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St. Patrick's Day in Peru, 1824

By Brian McGinn

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As Irish emigrants have scattered across the globe, St. Patrick has been honoured in unexpected ways and places. But a Peruvian celebration of 1824 was unique. Indeed, it is doubtful that Ireland's patron saint was feted before - or since - in the Andean mountain village of Huamachuco. And if he was, it is unlikely that the celebration had such fateful effects on the lives of its participants.

The three Irishmen who gathered that cold summer [1] night in Peru were soldiers in the army of Simón Bolívar, the hero of South America's war for independence. Bolívar's struggle against Spain had won sympathy and support in Ireland. At least 2,500 Irish soldiers and sailors joined Bolívar's cause. [2] Daniel O'Connell sent his teenage son Morgan to fight in Venezuela [3], and in 1826 O'Connell borrowed for himself the title originally bestowed on Bolívar in 1813: The Liberator. [4]

The stage for this 1824 gathering had been set some months earlier, when Colonel Francis Burdett O'Connor [5], a Cork-born battalion commander, had landed in Peru. O'Connor was handed two bottles of Irish whiskey by the captain of his transport ship, an Irishman named Simpson. 'When you meet up with some of our fellow countrymen,' the skipper told O'Connor, 'these will help you celebrate the feast of our patron saint'. [6]

Packed carefully in straw, the whiskey had followed O'Connor from the tropical coast to the frigid mountains. Busy with urgent military missions, O'Connor had let March 17 slip by uncelebrated. Some weeks later, Bolívar provided the opportunity for a belated observance when he called all his officers to a council-of-war at his highland camp. [7]

O'Connor rode to Huamachuco in the company of Bolívar's favourite general, a dashing young Venezuelan named Antonio José de Sucre. Two years before, Sucre had liberated Ecuador when he routed the Spanish army on the outskirts of Quito, the capital. [8] But the twenty-nine year old Sucre now had love rather than war on his mind. During celebrations of his great victory in Quito, Sucre had met and been smitten by a seventeen year old Ecuadorean heiress, Mariana Carcelén y Larrea. [9]

As the eldest daughter of a wealthy and pretentious aristocrat, Mariana inherited the grandiose title of Marchioness of Solanda. The teenager had little interest in settling down, and it was her father who engineered her betrothal to Sucre before he left Quito to liberate Peru. In an age when young women were always chaperoned, Mariana's father plotted to find Sucre alone in Mariana's company. Feigning shock, the father demanded that Sucre immediately ask for the hand of the daughter whose honour he had compromised, and the flustered hero agreed. [10]

Mariana however, did not feel bound by such conventions. With Sucre back at war, and her father dead, the flirtatious marchioness [11] soon caught the eye of another visiting hero, Colonel Arthur Sandes. The second of six sons of Alicia Browne and Henry Sandes of Glenfield, County Kerry, [12] Arthur was a veteran of the Napoleonic Wars before joining Bolívar in 1817. [13] By May 1819, the Kerryman was



Simón Bolívar (1783-1830)

commanding Bolívar's Rifles Battalion, and three months later received a field promotion to Lieutenant Colonel after leading a charge against Spanish cannon. [14]

Sandes, apparently unaware of Mariana's prior engagement to Sucre, was not shy about popping the question. And the whimsical *quiteña* promptly agreed to marry the handsome Irishman. Word of this turn of events soon reached Sucre, but the general had held his tongue, waiting for an opportune moment to confront his Irish subordinate. [15]



Arthur Sandes
(From *The Irish Sword*,
Vol. XII N° 47, p. 139)

On reaching Huamachuco, Bolívar's Irish officers wasted no time in finding each other. The night after he arrived, O'Connor was visited by Sandes. The two Irish colonels were soon joined by Captain William Owens Ferguson, the eldest son of John Ferguson of Ballinderry, County Antrim and Agnes Knox, his wife. Problems with his family and finances at home drove the headstrong Ulster youth to South America, where he joined Bolívar's forces at the age of eighteen. [16]

Ferguson's younger brother, Samuel, had a more settled disposition, and achieved fame as a distinguished poet - he wrote 'The Lark in the Clear Air' and 'Lament for Thomas Davis' - and as president of the Royal Irish Academy. [17]

William, only twenty-four years old at Huamachuco, was destined to achieve his own measure of immortality before reaching the age of thirty.

The reminiscences of the trio were abruptly interrupted when Sucre strode into their hut. 'Sandes,' said the general, 'I know that you are planning to marry the daughter of the Marquis of Solanda. But I also wish to marry this girl.' [18]

The tension was palpable. Sandes was not only outranked, but was very much an outsider in this Hispanic affair of the heart. Should he risk the wrath of his superior officer, and perhaps his career, for love?

Before he had time to decide, Sucre broke the silence with an audacious proposal. 'Permit me to suggest,' said the general, 'that we trust our destinies to luck. Let's toss a coin to see who will win the hand of the marchioness.'

Recovering quickly, Sandes agreed. 'Who knows,' said the Kerryman, 'if either of us will ever return to Quito, or whether we will die in some distant battle?'

O'Connor, chosen as umpire, pulled a silver peso from his pocket and tossed it in the air. 'Heads' shouted Sucre, as the tumbling coin glittered in the firelight.

When the peso fell flat on the floor, Sandes and Sucre looked down at the head of King Carlos IV. Sucre had won. [19]

The Kerryman apparently accepted the result with soldierly stoicism, and kept his feelings to himself. To lighten the loss, O'Connor now pulled from his baggage the two bottles of Irish whiskey that he had carefully preserved to celebrate St. Patrick's Day. 'With the help of these,' wrote O'Connor, 'Sucre, Sandes, Ferguson and myself had an excellent drinking session that night.' [20]



Mariana Carcelén

O'Connor was the only one of those drinking companions to survive into old age, dying on his farm at Tarija, Bolivia in 1871, aged eighty-one. [21] His descendants in Bolivia continued the family tradition of tinkering with their genealogy. Only one child of his 1827 marriage to Francisca Ruyloba -their daughter Hercilia- survived. [22]

If traditional Hispanic naming traditions had been followed, the O'Connor surname should have disappeared within two generations. Hercilia's son Tomás, from her marriage to Adhemar d'Arlach [23], decided not only to retain his matronymic but converted it into a patronymic, thus becoming O'Connor d'Arlach, a composite surname that has endured in the family down to the present. [24]

William Owens Ferguson lived to see the war's end, reaching the rank of Colonel, only to die in September 1828 during a plot against Simon Bolívar. Ferguson, whose physique was said to closely resemble that of the Liberator, was apparently mistaken for Bolívar and shot in the back as he crossed a darkened plaza in Bogotá, Colombia. [25]

With honours rarely accorded to a Protestant, the people of Colombia buried the 28-year old Ulsterman in Bogotá's Catholic cathedral. [26]

Sucre also survived to see South America liberated, and to keep his promise to the father of Mariana Carcelén. But the hero's marriage was destined to be unhappy and short. It was not until September 1828, four years after the fateful coin toss, that Sucre was united in marriage with Mariana. [27] In 1830, at the age of thirty-five, he was assassinated by political rivals while riding home from Colombia to Quito. Sucre had spent only eleven months in his wife's company. [28]

The 1829 birth of a daughter, Teresita, had done nothing to bring warmth to this loveless union. Blinded by machismo, Sucre was so embarrassed at not having produced a son that he had his daughter baptised in secret. [29]

His young widow may have had this slight still in mind when, instead of waiting the then-customary five years, she remarried just thirteen months after Sucre's death. Mariana's second marriage, to a former subordinate of Sucre's, brought further tragedy to her life: four months later, her new husband accidentally dropped her daughter Teresita from a balcony and killed the infant. [30]

Although Arthur Sandes outlived Sucre by two years, there is no evidence that he ever met Mariana again. Certainly Sucre had not held the affair with his future wife against his Irish subordinate: in December 1824, Sucre personally recommended Sandes for promotion to Brigadier General after the Rifles Battalion was decimated during a heroic 1824 engagement with the Spanish in southern Peru. [31]

After a war in which Sandes and his battalion are estimated to have covered 35,000 kilometres [32] on foot and horseback, the Kerryman was appointed governor of the department of Azuay in southern Ecuador. [33] In Cuenca, the graceful colonial city that serves as departmental capital, visitors can still find an avenue named after the Irish governor. [34]

Here, at the age of thirty-nine, Arthur Sandes died of dropsy (edema) in 1832. Whatever regrets he may have harboured about the coin toss in Huamachuco went with the Irishman to his grave in the Carmelite Convent (monastery) of Cuenca. [35] Sandes left no memoirs, and his only known communication with Ireland is a letter of condolence he sent from Ecuador to Daniel O'Connell concerning the death under Sandes' command of a relative from Ennis, Co. Clare.

The sincerity and generosity evident in the letter, combined with the active interest Sandes took, as a member of Cuenca's Department of Public Instruction, in founding new schools, suggest that he would have made a responsible and caring parent. But no descendants have been located, and the consensus is that the Kerryman never married. [36]

ARTHUR SANDES' LETTER TO DANIEL O'CONNELL [37]

Quito, 10th September 1822

Sir,

Although I have not the honour of a personal acquaintance, I feel it my painful duty to announce to you the death of your relative Mr Maurice O'Connell, Lieutenant in the Regiment under my command, who fell a victim to a malignant fever on the 2nd of April last.

Brave, generous, sincere and possessing qualities which raise the esteem and talents which arrest the attention of mankind, Mr O'Connell's character was truly Irish, uniting in it all those virtues for which the sons of our country are so justly celebrated, being always worthy of his ancient and honourable name and of the love of liberty which had engaged him in the defence of an oppressed people.

As a friend to liberty you will be pleased to hear of the success of the last campaign?the Spaniards having solely possession of Puerto Cabello. All other parts of the country enjoy a state of the most profound tranquillity and the inhabitants are beginning to reap the fruit of the numerous sacrifices which they have made to emancipate themselves from the tyranny of Spain.

Major Rudd [38] and Captain Wright [39] join with me in requesting to be remembered to your son Morgan who they had the pleasure of knowing intimately at Santa Marta.

You will have the goodness to tell him that his friend Major Peacocke [40] died of a fever and that Captain Featherstonehaugh [41] was killed on the last campaign at the battle of Bombona. Doctors O'Reilly [42] and MacDavitt [43] have also died.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

Arthur Sandes

PS. I request you will do me the favour to let my friends in Kerry know that I am well.

Notes

1. Since Huamachuco is in the Southern Hemisphere, St. Patrick's Day falls in the summer rather than winter, as in the Northern Hemisphere. Despite the season, the weather in the mountain village (3180 m) would have been cold.
2. Alfred Hasbrouck, 'Foreign Legionaries in the Liberation of South America' (New York: Columbia University Press, 1928; London: P. S. King, 1928; rpt. New York: Octagon Books, 1969), p. 388, 29-30. Eric Lambert, 'Irish Soldiers in South America, 1818-1830' in *The Irish Sword*, Vol. XVI, N° 62 (Summer 1984) p. 27. Hasbrouck has 1,729 men in the Irish Legion of John Devereux, plus an additional 387 in the Irish contingent of Colonel Gore. Irish-born soldiers also served in Bolívar's British Legion. Lambert has fifty-three ships leaving the coasts of Britain and Ireland 'carrying some 5,500 officers and men, of whom about 5,000-more than half of them Irish-set foot on the shores of South America.'
3. Maurice R. O'Connell (ed.) 'The Correspondence of Daniel O'Connell', Vol. II (New York: Barnes & Noble Books, 1973), p. 257-58: Letter N° 837, Daniel O'Connell to General Bolívar, Dublin, Ireland, 17 April 1820. According to Maurice R. O'Connell (personal correspondence to author, 23 December 1991), O'Connell's support for Bolívar's liberation campaign did not contradict his well-known antipathy to bloodshed at home: 'O'Connell was not a pacifist. He believed that most wars are unnecessary-as a great many Liberals did in the nineteenth century. He would have justified aid to the South Americans against Spain on the ground that the King of Spain was a tyrant who destroyed the Liberales in Spain, restored absolute monarchy and reestablished the Inquisition..... his reasons for supporting intervention were not a denial of his non-violent principles. I don't think he would agree for a moment that the Spanish monarchy as restored after the fall of Napoleon was a legitimate government.'
4. Oliver MacDonagh, 'The Hereditary Bondsman: Daniel O'Connell, 1775-1829' (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1988), p. 171.
5. The O'Connors were descended from an English family of Protestant merchants named Conner that settled in Cork during the seventeenth century. Francis' father Roger, who along with his better-known brother Arthur became United Irishmen, Gaelicized the surname to O'Connor, while the rest retained the original Conner. See Laurence M. Geary, 'Fraternally Yours: Roderic and Francis Burdett O'Conner' in *Journal of the Cork Historical and Archaeological Society*, Vol. XCV., N° 254 (January-December 1990), p. 120. Francisco Burdett started out as William, while his brother Feargus Edward was originally named Edward Bowen; both forenames were changed by their father in early life, the former in honor of Roger's friend and patron Sir Francis Burdett, a Baronet and radical member of the English Parliament. See Richard Robert Madden, 'The United Irishmen: Their Lives and Times' (New York: Tandy Publishing Company, 1911), p. 160; Eric Lambert, 'General Francis Burdett O'Connor' in *The Irish Sword*, Vol. XIII, N° 51 (Winter 1977), p. 128. This imaginative rewriting of family history led later generations of the faux-Irish family to claim descent from Rory O'Connor, last of the Irish High Kings; Mulhall reports that Francisco Burdett adopted the coat of arms of the Royal O'Connors as his own. See Michael G. Mulhall, 'The English in South America' (Buenos Aires: Standard Printing Office, 1878), pp. 263-64. The consequences of such genealogical delusions can be seen in the words of Tomas O'Connor d'Arlach, who arranged for the publication of the memoirs of Francisco Burdett: 'My grandfather was the last representative of that ancient royal house of Ireland that has nurtured in its bosom so many distinguished men who have brought imperishable glory to the fatherland, some in the halls of Parliament, others in the forum, in letters, in diplomacy, and on the field of battle, and still others in sacrificing their lives as martyrs for the Catholic faith and to their religious belief, which the family has preserved intact through the centuries'; see Enrique Naranjo M(artinez), 'Irish Participation in Bolívar's Campaigns' (Washington, D.C., 1927; rpt. from the *Bulletin of the Pan American Union*, October, 1925), p. 5. The claim to martyrdom is especially

ironic in light of the fact that Roger and his son Arthur were lifelong atheists; Francis Burdett apparently shared their beliefs while in Ireland, but became a devout Catholic in South America and died with the Last Rites. James Dunkerley provides a theoretical explanation of the motives for this claim (royal descent) in the sons' attitude to the contrast between their father Roger, 'a sportsman and spectacular spendthrift' and their uncle Arthur, a 'renegade MP, hardline leader of the United Irishmen and convicted traitor to the British crown, who was idolized by his nephews as a persecuted and heroic patriot. The imbalance between their father and uncle in terms of public profile and achievement possibly helps to explain why both Frank and Feargus maintained throughout their lives that the family descended from the kings of Connaught, thereby providing some dynastic compensation -perhaps even excuse- for the fact that Roger was, in the words of Graham Wallas, 'a semi-lunatic'; see James Dunkerley, 'The Third Man: Francisco Burdett O'Connor and the Emancipation of the Americas' (University of London: Institute of Latin American Studies, Occasional Papers N° 20; 1999) pp. 2-3.

6. Francisco Burdett O'Connor, 'Un Irlandés con Bolívar' (Caracas: El Cid Editor, 1977), pp. 69-70. All citations in the above article are taken from this, the third edition. O'Connors' memoirs were not published during his lifetime, but later appeared under various titles and dates. The first edition, titled 'Recuerdos', was published in Tarija, Bolivia: Talleres de La Estrella, 1895. The second edition, titled 'Independencia Americana: Recuerdos de Francisco Burdett O'Connor, colonel del Ejército, libertador de Colombia y general de división del Perú y Bolivia', was published in Madrid by Biblioteca Ayacucho, 'dirigida por el escritor venezolano Rufino Blanco-Fombona' in 1916. The second edition was also published in La Paz, Cochabamba, Oruro and Potosi (Gonzalez y Medina, 1915). O'Connor's grandson Tomás (often erroneously referred to as Francisco) O'Connor d'Arlach was responsible for publication of the second edition. His prologue appears in the second and third (1977) editions. See 'Breve Noticia Sobre La Obra' in 'O'Connor, Un Irlandés con Bolívar'; James Dunkerley, 'The Third Man', p. 7; The National Union Catalog Pre-1956 Imprints (London: Mansell, 1968-1981) Vol. 426, pp. 329-330.

7. Bolívar's Cork-born aide-de-camp, Daniel O'Leary, gives the date of Bolívar's council-of-war at Huamachuco as 22 April 1824. See 'Memorias del General Daniel Florencio O'Leary: Narración', Tomo Segundo (Caracas: Imprenta Nacional, 1952), p. 251.

8. Martha Gil-Montero, 'The Liberator's Noble Match' in *Americas*, May-June 1993, p. 11.

9. Martha Gil-Montero, 'The Marchioness and the Marshall' in *Americas*, March-April, 1994, p. 7.

10. Martha Gil-Montero, 'The Liberator's Noble Match', p. 11

11. Martha Gil-Montero, 'The Marchioness and the Marshall', p. 9.

12. Sir Bernard Burke, 'A Genealogical and Heraldic History of the Landed Gentry of Ireland' (London: Harrison & Sons, 1912), p. 623. All six sons choose military careers and served overseas. Only one (Goodman) of Arthur's brothers survived to return to Ireland, the others dying in South Africa (John), Trinidad (Henry and George) and on a ship returning from India (Thomas).

13. Arthur was present at The Battle of Waterloo. See Eric Lambert: 'Arthur Sandes of Kerry' in *The Irish Sword*, Vol. XII, N° 47 (Winter 1975), p. 139. There is credible evidence that Arthur Sandes was a fluent Irish speaker; Maurice R. O'Connell, op. cit. p. 410, n. 1. See also Eric Lambert, 'Voluntarios Británicos e Irlandeses en la Gesta Bolívariana' (Caracas: Ministerio de Defensa, 1993) Tomo III, pp. 266-267, where the author relates a fascinating tale of an Irish family named Collins settled at San Carlos, near Santa Marta in modern-day Colombia. According to the author, they were part of a colony of 'free English' (ingleses libres) founded by Spain's King Carlos III. In this case, the term 'English' seems to have loosely applied. The Collins father and one of his daughters were presented to the Spanish commander, who could not understand a single word of what they were saying. O'Connor was next called upon to try in English, which also met with failure. Shortly thereafter, Sandes was observed conversing with the Collins family in Irish.

14. Lambert, 'Arthur Sandes of Kerry', p. 141.

15. Martha Gil-Montero, 'The Liberator's Noble Match', p. 14

16. Hasbrouck, op. cit, pp. 333-34. Michael G. Mulhall, 'The English in South America' (Buenos Aires: The Standard Office, 1878; London: E. Stanford, 1878; rpt. New York: Arno Press, 1977), pp. 283. 'Journal from Lima to Caracas, Commencing Sept. 4, 1826' by Colonel William O. Ferguson (unpub-

lished thirteen-page manuscript that was sent home after Ferguson's death, presently held by his grand-nephew in Canada), introduction by anonymous grand-nephew, p. 1.

17. Henry Boylan (ed.) 'A Dictionary of Irish Biography', Third Edition (Dublin: Gill & Macmillan Ltd., 1998), p. 129.

Robert Welch (ed.) 'The Oxford Companion to Irish Literature' (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996), p. 185-86.

'Dictionary of National Biography', Vol. VI (London: Oxford University Press, 1953), pp. 1219-20.

18. Francisco Burdett O'Connor, op. cit., p. 69; Martha Gil-Montero, 'The Liberator's Noble match', p.p. 14-15; Eric Lambert, 'Arthur Sandes of Kerry', p. 145.

19. Francisco Burdett O'Connor, op. cit., p. 69.

20. O'Connor, op. cit., pp. 69-70

Lambert, 'Arthur Sandes of Kerry', p. 145.

21. James Dunkerley, 'The Third Man: Francisco Burdett O'Connor and the Emancipation of the Americas' (University of London: Institute of Latin American Studies, Occasional Papers N° 20; 1999), pp. 22-23.

22. James Dunkerley, op. cit., p. 2.

23. Monsieur Adhemar d'Arlach of Avignon, France, was secretary of the French Legation in Bolivia. According to Eric Lambert, he later served as an officer in the Bolivian Army; Lambert, 'General Francis Burdett O'Connor' in *The Irish Sword*, Vol. XIII, N° 51 (Winter 1977), p. 132.

Laurence M. Geary, 'Fraternally Yours: Roderic and Francis Burdett O'Connor' in *Journal of the Cork Historical and Archaeological Society*, Vol. XCV, N° 254 (January-December 1990), p. 122.

24. Dunkerley, op. cit., pp. 23, 7, 2. See also Eric Lambert, 'General Francis Burdett O'Connor' in *The Irish Sword*, Vol. XIII, N° 51 (Winter 1977), p. 132.

25. The official and generally-accepted version of Ferguson's death is found (among other sources)

in Michael G. Mulhall, 'The English in South America' (London: E. Stanford, 1878; rpt. New York, Arno Press, 1977), p. 283: 'A sedition broke out in the palace where Bolívar was residing; Colonel Ferguson was the officer on guard; the revolutionary chief approached him with a party of troops, and demanded imperatively an entrance to the palace, which Colonel Ferguson resolutely opposed. The revolutionary leader then drew a revolver and shot Ferguson through the head. The report of the revolver and the tumult of the troops alarmed General Bolívar, who made his escape from a window of the palace.' See also Hasbrouck, op. cit., p. 333; Lambert, 'Irish Soldiers in South America', p. 34.

Some of Ferguson's descendants, however, believe that William, whose physique closely resembled the Liberator's, may have been deliberately sent across a plaza by Bolívar's generals to draw fire and keep the Liberator safe. According to Ferguson's grand-nephew, he 'was mistaken by the plotters for Bolívar and was shot in the back and mortally wounded while walking in the street.' See Ferguson, 'Journal', op. cit., intro., p. 3; correspondence from Susan Wilkinson, Toronto, Canada, 15 December 1992. I am indebted to Susan Wilkinson for sharing a copy of Col. Ferguson's Journal. Francisco Burdett O'Connor's account of Ferguson's assassination lends some support to the family's belief, locating Ferguson on a Bogotá street (rather than at Bolívar's palace door) when he encountered one of the conspirators, who drew a pistol and shot him dead. See Francisco Burdett O'Connor, op. cit., p. 66.

26. Ferguson, 'Journal', intro., p. 3.

27. Martha Gil-Montero, 'The Liberator's Noble Match', p. 16.

28. Dr. L. Villanueva, *Vida de Don Antonio Jose de Sucre, Gran Mariscal de Ayacucho* (Caracas: Ediciones del Ministerio de Educación Nacional, 1945), p. 479.

29. Martha Gil-Montero, 'The Marchioness and the Marshall', p. 12; Martha Gil-Montero, 'The Liberator's Noble Match', p. 17.

30. Martha Gil-Montero, 'The Marchioness and the Marshall', pp. 12-13.

31. The decisive Battle of Ayacucho liberated Peru and effectively capped the defeat of Spanish forces in South America. See Lambert, 'Arthur Sandes of Kerry', p. 144.
32. Eric Lambert, 'Arthur Sandes of Kerry', p. 146: 'He and the Rifles must have covered some 22,000 miles [35,000 kilometres] on the march and the incredible number of 25,000 men and officers passed through the battalion's ranks during the thirteen years of its existence.'
33. Lambert, *op. cit.*, p. 145, has Sandes as 'governor of the department of Azuay at Cuenca.' Ecuadorean historian Dr. Ricardo Marquez Tapia, in his 'General Arturo Sandes: Datos Biográficos' (n.d.; n.p.), p. 165, writes 'más tarde en el año 1830 se instaló (Sandes) en la ciudad de Cuenca, y por este tiempo se hizo cargo del alto cargo de Prefecto General de los Departamentos del Azuay y Loja.'
34. Lambert, 'Arthur Sandes of Kerry', p. 146; Eric Lambert, 'Voluntarios Británicos y Irlandeses en la Gesta Bolivariana', Tomo III (Caracas: Ministerio de Defensa; 1993), pp. 449-450. A 1971 Bolivian commemorative stamp depicts O'Connor in the uniform of his adoptive country.
35. Obituary notice in the Limerick Chronicle, 15 June 1833: 'In the city of Cuenca, Colombia (sic), after a tedious illness, which terminated in dropsy, General Arthur Sandes of the Service of the Republic, son of the late John Sandes, Esq., of Listowel, in the county of Kerry. ... In the battles of Pantano de Vargas, Boyacá, Carabobo and Ayacucho, he displayed the genius of an accomplished soldier, combined with a chivalrous valour, which reflected honour on his country. In the first-mentioned of these bloody affairs which took place on the 25th of July, 1819 [Bolívar's birthday,] he received two severe wounds at the head of the victorious regiment, the Rifles, while commanding that Corps as Major, and finally his horse being shot under him-unable to stand from loss of blood, he supported himself leaning against the carcase (sic) of the dying animal, and could not be prevailed on to quit the field until victory was proclaimed, and at Ayacucho he was named General on the field of battle.'
36. Lambert, 'Arthur Sandes of Kerry', p. 145: 'As far as the writer knows, Sandes did not marry.' Also letter dated 3 June 1993 from Rosaura García Alominia de Polit Molestina of Quito to Guillermo McLoughlin Breard of Buenos Aires: 'He consultado a los más conocidos especialistas de las ciudades en donde vivió Sandes y llegamos a la conclusión de que él no dejó descendencia alguna en el Ecuador.' I am indebted to Dr. MacLoughlin Breard for sharing this correspondence with me. Unverified reports that Sandes left descendants in Venezuela can be found in Hasbrouck, *op. cit.*, pp. 318, 447, and also in Cyril Hamshere, 'The British in the Caribbean' (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1972), p. 182. Hasbrouck cites an article by Carlos Schoffer titled 'Germans in Venezuela: Conquerors and Warriors' that appeared in *El Universal*, Caracas, dated June 12, 1911: 'There are not enough records to make it possible to follow the history of Col. Sandes much beyond this period (1830), but some of his descendants were said to be living in Venezuela as recently as 1911'; Hamshere erroneously claims that Sandes settled in Venezuela after his regiment was disbanded in 1830, and 'left his name in the country.' In light of what later historians, such as Eric Lambert, have learned about Sandes' postwar settlement and career in Ecuador, the above reports should be treated with caution if not scepticism.
37. The version of this letter reproduced in Maurice R. O'Connell (ed.) 'The Correspondence of Daniel O'Connell' (New York: Barnes & Noble Books, 1973), Vol. II, Letter 980, p. 410, is incomplete, omitting the references to the deaths of Capt. Featherstonehaugh, Maj. Peacocke and Drs. MacDavitt and O'Reilly. According to the Dr. O'Connell, this was due to the publisher's pressure to 'keep the publication as short as reasonably possible' (personal correspondence from Maurice R. O'Connell, Dublin, to Dr. Eileen A. Sullivan, St. Augustine, FL, 7 October 1996. I am indebted to Dr. Sullivan for sharing this correspondence). The missing names are included in the version of Sandes' letter reproduced in Lambert, 'Arthur Sandes of Kerry', p. 143. The original letter is on deposit in the collections of University College, Dublin: O'Connell MSS, N° 729, Sandes to Daniel O'Connell, Quito, 10 September 1822.
38. Major Richard Rudd from Co. Wexford, a veteran of Waterloo where he saw action as a Lieutenant in the 40th Foot; in South America, he served as a Major in Sandes' Rifles. See Lambert, 'Voluntarios', II, p. 281.
39. Thomas Charles Wright from Drogheda, Co. Louth. An officer in Sandes' Rifles; Hasbrouck, *op. cit.* p. 261 n. 1; Lambert, 'Voluntarios', III, p. 418-419. Commended for bravery at the Battle of Bombana, Wright later settled in Ecuador, where he is regarded as a founding father of that nation's Navy; see Eric

Lambert, 'Irish Soldiers in South America', op. cit., pp. 31, 34. For a summary of Wright's career both before and during his South American service, see Hasbrouck, op. cit., pp. 321-322.

40. Sgt. Maj. William Peacocke, from Garryowen, Co. Limerick. Said to be 'the handsomest man in the west of Ireland.' After sustaining wounds in the capture of Santa Marta, as a member of Sandes' Rifles Battalion, he later died from dysentery; see Lambert, 'Arthur Sandes of Kerry', p. 142; Hasbrouck, p. 224. See also Lambert, 'Voluntarios Británicos y Irlandeses en la Gesta Bolívariana', Tomo II, p. 433, where the cause of death for Peacocke and Dr. Michael O'Reilly is given as yellow fever.

41. In the Battle of Bombana, 1822, where the Royalists lost 300 killed, wounded and captured, the Patriot forces lost 341 wounded and 116 killed. Of the Rifles Battalion, five officers and fifty men were killed, including Capt. George Featherstonhaugh, who fell 'transfixed by a bayonet, while he was slashing his way through the enemy with his sabre'; Hasbrouck, p. 276-77. See also Lambert, 'Voluntarios', Tomo III, p. 421, 442; and Lambert, 'Irish Soldiers in South America' in *The Irish Sword*, Vol. XVI, N° 62, p. 31.

42. Dr. Michael O'Reilly from Thomas Street, Dublin came to Venezuela in September 1819 with Colonel William Aylmer, a former leader of the United Irishmen from Painstown, Co. Kildare. Aylmer was wounded at the Battle of Rio Hacha on 25 May 1820 and died in Jamaica on 20 June 1820. See Martin Tierney, 'William Aylmer 1772-1820' in *The Irish Sword*, Vol. VI, N° 23 (Winter 1963), p. 107; Maurice R. O'Connell, 'Correspondence', II, p. 263; Eric Lambert, 'Voluntarios', Tomo II, pp. 28, 302-303, 310, 327 n. 61. After Aylmer's evacuation to Jamaica, Dr. O'Reilly joined Sandes' Rifles Battalion. He survived gunshot wounds sustained at the Battle of Turbaco in September 1820, but died of yellow fever in 1821. See Lambert, 'Voluntarios', Vol. II, p. 433; idem., 'Voluntarios', III, p. 264; and Maurice R. O'Connell, 'Correspondence', II, pp. 278-79.

43. Dr. Stephen MacDavitt was an Irish surgeon on the staff of John Devereux, an adventurer from Co. Wexford who organized The Irish Legion for Bolívar. Devereux avoided service himself while collecting fees for those he dispatched to their deaths; Lambert, 'Voluntarios', Tomo II, p. 370. The doctors fell victims to the same ailments they were treating in the troops: see Lambert, 'Irish Soldiers in South America, 1818-1830', p. 33: 'Despite the magnificent efforts of the hundred or so British and Irish doctors and a fair number of locals, little could be done owing to the state of medical knowledge in those days and particularly the lack of drugs and instruments. Malaria, yellow fever, cholera, dysentery, typhoid, typhus and tropical ulcers carried off hundreds. Hospitals were set up in the towns and military bases, but little or nothing could, of course, be done on the long marches and men left behind had little hope of survival.'

St. Patrick's Day, Buenos Aires, 1905

By Edward Walsh

*Hail glorious Saint Patrick, dear Saint of our isle,
On us thy poor children bestow us a smile*



St Patrick's Day in Luján, 1912
(*The Southern Cross*, 22 March 1912)

In the post-Second Vatican Council era it may be that the opening lines of the well know hymn to St Patrick are now be somewhat dated, but nevertheless the feast continues to be celebrated world wide “where ever green is worn.” [1] In the UK the late Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother was accustomed to present shamrock to the Irish Guards either at Wellington Barracks in London or at the Guards Depot in Pirbright, Surrey. That was very much a formal occasion with Her Majesty having her photograph taken with officers an NCOs (non-commissioned officers). Nowadays when Irish Government ministers jet off to distant parts of the world to be present at St Patrick’s Day celebrations, it has become customary for the Taoiseach to make the trip to Washington to formally present shamrock to the incumbent President at the White House.

In years gone by where ever the feast was celebrated more often than not it was Irish clergy who organised things and in that respect what happened in Argentina a century ago (as *The Standard* records) was little different from what took place elsewhere. In 1905 Manuel Quintana was president, an economic boom had just commenced and the press was full of news of railway construction, immigration, public works and urban growth.

'Besides the banquet which prominent members of the Irish Colony intend holding on St Patrick’s Day, there will be a dance in the hall of the Hiberno-Argentine Club, in Calle Belgrano. The dance in order not to clash with the banquet, and that all who attend the latter may not be deprived of the pleasure of being present at this first entertainment offered by the Hiberno-Argentino club will not take place till Saturday night. The floor is polished for the occasion; the music will be exceptionally good, as a fine orchestra has been engaged, and included in its repertoire are several Irish selections. The refreshment department will be also in good hands, so that, taking all in all, a very enjoyable evening is likely to result. The members of the Committee of the Hiberno-Argentino Club are to be congratulated on their zeal in all that tends towards drawing closer the bonds of union and good fellowship between members of the Irish community.' [2]

On St Patrick’s Day the *Editor’s Table* noted 'we salute our Irish readers on the auspicious occasion and wish them every happiness and prosperity' and the *Telephonia* column carried an amusing item. 'An

enthusiastic Irishmen has presented the Hungarian Orchestra (at San Martin) with the music of *The Wearing of the Green*, which will be played this evening between ten and ten thirty. Every loyal Irishman in town should make a point of being present at Luzio's at the hour mentioned.' [3]

Inevitably it was the events of the day itself under the title 'St Patrick's Day' which the newspaper subsequently reported in some detail. 'Yesterday the Patron Feast of old Ireland was celebrated in grand style at Holy Cross. His grace the Archbishop [4] celebrated Pontifical High Mass at 10 o'clock. The fine church was filled to overflowing. Such a large and representative congregation was never before seen at this annual feast. Some fifty priests were present, among whom we noticed Canon Rasore of La Merced; the Rector of El Salvador, Dr McDonnell, Fr James M. Ussher etc. etc. After the first gospel, Rev. Fr Patrick C.P. [5] preached a most eloquent sermon that touched all hearts present. Fr Patrick is only a boy in years, having been born in Salto a quarter of a century ago, and is now looked on as one of the best pulpit orators amongst the Fathers. At times this general display of oratory was sublime, entrancing, witty, but at all times to the point. Fr Patrick has such an earnest way of speaking, that his words go straight home. It is freely said that it was the best St Patrick's Day sermon preached here for a number of years. After mass all the principal Irishmen present were invited to meet his Grace the Archbishop in the monastery. After a few minutes conversation, all were invited to a capital breakfast served by the famous restaurant Catalinas, the expenses of which were defrayed by Messrs Tomas Duggan, Patricio Ham, Deputy Dr S.G.O'Farrell and John Nelson. The breakfast was enjoyed by all present. When the champagne was uncorked Deputy O'Farrell rose and proposed the health of his Grace the Archbishop; in words of eloquence such as we rarely heard, at least at a breakfast party. His Grace responded in his usual gracious way, stating that it gave him very much pleasure to meet and breakfast with the Irish people. He laughingly alluded to the fact that he is sometimes called the "Irish Bishop." His Grace's speech was much and heartily applauded. Deputy Dr Argerech also spoke and in the most eloquent words set forth the bravery of Irishmen, and what he thought most of, the purity and goodness of Irish women. He said he was not Irish, but had good reason to know what he said. Mr Emilio Hansen also spoke, and spoke well indeed. Brother Hughes, who has recently arrived from Ireland, also made a speech, and at some length dwelt on the prosperity and charity of the Irish in Argentina. Rev. Dr McDonnell and Canon Rasore did not speak although asked to do so. The breakfast was an enjoyable treat.' [6] The names of 33 prominent members of the community present are noted and a day later *The Standard* commented that there were a total of 125, including a band of 30 persons, at the Holy Cross festivities. [7]



St Patrick's Day in Mercedes, 1932
(The *Southern Cross*,
24 March 1932)

Saturday evening saw the festivities continue with a formal dinner. 'The handsome room had been suitably prepared for the occasion; musicians were also in attendance, and the strains of the orchestra below stairs, blending with those above, lent an unusual attraction to the festivities. The menu was got up in Aue's Kellers usually excellent style, abundance of good things and choice wines meeting with praise from the assembled guests. About 10.50 the toast commenced and, with the replies occupied the rest of the evening. Good humour and general satisfaction prevailed throughout. Among the guests were many well know Irishmen of the city and camp, and some of the speeches were eloquent while all were highly patriotic. As the night wore on and the formalities came to end, things assumed a more convivial character.

During the evening the photographers put in an appearance so that the views of the feast and the festival will be evident in the illustrated weeklies very shortly. The following were the toasts. "The land we live in" proposed by Mr G. Bowen, responded to by Rev. Fr Ussher; "Ireland a Nation" - Dr McDonald and W. Bulfin; "Our Clergy" - Dr M. Bent and Rev. Fr R. Gearty; "Gaelic League" - Rev. Fr Flannery, Mr P. Cole; "The Irish and Irish-Argentine Community" - Rev. Fr O'Grady, Mr P. Hansen.'

Celebrations also took place in the camp and the paper published a 'Dear Standard' letter to the editor. '18 March 1805. Yesterday was a great day in Rojas... The hotels were all full and the owners I expect, wished St Patrick's Day came oftener. After Mass a most impressive sermon was preached by Fr Dominic [8] of the Passionists on the life of the saint. He also advised his large congregation not to "drown the Shamrock" but to enjoy themselves at the coming dance in a fitting manner and uphold the honour of the Irish race...' [9] Once again alcohol and the Irish - some things seldom change.

Notes

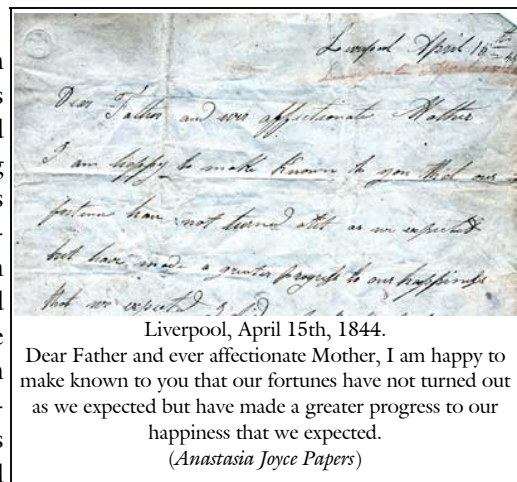
- [1] See Tim Pat Coogan, *Where Ever Green Is Worn – The Story of the Irish Diaspora*, Hutchinson, London, 2000.
- [2] The *Standard*, No. 12,974, Thursday 16 March 1905.
- [3] The *Standard*, No. 12,975, Friday 17 March 1905.
- [4] Dr Mariano Antonio Espinosa (1844-1923).
- [5] Probably Fr Patrick Walsh C.P.(1876-1919). See Santiago M. Ussher, *Los Capellanes Irlandeses En La Colectividad Hiberno-Argentina Durante El Siglo XIX*, Buenos Aires, 1954, p.221.
- [6] The *Standard*, No.12,976, Saturday 18 March 1905.
- [7] The *Sunday Standard*, No.12,977, Sunday 19 March 1905.
- [8] Probably Fr Dominic Moore C.P. (1875? – 19--?) See Ussher Op.Cit. No. 5, pp.183-184.
- [9] The *Standard*, No.12,979, Tuesday 21 March 1905.



The Manuscripts and Rare Books Collection

The Society for Irish Latin American Studies announces the creation of its Manuscripts and Rare Books Collection. Eighty-five years ago, historian Thomas Murray called for the collection of 'historical material that lies about in old family archives, and half forgotten official records, as well in old pamphlets and periodicals which have not found their way into the public libraries, but still exist in out-of-the-way places' (*The Story of the Irish in Argentina*, 1919). By donating or depositing with SILAS's Manuscripts and Rare Books Collection you can contribute to the preservation of Irish heritage and aid historical research on relations between Ireland and Latin America.

SILAS has signed a twenty-five years repository contract with the Max von Buch Library of Universidad de San Andrés (Buenos Aires). This library provides optimal security and technical conditions for documents and rare books belonging to SILAS, its Members and friends. The library staff is trained to preserve records using the latest available technology. Furthermore, the Max von Buch Library has been collecting a number of invaluable holdings of the British and Irish communities in Argentina, including among others the most complete collection of the *Standard* newspaper in existence in a public library (1861-1959), the Cecilia Grierson Papers (1859-1934), and the records of 'The Strangers Club' of Buenos Aires (1841-1981). To this, SILAS added the Anastasia Joyce Papers (1844-1881) donated by Mary Anglim, including the letters to Martin Murphy of Co. Wexford.



Now you can donate or lend on deposit your family letters, photographs, diaries and other documents related to the Irish in Latin America, thus contributing to the preservation of our heritage and traditions.



Jack Murphy (Anastasia Joyce Papers)

The Manuscripts and Rare Books Collection aims to:

- Collect and preserve all kinds of archival material relevant to the history of the Irish in Latin America. Records are accepted in most formats, provided that proper equipment exists for research use. Records may include, for example, manuscript and printed material, family papers, maps and plans, photographs, films and sound recordings.
- Provide adequate and appropriate conditions for the storage, security and preservation of archival materials.
- Arrange and describe the records according to archival principles and make them available to bona fide researchers, unless access is restricted by institutional or legal requirements or by written agreements with donors and depositors.
- Facilitate research on the history of the Irish in Latin America through

the provision of a reference service and appropriate facilities for the consultation of archives.

- Promote awareness and use of the Manuscripts and Rare Books Collection.

Materials are normally acquired in the following ways:

- Donation of materials. This may be offered to the SILAS, or actively solicited by the Society.
- Deposit on loan. Donations are preferred to deposits on loan but loans may be accepted subject to the

conditions of accession listed below.

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- Records will be available for public reference immediately or as soon as is practicable (subject to any written restrictions agreed between the donor or depositor and the SILAS).

