

Irish-American Heritage Month Proclamation (March-1991).

By the 41st President of the United States of America, George Herbert Walker Bush.
A Proclamation

Each ethnic group in American has made unique contributions to the ever-unfolding story of the United States. This month, as we celebrate the life of Saint Patrick, the beloved Apostle of Ireland, we also celebrate the hardy character, the rich cultural heritage, and the many valuable contributions of Irish Americans.

By 1776, the year that opened the first chapter in the dramatic history of our Republic, some 300,000 Irish citizens had emigrated to the United States. Many of these courageous individuals played crucial roles in America's War for Independence. Indeed, nine of the men who signed the Declaration of Independence were of Irish origin, as was Commodore John Barry, the first naval commander commissioned by the Continental Congress. Irish-Americans serving in a division of George

Washington's forces known as the Pennsylvania Line were so impressive, they moved General Henry Lee to note that it "might with more propriety had been called the Line of Ireland."

Since Irish-Americans not only helped to win America's Independence but also helped to fashion a system of government for our young Nation, it seems fitting that an Irish-born architect, James Hoban, designed the White House and assisted in the building of the United States Capitol. These magnificent structures have symbolized freedom and democracy to generations of men and women around the world.

Today the distinct "Line of Ireland" can still be traced throughout American culture. American literature, for example, has been greatly enriched by the contributions of gifted Irish-American writers such as Eugene O'Neill and Edwin O'Connor. Throughout the arts -- and throughout education, government, business, science, and agriculture -- talented men and women of Irish descent continue to merit the honor we give to them and to their ancestors. Indeed, in recent years, renewed immigration from Ireland and the revival of interest by all Americans in their roots have led to an increasingly vibrant Irish-American culture. The dramatic expansion of university courses in Irish studies and the countless annual Saint Patrick's Day parades held throughout the United States all attest to the continued vigor of the Irish-American heritage.

In tribute to all Irish-Americans, the Congress, by Public Law 101-418, has designated March 1991 as "Irish-American Heritage Month" and has authorized and requested the President to issue a proclamation in observance of this occasion.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, GEORGE BUSH, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim March 1991 as Irish-American Heritage Month. I encourage all Americans to learn more about the contributions Irish-Americans have made to our country and to observe this day with appropriate ceremonies and activities.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this twelfth day of March, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and ninety-one, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and fifteenth.

GEORGE BUSH