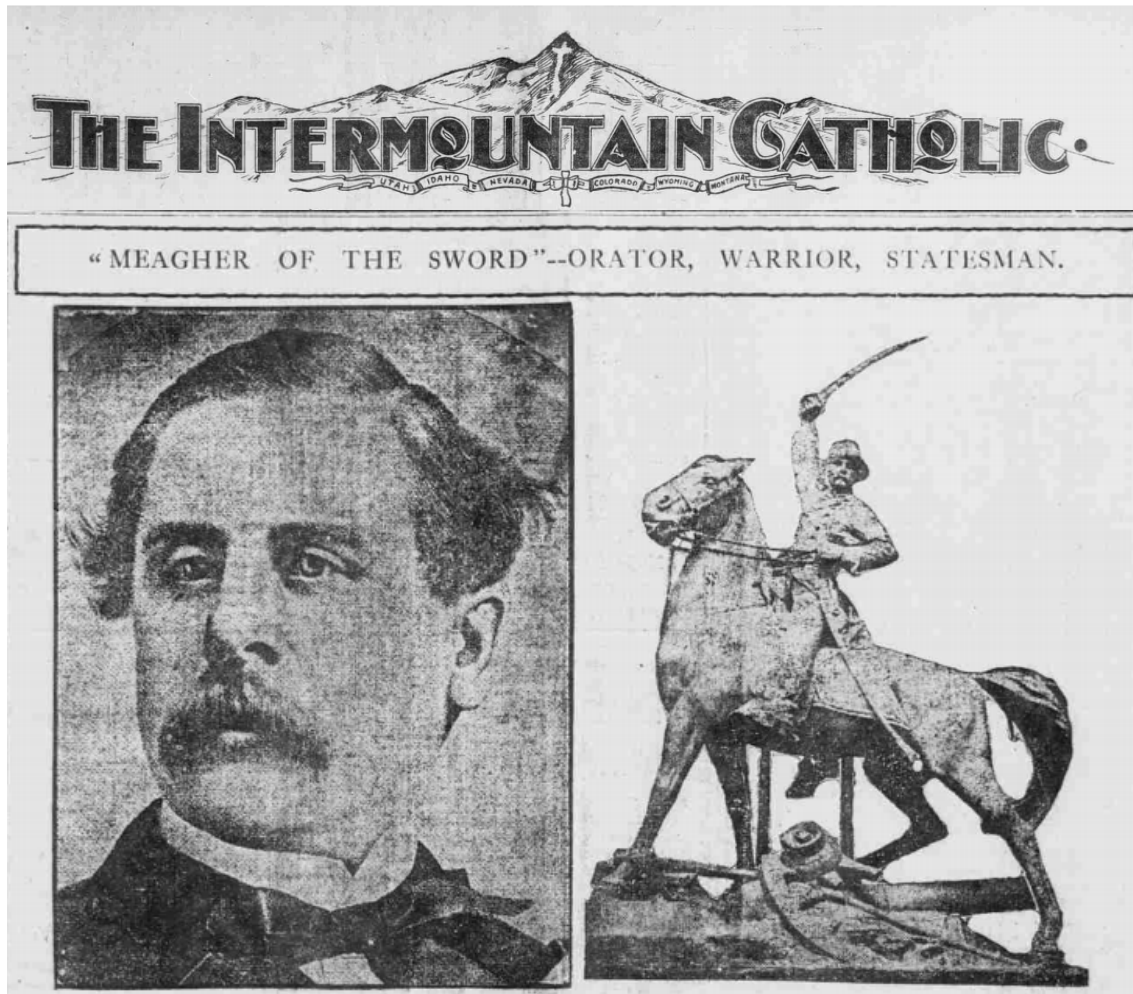


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SALT LAKE CITY AND DENVER, JULY 8, 1905.

## MONTANA'S MONUMENT TO MEAGHER'S MEMORY

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### Patriotic Demonstration Attending the Unveiling of Equestrian Statue of Meagher at Helena

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(Special Correspondence)  
Helena, Mont. July 4<sup>th</sup>, 1905.

**A** heroic equestrian bronze statue of General Thomas Francis Meagher, leader of the Irish brigade in the civil war and later secretary and acting governor of the territory of Montana was unveiled in the capitol grounds this afternoon in the presence of people from all parts of the state. Governor J.K. Toole, Lieutenant Governor Norris and other Montanans, participated in

the ceremonies. Colonel John F. Finnerty of Chicago delivered the principal address, paying an eloquent tribute to Meagher and the Irish soldiers of the civil war.

As Miss Anastasia O'Meara of Butte pulled the cord removing the flags around the bronze figure, a firing squad from the Twenty-fourth United States infantry fired a salute and the audience sang patriotic airs.

The statue was designed by Sculptor Mulligan of Chicago and is pronounced a faithful likeness of the dead general. It is made of bronze, about twice life-size, weighing about five tons and cost in the vicinity of \$10,000. The general sits astride charger. Beneath the horse's feet lies a dismantled cannon, with broken carriage wheel and ram rod, as though they had been disabled by a shell and were being trampled on by the horse. General Meagher sits upon the steed with reins in left hand, while in the right is an uplifted sword, the idea being meant to portray his noble charge at the battle of Fredericksburg, where he led the Irish brigade against the almost impregnable position of the confederate army. On the sides of the granite base are inscriptions from his noted tribute to the sword, as well as extracts from other notable addresses delivered by him in Ireland, New York and Montana.

July 1, 1867, thirty-eight years and three days ago today, General Meagher fell from a steamboat at Fort Benton into the Missouri river and was drowned. His body was never recovered although \$2,000 reward was offered. His widow still lives at Rye, NY while a son by a former wife is in the Philippines.

The idea of honoring General Meagher with a statue had long been in contemplation and in an embryonic state until such men as Senators W.A. Clark and Thomas H. Carter, former Senator T.C. Power, F. Augustus Heinze, F. Warren Toole, J.D. Ryan, J.H. Lynch, P.J. Brophy, John Caplice. Bishop Brondel and William Scallon and hosts of other well known citizens not only made liberal contributions but gave the matter their personal attention with the result that the necessary funds were forthcoming and the statue ordered. Permission was readily obtained for its erection in tin state house grounds.

The committee of arrangements who had the affair in hand today consisted of Mayor Purcell, John J. Gorgan, James A. Walsh, William Stuewe, W.M. Biggs, General C.D. Curtis and Judge Frank P. Sterling.

The finance committee consisted of Senator Carter, R.C. Wallace, John J. Clark, Finlay McRae and Joseph L. Callahan.

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### **LIFE OF GEN. THOMAS FRANCIS MEAGHER**

Born in Waterford Ireland

Of the gallant Irish gentlemen who drew sword in the defense of liberties of their adopted country, none occupies a more picturesque place in history than Thomas Francis Meagher, patriot, soldier, orator, journalist, fiery enthusiast, wit, good companion and loyal friend.

Thomas Francis Meagher, eldest son of Thomas Meagher, was born in Waterford, Ireland, August 3 1823. His father, a merchant who had made a fortune in the Newfoundland trade, had been mayor of his city and represented it in parliament for several years. At the age of 9, the

boy Thomas was sent to the Jesuit college of Congowes Wood, County Kildare, where he remained six years and then entered Stonyhurst college near Preston, England, also conducted by the Jesuits. Graduated here in 1843, he won every prize offered in the departments of literature and oratory and spent some time in travel on the continent.

When Thomas returned to Ireland, Daniel O'Connell was at the height of his power and fame. Young Meagher took no immediate part in the monster meetings of the year, save once, when he appeared as a speaker at a national meeting at Kilkenny, over which Daniel O'Connell presided. His first important speech was made when he was 23. This was delivered at Conciliation hall in Dublin, Feb 16 1846 and attracted the attention of O'Connell himself. Others took notice of the young man and soon after, Meagher formed an alliance with William Smith O'Brien, brother to the Earl of Inchiquin, who had become a co-leader with O'Connell in 1844. He soon became one of the leaders of the Young Ireland party whose object was to obtain Irish independence by force of arm and rallied the young men of the "repeal association" to his standard.

### **Meagher Wins Fame.**

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In 1846 came the change of administration in England, Lord John Russell becoming premier in place of Sir Robert Peel. At this time Daniel O'Connell was inclined to ally himself with the whigs under the Russell leadership and winked at the election of Richard Lalor Shiel, a whig, in the borough of Dungarvan. This policy was strenuously opposed by O'Brien and his followers who advocated a more independent attitude, and decried any begging of place from the English party. The tone of the Young Ireland party, both in prose and poetry was at this time romantic and warlike and O'Connell, who desired to get rid of them as obstructionists, is credited with having approved the famous peace resolutions, which were brought before a meeting in Conciliation hall, declaring in effect, that under no circumstances would the Irish people resort to physical force and that the greatest of sublunary blessings was not worth the shedding of a single drop of human blood.

Daniel O'Connell himself was not present when the resolutions were presented by his son John O'Connell who had a feud with the Young Ireland party. It was in the debate that followed that Meagher made the speech which won him fame and name, attracted the attention of statesmen and writers of Europe and America and caused William Makepeace Thackeray, writing for London Punch, to christen him "Meagher of the Sword".

### **Talks to Lord Mayor.**

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The lord mayor of Dublin was presiding at the meeting when John O'Connell introduced his resolutions. No sooner had they been read than Meagher was on his feet and had begun his world famous apostrophe to the sword saying among other things:

*"Nor do I believe my lord that the use of arms is immoral. The man that will reason, let him be reasoned with, but it is the weaponed hand of the patriot that can alone prevail against battalioned despotism".*

*"Nor do I believe that the King of Heaven, Lord of Hosts, God of Battles, withholds his benediction from those who draw the sword in the hour of a nations peril. From the*

*evening, when in the valley of Bethulia, he nerved the arm of the Jewish girl to smite the drunken tyrant in his tent, down to this, our own day, when he has blessed the insurgent chivalry of the Belgian priest, his almighty hand has ever been stretched forth from his throne of light to consecrate the flag of freedom and bless the patriot sword."*

*"Be it for defense my lord, or be it for the assertion of a nation's freedom, I hail the sword as a sacred weapon. And if it has sometimes taken the shape of the serpent and reddened the shroud of the oppressor with too deep a dye, it has at other times and as often, like the anointed rod of the high priest, blossomed into celestial flowers to deck the freeman's brow."*

*"Abhor the sword! Stigmatize the sword! No, my lord, for amid the cragged passes of the Tyrol, it cut into pieces the banner of the Bavarian and through those rugged hills struck a path to immortality for the peasant insurrectionist of Innsbruck."*

*"Abhor the sword! Stigmatize the sword! No, my lord, for by the magic of its touch and the quivering of its crimson light, a new nation arose from the waters of the Atlantic and the fettered colony became a daring free republic, prosperous, limitless, invincible."*

*"Abhor the sword! Stigmatize the sword! No, my lord, for it scourged the Dutch invader from the fine old town of Belgium back to his old phlegmatic swamps and knocked his laws and flag, his scepter and bayonets into the muddy waters of the Schledt!"*

### **Irish Confederation.**

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As Meagher was proceeding, John O'Connell interrupted. O'Brien asked that Meagher be permitted to finish but to this O'Connell objected and after some disturbance, the members of the Young Irish party left the hall. Soon after there was formed the Irish confederation, with O'Brien as its chief and in this society, Meagher with such men as Colonel Michael Doheny, Thomas d'Arcy McGee, John Mitchell and the late Judge Richard O'Gorman of New York worked consistently until 1848.

The blight of the potato crop, the subsequent famine and the year of desolation sent a million people to their graves and as many more to seek habitation and life across the seas. Daniel O'Connell, old and broken, died in 1847 and the people were hopeless and spiritless.

Stung to madness, William Smith O'Brien appealed to arms. The rebellion was crushed almost before it had begun. In 1848, Meagher went to Paris with an address to the provisional government of France from the Irish confederation and on his return, he presented the citizens with an Irish tri-color, making a most fiery patriotic address. On March 21, Meagher was arrested charged with sedition and bailed to appear at the court of the queen's bench. After the passage of the treason-felony act, he was arrested again and in October 1848, convicted of treason and sentenced to death. So were William Smith O'Brien Terrence, Bellew McManus, Patrick O'Donohue and some other leaders, all condemned to be hanged, drawn and quartered. These sentences were commuted to banishment and transportation beyond the seas and Meagher was taken on July 9, 1849 to Van Diemen's Land, now known as Tasmania.

In 1852, he escaped and sought refuge in this country. He had married Miss Bennett of Hobart Town, Tasmania and she, unable to accompany him, went to his father's home in Waterford where a son was born to her. She died soon after the birth of the boy.

### **Meagher Arrives in America.**

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Meagher's arrival in this country was welcomed by his compatriots and he almost immediately started on a lecture tour. He came to Chicago in 1857 and spoke in old Bryan hall, the presiding officer of the meeting being the late Colonel James A. Mulligan. In 1855, he had begun the study of law and was interested in the New York Irish News, which he edited, with John Savage, the poet.

When Sumter was fired on Meagher abandoned his profession organized a company of zouaves and attached them to the Sixty-ninth New York regiment, then commanded by Colonel Michael Corcoran. At the first battle of Bull Run, he was acting major of his regiment and his horse was shot under him. When his three months service had expired, he returned to New York and organized three Irish regiments the Sixty-ninth, Sixty-third and Eighty-sixth. These, supplemented afterward by the Twenty-eighth Massachusetts and One Hundred and Sixteenth Pennsylvania became the famous Irish brigade of the army of the Potomac with Brigadier General Thomas Francis Meagher in command. When the brigade was first completed, Meagher offered the command to General James Shields but the soldier declined saying: "Meagher, you raised the brigade and you shall have the honor of its command. My country can find another place for me and my sword."

In the seven days battle around Richmond, Meagher fought bravely. He was at the second Bull Run and Fredericksburg, being wounded in the leg at the latter place. At Antietam, a second horse was shot under him. After Chancellorsville, his brigade had become so decimated that it was a mere battalion, hardly a majors command and he resigned. In 1864, he was recommissioned brigadier-general of volunteers and assigned to command the district of Etowah. In January, 1865, he was relieved from duty in Tennessee and ordered to report to General Sherman in Savannah. The close of the war, however, closed his active service and he was mustered out.

### **At Fredericksburg.**

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It was at the battle of Fredericksburg where General Meagher achieved undying fame, he himself being wounded while leading the charge against Marye's heights. The confederates were intrenched behind a long stone wall and on heights crowned with artillery and were enabled to repulse the repeated assaults of the Union troops. In this battle, the federal loss was more than 12,000, nearly half of whom fell before the fatal stone wall. This solid stone wall, four feet high completely sheltered the confederate troops while they poured a murderous fire upon the attacking party. In the assault, Meagher's Irish troops especially distinguished themselves leaving two thirds of their number on the field of heroic action.

(Continued on Page Four)

The London Times correspondent, who watched the battle from the heights, speaking of their desperate valour, paid them a handsome compliment in a cablegram to his newspaper, which is well worth of repetition. He said:

*“Never at Fontenoy, Albuera nor at Waterloo was more undoubted courage displayed by the sons of Erin than during those six frantic dashes which they directed against an almost impregnable position of their foe. That any mortal man could have carried the position, defended as it was, seems idle for a moment to believe. But the bodies which lie in dense mass within forty-eight yards of the muzzles of Colonel Walton’s guns are the best evidence what manner of men they were who pressed on to death with the dauntlessness of a race which has gained glory on a thousand battlefields and never more richly deserved than at the foot of Marye’s Heights on the thirteenth day of December, 1862.”*

### **Meagher in Montana.**

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Upon the recommendation of General U.S. Grant, General Meagher was, in 1865, appointed secretary of the territory of Montana, arriving in Helena during that year, together with his wife, the trip having been made by boat from St Louis to Fort Benton and thence overland to the capital.

During the absence of General Edgerton for several months in the following year, he was acting governor of the territory and it was while serving the young commonwealth in that capacity that he lost his life.

Governor Meagher had gone to Fort Benton for ammunition and armament with which to equip a body of men he had organized to repel the Indians. While en route, he was taken ill and was confined to his bed for six days at Sun river. This illness is believed by many to have affected his mind.

During the evening of the day of his arrival at Fort Benton, he called upon a friend John T. Doran, the pilot of the steamer George A. Thompson, and after spending an hour or more in conversation and reading, he retired for the night. Shortly afterward, a splash was heard and the cry went up “Man overboard!” General Meagher had fallen from the boat and although systematic search was made, four years afterward the body was never recovered.

James G. Pollard