

History of the Sixty-Ninth Regiment, New York “Fighting Sixty-Ninth”

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Background

For over 100 years, the U.S. Army designated the founding date of the Sixty-Ninth Regiment of New York (The Fighting Sixty-Ninth) as 1851. Historians writing about the first 10 years of the Regiment only discussed the Second Irish Regiment and its ties to the New York Irish community. However, late in the 20th century, the Army Center of Military History changed the lineage of some of the New York regiments giving the Sixty-Ninth Regiment an earlier organization date. This change in lineage provided the Regiment with a more colorful early history linking it much more closely to the Irish revolutionary movement in New York City. This was a significant change which immediately rendered all existing histories of the Sixty-Ninth Regiment incomplete. Furthermore, the change linked the Sixty-Ninth Regiment even more closely with attempts to form an “Irish Brigade within the New York militia system.



Michael Doheny

Michael Doheny a leader of the failed Rebellion of 1848 along with other Republican leaders created three regiments in Manhattan: the First Irish Regiment, brought into the State Militia as the “Irish” Ninth Regiment; the Second Irish Regiment, brought into the State Militia as the Sixty-Ninth Regiment; and the Fourth Irish Regiment, brought into the State Militia as the Seventy-fifth Regiment. These three regiments are all in the lineage of the Sixty-Ninth Regiment of today. The three regiments co-existed until they were consolidated in 1858 as the Sixty-Ninth Regiment. Note there was another Irish Regiment, the Third Irish Regiment (72nd Regiment NYSM) established on Long Island is not in the Sixty-Ninth Regiment’s lineage. These regiments rounded out the Irish Brigade of New

York, replete with infantry, artillery, dragoons, pikemen, and engineers.¹

Most American still considered England a potential enemy at this time. Only five years earlier slogans in the United States were "All Oregon or None" and “Fifty-four Forty or Fight”. In 1848 England invaded Nicaragua and ceased San Juan. Fortunately war was avoided by the Clayton-Bulwer Treaty. Although Washington was concerned about Briton, it was also concerned about



Thomas Francis Meagher

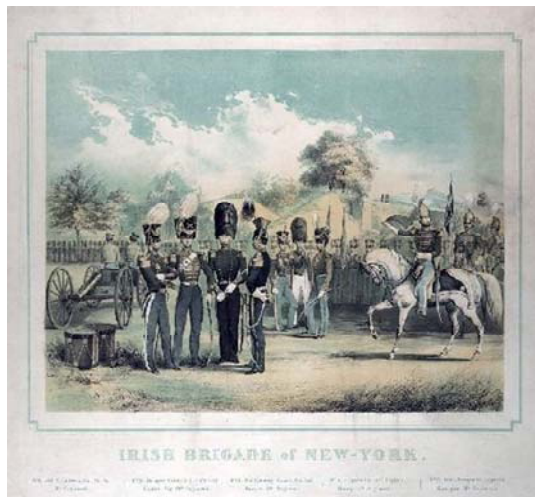
the Irish who lived in the U.S. The loyalty of the Irish to Ireland however did not mean they were not loyal to the United States. The Irish Revolutionaries of 1798 and 1848 looked to the United States for their ideals rather than to the more radical and anti-religious revolutionists found in Europe.²

Over a year after the First Irish Regiment was formed, the Second Regiment of the proposed Irish Brigade was

organized. The Second Irish Regiment was formed on October 12, 1851. The Second Irish Regiment was mustered into the New York State Militia on November 1, 1851 as the Sixty-Ninth Regiment. Michael Doheny left the Ninth Regiment and was appointed Lieutenant Colonel of the Sixty-Ninth Regiment.

In 1852, Thomas Francis Meagher, another leader of the failed Rebellion of 1848, escaped to New York and took an active role in the Irish Republican movement there. Later that year, Michael Doheny began to organize another Irish Regiment with Thomas Francis Meagher as the Commander. Michael Doheny left the Sixty-Ninth Regiment to become the Lieutenant Colonel of this new (Fourth) Irish Regiment designated the Seventy-fifth Regiment (organized September-December 1852 at New York from new and existing companies of volunteers as the Republican Rifles (Fourth Irish Regiment)). Since Thomas Francis Meagher was rarely in New York, Michael Doheny was the actual Commander. The organization of the Irish Brigade of New York was substantially in place by the summer of 1853.

Leaders from the three Irish regiments in New York City (Manhattan) moved back and forth within the three regiments throughout the 1850s. Captain James Huston left the Ninth Regiment to join the Sixty-Ninth Regiment as did Michael Doheny. Thomas Francis Meagher was elected Lieutenant Colonel by the Sixty-Ninth Regiment in 1855 but he turned the position down since he was not a citizen. The three Irish regiments in New York City co-existed until late 1858 when all three were consolidated into the Sixty-Ninth Regiment.



Thus the New York Irish Brigade which was first in the New York State Militia went out of existence not to be resurrected until Thomas Francis Meagher formed his Irish Brigade during the Civil War. The Ninth Regiment ceased to exist until later the next year (1859) when it was once again organized.

It is not uncommon for a regiment to trace through multiple units. In fact during the Civil War three "Sixty-Ninth Regiments" co-existed and those three regiments (Sixty-Ninth Regiment New York State Militia (NYSM) and later the Sixty-Ninth Regiment New York National Guard (NYNG); Sixty-Ninth

Infantry Regiment, New York State Volunteers (NYSV) and the Sixty-Ninth Artillery Regiment (Serving as Infantry New York State Volunteers (NYSV) - later the 182d Infantry Regiment NYSV) are all part of the today's Sixty-Ninth Infantry Regiment's proud lineage and history. The Ninth Regiment was consolidated with the Seventy-fifth Regiment in 1858 and later that year with the Sixty-Ninth Regiment. The consolidated regiment was called the Sixty-Ninth Regiment. The current regiment has the history and lineage of the all three of these Manhattan Irish Regiments.

As discussed throughout the 1850s, leaders of the Irish regiments in New York City moved back and forth within the Irish Regiments. A “Committee of Irish Regiments” had been formed to establish standards for raising and maintaining Irish regiments.³

1848

The year 1848 witnessed rebellions all over Europe. 1848 can be called the “Spring of Nations”⁴. There were revolutions in France, the German States, Kingdom of Denmark, Poland, Hungary, Switzerland, Romania, Brazil, Austrian Empire, and Ireland.

Irish Brigade of Young Ireland



William Smith O'Brien

An “Irish Brigade of Young Ireland” was proposed in Dublin by William Smith O’Brien who, on 23 March 1848, made public his concept of an Irish Brigade to be raised in America comprised of Irish immigrants.

Three weeks later, this plan was brought to life in New York City at the Shakespeare Hotel by Irish Republican factions known as the Irish Republican Union, Repeal Association, and Friends of Young Ireland. Irishmen who made their mark on the rolls of the Brigade were encouraged to “Go out and get yourself one of Colt’s revolvers”⁵. By May 1848, two of four companies were drilling. Company I was commanded by Cpt. Michael T. O’Connor with a Lt. James Bergen.⁶

After the failed “Young Ireland” revolt in Ireland in 1848, the remnants of Irish revolutionary (republican) leaders left Ireland and consolidated with Irish-American revolutionaries still active in New York. The central doctrine of these Irish republican leaders was that the freedom of Ireland could be won only by the force of arms. This position resonated with the Irish population of New York City. Irishmen, fresh from the horrors of the great famine and with great animosity toward the English, were ready to answer a call to arms.⁷

'82 Club and Tricolor



Club'82 Jacket

In Dublin, on 4th April, 1848, the return of a Deputation from France was celebrated by a banquet attended by two thousand Irish Nationalists. Several members of the '82 Club were present in their uniform.⁸ The '82 Club was a Republican organization named for Grattan’s Parliament of 1782 which secured legislative independence for Ireland when the threat of armed force by the “Irish Volunteers” set a precedent to achieve reform in Ireland. The Uniform of the '82 Club included a green frock coat. A similar green frock coat would be later adopted by the Irish Regiments in New York.



At the meeting one of the regimental colors of the old Dublin (Irish) Volunteers was presented to Mr. Smith O'Brien and Thomas Francis Meagher presented a Tricolor, through the President of the banquet, to the citizens of Dublin. This flag was to later be modified and adopted by the Irish Nation as its National Color.

When Thomas Francis Meagher presented the Tricolor he said: "From Paris, the city of the tricolor and the barricade, this flag has been proudly borne. I present it to my native land, and I trust that the old country will not refuse this symbol of a new life from one of her youngest children. I need not explain its meaning. The quick and passionate intellect of the generation now springing into arms will catch it at a glance. The white in the centre signifies a lasting truce between the "orange" and the "green" and I trust that beneath its folds, the hands of the Irish Protestant and the Irish Catholic may be clasped in generous and heroic brotherhood. Should this flag be destined to fan the flames of war, let England behold once more, upon that white centre, the Red Hand that struck her down from the hills of Ulster and I pray that Heaven may bless the vengeance it is sure to kindle."⁹

Irish Republicans in America

Michael Phalen, an Irishman raised in America, a well known billiard expert and the inventor of an improved billiard table, was the leader of the Irish republican movement in America. Michael Phalen believed that an uprising in Ireland could not succeed without the cooperation of a body of trained soldiers¹⁰. He described the first step in the formation of Irish regiments in New York at a meeting in the Shakespeare Hotel in the spring of 1848. Shortly after the meeting an organization called the Irish Republican Union was formed. The Irish Republican Union was controlled by a secret directorate. Its members included: Michael Phalen, James F. Markey, John G. Fay and James Huston. The Union welcomed the escaped Irish leaders of the abortive revolt of 1848, but in a short time strife broke out between the Union and the Irish Alliance headed by Thomas D'Arcy McGee, John Boyle and Thomas M. Halpin.



Michael Phalen

"Many eloquent spirit-stirring speeches were made at the meeting at the Shakespeare Hotel. One by Michael T. O'Connor, overflowing as it did from exorism to peroration with thoughts which breathe and words that burn, being particularly effective. When O'Connor had concluded, a young man present arose and abruptly put the question to him, whether he could fight as well as he had spoken. Upon his answering that he did not understand the question, I (for it was myself who had thus proposed to substitute action for discourse) told him that if he meant what he had just been saying he would have an opportunity to prove it, as it was my desire that then and there a regiment, if not a brigade, should be raised for the purpose of going to Ireland in

furtherance of the good cause. He approved of the suggestion, and having put it before the meeting, headed the roll with his own name - mine being second, accompanied by a sum of money that in those days, when fortune was less kind than in after years, I could ill afford to give. Additional names followed, and the nucleus of a brigade was formed. In a short time the organization was perfected; recruits flocked to the standard; and regular drills were held.”¹¹

In New York the Irish Republican leaders began to organize independent military companies in the city. In June and July 1848 there were a number of “monster meetings” where the “Irish Brigade” marched with an Irish Tri-color (designed by Thomas Francis Meagher, who was a exiled leader of the Rebellion of 1848 and a member of both the 75th and Sixty-Ninth Regiments) streaming from a pike. On 4 July 1848, an Irish Declaration of Independence was read by the “light of the silvery moon” in Williamsburg, New York. ¹²

The Irish Brigade of Young Ireland consisted of the following companies:

Company 1, Captain M.T. O’Conner and Lt. James Bergen
Company 2, Captain Dwyer
Irish Fusileers / Irish Patriot Fusileers, Captain Maurice Walsh
John Mitchel Guard, Captain James Markey
Guyon Cadets Captain Michael Phalen

They were armed with pikes, muskets, bayonets and fusils. The brigade expressed an interest in rapid fire fusils, colt revolvers, and light artillery. They also may have had a troop of lancers.¹³

James Markey raised the first company among workmen and dealers in the Washington Market at Fulton Street and the Hudson River. Most of its members were active in the John Mitchell Club, a Republican club founded in 1848. Michael Phalen was presented with a sword at the Michael Phalen Billiard Hall on Barclay Street. Drills were conducted at Center Market.¹⁴

Michael Phalen raised the Guyon Cadets sometime in late 1848 or early 1849. The Guyon Cadets were named after General Guyon, Gwyn or Quinn, the only General officer in the army of the Sultan who was not a Moslem. The son of a Post Captain in the English Navy, he had joined the British legion in Portugal during the Peninsular War at the age of sixteen. After the defeat of Napoleon he served many years in the Hungarian Hussars Regiment, and fought against the Austrians in 1848. He fled to Turkey rather than surrender and entered the Turkish service, where he rose to the rank of lieutenant General. He died in the fall of 1856.¹⁵

By July 1848, members of the Irish Brigade of Young Ireland infiltrated Ireland to serve as “force multipliers” where a cadre of Irish Brigade leaders would train individuals recruited in Ireland among the club system which existed. A number of these groups were rounded up by authorities in Ireland. ¹⁶



The Young Ireland Rebellion failed in August 1848 and 500 Pounds was offered for the capture of William Smith O'Brien and 300 Pounds for Thomas Francis Meagher, John B. Dillon, and Michael Doheny.¹⁷ In November the members of the Irish Brigade of Young Ireland returned to NYC.¹⁸ August 1849 marked the last known public display of the Irish Brigade of Young Ireland. An armed 16 man uniformed detachment, the Irish Patriot Fusiliers under the command of Captain Maurice Walsh, paraded in New York City in solidarity with Hungarian nationalists. These Irish Brigade of Young Ireland soldiers wore a green uniform with white facings and a chapeau with the letters "I.P.F". They marched behind a "tri-colour" mounted on a pike. Michael Doheny spoke at the gathering.¹⁹

1849

First Irish Regiment

Michael Doheny, a refugee from the failed 1848 Uprising, arrived in New York City in February 1849 with a price on his head. It is believed Michael Doheny involved himself with the Irish Brigade of Young Ireland and that he played a leading role in reorganizing that brigade into the Ninth Regiment. Michael Doheny was one of the Company Commanders of the nascent First Irish Regiment. He was instrumental in the founding of all of the Irish Regiments and a driving force behind the Irish Brigade of New York. In March 1849 Michael Doheny was received in the New York State Assembly by the Governor and other State Officers, as well as Senators and Members of Assembly.²⁰

In the summer of 1849 and continuing until the fall, Irish leaders in New York City began negotiations with the State to form an Irish regiment with the existing and future independent Irish companies. By October 1849, the Irish Brigade of Young Ireland reorganized with other independent militia companies into the “First Irish Regiment” in New York City. The First Irish Regiment is the earliest Regiment in the Sixty-Ninth Regiment’s lineage. The First Irish Regiment was formed on 21 December 1849 and mustered into the New York State Militia on 29 May 1850 as the Ninth Regiment.

In the summer of 1849 and continuing until the fall, the Irish leaders in New York City began negotiations with the State to form an Irish regiment with the existing and future independent Irish companies. On December 21, 1849 the First Irish Regiment was adopted by the State. (This date is the officially recognized date of organization for the Sixty-Ninth Regiment.)²¹

Many of the Irish revolutionary leaders, including Michael Phalen, Michael Doheny, Richard O’Gorman, and James Huston, participated in the meetings. Michael Doheny, O’Gorman, and James Huston had participated in the failed Irish Revolt of 1848. Michael Phalen was not in Ireland in 1848 but he also believed the Irish must train soldiers within the New York State Militia system to free Ireland. What is known about the meetings is that the “original Ninth Regiment” which had been formed in 1799, was disbanded on May 27, 1850 with its companies transferred to the Eight Regiment. Two days later, on May 29th 1850 the First Irish Regiment was mustered into the New York State Militia as the 9th with Colonel Benjamin Clinton Ferris, Commander.

There is almost a complete lack of information concerning these negotiations, which seem to have been of a complex nature, involving Colonel Ebenezer Jesup, Lt. Col. Benjamin Clinton Ferris, Adjutant Charles Sweeny and Paymaster Charles E. Shea of the Ninth Regiment, and James Huston, Michael Phalen, Michael Doheny, and Richard O’Gorman. All were lawyers, except Michael Phalen and James Huston. Michael Doheny, James Huston and O’Gorman had been leaders of the Young Ireland Party in Ireland in 1848. Major General Charles W. Sandford, commanding the First Division, was also a lawyer.²²

It can be said the Irish Brigade of Young Ireland was reorganized into the Ninth Regiment, In December 1849 the Ninth Regiment adopted the name "Irish Volunteers" which later in 1851 would be adopted by the 2d Irish Regiment, the Sixty-Ninth Regiment.²³

The "SF"

Within the Ninth Regiment, Captain James Houston commanded a secret organization known as the "SF", which was comprised of Irish revolutionaries. The "SF" (referred to as "Silent Friends" by Patrick D. O'Flaherty in "The History of the Sixty-Ninth Regiment of the New York State Militia 1851 to 1861") was called the "Sinn Fein" by J.C.P. Stokes the Historian of the Ninth Regiment in his November 4, 1953 letter to BG Keys concerning the history of the "Irish" Ninth Regiment.²⁴

The letter states: "Captain Hussey shows, on his pages 3 and 5, that various of his more notable facts respecting the lire organization (as he calls it) of the Ninth Regiment in 1850, were "culled" from a sketch of the life of Captain Michael Phalen, whom he shows to have been one of the most active promoters of the plan or the "expatriated Irishmen" of 1848-9 to have their Irish Republican Union incorporated as a part of the New York State Militia and who to that end formed it, towards the close of 1849 into some sort of a "brigade" divided into companies and officered in accordance with the militia laws" then existing; the said sketch being as written by a Mr. Michael Cavanagh and as published in the Celtic Magazine in June, 1882; and culled also from a letter addressed to the Irish People by el-Captain Michael Phalen himself, on a far earlier date, viz .. on May 18, 1866, relative to the activities within the new regiment of those certain Irish revolutionists then in New York, whom Captain Michael Phalen called "the S. F's but whom Captain Hussey, in the interview I was privileged to have with him in my office at our Regiment's Armory in January 1925 (as proposed by him in his letter to me of December 18, 1924, which lies before me declared to me. With such great emphasis and as of his own knowledge, to have been in truth the same previously wholly secret group of Irish revolutionists who, at the time of the then regiment's disbandment, in May 1858 had, become known as "the Sein Feins (Sinn Fein) concerning Which matter you will find more in the sequel, (Spell the name "Sinn Fein" if you prefer. – the spelling is in either case but a phonetic English rendering of corresponding Gaelic words.)"²⁵

The Silent Friends were directed by an invisible Council of five members, supposedly known only to Captain Michael Phalen, who held the position of Communicating Officer as well as the Commander of Company "D".²⁶ James Huston was President of the Silent Friends, and Maurice Walsh was treasurer. The other three are not known. Michael Doheny was not a member of the Silent Friends but was active in the regiment. The leaders of the Silent Friends, even before the first volunteers had been accepted by the State, had begun to recruit a second regiment.²⁷

In the fall of 1849 Michael Corcoran left Ireland and came to New York. He had been a Revenue Officer in Ireland but was a member of a rural guerilla group known as the "Ribbonmen". Corcoran enforced tax laws during the day but at night he harassed landlords by killing their livestock and burning barns. Corcoran was 6 foot two and this made him easily recognizable and when he came under suspicion for seditious activity he decided to leave Ireland²⁸. Corcoran got a job at the Hibernian House, a tavern at 42 Prince Street in New York City. The tavern was

frequented by many Tammany Hall leaders and soon after he was appointed to a well-paying patronage position in the post office. He joined the First Irish Regiment and later transferred to the Second Irish Regiment.

1850

In January 1850 Michael Doheny of the “Irish Volunteers” attended the ball of Carroll Light Guard and addressed the soldiers wearing the Uniform of the ’82 Club²⁹. The “’82 Club” jacket was worn by several Republican leaders during the Rebellion of 1848. The ’82 Club was formed in 1844 to promote and encourage Irish art, culture, and feelings. It was named after the great events of 1782. Members of the Club wore green jackets with gold facings.³⁰



Club’82 Jacket

choice.”³¹

Even out of state newspapers disapproved of the green uniform and idea of having an all-Irish regiment. The *Providence Journal* expressed alarm at the formation of the exclusively Irish Regiment, claiming it welcomed foreigners, but deplored the formation of foreign regiments in foreign dress.³²

The Ninth Regiment adopted the name “National Cadets which was to be later adopted by the Sixty-Ninth Regiment after the two regiments were consolidated in 1858. Seven companies of the Ninth Regiment were ready by January, 1850, and on January 4, about three hundred men turned out for the first parade of the regiment at Center Market. Five companies were present: The “Irish Fusileers” lead by Captain Walsh; The “Desmond Fusileers” lead by Captain Dowling; The “Jackson Rangers” or Company “C” “Irish Pike Fusileers” lead by Captain Michael Doheny; The “Carroll Guard” lead by Captain Kavanagh; The “Guyon Cadets” lead by

Green Frock Coat

The uniform of the Ninth Regiment included a green frock coat, blue pants, black patent leather cross belts. The adoption of the green frock coat by the Irish Regiments which resembled the uniform of the ’82 Club was a source of strife for the next eight years. The Ninth Regiment from its very beginning, even before it was accepted by the State as a militia regiment, had worn a green frock coat. The green frock coat meant much to the exiled Irish. It was the symbol of freedom and the right to bear arms but the hatred of the green coat expressed by the Native American Party, shortly after it had been approved by Governor Fish in 1849 made the Irish determined to keep it at all costs. Criticism of the green coat worn by the Ninth Regiment at a parade for President Fillmore in 1851 was typical of the sentiments expressed by the press at that time. “Your splendid uniform will justly subject you to sarcasm if you are not respectable in your military intelligence. (Drill, etc.) There was a strong party in the regiment for the blue coat, and it is most to be regretted that the green was the

Captain Michael Phalen. The dates of events and the names of companies and officers during the next few months are obscure.

In May, Colonel Ferris directed Captain Kavanagh to call at the Adjutant General's office to pick up the commission of the officers. His directive was: "Call at the Adjutant General's office for the commissions of Captains Myles, O'Callaghan, Michael Phalen, John Kavanagh, Michael Doran, the return for which has been made by General Hall. Request the Adjutant General to issue commissions on the return of General Hall for Captains Walsh, Michael Doheny, Murray and Morrison. If the Governor is not in Albany please request the Adjutant General to permit you to wait on the Governor and obtain his signature".³³

The "Guyon Cadets" held its first annual ball in January, 1850. Captain Michael Phalen was presented with a sword, with the wish that he would be as eminent in the practice of warfare as he was in his profession, whether in defense of his adopted land or in gaining the freedom of his native land. The presentation was made by a group of gentlemen who frequented Michael Phalen's Billiard Hall on Barclay Street.³⁴



The Ninth Regiment held its first parade as a unit of the New York State Militia on June 11, 1850. "Last Tuesday afternoon Colonel Ferris assembled his new material (in undress) in Broom Street, put them in regimental line, marched to Tompkins Square, and executed some very simple manoeuvres; after which, the young corps was reviewed by Brig. Gen. Hall, in citizen's dress, who expressed his high satisfaction at the very favorable and neat appearance of the officers and entire rank and file; not

for discipline, for that is yet to be accomplished. The General had good reason for such expression, for certainly, as a body, we have rarely seen a set of men of superior figures or better conformation."³⁵

The Ninth Regiment paraded on the 4th of July. The United Service Journal of July 8th commented on the appearance of the Ninth Regiment: "Here comes Ferris with the new Ninth; companies in undress, all equalized; it looks like a tangible, handy command, but we now observe many of them have not got the step; they are a little clumsy, but they are green yet. The column however, looks exceedingly well and is so considering the time and opportunity yet afforded for instruction."³⁶

As noted previously there were disputes between the Irish leadership in New York. In the spring of 1850, Houston who was a member of the Irish Republican Union and the SFs attempted to break up a meeting of the Irish Alliance at which McGee was attempting to hold in the absence of Michael Doheny, Devin Reilly, and Joseph Brennan. The military men opposed the Alliance because they considered it corrupt both here and in Ireland. Its members planned to accept positions in the English Government and favored a system of political education and action opposed to the military policy of the Union. The Alliance men replied that Michael Doheny and his friends had hampered the work of Daniel O'Connell and had mismanaged the Uprising of

1848. They condemned all plans to raise an army in the United States as impractical and visionary.

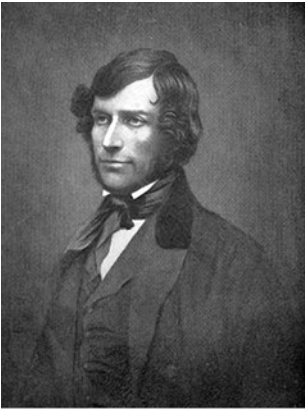
The Irish Alliance advocated the formation of mutual instruction clubs of six, twelve, twenty or any convenient number of persons, each to subscribe a small sum weekly for the purchase of books, magazines and news-papers. In Ireland the educational program was to include political training and the circulation of tracts on republican principles. The military men had no patience with this plan. They felt that the charges of ignorance against the Irish in America were exaggerated and that the English Government and the landlords in Ireland would tolerate no peaceful progress towards freedom³⁷

1851

The Ninth and Sixty-Ninth Regiments considered themselves the “Sons of the Irish Volunteers”, a reference to the “Irish Volunteers” who forced the 1783 establishment of an Irish Parliament on College Green in Dublin, “Grattan's Parliament.” These “Irish Volunteers” established the precedence that political reform could be obtained in Ireland through the threat of physical force.

Regiment's First St. Patrick's Day Parade

1851 marked the first year an Irish regiment marched in the St Patrick's Day Parade with the “Irish Volunteers” of the Ninth Regiment marching in their green frock coats. As the local papers would say throughout the 1850s, the annual tramping of Irish “foot sodgers” in their jackets green and the clopping of mounted dragoons in honor of Ireland's Saint provided an ideal “recruitin' serjeant” for the raising of additional regiments for New York's nascent Irish Brigade.³⁸



John Mitchel

The arrival in New York City of exiled Irish revolutionaries Thomas Francis Meagher, John Mitchel and William Smith O'Brien provided additional recruiting venues. John Mitchel would serve as the Brigade's emissary to the Russian Consulate when soliciting logistical assistance for an invasion of Ireland.

Second Irish Regiment

As noted previously the Irish Republican leaders had begun to recruit a second Irish regiment before May 29, 1850 when they were accepted by the State into the militia system. The first report of this appeared in the press in January 1851. Judge McGrath, Captain of the “Emmet Guard”, an Irish company formed some four years before, was appointed Colonel. That this well known citizen was a front for the “Silent Friends” is evident from the appointment of John G. Fay as Major. Fay had been an associate of Michael Phalen. Furthermore, James Huston, President of the “Silent Friends” was appointed a short time later a company commander. Five companies were started within the next few months which consisted of new men not connected with any other regiment.

Early in February, the Board of Officers met at Colonel McGrath's home and reported that a mounted troop of forty men had been formed. The “Shield's Guard”, Co. "F", reported an increase, and Captain William Green informed the meeting that his company was almost filled. Captain Dowling's Company "A" secured approval for the adoption of the name “Cass Fusileers”. These reports show that the regiment had not existed at least in the essentials of its organization before January, 1851, when its formation was announced.³⁹

On St. Patrick's night at a dinner of the Friendly Sons of St. Patrick, which was originally composed of wealthy Irish residents of New York, toasted the health of the British Queen. Captain Michael Phalen and about a dozen other officers of the Ninth Regiment turned their

glasses over while Captain Brougham made a strong protest.⁴⁰

Even at this early date, the Irish Republican leaders were in conflict, a problem which plagued the early regiments throughout their existence. A section of New York State law passed on April 16, 1851, allowed a section of "flying artillery" (horse-drawn artillery) to be attached to a regiment if that regiment met certain standards and were willing to provide horses. If these conditions were met the State would issue howitzers and caissons to the regiment.⁴¹

Captain John Fay Commander of Company "B" believed artillery training would be more useful to the liberation of Ireland. Captain Fay sent a petition to the Commander-in-Chief on January 14, 1852, asking that his company be organized as light artillery and attached to the Sixty-Ninth Regiment.⁴² Colonel Charles S. Roe the Commander of the Sixty-Ninth Regiment did not agree and a dispute ensued in which Colonel Roe eventually called for Captain Fay's Company "B" to be disbanded.⁴³

First Outing of the Second Irish Regiment

The Sixty-Ninth Regiment held its first outing, with arms on Staten Island. Tickets were sold and the funds were used for the benefit of the troops. The steamboat "Catiline" took them to Biddle's Grove, Staten Island, for a day of ceremonies, games and a dinner. The ceremonies consisted of a parade, during which Mrs. Michael Doheny, the wife of Captain Michael Doheny, presented a flag to the regiment. She referred with pride to the fact that her husband and sons carried the arms of freemen and hoped that they may one day somewhere have a chance of hearing England's rotten flag to earth and giving light and liberty to those she has betrayed, belied and desolated. Among the three thousand persons present were representatives of the Ninth Regiment and the other Irish military companies. Colonel McGrath presided in a green jacket with blue trousers. Later this costume was adopted as the dress uniform of the regiment.

During the summer and early fall there seemed to be some doubt about the number which would be given to the Second Irish Regiment. The papers referred to the regiment as the Seventy-eighth. The Thomas Francis Meagher Cadets who were recruiting during this period continued to refer to their Company as Company "K", 78th Volunteers, until December, 1851.⁴⁴



Center Market

On September 9, 1851 at Center Market the Sixty-Ninth Regiment held a parade to secure approval for the charter of the regiment and the commissions of the officers. There appears to have been a belief the Irish were "padding the rolls" of the Sixty-Ninth Regiment with members from other regiments in order to secure quick approval for incorporation into the State Militia. Colonel Benjamin Clinton Ferris Commander of the Ninth Regiment believed many of his men were on the rolls of the Sixty-Ninth Regiment. He secured from General Hall, Third Brigade Commander, the rolls of the Sixty-Ninth Regiment.⁴⁵

General Ewen answered the claims that members of the Ninth Regiment were also in the Sixty-Ninth Regiment by stating: "I saw Col. Ferris (Commander of the Ninth Regiment) this morning, who told me

that he found so few persons in the new organization (Second Irish Regiment) belonging to his regiment, that he did not intend to trouble himself further, or make any application to the organization or even claim any of the men, and he desired me to communicate to you these facts, as he does not intend to address you on the subject. I told him however that I should request you to insert in your order that if any of the persons enrolled should belong to other regiments that the officers should strike them from the rolls, and that I should not give out the commissions for officers without first ascertaining whether any of them belonged to his regiment, and if I so find obtaining their resignation".⁴⁶

The dispute concerning members of the Ninth Regiment and Sixty-Ninth Regiment was finally settled and on November 1, 1851, when the Adjutant General, Major General L. Ward Smith published General Orders No. 489 accepting the Sixty-Ninth Regiment into the service of the State of New York. It was further ended when a Brigade Order by General Ewen dated November 3, accepted the Sixty-Ninth Regiment into the Fourth Brigade of the First Division.⁴⁷

General John Ewen ordered that an election of regimental officers be held on November 28th to fill the posts of Colonel, Lieutenant Colonel, and Major. Major Charles S. Roe, formerly of the Washington Grays was elected Colonel of the Regiment. Captain Michael Doheny of Company "E" secured the post of Lieutenant-Colonel; and Lieutenant Birney became the Regimental Major⁴⁸.

The Sixty-Ninth Regiment was involved in a controversy over the reception for Louis Kossuth a famous Hungarian freedom fighter. He had made anti-Catholic remarks in England. Archbishop Hughes of New York called Kossuth a "humbug"⁴⁹. The Sixty-Ninth Regiment disagreed with the Archbishop and the reception for the Hungarian leader went off without a hitch. Kossuth seemed impressed by the fine appearance of the Sixty-Ninth Regiment and inquired which country they represented. General Sandford replied they were the Irish regiment recently organized and that their marching was fine considering the short time since they were organized. General Kossuth agreed and said they were one of the finest bodies of men he had ever seen.⁵⁰ Rumors spread throughout New York that the Irish military companies refused to parade in Kossuth honor because of the disapproval of the Archbishop Hughes.⁵¹ But this was not true.



James Ragget Ryan joined the Ninth Regiment when the Sixty-Ninth Regiment was being formed. He joined as a Lieutenant of Co. "E", "The Fag an Bealacs" or "Faugh A Ballah" translated "Clear the Way" would later become motto of the Sixty-Ninth Regiment. The motto Faugh A Ballah appeared on a plaque along with pictures of soldiers killed in action in the foyer of the Sixty-Ninth Regiment's headquarters in Iraq in 2004. Ryan would go on to command the Sixty-Ninth Regiment succeeding Colonel Charles S. Roe

1852

The formation of the Irish Regiments caused uneasiness among American “Nativists.” The Know Nothing Party was rising in power. In 1852, the Nativists were successful in forming a new regiment designated the Seventy-first, the “American Guard” as a counterbalance to the Sixty-Ninth Regiment. It was commanded by Colonel Vosburg until he died in 1861. Although the Sixty-Ninth Regiment and the Seventy-first represented opposite poles of political and religious thinking and had no contact during the 1850’s, they became extremely close in 1861 when both were stationed in Washington prior to the Battle of Bull Run.

On March 17th, 1852, St. Patrick's Day, six companies of the Sixty-Ninth Regiment paraded through slippery wet streets with the Ninth Regiment along with other independent companies. There were some who felt a parade of militia companies in honor of Saint Patrick was not appropriate. Many of the Irish however felt that the parade presented many new features, chiefly due to the military companies, and the celebration was the best possible recruiting device for the proposed newly formed Irish Brigade of New York.⁵² As mentioned previously, the officers of the Ninth Regiment protested the toasting of the Queen of England during the 1851 St. Patrick’s Day Dinner of the Friendly Sons of St. Patrick. The Queen was not toasted in 1852. The dinner was attended by officers of the two Irish regiments, since a pledge had been given by the committee that no offensive toasts would be proposed. The health of the Irish exiles and other patriotic toasts were proposed and drunk with good cheer by all the guests.⁵³

Sixty-Ninth Regiment’s First Parade

In May 1852, the Sixty-Ninth Regiment paraded for the first time but their uniform was regulation and without the green coat which was still worn by the Ninth Regiment. “The Sixty-Ninth Regiment under Colonel Charles S. Roe made its maiden parade last Tuesday week, not with much numerical strength, as we learned, for we did not see it. The uniform will give it a favorable standing among our corps, as it is the first in this city to appear in the regulation dress, complete”.⁵⁴

On July 2, the Sixty-Ninth Regiment marched in a Memorial Parade for Henry Clay with the regiment under the command of Lieutenant Colonel Michael Doheny.

When the Sixty-Ninth Regiment marched in the Fourth of July Parade, they also received favorable comments about their regulation uniform from the press. “The Sixty-Ninth Regiment will be out in small numbers, looking neat in the new dress. Prosperity attend them, for they honor their name and birthplace by their strict compliance to orders.”⁵⁵ At the July 4th Parade, the Sixty-Ninth Regiment also received attention because Thomas Francis Meagher along with Mayor of New York Kirkland reviewed the marchers from a window of the City Hall.

Arrival of Thomas Francis Meagher

In 1852, Thomas Francis Meagher, another leader of the failed Rebellion of 1848, escaped to New York and took an active role in the Irish Republican movement in New York City. On May 27, 1852, a man walked into the law office of Dillon and O’Gorman (Richard O’Gorman) on

William Street and announced he was Thomas Francis Meagher lately escaped from Australia. Thomas Francis Meagher had been sentenced to death for his part in the Revolution of 1848 but was pardoned by Queen Victoria in 1849 and exiled for life to Australia. He escaped by withdrawing his parole and sailing away in a ship whose captain had been paid with money from the United States. For the next two years Thomas Francis Meagher traveled about the United States lecturing and being received by public officials.⁵⁶

On July 28th the Sixty-Ninth Regiment marched in a special review in honor of Thomas Francis Meagher held at the Battery by all the Irish regiments and military companies. Michael Doherty read an address to Thomas Francis Meagher in which both loyalty to the United States and hope of freedom for Ireland was expressed. The United Service Journal did not approve. It ran an article stating: "The Ninth and Sixty-Ninth Regiments were ordered out in full uniform for the purpose of honoring Mr. Thomas Francis Meagher, the Irish patriot, who recently made his escape from the holts and hars of England. They appeared in full, and it appears that these commands were joined at Castle Garden by nearly all, if not quite all, of the companies of other regiments composed of citizens of Irish birth. We do not pretend to understand but the propriety of it is doubted. Parades should be called only by Generals of Brigades or Divisions. Separate national companies having their own parades creates had feeling in the militia. Suppose that England demand Mr. Thomas Francis Meagher, and the authorities are about to hand him over. The Irish militia companies might form a mob to rescue him and we would have a situation like we had in the Kaine case".⁵⁷

Even the Irish Press was critical of the Irish Regiments but for other reasons. "I have often been pained at witnessing the attempts of some of our officers to execute maneuvers of which they hardly have a single correct idea. It is unfortunately too true that the greater part of the officers now in commission in our Irish companies are totally incompetent to perform the duties they have assumed."⁵⁸

During the fall of 1852, the Sixty-Ninth Regiment attempted to get permission to adopt the green frock coat. They received approval. "Inclosed is an application from the officers of the Sixty-Ninth Regiment to the Commander-in-Chief to sanction their bill of dress. It has the approval of the Major General and myself. The uniform proposed, I am informed, only varies from that referred to in General Orders, in the color of the coat which it is desired may be dark green instead of blue, and in the substitution of a feather for the pompom. If this wish should not be granted it would be no consequence. But the members of the regiment being Irish they regard it as very essential that the color of the coat should be green. While it is very desirable and necessary that there should be a uniform for each regiment it does not seem very important that the regiments should all be uniformed alike, and believing that the bill of dress asked by the Regt. will contribute to its advancement, I have with the Major Gen. given it my approval and hope it may be sanctioned by the Commander-in-Chief."⁵⁹ The reply the Sixty-Ninth Regiment received stated; "I received a communication from you about a fortnight since, stating that his Excellency the Commander in Chief had consented to the application of the officers of the Sixty-Ninth Regiment for an alteration in the bill of dress and that you would send me the necessary orders."

Later that year, Michael Doheny began to organize another Irish Regiment with Thomas Francis Meagher as the Commander. Michael Doheny left the Sixty-Ninth Regiment to become the Lieutenant Colonel of this new Irish Regiment designated the Seventy-fifth Regiment (organized September-December 1852 at New York from new and existing companies of volunteers as the Republican Rifles (Fourth Irish Regiment)). Since Thomas Francis Meagher was rarely in New York, Michael Doheny was the actual Commander. Therefore the organization of the Irish Brigade of the New York Militia was substantially in place by the summer of 1853.

September, 1852 saw the launching of another new regiment. The first company styled the Irish Rifles had been founded by Captain Edward Butler and P. G. Coughlin, two of the minor figures in the Revolution of 1848. The new regiment, also called the "Irish Rifles", held their first meeting early in November. Their advertisement in the *Irish American* invited the officers of such military companies not already enrolled to attend. The organization went on through the fall, and every week an advertisement for a new company appeared in the papers. The first advertisement of the Barry Guard stated on November 13, 1852, that an illustrious patriot exile (Meagher) would inspect the company on Friday, November 17, at 7 P.M. This is the first open statement that Thomas Francis Meagher had lent his name to the founding of the Rifles. The regiment of six companies was completed by the end of the year and, on December 17, the officers met at Military Hall on the Bowery to assign positions to the companies.

On October 22, 1852, the New York Times published an article concerning Parade and Review of the First Division New York State Militia: "The whole of this Division, under command of Major-General Sandford paraded for review yesterday afternoon. The line was formed at 2 o'clock, PM., on the Second Avenue, the right resting on Houston Street, and when formed in close order reached nearly to Fifteenth-street". The article listed the regiments as:

Ninth Regiment - Colonel Ferris –Co. D., Guyon Cadets; Capt Michael Phalen, Co. A, Patriot Guards, Capt. Coffe; Co. C, John Mitchel Guards, Capt. Markey; Co. E, Carroll Guards, Capt Kavanaugh; Co. I, Jackson Guards, Capt Kelly; Co. G, Wolfe Tone Guards, Capt. McDonnough; Co. F, Sarsfield Guards, Capt. Dailey; Co. R, Erina Guards. Capt. Murray.

Sixty-Ninth Regiment-Col. CHARLES S. ROE-Company A, Capt. Leonard; Company B, Capt. Newman; Company C, Capt. McCourt; Company D, Capt. Tobin; Company E, Capt. Ryan; Company F, Lieutenant O'Gorman; Company G. Capt. Green; Company H, Capt. Coakley; Company I, Capt. Judge; Company K, Capt. Hinchman.⁶⁰

1853

Fourth Irish Regiment

Thomas Francis Meagher met the officers of the new Fourth Irish Regiment (Seventy-fifth Regiment) at the Mercer House on January 29, 1853. He presided over the meeting which decided that the uniform would be dark rifle green frock coat with black facings and dark buttons with a regulation hat with green pompon. The Regiment would be called the "Republican Rifles". As stated previously, since Thomas Francis Meagher spent most of his time that year traveling, Lieutenant Colonel Michael Doheny, who had transferred from the Sixty-Ninth Regiment to the "Republican Rifles", was in reality commanding the Seventy-fifth Regiment.

Sixty-Ninth Regiment's Green Frock Coat

On February 25, 1853, at the Eagle Drill Rooms, the Sixty-Ninth Regiment appeared for the first time in their new green uniforms. The public however did not see the new uniform until Thomas Francis Meagher presented a lecture for the benefit of the disabled veterans of the New York Volunteers (War with Mexico) on May 21, 1853.⁶¹

St. Patrick's Day 1853

St. Patrick's Day Parade of 1853 was a great success. The weather was fine and all the Irish regiments and independent companies turned out. They mustered five regiments, three of the State militia, the Ninth, the Sixty-Ninth and the Seventy-second, Thomas Francis Meagher's Republican Rifles, Fourth Irish Regiment not yet part of the militia, and a regiment including the Montgomery Guard. This was the high point of the Irish militia movement. Never again were they able to muster so large a force. About three thousand armed Irishmen marched on that day. All the papers spoke well of the parade and it was agreed that although the regiments were recently formed and were made up of working men who had little time for drill, they marched in fine style.⁶²

On July 4th, the Irish Regiments marched and received favorable comments in the local papers. Later in the month, all the militia took part in the opening of the World's Fair at the Crystal Palace, Forty-second Street and Fifth Avenue. The Sixty-Ninth Regiment wore their new uniforms and appeared in their green dress uniforms. "The red plume, the regulation cap, the white pants and the dark green coat, with crimson facings, rendered the uniform very attractive." White pants were the ordinary summer wear of almost all the militia regiments in the city. The winter uniform of the Sixty-Ninth Regiment featured blue pants with a yellow stripe. The Irish regiments wore dress uniforms with a green coat; the prescribed blue coat was used by them as a fatigue uniform. Prior to this time the style of uniform was considered the business of the company. Each company had its own uniform and for many years only the Seventh Regiment had a regimental uniform. At this time the stress was being put on the adoption of a regimental uniform, and some attempt was being made to induce all regiments to adopt the uniform of the United States Army. The United States Uniform became mandatory in 185 but even after that date exceptions were allowed.⁶³

Irish Brigade of the New York State Militia

As previously noted, the organization of the Irish Brigade was substantially complete by the summer of 1853. The number of men involved is uncertain but it probably amounted to no more than twelve hundred. The Republican Rifles were not accepted by the State until January 1855.¹¹⁹ The Regiment was not overly anxious to join the militia wishing to be completely free to go to Ireland if the chance was offered.⁶⁴

John Mitchel

In the fall of 1853, John Mitchel escaped from exile in Australia. His arrival in New York created great excitement among the New York Irish. John Mitchel was second only to Smith O'Brien in leading the "Young Ireland" Rebellion of 1848. On Saturday November 27, 1853, excitement reached its height when rumor spread rapidly among the Irish that an attack of an unspecified nature was planned on John Mitchel as he disembarked in New York City. A huge crowd collected in City Hall Park and many members of the Sixty-Ninth Regiment and other Irish military organizations were there in uniform carrying arms.

During the remainder of 1853, Irish leaders pushed the formation of military companies outside New York City with considerable success. They succeeded in creating Irish military companies in: Boston and Worcester, Massachusetts, Hartford and New Haven, Connecticut, Jersey City and Paterson, New Jersey, Charleston, South Carolina, Cincinnati, Ohio, and Chicago, Illinois. Companies were even established in small towns like Haverstraw and Scaghiticoke, New York.⁶⁵

John Mitchel lost no time in joining his fellow exiles in their plan to develop the Irish militia. Within three weeks after landing, he issued the prospectus for a paper devoted to the cause of Irish revolution. The first issue appeared early in January, 1854, and sold fifty thousand copies. John Mitchel enjoyed great popularity among all classes of people, and the Irish, seeing the approach of the Crimean War, prepared to rally all their forces round him for a blow at England while her army was pinned down in southern Russia. Several issues plagued the Irish militia regiments during their early years. The first to arise was the relationship of the Irish militia and their revolutionary ideas to their American neighbors. Another major issue was the attitude of the Roman Catholic Church towards Irish republicanism. The basic philosophy of the Republican leaders was the freedom of Ireland could be won only by military action with the aid of soldiers trained in the United States. Perhaps the most divisive issue was who would lead in the proposed revolt against England and who would direct the activities of the Irish regiments.⁶⁶

Michael Phalen who was the power behind the Ninth Regiment and a link to the Silent Friends found his position and influence diminishing. He held a commission in the Ninth Regiment until the fall of 1853, when Lieutenant-Colonel Charles Sweeney preferred charges against him for disobeying orders and he was court-martialed.

Michael Phalen decided to move to California. Michael Phalen's company, the "Guyon Cadets", gave him a farewell dinner at Military Hall, on November 17, 1853 which was well attended by Irish Revolutionary leaders including Thomas F. Thomas Francis Meagher and James Huston,

Captain of the “Thomas Francis Meagher Cadets” of the Sixty-Ninth Regiment. Michael Doheny and his supporters however did not attend.

The arrival of John Mitchel, in the fall of 1853, and the approach of war between England and Russia sparked the New York Irish into renewed activity. John Mitchel, because of his imprisonment and his writings, enjoyed the greatest possible popularity and esteem and, since he had taken no part in former disputes, served as a rallying point for the divided Irish.⁶⁷

1854

Disputes Between the Leadership

Disputes between Irish leaders continued during the early 1850s. James Huston, President of the Irish Republican Union, and a faction led by Michael Doheny. Michael Doheny and his friend, Maurice Walsh, charged that the James Huston Party, which controlled the Silent Friends, as the Union had become known, was weak and corrupt. The James Huston Directory fell as a result of these charges blaming their fall on Michael Doheny. Walsh, who was treasurer of the organization, was accused of being a cat's paw for Captain Michael Doheny who held no office and seldom attended meetings. Michael Doheny defended himself against these charges of sabotage, so successfully, that the James Huston group was unable to resume power. Seeing the society broken and deserted by the split, Michael Doheny called a meeting, hoping to revive it. Putting aside his own feeling, he begged Captain James Huston to stand by the society and not permit it to be ruined by internal troubles. James Huston refused his request and demanded an accounting of the funds from Maurice Walsh. The membership, bewildered by the dispute among its leaders, dwindled away.

Captain James Huston's version differs only in viewpoint. James Huston, as President, brought charges against Michael Doheny for his disruptive actions, and then resigned. Michael Doheny defended himself at great length, and at the end of Doheny's speech Huston refused to resume control unless there was an accounting of funds by the Treasurer, Maurice Walsh. When no accounting was made, the Directory refused to resume control and advised the membership not to contribute until the affairs of the Silent Friends were in order. The result was that contributions fell and the organization died of financial malnutrition.

John Mitchel who was the publisher of *The Citizen* took a prominent place in the revolutionary movement. Because of his popularity, the somewhat disillusioned Irish of America rallied to form a new revolutionary society. The first meeting of this new society was held at Kerrigan's Headquarters, 22 White Street, on April 13, 1854. Captain P. J. Coghlan acted as Chairman of the proposed "Irishmen's Civil and Military Republican Union". The Chairman, Captain Coghlan stated he believed it would be vain to attempt to benefit Ireland except by purely military organization. Molloy agreed with the Chairman but pointed out that a military organization could not exist without funds. The moment had come, he continued, for every Irishman to aid the Cause and the civil organization would give them this opportunity. Shortly after this Captain Coghlan proposed the arming of the Irish civil societies as a supplement to the military organization.⁶⁸

In 1854 the Crimean War between England and Russia presented an opportunity for Irish Revolutionaries in New York but disputes between James Huston (leader of the SFs) and Michael Doheny resulted in crippling the movement. James Huston eventually left the Sixty-Ninth Regiment but the conflicts between the Irish Revolutionary leaders continued. Although radical Irish societies were formed, all attempts to strike a blow for Ireland during the Crimean War failed. Recruiting for the Irish Brigade was stimulated by the hope that the Crimean War

might be “England’s difficulty” which could become “Ireland’s opportunity.” The end of the Crimean War, consequently, resulted in a diminishing of recruiting for these Irish regiments. Conflicts between Archbishop Hughes and the Irish Revolutionary leaders further exacerbated the situation.

John Mitchel was criticized for his pro-slavery stance but perhaps his worst mistake was his disputes with Archbishop Hughes. He accused the Archbishop as being an enemy of Irishmen and also accused the Catholic Church in Ireland of having betrayed the revolutions of '98 and '48.⁶⁹

Archbishop Hughes writing under a pen name and John Mitchel had an ongoing battle in the press. Hughes writing about Thomas Francis Meagher said: “I shall not repeat the name of the individual; he is already but too well known as the representative of an Irish tribe whose hearts have apostatized from the honored creed of their country, but whose lips have not mustered the bad courage to disavow the faith of their forefathers. The specimens quoted by you is but the type of a class who contributed largely to gather the faggots and fire the pile of their country's expiration. But instead of seizing a torch from the conflagration which might "Light them through dignity's way," some of them were satisfied with impressing felons tracks on Irish soil, and others with grasping a dead burnt stick which is no torch at all”⁷⁰

John Mitchel quickly accused the Archbishop uttered different sentiments under different names, and charged that the Catholic press, by upholding tyranny in Europe, including the tyranny of the Pope disgusted and alarmed Americans.⁷¹ The battle in the press between the Archbishop and John Mitchel continued. John Mitchel’s comments about the Church and his stance on slavery angered many Irish in New York but he was praised in the Southern press and eventually moved to the South.

Seventy-fifth Regiment

In December 1854, the Seventy-fifth Regiment was accepted into the New York State Militia. Seventy-fifth Regiment (organized September-December 1852 at New York from new and existing companies of volunteers as the “Republican Rifles” [Fourth Irish Regiment] and mustered into the New York State Militia 19 December 1854 as the Seventy-fifth Regiment)⁷²

Michael Corcoran

Michael Corcoran had enlisted in Company “I” of the Sixty-Ninth Regiment when the company was under command of Captain John Judge. Company “I” was called the “Irish Rifles”. Company “I” became Company “A” and was called the “Irish Fusiliers”. Corcoran held a position as a Private, Orderly Sergeant, and then Lieutenant. In 1854 he was elected Captain. The shoulder epaulettes which Corcoran wore as a captain while commanding Company “A” are on display in the Sixty-Ninth Regiment Armory in New York City.

1855

1855 was a turbulent year in New York City and racial, religious, and political fever reached the highest pitch in the history of the City. In January 1855, Bill Poole, “Bill the Butcher”, a member of the “Bowery Boys” gang and champion of the Native-American faction, was shot in a bar-room brawl at Stanwix Hall by an Irishman named Louis Baker. The Know-Nothings attempted to make political capital out of the shooting since two of the men arrested for the shooting had Irish names, Turner and McLoughlin. The Know-Nothings in New York City tried to stir up anti-Catholic sentiments. There were several riots in the City and both the Sixty-Ninth Regiment and the Ninth Regiment was called out to restore order.

Pressure on Irish Military Units

In 1855, Irish military units in several states came under severe pressure. In Cincinnati, when it was believed the Native-American faction would not let foreign militia companies take part in the July 4th Parade, the Irish and German units decided to hold their own celebration. On hearing this, General Sargent, a “Know-Nothing” politician ordered them to parade. The commander of the Sarsfield Light Artillery, Captain Dowd, refused to march claiming Sargent had no authority to order them out. The armory was broken open by the Sheriff and the arms of the Sarsfield Guard were seized.

1855 St. Patrick’s Day Parade

In 1854 some of the Irish leaders in New York and some of the Irish Press suggested not holding a St. Patrick’s Day Parade but rather holding a celebration indoors and without alcohol. In 1855 however anti-Irish, anti-catholic feelings were even higher in New York City. Irish leaders again suggested cancelling the St. Patrick’s Day Parade. An article *The Irish American* stated: “Last year we proposed an indoor celebration to avoid a clash with the Native-Americans. This year we propose an indoor celebration to aid the many Irish suffering from want due to unemployment. We propose a lecture on republicanism in the afternoon, and a ball at night to be held in Castle Garden or the Metropolitan Hotel. Therefore, we suggest auxiliary to the relief of suffering and distress that the monies paid by the societies to hands - cash expended in the purchase of banners and flags - and the large amount set aside for scarfs and regalias - might be made to contribute to the relief of such painful misery.”⁷³

When it was finally decided to allow the parade, *The Irish American* warned: “We recommend that during the marching no ardent liquors be used. By temperance, calmness, a conciliatory spirit, and a determination to win respect from the right-thinking and honorable of every shade of American life. Every Irishman who turns out should remember that he is bound to act the part of a good citizen and to avoid violation of the peace.”⁷⁴

Although the 1855 St. Patrick’s Day Parade was allowed to be held, the military was not allowed to participate. The Ninth, Sixty-Ninth, Seventh and Twelfth Regiments were held at the regimental parade ground from twelve noon to await orders. The weather was poor and hail began to fall as soon as the marchers formed. As the parade moved downtown, group after group

dropped out leaving only the longshoremens to finish at City Hall. The only spectators were the police and even they sought shelter.⁷⁵

Sixty-Ninth Regiment Marches

When the regiments were dismissed the Sixty-Ninth Regiment marched with fixed bayonets down Broadway, through the Park and several of the principal streets. The other regiments did not attempt to march.⁷⁶

Emmet Monument Association

After John Mitchel's departure from New York, a meeting was called in March 1855 to set up a plan for systematic and organized action and to hold the Republican Movement together. The meeting was attended by delegates from various parts of the United States. A plan was adopted, partly military, partly civil, and a Directory was appointed. This group became known as the "Emmet Monument Association".



At the first meeting of the Emmet Monument Association, Captain James Huston opposed Colonel Michael Doheny and brought up the subject of the unaccounted for funds of the Silent Friends. Michael Doheny proposed that Colonel James Ragget Ryan of the Sixty-Ninth Regiment be appointed to the Directory. As stated previously, Ryan had been the Commander of Co. "E", "The Fag an Bealacs" or "Faugh A Ballah" of the Sixty-Ninth Regiment when he was a Lieutenant. He was a friend of James Huston but Ryan and Doheny were not friendly. Michael Doheny offered to withdraw in the interests of unity. Colonel Ryan however refused the post and it was offered to James Huston who also refused it. The reason for Houston's refusal is not stated but it was doubtless the question of the unaudited accounts. James Huston, McClenahan, Captain Lyons and Colonel Ryan attempted to set up a counter-movement. This attempt was carried on but only in small meetings.

An article in the New York Times reported "The Irish though defeated in 1848 were not disheartened. Clubs were formed in 1849 to aid Ireland, and were active in every American city. These were never abandoned but were quiet until the Russian War broke out. Now under the slogan, "England's Difficulty Is Ireland's Opportunity," they are very active. Two years ago the Irishmen's Civil and Military Union was formed. Married and older men make up the civil branch contributing in various ways by civil action and by money. The young men are organized to fight in Ireland. The military part of the Union is now known as the Emmet Monument Association. About a year ago the Irish Emigrant Aid Society was founded in Boston. It has spread through all the country and is distinct from the Emmet Monument Association. It says it plans to act only within the laws of the United States, and that no oath is required to join. The Emmet Monument Association on the other hand, is a secret oath bound association."⁷⁷. Conflict between the Emmet Monument Association and the Irish Emigrant Aid Society was fierce in

1855.

1856

Continued Pressure on Irish Military Units

In 1856 Governor Minor of Connecticut dissolved the Irish companies in his State leaving the German companies intact. Irish militia companies in Massachusetts and Ohio were also disbanded. Although there was no direct action taken against the Irish Regiments in New York, within three years, the only Irish Regiment remaining would be the Sixty-Ninth Regiment, Within five years, the Commander of the Sixty-Ninth Regiment, Colonel Michael Corcoran would be on trial by Courts Martial with the Nativists calling for the disbanding of the last Irish Regiment in New York.

Conflicts Between Leaders Continues

Conflicts between the Irish societies and Irish Republican leaders continued with charges and counter-charges being made by Houston and Michael Doheny. The conflict between the societies and leaders spilled over into the Irish Regiments. Captain James Huston, who had angered the Michael Doheny faction of the Emmet Monument Association, thought he was secure in his position as Commander of Company "K" of the Sixty-Ninth Regiment. His long time friend Colonel Ryan was the Commander of the Regiment. But on February 2, 1856, Colonel Michael Doheny accused Colonel Ryan of passing on a false story of Doheny being assaulted by a Mr. O'Connor in the office of the *Courier and Enquirer* some years before. The story claimed Doheny made an attempt to arrange a duel with O'Connor to satisfy his honor.⁷⁸

On May 24, 1856 Colonel Ryan presided at a meeting held at the Eagle Drill Rooms where the members of Company "K" presented a sword to Captain James Huston as a testimonial of their faith and support but Huston's situation changed dramatically on June 4, when the Sixty-Ninth Regiment turned out for parade at Washington Square. James Huston explains: "Enter the Sixty-Ninth, at one wing, under the command of its Sergeant, whilst Captain James Huston and his Lieutenant Ward, enter at another. There should have been a flourish of trumpets but the trumpets being under the command of a menial of one of the plotters, and having pledged himself to aid in putting me out of my position, was in defiance of Brigade and Regimental orders taking his time to show himself off in Broadway. Nor am I to be blamed for want of banners or color. The same menial was guarding them through Broadway. I was told I could not have my position: I protested, I would have no other and asked why? I was told because the regiment was formed. There being as yet no regiment to form. But in the persuasive language of the Colonel I was told however I must submit. Well, after telling them they were "filial relatives of a femine quadruped of the canine species", I did submit and for the first time in my life I was to march after an off-cast official of the British Government. But I was soon relieved from this very unpleasant position, not indeed by any order of the Brigadier or Colonel, but by an order from a non-com. Company K got the order, "about face", and without one man hesitating made its exit out of the Square and out of the Sixty-Ninth."⁷⁹

Court-martial of Captain James Huston

An investigation resulted in the court-martial of Captain James Huston for being late at parade and for conduct unbecoming an officer. The trial was held in October, Colonel Ryan acting as prosecutor. The members of the court were Colonel Julius B. Stearns of the Twelfth Regiment and Captains Jacob F. French and John Kennedy. Although counsel was not generally permitted at military trials, John O'Rourke was permitted to represent Captain Huston.⁸⁰ The court found Captain James Huston not guilty. General Ewen on reviewing the finding dissented and Captain James Huston was rearrested. In obedience to the orders of General Ewen's Special Brigade Order a Military Board, consisting of Colonel French, Twelfth Regiment, Captain Ryner of the Tenth and Captain Lebau of the Eleventh met on Monday, December 8, 1856 at 4 P.M., to try Captain James Huston on charge and specification, prepared this time by Captain Corcoran, of conduct unbecoming an officer and gentleman. Colonel French refused to allow O'Rourke to represent James Huston on the grounds that it was contrary to military law, but after some discussion it was allowed because O'Rourke had military rank. Counsel pleaded a defect in the specifications, and the court, considering the objection well taken, adjourned *sme die*. A Brigade Order of December 9, dissolved the court, and Special Order 33 of the Sixty-Ninth Regiment, dated December 9, 1856, restored Captain Huston to duty. This did not end the affair. In a short time Captain Huston was re-arrested and a third trial was ordered. The third trial resulted in Huston's conviction.



Michael Corcoran

James Huston believed his troubles were because of Colonel Ryan and his "clique of ex-peelers", a reference to Captain Michael Corcoran, who had formerly been an official in the Irish police. Had James Huston been a supporter of the Doheny/Corcoran faction, the charges would never have been brought. James Huston's Company "K" supported him and dropped out of the Sixty-Ninth, forming an independent company which was originally called the "Irish National Grenadiers".⁸¹ Corcoran would go on to Command the Sixty-Ninth Regiment at the first major engagement of the Civil War, the Battle of Bull Run or First Manassas. There was no great difference in the ideas of the Irish leaders. All desired the freedom of Ireland; all believed there was need for military aid from the Irish in

America; all believed in the use of the militia to train the Irish forces; but unfortunately the disagreed in methods to be used. The chief difficulty actually arose from a clash of personalities and the desire to exercise control and power in Irish revolutionary affairs.⁸²

During the summer of 1856 the ten companies of infantry were changed and a rifle company, a corps of engineers, and a troop of cavalry were incorporated into the Sixty-Ninth Regiment. Adding a cavalry troop to an infantry regiment was not that unusual and at that time it was allowed by law. Kerrigan's cavalry troop, the "Irish Dragoons" had been part of the Ninth Regiment as late as March 1854.⁸³

The engineers in the Sixty-Ninth Regiment wore the green jackets which was a source of irritation to many New Yorkers. In a newspaper article concerning a parade on June 4th at Washington Square in which the engineers from the Sixty-Ninth Regiment participated, the author states about their appearance: "A green coatee with crimson facings and shoulder knots,

buff knee britches and long hoots reaching to the knee, ornamented with a tassel in front, regulation hat with crimson and green pompon. The arms are a musketoon and a sword.”⁸⁴

Disputes Between Irish Societies

There were disputes between the Emmet Monument Association and the Irish Emigrant Aid Society which helped bring their secret activities and plans to light in the press. The Emmet Monument Association had openly admitted it was planning a military expedition in Ireland. This increased the hostility of the American public against the Irish societies.⁸⁵

In February 1956 the Crimean War between England and Russia ended and hopes to take advantage of “England’s difficulties” were dashed. Interest in the Irish Regiments waned as the Irish became more disillusioned due to the failure to take decisive action during the Crimean War and the conflicts between the Republican leadership.

1857

Move Toward Consolidation of the Irish Regiments

The divisions between the Irish leaders and the depression of 1857 demoralized the New York Irish even further. The Lineage and Honors Certificate of the Sixty-Ninth Regiment states “Consolidated 14 March 1858 with the Seventy-fifth Regiment (organized September-December 1852 at New York from new and existing companies of volunteers as the Republican Rifles [Fourth Irish Regiment] and mustered into the New York State Militia 19 December 1854 as the Seventy-fifth Regiment) and consolidated unit designated as the Ninth Regiment.”⁸⁶

In June 1957, Adjutant General's office published “General Order 19” which put an end to the Seventy-fifth Regiment, the “Fourth Irish Regiment,” “Republican Rifles”. Four companies of the Seventy-fifth Regiment were transferred to the Ninth Regiment with the provision that if any of them numbered less than the required number of thirty-two members, they were to be disbanded. Under-strength companies of the Ninth Regiment were also to be disbanded. The members of those suppressed from both regiments were to be distributed among the other companies of the Ninth Regiment.

However the 1857 Annual Report of the Adjutant General of State of New York (AG Report) dated February 2 1858 states: “During the past year the following regiments have been disbanded, namely, the Seventy-fifth Regiment, by consolidation with the 9th, the 47th with the 48th, the 63d with the 64th, and the 28th with the 20th.”⁸⁷ The Seventy-fifth Regiment is not mentioned in the 1857 AG Report. The 1857 Adjutant General Report contains information about only the Ninth and Sixty-Ninth Regiments.

The First Division was commanded by General Charles W. Sandford. It consisted of 1st, 2d, 3d 4th, and 5th, Brigades. Its territory included the County of New York, and the County of Richmond. The First Division had the following Regiments assigned: 1st, 2d, 3d, 4th, 5th, 6th, 7th, 8th, 9th, 10th, 11th, 12th, 55th, Sixty-Ninth Regiment, 71st and 73d.

In 1857, the Ninth Regiment is within the Third Brigade, 1st Division and is commanded by Colonel. Lucius Pitkin. The Ninth Regiment also lists two Field Officers, five Staff of the Regiment, 19 Company Officers, one Leader of the Band, 15 Musicians 185 NCOs and Privates with 227 aggregate. The Third Brigade consists of the 7th, 8th, 9th and 55th regiments and the Brigade Commander is William Hall. The Ninth Regimental district consists of the 17th ward of the City of New York.

The AG Report contains the following information on the Ninth Regiment:

Regimental Staff (Ninth Regiment)

Colonel, Lucius Pitkin, Date of Commission: July 21, 1855, Date of Rank: June 29, 1855, Residence: New-York city.

Lieutenant Colonel, P. Daniel Kelly, Date of Commission: October 26, 1854, Date of Rank: Aug 29, 1854, New York City.

Major, Richard Barry, Date of Commission: October 26, 1854, Date of Rank: Aug 29, 1854, Residence: New York City.

Adjutants - Lieutenants Davis De Courcy, Date of Commission: 16th March, 1857, Date of Rank: 1st June, 1856, Residence: NYC

Regimental Engineers Captains: Vacant (No Return)

Regimental Surgeons - Rank of Captain: William O'Donnell Date of Commission: 23d June, 1852, Date of Rank: 9 Jan 1852, Residence: NYC

Surgeon's Mates Rank of Lieutenants - Vacant (No Return)
Regimental Quarter Masters Lieutenants Hugh Keane, Date of Commission: 2d Oct., 1855, Date of Rank: 8th Aug., 1855, Residence: NYC

Regimental Pay-Masters Lieutenants Edward Brenan, Date of Commission 2d Oct., 1855, Date of Rank: 8th Aug., 1855, Residence: NYC

Chaplains -Christian W. Schaeffer, Date of Commission 2d Oct., 1855, Date of Rank: 8th Aug., 1855, Residence: NY
Total on Staff: 14

Equipment

The unit has the following equipment on hand:

338 Percussion Muskets and bayonets
16 Percussion Pistols
53 Calvary Sabers
87 Bayonet Scabbards Belts and Plates
50 Waist Belts and Plates
60 Pistol Holsters.

During the year \$511.03 was paid for music and \$114.50 for printing.

Companies

"A" Company

Vacant

"B" Company

Charles McGuire, Captain, Dec 29, 1854, Oct 25, 1854

Patrick Holden, 1st Lieutenant, Dec 29, 1854, Oct 25, 1854
Bernard Fox,, 2d Lieutenant, May 23, 1856, June 9, 1856
39 Privates 42 Total

“C” Company

Edward Kernes, Captain, October 5, 1855, June 21, 1855,
James Cassidy, 1st Lieutenant, May 23, 1856, Nov 7, 1855
Cornelius Doras, 2d Lieutenant, May 23, 1856, Nov 7, 1855
36 Privates 39 Total

“D” Company

Thomas Murphy, Captain, Not noted
Lawrence Glynne, 1st Lieutenant, August 15, 1857, April 8th, 1857,
2d Lieutenant, Vacant
38 Privates 41 Total

“E” Company

James Galligher, Captain, August 15, 1857, April 8, 1857
Samuel Frazer, 1st Lieutenant May 23, 1856, Nov 15, 1855
Peter Flynne, 2d Lieutenant May 23, 1856, Nov 15, 1855
38 Privates 41

“F” Company

William O. Murphy, Captain Vacant
Vacant, 1st Lieutenant
Anthony T. Vaughn, 2d Lieutenant Not noted
30 Privates 31 Total

“G” Company

Vacant, Captain
James Conroy, 1st Lieutenant May 23d, 1856, June 21st, 1855
Vacant 2d Lieutenant
37 Privates 38 Total

“H” Company

Robert Coddington Captain March 17, 1854, Feb 22, 1854
Vacant, 1st Lieutenant
Vacant, 2nd Lieutenant
37 Privates 38 Total

“R” Company Cavalry

James Murphy, Captain, Oct 10, 1856, Oct 10, 1856
Augustus P. Greene, 1st Lieutenant Oct 10, 1856, Oct 10, 1856

Cornelius Horrigan, 2nd Lieutenant Oct 10, 1856, Oct 10, 1856
Vacant, 2nd Lieutenant
35 Privates 38 Total

“L” Company Artillery

Felix Duffy, Captain, Oct 17, 1855, Oct 17, 1855
Terrence Duffy, 1st Lieutenant, Oct 17, 1855, Oct 17, 1855
(Vacant,) 2d Lieutenant
(Vacant,) 2d Lieutenant
35 Privates 37 Total
Total 333 364

Sixty-Ninth Regiment

The Fourth Brigade of the First Division consisted of the 10th, 11th, 12th and Sixty-Ninth Regiments. The 4th Brigade was commanded by Brigadier General. John Ewen. The Fourth Brigade was located in the 9th, 12th, 16th, 19th, 20th and 22nd Wards of the City of New-York. The Sixty-Ninth Regimental District consisted of the 20th Ward of the City of New-York.

Sixty-Ninth Regiment was commanded by Colonel J. R. Ryan. It has 3 Field Officers, 8 Staff of the Regiment, 12 Company Officers assigned. It also has 1 Leader of the Band, 17 Musicians, 3 Snare Drummers, 165 NCOs and Privates, with an aggregate of 209 individuals assigned. During the year \$357. 00 was paid for music for the Regimental band. The AG Report lists the following information on the Sixty-Ninth Regiment:

Regimental Staff

Colonel, James Ragget Ryan, Date of Commission: April 18, 1855, Date of Rank: March 23, 1855, Residence: New-York city.

Lieutenant Colonel, Edward Butler, Date of Commission: May 14, 1856, Date of Rank: March 3, 1856, New York City.

Major, Robert Nugent, Date of Commission: June 6, 1854, Date of Rank: May 23, 1852, Residence: New York City.

Adjutant, Lieutenants, John McCasten, Date of Commission: 24th June, 1854, Date of Rank: 16th June, 1852, Residence: NYC

Regimental Engineers, Captains: James B. Kirker, Date of Commission: 16th March, 1857, Date of Rank: 12th Jan., 1857, Residence: NYC

Regimental Surgeons, Rank of Captain: William M. Giles, Date of Commission: 18th April, 1855, Date of Rank: 9th April, 1855, Residence: NYC

Surgeon's Mates, Rank of Lieutenants Matthew Kehoe, Date of Commission: 22d Sept., 1857, Date of Rank: 20th Aug, 1857, Residence: NYC

Regimental Quarter Master, Lieutenants. Matthew O'Conner, Date of Commission: 18th April, 1855, Date of Rank: 2d April, 1855, Residence: NYC

Regimental Pay-Masters, Lieutenants William H. White, Date of Commission 19th Jan., 1854, Date of Rank: 9th Jan., 1852 Residence: NYC

Chaplains - James Bagley, Date of Commission April 18th, 1855, Date of Rank: April 10, 1855, Residence: NY

Total on Staff: 14

Equipment

Sixty-Ninth Regiment was equipped with 296 Percussion Muskets and bayonet, 50 Percussion Rifles, 30 Calvary Sabers, and 50 Cartridge Boxes and Plates. 50 Cartridge Boxes and Belts, 50 Bayonet Scabbards and Plates, 50 Waist Belts and Plates⁸⁸

It had three Field Officers, eight Staff of the Regiment, 12 Company Officers, one Leader of the Band, 17 Musicians, three Snare Drummers, 165 NCOs and Privates for an aggregate of 209 individuals

Companies

"A" Company

Michael Corcoran, Captain, Date of Commission: June 24, 1854, Date of Rank: May 29, 1852, Hugh C. Flood 1st Lieutenant Date of Commission: Nov. 14, 1855, Date of Rank: Oct. 8, 1855, John McKeon, 2d Lieutenant, Date of Commission: June 20, 1853, Date of Rank: June 6, 1853
72 Privates 73 Total

"B" Company

Thomas Lynch, Captain, March 9, 1857, Jan. 12, 1857
Vacant, 1st and 2d Lieutenant
37 Privates 38 Total

"C" Company

John Burke, Captain, March 9, 1857, Jan. 26, 1857
James Cavanagh, 1st Lieutenant, June 8, 1857, March 9, 1857,
John Rowen, 2d Lieutenant, June 8, 1857, March 9, 1857
24 Privates, 27 Total

“D” Company

George Tobin, Captain, Oct. 14, 1852, Sept. 21, 1852
Vacant, 1st and 2d Lieutenant
28 Privates 29 Total

“E” Company

Maurice Keating, Captain, July 25, 1856, July 2, 1856,
Patrick Kelly, 1st Lieutenant March 9, 1857, Jan. 16, 1857
Richard P. King, 2d Lieutenant June 24, 1851, June 14, 1852
42 Privates 45 Total

“F” Company

Captain Vacant
John T. Scullen, 1st Lieutenant April 3, 1855, March 21, 1855,
George Collins, 2d Lieutenant April 3, 1855, March 21, 1855
21 Privates 23 Total

“G” Company

William Malone, Captain, March 9, 1857, Jan. 28, 1857,
John Cornan, 1st Lieutenant March 9, 1857, Jan. 28, 1857,
John Julien, 2d Lieutenant March 9, 1857, Jan. 28, 1857
32 Privates 35 Total

“H” Company

Completely vacant

“R” Company Cavalry

Officers Vacant
25 Privates 25 Total

“L” Company Rifles

Henry H. Condon, Captain, March 9, 1857, Feb. 10, 1857,
William Butler, 1st Lieutenant, May 14, 1856, March 11, 1856,
2d Lieutenant, Vacant
39 Privates 41 Total

During the year the Ninth Regiment had problems keeping up its strength. “Lieutenant Colonel Kelly deserves credit for keeping the Ninth together, despite the resignations and a sluggish disregard for drill and discipline that have since the twenty-first of December, 1849, sapped the very existence of the Ninth. It is a wonder that it has not been frittered away to a skeleton.”⁸⁹

The Ninth Regiment and Sixty-Ninth Regiment were called out during the Police Riots. The Ninth Regiment was tasked to guard the Arsenal during the riot in June but were criticized as

"green-coated rabble" by the press for continuing to wear the green jackets during a fall parade.⁹⁰
By then the uniforms of the Ninth were old and worn after eight years of service in all weather.

1858

Consolidation of the Three Irish Regiments

Green Frock Coats

The uniforms of the Ninth Regiment were old and worn after eight years of service. The men who had been transferred from the Seventy-fifth Regiment did not have the green frock coat since they were not allowed to adopt it in 1854 when they were incorporated into the militia. A new set of uniforms for the Ninth was clearly required. The Board of Officers of the Ninth Regiment voted a Bill of Dress conforming to the uniform of the Military Forces of the State which was prescribed by General Order, dated September 6, 1851. Publication of this decision to adopt the blue coat in Brigade Order No.2, on March 13, 1858, brought the matter to a head. The men protested by refusing to march in the St. Patrick's Day Parade for the first time since the regiment had been organized⁹¹

The State Military Gazette responded: "STAND FIRM -It is said that this company and that Regiment will do thus and so, rather than obey the late order of organization. Oh, well! Let them disband; it will be a purification of the troops. Have we had in service so long so many companies, and a Ninth Regiment, who have held themselves above the laws and the authority of the Commander-in-Chief? Who have uniformed and equipped in their native foreign costume, and resignedly enjoyed privileges, merely to tickle their own foreign vanity? If so, let them be abrogated at once. Stand firm, Adjutant General, and let them disgrace themselves by their mutinous conduct, if they will do so. Do right though the heavens fall. Above all, accede no more to the adopted than you would to the native. We are all and must be one family of brothers after naturalization; all, - all Americans; all in one, *E Pluribus Unum* in military as well as government. If the adopted cannot meet the native born on these principles, the sooner he takes his leave the better."⁹²

Regulation Uniform

Although the members of Sixty-Ninth Regiment wore a blue uniform jacket when they were accepted into the State Militia in 1951, they received permission to wear a green jacket in 1853. Their blue jackets were worn as a fatigue uniform. Like the Ninth Regiment, the Sixty-Ninth Regiment did not want to give up its green frock coats but the Sixty-Ninth adopted the blue coat without protest and in December, 1858.

Disputes Between Leadership

Disputes between the Irish leaders continued. On February 23, 1858 James Huston was elected Captain of Company "I", Ninth Regiment. Colonel Ryan of the Sixty-Ninth, protested to Colonel Lucius Pitkin, of the Ninth, and to the Adjutant General. The matter was concluded when the regiments were consolidated. Although the interest in joining the Irish Regiments had waned, the remaining Irish Militia was actually stronger than ever, since the consolidation eliminated the rivalry between the three regiments.

Irish Republican Brotherhood

On March 17th, James Stephens, another of the “Young Ireland” leaders, founded the “Irish Republican Brotherhood”. Stephens came to New York in the fall of 1858 to try to stir up some enthusiasm and to obtain money to keep things going in Ireland. He appointed John O’Mahony head of the movement in America and appealed to John Mitchel to lend his name to the raising of funds. John Mitchel, however, declined to make any appeal to his countrymen for contributions.⁹³

The three Irish Regiments had a difficult time maintaining strength. Quarrels between Irish leaders coupled with the lack of action against England during the Crimean War caused the strengths of all the Irish Regiments to fall. On 14 March 1858 the Ninth Regiment was consolidated with the Seventy-fifth Regiment and the consolidated unit designated as the Ninth Regiment. On 3 May 1858 the Ninth Regiment was consolidated with the Sixty-Ninth Regiment and the consolidated regiment was designated as the Sixty-Ninth Regiment. There was now only one Irish Regiment in New York City, the Sixty-Ninth Regiment but the concept of raising an Irish Brigade had not waned.

As stated previously the current Lineage and Honors Certificate of the Sixty-Ninth Regiment states “Consolidated 14 March 1858 with the Seventy-fifth Regiment (organized September-December 1852 at New York from new and existing companies of volunteers as the Republican Rifles [Fourth Irish Regiment] and mustered into the New York State Militia 19 December 1854 as the Seventy-fifth Regiment) and consolidated unit designated as the Ninth Regiment.”⁹⁴

The AG Report for 1858 has no mention of the Ninth Regiment. The only surviving Irish Regiment, the Sixty-Ninth Infantry Regiment has the following information in the 1858 AG Report:

One of the companies marching with the Sixty-Ninth on St. Patrick's Day, 1858, was the “Guyon Cadets”, one of the original Ninth Regiment Companies of 1850, organized by Captain Michael Phalen. Captain Halpin who commanded the company had been the commander in October 1857, when the “Guyons” were Company “H” of the Ninth Regiment. We also find as Commander of Company “B”, Robert Coddington, who in July, 1857, is listed as commander of the “Erina Guard”, Ninth Regiment. The “Fitzgerald Guard”, which in the spring of 1858 had been Company “B” of the Ninth Regiment, marched as Company “D” of the Sixty-Ninth Regiment under the leadership of the same Captain Thomas Maguire who had commanded it when it had been part of the Ninth Regiment. Captain James Kelly, who commanded Company “H” in the Sixty-Ninth Regiment, named the “Irish Rifles”, is no doubt the same James Kelly who had come over from the Ninth Regiment and who had been a Company Commander in the Seventy-fifth Regiment.⁹⁵ In the spring of 1858, the Sixty-Ninth Regiment adopted the name “National Cadets” which was formerly the name used by the Ninth Regiment.

The AG Report states the Sixty-Ninth Regiment was equipped with 200 Percussion Muskets and Bayonets. Furthermore, \$8 was paid to J. White, Marshal, for attendance Sixty-Ninth Regiment court and \$49.00 in cash was received from Colonel Ryan for regimental fines.

Quarantine Riots

On the 7th day of September, the Commander-in-Chief, Governor John A. King, pursuant to a proclamation issued by him, called into service 250 officers and men of the First Division directing them to proceed to the Quarantine Station on Staten Island to defend the property of the State against the further incendiary attempts of a lawless mob.

The Seventy-first Regiment under Colonel Abram S. Vosburgh served on Staten Island for thirteen days and was relieved on the 18th of October by a detachment from the Sixty-Ninth Regiment, Colonel James Ragget Ryan, Commanding. The Sixty-Ninth Regiment remained on Staten Island for fifteen days until they were relieved on November 1st, by a detachment of 125 officers and men of the 55th Regiment, under Command of Colonel Eugene LeGal,

Consolidation

When the Ninth Regiment was consolidated with the Sixty-Ninth Regiment, many of the re-numbered companies of the Ninth Regiment were transferred to the Sixty-Ninth Regiment. Company "A" - Captain James Kelly, Company "B" - Captain Thomas McGuire, Company "C" - Lieutenant James Duncan, Company "D" - Captain Peter Halpin, Company "E" - Captain James Gallagher, and Company "G" - Captain Michael Dougherty were transferred to the Sixty-Ninth Regiment. Company "F" - Capt. John Begg was transferred to the 11th Regt and Company "H" - Lieutenant. Anthony L. Vaughn was transferred to the 2nd Regiment.

In 1858 the 4th brigade, consisted of the 10th, 11th, 12th and Sixty-Ninth Regiments. The AG Report states on November 1, the 11th Regiment conducted a regimental parade to receive Sixty-Ninth Regiment.

Robert Taylor, Major and Inspector, of the 4th Brigade N.Y.S.M. inspected the Sixty-Ninth Regiment at Camp Washington. He was very complimentary of Michael Corcoran in his after action report in which he states:

"I inspected the Sixty-Ninth Regiment on the 20th of October at Camp Washington, where it was doing a tour of duty for the protection of the State property at Quarantine. This regiment consists of six infantry, one rifle, and one company of the poorest looking cavalry I ever saw, since detached.

This is truly a serviceable regiment, and under command of its present colonel (Ryan) would be found reliable on any occasion. The total strength inspected was 275; the absentees numbered 136, making an aggregate of 411. The evolutions of this regiment, performed on this occasion, were in the highest degree creditable, and I cannot report an exception to this remark.



MICHAEL CORCORAN

What I might say of Captain Corcoran, commanding company A, concerning his military knowledge, and the marked ability with which he handled his company on

this occasion, would not add to his already well known reputation as the best, if not the very best, infantry officer in the 4th brigade, therefore I shall only say he did his duty well, and so did the other officers of this regiment. The staff are efficient in their several stations, and are now well organized.

The duty this regiment has performed during the past year is great: five battalion drills at the armory; January 15 and 26, February 22, March 17, April 27, May 19, June 16, September 30, and October 20 were regimental parades; June 1 and November 9, brigade parades for evolutions of the line; July 5 and September 1, division parades. The arms that are ordinarily used by the Sixty-Ninth Regiment are worthless, and I solicit for it an immediate supply of the most approved musket.”

Regimental Staff

Colonel, James Ragget Ryan, Date of Commission: April 18, 1855, Date of Rank: March 23, 1855, Residence: New-York city.

Lieutenant Colonel, Edward Butler, L., Date of Commission: May 14, 1856, Date of Rank: March 3, 1856, New York City.

Major, Robert Nugent, Major, Date of Commission: June 6, 1854, Date of Rank: May 23, 1852, Residence: New York City.

Adjutants Lieutenants, John McKeon Date of Commission: Aug.20, 1858 Apr. 22, Date of Rank: 1858, New York

Regimental Surgeons, Captains, Robert Johnson, Date of Commission: October 25, 1859, Date of Rank: October 8, 1858

Surgeon's Mates, Rank of Lieutenants, John Fergusson Date of Commission: Oct. 25, 1858, Date of Rank: Oct. 11, 1858

Regimental Engineers. Captains, James B. Kirker, Date of Commission: 16th March, 1857, Date of Rank: 12th Jan., 1857, Residence: NYC

Regimental Quarter Master, Lieutenants Matthew O'Connor, Date of Commission: Apr.18, 1851, Date of Rank: April 2, 1855, Residence: NYC

Regimental Pay-Masters, Lieutenants, Matthew Kehoe, Date of Commission: Oct. 25, 1858, Date of Rank: 9 Jan., 1852 Residence: NYC

Chaplains

James Bagley, Date of Commission: April 18th, 1855, Date of Rank: April 10, 1855, Residence: NY

Total on Staff: 14

Companies

"A" Company

Michael Corcoran, Captain, Date of Commission: June 24, 1854, Date of Rank: May 29, 1852
Hugh C. Flood, 1st Lieutenant Date of Commission: Nov. 14, 1855, Date of Rank: Oct. 8, 1855
Theodore Kelly, 2d Lieutenant, October 25, 1858, October 6, 1858
79 82

"B" Company

Thomas Lynch, Captain, March 9, 1857, Jan. 12, 1857
Robert W. Brown, 1st Lieutenant June 26, 1858 May 24, 1858
Dennis Brown, 2d Lieutenant, August 20, 1858, July 26, 1858
46 49

"C" Company

John Burke, Captain, March 9, 1857, Jan. 26, 1857
James Cavanagh, 1st Lieutenant, June 8, 1857, March 9, 1857
John Rowen, 2d Lieutenant, June 8, 1857, March 9, 1857
27, 30

"D" Company

George Tobin, Captain, Oct. 14, 1952, Sept. 21, 1852
Vacant, 1st and 2d Lieutenant
46 47

"E" Company

Maurice Keating, Captain, July 25, 1856, July 2, 1856,
Patrick Kelly, 1st Lieutenant March 9, 1857, Jan. 16, 1857
Richard P. King, 2d Lieutenant June 24, 1851, June 14, 1852
49 52

"F" Company

John Breslin, Captain, March 30, 1858, March 9, 1858
John T. Scullen, 1st Lieutenant April 3, 1855, March 21, 1855
George Collins, 2d Lieutenant April 3, 1855, March 21, 1855
35 38

"G" Company

William Malone, Captain, March 9, 1857, Jan. 28, 1857
John Cornan, 1st Lieutenant March 9, 1857, Jan. 28, 1857
John Julien, 2d Lieutenant March 9, 1857, Jan. 28, 1857
24 27

“H” Company

James Kelly, Captain, May 11, 1856, May 7, 1856

William Butler, 1st Lieutenant May 14, 1856, March 11 1856

James Lyons, 2d Lieutenant, December 22, 1856, November 6, 1856

46 49

“I” Company

Vacant

“K” Company

Vacant

Staff	7
Non commissioned Staff	5
Band	16
Total NCOs and Privates	352
Total Regiment	405

96

1859

Irish Republican Orientation

The consolidated regiment, the Sixty-Ninth Regiment did not lose its Irish Republican orientation. When the 1848 Irish leader, William Smith O'Brien, visited New York in February 1859, his reception in New York was lackluster. It seems the New York Irish were growing tired of the leaders of the "Young Ireland Revolt".⁹⁷ His tour continued until the summer when a farewell reception for Smith O'Brien was held in New York. The Sixty-Ninth Regiment took no part in the reception but at his departure Colonel Ryan read an address and the regiment marched as part of the escort from Union Square to the Battery, where Smith O'Brien boarded a ship to Ireland.⁹⁸

When Daniel O'Sullivan a member of the "Phoenix Society", visited New York in April 1859, the Sixty-Ninth Regiment paraded to the St. Nicholas Hotel on the evening of April 29, 1859. In the presence of a large crowd, the regiment stood at attention while the regimental band serenaded the new hero. The officers of the regiment appeared on the balcony with the "Phoenix", while John O'Mahony, President of the Fenian Brotherhood in America, made the welcome speech. Michael Doheny who was no longer associated with the regiment also made some remarks. During the speeches the Sixty-Ninth Regiment stood in the street below with rifles and fixed bayonets.⁹⁹

Colonel Ryan Resigns

Colonel James Ragget Ryan's submitted his resignation from the Sixty-Ninth Regiment on July 24, 1859. It was accepted by General Ewen, Commander of the Fourth Brigade, First Division, on August 19, 1859.¹⁰⁰

Early in the year Michael Doheny, O'Mahony, and Corcoran founded the "Irish Patriotic Defense Fund" which was supposed to raise money for prisoners in Ireland but was really to raise funds for Republican activities. Contributions ceased when this was uncovered and the New York Irish were upset feeling duped again.¹⁰¹

Colonel Ryan retired from the regiment on July 29, 1859, to be replaced by Michael Corcoran, second in command in the Fenian Brotherhood. His date of rank to Colonel is listed in as August 26, 1859. He and all the officers in the regiment are listed as artillery officers doing duty as infantry.



The officers and soldiers paraded in the evening of August 7, 1859, in an attempt to induce Colonel Ryan to reconsider his resignation, but he was determined to retire. An election was held at the Division Armory, White and Elm Streets, on August 26th, with Brigadier General Ewen presiding. The choice of the officers was Michael Corcoran, Captain of Company "A", the "Irish Fusileers", as Colonel, Robert Nugent, Regimental Major, as Lieutenant Colonel, and James Bagley, Chaplain,

as Major. Michael Corcoran, at the time of his election, was one of the Directory of the “Fenian Brotherhood” and was actively engaged in the collection of funds to finance the organization in Ireland. Corcoran was born in County Sligo, Ireland, on September 21, 1827. His father was a retired army officer who had served in the West Indies, and his mother claimed descent from Patrick Sarsfield, Earl of Lucan" the most famous Irish soldier of his day. He joined the Royal Irish Constabulary at the age of nineteen after he had finished his education in England. He resigned his position in August 1849, after three years' service at Creeslough, County. Donegal. Corcoran emigrated to America. He entered the employ of John Heeney of the Hibernian Hall and on Heeney's retirement succeeded him as the owner. Corcoran also held a position in the Custom Service which was no doubt a political sinecure. He joined the company formed by Captain John Judge, which in the early days of the regiment was known as the “Irish Rifles” Company “I”.¹⁰²

Sixty-Ninth Regiment

The consolidation of the regiments is reflected in the Sixty-Ninth Regiment strength. The AG Report for 1859 lists 446 members increased by over ten percent from the previous year. The following is a list officers assigned: to the Sixty-Ninth Regiment. Colonel and Commander was Michael Corcoran. Robert Nugent replaced Butler as Lieutenant Colonel. Robert Nugent’s previous position as Major went to James Bagley

In “A” Company, Michael Corcoran’s position of Captain went to Hugh C. Flood who had served the previous year as 1st Lieutenant in the company. Theodore Kelly moved into Flood’s previous position and Daniel Strain and Patrick K. Masterson served in Alpha Company as Second Lieutenants. There were 83 individuals assigned to Company A.

There were no officers assigned to Company “B”. but there were 14 individuals assigned to the company. Captain Thomas Lynch who served as the commander in 1858, 1st Lieutenant Robert W. Brown, and 2d Lieutenant Dennis Brown who were assigned to B Company in 1858 are not on the rolls of the regiment in 1859.

In “C” Company James Cavanagh who served as 1st Lieutenant in 1858 took over position as Captain, John Rowen (spelled Rowen in the 1858 and 1860 AG Reports but Bowen in 1859) moved from 2d Lieutenant in the company to 1st Lieutenant and John H. Ryan and Daniel O’Connell were assigned as 2d Lieutenants. John Burke who served as Captain the previous year is no longer on the rolls. There were 43 individuals assigned to Company “C”.

The command of “D” Company went from George Tobin to Thomas McGuire. Thomas Fay, was assigned as 1st Lieutenant and James Dungan and Michael O’ Boyle were assigned to the company as 2d Lieutenants. There were 44 individuals assigned to “D” Company.

In “E” Company Maurice Keating, Captain was replaced by Patrick Kelly, who served the previous year as 1st Lieutenant. Patrick Kelly, was replaced by John Bagley in the 1st Lieutenant position
Hugh J. Campbell and John Drake assigned as 2d Lieutenant. The company had 54 individuals assigned

“F” Company had Captain John Breslin still in command with Patrick Duffy serving as 1st Lieutenant and Michael Breslin and John Duffy serving as 2d Lieutenants. There were 45 individuals assigned to “F” Company.

Captain Felix Duffy commanded “G” Company with Terrence Duffy serving as 1st Lieutenant and 36 individuals assigned.

In “H” Company James Kelly was still Captain with William Butler still 1st Lieutenant James Lyons was still a 2d Lieutenant in the company but the company had added another 2d Lieutenant to the rolls. 2d Lieutenant James Gannon was assigned along with 72 individuals assigned.

“I” Company which was Vacant in 1858 had John H. Robert Nugent in Command as Captain with a vacant 1st Lieutenant position and 2nd Lieutenants Thomas M. Canton and Dennis Brown and 41 individuals assigned.

The Abstract E of the AG Report lists Company “I” as being one of the artillery companies organized during 1859. It indicated the company was organized on September 17 with Robert Coddington as Commandant.

“K” Company was still Vacant.

There were seven staff and four noncommissioned staff assigned to the regiment. The regiment was equipped with 318 percussion muskets and bayonets.

Major Robert Taylor Inspector of the Fourth Brigade reported to the Adjutant General “Sir-The inspection of the several regiments' comprising this Brigade-for the present year, commenced with the Sixty-Ninth Regiment, at Hamilton Square, on the 5th 'instant, -for the present year, the front of which, when formed, exhibited about eighty files. The formation was quite well made, and the regalement was delivered to the 'Command of the Colonel by the Adjutant very soon I felt some apprehension as to the ability of the recently elected colonel to go through with the movements, he having drilled his regiment but once, and then in the evening, since his election. All doubts were soon removed for Col. Corcoran went through with the programme of movements, or nearly so, with all the familiarity experience only gives.

The Colonel was ably assisted by Lieutenant Col. Robert Nugent, late the Major of the regiment. In execution of the movements a number of the line officers gave evidence of inexperience, indeed, were sadly deficient in knowledge even minor matters pertaining to the positions they were elected to fill.

There were exceptions however. Captain Flood's, Company "A" and Captain McGuire's Company “D”, appeared to comprehend and act as if they understood the mechanism of the movements. All the officers and men, as well, exhibited a willingness to be instructed, and really did all they could to relieve the Colonel of his arduous task, who, by his promptness and

ubiquitous presence, enables me to report that the movements were quite well performed. It is the Colonel's intention .to be thorough in his evening drills hoping by the spring to remedy the deficiencies that manifested themselves at inspection. The arms and accoutrements of the Sixty-Ninth Regiment were in fair condition particularly those of Company "A". There is not, however, that attention paid to brightness or cleanliness, that arms furnished by the State, are entitled to.

The uniform of this regiment is all new, and according to the regulations as adopted. The change in the uniform of the regiment is highly creditable to them, as the one they have discarded was good, and they could have retained it, but, desirous of conforming to the "regulation" color, they sacrificed their prejudice for a color that was cherished by them, and adopted blue. I respectfully suggest that several of the companies of the Sixty-Ninth Regiment be consolidated and the most efficient officers placed in command, regardless of rank".¹⁰³ According to this report, the Sixty-Ninth Regiment had fully adopted and accepted their regulation blue uniform by 1859.

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- ¹ The Sun; Baltimore, Friday, May 5, 1848
- ² O'Flaherty, Patrick Daniel, *The History of the 69th Regiment of the New York State Militia 1851 to 1861*, 1964, pg. 4 footnote
- ³ Copy of period Newspaper article in Regimental archives
- ⁴ Merriman, John, *A History of Modern Europe: From the French Revolution to the Present*, 1996, p 715
- ⁵ Copy of period Newspaper article in Regimental archives
- ⁶ Daily Evening Transcript; 05-24-1848; Volume XIX; Issue 5469; Boston, Massachusetts; New York Journal of Commerce, May 23
- ⁷⁷ The Irish News, January 29, 1859. Statement of Lord Palmerston on the Sentiments of the Irish in America, Leonard Patrick O'Connor Wibberley, *The Coming of The Green*, Henry Holt & Co., 1958, p. 48.
- ⁸ Copy of period Newspaper article in Regimental archives
- ⁹ Copy of period Newspaper article in Regimental archives
- ¹⁰ Michael Cavanaugh, *Celtic Monthly Our Dead Comrades: Captain. Michael Phalen*, , June, 1882, p. 477, *The Irish People*, October 21, 1871.
- ¹¹ The Irish People, June 2, 1866. George Potter, *To the Golden Door* (Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1960, p. 557.
- ¹² Copy of period Newspaper article in Regimental archives
- ¹³ Copy of period Newspaper article in Regimental archives
- ¹⁴ O'Flaherty, Patrick Daniel, *The History of the 69th Regiment of the New York State Militia 1851 to 1861*, 1964, pgs 2-3.
- ¹⁵ O'Flaherty, Patrick Daniel, *The History of the 69th Regiment of the New York State Militia 1851 to 1861*, 1964, pg. 3 footnote
- ¹⁶ Copy of period Newspaper article in Regimental archives
- ¹⁷ Copy of period Newspaper article in Regimental archives
- ¹⁸ Copy of period Newspaper article in Regimental archives
- ¹⁹ Copy of period Newspaper article in Regimental archives
- ²⁰ Copy of period Newspaper article in Regimental archives
- ²¹ Lineage and Honors Certificate, 69th Infantry, undated, signed by John W. Mountcastle, Brigadier General, United States Army, Chief of Military History who held that post in the 1990s
- ²² O'Flaherty, Patrick Daniel, *The History of the 69th Regiment of the New York State Militia 1851 to 1861*, 1964, pgs 5-6
- ²³ Copy of period Newspaper article in Regimental archives
- ²⁴ Letter to BG Keys from J.C.P. Stokes the Historian of the 9th Regiment, November 4, 1953, located in 69TH Regiment Historical Archives
- ²⁵ Letter to BG Keys from J.C.P. Stokes the Historian of the 9th Regiment, November 4, 1953, located in 69TH Regiment Historical Archives
- ²⁶ The Irish People, June 2, 1866
- ²⁷ O'Flaherty, Patrick Daniel, *The History of the 69th Regiment of the New York State Militia 1851 to 1861*, 1964, pg. 14
- ²⁸ Lane, "Colonel Corcoran," pgs. 4-15
- ²⁹ Copy of period Newspaper article in Regimental archives
- ³⁰ Copy of period Newspaper article in Regimental archives
- ³¹ The United Service Journal, May 31, 1851, p. 180
- ³²³² The Providence Journal, April 20, 1850
- ³³ Letter from Colonel Benjamin C. Ferris to Captain John Kavanagh, May 15, 1850, Adjutant General's Correspondence File, Box 91.
- ³⁴ The Irish American, January 28, 1850;
- ³⁵ The United Service Journal, June 22, 1850, p. 8
- ³⁶ The United Service Journal, July 6, 1850, p. 23
- ³⁷ The Irish American, March 31, 1850
- ³⁸ Copy of period Newspaper article in Regimental archives
- ³⁹ O'Flaherty, Patrick Daniel, *The History of the 69th Regiment of the New York State Militia 1851 to 1861*, 1964, pgs 14-15
- ⁴⁰ Michael Cavanaugh, *Memoirs of General Thomas Francis Meagher* (Worcester, Mass.: The- Messenger Press, 1892), p. 363
- ⁴¹ The Irish American, August 9, 1851
- ⁴² Petition of Captain John Fay to the Commander in Chief, January 14, 1852, Adjutant General's File, Box 101.
- ⁴³ General Ewen to Adjutant General Smith, Approval of Disbandment of Company B Approved by Major General Charles W. Sandford, June 4, 1852. Adjutant General's File, Box 99.
- ⁴⁴ O'Flaherty, Patrick Daniel, *The History of the 69th Regiment of the New York State Militia 1851 to 1861*, 1964, pgs 17-21
- ⁴⁵ General William Hall to Adjutant General Smith, October 10, 1851, Adjutant General's File, Box 95.
- ⁴⁶ General John Ewen to Adjutant General Smith, October 31, 1851, Adjutant General's File, Box 95.
- ⁴⁷ New York Daily Tribune, November 7, 1851
- ⁴⁸ General Ewen to Adjutant General Smith, certifying the election of the field officers of the 69th, December 15, 1851, Adjutant General's File. Box 94
- ⁴⁹ John Tabbot Smith, *The Catholic Church in New York* (New York: Hall and Locke Co., 1905), I, 149. The Irish American, April 17, 1853
- ⁵⁰ The Irish American, December 6, 1851
- ⁵¹ The Irish American, December 6, 1851
- ⁵² The Irish American, Mar. 20, 1852
- ⁵³ The Irish American, March 27, 1852
- ⁵⁴ The United Service Journal, May 24, 1852, p. 158
- ⁵⁵ The United Service Journal, June 12, 1852, p. 205
- ⁵⁶ O'Flaherty, Patrick Daniel, *The History of the 69th Regiment of the New York State Militia 1851 to 1861*, 1964, pg 29
- ⁵⁷ The United Service Journal, July 31, 1852, p. 52
- ⁵⁸ The Irish American, May 29, 1852
- ⁵⁹ Brig. Gen. Ewen to Adj. Gen. L. Ward Smith, November 20, 1852, Adjutant General's File, Box 102
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- ⁶⁴ O'Flaherty, Patrick Daniel, The History of the 69th Regiment of the New York State Militia 1851 to 1861, 1964, pg. 43
- ⁶⁵ O'Flaherty, Patrick Daniel, The History of the 69th Regiment of the New York State Militia 1851 to 1861, 1964, pg. 40
- ⁶⁶ O'Flaherty, Patrick Daniel, The History of the 69th Regiment of the New York State Militia 1851 to 1861, 1964, pg. 46
- ⁶⁷ O'Flaherty, Patrick Daniel, The History of the 69th Regiment of the New York State Militia 1851 to 1861, 1964, pg.54
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- ⁶⁹ The Citizen, December 30, 1854
- ⁷⁰ Michael Doheny, The Felon's Track (Dublin: M. H. Gill and Son, 1914), p. 8
- ⁷¹ The Citizen, Aug. 26, 1854
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- ⁷⁴ The Irish American, March 17, 1855
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- ⁷⁶ The New York Times, Mar. 18, 1855
- ⁷⁷ The New York Daily Times, December 5, 1855
- ⁷⁸ The Irish American, February 23, 1856.
- ⁷⁹ The Citizen, June 20, 1856
- ⁸⁰ The Citizen, November 8, 1856
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- ⁸² O'Flaherty, Patrick Daniel, The History of the 69th Regiment of the New York State Militia 1851 to 1861, 1964, pg.87
- ⁸³⁸³ O'Flaherty, Patrick Daniel, The History of the 69th Regiment of the New York State Militia 1851 to 1861, 1964, pg. 184
- ⁸⁴ The Irish American, June 14, 1856
- ⁸⁵ O'Flaherty, Patrick Daniel, The History of the 69th Regiment of the New York State Militia 1851 to 1861, 1964, pg. 90
- ⁸⁶ Lineage and Honors Certificate, 69th Infantry, undated, signed by John W. Mountcastle, Brigadier General, United States Army, Chief of Military History who held that post in the 1990s
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- ⁸⁸ 1857 Annual Report Of The Adjutant General of New York State, February 2, 1858
- ⁸⁹ The Citizen, March 28, 1857
- ⁹⁰ The Evening Express, October 17, 1857
- ⁹¹ O'Flaherty, Patrick Daniel, The History of the 69th Regiment of the New York State Militia 1851 to 1861, 1964, pgs 153-4
- ⁹² The State Military Gazette, May 8, 1858
- ⁹³ The Boston Pilot, January 27, 1866
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