.I.C. Clarke, president of the American-Irish Historical Society in New York, made a prediction whose accuracy would have astonished even him. "We are reaching a crisis in the history of Ireland," he prophesied. "It is the tragedy of her fate. She is under the rule of an alien people, struggling upwards with her face steadily elevated and finds herself between two fires. If she were part of the British Empire, which if England were just and kind and merciful, she might have been, she would have stood opposed to the Teutonic powers. As it is, she stands in the same difficult position of probably being the victim of whichever side wins."

Just a little over a month later, the crisis was reached, indeed, when on April 24, 1916, several hundred Irish rebels occupied the General Post Office and other government buildings in Dublin and declared an Irish republic. It was the beginning of the end of English rule in Ireland.
1917 Despite the war in Europe, a supply of shamrocks arrived from Ireland. "As one of the wearers put it," said the Register, "Germany would not destroy a ship carrying shamrocks and it seemed as if there was no more scarcity of the clover this year than ever." Even if the shamrocks had not gotten through, one New Haven Irishman had his own source. "Terrence B. Kelly, deputy collector of internal revenue, wore a branch of green on his coat lapel today," said the Register. "He confessed it was not the real article and then he gave away a secret. Mr. Kelly told about a spot where the imitation shamrock grows. It is on the grounds of a private residence on Bishop Street and he has for years been plucking his St. Patrick's Day decorations from this spot."

For the second year, the Friendly Sons of St. Patrick canceled their banquet because of the war, but other groups held their usual festivities. The Sons of Irishmen met at the Eagles Hall. The Ancient Order of Hibernians gathered in Mainster's Cafe and the Knights of St. Patrick dined at the New Haven Lawn Club with Mayor Curley of Boston as their guest speaker. The Thomas F. Miniter Association held its banquet in its clubrooms on Grand Avenue. Speakers included Philip Troup, Thomas L. Reilly and M.F. O'Donnell. The entertainment committee comprised James Corcoran, William Dooley, Henry Fredericks, John Murray and John Taddeo.

1918 The shadow of American involvement in the European war hung over the St. Patrick's Day observance. "Simplicity and informality will mark the celebration in New Haven of St. Patrick's Day," said the Register. "While every good Irishman will not fail to wear a 'bit o' the green' in honor of the great patron saint of the Emerald Isle, and although nearly every Irish society will observe the occasion in some form or other, the effect of the war will be evident in that there will be no general fete or gathering to pay tribute to St. Patrick."

The major event of the day was a concert sponsored by the Wolfe Tone Club at Poli's Palace Theater. The concert was in honor both of St. Patrick's Day and the birthday of the famous Irish patriot, Robert Emmet, and, according to the Register, "bids fair to outshine anything of the kind ever held in New Haven." Among the artists brought in for the show were the Philadelphia singer Stephen D. O'Rourke and the McCormacks of vaudeville. "The admission is cheap to hear the great
"O'Rourke," commented the Register the day before the concert, "but when the public realizes the fact that he is to be supported by an array of talent in every way worthy of the time, the place and the occasion, it will be easily seen there is a great treat in store for the people who will go and enjoy a charming concert of Irish music, melody and song."

The Knights of St. Patrick marked the occasion with an informal dinner at their clubrooms as did the Ancient Order of Hibernians. At St. John's Church, Professor Enrico Batelli arranged a special program of music for the St. Patrick's Day services.

1919 New Haven's Irish had special reason to rejoice when it was announced on March 17 that one of their own, Cpl. Timothy Francis Ahearn, had been awarded the Distinguished Service Cross for bravery in action in France. The citation honoring Ahearn read as follows: "Cpl. Timothy Ahearn, Co. C, 102nd Infantry. For extraordinary heroism in action near Verdun, France, Oct. 17, 1918. After all of the officers and sergeants had become casualties, Cpl. Ahearn took command of his company, leading it through the remainder of the day's action with great bravery and ability. Late in the day he went to the rescue of a wounded officer and succeeded in bringing him to a place of safety through a terrific machine-gun fire."

With the war over, the city's Irish planned gala festivities for their holiday. Division 1 of the Ancient Order of Hibernians celebrated the 47th anniversary of its organization with a program at Erin Hall. Minnie Sullivan and Arthur B. Sullivan played violin selections; P. Barrett and Dannie Lawlor sang; County President M.J. Connelly read a history of the division; Mayor Fitzgerald addressed the crowd. The mayor said that when someone asked him why the Irish flag was permitted to fly over City Hall on St. Patrick's Day, he replied because it represented the land of birth or ancestry of hundreds of thousands, even millions, of men who had fought for world democracy and made the world a safe place to live.

More than 100 members and guests attended the Knights of St. Patrick banquet at their clubrooms on Orange Street and heard talks by two World War I veterans, Lt. Charles P. Taft and Capt. James Braden. Three charter members of the Knights were present on this 42nd gathering of the organization: Thomas Brennan, Edward McCarthy and Bernard Clark.
1920s

A Nation
Once
Again
1920 There was quite a history behind the "tender bunch of shamrocks" that found its way onto the desk of Mayor David Fitzgerald on St. Patrick's Day morning. The shamrocks, explained the New Haven Union, were grown from a slip sent from Ireland the previous year to Patrick F. Henehan, an old Fenian who had spent years in prison in England and who was keeper of the public bath on St. John Street. Henehan gave one of the slips to Edward Tracy, chief clerk in the Park Department, who put it under glass in one of the city's greenhouses on Crescent Street. "The project succeeded up to expectations," reported the paper, "and there are probably over 100 of the clovers on the bunch. Although they are very tender, it was remarked that they were of the purest green."

The shamrocks were given by Miss McCarthy of the Public Works Department to the mayor's secretary who, in turn, had them waiting on the mayor's desk when he arrived. "When they have served as welcome to the mayor," said the Union, "they will be transferred to form a centerpiece on the table of the Knights of St. Patrick dinner tonight at which the mayor is to be the chief speaker and sprigs will be handed around to all diners."

Music Hall was decorated with intertwined flags of the United States and the Irish Republic for a program that began in song and ended in dancing for the hundreds of couples who attended. Playing at the Poli's Palace Theater was a special St. Patrick's Day treat, the film version of the book, "The Luck of the Irish." "This visualization, like the story," commented the Register, "is replete with romance, added to which is excitement aplenty. Allan Dawn, the producer, has succeeded in making a true Irish picture of this real Irish story and whether it be in comedy or romance or fighting, for that matter, is there any atmosphere more enjoyable than that of Ireland and the Irish?"
For the first time in many a year, New Haven witnessed a return to the grand old tradition of a St. Patrick's Day parade. It wasn't, said the Register, "like the St. Patrick's Day parades of old when every loyal son wore a high silk hat with cockade of green," but it was grand enough. The chief feature of the parade was the famous Irish Bagpipers Band of New Jersey and the Irish-American Drum Corps "of local note."

After the parade, the drum corps gave a ball and exhibition at Music Hall. The ball committee included: Joseph Fitzpatrick, Peter Killbride, Walter Doran, John and William Dugan, William Dwyer, Thomas Ahern, Daniel English, Joseph F. Dwyer, William Calligan, Patrick and Michael Whalen, Frank Reynolds, John M. Conville, John McQueeney, Edward Donley, John Rogers, James Calleran, Patrick Rogan and James Clyne.

Even with the resurrection of the parade, a shadow was cast on the day's festivities by the knowledge that the revolution in Ireland was escalating and taking more and more lives. Beginning in October 1920, the British considerably reinforced the notorious Black and Tans by 1,000 recruits each month and the Irish Republican Army began to use flying columns for systematic attacks on British troops and facilities.

Locally," said the Register, "the day was observed as an occasion of solemnity rather than joy, because of present day troubles and tribulations in the Emerald Isle. Many who wore sprigs of green or the shamrock leaves added a bit of black ribbon as a token of mourning in memory of those who lost their lives in devotion to the cause of Ireland's freedom. Masses were offered in some of the Catholic churches for the repose of the souls of the Irish martyrs. Various celebrations and gatherings were held and funds were contributed for the troubled isle across the sea."

At St. Mary's Church, schoolchildren performed the play, "Our Irish Cousins," and adult groups presented a concert of patriotic songs and performed ancient and modern Irish dances. Performers included Walter Maloney, Thomas Brennan, Patrick Ward and Patrick Rogan.

The Knights of St. Patrick held "an old-time get-together" at their clubhouse on Orange Street. Guest speakers included S.J. Kelley, president of the Borough of Queens in New York City and Father Martin Fahey, a New Haven native and chaplain of the Actors Alliance in New
York. Also speaking were Mayor Fitzgerald, John H. Lane, Postmaster Troup and Sheriff Thomas Reilly.

A special feature of the day occurred at City Court where 20 Irish people were among 125 who became United States citizens in a ceremony before Judge Jacob Caplan. The new citizens of Irish birth included: Mary Ann Reynolds, 380 Sherman St.; Patrick Williams, Lyons Street; Edward O’Donnell, 166 Ward St.; Edward J. Donnelly, 150 Olive St.; Michael J. Darcy, 421 Poplar St.; James Reardon, 501 Blatchley Ave.; John J. Maloney, 4 Canal St.; Michael J. Sullivan, 777 Water St.; John Lynch, 276 Blatchley Ave.; Michael Reilly, 32 Button St.; Thomas Kears, 200 Putnam St.; William Patrick Kennelly, 8 Baldwin St.; John Waldron, 44 Shephard St.; Patrick Murphy, 184 Newhall St.; Thomas W. Burns, 279 Columbus Ave.; John Joseph Whelan, 20 Ann St.; Daniel J. Sullivan, 264 Munson St.; John C. Glynn, 217 Exchange St.; Hugh Fitzsimmons, 4 Columbus Ave.; and James J. Nolan, 127 Winchester Ave.

1922 The civil strife that was just beginning in Ireland in the wake of the treaty with Great Britain was mirrored in New Haven. St. Patrick’s Day itself was celebrated with the usual observances, but on Sunday, March 19, the Connecticut branch of the American Association for the Recognition of the Irish Republic convened in New Haven and unanimously denounced the Irish Free State created by the treaty.

The 26 delegates to the convention, meeting at Fraternal Hall, 19 Elm St., voted on the free state before a gallery filled with 500 spectators after hearing a stirring appeal by an Irish priest, Father Michael J. O'Flanagan, vice president of the first Dail Eireann. O'Flanagan urged the convention to go on record as recommending that the Irish hold out for complete independence rather than accept Free State status. He also urged tolerance and respect for those in sympathy with the new Free State declaring that the two factions could exist without detriment to Ireland pending a decision by vote of the Irish people. Welcoming the delegates, Mayor Fitzgerald spoke for moderation and urged those sympathetic to the cause of Irish freedom to bide their time until the Irish people had spoken on the issue.

The resolution adopted by the convention read: “Whereas the acceptance by a small majority of the Dail Eireann of the so-called Free
State treaty was also a result of the despotic threat of the British government and not an expression of free will of the people of Ireland, who have on two previous occasions clearly expressed their allegiance to the principle of absolute independence upon which the existing Irish Republic was established, now therefore be it,

"Resolved, that we communicate our congratulations to the members of the Dail and the men and women of Ireland who have gloriously stood by their convictions in the recent crisis and, who notwithstanding the threats of the alien enemy, have voted to uphold the existing republic lawfully established at the risk of their lives, liberty and prosperity.

"Resolved that the delegates to the convention of the A.A.R.I.R. representing the entire membership of the association in the state of Connecticut hereby endorse the resolutions adopted at the executive meeting of the national board of the American Association at New York City on Feb. 14, 1921."

Before adoption, the resolution was hotly debated, Father M.F. Martin of Meriden offering an amendment that pledged to stand by the will of the Irish people as expressed in a general election. The amendment was easily beaten back by a 23-3 vote, the majority accepting the argument that the will of the Irish people had already been clearly expressed for complete independence at the election in 1918.

The convention adopted other resolutions supporting the cause of independence for India, favoring a boycott of British goods, opposing the Four Power Pact, supporting the release of James Larkin, an Irish revolutionary being held in federal prison at Dannemora in New York, and decrying what Irish nationalists saw as efforts of British propagandists to remove from American schools books that told of the American Revolution.

The delegates re-elected President Simon Crehan of Bridgeport and Treasurer Timothy J. Sullivan of New Haven. Other officers elected included: First Vice President Edna M. Purcell of Hartford, Second Vice President P.J. Hogan of Meriden and Third Vice President Agnes Nelligan of Willimantic. Directors elected included: James P. Kelly of Ansonia, Patrick Eagan of New Haven, Luke Martin of New London, Mrs. M.J. Flanagan of Bridgeport and Martin Kelley of New Britain.

Several days before the convention, the city's Irish celebrated St. Patrick's Day with the usual observances. For the second year in a
row there was a short parade featuring the Irish-American Fife and Drum Corps of New Haven, the Irish Pipe Band of Englewood, N.J., and several New Haven drum corps.

The major event was a dance at Fraternal Hall sponsored by the Padraic Pearse Literary Association, the New Haven branch of the Muriel MacSwiney Relief Association and the Benjamin Franklin Council of the American Association for the Recognition of the Irish Republic.

The Knights of St. Patrick held their banquet at their club rooms on Orange Street. Judge Robert L. Munger of Ansonia told the Knights that it was the greatest St. Patrick’s Day that Ireland had ever seen "because of the independence which Ireland had at last won from England." He urged the factions in Ireland to compromise and suggested that most of the bloodshed in history could have been avoided had people been willing to compromise.

1923 The largest celebration was a banquet and musical program sponsored by the New Haven Council of Catholic Women at the Taft Hotel. Four hundred members and guests were welcomed to the affair by President Anna Sheehan and toastmistress Mary Mulvey. The featured speaker was Helen McCormick, assistant district attorney of Brooklyn, N.Y. McCormick urged Catholic women to become involved in the civic and legislative issues of the day and to fight against such modern evils as birth-control propaganda. "She concluded," said the Register, "with a plea for the women to bear the standard of Christ as an expression of their priceless faith."

After the speeches, the well-known actress, Marie Wainwright, "charmed the audience" with her readings of selections from Shakespeare's "Hamlet" and "The Merchant of Venice." Elizabeth Murphy sang a number of Irish melodies including: "Believe Me If All Those Endearing Young Charms," and "Mavourneen." Gertrude Toole also sang, while Mollie and Hannah Pitcher played the piano and Katherine Leonard directed a sing-along.

Several drum and bugle corps marched along Church Street and other central thoroughfares in the third renewal of the St. Patrick's Day parade. At their banquet, the Knights of St. Patrick enjoyed a routine presented by Frank Fogarty, "an old-time comedian" from Brooklyn, N.Y.
City Postmaster Troup told the Men’s Club of St. Paul’s Episcopal Church that it was very appropriate for it to celebrate St. Patrick’s Day. “Next to the Saviour himself,” he said, “St. Patrick took St. Paul as his ideal. Like the great apostle to the Gentiles, who heard a cry for help from Macedonia, St. Patrick had and harkened to a similar cry from Ireland. Both Paul and Patrick had special missions. There was a wonderful mental and spiritual likeness between them. Both were men of independent thought, purpose and action. Both were profoundly schooled in the Sacred Scriptures. Just as Paul denounced the incestuous Corinthians, Patrick assailed the rapacious Coroticus. Just as Paul loved the Galatians, who were Celts, so Patrick loved the Irish ...”

The Holy Name Society of St. Mary’s Church sponsored a program in the church hall including: Irish folk dancing by St. Mary’s School pupils; a tenor solo by Victor Valenti; harp solos by Ruth Whalen; a soprano solo by Elizabeth E. Murphy; a solo by Morton Noonan; a banjo solo by Charles O’Connell; a solo by M.J. Duggan; and a monologue by Frank McCabe. The program also featured a one-act play, “An Irish Invasion,” by Alice C. Thompson. The cast included: Adelaide Gilhuly as Mrs. McManus; Betty O’Brien as Eileen; Nora Ryan as Granny O’Ryan; Gertrude Brown as Mrs. O’Donnell; Mary Duffy as Maggie O’Donnell; Mary Cashin as Biddy O’Donnell; and Mary Mulligan as Maire O’Donnell.

Like the Irish people themselves, the Irish-American community had been split between those who wished to accept the treaty with England and the status of an Irish Free State and those who held out for a totally independent Ireland.

In Ireland, the split led to civil war. In America it led to bitterness, evident in a letter to the editor of the Union by Anna M. Moran. “There is no such thing,” wrote Moran, an opponent of the Irish Free State, “as Irish citizenship. Just as in the case of the flag, when the British government refused to permit the use of the Tricolor on Irish merchant ships so now a new order has been issued from London forbidding the issue of passports in Ireland in such a form as would distinguish Irish citizens from English subjects.

“All Free Staters are British subjects in virtue of the common citizenship between Great Britain and Ireland. These words are from the oath of allegiance taken by members of the South of Ireland.
Parliament on behalf of their constituents. What, therefore, more logical than to refuse to allow Free Staters to present themselves to the nations of the world otherwise than as British subjects.

"To republicans there is nothing surprising in this. But to those who rushed for the jobs with surrender it is disconcerting. They can no longer throw dust in the eyes of the Irish people. They cannot talk of Ireland being recognized as a separate nation when Irish men and women must go through the world described and officially labeled British subjects. Thus the pretense even of a separate flag or a separate citizenship has been surrendered to Britain without even a protest by the Free Staters, but not so the invincible Irish Republic; they will hang on till the crack of doom."

The ceremonial teams of the city's Ancient Order of Hibernians traveled to Waterbury "to put on one of the largest class initiations ever put on in this state," according to the Union. The contingent was led by President John Dwyer, Secretary Joseph P. Glynn and Treasurer Thomas King. The degree team was headed by Frank Reynolds and included: Michael McKenna, William Droyer, John Brady, Patrick Doherty, James McGreal, Peter White, Bernard Murphy, Patrick Hickey, Frank Stoker, Thomas Ahearn, James Purcell, Thomas Griffin, Dominic Sheehan, James Kelly, Eugene Sullivan, John Kane, Joseph Fitzpatrick, Thomas Callinon, Dennis Devine, Peter McKeon and Dennis McKenna. The ladies' team was led by Mrs. J.J. Crotty, Mrs. J. Shanley, Mrs. Coogan, Aileen Mulligan, Mae Burns and Elizabeth White. Members included Mrs. Kenny, Nellie McKiernan, Nellie Burns, Anna Burns, Mary Crotty, Kathleen Conway, Marie McGuire, Mrs. McFayden, Minnie Rogers, Elizabeth Cosgrove, Ruth File, Elizabeth O'Connor and Mrs. J. Ryder.

Mayor Francis P. Guilfoyle of Waterbury was the guest speaker at the annual Knights of St. Patrick banquet at their club rooms on Orange Street. Other speakers included President John J. Kinney, the Rev. Dr. McLaughlin of St. Brendan's Church, Hartford Town Clerk John Gleason and Sheriff Thomas L. Reilly. Musical entertainment was provided by John E. Brennan and Charles Kullman of the Yale Glee Club.

At Fraternal Hall, 19 Elm St., the city's Irish organizations sponsored a dance. Said the Register, "The committee in charge of the celebration representing the Irish societies in New Haven have done everything possible toward making the affair one of the best of its kind
ever held in New Haven. They have secured both halls for Irish and American dancing, first class music for both dances and considerable talent which will illustrate Irish step dancing, jig, reel and hornpipe."

A dance was also held at Erin Hall, 443 State St., under the auspices of the Countess Markievicz Club. "Elaborate Irish music has been procured," said the Union. "There will also be American dancing on the occasion."


1925 The Journal-Courier printed a poem by Augusta John Newton, 2018 Chapel St., which paid tribute to those Irish people who clung to the idea of an independent republic and took none too subtle aim at those who forgot that cause and merely celebrated the occasion. It was titled, "St. Patrick's Day, 1925":

``Today the masses flaunt the green,
Tomorrow they will tread upon
The budding shamrock's brilliant sheen
And let it wither in the sun.
``

``What means thy Cause, O land forlorn,
To garrulous throngs and singers loud?
Know they the poison of the thorn
The heart deep pierced, but still uncowed?"
'Dear land, the crowds they hurry by,
And leave your Trust unto the few
Who still the subtle foe defy,
And dedicate their hearts to you.

'Unlike the noisy swarming tide,
These silent men with furrowed faces
The glance upturned, the solemn pride
Enkindled in the Gaelic race.

'Amid the gay and festive throng,
Of those who lift the brimming glass.
Those faithful watchers move along,
And all is silence where they pass.

'Their thoughts are not of dance or game
where slaves of custom clap the hand.
Their hearts are high, and still untame,
And all unmarked by slavery's brand.

'Do you commune, O faithful few,
With men of ages past and gone
Who teach your spirits to be true,
And point the path you walk alone?

'Does all of Erin's hero host
Speak through stagnation of lean years,
Strengthening you to pay the cost,
Turning to trusting faith your fears?

'The burning depths of Tone's ideal,
The light that claimed young Emmet's heart,
MacSwiney's vision of the Gael,
Of all their fire you are a part.

'True sons who carry still the light
Must all the enemy's wiles withstand
Must still forget the weaklings spite
Because they do not understand.
``Into your trust a Cause is given,
By destiny and loftiest souls.
Let not that trust from you be riven
'Til earth in lifeless ruin rolls!

At the Knights of St. Patrick banquet, however, Terence J. McManus praised the success of the Irish Free State. That state, he told 150 Knights at their rooms on Orange Street, "has made splendid progress. It started as you know only three years ago and with a baptism of mud. Since then the railroads have been reorganized and consolidated; where there were 28 systems, there is now but one. The dairy industry and the breeding of cattle is being handled to the best possible advantage for the first time in Ireland's history. With the Free State have come leaders with intelligence, vision and foresight. What can be expected but success? The great handicap that workers in Ireland are now facing is the fact that the financial center of the island is still in London. More than 5 billion in Irish capital is invested through British firms."

One of the most famous of Irish storytellers, Padraic Colum, was in New Haven to help observe St. Patrick's Day. Of Colum's appearance at the Little Theater, the Register commented, "It is too bad that the Little Theater's only means of illumination is electricity. For to Padriac Colum ... the only proper atmosphere for Irish folk tales is that which is lighted by the flames from peat piled into a fireplace. He blames America with her gift of oil for the dying out in Ireland of the custom of storytelling. Interest in newspapers and politics has brought its destruction. It is only in the romantic references in the people's speech and in the fairies of Ireland that some of the lore is preserved."

"Mr. Colum, one imagines, could have told endless stories last night so richly has he gathered of that romance that is passing. As it was, he seemed to change his audience to enthralled children as he told of the henwife's son, Mel, of the Princess Brightbrow, of the Isle of the Shadow of the Stars and the Blind Sage, of the fairy shoemaker and the love-talker who once a maiden hears never listens to mortal lovers again." Unfortunately, apparently not many of New Haven's Irish turned out for the appearance for the Register concluded: "To the scant audience present, it was a St. Patrick's night spent in the Erin of ancient days."
The ancient mingled with the modern when radio station WJAP broadcast a special program of Irish music featuring vocalists and instrumentalists. The affiliated Irish societies and the Padraic Pearse Literary Association sponsored their fifth annual ball at Fraternal Hall, and in Hamden, Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church sponsored a skit titled, "A St. Patrick's Day Frolic" at Town Hall. The Irish-American Drum Corps sponsored a dance at Music Hall on Court Street where the entertainment included precision drilling by Father Mathew's Fancy Drill Cadets.

1926 In an editorial, the New Haven Union suggested that the lingering bitterness between those who accepted the Irish Free State and those who still held out for complete independence, did not dampen the love of all Irishmen for their ancestral land. "However much the Irish and their friends may disagree over Ireland's present status," it editorialized, "there is no division anywhere over the value of St. Patrick's mission to Ireland. Like the life story of all the great figures of history, the career of St. Patrick points clearly to a Providence guiding destiny in the affairs of mankind that transcends all things human. One cannot contemplate his life and life work without being impressed by the providential preparation of the Irish people to receive his message, by the providential manner in which he overcame the obstacles inherent in his great mission by his own providential preparation for the work he was to do and by the providential results of the great work he did perform. In an age of scientific skepticism it is well to have examples like that of St. Patrick to inspire us anew in the better faith that God's hand and no man's rules in this world of ours."

More than 250 people attended the banquet of the Ancient Order of Hibernians at the Elks Hall on Crown Street and 50 members of the Maples Athletic Club enjoyed a celebration of the day at their club rooms on Front Street. The entertainment included a skit, "The Boat's In," in which the interlocuter was Henry C. Woodruff and the cast included: Thomas Hare, Arthur Wardell, Edward Brereton, George Keane, Joseph Maher, Frank Casner, Joseph Carroll, Joseph Hines, Walter Lynch and Frank Bowers. After the play, there was dancing to the music of Larry Merrell's Suncopators until midnight.
The Knights of St. Patrick paid special tribute in a toast to the only two remaining members from those who had been present in 1878 for the organization's first banquet. They were Edward McCarthy, 249 Park St., and Bernard Clark, 14 Court St. Neither was able to attend the 1926 banquet. Edward E. Regan, general superintendent of the New Haven Division of the New Haven Railroad offered the toast to them, first invoking the memory of the other departed founders. Father Jeremiah Curtin of St. Lawrence Church in West Haven was the principal speaker at the Knights banquet.

1927 The New Haven Union observed the occasion by publishing a poem titled, "Only A Spray of Shamrock, (An Exile's Soliloquy)." The poet, unfortunately, was identified only by the initials W.M. The poem was a nostalgic recollection of Ireland:
"Only a spray of shamrock, only a tiny spray,
And I think of the years long over, and a home far away.
A grey-haired mother knitting in the rush-lights tender glow,
Singing an old-time ditty, a song of long ago.

"Only a spray of shamrock, and I am a child again
Hearing the larks of music over an Irish glen.
Down in the primrose garden I list to the blackbird sing,
I roam in green young meadows, and share in the joys of spring.

"Only a spray of shamrock and I think with a joyous pride
Of its golden and gladdening message over the water wide;
Over sainted hands that touched it on the summit of Tara's hill,
When the fire of faith was lighted the hope of our nation still.

"I look on a spray of shamrock and a prayer to Patrick send,
That soon in the stranger's world my exile years may end;
That soon my path shall wind where dew-wet shamrock gleam
By an emerald hill in Erin, the land of my cherished dream."

The Benjamin Franklin Council of the American Association for the Maintenance of the Irish Republic sponsored its annual dance at Fraternal Hall on Elm Street. James J. Fitzgerald was chairman of the affair with John J. Horan as general floor manager. Messrs. Gallagher, Roche and Mulowney were in charge of the Irish music and Mr. Brennan provided American music.

Nicholas Moseley of the Albertus Magnus College faculty spoke on "Saints and Leadership" at the annual dinner of the New Haven Council of Catholic Women at the Taft Hotel and a program titled, "Reminiscences of Erin," was sponsored by the Guild of the Tabernacle at St. Brendan's Church hall.

The Knights of St. Patrick enjoyed their 44th banquet at the Taft Hotel. A prominent New Haven Italian, Dr. William Verdi, was the main speaker. "His talk," said the Register, "was in the nature of a testimonial to the fortitude of the Celtic race."

Large delegations of members and friends from Hartford, Meriden, Bridgeport, Shelton, Ansonia, Waterbury and Derby attended the Ancient Order of Hibernians banquet at the Garde Hotel. The enter
tainment included singing by Mary Ford Quinn, soprano; Florence Doyle, contralto; and Mary T. Crean, F. J. Hennessy and Mrs. John Mulryan. Reynolds Orchestra provided music for dancing and Messrs. McCartin and Flynn provided old-time music on the fiddle and flute.

An interesting addition to the annual observance was a dance competition at the Republican Club on Crown Street. Director of Public Works Michael D. McGovern and Tax Collector Edward J. Stanford, the Register said, "will lead the competition. Thomas Faughan will also participate in the festivities. Master of ceremonies will be Superintendent of Streets Walter Kinney, who will have the task of awarding the prizes for the most nimble steppers."

Walt Kiernan and the Kerry Men were the performers at a dance at the Knights of Columbus Club on Orange Street. Members of the Irish-American Social Club enjoyed an evening of Irish music and dance at Music Hall and even the German Harugari Club sponsored a St. Patrick's Day dance for its members at the Redwood Cafe.

1928 Russell Council, Knights of Columbus, sponsored an old-timers' program at its clubhouse on Orange Street. The highlight of the evening was a play written by Peter H. Campion and featuring a cast including: Patrick J. Cronin, Joseph E. Ahern, Joseph Sexton, Frank Allman, Francis P. McCabe, Francis T. Wade, Vincent J. Scully, Terrence Kelly and Arthur E. Culver.

The Ancient Order of Hibernians presented a program of speeches, song and dance. Florence Doyle led club members and guests in a round of community singing and Mayor Francis Guilfoyle of Waterbury, "well known as an eloquent speaker," was the main speaker. Guilfoyle called St. Patrick a great statesman as well as a great apostle and said that after centuries of struggling for liberty Ireland was destined for a great future. The banquet, reported the Journal-Courier, "ended with dancing, with several couples trying the old Irish jigs that they learned in their youth."

The Knights of St. Patrick held what was the final St. Patrick's Day banquet at their longtime home on Orange Street. The club, reported the Register, had been notified it must vacate the premises within the year. As he had been for 25 years, Edward J. Moriarty was toastmaster for the banquet. The committee planning the event included: President Bernard P. Corbett, Miles Connelly and James J. Buchanan.
Jr. At the banquet, a Scot, Bruce Caldwell, was a principal speaker and was made an honorary member of the Knights.

A special highlight of the day was the presentation by Mayor J. B. Tower of a bronze medal to a 17-year-old Irish lad, Frank Donahue of Evergreen Avenue in Hamden. In January of that year, Donahue had saved an 11-year-old boy, William Spaulding of Edgehill Terrace from drowning in Clark's Pond in Mount Carmel. The child fell through the ice while skating and Donahue jumped into the icy water to rescue him.

1929 "There is a peculiar and whimsical gaiety about St. Patrick's Day that does not attach to any other anniversary," mused the Register, waxing philosophical about the occasion, "a spirit merged with all the rich folklore and legend of the gloriously romantic Erin. It goes further than just men and women who claim the gentle saint as their own. For the cloak of sweet romanticism in which St. Patrick has come down through all the centuries is kissed by alien peoples who join with the sons and daughters of Erin in paying tribute to the memory of the man who is best known because he banished the snakes from Ireland."

Father Michael Martin of Meriden told the Ancient Order of Hibernians at their dinner at the Garde Hotel that the 500 years following the arrival of St. Patrick were the "golden age of the Emerald Isle. Not only were the religious men well educated and scholarly, but there were many laymen who had the benefit of a complete education, acquiring their learning while the other races of the continent were passing their time in warfare and bloodshed. Later, the Irish spread the advantage of their learning through Ireland and the continent, founding monasteries and schools."

The Knights of St. Patrick banqueted at the Taft. The Annawon Fellowcraft Club of the Masons held a St. Patrick's Day masquerade dance, and another dance was sponsored by the Irish-American Social Club. Sacred Irish and Italian songs were presented by the choir at St. Stephen's Church. The Catholic Charity League held a bridge and tea in the afternoon for more than 500 guests at the Taft. Committee members included Mrs. Bernard P. Corbett, chairwoman; Mrs. Ralph Walker, Mrs. Raymond Gilson, Mrs. Margaret Lawrence, Betty Carroll, Alice McCusker, Virginia Beegan, Madeline Howard, Helen Moran, Catherine Sisk, Genevieve Beauton, Marion Clark and Dorothy Cuthbertson.
1930s

Banquets, Plays and Concerts
**1930**

"Nearly every parish in the city has some program or event scheduled for this evening, which will reflect the honor of St. Patrick or his adopted island country," said the Journal-Courier. "Some are having plays, others dances, and still others are holding just get-togethers at which Irish ballads and dance steps will be the feature ..."

"From the post office comes the news that between 300 and 400 boxes of shamrocks have arrived in this city from the country with which the shamrock will be always associated."

Three hundred members and guests of the Ancient Order of Hibernians gathered at the Hotel Garde. "Between courses in the appropriately decorated banquet room, which was decorated with red, white and blue of America and the green, white and orange of Ireland, songs of the island across the sea were sung. Fred J. Hennessey led the group singing which included "The River Shannon," "Wild Irish Rose," and many of the ballads loved by the Irish people. Singers Mary Quigley of West Haven and Peter Gilligan of Waterbury, and elocutionist Edna Purtell of Hartford provided professional entertainment and James E. Murphy, a Bridgeport lawyer and a World War I veteran, was the main speaker.

A one-act play titled "Faugh-a-Ballagh" was presented by Russell Council, Knights of Columbus. Three members who had taken roles in the play 20 years before when the council presented it — "Terry" Kelley, "Packy" Cronin and Joseph Saxton — were once again members of the cast.

The main speaker at the Knights of St. Patrick banquet at the Hotel Taft was Father Speer Strahan of Catholic University in Washington, D.C. Edward J. Moriarty again was toastmaster and music was provided by Charles Kullman of the Chicago Opera Company.

At St. Aedan's Church in Westville, attorney Kenneth Wynne, "a student of Irish history for many years and considered by local Irishmen to be without peer in the state," lectured at a party in the parish hall on McKinley Avenue. The party was sponsored by the Holy Name Society under its president, William J. Falsey, and the women of the parish under the leadership of Mrs. Charles J. Stanton. Vincent Doody was general chairman and was assisted by Mrs. George Riley.
1931 St. Patrick's Day was increasingly becoming a day of general celebration even for non-Irish groups. Special Irish music and dances were featured at the annual dance of the New Haven Druggists Association at the Seven Gables Inn in Milford. Members of the 6th Ward Democratic Club held their first annual dance at the Elks Club in Crown Street. A midnight supper followed the dancing. The Ladies Auxiliary of Post 320, Veterans of Foreign Wars, held a St. Patrick's Day party at the post club rooms, 47 Orange St., and the engineering department of the Southern New England Telephone Co. sponsored a dinner and dance at the Rainbow Inn.

The Irish-American Social Club held its third annual ball at Pulaski Hall, 807 State St. Music was furnished by Margaret Locke and a Mr.
Kramer of New Haven. A Shamrock Night was sponsored by the Holy Name Society of St. Aedan’s Church. Paul R. North was general chairman and was assisted by James Stanton and Thomas H. Cox.

More than 200 attended the annual banquet of the Ancient Order of Hibernians at the Hotel Garde where former Mayor David E. Fitzgerald was toastmaster and Father William McLaughlin of New Haven was main speaker. At their banquet at the Hotel Taft, the Knights of St. Patrick made arrangements to have piped in a special radio concert by John MacCormack, who was, said the Journal-Courier, “an old friend of the Knights of St. Patrick and who was entertained by the local club on the occasion of his first concert tour ... The famous tenor, as a compliment to his New Haven friends, will sing ‘Kathleen Mavourneen.’”

1932 Tragedy struck when perennial toastmaster Edward J. Moriarty collapsed at the Knights of St. Patrick banquet at the New Haven Lawn Club. “Mr. Moriarty,” said the Journal-Courier, “had just opened the annual banquet for the 27th time and had introduced Rev. (John J.) McBrearty who had been speaking for several minutes, when Mr. Moriarty suddenly collapsed. The first efforts to revive him proved fruitless and he was carried to another chamber upon the directions of Dr. John F. Sullivan, his personal physician who was present, and Dr. William F. Verdi and Dr. John F. Luby. The doctors administered first aid treatment and an ambulance was summoned from St. Raphael’s Hospital. It was stated that Mr. Moriarty had suffered a collapse and was in no immediate danger by President Sisk who assumed the duties as toastmaster and did a splendid piece of work. Mr. Moriarty was taken from the Lawn Club at 10:23.” Although the initial prognosis for Moriarty seemed good, his condition deteriorated and he died at St. Raphael’s, Dr. Sullivan attributing his death to a heart attack.

Born at Woolrich Arsenal, England, about 1860, Moriarty came to New Haven as a boy. The Journal-Courier described him as “one of the most noted characters in the city of New Haven. He has been a chronicler of Yale and New Haven for the last half century. As an institution in the Knights of St. Patrick he is without counterpart. His connections with Broadway and his great loyalty for that section of the city has long since won him the titles of ‘Mayor of Broadway’ and ‘Sage of Broadway. His keen wit and original philosophy and outlook on life
have made him widely sought after for advice and counsel. Mr. Moriarty knows Yale athletic heroes of the past 50 years and kept a long diary of Yale records and traditions. For this reason, his company is much sought by students who listen by the hour to his tales of campus life in days gone by. He first began his contacts with Yale men when he was employed in the A.C. Traeger Restaurant in Chapel Street. Later, he became connected with the Tuttle General Grocery Store in Broadway and when the proprietor died, Mr. Moriarty took over in the business …”

Just before Moriarty’s death, a friend, George S. Chappell, wrote a poem about him for the March 1932 issue of the Yale Literary Magazine. The poem read:

``It's good, friend Ed, to sit with you
And drink a glass of beer or two,
Or three — as many as I please —
And munch your crackers and your cheese,
Sharing the old Yalensian lore,
Of which you have so rich a store.
While Tom, our long-limbed Ganymede,
Stands by to serve us at our need.
We talk of Hadley and his days
And all his old, eccentric ways
Beneath which we were soon to find
A kindly heart and brilliant mind;
A man who chose the longest word
Yet never made it seem absurd
Nor pedagogic; nay, not he,
For learning only set him free
To find the hidden springs below
That ever frightened freshmen know.
So too, I've heard you tell of Dwight —
Old Timothy — and Baldy Wright
Beneath whose cold and awful eye
I've often wished that I might die
Or, better he, lest he see through
The guilt that he always knew,
Nor ever dreamed I'd realize
That in those gleaming, glacial eyes
Shone a fierce friendship for my youth
That led blundering step toward truth.
Of Perrin, too, I've heard you speak,
And Seymour — men to whom old Greek
Was no mere matter of translation.
The dusty relic of a nation
Vanished and gone; they knew full well
That what great Homer had to tell
Was not the folklore of the past
But primal virtues that must last
If we would; honor for the dead.
A laurel for the victor's head,
A crown for those who scale the wall
A garnished tomb for those who fall
You knew them not as I, those men
Whose names we now revoke again
Yet know well what they lived to teach —
Courage, uprightness and fair speech
So, when the quiet of your room
Enfolds us in its genial gloom
And through a pleasant, amber haze
We turn our thoughts to simpler days,
And when at length I say good night
And steer my somewhat errant flight
Across the dark, I thank my stars
And who so ever guide late cars
That I and all the men I know
And met again, good Ed, in you."
City florists reported the sale of 5,000 to 10,000 potted shamrocks. "Most of the shamrocks," the Register pointed out, "are grown by the nurserymen of the district from seeds imported from Ireland, but postal authorities report that shamrocks actually grown in the old country and shipped here this week total at least 300. Loyalty to the Emerald Isle is a tradition that persists among thousands of families here who have been in America for two or three generations. Green neckties, hose and handkerchiefs are much in evidence about the streets with occasional notes of flaming orange, just to show that political beliefs are still worthy arguing about."

The Knights of St. Patrick honored the late Edward J. Moriarty at their 57th annual banquet at 100 Elm St. The Ancient Order of Hibernians dined at the Hotel Garde with former Mayor David E. Fitzgerald as toastmaster and guests including Mayor John W. Murphy and former Mayor Thomas A. Tully.

Other activities included a play titled "The Singing Vagabond" presented by the choir of St. Ann's Church, a dance sponsored by the Gaelic and Shamrock Lovers' clubs at Bowes Hall, the sixth annual ball of the Irish-American Social Club and a dance in the Roger Sherman ballroom. An Irish supper was served at the Oldtimers Night sponsored by Russell Council, Knights of Columbus at its headquarters on Orange Street. The entertainment included a play, "Boogan Buncoed." The Anchor Dramatic Club sponsored a social and dance at Convention Hall on Orange Street.

An Irish operetta directed by Professor Enrico Batelli was the featured entertainment of the year. The operetta was sponsored by the Holy Name Society of St. Aedan's Church. In addition to the operetta, the program included: solo by soprano Marie Mott Mahan accompanied by Katherine Ferguson; Irish tales told by Mrs. Paul M. Griffin; solo by baritone Jerry Dale; Irish songs and dances by The Branigans; violinist Frank Richards accompanied by Anne V. Molloy; and solo by tenor Maj. Joseph P. Houley accompanied by Edward Rutz.

The Dramatic Club of St. Barnabas Church in North Haven presented a program titled, "Erin's Inn Revue," at the North Haven Firehouse. The revue included singing, dancing and instrumental specialties. The New Haven Druggists Association sponsored its annual
banquet at Seven Gables Inn in Milford with Thomas E. Nugent as chairman.

The Anchor Club and 17th Ward Democratic Club sponsored a ball at Convention Hall on Crown Street. Alderman James J. Rinella was chairman. An afternoon tea in honor of the day was sponsored by the Business Girls' League of the YWCA with Annie Deake as chairwoman. The New Haven Automotive Servicemen's Association held its annual St. Patrick's Day celebration at the American Legion Hall in Westville. Earle Thomas, Edward Sabian and Joseph Panza were on the committee and entertainment was provided by Jack McBride and Concetti Di Cerbo.

At their annual banquet, the Knights of St. Patrick heard a talk by Joseph V. Connolly, head of King Feature Service and president of International News. Connolly, brother of Register editor Roger Connolly, told the Knights, "You received from your fathers a precious legacy that you can never lose. You are Irish gentlemen because whether you like it or not, whether you forget it or not, in the chalice of your heart burns everlastingly the grace of God that was lighted by those simple folks generations ago. It is a delicate, fragile gift, but it is imperishable. It can be soiled, it can become tarnished, but it cannot be broken or lost or destroyed ..."

The committee included chairman John Brennan, John M. Golden, John Donovan, James Sisk, James English and James Shanley.

1935 A play, "Irish Dreams," was presented at St. Brendan's Hall by parish members. The cast included: Catherine Butler, Beth Breen, Rita Affinetto, Elnor Affinetto, Catherine Dalton, Gertrude Donahue, Catherine Donahue, Marie Ford, Grace Gorman, Elizabeth McGrail, Alyce McKiernan, Margaret McLaughlin, Agnes Sullivan, Jane Shea, Frances Scannell, Marion Walker, Helen Walker, Esther Walker, George Jacobs, Richard Butler, Ted Madden, Joseph Madden, Joseph Moakley, John Logan, Joseph McNamara, Joseph McManus, Charles White, Steven Maher, Neil Shea and Eugene Walsh. Other entertainment on the program included: Irish music by the trio of pianist Grace Leontine Kennedy, violinist Mary O'Brien and cellist Florence O'Brien; and vocalists Frances Gainty, Henry Bissonette and Jackie Brannigan.

Patrick Keane of Montreal, vice president of the Ancient Order of Hibernians in Canada, and John Fenton of Lawrence, Mass., vice
president of the order in the United States, were guest speakers at the annual banquet of the New Haven AOH at the Hotel Garde. Former Mayor David Fitzgerald was toastmaster and entertainment was provided by Mary Fitzsimmons Farrell of New Haven and Edward F. Malumphy of Ansonia.

At the Knights of St. Patrick banquet at 106 Elm St., U.S. Rep. James Shanley noted that Connecticut was in the process of celebrating its 300th anniversary and urged that the Irish "see that that part of the history of Connecticut which has to do with Irishmen in the early history of Connecticut would not be overlooked."

In a special message appearing in the Sunday Register, Mayor John W. Murphy saw in the life and work of St. Patrick lessons that might be of use to the people of his city who were suffering through the hardships of the Great Depression.

"Irishmen, sons and daughters of Irishmen and friends of Erin in all parts of the globe pay homage today to the memory of St. Patrick, the Apostle of Ireland," the mayor began. "Somehow a spirit of friendliness, good humor, of good will, prevails quite generally on St. Patrick's Day, more particularly in Irish circles, of course, on this feast day; and perhaps this should be expected for as has been well said, there never was a saint more loved and honored than St. Patrick nor one more identified with his race. On this day, the Irish delight to honor this saint in story, in song and in veneration.

"St. Patrick was and is loved by the Irish because he loved Ireland and its people. Speaking of them he is quoted as having said, 'I loved them with a mother's love.' Irishmen love Patrick most of all for the faith which he brought to the people of Ireland and which has continued to burn brightly during the centuries which have followed. Despite persecution, the Irish have kept the faith and it has sustained them in sorrow, in tribulation and in adversity of every kind.
"Despite the fact that St. Patrick taught religion to his people in and out of season for many years, it must have been that he demonstrated and taught that one could be true to one's religious convictions and at the same time be joyful and happy while so doing. Surely Ireland has been the land of mirth, of song and of poetry. St. Patrick taught that faithfulness to God and his laws would yield eternal happiness, but it is apparent that he believed that we should, and properly could, keep his word and be quite happy while so doing.

"Love of God dominated the life and actions of St. Patrick. It followed naturally, of course, that he therefore sincerely loved his fellow men and this being so, he loved to labor in their behalf, and although he was their chief, their leader, he was a humble, modest man never given to self-praise, or seeking praise or personal glory or honor.

"Perhaps in these days when many have less material wealth than they formerly possessed and when so many are reduced to want and think that there can be no happiness without much money, all may with profit give thought to the life of Patrick, who, by merely serving God and his fellow men as best he knew how, inspired happiness, gave courage and spread the word of God and by so doing made for himself a name that is known, loved and venerated throughout the world. He had no wealth, he desired none.

"Moreover, Ireland has ever been a poor nation; nevertheless much happiness has blessed the land. Perhaps this is so because happiness, spiritual and of spirit and not gold, has been the objective of the Irish under the leadership and influence of Patrick. Surely the Irish race has shown that real and lasting happiness can be found in obedience to God and by love and service to one's fellow men."

1936 The Oblate Fathers conducted a special novena at St. Patrick's Church during the nine days before St. Patrick's Day. The novena concluded with impressive ceremonies on the evening of the holiday itself.

The rites began at 7:30 p.m. with a concert of Irish music by members of the church choir including: "Hail Glorious Apostle," sung by Mrs. George Streit, chorus by the congregation; "Come Back to Erin," sung by soprano Ellen McQuade; "Mother of Mine" sung by bass soloist Robert Griffith; "Hymn to St. Patrick," words by Father Joseph D. Casey, sung by the children's choir; "Believe Me If All
Those Endearing Young Charms," sung by Mrs. Streit; "Killarney," sung by contralto Mrs. Joseph Tobin; "Mother Macree" sung by Father Casey; "Melody of Irish Airs," an organ recital by Mrs. F. Rexford; "Hail Glorious Apostle," by Mrs. Streit and the congregation.

After the musical program, Father Patrick P. Conlon, O.M.I., preached on "St. Patrick's Undying Glory." The papal blessing was conferred by Father John J. Murphy and the novena closed with benediction and veneration of the relic of St. Patrick.

The Ancient Order of Hibernians held a banquet at the Hotel Garde commemorating the 100th anniversary of the founding of the order in America. More than 300 members and guests attended and listened to speeches by Mayor John W. Murphy, former Mayors David E. Fitzgerald and Thomas A. Tully and Judge Patrick B. O'Sullivan. Instead of their usual banquet, the Knights of St. Patrick marked the day "with an informal party at their clubhouse, Elm Street, with about 35 members of the order present."

Postal officials reported that more than 6,000 packages and envelopes containing shamrocks from Ireland arrived in New Haven.

The Register commented on the use of greeting cards to celebrate St. Patrick's Day. "As a new form in the day's celebration," it said, "greeting cards, thousand of them, went through the post office. Among the senders was Sen. Matthew A. Daly whose cards bore a replica of the shamrock and appended a bit of sentimental verse appropriate to the day." The sending of shamrocks from Ireland also continued to be a popular practice. More than 1,000 packages were distributed by the post office in New Haven. And the newspaper said that more shamrocks adorned the lapels of coats than ever before in the city.

Many city churches scheduled special Masses and at St. Patrick's the church was filled for the Solemn High Mass at 10 a.m. Father John D. Casey celebrated the Mass with Father Aloysius Geist as deacon and Father William T. Hanley as subdeacon. "The venerable and beloved pastor, the Rev. Dr. John Russell, who will be 92 years old next June, sat within the sanctuary," reported the Register. The saint's day marked the completion of a novena conducted by Father Hanley.

A St. Patrick's Day bridge and tea was held at the Sisters of Mercy Convent, 311 Green St., by the Queen's Daughters' Association. Mary Curran was general chairwoman.
The Knights of St. Patrick gathered in the evening in the Union League Club with James A. Shanley as toastmaster and Connecticut Insurance Commissioner John C. Blackall, Judge Patrick B. O'Sullivan, Father Jeremiah J. Broderick and Mayor John W. Murphy as speakers.

Former Mayor David E. Fitzgerald presided at the Ancient Order of Hibernians' banquet at the Garde where more than 300 people heard a talk by Father John Walsh of Our Lady of Victory Church in West Haven. Mary Fitzsimmons and Charles Smedick sang Irish songs.

1938 The Knights of St. Patrick celebrated their 60th anniversary with a banquet at the Hotel Taft. The speakers included Thurman Arnold, Yale Law School professor who had just been appointed first assistant attorney general of the United States, and U.S. Rep. Edward J. Hart of New Jersey.

Another distinguished visitor was Father Stephen Ward of Johnstown, Pa. A native of New Haven, he was the son of one of the city's notable Irishmen, James P. Ward, who for years was a detective sergeant on the police force. U.S. Rep. James A. Shanley was toastmaster and music was provided by an 11-piece orchestra directed by Roy Ward.

"Old Irish melodies" were on the program, commented the Register, "excepting 'Tipperary,' the favorite song of the English-speaking Allies in the World War, banned on the ground that the British used the song for catching Irish recruits." After the banquet, the Knights hosted an open house at their club rooms at 106 Elm St.

More than 250 members of the Ancient Order of Hibernians and the Women's Auxiliary dined at the Hotel Garde and heard a speech by Brian McMahon of Norwalk, assistant U.S. attorney general.

The Holy Name Society of St. Francis Church sponsored a St. Patrick's Day program. Entertainment was provided by Kathleen Hayes, Dennis Devine, Stephen Courtney, Joe Fitzpatrick, Jack Hickey, Tom Callahan and Michael Sullivan.
In the late 1930s, the Knights of St. Patrick had their own choral group.

1939 A man who was destined to become one of the most famous and prolific Catholic preachers and writers in the nation, Fulton J. Sheen, was guest speaker at the annual Knights of St. Patrick banquet at the Hotel Taft. Sheen, then a monsignor in the New York Archdiocese, "held his audience enthralled," said the Journal-Courier, "as he regaled them with a humorous, but philosophical and whimsical psychoanalysis of the Irish race. For the greater part of his address, he waxed eloquent and facetious on the fight and humor of the Irish, while an appreciative audience sat convulsed in laughter or chuckling at his barbs and witticism. Then as he reached the third point of his thesis, he cast aside the mantle of levity to discourse on the Irish in politics. 'The foundation of politics,' he said, 'is the recognition of the value of man, the recognition of the value of human unity' ... Then he went on to declare that the source of all liberty, the source of all human right is not the state, but God...'

Knights President James J. Sisk welcomed the guests and "the perennial toastmaster," U.S. Rep. James A. Shanley, introduced
Sheen and the other speakers, Mayor John W. Murphy, James L. McGovern of the Bridgeport Times Star and John Day Jackson of the New Haven Register. One of the features of the annual banquet was the singing of the Knights' own choral club, whose members included: Frederick L. Marks, William E. Marks, Roy J. Ward, Charles E. Fowler, Thomas J. Rourke, Hugh A. Keenan, D. Francis Sullivan, Paul R. North, James J. Halpin, Raymond J. Sheehan, John J. Kelly, Maj. Joseph P. Houley and William H. Burland.

The Catholic Charity League held its annual St. Patrick's Day dessert-bridge at St. Aedan's parish hall. Mrs. Frederick Beschel was general chairwoman and was assisted by Mrs. Franklin Swift, Mrs. M.K. Grady, Mrs. H.D. Swanson, Mrs. Timothy Clifford, Miss Marion Johnson, Miss Mary Scully, Mrs. George S. Browne, Mrs. David Lyons, Miss Peggy McKay, Miss Evelyn Moore, Miss Anne Hancock, Miss Mary Murphy, Mrs. John R. Marinan, Miss Loret Holst, Miss Madeline Grenn, Miss Anna Rose, Miss Mary Conway, Miss Alice Minnix, Mrs. William Kavanaugh, Miss Esther Cannon, Miss Loretta Kearney, Miss Betty Clancy, Miss Josephine Williams, Miss Margaret Barry, Mrs. John McKeon and Mrs. William Lavery.
1940s

War and Peace
St. Patrick's Day fell on Palm Sunday and the beginning of Holy Week gave an unusual solemnity to the celebration in honor of Ireland's patron saint.

A distinguished participant in the observance was Robert Brennan, Irish Free State minister to the United States, who attended both the Knights of St. Patrick banquet on the eve of the saint's day and the banquet of the Ancient Order of Hibernians at the Hotel Garden on St. Patrick's Day itself. Brennan told the Knights that Ireland had only "a little farther to go to win full freedom and unity ... and at home I know they are confident the support so generously given by the friends of Ireland in America will not be denied us if we want it again."

"The Irish who came here," the diplomat continued, "brought with them such qualities as fidelity to their religion, a wide tolerance gained through centuries of oppression in their native land, a love of freedom and a hatred of tyranny and a gay-hearted fortitude in facing adversity and hard times. They gained overnight a loyalty to the land of their adoption. As de Tocqueville, the famous French writer, said a century ago, the Irishman arriving in America became an American from the day he landed.

"We are sometimes accused of being oversensitive in the matter of strictures in our national failings, but certainly I must say that some of the younger writers have not spared us in this respect. I imagine that this characteristic of oversensitiveness is common to all the smaller nations which have felt the hand of oppression and have been the victims of calumnies which are centuries old. But that does not prevent us occasionally from criticizing ourselves however much we may resent that criticism in others.

"It has been dinned into our ears by people who considered themselves our betters that the Irish were lazy and shiftless. This in spite of the fact that in America, Australia, Canada and even in the South American countries, Irishmen starting from scratch with all other races have been singularly successful.

"It was, therefore, with some anxiety that people watched the progress of events in Ireland when at last the Irish won for themselves some measure of freedom. Any observer of the Irish scene about the beginning of the century would never have dreamed that Ireland was about to witness the greatest struggle for freedom that had been made in centuries. The national movement for independence seemed at its lowest ebb. The great leader, Parnell, had died; the Irish Parliamentary
Party had split up into factions. Ireland’s ancient history and culture seemed to have been forgotten and they were replaced by a foreign civilization and a foreign school of thought.

“The beginning of the revival was the founding of the Gaelic League by Douglas Hyde, the present revered president of Ireland. In his movement, little groups of people assembled here and there throughout the country after their day’s work to learn the Irish language and, though the language itself made little progress, the people who came together in these classes learned something of the spirit of Ireland because in later years these Gaelic Leaguers formed the backbone of the great volunteer movement which in 1916 brought about the rising.

“They were aided by the fact that the old Fenian organization, the Irish Republican Brotherhood, had been revived and that this organization became the driving force in the movement for independence. The leaders of the rising in 1916 were executed, but their sacrifice was not in vain because two years later the nation gave its adherence to their principles and set up an Irish Republican movement which defied the might of Britain. During three years of terror, the Irish people stood fast and finally the British minister openly confessed that the king’s writ no longer ran in Ireland and asked for a truce. I need
hardly tell my hearers that the material and moral aid given to us by our friends in America had much to do with bringing about that result. It was the first real victory the Irish nation had won for over a century.

"We can now look back on the 17 years of self-government and observe how the Irish people have used their newfound powers. They took over a country which had been practically turned into a grazing ranch, a country in which life had been made so difficult that the population had dwindled from 8 1/2 millions to 4 1/4 millions inside half a century. They determined that as a first step toward the rehabilitation of the country, the people should from their own resources, feed and clothe and house themselves. Only a few years ago, Ireland, an agricultural country, imported annually no less than $50 million worth of food and foodstuffs. Today the great bulk of these foodstuffs are being produced on Irish soil.

"The large ranches have been taken over, their owners being compensated by 20- to 24-year purchase paid in land bonds which are still above par and the government divided these ranches into small holdings of 20 to 30 acres. The newcomers in these holdings were provided with a house, outbuildings and some stock and they became owners from the time they entered on the land, but were required to pay back the purchase price in annuities extending over 60 to 80 years. By this plan some 30,000 additional people have been settled on the land. Tillage farming has been encouraged and one result of this is that the area under Irish grown wheat has been increased from 20,000 acres to nearly 300,000 acres. By this wise measure, Ireland now is able to supply at least one-half of its yearly requirements in flour. The Irish mills which had fallen into disuse are now manufacturing this flour. Sugar-beet factories, of which there are four, provide about 60 percent of Ireland's sugar requirements.

"In addition, hundreds of industries have been established for the manufacture of textiles, boots, clothing, furniture, building materials, etc. and these factories instead of being concentrated in cities are, by order of the government, scattered here and there throughout the country. There have been erected no fewer than 100,000 dwelling houses and the electricity provided by harnessing the Shannon is now supplied to 130,000 consumers. When the Shannon project was first mooted, some of the experts considered there would never be a demand to meet the supply, but so great has been the demand that the Shannon
scheme has been found insufficient and a project harnessing the River Liffey in Dublin to supplement the supply is now well under way.

"In the cultural field, there has been very great progress and there are indications there will be more. The people have never forgotten that for five centuries after the downfall of the Roman Empire, Europe looked to Ireland, and not in vain, for the restoration of learning and that Irish monks during these centuries traveled throughout Europe facing incredible hardships to bring back the light of civilization and Christianity. They have not forgotten either that when there was a price on the head of the priest and schoolmaster the people risked life and liberty to obtain the education they so highly prized. It is not to be wondered at, therefore, that now there is so much attention given to all branches of learning in Ireland and Mr. de Valera has recently stated that one of his objectives is to make Ireland again a center of learning for Europe ... The Irish language, banned for nearly two centuries, is now being taught in all the schools and it is hoped that the next generation will be bilingual, speaking Irish in the home and using English for external purposes."

1941 Amid intermittent snowfall and with the temperature dropping to 12 degrees, St. Patrick's Day was celebrated in New Haven with most eyes turned across the Atlantic Ocean. The war in Europe and the possibility that the United States might be drawn into it cast a long shadow over the festivities.

At the annual banquet of the Ancient Order of Hibernians at the Hotel Garde, Gov. Robert A. Hurley stated, "This country faces a crisis which she has never faced before," and warned that the people must rededicate themselves to the principles for which their forefathers fought to establish liberty. Another speaker, U.S. Rep. James A. Shanley predicted, "Within the next fortnight the people of America will be called upon to make a great sacrifice." Shanley, said the Register, "did not amplify his statement, but said it had to do with the government's huge British aid program." Still another speaker, Mayor John W. Murphy, said Irishmen would not be found wanting if called upon to fight, but praised President Eamon de Valera for keeping Ireland out of the war.

About 300 attended the Knights of St. Patrick banquet at the Hotel Taft. The Knights' own choral group under the direction of Roy Ward
presented "medleys of old Irish songs." The guest speaker was Clare G. Fenerty, judge of the Common Pleas Court in Philadelphia and a former congressman. After the banquet, the Knights and their guests "adjourned to the clubhouse at 304 Elm St. for the annual reception, which is traditionally an important feature of the St. Patrick's Day celebration."

1942 Only four months after the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, Father Raymond Shea, assistant pastor of Sacred Heart Church, told 400 members and guests at the Knights of St. Patrick banquet: "As Irishmen helped to build America, so the sons of Irishmen will help to defend it... America stands today, as President Roosevelt has said, at the crossroads of her destiny. And she will continue to stand and give us freedom, if each and everyone of us accepts the call to arms ... America is ours. Its destiny lies in our hands and in ours alone. Our government rests not only upon our armed forces but upon the virtue and the character of her citizens. And we who have been heirs to Irish ancestors, are heirs to Irish virtue and the shillelagh of courage is ours to wield."

For his part, Mayor John W. Murphy declared, "Our hearts are with our armed forces and if they think of St. Patrick's Day, they know we are with them in spirit."

The Ancient Order of Hibernians held an informal dinner in FitzGerald's Restaurant, 1297 Chapel St., with Father Edward Shea of St. Bernadette's Church as the principal speaker. St. Donato's Church sponsored a program of Irish dances and songs, and the Holy Name Society of St. Mary's Church sponsored a program of Irish entertainment. Roderigo Council, Knights of Columbus, held a barbecue and Father Francis O'Neill of St. Patrick's Church was the speaker at a parish party at St. Joseph's Church.

1943 Shamrocks were rare in New Haven. Postmaster Patrick J. Goode attributed their scarcity "to the war conditions and probable restrictions on mailing due to limited transport facilities in wartime."

For the first time in years, the Knights of St. Patrick omitted their usually festive banquet and merely held an open house at their club rooms at 304 Elm St. Lt. Gov. William L. Hadden was guest at a
reception at 5 p.m. Hadden and other dignitaries smoked traditional clay pipes while pictures were taken. At 8 p.m., there was a program of instrumental and vocal music, including an appearance by New York Journal-American columnist Frank Coniff, who wrote under the name Gene Knight.

The usually festive celebration at St. Patrick's Church was also toned down because of the war, the only observance being a Low Mass celebrated by Father Francis O'Neill and the singing of Irish airs. At St. Mary's Church, however, the children of the parish and many adults attended a Solemn High Mass celebrated by Father William D. Martin who preached on the achievements of St. Patrick and of Irish people throughout the world.

1944 The celebration was again muted with the Knights of St. Patrick "holding an open house again tonight, instead of the traditional dinner held annually for 64 years to mark St. Patrick's Day. Forgotten for the moment was the war," commented the Journal-Courier, "and in its place there was laughter, Irish banter, and songs about the 'shamrocks growing on Broadway and the buildings all painted green.'"


1945 The weather was ideal with the temperature soaring into the 60s, but the celebration was muted. "St. Patrick's Day Is Quiet Day Here, For The Irish Are Fighting, Too," read the headline in the Register on March 17. It was an accurate summary of the annual observance.

For the third consecutive year, the Knights of St. Patrick celebrated the occasion only with a reception. President James M. Roche led the program, which began at 4 p.m. with a reception for past
presidents followed by a buffet supper at 6 p.m. and Irish music. Thomas J. Rourke was chairman of the event.

Father McKeon Branch, Ancient Order of Hibernians, held a dinner at the home of a member. "Plans for a large celebration," commented the Register, "were abandoned by the AOH because some of the older members have reached an age which prevented them attending and because many of the younger members are serving in all parts of the world in the armed forces."

A St. Patrick's Day program at St. Aedan's Church was directed by Henry A. Bissonnette and included: a dance specialty by Theresa Signore, solos by Mary Shanahan, Eddie Byrne, Eleanor McGrath, Dennis Ahearn, Rosalyn Deloughery, Wallace Bonner, Ann Molloy, Genevieve Terpening, Barbara Byrne, James DeBowes and Jack McDougall. James and Jerry Donovan danced an Irish jig and Ann Collins played several selections on the harp.

At St. Patrick's Church, organist John Lynch presented a musical program of Irish songs and Father William D. Marrin, prior of St. Mary's Church, celebrated a special Mass in honor of St. Patrick.

The 5th Battalion, Connecticut State Guard, sponsored a dinner-dance at the armory on Goffe Street. Maj. Robert A. Connolly, acting commandant, was master of ceremonies and entertainment was provided by Ann Hope Johnson, accordionist, and Mrs. Daniel Signore, pianist.

In its editorial column, the Register gave thanks for the recently won battle of Iwo Jima and had a kind word for St. Patrick, too:

"Today, Irishmen throughout the world are pausing in their war-speeded lives to mark the legendary March 17 date of the death of the Emerald Isle's patron saint, Patrick. While the parades, the celebrations and the wearing of the traditional shamrock no longer measure up to the days of yore, there is still an observance of this day which well attests the great contributions which this kindly saint made to the cause of the Irish, the world and Christianity."
One of the best-known war heroes, Gen. Anthony McAuliffe, was the speaker at the first postwar banquet of the Knights of St. Patrick at the Hotel Taft. McAuliffe recounted how as commander of the 101st Airborne Division during the Battle of the Bulge in December 1944, he had responded with the famous retort, "Nuts," to the German commander demanding that he surrender the American troops. "It's a favorite expression of mine when I am disgusted," he told the Knights. The general also paid tribute to the American fighting men saying the war in all theaters was actually won by the rank and file soldiers and sailors. "In the main," he said, "these heroes were privates, corporals, sergeants and junior officers." McAuliffe also warned of the dangers of demobilization in the wake of the victory. "After every war," he said, "there is a revulsion of natural feeling toward things military. The shouting in celebration of victory is soon stifled and the average American citizen forgets he has duties and responsibilities with respect to national defense."

At St. John the Baptist Church, the Rosary Society sponsored a card party and social. The committee included: Father Joseph Heffernan, honorary chairman; Mrs. Thomas W. Keating, chairwoman; Mrs. A. Duby and Mrs. John Lawler, tickets; Mrs. H. Terrell and Mrs. John Knudsen, table prize; Mrs. D. McCarthy, Mrs. John Carmichael and Mrs. Mack, door prizes; Mrs. H. Andsager, Mrs. C. Scharf, Mrs. E. Pole, Mrs. T. Fennelly, Mrs. F. Moran, Mrs. R. Lavigne, Mrs. R. Forest, Mrs. W. Shields and Mrs. Helen White, refreshments.

Another Irish-American war hero, Gen. James M. Gavin, was guest speaker at the Knights of St. Patrick banquet at the Hotel Taft. Commander of the 82nd Airborne Division, Gavin earned 24 combat decorations and theater ribbons and was the youngest American combat general in World War II. He took part in the invasions of Sicily, Italy and France and made combat paratroop jumps in those three countries and in Holland. Introduced by U.S. Rep. James A. Shanley, toastmaster for the evening, Gavin paid tribute to some of Connecticut's "Fighting Irish" who were among the troops he led. Among those he mentioned were Medal of Honor winner Michael Daley and Col. Arthur Maloney, both of Hartford. He also singled out an Ansonia man, Col. Reuben H. Tucker, as "the best regimental commander I saw in the war."
Father William F. O'Connor, assistant pastor at St. Brendan's Church and himself a former Army chaplain with an airborne unit in the Philippines, reminded Gavin that a paratrooper "is the only man in the world who gets ahead in the world by falling down on the job." O'Connor also described Ireland as "the last stronghold of the world's culture."

The Rosary Society of St. Peter's Church sponsored a St. Patrick's Day social in the church hall on Kimberly Avenue. Mrs. William Quinn, hostess, was assisted by Mrs. William Groves, Joseph Quinn, John Bierne, Charles Swain and James Cahill. Mrs. Mary O'Dell, Vincent Reilly and Jane Wilson were in charge of entertainment. Joseph Kelley was master of ceremonies.

Francis C. Coulter, advertising manager of the Associated Seed Growers Inc. in New Haven and an Irishman himself, allowed the Register to reprint a portion of a talk he had given before the New York Horticultural Society on the shamrock. "On March 17," he began, "Irish and near-Irish the world over will sport a sprig of green in memory of St. Patrick and the glory of Erin. They will call it shamrock and many will be the arguments on what plant has the right to bear this honored name.

"Three plants lead the running for the title. The first is wood-sorrel and it has the oldest claim, as it was meant when the word shamrock got its earliest mention in literature. This was in 1571 and by an Englishman, Edmund Campion, who was hiding out in Ireland by reason of religion and wrote a little history of the country to while away the time. It names it as one of the 'hearbes they feed upon' and what is said by other Elizabethan writers leaves no doubt that their shamrock was a trefoil of the woods, edible and a sharp taste.

"It cannot have been white clover, the second contender, because this is a plant of the open field and was not introduced into Ireland until a century later. Then, as it became more and more common, it gradually took over the title, held it a long time and, provided the plants are young, still passes very acceptably for shamrock in America, especially as it is easy to find in fields and along roadsides.

"But not in Ireland, where shamrock now means only one thing — the little yellow-flowering Trifolium minus, a dainty, miniature clover, extensively exported to this and many other countries in the familiar green and white mailing boxes for St. Patrick's Day. It is not cultivated in America, but occasionally can be found wild in temperate
parts of the Eastern states where the climate is not too cold for it in
winter or too hot in summer.

"Actually the tradition of the shamrock as a symbol of Ireland is
very modern, so much so that in 1928 for this very reason the Finance
Committee of the young government in Dublin refused to sanction its
use in designs for the new Irish coinage. Nor is there any antiquity
attached to the legends that St. Patrick used the shamrock to illustrate
the doctrine of the Trinity and to drive the snakes and toads out of
Ireland by pointing it at them after he landed at Wicklow in the year
432, not to convert a heathen country but to oversee the already
established churches and to extend their work. Shamrocks are not
mentioned in any early life of St. Patrick ... In fact, they are only
specious folklore of the past century or two with no more warranty than
the old stage Irishman. Even green as the national color is modern, for
the ancient official color of Ireland was royal blue."

1948 Much of the old verve had returned to the St. Patrick's
Day celebration. The Register featured a picture of a
St. Patrick's Day party at the Marlin Firearms Co. with the caption:
"When members of Department 51 of the Marlin Firearms Co. decided
to observe St. Patrick's Day today, they gave Mrs. Joseph Dempsey,
only woman in the department, custody of the Blarney Stone, decorated
their working area with green ribbons, broke out Irish hats and clay
pipes and then wound up with the serving of refreshments."

"The New Haven Irish were up and out betimes today," the
Register commented, "for this was the best day of the year — the day
when stardust is sprinkled through prosaic doings, and doings not so
prosaic — just to commemorate the life of an energetic young man
named Patrick, who was to become a saint, thus to serve as the patron
of a green-clad land down the ages. Wurra, wurra, Irish eyes will be
smiling and Irish hearts will be glad throughout this day and well into
tonight if plans of several organizations for special festivities don't
backfire ... Many church organizations and some veterans' posts have
scheduled special affairs for tonight, while the city's biggest observance
probably will be the annual dinner of the Knights of St. Patrick at the
Hotel Taft. Main speaker for that event will be Dean Clarence Manion
of the Law School of Notre Dame University."
Still in all, there were those who continued to pine for the traditional St. Patrick’s Day parade. “Some New Haveners,” said the Register, “descendants of sons of the auld sod, of course, were in New York to see the St. Patrick’s Day parade step along Fifth Avenue under the gaze of President Truman. Others satisfied themselves with wearing green carnations, green ties and other accouterments of an emerald shade . . .”

And in an editorial, the Register mused on the changes in the celebration and in “the Irish question” over the years: “The Feast of St. Patrick is celebrated universally. Not only the church, but the secular world as well salutes the Irish on the 17th of March. Yes, even in darkest Russia today there is likely to be some stranded soul who will dwell on the contrast between Stalin and the good saint.

“The years have surely brought changes in the Irish question. Now it is no problem at all but an example. Those who have turned 50 can well remember when Erin’s freedom was an explosive issue. It dominated the lives of many of our earlier residents. Money and political effort were concentrated on the fight for home rule. Today that is all history. We have seen Eire become a nation able to keep herself out of a war that engulfed the world. There were those who criticized her for her policy, but few will challenge the wisdom of her decision now. The Irish, once regarded as belligerent and hotheaded, kept their heads.

“In the last month, we have watched these people change their government in constitutional order, without disturbance and with good feeling between the rival parties. The ousted prime minister is visiting this country and instead of denouncing his defeat, he calmly declares that politics is a domestic problem and can well await his return. Would that all Europe could follow that pattern!

“In New Haven, too, times have changed. No longer does the city get a steady flow of new blood from the Emerald Isle. Immigration is practically at a standstill. Downtown Fair Haven and the Hill, once centers of Irish life, are given over to other races. The native born of Irish heritage lean to the skills and professions rather than hardy toil. They are moved to Westville, Hamden and the newer residential areas where their interests are turned to country clubs, social life and community affairs.
The Knights of St. Patrick celebrated their Irishness at a banquet in the late 1940s. Left to right, Pierce Clark, Raymond Lee, William Shanahan, James Geelan, Richard C. Lee, James Roche, Jack Donovan, Richard Carroll, James Cooney and Joseph Curran.

"The genius of the Irish is said to be their ability to adapt themselves to any climate. In New England, they can become as Yankee as the original settlers. In the South, they blossom as one with the landed gentry. In such a time as this, perhaps it is not amiss to review those qualities they brought to this country. They loved and supported their church. They established sound family life. They gave honest labor for their hire, loyalty to their adopted land and respected the laws and rights of their neighbors. Simple those principles seem, but how much they contributed to the American story. May their sons and daughters never stray from their footsteps."

1949 For the first time, the flag of the Irish Free State flew from New Haven City Hall. The flag was placed there by Frank Reynolds, sealer of weights and measures, with the permission of Mayor William Celentano. Reynolds, county organizer for the Ancient Order of Hibernians, said he had purchased the materials and had the flag made to order some time before the occasion. "Startled old-timers," noted the Register, "said they had never seen an Irish Free State flag in front of City Hall on March 17 even in the days when Murphy, Fitzgerald and others of Gaelic ancestry held the mayor's office."
At the end of the working day, the flag was taken to the West Haven Armory where it flew at the “first annual ball of Father McKeon Division of the Ancient Order of Hibernians.” Irish pipers clad in kilts piped in the guests. U.S. Rep. John McGuire and his wife of Wallingford led the grand march. Another feature was “a procession of 32 young ladies, each representing one of the counties of Ireland.”

The Knights of St. Patrick held their banquet at the Hotel Taft with Andrew C. McCarthy, assistant district attorney of the Bronx, N.Y., as the principal speaker.

The young people of St. Patrick’s Church sponsored their second annual minstrel show and dance with a cast of 75 presenting 17 musical numbers including: “Galway Bay,” “The Same Old Shillelagh,” and “Clancy Lowered the Boom.”

At St. Paul’s Episcopal Church, the Men’s Club sponsored a St. Patrick’s Day dinner meeting with Lt. Cmdr. John E. Plumber of the U.S. Navy Submarine Base at New London giving a talk.

At St. Mary’s Church, the Holy Name Society celebrated with a program including songs by tenor Frank Rourke, Steels McCullough and Grace Brennan; a four-hand reel performed by Kathleen Hayes McGreevy, Nonie Hayes, Denis Ahearn and Michael Riordan; dances by the team of Lloyd and Ginter; specialty Gaelic dance by Carol Sasso. The second part of the program featured a one-act comedy titled “Is Kasey Ketched?” The cast included Dennis Devine, Jerry Donovan, Frank Lynsky, William Masterson, William Hackett, Robert Gilbert, Stephen Montgomery, Fred Carew and James Donovan.

At Grace-New Haven Hospital, members of Girl Scout Troop 23 under Mrs. Norman Eckert presented young patients with green paper hats filled with candy.

And, for all of that, there was still a longing for a parade, as the Register commented a bit wistfully, “There will be no large public parades here today. There hasn’t been one here on March 17 in a great many years — since 1885, according to the best authorities — but several thousand from this area went to New York for the huge Fifth Avenue parade...”
1950s

The Parade Reborn
1950  The Ancient Order of Hibernians started the Distin­
guished Friendship Award, which, according to the
Register "is expected to become an annual and coveted distinction." The first recipient was Frank H. Smith, editor of the Elm City Clarion column in the Register. AOH President Edward McMahon presented the award at the Hibernians' ball at the West Haven Armory. "The award, unique in the New Haven area," said the Register, "was decided on this winter by AOH leaders to give recognition to citizens who have contributed to the spirit of friendship and good will. Mr. Smith, for many years a well-known and colorful figure in the New Haven area, was selected from a host of possible candidates because the AOH committee felt he best merited the salute."

In announcing the award, the selection committee said of Smith, "With his keen knowledge of civic conditions he has initiated many constructive improvements of permanent worth to New Haven and surrounding communities. In his own person, he has kept innumerable friendships down through the years and made our world a gayer, brighter place with his wit and good humor."

At their annual banquet at the Hotel Taft, the Knights of St. Patrick heard addresses by Washington, D.C., lawyer Joseph F. Casey and Father Arthur J. Riley, a professor at St. John's Seminary in Brighton, Mass.

1951  The second annual Distinguished Friendship Award was presented to attorney Michael J. Quinn at the ball of Father McKeon Division, Ancient Order of Hibernians, at the West Haven Armory.

The presentation was made by AOH President John F. Flanagan, who told Quinn, "Over the years both in public and private life, you have shown an unusual faculty of consideration for others. You have always been associated with causes and projects designed to protect and aid the needy, the underprivileged and the oppressed. All your efforts and achievements in behalf of widows, in the youth of our community, in the founding of the Friends of Boys and in the cause of Irish freedom are hereby acknowledged. Above all, we recognize in you that extraordinary characteristic of big brother friendliness and complete humility in spite of achievements. All this brands you as truly exemplifying friendship to our community and truly deserving of the award."
Monsignor John J. Hayes, chancellor of the Archdiocese of Hartford, delivered the principal address at the annual Knights of St. Patrick banquet. "St. Patrick," he said, "is no longer peculiar to the Irish. He is a universal patron the Irish have given to the world."

The St. Patrick's Day parade in New York City continued to attract marching units from the New Haven area. St. Francis Corps, led by Tim Crimmons, said the Register, "was easily the musical hit of the parade," and the Webster Hose Company No. 3 of Ansonia, along with 500 guests, chartered a special excursion train just to march in the parade. John Comerford, a past captain of the company, organized the excursion and was assisted by Jeremiah Mahoney, James Clancy, William Meade, Edmund Moroney, John Keefe, William Sexton, Jerald Griffin, Michael Bradley, Charles Dick, John Meade, Edward Hines, George Blake, John Hines, Thomas E. Shortall and Patrick Sexton.

1952

Father Charles O'Flynn, a native of County Cork and a missionary in Sierra Leone, was the guest of Martin Cassidy at the Ancient Order of Hibernians ball at the West Haven Armory. A member of the Holy Ghost Fathers, O'Flynn spent 10 years in the northwestern African nation.

The Knights of St. Patrick banqueted at the Hotel Taft with Carroll C. Hincks, senior judge of the U.S. District Court, and Monsignor Charles J. Giblin, president of Cathedral College in New York, as guest speakers.

The Holy Name Society of Sacred Heart Church sponsored an Irish Night with Father Robert Keating, who was chaplain at the Cheshire Reformatory, as speaker. Entertainment was provided by Emerald Gems dancers including: Peg McKenna, Barbara Jean Smith and Noreen McKenna; accordionist Harry Barrett, pianist Frank Rourke, and vocalist Eugene Flanagan Jr. accompanied by pianist Al Sagnella.

At the weather bureau at Tweed Airport, weatherman James Dunn sported a green tie in honor of his Irish ancestry as he forecast that conditions for the day would be pleasant, but chilly.
1953 St. Patrick's Day was brightened by the announcement that a New Haven man had been named ambassador to Ireland. The appointment of 37-year-old William Howard Taft III, son of Sen. Robert H. Taft of Ohio, was especially pleasing to New Haven Irish folks because they considered Taft a great friend to Ireland. From 1945 to 1948, Taft had been an instructor in English at Yale and during that time he did research on the Irish language. In 1948, he went to Ireland as special assistant to the Economic Cooperation Mission there.

The Journal-Courier commented on his appointment, "St. Patrick's Day follows, in a fitting sequence, a weekend which heard the announcement that President Eisenhower had named as ambassador to Ireland William Howard Taft III of New Haven. Since the untimely death last fall of our ambassador to Ireland, Francis P. Matthews, New Haveners and others have often remarked that an appropriate and popular appointment to this post would be that of the grandson and namesake of the late President Taft ... Our new envoy was liked by the Irish because he is interested in their country and in its culture and people. When he was laying down his ECA duties in Dublin, he bade farewell to President Sean O'Kelly in the company of his two sons, the younger of whom said proudly, 'We are both named for presidents. My brother is William Howard Taft IV and I am named Sean for you.'"

The Albertus Magnus Circle presented a program of Irish music at its meeting in the College Campus Theater. Program Chairwoman Mrs. James T. Cullen presented singers Maureen T. Reidy, an Albertus student, and Ultan Heron, both gold medal winners at the feis held the previous summer at Fordham University.

The Knights of St. Patrick enjoyed a six-course dinner at the Hotel Taft with Chief Justice Francis B. Condon of Rhode Island and Brother Bonaventure Thomas, F.S.C., president of Manhattan College as speakers.

Two sets of Kelly brothers, said the Journal-Courier, "celebrated St. Patrick's Day in a very humble and altruistic way. They went to St. Raphael's blood bank and donated a pint of blood to the Red Cross blood program. They are William Kelly, 800 Winchester Ave., and his brother, Gerald of 103 Sheffield Ave., and Peter Patrick Kelly and his brother, Thomas, both of 225 Clinton Ave."

1954 St. Patrick's Day was very special for one Irish-born New Haven cop, Patrick Hickey. "A double blessing fell on an Irish household 68 years ago today," explained the Register, "when a boy was born on the birthday of Erin's patron saint. There was no question as to what to name the baby boy. Patrick was the only choice considered. Today, Patrick J. Hickey is celebrating both St. Patrick's Day and his own birthday, but the happiness in his Irish heart is not as great as you might expect. Today is the last day he will walk the streets of New Haven in the blue uniform with the brass buttons and the familiar Police Department badge No. 55. After 36 years on the police force, Officer Hickey has reached the mandatory age for retirement and will turn in the equipment of his profession tonight. This is mandatory. But they can't take his memory from him.

"A son of the late John and Ellen Coleman Hickey, Pat was born in a fair-sized stone house out in the country in County Cork. His father was a contractor who had seven other children to feed, so at 18, the boy left Ireland to seek his fortune in America. 'There were no quotas then,' said Pat in a solid Irish brogue. 'The passage was $30 one way to Boston port and I had about a hundred in my pocket.'

"'Pat's reason for leaving his homeland was all economic, as he explained it. Ireland was constantly in the throes of depression and unemployment and it was the custom of its native sons to migrate, 'to spread out,' as Pat put it, to ease the burden on the folks at home. Tall and strong, Pat first showed his puckish Irish-American features in America in 1904, discovering that the streets of Boston were not paved with gold but with cobblestones ... Pat wasn't quite sure what he'd do in America. He came at the urging of his brother in Hartford, but he
didn't know whether or not he'd stay. In all his life, he admits, he never did make up his mind to stay. The call of the 'auld sod' just faded. 'At first you miss it,' he said, 'but then you gradually grow away. And besides, I became a citizen and got married.'

Pat and his fiancee, Mary Harkins, the pretty American-Irish born daughter of Irish parents, slipped away in New York City and were married Nov. 6, 1914, at St. Patrick's. Pat had worked six years in New Britain with the Corbin Cabinet Lock Co. When World War I broke out, he was on a job as a gun filer at the Winchester Repeating Arms Co. in this city. Just before the war ended, he took the police examination and was named a supernumerary Sept. 12, 1918...

"Chief Philip Smith called Pat for full-time duty Jan. 1, 1919, and St. Patrick's namesake began pounding a beat for $24.50 a week. On Feb. 2, 1920, he was appointed a regular member of the force and his pay jumped to $27.50. 'We worked 10 hours a day and had 2 1/2 days off every month, whether we wanted them or not,' Pat said. 'There were no vacations and no sick days.'"


The Hibernians presented their Distinguished Friendship Award to Patrick J. Goode, president of WNHC-TV and former New Haven postmaster. In making the presentation, AOH President James B. McKay said, "For more than three score and 10 years you have endeavored to promote friendship among all people regardless of race, creed and color. You have untiredly given of your time, effort and financial support to promote true brotherhood."

As a feature of the evening, "to the Irish tunes of the pipers, six young Irish girls dressed in evening gowns and wearing colorful green sashes marched the length of the enclosure led by William Jones, marshal. Four of the girls represented the provinces of Ireland: Mary J. McPartland, Miss Connaught; Irene Carew, Miss Munster; Patricia Sullivan, Miss Ulster; and Sarah Condon, Miss Leinster. Nancy McCarthy was Miss America, and Kathleen Collins was Miss Erin."
The Knights of St. Patrick broke with tradition and for the first time in their history went outside New Haven for their annual banquet. The affair was held at the Woodbridge Country Club. Guest speakers were Yale President A. Whitney Griswold and Bishop Matthew F. Brady of Manchester, N.H.

1955 Archbishop Henry J. O'Brien of the Archdiocese of Hartford was among the guests of the Knights of St. Patrick at their banquet, again held at the Woodbridge Country Club. He told the Knights that the determination of the Irish in combating centuries of oppression and finally winning complete political freedom should be an inspiration to nations under the domination of the Soviet Union. "Ireland's example," he said, "can give an affirmative answer to the future of countries now oppressed."

At the banquet, it was noted that Knights President Steve Madigan was wearing the same green necktie that he had worn on St. Patrick's Day for 35 years. Madigan had purchased the tie at the Young's Men's Shop in Washington, D.C.

An example of ethnic relations at their best was cited by the Register in the relationship of New Haven laundryman Lee Ning, a native of China, and New Haven Police Capt. Herbert McGuire. Ning's laundry was on Ferry Street in the heart of an Irish neighborhood and when he went before the U.S. District Court to become a U.S. citizen, Ning was sponsored by his Irish cop friend, McGuire.

The Catholic Charity League sponsored a St. Patrick's Day bridge party and fashion show at St. Mary's Hall on Temple Street with Elizabeth A. Dillon as general chairwoman. Charity League members who modeled in the show included: Mrs. Charles F. Scholhamer, Mrs. Roe Colombe, Mrs. George Grady, Mrs. James Fahy, Mrs. A.L. Kay, Mrs. Frank P. Cammarano, Mrs. Carl Asman, Mrs. William Cronin, Mrs. Donald Plunkett, Margaret Lyons, Elizabeth Clifford and Helen Higgins.
Over their Sunday morning coffee on Jan. 29, New Haveners learned that for the first time in longer than almost anyone could remember there was to be a St. Patrick's Day parade in the city. That morning, the Register reported, "New Haven's Irishmen are going to have their own St. Patrick's Day parade after a lapse of nearly half a century. Plans now being readied call for a big scale celebration with scores of units and thousands of people participating in the tribute to the Emerald Isle's patron saint."

The paper proclaimed that the last parade had been in 1908, although there seems to be no evidence of a parade that year. The paper may have been just 10 years off, since newspaper articles in March 1898 indicate that the Ancient Order of Hibernians and the Holy Name Society of Sacred Heart Church paraded from the Knights of Columbus Hall to the church on St. Patrick's Day evening that year. However, there also had been parades of a sort in the early 1920s. In any event, the Register commented, "In the intervening years, Irishmen, both the native-born sons of Erin and her sons by ancestry and adoption, have celebrated the island country's most sacred day in many ways, but never with a parade here. This year the story will be a different one and the sponsoring Ancient Order of Hibernians hopes to keep it a different one with a yearly St. Patrick's Day parade in New Haven. The local organization, officially known as the Father McKeon Division, No. 7, AOH, has already received responses from units throughout the state which wish to take part in the marching. This despite the fact that most of the plans are still tentative. Applications presently on hand include those from military, police, fire, Civil Defense, fraternal and school organizations. The committee in charge of arrangements intends sending invitations to all types of organizations throughout Connecticut."

The chairman of the event was William F. Gallogly Sr. A native of Dallinamore, County Leitrim, Gallogly came to New Haven in 1922 and went to work at the Hull Brewery as a cooper. He was active in the Ancient Order of Hibernians and at the time of the parade renewal was state president of the AOH. Years later in an article in the Register, his son, William F. Gallogly Jr., recalled the events leading up to the revival of the parade. Preparations actually began several years before the event and the elder Gallogly visited John J. Sheehan, longtime president of the New York City St. Patrick's Day parade, for advice on how to proceed. When his dream of renewing the parade became a reality, said the younger Gallogly of his father, "He was so excited,
he was crying. He was so happy he did it. (The parade) was the love of his life."


Gaffney commented: "While the organization of the parade and preparations for it require a tremendous effort, we feel certain that our celebration will be a huge success and will act as an inspiration for each annual St. Patrick's Day to come."
As things turned out, their fabled luck almost deserted the Irish when the worst blizzard in seven years pummeled the city on Friday, March 16, the day before the parade. A snowfall of 8 1/2 inches accompanied by gusts up to 60 mph created 4-foot-high drifts, which caused the worst traffic conditions in years and brought the city to a standstill. The roof of a laundry on Chapel Street was ripped off, signs were blown down and windows shattered. New Haven Railroad trains were delayed five hours, buses were running three hours behind schedule and the city airport was closed down.

Amid the chaos, the parade committeemen who had been planning the event for several years pondered whether to throw up their hands in despair or go forward with the event. Mayor Richard C. Lee and Public Works Director Arthur T. Barbieri assembled a fleet of 21 plows, 14 salt and sand trucks and several snow loaders and more than 100 city workers toiled through the night clearing streets. Their efforts were aided Saturday morning when the sun came out and the temperature soared up into the 40s. After a tour of the route of the march, Lee, Barbieri and Grand Marshal William Clancy made the decision to go ahead with the parade.

Shortly after 2 p.m., Clancy stepped off from the corner of Whalley Avenue and Carmel Street as 45,000 spectators lined the route down Howe Street to Chapel Street to Church Street, past City Hall and on to Elm Street and York Street. Missing from the route was the traditional green stripe down the center of the street. There had been plans to paint the stripe, but the snow had started falling Friday morning just as a crew under the direction of Police Capt. Herbert McGuire was about to begin.

Clancy was surrounded by a police escort headed by Lt. Felix Gilroy and Lt. Thomas Hanrahan. Next in line came Brig. Gen. Joseph P. Houley, chief of staff, followed by Police Chief Francis V. Manus, Fire Chief Thomas J. Collins, President John J. Boyle Jr. of Father McKeon Division of the Ancient Order of Hibernians and Mayor Lee. The Register estimated that 4,500 marchers took part in the parade with the final unit passing City Hall at 3:45 p.m. "All divisions stepped to Irish music," said the paper, "although no jigs were heard. An Irish horse jaunting car with handles in the rear for lifting it free of mud and a light carriage drawn by horse were the only non-mechanized vehicles. Three horses and riders also took part. Military units were provided
Maureen Early, left, and Mary McCormack rode in an open convertible as queens of the 1956 parade.

by recruiting services, the U.S. Army and the U.S. Marine Corps. The division was headed by Lt. Col. Joseph H. Fleming of the 102nd Infantry Division, with retired Marine Lt. Col. William Barry as chief of staff. The Governor's Foot Guard, in colorful uniforms topped by bearskin hats, headed the second division. Other divisions were the police including New Haven, West Haven, East Haven, Hamden and state police detachments, led by Chief John Monahan of West Haven, and the firemen including Bridgeport, Derby, Hamden, Ansonia and New Haven groups headed by Battalion Chief Andrew Flanagan of New Haven.

"All of the Irish societies showed up. There were the Connecticut Concert Band, Knights of St. Patrick, New Haven Gaelic Football Club, Notre Dame High School Band, Father McKeon Division and auxiliaries 13 and 63 of the Hibernians. Bradford Manor Drum Corps marched with them. The John Barry Assembly, Fourth Degree, Knights of Columbus, Father Curtin Council, K of C, and Hammonasset Tribe, IORM, were among the fraternal groups which marched. A Ukrainian group, estimated to be a large portion of the men, women and children in New Haven's Ukrainian community, marched behind a large banner
proclaiming, 'Ukrainians Honor St. Patrick.' Ninety-five patrolmen, 55 auxiliary policemen and 10 motorcycles, in addition to the 26 men and six motorcycles actually in the parade, formed the police contingent."


In an editorial, the Journal-Courier summarized the general euphoria: "It's a great day for the Irish and for all the rest of us — for when an Irishman's happy, everybody's happy (unless it be the House of Lords). And besides, there's the parade. After a long lapse, the sons of the Gael and all their friends are about to honor St. Patrick with marching and music. From all parts of the state and beyond, they're coming and they're here. And even the green stripe on Fifth Avenue can hardly hope to see a heartier or a happier celebration than New Haven's own today."

To make the celebration of the rebirth of the parade complete, the Knights of St. Patrick had as their speaker the most distinguished guest in the long history of their annual banquets: Prime Minister John A. Costello of the Republic of Ireland. The banquet was held at the Yale Commons and Costello presented to Yale President Whitney Griswold a copy of the "Book of Kells" while Griswold reciprocated by presenting to the Irish people a graduate scholarship to Yale. In his address, Costello spoke of Ireland's role in international affairs. "Ireland — all Ireland — is a Christian power," he said, "and while not claiming any superiority in moral virtue, is ambitious of acting a Christian's part in international affairs. With regard to its own self interest it will adopt a policy of good will in the faith that if it but employ such a policy, an unseen force will gradually dislodge opposition to its purposes and an invisible hand will help it to ultimate success.

"In human relations, there are no incurable cancers, nothing so malignant that will not be drawn out by the therapeutic heat of charity. Ireland will be patient, for a Christian must be patient, and patience is, too, a condition for the improvement of human affairs. It will hope, for
it is when times are darkest that this virtue is most needed. It will be constructive in the manner of the peacemaker, for good works are essential for salvation. It will seek by example to communicate the message so vital for the health of the world, that there is as much an obligation to moral action on the part of people and governments as on the part of individuals."

1957 “St. Patrick himself couldn't have asked for a finer March 17," crowed the Journal-Courier. "A bright sun and clear skies teamed up in the New Haven area yesterday to make the wearin' of the green not only a symbol of a fine Irish holiday, but of the spring that is just around the corner."

Traffic was heavy on the Merritt and Wilbur Cross parkways as Connecticut residents shook off the winter doldrums and state police Sgt. James Lenahan commented, "Apparently because it was St. Patrick's Day, the people were very nice to each other, just as if they were all Irish and from the same country."

A crowd estimated at between 75,000 and 100,000 jammed every inch of the line of march as warm, sunny weather greeted the second renewal of the parade. "Crowds began gathering at noon and when the parade began to move promptly at 2 o'clock," said the Register, "all of New Haven was at a high pitch of excitement. Balloons turned loose by distracted youngsters floated skyward. Mothers shouldered their way through crowds trying to keep track of wandering children. 'Top of the mornin' to ya,' was the standard greeting ... Spirits squelched by last year's snowstorms, which made the 1956 parade smaller and somewhat subdued, were high this year ..."

At the Knights of St. Patrick banquet, Monsignor John S. Kennedy, editor of the Hartford archdiocesan newspaper, The Catholic Transcript, touched on a topic that would become of increasing importance to Irish-Americans in the years just ahead. Speaking before 350 members and guests at the Hotel Taft, Kennedy urged Irish people to support immigration reform, saying, "We are all descendants of immigrants. It would be unfair, it would be obscene if we who have been given so much by the United States were to seek to bar the gates to others."

Kennedy pointed out that thousands of persons had been displaced throughout the world in recent years and had no country to call their
own. He said the United States should open its doors to them. Quotas for many countries should be increased, he urged, and unused quotas should be open to those from countries whose quotas were used. He told how an American official who witnessed the uprisings in Hungary against communist rule had suggested that the United States would gain from an influx of such freedom fighters. "The people of the United States," said the official, "need a transfusion of people of other races and other languages."

Edmund Markiewicz, president of the New Haven Board of Fire Commissioners, received the eighth annual Distinguished Friendship Award at the Ancient Order of Hibernians banquet at the West Haven Armory. And Yale halfback Dennis McGill and state Sen. Arthur Healey were honored at the 43rd annual dinner of the Irish-American Club at Eagles Hall.

1958 Several days before the holiday, city detectives caught "five teen-agers green-handed," reported the Journal-Courier. The culprits were discovered splashing the letters "IRA" on the walls of the Pegnataro's Market on Whalley Avenue. "With St. Patrick's Day just around the corner," said the newspaper, "the detectives, John Widmann and Edwin Lawlor, let them go, but not before they scrubbed all the paint from the side of the market."

The day before the parade, a late winter storm dumped up to 17 inches of snow on some parts of the state, but the city, fortunately, escaped with a bare one or two inches. Despite the weather, the parade continued to attract large numbers of marchers and spectators. It was estimated that 35,000 people lined New Haven's streets Saturday, March 15, for the annual event, which featured 12,000 marchers. Gov. Abraham Ribicoff and Archbishop Henry J. O'Brien were on the reviewing stand along with Mayor Richard C. Lee. After the parade, Father McKeon Division, AOH, held its annual ball at the West Haven Armory.

Bishop Bernard J. Flanagan of the Diocese of Norwich was the featured speaker at the Knights of St. Patrick banquet at the Taft. "The lesson St. Patrick taught us," he said, "is that this is still God's world and that God still rules it. The only road to peace and to survival as a nation is to live according to God's law."
1959  Another late winter snowstorm and some rowdy Yale students added more than enough excitement to the annual festivities. The storm — the worst of the season — clogged city streets while 30 mph winds and freezing temperatures caked the landscape with layers of ice on Friday, March 13, the day before the parade. "About 150 men turned out," reported the Journal-Courier, "with plows and snow loading equipment at 11 p.m. last night in an effort to clean up city streets in time for today's parade. Special attention was given to Howe, Church and Elm streets and on George Street from south Orange to Church ..."

The morning of the parade, the crews gave the streets along the parade route a dusting of salt and sand to make certain the marchers had sure footing. Thanks to the crews, 10,000 marchers in 94 units and seven divisions had clear stepping when the parade began on Whalley Avenue at Carmel Street. Both Connecticut U.S. senators, Thomas A. Dodd and Prescott Bush, were on the reviewing stand along with Lt. Gov. John Dempsey, himself a native of County Tipperary. William F. Gallogly Sr. and Michael J. Devaney were general chairman and
co-chairman of the parade. As usual, Mayor Richard C. Lee marched in the parade. But, he wasn’t able to wear a pair of new shoes specially made for him by a Dublin shoemaker, Michael Edge, during the mayor’s tour of Europe the previous summer. The shoes, unfortunately, were brown and parade etiquette demanded black.

The snowstorm wasn’t the only problem that day, however. “The windup of the annual St. Patrick’s Day parade,” reported the Register the next morning, “was disrupted here yesterday afternoon when an unruly mob of Yale students converged on the last few marching units and touched off a small riot.” The disturbance began, according to a patrolman on duty at Elm and High streets, when marching units from Sacred Heart Academy of Hamden and Albertus Magnus College were pelted with snowballs by students lining the streets and in windows in Calhoun College. The girls who were marching became terrified, according to the patrolman, and many began to flee with the Yale students chasing them. Two girls reported their clothes were torn by Yale students.

Police reinforcements arrived shortly and a group of about 200 students was chased back onto the Yale campus by 50 policemen. Yale police, meanwhile, kept another large group of students behind the gates of the Old Campus. A fire hose was also put in use to break up the groups of students. “After 35 minutes of snowball pelting, clashes with city and campus police and dousing by water from a fire hose, 16 students were under arrest,” reported the Register. “At least three of their number and one city policeman were injured. The melee, the second within the past three-day period, took place on Elm Street between College and High streets. It was quickly confined to this one-block area by police on duty along the parade route, who, in a matter of minutes, were reinforced by uniformed and plain clothes details.

“University President A. Whitney Griswold, who hurried to the scene after being informed of the disturbance, denounced the students for their action which, he said, ‘would set back 10 years of work to improve the town-gown cooperation. Childishness is too weak an excuse, boorishness is the better word.’

“Police Chief Francis V. McManus, who was in the reviewing stand in front of City Hall with Mayor Richard C. Lee when the flareup began, estimated that some 1,500 students took part at one time or another before it was quelled.”
1960s.

Statewide Celebration
Children, women and men march behind the banner of the Ancient Order of Hibernians on a chilly St. Patrick's Day.

1960 "Thousands of spectators, all Irishmen in spirit," commented the Register on Saturday, March 12, "lined two miles of city streets this afternoon to view the fifth annual St. Patrick's Day parade under brilliant blue skies in temperatures that hovered just above the freezing mark." Mayor Richard C. Lee "in formal attire and top hat, morning suit and cane, accompanied by a longtime friend, Lt. Col. William H. Shanahan, as aide, stepped off the opening 120-per-minute cadence to launch the procession ... For the mayor, the day is a momentous one. In addition to his parade chores, he is celebrating his birthday and tonight will receive the 1960 Distinguished Friendship Award at the annual dance of the Ancient Order of Hibernians in the West Haven Armory."

Secretary of the State Ella T. Grasso represented Gov. Abraham Ribicoff on the reviewing stand. Also on the stand was Archbishop Henry J. O'Brien of Hartford.

Vice Adm. John T. Hayward, deputy chief of naval operations, was the featured speaker at the Knights of St. Patrick banquet at the Waverly Inn in Cheshire. Hayward told the 416 members and guests that he foresaw a long and dangerous period of clashing ideologies in
world affairs. In that clash, he said, "The sea is the greatest asset the free world has," and emphasized the importance of the Navy's atom-powered submarines. Another guest, Col. William J. Clasby, chief of the Professional Division, Office of the Chief of Chaplains of the Air Force, called for a more active display of and participation in religion by Roman Catholics. Irish songs were sung by John Dillon of New York and the invocation was given by Father Thomas J. O'Connell of Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church in Hamden.

A young Irishwoman spending her first St. Patrick's Day away from her native land told the Register how the day was celebrated in her hometown of Wexford. "Everyone goes to church, where High Masses are held throughout the morning," said Gloria Ann O'Neill, who had come to New Haven to stay with her uncle and aunt, Mr. and Mrs. William O'Neill of Newhall Street. "The mayor and council members attend the church services and there is often a crowd of people to watch the parade from the town square ... Children go out early in the morning to the countryside to pick fresh shamrocks. Everyone wears a cluster on a coat lapel or collar, and men often wear shamrocks in their hats. If you have something green in your wardrobe, you wear it. But the Irish are too practical to buy green for just the one day. At church, it's customary to sing 'Hail, Glorious St. Patrick,' as well as other sacred hymns. In the evening, families often attend concerts or pageants where Irish history is depicted and Irish songs are sung. Others go to a ceili where there is dancing and singing."

An estimated 45,000 spectators braved 32-degree weather to watch the two-hour parade on Saturday, March 11. "But what chill was in the air," commented the Register, "was dispelled by the toe-tapping music — a wonderful combination of Irish tunes set to marching beat — and the colorfully dressed marchers."


The day concluded with the 12th annual AOH ball at the armory in West Haven where Dr. Michael Shea was presented the annual Friendship Award.
Former Rhode Island Gov. Daniel J. Roberts was the principal speaker at the Knights of St. Patrick banquet at the Waverly Inn. Other speakers included Monsignor John J. Byrnes, rector of St. Thomas Seminary in Bloomfield, and Mayor Richard C. Lee. Probate Judge James A. Shanley was toastmaster. Tenor Lee Sullivan of New York City entertained with traditional Irish music.

1962 Once again New Haven was without a St. Patrick's Day parade when the Father McKeon Division of the Ancient Order of Hibernians canceled the event after years of sponsoring it. "Some of the shine and splendor will be gone from this year's observance," commented the Register. The author of the Saturday Journal in the Register noted, "Modern era observances here are a far cry from what they were up to a quarter of a century ago ... The parade which has been a feature of the day for the past several years has been dropped. In bygone years there were gala dances and parties staged at old Erin Hall on State Street or in Harmony Hall, later called Fraternal Hall, on Elm Street. Also, there was no dearth of similar affairs in varous Fair Haven gathering places, where the 'livin out' girls and the lads from 'back home' had a gay time for themselves. There were church-sponsored programs, too, down in St. Patrick's Hall on Hamilton Street, over in St. Francis Hall and St. Joseph's Hall and up in Sacred Heart School auditorium to mention a few. But such happy events are only pleasant memories now and the feature of this day locally will be the display of the green."

Still, there were a number of events in honor of the occasion. The Hibernians held their ball at the West Haven Armory honoring John Golden with their Friendship Award, and the Knights of St. Patrick gathered at the Waverly Inn in Cheshire for their banquet. Out in Hamden, a special treat was the appearance of the Lovett Irish Dancers of New York City at the annual Irish Night at St. Rita's Church. "The New Yorkers," said the Journal-Courier, "will be making their only New England appearance prior to their tour of Ireland this summer, where they will appear at the Mansion House and Royal Theatre in Dublin plus TV engagements in Belfast."

And as a substitute for the parade, Jocko Sullivan arranged for the 70-piece Notre Dame High School Band to present a concert of Irish music on Saturday afternoon in front of his cafe at 1166 Chapel St.
For those who needed a parade to celebrate the day, the New Haven Railroad offered a special bargain weekend in New York City on March 16-17-18. "Low-cost package rates," reported the Register, "include round-trip coach tickets, choice hotel accommodations at Bristol, Commodore, Paramount or Biltmore hotels, hotel breakfast each morning and all taxes. Example: Package rate per person, double room Saturday night from $9.95, Friday and Saturday nights, from $16.10. TV in most rooms. Travel on any train except 5:40 p.m. train Friday ... Return on any train Sunday. Also available Friday or Saturday evening after dark at Broadway's International Night Club for $6.50, including cocktail, club sandwich, coffee, dessert, midnite floor show, tip and taxes. The New Haven Railroad ticket office makes all arrangements."

More than 1,600 New Haveners who didn't take the railroad up on its offer, turned out to see the Register and Journal-Courier travel show on Ireland at Wilbur Cross High School. The show featured songs by the St. Mary's High School Glee Club whose members were dressed as Irish colleens, a color movie about Ireland and Irish jigs and reels by the Emerald Dancers. And, Finton Moore of Irish Airlines was on hand just in case anyone wanted to sign up for a week or two in the Emerald Isle.

1963 After a one-year hiatus, the St. Patrick's Day parade returned, much to the delight of an estimated 14,000 marchers and even more thousands of spectators. The day began, as it had back in the late 1800s, with a Solemn High Mass at St. Patrick's Church on Grand Avenue. Father Robert E. Sanders, pastor, celebrated the Mass and preached on the life of St. Patrick. Attending the Mass were members of the parade committee, an honor guard of John Barry Assembly, Knights of Columbus, delegations from the Irish societies of the city and city officials.

The Ancient Order of Hibernians honored retired Maj. Gen. James M. Quinn of the National Guard at their annual ball at the West Haven Armory. Quinn was presented the Hibernians' 14th annual Distinguished Friendship Award.

The Knights of St. Patrick dined at the Waverly Inn on a menu of grapefruit baskets, Waverly Manhattan, Irish terrapin soup au sherry, iced celery hearts, radish buds, queen olives, salted nuts,
imported sherry, filet of sole sautéed, roast prime ribs of beef, au gratin potatoes, string beans, amadine champagne, mixed salad, flaming ice cream cake, Irish coffee, petit fours, green peppermints and coffee. Guest speakers were Monsignor Terrence J. Finnegan of Norwich, retired chief of Air Force chaplains, and Gov. John N. Dempsey. Finnegan said he had seen Irishmen in the four corners of the Earth, Germany and Hong Kong, Casablanca and Tripoli, Santiago and Buenos Aires, Tokyo and Melbourne, and that many retained their brogue after four or five generations, an indication that an Irishman is at home no matter where he goes. The former chaplain described the spirit of the Irish "as a bright light, calling to people behind the Iron and Bamboo curtains that freedom never dies when it burns in the heart of men who will never allow themselves to be slaves ... The greatness of Ireland is in its soul ... Ireland is poor only in the things of the world. It is tremendous in the eyes of God."

1964 One of the longest parades in the history of the city celebrated the feast day of St. Patrick. "The Irish step out every year in fine style," commented the Register, "but this year they did themselves proud in the state's only parade." It was estimated that 35,000 spectators turned out under gray skies for the parade which featured more than 150 units and took more than two hours to pass the reviewing stand. Mayor Richard C. Lee led the marchers. "The mayor," said the Register, "smiled and smiled all the way from Whalley Avenue and Carmel Street to the reviewing stand in front of City Hall on Church Street. He had a lot to smile about. Only the day before he had fulfilled an old promise to the city, that a hotel, an office building and some shops would soon rise above the big hole at Church and Chapel streets."

At their banquet in West Haven, the Ancient Order of Hibernians presented their Friendship Award to William F. Gallogly Sr.

The Holy Name Society of St. Mary's Church sponsored an Irish Night with a ham and turkey buffet supper followed by Irish dancing and songs provided by children of the parish. The evening ended with dancing to the music of Bobby Gardiner and his band. Gardiner also provided music for a dance sponsored by the New Haven Gaelic Football and Hurling Club at its rooms on Alling Street in Hamden.

At the Waverly Inn, the Knights of St. Patrick had as their guests Homer D. Babbidge, president of the University of Connecticut, and
Even an Irish canine gets into the parade spirit sometimes.

Rabbi Theodore Lewis of Congregation Jeshuat Israel of Newport, R.I., the oldest synagogue in the United States. Lewis, it was reported, "qualified for a place in this Irish night because he was born in Dublin, was educated there and later headed Dublin's largest synagogue. The Jewish leader told the Knights of the ‘harmony existing in Ireland where 99 percent of the population is Roman Catholic, but where there is no discrimination of any kind.'

Babbidge said that UConn had "come of age in higher education and can no longer be looked upon as a stepchild of the educational world." Land-grant colleges such as UConn, he said, "must redefine their missions and translate the spirit of the 1860s when many were established to the late 20th century."
The tensions that were spreading across the South in the wake of civil rights demonstrations spilled over into the St. Patrick's Day celebration as about 35 members of the New Haven Chapter of the Congress of Racial Equality demonstrated at the parade. "Four young men," said the Register, "carried a mock coffin marked, 'Selma,' and 'No More Deaths.' Many carried signs reading, 'Enjoy the parade, but remember Selma.' As the day lengthened, the signs clustered across from the reviewing stand." Walter Brooks, chairman of the CORE chapter, said the demonstrators had applied for a position in the parade, but had been denied because their application was too late. He said the demonstrators were trying to dramatize the injustices in Selma, Ala., against blacks conducting a voter registration campaign.

The parade route was changed to solve traffic problems that had plagued the marchers in other years. Previously, marching units assembled on side streets off Whalley Avenue and passed down Howe Street to Chapel, Church and Grove streets. The new 1.75 mile route took marchers from Sherman Avenue east on Chapel Street then north on Church to Grove.

John E. "Swede" Lindquist was presented the 16th annual Distinguished Friendship Award at the Ancient Order of Hibernians ball in West Haven. The presentation was made by AOH President Edward P. McMahon.

Despite raw weather and ankle-deep snow, 33 musical units joined such groups as the West Haven Irish-American Club, the New Haven Gaelic Football and Hurling Club, the Knights of St. Patrick and the Ancient Order of Hibernians in the parade on March 13.

The weather kept the number of onlookers to about 35,000, but the Journal-Courier figured the Irish had been lucky: "Certainly the number of marchers and the crowd size would have shown an even greater decrease from last year's records if the city had been hit by the 10 inches of snow that buried Hartford."

The parade was led by Honorary Chairman John M. Golden, Grand Marshall James C. Bowe and Fire Chief Francis J. Sweeney. "The St. Patrick's Day spirit captured downtown four days early as 8,000 marchers strutted down Chapel Street to Church Street, and took
a left and marched past the reviewing stand before City Hall," reported the Journal-Courier.

Charles T. McQueeney, managing editor of the Register, received the 17th annual Distinguished Friendship Award at the AOH banquet at the armory in West Haven.

Lt. Gen. Louis B. Hershey, director of Selective Service, was the speaker at the Knights of St. Patrick banquet at the Waverly Inn. "This country," said Hershey, "needs faith in our schools, our churches, our state and the federal government. If we have anything left over, we can put it on the moon."

Also speaking at the banquet was Monsignor John C. Knott, director of the Family Life Bureau of the National Catholic Welfare Conference in Washington, D.C.

1967 "Green," said the Journal-Courier, "for some strange reason prevailed. A fire engine from Clinton, bouquets of carnations in the horns of Derby Storm Engine Company 2, uniforms of the Pyramid Shrine Band, sashes of the Hurricane Drum and Bugle Corps and large shamrocks bedecking the Prince Street School marchers — were all green. For 2 1/2 hours they marched the two-mile route. Bagpipes, bugles, fifes and drums, Dixieland and oriental bands. About 45 musical units participated. It was rumored three leprechauns, one about a foot high, were seen following the Marine Corps League. Attempts to catch them were in vain. Horses even contributed their presence. An interesting grouping from Reveille Farms had a woman and a little girl riding double on a regular size horse, with a goat and a 5-year-old boy on a Shetland pony alongside."

The Journal-Courier pointed out that there were units from Rockville, Oakville, New Britain, Hartford, Waterbury, Norwalk, Bridgeport, Unionville and Trumbull.

1968 A steady rain didn't stop 7,500 marchers and an estimated 17,000 spectators at the parade. "Remarkable," commented Lt. Gov. Attilio Frassinelli as he watched the soaked marchers. "I've never come to New Haven on St. Patrick's Day before. These people are remarkable — not only those marching, but those watching." "It was an exhilarating but a drenching one," commented Grand Marshal Roy Ward Jr.
'The heavens opened Sunday,' said the Journal-Courier, 'but those honoring St. Patrick in New Haven were unmoved.'

Mayor Lee, the paper said, 'was drenched but undaunted and smiled along the two-mile route and was only slightly dismayed when the water lodged in the rim of his top hat spilled forth over his face.'

At the Knights of St. Patrick banquet, guests were greeted by President Joseph H. Fleming and toastmaster Francis J. Sweeney, New Haven's fire chief. The speakers were Lt. Col. James C. Carroll, deputy staff chaplain of the 5th U.S. Army, Fort Sheridan, Ill., and Owen McGivern, justice of the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court of New York. Roy Ward directed the musical program featuring his own band and a vocal quartet.

Father Edwin J. Gaffney was the recipient of the annual Distinguished Friendship Award presented by President Robert Morrissey at the Ancient Order of Hibernians ball at the West Haven Armory.

1969 For the first time in its history, the constitutionality of the St. Patrick's Day parade was challenged when a New Haven resident, John F. Curran Jr., sought an injunction banning it. Curran filed a petition in federal court in New Haven contending that the parade was a religious procession and thus violated the U.S. Constitution's provisions separating church and state. He challenged the constitutionality of the city's appropriation of $1,000 to help defray costs of the parade and sought an injunction against any future parades.

At a hearing before U.S. District Judge Robert C. Zampano on Friday, March 14, just three days before the parade, Curran argued that the parade's purpose was "to propagandize Roman Catholicism to the population of city of New Haven." He called the event a "nose thumb" at the Constitution. Acting as his own attorney, Curran said that in Ireland, "where the ancestors of the New Haven Irish had their homes," St. Patrick's Day is a national holiday and a holy day. "Most Roman Catholics in this country," he said, "ignore the fact that people here have the protection and benefits of the First and Fourteenth amendments. With these benefits should go duties."

Curran pointed out that the archbishop of Hartford and other bishops appeared on the parade's reviewing stand, which was erected
by city workers. "Actions like these," he said, "set up other encroachments of Roman Catholic Church agents who have strived for centuries to corrupt and undermine ... It is like the ancient story of the camel who moves into the tent to keep warm and moves in so far as to finally move out the occupant."

Assistant Corporation Counsel Rogert J. Frechette argued that the federal court had no jurisdiction in the matter. He said Curran's complaint about the $1,000 appropriation should be heard in a state court and pointed out that the city charter gave city officials the power to issue parade permits.

Later that day, Zampano denied Curran's request for a temporary restraining order forbidding the parade. "The plaintiff," said the judge, "has failed to demonstrate that he will suffer irreparable harm if the parade is not enjoined ... The probability that the plaintiff will succeed on the merits is slight. Regardless of its probable religious origin, the present purpose and primary effect of the parade are secular and festive ... The parade has not been shown to inhibit or advance any religious cause in violation of the establishment clause or free exercise clause of the First Amendment. Even assuming that the appropriation by the Board of Aldermen and the Board of Finance exceeded the scope of their legislative powers, the proper remedy is not an injunction against the parade. The First Amendment rights of the parade's participants must be protected. The city's action in presenting a small gift, which subsidizes the parade to a very small degree, cannot be used as a basis for effectively destroying those rights. The harm caused by issuing a restraining order would far outweigh any conceivable harm to the plaintiff caused by denying it."

"It is common knowledge," Zampano said, "that the parade attracts thousands of spectators, of all races, religions and national origins. The atmosphere is festive and no religious ceremonies will be performed as part of the parade. Except for the name, the parade differs very little from other parades — Columbus Day, Memorial Day, etc. — held annually in the city."

Zampano did not rule on the issue of future parades and Curran's case lingered on in federal court until 1973 when it was finally settled in favor of a continuation of the parades.

With the legal question disposed of for the moment, 50,000 spectators took advantage of ideal weather to view the parade. Mindful of the previous year's deluge, some carried umbrellas, but during the
length of the parade were treated to "only a golden sun and blue skies." Sixty marching units and 30 musical groups participated.

The Knights of St. Patrick returned to the city of their origin with a banquet at the Park Plaza Hotel. Guest speakers were the Very Rev. William C. McInnes, president of Fairfield University, and John M. McCaffrey, author and lecturer. Circuit Court Judge John N. Reynolds was toastmaster and music was provided by soloist Sal Delise and the Roy Ward orchestra.
1970s

Songs of Ireland
Blankets and turned-up collars were the order of the day for an estimated 40,000 spectators who braved a 40-degree temperature to watch the parade. "Although the people might have wanted the weather warmer, the mood of the viewers was festive throughout the long parade and wherever you might have looked you might see a foot tapping to the tune of an Irish jig as 36 musical units provided the old familiar rhythm of the Irish songs," reported the Journal-Courier.

The marching units were led by the U.S. Naval Submarine Base band from New London and the Fire Department color guard. A total of 5,000 marchers strode along the parade route. Dignitaries in the line of march included Mayor Bartholomew F. Guida, Grand Marshal James T. Fleming, Honorary Chairman John M. Golden and Chairman John O'Donovan. Three queens — Miss Teen Ireland, Majella Crawley; Miss Ireland, Catherine Cullagh; and Miss Irish-American, Bonnie McNulty — rode in cars along the parade route.

At their banquet at the Park Plaza Hotel, Archbishop John F. Whealon of the Hartford Archdiocese told the Knights of St. Patrick that the secret to the survival of the Irish in America could be found in "four outstanding qualities that the Irish possess. Those attributes are family loyalty, love for learning, sincere religious belief and their sincere humor."

While thousands marched and watched the parade in New Haven, 339 Connecticut musicians journeyed to Ireland to add a Yankee flare to parades in Dublin, Limerick and Galway. Among the Connecticut units were the Lancraft Fife and Drum Corps of New Haven, the Chester Fife and Drum Corps and units from Bristol, Coventry and Danbury. The Chester corps was led by a man who had personal experience of immigration, a Latvian native, Leo Reinhausens. Reinhausens, who came to Connecticut in 1949, said he would feel at home in Ireland which had struggled as long and hard for its freedom as had the tiny Baltic republics.

In New Haven, overcast skies and 40-degree chill did not dampen the enthusiasm of marchers and spectators. The broad interest in the local parade was evident in the variety of musical units participating: the U.S. Coast Guard Band from New London, the Tigers Band from South Hadley, Mass., and the St. Helena Cadet Corps from the Bronx, N.Y.
Gov. Thomas J. Meskill was guest speaker at the annual Knights of St. Patrick banquet at the Park Plaza Hotel. "The Irish have retained the true sense of values that many of us have lost in this country," said Meskill, whose forebears came to Connecticut in the early 1800s from County Clare. Another speaker, Mayor Bartholomew F. Guida noted that New Haven was "a city so much enriched by the contributions of the Irish." Dr. James K. Flan of Derby was master of ceremonies and music was provided by Irish tenor Sterling W. Harrington.

1972 For the first time in many years, there was no green stripe on Chapel Street in honor of the parade. The stripe was a victim of bad weather. Rain and slush kept the crowd at the parade to an estimated 8,000 to 10,000. "Many of the ... spectators," reported the Journal-Courier, "peered out from beneath umbrellas during intermittent downpours as approximately 35 bands and 25 marching units put on what one curbside Irishman called a great show. The dismal, drenching weather prevented the painting of the traditional green stripe along the Chapel Street route for the first time in recent history. And it apparently discouraged some 25,000 additional onlookers who usually come to the parade. But the tribute to the patron saint came off without a hitch and seemed to be a lot of fun. For an hour and 15 minutes marching units and drum corps from as far away as Revere, Mass., beat out the songs of the Irish while competing for the favor of three judges who watched carefully from the reviewing stand."

1973 Connecticut's Irish people had a special reason to rejoice when one of their own, John Downey, was freed after 21 years in prison in China. A Central Intelligence Agency operative, Downey was imprisoned as a spy after his plane was downed over China during the Korean War. Downey was released after his mother, Mary V. Downey, 75, suffered a stroke. They were reunited when Downey flew into Bradley Airport on Tuesday, March 13.

Rain again did its best to spoil the parade, but, reported the Register, "Neither rain nor a chilly breeze stayed the city's annual St. Patrick's Day parade from its appointed route ... much to the satisfaction of an estimated 25,000 spectators." West Haven Mayor William J. Heffernan was grand marshal "as a misty drizzle was falling and
For 150 years, the weather has made St. Patrick's Day interesting, if not always comfortable, as shown in these parade photos.
lasted for about two hours until the last units arrived at the end of the parade route at Church and Grove streets."

U.S. Sen. Henry Jackson of the state of Washington was guest speaker at the Knights of St. Patrick banquet.

"The shifting of holidays for convenience sake may be hitting an all-time high in the observance of St. Patrick's Day 1973," commented the Register on Saturday, March 16. "Last Sunday, the Irish Societies had their parade, last night the Knights of St. Patrick held their annual dinner — on the 15th no less — so it is grateful every proud Irishman can be that the Ancient Order of Hibernians is still in existence. Tonight, they'll be holding their annual Friendship Award Ball at the West Haven Armory with our good friend John McGrath, a retired Ansonia newspaperman, prim to receive the high honor."

1974

U.S. Rep. Thomas "Tip" O'Neill, majority leader of the House of Representatives, was guest speaker at the annual banquet of the Knights of St. Patrick at the Park Plaza Hotel. O'Neill spoke of the Watergate scandal which was then rapidly approaching its dramatic climax and of the need to seek an end to the turmoil and perils in Northern Ireland. O'Neill, however, had to share the spotlight. Said the Register, "Another sex barrier will fall tonight as, for the first time in 97 years, the Knights have invited a woman to sit at the head table of the banquet. The event had previously been a strictly stag affair." The woman for whom the long tradition was broken was, "a lovely, dark-haired colleen, Mary Cooney, mist fresh out of Dublin ... The 23-year-old led the obviously pleased men in the singing of the national anthems of the two countries, and then in the songs from the Emerald Isle that in themselves have become anthems of St. Patrick's Day."

An estimated 30,000 spectators braved bitter March winds to view the parade which featured the Artane Boys' Band from Dublin and "the largest group of marchers ... from the four Irish societies that annually sponsor the parade: Father McKeon Division 7, Ancient Order of Hibernians; Knights of St. Patrick; New Haven Gaelic Football and Hurling Club; West Haven Irish-American Club."

If one Irishwoman broke new ground by attending the Knights of St. Patrick banquet, another Irishwoman, Register reporter Margaret Foley Bushy, provided one of the most touching moments of the day with this memoir in the newspaper:
"Three legacies my Irish grandfather left me, his red hair, a bit of a temper and a tattered Irish songbook. The old green book, with pages gone and cover torn, presents a vivid picture of the Erin my grandfather knew 101 years ago. Inscribed on the flyleaf in the neat script of a long forgotten hand is grandfather’s name, the date 19th of May 1872, and the words, 'Presented as a premium from the Library of Irish Literature.'

"There were few possessions to bring when my grandfather and his wife left the mountains of County Wicklow, but the old songbook was one of them. It is said he used to thumb the pages, singing and recollecting the old days in the land he had chosen to leave for a future in a bright, new land. The future was short and the dreams only partly fulfilled, for he died young, far from home and people he loved. Years later, the songbook became part of my life when as a child it was held in my grandmother’s work-worn hands as she lived again in song the years they had shared together.

"Singing isn’t a performing art to the Irish; it is as natural as speaking. There were the evenings, my grandmother recalled, when they sang together the songs from out of their past. There are both laughter and tears to be found in the poetry of the book, typifying the dreams, hopes and the faith of an oppressed people who could laugh at the 'tyrants,' and even at themselves. Woven among the songs is the cry of the soldier, far from home, fighting the battle he didn’t start and was forced to join. There is the history of ancient times, the sadness of defeat and the glory of success. There is the mother’s prayer as her boy goes off to war, the empty home when a daughter marries, the parting when the immigrant ship leaves, all brought forth in the lilting meter of the Irish pen.

"Many of the songs, my grandmother said, were printed after being passed from generation to generation as they were sung before the open fires in an Ireland long before her time. How the book was compiled or where it was printed is lost to memory and the faded cover doesn’t disclose it."
1980s

Festivals and Feminists
About 550 members and guests attended the annual Knights of St. Patrick banquet where Circuit Court Judge William Hughes Mulligan told a story of an ancestor whose alleged important role in the American Revolution went unrewarded. Hercules Mulligan, he said, was a New York tailor who catered to British officers and then each night rowed across the Hudson River to New Jersey to pass along to Gen. George Washington whatever of military importance he learned from his English customers. The judge pointed out how ironic it was that, "Despite all this travel back and forth across the river ... it was named the George Washington Bridge and not after Hercules Mulligan who had really earned the honor."

Irish balladeers Tommy Makem and Tommy Clancy performed at Wilbur Cross High School in a concert sponsored by the New Haven Gaelic Football and Hurling Club.

An estimated 50,000 spectators watched the annual parade led by attorney Charles D. Gill, chief public defender for Litchfield County. As had become customary, Jack and Lillian Flederman, proprietors of Lillian's Fur Studio, held a party for friends who wished to watch the marchers from their front door on Upper Chapel Street. "After the march was over," reported the Register, "the party went on long into the twilight with genial Jack, known to his many Irish friends as 'Murphy,' proving a most gracious host."

The Knights of Columbus announced on the eve of St. Patrick's Day that the fraternal insurance society was working to have its founder, Father Michael J. McGivney, declared a saint by the Catholic Church. The son of Irish immigrants who lived in Waterbury, McGivney organized the Knights while serving as a curate at St. Mary's Church in New Haven in 1882.

For the first time in more than a decade, Connecticut's governor was among the marchers in the annual St. Patrick's Day parade. Gov. William A. O'Neill, said the Journal-Courier "was all smiles as he led the parade bedecked in a high hat and morning suit — complete with gloves, sash and shillelagh ..."

More than 3,000 marchers, including Grand Marshal James C. Bohan and Queen Valerie Spangle and her aide, Maureen O'Reilly,
New Haven's Ukrainian community gives the St. Patrick's Day festivities an international flavor with this float.

joined O'Neill in the line of march and an estimated 50,000 watched the parade despite cool weather and cloudy skies.

More serious matters were injected into the festivities by a group of New Haven peace activists who jumped into the line of march carrying a banner reading, "Brits out of N. Ireland, U.S. out of El Salvador and Pentagon research out of Yale." Parade authorities removed the demonstrators at Chapel and College streets, but they re-entered the line farther along the route.

Mayor Biagio DiLieto proclaimed March "Irish Heritage Month," and two special exhibits at Yale cast the spotlight on Irish culture. At the Yale Center for British Art, the works of two prominent Irish landscape and seascape painters — George Barrett of Dublin and Thomas Roberts of Waterford — were displayed. At Sterling Library, a replica of the "Book of Kells" was exhibited along with memorabilia of such noted Irish authors as George Bernard Shaw, James Joyce and William Butler Yeats.

The Irish History Roundtable celebrated the occasion at a meeting at the Hamden Library. Guest speaker was James D. Alexander whose topic was, "Frank O'Connar as Seanachie."
At the Knights of St. Patrick's annual banquet at the Park Plaza Hotel, Ann and Bobby Gardner, a brother-sister team from County Tipperary provided the musical entertainment while the guest speaker was Brother John G. Driscoll, president of Iona College. The only thing missing at the banquet, reported the Register, was the "pistachio flambe," which traditionally was carried into the darkened banquet hall. Toastmaster Robert J. Leeney suggested that the tradition ended because it made fire marshals nervous, and the Knights had to settle for cold pistachio ice cream. After the banquet, the Gardners performed at the New Haven Gaelic Hurling and Football Club on Venice Place in East Haven.

In Hamden, more than 500 runners participated in a new event, the Knights of Columbus St. Patrick's Day Roadrace.

1982 "'Twas a day of dignity and decorum as befits the honoring of St. Patrick and the green," commented the Register. "Drawing a crowd estimated at more than 50,000 spectators to downtown New Haven streets, the ... St. Patrick's Day parade came off without a hitch Sunday afternoon ... Even Mother O'Nature did her best for the Irish, providing a sunny, if a touch breezy, day. The oldest parade of its kind held between Boston and New York City, the event drew an estimated 3,000 marchers from throughout the state who passed between greened-up throngs lining the city's streets from upper Chapel to the Green."

Led by Grand Marshal Michael V. Lynch, the parade stepped off at 2 p.m. from Chapel Street and Derby Avenue and ended at Church and Grove streets. Among those marching were Gov. William A. O'Neill, U.S. Sens. Christopher Dodd and Lowell P. Weicker Jr. and U.S. Rep. Lawrence J. DeNardis.

Sen. Charles Mathias of Maryland was the guest speaker and Superior Court Judge John Reynolds was master of ceremonies at the Knights of St. Patrick banquet held in the Yale Commons.
That the parade had become a celebration for all nationalities was evident from comments of some of the 50,000 spectators. Yvette Chambers, whose ancestors were French and English, pointed to five generations of her family watching the festivities from the back of a pickup truck and commented, "We have made this parade a family gathering for the past five years." She said the day had special meaning for the oldest and youngest of the family: great-grandmother Olive, 76, and great-grandchild Christianne, 14, were both born on St. Patrick's Day.

1983

In the same vein, Jong Chu Park, a native of Korea studying political science at Yale, suggested, "There ought to be a day like this to celebrate all nationalities. It's great. In Korea, there is no such thing as this because everyone is only Korean. It has been the same for 5,000 years. But perhaps I'll be able to take some changes back."

Later, tragedy struck when John J. Moffitt, 53, a member of the Lancraft Fife and Drum Corps, was stricken with an apparent heart attack just after his unit passed the reviewing stand. A one-time independent candidate for mayor of New Haven, Moffitt died the next day at St. Raphael's Hospital. At his funeral at St. George's Church in Guilford on St. Patrick's Day, the fife and drum corps played such Irish tunes as "Minstrel Boy" and "Garry Owen."

1984 A sewer construction project on Chapel Street forced the parade to detour from its usual route. Instead of heading straight down Chapel Street to Church Street, marchers turned off Chapel onto York and George streets to avoid the sewer trenches. Owners of taverns along the parade route grumbled a bit about the detour, but conceded they were close enough to the line of march to still do a brisk business on the day of the parade. For the parade, the Board of Aldermen approved a temporary renaming of Church Street to Joseph T. Carr Boulevard in honor of the late Joseph T. Carr, a longtime city employee who was active in the Irish-American community. On the day of the parade, blustery winds and a 30-degree temperature greeted marchers and spectators, but the crowd lining the streets was still estimated to be about 50,000. Finbarr Moynihan was grand marshal for the event, which included more than 100 marching units and such regulars as Gov. William A. O'Neill and Mayor Biagio DiLieto. A former prisoner of war, Navy Capt. Richard A. Stratton, was guest speaker at the banquet of the Knights of St. Patrick at the Park Plaza Hotel. Stratton was shot down over Vietnam in 1967 and held prisoner for six years in Vietnamese prison camps.

1985 A number of Connecticut residents had the privilege of marching both in the New Haven parade and on St. Patrick's Day itself in the parade in Dublin.

After marching in New Haven, a contingent of 60 members of the Governor's Foot Guard accompanied by their families flew to
Ireland. They were greeted by bagpipers at Dublin Airport and welcomed by the lord mayor of Dublin. The Guardsmen — dressed in traditional red coats, white breeches, black leggings and towering bearskin shakos and carrying muskets — marched in the largest parade ever in the Irish capital as 250,000 spectators stood 10 deep along the two-mile route on O'Connell Street. After the parade, the guardsmen were guests at the lord mayor's banquet and then were transported to Limerick for a parade there the next day before flying out of Shannon Airport. Walter J. Walsh of West Haven, a former grand marshal of the New Haven parade, described the trip as "the thrill of a lifetime."

The New Haven parade drew one of the largest crowds ever, an estimated 65,000 spectators. State politics got tangled up in it when green buttons with the inscription "McGuigan In, O'NeiII Out," appeared on the lapels of some marchers and spectators. The buttons referred to Gov. William A. O'Neill and Chief State's Attorney Austin J. McGuigan, both of whom marched in the parade.

"O'Neill and McGuigan," explained the Journal-Courier, "those good sons of Erin, also have not been getting on so well of late. McGuigan has been locked in a dispute with Public Safety Commissioner Lester J. Forst. The governor went so far a few weeks ago as to say that if things didn't change somebody would have to go. Since O'Neill had given a glowing vote of confidence to Forst, it appeared that McGuigan was the one who would have to go unless there was a drastic change. Not in the minds of some of the St. Patrick's Day celebrants in New Haven.

"New Haven lawyer Hugh Keefe, another one of those good sons of Ireland, wore one of the buttons Sunday and said he was one of several people to show his support for McGuigan. There have been claims that Keefe, a good friend of McGuigan's, engineered the button boom. Like any good defense attorney, Keefe was coy when accused. 'I'm not at liberty to tell you,' he said with a laugh. 'I wore one. I was one of several people. I was sorry that I didn't run into the governor. It would be fair to say I was involved. It wouldn't risk a libel suit.'"

For his part, McGuigan would only comment that he had nothing to do with the buttons. "I know they're counterfeit," he added, "because they don't have the union trademark." The governor had no comment.
An issue that had been smoldering for some time broke into flames when U.S. Sen. Edward M. Kennedy of Massachusetts canceled out as guest speaker for the annual Knights of St. Patrick banquet after he learned that women were excluded from attending. Kennedy said he had a longstanding policy of avoiding events excluding women.

The senator’s action triggered a flurry of statements and counterstatements, charges and countercharges. Mary Osborne, spokeswoman for an informal group of “about 20 politically active women,” said the women were mounting a crusade against politicians who attended the all-male banquet. “We’re not telling the Knights to do anything,” she explained. “The issue is discrimination. We’re calling on our elected officials not to attend the dinner because the Knights discriminate against women.”

Nancy Lynch, president of the New Haven chapter of the National Organization for Women, said, “By deliberately excluding all women, including locally prominent women in business and politics from their annual St. Patrick’s dinner, the Knights of St. Patrick and those male guests who have accepted their invitation are delivering a message that theirs is a closed organization which has no respect for women, not even for those who have achieved public office or made outstanding contributions to the community.”

For their part, most state politicians — U.S. Sen. Christopher J. Dodd, U.S. Rep. Bruce A. Morrison, Gov. William A. O’Neill and New Haven Mayor Biagio DiLieto — said they would continue to attend the banquet, women or not. Dodd said, “I have no difficulty with it whatsoever. Last week I addressed the Women’s Insurance Club of Connecticut and I was the only man there. If the event is one that is a public policy kind of forum, that would be different. But this is a club of men who gather in tuxedos once a year to tell Irish stories. Regardless of whatever decision Sen. Kennedy makes, I plan on being there.”

U.S. Rep. Bruce Morrison, representing Connecticut’s 3rd District including New Haven, stated, “When I’m invited to speak by a group of my constituents, it’s not my place to tell them how they should run their organization.” Morrison said were he a member of the Knights he would favor admitting women, but “in the end it’s a private organization and they can make their own choice. As constituents, I owe them the same respectful response as I do to anyone.”
ON MUSIC.

Air.—“Banks of Banna.”

When through life unblest we rove,
Losing all that made life dear,
Should some notes we used to love,
In days of boyhood, meet our ear,
Oh! how welcome breathes the strain!
Wakening thoughts that long have slept,
Kindling former smiles again
In faded eyes that long have wept.

Like the gale, that sighs along
Beds of oriental flowers,
Is the grateful breath of song,
That once was heard in happier hours;
Fill’d with balm the gale sighs on,
Though the flowers have sunk in death;
So, when pleasure’s dream is gone,
Its memory lives in Music’s breath.

Music, oh how faint, how weak,
Language fades before thy spell!
Why should Feeling ever speak,
When thou canst breathe her soul so well?
Friendship’s balmy words may feign,
Love’s are even more false than they;
Oh! ’tis only music’s strain
Can sweetly soothe, and not betray.

The tattered first page of “The Universal Irish Song Book” that was brought across the Atlantic from County Wicklow.
1975 The Lancraft Drum Corps of New Haven repeated its earlier visit to Ireland and participated in the annual parade in Dublin. The corps arrived in Ireland the week before the parade there and performed in Cork, Limerick and Tralee before marching in the capital of the republic.

Back in New Haven, perfect spring weather drew 30,000 spectators downtown to enjoy the annual parade which featured marching units from Bristol, Meriden and Torrington, and was punctuated by the periodic firing of their cannon by members of the Ancient Mariners of Guilford.

Speaker at the Knights of St. Patrick annual banquet at the Sheraton-Park Plaza Hotel was editor, writer and television personality George Plimpton. Plimpton regaled the Knights with anecdotes from his many sports escapades, such as playing "last-string" quarterback for the Baltimore Colts, pitching to Willie Mays in Yankee Stadium and boxing heavyweight champion Archie Moore. In the spirit of the occasion, he attributed his adventurous nature to having been born near St. Patrick’s Day.

1976 The annual parade on Sunday, March 14, was the city’s first major outdoor event in a year of special activities in connection with the U.S. Bicentennial. In honor of that celebration, floats were sponsored by the New Haven Bicentennial Committee, the Gaelic Football and Hurling Club, Knights of Columbus of Father Curtin Council in West Haven and the West Haven Irish-American Club.

The weather cooperated with bright sunshine bathing the route and warding off brisk wind gusts to make the parade most enjoyable for 1,000 participants and 35,000 spectators. On the reviewing stand were Grand Marshal John O’Donovan, Mayor Frank Logue, Fire Chief Francis Sweeney and Police Chief Biagio DiLieto.

The Knights of St. Patrick dined at the Sheraton-Park Plaza with Judge Walter Kennedy as guest speaker.

St. Patrick's Day itself was glum, preceded as it was on March 16 by a day of rain and snow, all of which led the Journal-Courier to editorialize: "A white St. Patrick’s Day? Come, come, now. Look again. This is the day when green abounds, in the imagination if not in
actual fact … Yesterday’s dismal rain, the late-season snow, the silent grayness of the bare trees? All will pass away. Today let’s be a little color blind and see some fresh green somewhere.

“Legends of St. Patrick are almost as numerous as shamrocks. Patrick, the 5th century man of steadfast faith, was in confrontation with King Logaire for having dared to light the Paschal fire on Easter Eve in violation of the rules of a pagan festival then afoot at Tara. For his weapon, Patrick plucked from the soil a trefoil and touched its three leaves as he recited: 'In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost,' and there began one of history’s great missionary careers.

“Be one Christian or otherwise, Irish or not, today is a special day. Let the trefoil stand for good will, good cheer and friendliness. Think thoughts of universal fellowship and spring and you will bring each of these closer.”

1977  Terry Gallagher Crouth, already the first woman president of the West Haven Irish-American Club, broke more new ground when she became the first woman to serve on the 40-member parade committee and the first woman to lead a major segment of the parade. "It’s always a thrill to march in this parade," said Crouth, whose Irish roots were in counties Limerick and Sligo. "There’s no way to describe the pride in your Irish heritage as you step right along the line of march."

Unfortunately, a steady rain on Sunday, March 13, kept the crowd to the lowest number in years: an estimated 1,500. Fifty units hid their bright uniforms and musical instruments under rain garb. Mayor Frank Logue in top hat and formal attire led the contingent of parade organizers and city officials who slogged through the rain-soaked streets.

At the Knights of St. Patrick banquet, television newscaster Harry Reasoner of Westport spoke of what he called the "national disillusionment in the wake of a decade of violence and corruption in American political life." He recalled the assassinations of President John F. Kennedy, the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. and Robert F. Kennedy, the civil rights agitation in American cities and the resignation of President Nixon under fire for the Watergate scandal. He said the nation needed
to produce new heroes for the final years of the 20th century, commenting, "We have got to do better for the next century."

Col. James T. Fleming was toastmaster and greetings were extended by President John F. Walsh and general chairman Edward M. Reynolds. Among those attending the dinner were two women: Sheryl Previll of WTNH-TV and Elizabeth Curren, society editor of the Register.

1978 A new touch was added to the festivities when A. Bartlett Giamatti became the first president of Yale University to participate in the parade. "He didn't actually trek along the route with the marchers," explained the Register, "but as an honored guest in the reviewing stand he cut a dashing, very Irish figure. To complement his dark gray pin-striped suit, Giamatti sported a green carnation and a green and Yale-blue ribbon. And topping it off was Giamatti's Irish white thorn walking stick, a rare accessory. Spectators said Giamatti could have passed for the Irish ambassador as he was chauffeured from his Westville home to the reviewing stand in a green Cadillac that was adorned with fluttering Irish flags."

No Yale president previously participated in the parade, the newspaper explained, quoting a parade spokesman as saying, "because the style of the university never lent itself to an overture by parade organizers." Giamatti's desire to improve town-gown relations and his
record of community involvement led to the history-making event, the spokesman said.

James Dinan was grand marshal for the parade and he was joined by Mayor Frank Logue, Fire Chief Francis Sweeney and Police Chief Edward Morrone in leading the marchers.

An Irishman in New Haven for the observance expressed surprise at the extent of the celebration. "I'd heard about this celebration, but I never expected to see green lines painted down the center of your streets," said Eddie McElheron, leader of the Avoca Ceili Band from County Wicklow in Ireland. "I've never seen anything like this in my life. And we haven't even reached St. Patrick's Day yet ... We do celebrate this day, but not on this scale. We have our parades, but it's a religious holiday..." McElheron's band was in New Haven to play at the annual Knights of St. Patrick banquet at the Sheraton-Park Plaza Hotel.

The annual parade was conducted amid occasional snow flurries and a 37-degree temperature with more than 100 units and 35,000 spectators. In his Editor's Note column in the Saturday, March 17, Register, Robert J. Leeney recalled quieter St. Patrick's Days in his youth a half century before.

"Back in Fair Haven when I was a boy," wrote Leeney, "everybody was Irish — almost — but there was no St. Paddy's Day parade. The Irish were close to their roots, consumed by their jobs, and so immersed in family pursuits which were often religious pursuits, that public manifestations like local parades were out of the picture.

"St. Patrick's Day might provide a brief respite from the mortifications of Lent — but it wouldn't be much more than a cake with green frosting on the table, a sentimental serving of Irish soda bread (which was not normally held in high regard), or, for the man of the house, a bottle of the homemade beer which was brewed in most kitchens during the Prohibition era.

"For children, St. Patrick's Day meant a green tie, green ribbons or a green silk shamrock or harp placed near the shoulder before the trip to school. And in the afternoon in St. Francis classrooms the nuns would let the seventh- or eighth-grade boy with the sweetest singing voice — Francis Kendrick in my time — sing 'Danny Boy,' or 'That Tumbled Down Shack in Athlone,' or 'A Little Bit of Heaven
Fell From Out the Sky One Day.' But that came only after the full stint of lessons and learning and occasional head rapping had been observed.

"On the evening of the 17th the Holy Name Society would have its annual Irish Night of amateur songs and amateur dances, starting in the church basement at 7:30 p.m. and over by 10. It was an uncomplicated one-day celebration — and while everybody participated, it all came mutually, naturally and without great intensity or emphasis. The simplicity, I see now, came from the certitude of it all. Everybody was Irish, so there was no need — or at best a very small need — to proclaim Irishness …

"In so close-knit a community, personality and idiosyncrasy clearly came in for intense scrutiny. We were all so much alike that differences had value and Irishness had a thousand faces … The green ties and the emerald ribbons we flourished on the 17th of March were bright adornments — but they signified a harsh memory: 'They’re hanging men and women there, for the wearin' of the green.'

"My father had been a country schoolmate of Eamon De Valera. And late in life they exchanged a couple of reminiscent letters when the Old Irish Eagle was living in Eire's presidential home at Dublin's Phoenix Park. But that link had no inflammatory effect upon our lives.

"The old country was then far away. The one-way voyage to which so many of these Fair Haveners pledged themselves had been difficult and expensive, and emotion-ridden. There was little thought of turning back, despite the sentimental songs and prayers and the letters from home.

"As for parading, the standard 50-hour week kept fathers and husbands busy until 1 p.m. on Saturday. Fair Haven was an Irish community intent on being American. If Fair Haven's Irish marched for St. Patrick's Day, who’d be there from the outside to watch? So we didn’t march."
Morrison's comments infuriated Osborne who commented, "Suppose a local chapter of the Ku Klux Klan invited him to speak?"

Another feminist, New Haven lawyer Margaret Dean commented, "If it were a group that excluded blacks, none of these people would go. The rights of private clubs are fine. But when all the major politicians of the state are present, it rises to the level of a public forum from which women are excluded on the basis of sex. And it's not good for public officials to engage in sexism."

State Rep. Peggy Beckett-Rinker of Branford said that women ought to choose their battles carefully and that the banquet might not be the right issue, but added that the organization should consider opening the dinner to women because it had become a quasi-political affair. "Is it just a boys' night out or is it more than that?" she said. "They ought to think about it."

The women also complained of the willingness of the Catholic Church to grant a dispensation from the requirement of not eating meat on Fridays during Lent to an organization that barred women from attending the banquet. In a letter to Archbishop John F. Whealon of Hartford, Maureen Malone-Jones said the dispensation sent a message "that the tradition of barring women is more sacred than the traditions of the church." A spokesman for the archdiocese replied that such dispensations were commonplace and said the question of the Knights' policy was not even considered when granting the dispensation.

In the end, former Pittsburgh Steeler halfback Rocky Bleier filled in as guest speaker at the event while about 40 protesters picketed outside the Park Plaza Hotel.

At the banquet, toastmaster Robert J. Leeney stated, "This is the 108th time the Irishmen of New Haven have gathered at table like this. For the first time in all those years we've been told it's not seemly. And that's a message we can ponder, surely, without killing the messenger.

"But let us, and any wondering guests, review how we came to be here, Irishmen by the hundreds with their male friends, all Irish-by-adoption for the occasion. Our fathers started it, putting on best bib and tucker, black tie and weskit to gather around tables spread with abundant food and spirit, not to turn away from wives and families, but to celebrate them, to honor the worth of the gallant, creative and hard-working women, and the aspirations of the large-eyed children, who shared with them, our fathers, the struggle for a good life and
individual identity in a strange new world an ocean away from their beginnings.

"It wasn't always a friendly world. One hundred and eight years ago in New Haven, 'Irish need not apply' still had a place in job advertising. When St. Mary's Church was built by immigrant Irish on Hillhouse Avenue, The New York Times had a headline in 1879 — one year after this banquet began — which said, 'How an Aristocratic Avenue Was Blemished.' It described the 'repulsive appearance' of the stone church and concluded it was an eyesore, 'a source of annoyance and injury' to the neighbors and a financial failure.

"In that climate of rejection, Irishmen met in beleaguerment and pride on St. Patrick's Day when this club was founded — not to remove themselves from the family hearth in self-centered, all-male pleasure, but to bring the warmth and the needs of that hearth's wives and children to a central sharing place, in the company of other men who sought security in their mutual Irishness and expressed ambition and faith with all the tone and quality they could scrimp together for their celebration. It was ethnic then, and it's ethnic now — but not sexist.

"Dressed to the nines, exhuberant in our memories, touched still by the sadness of old battles lost where oppression still persists, Irishmen become their fathers on this night, to renew the dim Celtic legends at this dinner.

"In today's comfortable acceptance, it is true, the linen and the silver and the wine may all seem self-serving, the ethnic memory a bit overblown, the blarney a bit slick. But this tradition started in a time when Irish women, anchoring the home and the children, said — like the legendary Kathaleen — 'Go, and strike a blow for the Green.'

"That's the foundation on which this evening was built a hundred years ago and on which it has so long prospered and flourished in good cheer.

"We are not beyond change. The poet O'Shaughnessy, in his ode to the music makers and the dreamers of dreams reminds us that as part of this new world's worth: 'Each age is a dream that is dying, or one that is coming to birth.'

"The Knights of St. Patrick were born amidst change, to ease the pangs of change and to advance changes our fathers hoped would come. There is surely change ahead for all of us and for the parties we hold. And the flexible, adaptable, assimilative wisdom that has guided this
brotherhood so consistently is not going to desert us now at the challenge of change.

"But, we need take no bum rap for doing what this party has always done proudly — marshaling Ireland's offspring in the old-fangled way of those who came before us, to celebrate Maeve and Deirdre and Isuelt and Maude Gonne, and Cochinbar and Finn MacCool, Robert Emmet, Daniel O'Connell and the rest, women and men from many ages, all heroes — beyond gender — in the land St. Patrick blessed and in the history we commemorate this night."

1987 The battle over the Knights of St. Patrick banquet heated up with about 125 protesters — men and women — demonstrating outside the Park Plaza Hotel where 500 Knights and guests gathered for the annual affair.

Representing organizations as diverse as the New Haven Green Party, the New Jewish Agenda, the Greater New Haven Peace Council and the Urban League, the protesters carried signs reading "Peace, Justice and Equality for all Men and Women," and "Shame for Locking Out Your Own Wives and Daughters."

"It's a sad commentary on the people inside that they continue to exclude women," said George Springer, president of the Connecticut Federation of Teachers, one of the protesters. "It makes a statement about how they value women in society and how they value women in their lives ..."

The protesters could claim some success in their crusade against the men-only dinner. U.S. Rep. Bruce A. Morrison and Yale President Benno C. Schmidt Jr. both turned down invitations to the affair and U.S. Sen. Christopher J. Dodd did not attend, his office issuing a statement that his absence was due to scheduling difficulties.

Continuing to attend the banquet were Gov. William A. O'Neill and Mayor Biagio DiLieto. "I don't believe for one minute," DiLieto said, "that the Knights of St. Patrick discriminate against women. I have attended other functions of the Knights and there have been more women there than men. The Knights have 25, 30 and even 40 events a year, and women are encouraged to attend all but one."

The guest speaker for the evening, Paul Maguire, a sometime professional football player turned sportscaster, did nothing to raise the
level of debate above the locker room when he commented, "I won't back out of it. Especially if a bunch of women wanted me to."

While the banquet was becoming more controversial, the parade was becoming more than ever a city institution, as was evident in the publication by the Register of an article titled, "A guide to watching the St. Patrick's festivities ..."

"There is no best place to watch the St. Patrick's Day parade," the article began. "There are many. Parade officials claim the reviewing stand is the best. Restaurant owners boast their respective venues afford the supreme spot from which to view the annual affair. It comes down to personal preference. If you like outdoor drinking, go to Kavanagh's. If you like a touch of class, watch from the steps of the Yale University Art Gallery. If you like a little darkness at the edge of the parade route, stop downstairs at Malone's Three Stein Grill. And if you're interested in ice cream, corned beef and cabbage soup and Irish gifts, you'll definitely be able to find what you're looking for along the two-mile parade route...

"Sidewalks and curbs provide the closest look at the action, but those who desire a more comprehensive view should probably stop by the Elm City Diner or the Chapel Square Mall's Picnic on the Green. 'Because you're elevated, you don't have any of the crowd in the way,' said Steve Klass, general manager of the Elm City Diner. 'We have the corner coming down Chapel Street and that's where a lot of different bands stop and play, and you have a panoramic view, as it were, at the corner of Chapel and Howe.'

"The floor-to-ceiling window upstairs at the Chapel Square Mall affords a clear view of the corner of Church and Chapel streets, where the reviewing stand is set up. 'If you're looking for where the bands are going to be doing their best, it's the reviewing stand,' said Michael V. Lynch, the parade treasurer. 'Most bands save their best musical tune or whatever to play in front of the judges who are going to be reviewing so they can be picked for an award.'

"Anita Lawrence, manager of Claire's Corner Copia on the corner of College and Chapel streets, believes the bands do their best work in front of her restaurant. 'The bands stop there and they do all their little routines right on the corner,' she said.

"Both Claire's and the nearby Atticus Book Store Cafe do a healthy takeout business on parade day. Parade-goers often stop by for a cup of corned beef and cabbage soup or a scone before heading across
the street to the benches and spacious steps outside the Yale University Art Gallery.

"A block from the art gallery, at Kavanagh's, the owners will pitch a green-and-white tent out back to handle the excess crowd. 'Last year, because the day was so gorgeous, I would imagine we had 15,000 to 20,000 people in and out all day,' said co-owner Frank Conti, who expects plenty of people to frequent the restaurant and tent again ...

"'We encourage the parents to bring the children,' Conti said. 'Believe it or not, it makes people a lot calmer when there are children around. They're not apt to get as loud. I think kids bring out the best in everybody.'

"When the kids get tired of Kavanagh's, they can walk down the street to Thomas Sweet for Bailey's Irish Cream ice cream and Irish potato candies, made of coconut creame and rolled in cinnamon.

"The ice cream, which owner Ken Mezaros only makes for St. Patrick's Day, contains about four ounces of Bailey's per gallon. 'That's the maximum legal requirement we can put in,' he said. Thomas Sweet, which usually has more than a dozen other flavors in its freezer, has a greenhouse seating area and a terrace outside with five picnic tables. 'This is a great place to watch the St. Patrick's Day parade,' Mezaros said. 'It comes right in front of the store.'

"Until last year, the parade ended right in front of Malone's, at the corner of Grove Street and Whitney Avenue. Construction work forced parade officials to extend the route to the corner of Grove and State streets, but the change doesn't seem to have hurt business. 'Basically all the bands off the street come right in here,' said Bob Dill, Malone's manager. 'All the bands play inside afterward.'

"St. Patrick's Day specials include corned beef sandwiches and green beer. The bartenders keep food coloring handy for customers who want their cocktails green ..."
An ardent fan of the parade, Mary Stokes Ahern reminisced about her feelings in a column in the Register. "This parade is very special to me," she wrote. "It is like a grand big party. Everyone, marchers and spectators alike, enjoying the music, the laughter and the fun ... I loved the debonair Mayor Lee when he marched the whole route in his top hat and tails. I love Mayor DiLieto with his green carnation and Joe Lieberman with his. I love the little Hibernian, walking along with his thorn cane, the Irish wolfhound in his green ribbons, the young step dancers. their faces filled with concentration. I love the Brownies and the Cubs, whose little legs have trouble keeping up with the rest, the policemen and firemen who give up their Sunday to honor St. Patrick. I love the policemen and their big horses, Cherokee, Cheyenne, Charger and Irish ..."

"I remember one Sunday in the '50s, after a very heavy snowstorm. The streets had not been very well cleared. The buses were not running up to West Hills, where I lived. My neighbor and her three children and I and my two walked from West Hills via Whalley Avenue to Dayton to Forest Road and down Chapel to Norton, just so we would not miss the parade. I do not think any of the kids, except the baby in the carriage, ever went to the parade again, at least not until they grew up. 'You go ahead, mom, and have a nice time, we'll stay home with dad and watch it on TV.' Johnny Glynn, however, the occupant of the carriage, grew up to join the Hurricanes and, to my knowledge, still marches with them ...

"Many an Irish song has been sung in Jocko Sullivan's, now Kavanagh's, and in Malone's Three Steins and the Seven Gables, popular stops at the beginning and end of the parade route. I have even joined in one or two myself. I hope to carry on the tradition for many more years. I love a parade.

"Arrah, may we live all the days of our lives."

The controversy over the Knights of St. Patrick men-only banquet raged. An estimated 200 protesters were on hand to greet the estimated 700 men attending the affair at the Park Plaza Hotel with shouts of "Shame on you," and signs reading, "Your mother couldn't eat here," and "We're fed up with macho dinner parties."

Joining the local protesters was Patricia Ireland, executive vice president of the National Organization for Women. Ireland said the problem with the banquet was that it was not just a social event, but a chance to make business and political contacts. "When the law firms
Kathleen Reilly, the first female grand marshal, strides down Chapel Street with her children, Jimmy and Alison.

and corporations buy tickets for entire tables, they recognize the importance of the dinner," she said.

Knights and their guests continued to deny that any such political or business networking occurred at the affair. James Shanley, chairman of the event, stated, "It's a nice evening out. You don't go to something like this to make deals." And, one guest, Father Peter Mitchell, chaplain of St. Francis Hospital in Hartford, commented, "There's no more business discussed here than on the golf course."

For the first time in its long history, New Haven's St. Patrick's Day parade was led by a female grand marshal: Kathleen Reilly. The 33-year-old West Haven woman had been associated with the parade committee for a decade and had previously served as chief of staff and as parade chairwoman. For a while, it seemed the weather was determined to rain — or snow — on Reilly's parade. The sun was shining at dawn on the day of the parade, but the skies soon grew dark and throughout the morning snow and then rain fell. By 2 p.m., however, the precipitation had slowed and by the end of the parade, the sun was again peeping through the clouds.

The weather didn't stop the crowd, however, for police estimated that 75,000 spectators turned out to watch the 3,000 marchers. "It was great," said Reilly, as she completed the march route with her husband, Jim, and children, Alison, 11, and Jimmy, 7. "I dodged the raindrops. The response from the crowd was terrific. They were very encouraging. They kept me going."

Also marching was Keith Sweeney, a West Haven detective who was shot in the leg a year before while pursuing a suspect. At one time, doctors gave Sweeney little chance of ever walking again, but several months after the shooting he said that his goal was to march in the St. Patrick's Day parade and, with the aid of a cane, a brace and fellow members of the West Haven Emerald Society, he reached that goal.

On the reviewing stand for the parade was a resident of County Wicklow who had a bit of the "I'm from Missouri" strain in him. A year earlier, Declan Roche, owner of a hotel and pub in Wicklow, met Father Joseph T. Rozint of Hamden while both were vacationing in Florida. When the conversation got around to New Haven's Irish and their parade, recalled the priest, "I told him New Haven has the biggest St. Patrick's Day parade between New York and Boston."

Roche decided he had to come to New Haven to see for himself. A couple of hours on the reviewing stand made a believer of him. What he saw was as good as what Rozint told him, said Roche, professing himself "amazed at the pride the Irish-Americans showed in their heritage ... The courtesy and the comradeship of the people was amazing. They're very proud of their Irish heritage."
A new twist was added to the debate over the Knights of St. Patrick banquet when feminists, upset by the men-only policy of the banquet, organized their own banquet. The awards dinner, said Shirley D'Auria, spokeswoman for the National Organization for Women, "is an alternative event which the public can participate in."

About 200 men and women attended the women's banquet at September's Restaurant. Guest speaker, acting state Attorney General Clarine Nardi Riddle, called the event "an affirmation that the battles that women have fought for decades, have meant something and have accomplished a great deal ... and the battles will continue to be fought and won throughout society."

Awards were presented to several persons prominent in feminist causes including: Sister Patricia McKeon, director of St. Vincent de Paul Place in Middletown; George C. Springer, a New Britain educator; authors Casey Miller and Kate Swift; state Senate Minority Leader Ameila P. Mustone and attorney Susan M. Omilian.

Gov. William A. O'Neill put in appearances at both banquets and told those at the feminists affair that the Knights had a right to their men-only dinner just as the feminists had a right to their dinner. The focus on the women's dinner served to reduce the number of protesters at the Knights of St. Patrick banquet at the Park Plaza Hotel where only 20 demonstrators showed up.

When suggestions were made that Kathleen Reilly had been selected as parade marshal in response to the controversy over the Knights banquet, Reilly responded in a Forum page column in the Register.

"This year, I was given the honor of being the first woman ever to lead the St. Patrick's Day parade as grand marshal," she wrote.

"The position of grand marshal is not an overnight appointment. When a grand marshal is elected, it is because that person has worked diligently for many, many years to help ensure the success of each and every parade that goes on the street.

"It is very puzzling to me that the National Organization for Women would attempt to insinuate that I may have been elected to the position of grand marshal to offset any controversy surrounding the absence of women at the annual Knights of St. Patrick dinner tonight..."

"The St. Patrick's Day Parade Committee is an organization that works year-round to raise funds for the following year's parade. I am a part of that effort 12 months of the year. Why is it that NOW only
concerns itself with my activities immediately before the Knights of St. Patrick dinner? There will be two dinners held tonight. One will be sponsored by the Knights of St. Patrick; one will be sponsored by NOW. I have not been invited to either dinner!"
1990s.

More to Come
Balmy, springlike weather and the special attraction of a team of eight Clydesdale horses owned by the Anheuser-Busch Brewing Co. were credited for bringing out the largest crowd ever to witness the parade, estimated by police to number up to 150,000.

"Chapel Street sidewalks were packed up to eight deep," said the Register, "as spectators decked out in their brightest greens cheered the passing parade of political leaders, marching bands, floats and Shriners zipping back and forth in go-carts." Arrangements for the magnificent
Clydesdale horses were made by former Mayor Richard C. Lee. The estimated 3,000 marchers were led by Grand Marshal Thomas F.W. Slater. On the reviewing stand were, among others, the city's first African-American mayor, John C. Daniels Jr., Gov. William A. O'Neill and 3rd District U.S. Rep. Bruce A. Morrison.

The debate over the men-only banquet of the Knights of St. Patrick continued unabated. Both O'Neill and Daniels turned down invitations to the dinner and attendance at the affair was estimated at 325, down from the usual 500. City Alderwoman Elizabeth McCormack said the low attendance was proof that protests of feminists had paid off by changing attitudes. James Shanley, chairman of the banquet committee, blamed the low attendance on the fact that the banquet was held on a Saturday night. Some Knights suggested that a change in the all-male policy might be forthcoming. "It's time for a change," commented Robert Sheeley, and Tom Gallagher said, "I respect the tradition, but I think it's going to be changed." In the event, about 10 feminist supporters stood outside the Park Plaza Hotel and scolded the tuxedo-clad Knights on their way into the banquet.

1991 The quick and successful conclusion of the Persian Gulf War gave the annual parade special zest. "One day each year," said the Hartford Courant, "everyone in (New Haven) turns Irish. But during the city's annual St. Patrick's Day parade Sunday, it was clear that even the most ardent shamrock-booster was one thing first: American. Although the bagpipes, fife and drum corps and Irish dancers got their share of cheers, it was the National Guard, Army Reserve and Vietnam veterans' units that earned the loudest applause from the nearly 150,000 spectators who lined the chilly two-mile parade route.

"There's always enthusiasm for the military," said Joan Moynihan, a member of the parade committee, "but I've never heard it like this. It's all over the country. Everyone's just very proud of American military successes in the Persian Gulf."

A total of 3,000 marchers in 130 units — 10 more than in the previous year — followed the green stripe down Chapel Street and turned onto Church to pass the reviewing stand in front of City Hall. The latest addition to the parade was a gaily decorated truck sponsored by the Connecticut Irish-American Historical Society. The society's
president, Jeanne Roche Hickey, waved to spectators from the cab of the truck which was driven by her husband, Norman Hickey.

Former U.S. Rep. Bruce A. Morrison received cheers along the route for his work in securing immigration reform that opened up the gates to the United States to thousands of previously barred Irish men and women.

Although he had marched the route 35 times before, the parade's grand marshal had special reason to celebrate. Michael Bohan, a native of Mohill, County Leitrim, had hip replacement surgery the previous August. "I marched in the first modern-day version of the parade (in 1956) and haven't missed a march since then," said Bohan, who after his hip replacement went on a regimen of increasingly long walks to prepare for the parade.

The night before the parade, two prominent local Irishmen — Patrick Hosey and Ted Taylor — were honored at the annual parade ball at Sante's Manor in Milford. Hosey, a native of County Longford, was honored for many years of involvement in the New Haven Gaelic Football and Hurling Club, in the annual Irish Feis and in promoting Irish football. Taylor was honored for his promotion of the Special Olympics for youngsters with disabilities.

In accepting the award, Hosey commented, "If St. Patrick were to walk into this room tonight he'd be at ease and make the rounds of the room, probably even join a few of us at the bar. After all, that's how St. Patrick came to know the tribal chieftains and how they came to know and trust in him. He sat down with them and ate and drank with them and gained their confidence and sooner or later they had each other's respect."

New Haven's parade was on March 10 and on March 17 another parade, the first St. Patrick's Day parade in Milford succeeded far beyond its organizers' most optimistic predictions. "A little more than six months ago," reported the New Haven Register, "the city's first-ever St. Patrick's Day parade was nothing more than a giggle between Carol Schneider and Maureen Birge, the Irish-American lassies who thought it up. But no one was laughing Sunday as police estimated almost 20,000 people lined the one-mile route between City Hall and the gazebo on the Green for the city's best-attended parade, save for its 350th celebration in 1989. More than 100 units and sunny, 55 degree weather combined to make the 45-minute, low-budget parade one of the city's longest ever."
Dancers of the Lenihan School of Irish Dance do a jig on Church Street during the 1991 parade.

It might even be said that the first Milford parade left a permanent mark on that community. Several weeks after the parade, it was revealed that water-soluble paint had not been used to paint the green stripe on downtown streets for the parade. "They used super-duper highway paint," said Mayor Fred Lisman with a shrug. "It's indelible." City crews attempted to cover up parts of the line with black paint, but, reported the Register, "bits, including some shamrocks sprinkled on West Main Street, still peek out."

For the first time in several years, the annual Knights of St. Patrick banquet, held at 500 Blake Street, a Westville restaurant, was not picketed by women protesting the male-only dinner. About 250 attended the dinner, while the Feminist Leadership Awards Banquet, begun as a protest of the Knights men-only affair, drew 300 diners at Yale Commons.
1992

More to come.