

Chapter 1 : One Man's Hero () - IMDb

San Patricio station - Metro Zapata was renamed for one day to "San Patricio" on 17 March to commemorate Saint Patrick's day and the Saint Patrick's battalion. This was the first time a metro had been renamed in such a manner.

Were they heroes or traitors? Beginnings It started with the Irish famine of the mid-19th century. The blight returned in and around 1845, people died of starvation. An outbreak of typhus also ravaged the population, leading massive numbers of Irish to immigrate to America. In 1846, thousands of these immigrants enlisted in the U. Army, joining the forces under General Zachary Taylor that invaded Mexico after Congress declared war on May 13 that year. In all, 4,000 Irish-born soldiers served in the U. Army during the Mexican-American conflict. Among those already serving in the U. Army, as their number also included Irish and other Europeans already settled in Mexico. When the Mexican generals learned of the difficult conditions the Irish faced in the U. Army, they encouraged defections by promising deserters land, money and promotions, surreptitiously distributing leaflets exhorting Irish Catholics to join them. The conflict was not universally popular in the United States. Henry David Thoreau went to jail rather than pay taxes to support it and newly elected House of Representatives member Abraham Lincoln denounced the war in Congress. Four months later, on September 21, 1847, the San Patricios first fought as a formal Mexican army unit, providing artillery support and adding to their reputation in handling heavy weaponry. At the battle of Monterrey, September 18, 1846, the San Patricios fought with valour. The San Patricios again played a prominent role. During the battle, two six-pounder cannons belonging to the U. Fourth Artillery were captured by Mexican forces due to the intense fire from the San Patricio artillerymen. Later, the battlefield shifted to eastern Mexico and when General Winfield Scott landed his troops and captured Veracruz on March 28, 1847, the U. Three times a white flag of surrender went up, to be torn down by the San Patricios, who knew what fate awaited them if captured by the U. Only the intervention of a U. Fifty of the San Patricios were sentenced to be hanged and 16 were flogged and branded. To the surprise of the U. Army Colonel William S. Harney "a harsh disciplinarian" brought thirty condemned San Patricios to a gallows within view of the battle still raging around the fortress-castle. In an incident of brutal irony, Harney himself was an Irishman. Mexicans were shocked and outraged by the brutal treatment of the San Patricios. The San Patricios who had not been hanged were imprisoned for the duration of the war. Army regulars who saw duty disappearing. Of that figure, nearly 1,000 were Irishmen. Army, the conflict provided a training-ground for the men who would lead the Northern and Southern armies in the upcoming American Civil War. General Taylor used his fame as a war hero to win the Presidency in 1848. Later, he was arrested on suspicion of taking part in an abortive revolt against the Mexican government and rumors of his execution by a firing squad nearly sparked a revolt by the reorganized St. The San Patricios have been honoured in Mexico as foreign heroes. In 1947, the Mexican government dedicated a commemorative plaque to them in the Mexico City suburb of San Angel, which lists the names of all members of the battalion who lost their lives fighting for Mexico, either in battle or by execution. In September 1947, on the 100th anniversary of the U. The Irish fighters are also commemorated in Mexico each year on St. Patrick's Day.

The St. Patrick's Battalion—known in Spanish as *el Batallón de los San Patricios*—was a Mexican army unit comprised primarily of Irish Catholics who had defected from the invading US army during the Mexican-American War.

By the s a significant proportion of the enlisted men in the United States Army were Catholic immigrants from Ireland and Germany. The Mexican government, aware of prejudice against immigrants to the United States, started a campaign after the Mexican War broke out to win the foreigners and Catholics to its cause. The Mexicans urged English and Irish alike to throw off the burden of fighting for the "Protestant tyrants" and join the Mexicans in driving the Yankees out of Mexico. Mexican propaganda insinuated that the United States intended to destroy Catholicism in Mexico, and if Catholic soldiers fought on the side of the Americans, they would be warring against their own religion. Using this approach, the Mexicans hoped to gain 3, soldiers from the United States Army. In November Gen. The company saw action at Monterrey, again near Saltillo, and at Buena Vista, each time receiving praise for its thorough job. The most important conflict came at the battle of Churubusco in August By July 1, , Santa Anna gathered enough deserters and foreigners to organize two San Patricio battalions of men each. As American forces rapidly approached Mexico City, Santa Anna divided his forces into three armies to guard several entrances to the city. One of these, commanded by Gen. Gabriel Valencia, was surprised by the Americans at Contreras and defeated. Santa Anna then decided to concentrate his forces at Churubusco, where there was a fortified bridgehead and a Franciscan convent. He stationed the San Patricio companies with a battery of five cannons on the bridge. The American forces advanced from the south and the west covering one side of the fort. Although they suffered heavy casualties, the Americans continued to advance. Suddenly they noticed a drop in gun fire as they made their cautious approach. With his supplies running low, Santa Anna now ordered one company of San Patricios into the fort, along with another infantry company and a wagon of ammunition. The cartridges in the wagon, however, were the wrong caliber for all the weapons except those used by the San Patricios. From inside the fort the San Patricios manned three of the seven cannons. Later some said that their gunfire was aimed at former officers. The Americans continued to press on, forcing the second company of San Patricios and other Mexican soldiers into the convent. Reportedly, Mexican soldiers inside the convent tried three times to raise the white flag, but the San Patricios, desperate because of their fate if captured, tore it down. Smith of the Third Infantry entered and put his own handkerchief on the pole. Winfield Scott issued General Orders and establishing two courts martial for seventy-two deserters. John Garland convened the first court martial on August 23, , in Tacubaya. Only two defendants did not receive the death sentence, one excused because of improper enlistment in the United States Army, the other because he was deemed insane. When General Scott received the verdicts for approval, the Mexican people faced him with cries of outrage at the treatment of their soldiers. After considering appeals from the archbishop of Mexico, the British minister to Mexico, and a number of foreign citizens resident in Mexico City including United States citizens , Scott reevaluated the courts martial, giving close attention to the Articles of War. Scott issued General Order on September 8, , and out of the twenty-nine men tried at San Angel, twenty received the death sentence. John Riley, the leader, technically deserted before the war between Mexico and the United States was declared, so he could not be hanged. He received fifty lashes and the letter "D" branded on his cheek. Scott issued General Order several days later concerning the trials at Tacubaya, confirming the death sentence for thirty San Patricios, and allowing the same considerations he had with the group before. Several of the men received pardon due to their relatively young age; and one man was pardoned because he was not a willing deserter, but had been kidnapped by the Mexicans while he was drunk. Sentences for the men tried at San Angel were carried out in that village on September 10; sentences from Tacubaya were executed in the village of Mixcoac on September The latter sentences were carried out under the command of Col. Harney , who had the condemned men fitted with nooses at daybreak and then left them standing on the gallows while the battle for Chapultepec Castle raged nearby. The men were to be hanged when the United States flag was raised over the castle; United States troops took Chapultepec several hours later, at 9: The sentences imposed on the San Patricios outraged the Mexican public. In Toluca Mexican

authorities prevented rioters from trying to retaliate against American prisoners of war. This did not end the story of the San Patricios. Mexico continued its dubious recruitment of deserters and by March of had found enough original San Patricios and new deserters to form two more companies. Mexico did not forget its San Patricios still held by American authorities and continued bargaining for their release. The San Patricios continued as a group, providing support by patrolling areas of Mexico to protect the people from bandits and Indians. They later became involved in revolts within Mexico until a presidential order of General Herrera stopped them. Herrera, in order to end the problems with the San Patricios and dispel any further crises as well as to cut the postwar budget, dissolved the company in , a short time after it received its last military expenditure in August. While some members of the San Patricio company petitioned the government of Mexico for help in returning to their European homelands, most remained in Mexico as they could not return to the United States. Kimball Baker, "The St. Cavalry Journal 24 September Wynn, The San Patricio Soldiers: Texas Western Press,

SAN PATRICIO BATTALION. By the s a significant proportion of the enlisted men in the United States Army were Catholic immigrants from Ireland and Germany. By the s a significant proportion of the enlisted men in the United States Army were Catholic immigrants from Ireland and Germany.

Army was made up of recent immigrants to the United States , many of whom had chosen military service because other jobs were not available to them. Living and working conditions were harsh, and immigrants were often viewed unfavorably and treated unfairly. This was especially true for Irish Catholics, whose religion made them particular targets for prejudice in a society that was mostly Protestant. These and other factors led a group of U. Army and fight on the Mexican side in a special military unit called the San Patricio Battalion. Considered traitors in the United States , these men were highly valued by the Mexican army and are still fondly remembered by the Mexican people. The story of the San Patricio Battalion helps to illustrate not only an interesting aspect of the war but social conditions in the United States in the nineteenth century. The hard lives of U. Army was quite small. Military service was not viewed as a very promising, respectable profession and most young men considered it a last resort if they could not find other work. When Congress authorized funding for fifty thousand volunteer troops to help fight the war against Mexico, however, enlistment offices were crowded with men eager to sign up to travel to an exotic foreign country and fight an enemy they thought would be easy to beat. All of these drawbacks led as many as nine thousand U. Less than one hundred of these men were tried for the crime of desertion, the punishment for which was usually death. However, members of the San Patricio Battalion who were still alive at the end of the war were captured after one of its final battles, and most received the death penalty. Among all the deserters of the Mexican American War, only the San Patricios were sentenced to death by hanging; the usual form of execution was by firing squad, which was considered more humane. Those who were not executed were severely punished with whipping and branding. The low status of Irish immigrants The reason that the men of the San Patricio Battalion were signaled out for such harsh punishments was because of the views of U. In the s and early s, extremely poor economic conditions in Ireland brought a huge number of Irish immigrants into the United States. Unlike the Irish who had immigrated in the eighteenth and earlier nineteenth centuries, who tended to be skilled craftsmen and Protestants, most of these new Irish immigrants were poor farmers. They also were members of the Roman Catholic religion, to which only 1 percent of the total U. The United States had been founded and long dominated by Protestants, and as a result, there was widespread prejudice against and fear of Catholicism. Although it is true that the U. Constitution guarantees freedom of religion, most Americans did not think their society had to accept or accommodate people who were racially or otherwise different from those who currently dominated it. Thus, even people who thought slavery was wrong did not think that white Americans would ever live side by side, in equality, with blacks; instead, they envisioned that African Americans would either return to Africa or form their own state in the Caribbean region. The racial prejudice that was used to justify the unfair treatment of blacks was extended to Mexicans, who were considered lazy, irresponsible, uncivilized, and too excitable. And it also was often applied to the Irish, who were assigned many of the same qualities as the Mexicans, and who also were predominantly Catholic. Long discriminated against at home by the British, who had been in control of Ireland for many centuries, Irish immigrants discovered that they were subject to much of the same treatment in the United States. Many of the Irishmen, who were unable to find other jobs, joined the U. In fact, immigrants, including the Irish, made up almost half of the U. These immigrants were generally held in contempt by their officers and fellow soldiers. It was believed that since these newcomers were not yet U. Critics cited that these new immigrants were fighting for money, not to defend the United States, and thus they were not "real" soldiers. As a result of this discrimination, Irish-born soldiers were usually given the lowliest and hardest jobs, received harsher punishments and fewer promotions, and were prevented from practicing their own religion. In fact, some historians have found it surprising that more of the five thousand plus Irish soldiers who did fight on the U. The United States sends troops to Mexico In March , the nation of Texas, which had declared its independence

from Mexico nine years earlier, became a U. Mexico had promised that this action would mean war, since Mexico never officially recognized Texas as an independent nation. Thus, the United States and Mexico were now on the brink of war. At this time, U. Polk ; see biographical entry was an ardent expansionist, and he was only the most prominent among a large number of Americans who hoped Mexico would make the first move and start a war. If this occurred, it was believed that the United States could take over parts or even all of Mexico. Soon after the annexation granting of official state-hood of Texas, Polk sent several thousand troops under the command of General Zachary Taylor ; see biographical entry to Corpus Christi , a town on the Nueces River, the traditional border between Texas and Mexico. The following spring, Taylor was ordered to move his troops south to the Rio Grande , a river about miles south of the Nueces that the United States was now declaring as its border. Across the narrow river was the pleasant Mexican town of Matamoros, whose citizens peered curiously across at the U. During the months between the arrival of the troops at the Rio Grande and the May start of the Mexican American War, about forty U. They deserted the army, swimming across the river to join the enemy on the other side, and fighting against their former officers and fellow U. They did so for a variety of reasonsâ€”including the harsh discipline and treatment they had received from the U. Army, the lure of a friendly and welcoming people who shared their religion, and perhaps because of a feeling of sympathy for the Mexicans, whose homeland had been invaded. Riley would later try to persuade more U. Initially, though, this new unit was made up not only of the U. Army deserters, but of foreigners from Ireland, Germany, and other places who were already living in Mexico. By August , the unit had grown to include two hundred men who were known to the Mexicans as colorados red heads; many people of Irish descent have red or reddish hair. It was then renamed the San Patricio Battalion after Patrick, the patron saint of Ireland , and its men began to fly a distinctive flag of green silk with the traditional Irish images of Saint Patrick , a shamrock, and a harp sewn on it in silver thread. Even before this flag flew, however, and even before the official May 13 declaration of war, the men who would make up the core of the San Patricio Battalion had taken part in the first two battles of the war. The battles of Palo Alto and Resaca de la Palma The man in charge of the Mexican troops stationed in Matamoros was General Pedro Ampudia , a Cuban-born officer with a reputation for brutality. The residents of Matamoros had asked for a replacement and General Mariano Arista had been sent to take over command from Ampudia, who now became second-in-command. On May 8 and 9, troops under these two officers fought the U. Army in the battles of Palo Alto and Resaca de la Palma. The men whose unit would soon be christened the San Patricio Battalion were probably present at both these battles, which turned out disastrously for the Mexicans. Outgunned by the U. Arista took most of the blame for these defeats, and as a result, Ampudia was again put in charge of the army. He halted his army of about nine thousand at the city of Monterrey. The San Patricios help to defend Monterrey The battle began on September 20, and lasted for three days, ending in brutal hand-to-hand fighting through the city streets. The San Patricio Battalion played a major role in the clash, proving their artillery large guns such as cannons skills as they mowed down many U. After a high number of casualties on both sides but more for the Mexicans, including many civilians , Ampudia surrendered. A ceasefire agreement that some, including Polk, felt was too generous allowed the Mexicans to walk out of Monterrey, with officers carrying their personal weapons. Among those who marched away were the San Patricios, their green flag held high. Because of the high number of civilian casualties in the Battle of Monterrey, and the fact that U. Santa Anna decided to take advantage of this opportunity. He sent out notices that encouraged U. Catholic soldiers to turn their backs on an army and a nation that had no respect for their religion. Realizing that their artillery was far inferior to that used by the United States, the Mexicans had to plan their strategy carefully. They assigned the well-trained San Patricio Battalion to the three biggest cannons, which were mounted on high ground above the battle field. Although the United States won the Battle of Buena Vista due to their superior weapons and equipment and to the fact that their troops were in much better physical condition, the San Patricios performed well, even though they lost about a third of their men. Despite several costly attempts, the U. In addition, the San Patricios captured two U. After the battle, they were recognized by the Mexicans for their bravery, and John Riley received a medal and a promotion to the rank of captain. By August , the San Patricios had enough men for two companies, each made up of about one hundred soldiers. In reality, of course, it had been a great loss.

Mexican citizens were growing more and more alarmed, especially after troops under General Winfield Scott ; see biographical entry , now in command of the U. Once again, many civilian lives were lost in the U. Army was now on the march toward Mexico City , the conquest of which, it was believed, was necessary if the United States was to win this war. From their position at a Churubusco convent, the San Patricios fought fiercely, and it is for this effort that they are most remembered in Mexico. Fighting with both heavy artillery and rifles, the San Patricios held on to the convent valiantly, inflicting many casualties on the U. At one point, the Mexicans ran out of ammunition. They made a plea for more, but received only supplies designed for U. However, since the San Patricios carried U. Three times the Mexican soldiers tried to raise a white flag of surrender, but each time the San Patricios tore it down, determined to fight on. Finally, knowing that they were defeated, a officer in the San Patricios put his own white handkerchief on the point of a bayonet and raised it in the air. The battle was over. Thirty-five San Patricios had been killed in the battle, while about eighty had escaped. The remaining eighty-five members of the battalion were taken prisoner. Seventy-two of them were immediately charged with desertion from the U. They were to be tried in two groups, on August 23, in the town of Tacubaya and on August 26, at San Angel. A panel of officers would hear the case, and the sentence would be sent to Scott for approval. Assigned to carry out the terms of the sentences was Colonel William Harney , an officer of Irish Catholic heritage who was known for his cruelty. Found guilty of desertion At the trials, the San Patricios were not represented by lawyers, but they were allowed to call witnesses who would testify that they were men of good character. Knowing that conviction meant the death penalty and unable to get formal legal advice, about half the men claimed that drunkenness had led them to desert from the army this was a very common defense in military trials and sometimes led to lighter sentences. Others claimed that the Mexicans had forced them to join their army. None brought up the issues of religious or racial prejudice.

Chapter 4 : San Patricios Battalion – Celtic Life International

The Saint Patrick's Battalion (Spanish language: Batall3n de San Patricio), formed and led by Jon Riley, was a unit of to several hundred immigrants (accounts vary) and expatriates of European descent who fought as part of the Mexican Army against the United States in the Mexican-American War of to

That is why countries that are on different sides of a conflict usually have very different historical accounts of the same conflict. In Mexico, they are honored as martyrs of liberty and freedom. The Irish immigrant experience in the United States was not easy. Some believed that the Irish were a servant race; they were ostracized from American society. During this time, many Irish men enlisted in the United States Army as a means to earn money. Human slavery was first abolished in Mexico in Canada abolished slavery in But, human slavery continued in the United States until , following its Civil War. Most of these immigrants came from the American south and they brought their slaves with them. When Mexico forbade the institution of slavery in its territory, the U. Tensions grew between the Mexican government and slave-holding immigrants from the United States and came to a head in the Anahuac Disturbances in and that helped to precipitate the Texas Revolution in when American immigrants in Texas declared its independence from Mexico. The Texas Revolution eventually led to the United States military invasion of Mexico from The US military, comprised of a significant portion of Irish and German immigrants, was sent to fight the battle. It is in this historical setting, faced with discrimination and bigotry in the United States, and with the United States in conflict with Mexico over human slavery that some Irish soldiers from the USA decided to switch to the Mexican side. In November , Gen. They fought at several battles and finally at the Battle of Churubusco, on the outskirts of Mexico City, where more than 70 were captured by US forces and the rest disbanded. Units of the disbanded battalion went on to fight at the Battle for Mexico City. Under the command of Col. They were hung at the moment that the United States flag was raised over the over the castle and the United States Army took control of the city. John Riley, the leader of the battalion, technically deserted before the war between Mexico and the United States was declared, so he could not be hanged. It has received over , views. We honor the memory of the Irish who gave their lives for Mexico and for human dignity. We also honor our own commitment to cherish their ideas, and to always defend the values for which they occupy a place of honor in our history.

Chapter 5 : Saint Patrick's Battalion - Wikipedia

In Santa Anna's retreat, the San Patricio Battalion carried off O'Brien's two bronze 6-pounders. After General Winfield Scott bombarded Vera Cruz into surrender and pushed on into the interior, Colonel Ethan Allen Hitchcock recruited a counterforce to the San Patricios.

Then, a brave group of Irish soldiers They were martyred for adhering to the highest ideals In the name of the people of Mexico, I salute today the people of Ireland and express my eternal gratitude". Army often recruited Irishmen and other immigrants into military service shortly or sometimes immediately after arrival in America in coffin ships , with promises of salaries and land after the war. Numerous theories have been proposed as to their motives for desertion, including cultural alienation, [8] [9] mistreatment of immigrant soldiers by nativist soldiers and senior officers, [10] [9] brutal military discipline and dislike of service in the U. This hypothesis is based on evidence of the number of Irish Catholics in the Battalion, the letters of John Riley , and the field entries of senior officers. Army; this was the conviction of George Ballentine, an Englishman who served in the American army. Ballentine stated that while "there was a portion of truth" in the view commonly assigned by officers that the deserters joined the Mexican army due to their Catholicism, "I have good reason to believe, in fact in some cases I know, that harsh and unjust treatment by their officers operated far more strongly than any other consideration to produce the deplorable result [desertion]," describing how he found the punishments used for "trivial offenses" to be "revolting and disgusting". In addition, many Irish fought as soldiers in South American wars of independence. No flags or depictions of them are known to have survived to the present day. The only version of the flag known to have survived the war was subsequently lost or stolen from the chapel at West Point. It was that glorious Emblem of native rights, that being the banner which should have floated over our native Soil many years ago, it was St. Patrick, the Harp of Erin , the Shamrock upon a green field. Under the harp is the motto of Erin go Bragh! On the other side is a painting Patrick, in his left hand a key and in his right a crook or staff resting upon a serpent. Underneath is painted San Patricio. The first describes it as: Popularly they were called Los Colorados by the Mexicans because of their ruddy, sun-burnt complexions and red hair color. Army in Michigan in September He deserted in Matamoros in April Among their targets were companies led by such officers as Braxton Bragg , many of whose soldiers would end up in their own ranks later in the war. Following the engagement at Monterrey , the San Patricios grew in number, by some estimates reaching an enlistment of over men. They were assigned the three heaviest 18 and 24 pound cannons the Mexican army possessed, which were positioned on high ground over-looking the battlefield , at the base of a hillside just below what is now a gravel mine. As the division got close enough they charged the artillery battery, bayoneting whoever remained and routing the rest, leaving the attached San Patricios free to haul away two six-pound cannons. It was renamed The Foreign Legion of Patricios and consisted of volunteers from many European countries, commanded by Col. Santa Anna gave a verbal order to "preserve the point at all risk". Pedro Anaya to order his men to fight on, with their bare hands if necessary. Army Captain James M. Smith suggested a surrender after raising his white handkerchief. Army were treated and punished as traitors for desertion in time of war. Seventy-two men were immediately charged with desertion by the Army. At neither of these trials were the men represented by lawyers nor were transcripts made of the proceedings. This lack of formal legal advice could account for the fact that several of the men claimed that drunkenness had led them to desert a common defense in military trials at the time that sometimes led to lighter sentences , and others described how they were forced to join the Mexican Army in some form or another. The majority of the San Patricios either offered no defense or their defenses were not recorded. The rationale was that they had entered Mexican military service following the declaration of war. Collectively, this was the largest mass execution in United States history the hanging of 38 Sioux at the conclusion of the Dakota War of appears to be the largest execution by hanging at a single event. Winfield Scott , thirty San Patricios were to be executed at Chapultepec in full view of the two armies while they fought the Battle of Chapultepec , at the precise moment that the flag of the U. This order was carried out by Col. When the army surgeon informed the colonel that the absent soldier had lost both his legs in battle, Harney

replied: In a final act of defiance, the men about to be hanged cheered the Mexican flag , as one onlooker remarked; "Hands tied, feet tied, their voices still free". Army occupied Mexico City. The Mexican government described the hangings as "a cruel death or horrible torments, improper in a civilized age, and [ironic] for a people who aspire to the title of illustrious and humane", [12] and by a writer covering the war as "a refinement of cruelty and Some former San Patricios found work at the arsenal in Guadalajara making gun stocks. Carpenter, who found himself in this predicament, stated that: Numerous schools, churches and other landmarks in Mexico take their name from the battalion, including: The band was inducted into the Irish America Hall of Fame in This was the first time a metro had been renamed in such a manner. In an inquiry was initiated by U. This resulted in the U. Congress ordered the army to turn over its records on the battalion to the National Archives. This is where the U. Army conducted the first 16 hangings after the men were convicted of desertion at court martial. Ireland and Mexico jointly issued commemorative postage stamps to mark the anniversary. Please help improve this section by adding citations to reliable sources. Unsourced material may be challenged and removed.

Chapter 6 : Commemoration of the Saint Patrick's Battalion - Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade

The San Patricios Battalion or El Batallón de los San Patricios were Irishmen who fought against America during the Mexican-American War of Beginnings It started with the Irish famine of the mid 19th century.

To the Americans they were traitors. They were recent Irish immigrants fleeing poverty and famine in Ireland who, motivated by discrimination in their own ranks, a shared religion, and sympathy for the cause, fought on the side of Mexico in the U. The war between the United States and Mexico had two causes: In 1845, with the election of President James K. Polk, an avowed expansionist, the United States embarked on a course to acquire the lands west to the Pacific Ocean. Captured in the battle of San Jacinto, Santa Anna was a prisoner of the Texans at the time of the signing. After many savage border fights, Texas decided to join the United States on July 4, 1845. Mexico was not happy with its breakaway province, which now claimed the border at the Rio Grande River. A major international issue and a tense standoff ensued. On April 25, 1846, a clash occurred between Mexican and American troops on soil that was claimed by both. Despite early popularity, the war had its opponents. There was great opposition to the war by the Whig Party and some members of the U. It was an instance of a republic following the bad example of European monarchies, in not considering justice in their desire to acquire additional territory. The offer for volunteers was ten dollars a month with three months advance pay and acres of farmland. Volunteers, including thousands of Irish immigrants newly arrived from famine-stricken Ireland, swarmed the recruiting centers and quotas were filled within weeks. The San Patricios Mexico was not to be outdone in terms of recruitment. General Santa Anna encouraged American soldiers to fight on the Mexican side with offers of cash in dollars and acre grants of land. They could retain their rank and pay grade and fight under the leadership of fellow American officers. Estimates as high as 9,000 soldiers deserted from the American army during the Mexican war and many later vanished into the Mexican countryside. The San Patricios created their own military banner with Saint Patrick on one side and a shamrock and the harp of Erin on the other. The reasons given for desertion were bad treatment and poor subsistence they received from non-Catholic members of the American Army. Being Catholics, they also resented the bad treatment given to Mexican civilians, priests and nuns after the war started. After the battle of Buena Vista, the San Patricios gained recognition as a Mexican fighting unit to be reckoned with. They gained the grudging respect of the American Army. Churubusco was the site of one of the bloodiest battles of the Mexican War. The superior tactics and strategy of the American Army, which included Military Academy-trained officers, accurate and fast-loading artillery and the U. S. Equipment alone does not win battles; it was the blood and guts of the American soldiers and marines under the command of Major General Winfield Scott that contributed to this victory. The Castle of Chapultepec, located southwest of Mexico City, was heavily fortified and was a military obstacle that had to be taken prior to entering the city. Marine Corps hymn is based on the battle of Chapultepec. The castle was stormed by a mixed force of American soldiers and marines. About 50 young Mexican cadets refused to leave and "some of them younger than 13" confronted a bayonet charge. The story of the San Patricios has been shrouded in legend so the numbers mentioned in this article may have some variation. It is estimated that as many as San Patricios fought alongside the Mexicans in the battle of Churubusco; 72 were taken prisoners; the rest escaped or were killed in action. The penalty of death was not unusual punishment, since most armies imposed a death penalty for desertion during a time of war. The sentences of Mexican Brevet Major John Riley and eleven others were commuted by General Scott because they had deserted before the war with Mexico had been officially declared. Mexico honored the San Patricios with medals, memorial plaques and annual ceremonies. Army regarded them as deserters and traitors, who deserved the punishment they received. The Irishmen, who had never formed much devotion to America due to the treatment they had received, were unfortunate in choosing the losing side. This did not diminish their bravery, since heroism can surface in the heat of battle on either side of a conflict.

Chapter 7 : The Legacy of the San Patricios | Irish America

Michael Hogan is the author twenty-two books, including the Irish Soldiers of Mexico, one of the major historical works on the San Patricio Battalion which encompasses six years of research in the U.S., Mexico and Ireland.

Meanwhile, Riley and "a company of 48 Irishmen" [16] manned Mexican artillery at the Siege of Fort Texas , which took place concurrently to the two other battles. Popularly they were called Los Colorados by the Mexicans because of their ruddy, sun-burnt complexions and red hair color. Ref label an Irish artilleryman and veteran Non-commissioned officer of the British Army, who possibly arrived in Canada in whilst serving in the British Army the assertion that he served as a Sergeant in the 66th Berkshire Regiment of Foot , [17] is known to be a fabrication [19] going on to join the U. Army in Michigan in September He deserted in Matamoros in April Among their targets were companies led by such officers as Braxton Bragg , many of whose soldiers would end up in their own ranks later in the war. Following the engagement at Monterrey , the San Patricios grew in number, by some estimates reaching an enlistment of over men. They were assigned the three heaviest " 18 and 24 pound " cannons the Mexican army possessed, which were positioned on high ground over-looking the battlefield. They were later described as "a strong Mexican battery As the division got close enough they charged the artillery battery, bayoneting whoever remained and routing the rest, leaving the attached San Patricios free to haul away two six-pound cannons. It was re-named the The Foreign Legion of Patricios and consisted of volunteers from many European countries, commanded by Col. Knowing that they were likely to face the death penalty if captured, the San Patricios are known to have threatened wavering Mexican troops with death by " friendly fire " at the Battle of Cerro Gordo if they retreated. When the San Patricios were too-heavily engaged to carry out their threat, the Mexican troops broke and ran, leaving the San Patricios as they fought U. Santa Anna gave a verbal order to "preserve the point at all risk". George Ballentine Mexican-American war Pedro Anaya to order his men to fight on, with their bare hands if necessary. Army Captain James M. Smith suggested a surrender after raising his white handkerchief. About 85 escaped with retreating Mexican forces. New units were made up of the free survivors of the battle of Churubusco and a roughly equal number of fresh deserters from the U. Some members were alleged to have been involved in an abortive military coup ; [46] historians have said the group was disbanded because of Mexican budget cuts.

Chapter 8 : St. Patrick's Battalion :: Batall3n de San Patricio: the Irish Heroes of Mexico

On 12 September , the Mexican government paid special tribute to the soldiers of the San Patricio Battalion who were tortured and hanged at the San Jacinto Plaza, San ngel, in

Patricio Battalion, and the history of the Irish soldiers of Mexico. I know a Mexican woman who is a descendent of these Irish soldiers, and her last name is Tandy. Mexican President Ernesto Zedillo presided at the ceremonies marking the sesquicentennial of that tragic event and declared: Patricks Battalion were executed for following their consciences. They were martyred for adhering to the highest ideals, and today we honor their memory. In the name of the people of Mexico, I salute today the people of Ireland and express my eternal gratitude. He noted that Ireland and Mexico shared a common history of struggle to preserve their cultural identities and political liberties, often threatened by powerful and aggressive neighbors. Not all the San Patricios were deserters from the US army. Their number also included Irish and other Europeans already settled in Mexico, and some historians use Mexican army records as a basis to state that the majority were not deserters. The San Patricios did, however, have a distinctly Irish identity since their name-sake, St. Patrick, is the patron saint of the Irish people. On the other side of the banner Saint Patrick was depicted holding a pastoral staff resting on a serpent. Liberating Army of the North, as well as a special artillery unit manned by the San Patricios. This unit was commanded by Colonel Francisco Rosendo Moreno and played an important role in the Mexican victory at the Battle of Angostura in February. According to Miller, about a third of the San Patricios were killed or wounded at Angostura. Only two weeks after the battle of Angostura, the main focus of the war shifted to the Mexican Gulf Coast with the arrival of General Winfield Scott at Veracruz with 9,000 troops. The Foreign Legion of St. Patrick In June , Santa Anna created a foreign legion as part of the Mexican army, and the San Patricios were transferred from the artillery branch to the infantry and merged into the Foreign Legion. The Battle of Churubusco Dr. The monastery, surrounded by huge, thick stone walls, provided a natural fortress for the defending Mexican forces. The San Patricio Companies together with the Los Bravos Battalion occupied the parapets of the building which was to become the scene of one of the bloodiest battles of the war. Though hopelessly outnumbered, the defenders repelled the attacking US forces with heavy losses until their ammunition ran out, and a Mexican officer, realizing the hopelessness of the situation, raised the white flag of surrender. According to Hogan, Captain Patrick Dalton of the San Patricios tore the white flag down, and General Pedro Anaya ordered his men to fight on with their bare hands if necessary. Patrick, brave Irishmen who spontaneously defended our standard, passing to our ranks out of sympathy for our ideals and religion, were able to use the munitions; and they continued their spirited volleys, until the enemys rain of fire brought death to those valiant marksmen. Eighty-five of the San Patricios were taken prisoner, while the other survivors about 85 managed to escape, and apparently were later able to rejoin the retreating Mexican forces. Seventy-two were charged with desertion from the US army, and General Scott ordered that two courts-martial be convened to try them. San Jacinto Plaza thus became the scene of bloody and mangled bodies, mingled with the repulsive odor of the burning flesh of the tortured San Patricios. Sixteen nooses hanging from the crossbeam were placed around their necks, and the priests were brought forward to administer the last rites of the Catholic Church. The others were buried beneath the gallows, and C. On September 2, four more convicted San Patricios were hanged at the nearby village of Mixcoac. The Diario del Gobierno expressed its indignation, writing: It has been wisely said that those who ignore the lessons of history are destined to repeat it, and that we do not need to savor the bitterness of the past in order to understand its lesson for the present and the future. The commemorative plaque on the wall facing the plaza was designed by Lorenzo Rafael, son of Patricio Cox, who wrote the first book, a novel in Spanish, about the San Patricios. The escutcheon at the top of the plaque depicts a Celtic cross protected by the outstretched wings of the Aztec eagle. The inscription on the plaque reads: At the bottom of the plaque another inscription reads: The plaque was placed in and continues to remind visitors to the peaceful, tree-shaded plaza, of the tragic events that took place there on 10 September Thanks for reading, and Happy St.

Chapter 9 : San Patricio (album) - Wikipedia

San Patricio is an album by the Irish musical group, *The Chieftains* featuring *Ry Cooder*, released in *It was their first album with Hear Music and the first studio album in 6 1/2 years since Further Down The Old Plank Road* ().

Mar 15, 9: One of the least-known stories of the Irish who came to America in the s is that of this Irish battalion that fought on the Mexican side in the U. They came to Mexico and died, some gloriously in combat, others ignominiously on the gallows. At the penultimate battle of the war, these Irishmen fought until their ammunition was exhausted and even then tore down the white flag that was raised by their Mexican comrades in arms, preferring to struggle on with bayonets until finally being overwhelmed. The ostensible reason was to collect on past-due loans and indemnities. The real reason was to provide the United States with control of the ports of San Francisco and San Diego, the trade route through the New Mexico Territory, and the rich mineral resources of the Nevada Territory—“all of which at that time belonged to the Republic of Mexico. Before the declaration of war by the United States, a group of Irish Catholics headed by a crack artilleryman named John Riley deserted from the American forces and joined the Mexicans. Born in Clifden, County Galway, Riley was an expert on artillery, and it was widely believed that he had served in the British army as an officer or a non-com in Canada before enlisting in the American army. He is credited with changing the name of the group from the Legion of Foreigners and designing their distinctive flag. Their aid was critical because the Mexicans had poor cannon with a range of meters less than the Americans. In addition, Mexican cannons were inexperienced and poorly trained. The addition of veteran gunners to the Mexican side would result in at least two major battles being fought to a draw. Several Irishmen were awarded the Cross of Honor by the Mexican government for their bravery, and many received field promotions. At the Battle of Churubusco, holed up in a Catholic monastery and surrounded by a superior force of American cavalry, artillery, and infantry, the San Patricios withstood three major assaults and inflicted heavy losses on the Yanks. Eventually, however, a shell struck their stored gunpowder, the ammunition park blew up, and the Irishmen, after a gallant counteroffensive with bayonets, were overwhelmed by sheer numbers. They were tried by a military court-martial and then scourged, branded, and hanged in a manner so brutal that it is still remembered in Mexico today. In September , the Americans put the Irish soldiers captured at the Battle of Churubusco on trial. Forty-eight were sentenced to death by hanging. Those who had deserted before the declaration of war were sentenced to whipping at the stake, branding and hard labor. Among all the major wars fought by the United States, the Mexican War is the least discussed in the classroom, the least written about, and the least known by the general public. Yet, it added more to the national treasury and to the land mass of the United States than all other wars combined. After the conflict, so much new area was opened up, so many things had been accomplished, that a mood of self-congregation and enthusiasm took root in the United States. The deserters from the war were soon forgotten as they homesteaded and labored in the gold fields of California or, as the s approached, put on the gray uniform of the Confederacy or the blue of the Union. The story of the San Patricios disappeared from history. For most Mexicans, solidarity with the Irish is part of a long tradition and they remembered the help they received from the Irish and their friendship. The decisions of the men who joined the San Patricios were probably not well-planned or thought out. Nevertheless, the courage of the San Patricios, their loyalty to their new cause, and their unquestioned bravery forged an indelible seal of honor on their sacrifice. Riley himself survived the war and was honorably discharged from the Mexican Army in A report that he died shortly thereafter has recently been called into question by researchers in Mexico, so his true end remains a mystery. Of the 85 captured, 48 were hanged by the U. Army, including Thomas Cassidy who died in a Mexican uniform after being captured after the Battle of Churubusco. His descendent, Shaun Cassidy, lives and works in San Diego where he is a one of the original Rebeldes, a regular contributor, and an activist for immigration reform. A color guard of crack Mexican troops marches forward with the Mexican and Irish colors to a spine-jarring flourish of drums and bugles. This February the audio version of the *The Irish Soldiers of Mexico* was finally released and many people are ordering it for St. In addition, there have been commemorative events in Guadalajara, Mexico City and Chicago. As a permanent resident of Mexico, he

DOWNLOAD PDF THE SAN PATRICIO BATTALION

was the first historian to be granted complete access to Mexican archives and military records. For more information or to order Irish Soldiers go to www. In addition, friends of the San Patricios, including Shaun Cassidy, a descendent of an Irish soldiers who fought with the battalion, help maintain a site on Facebook which contains more of the history, as well as Irish music, Mexican and Irish cultural events, as well as updates on films, movies and articles related to both countries.