

Concerning Meagher

or

How Did he Die ?

Man's voice : Well, young man, - finished reading ?

Boy's voice : Yes, uncle Ned, and I'm going out now. I have a date.

Man Take it easy .. dont get hurried.

Boy - I'm not hurried.. I'm a bit early.

Man What was the book ?

Boy Life of Meagher, Thomas Francis. I'd like to know how he really died.

Man Died ? He was drowned, at Fort Benton, - that's historical fact.

Boy Yes, I know, but ---

Man -Drowned at Fort Benton, fell off the steamer, G.A. Thompson which was lying in port. Dark night - strong current, - he hadn't a chance.

Boy . But what I'd really like to know -- did he fall overboard, - or was he pushed ? Was he stabbed first, and then thrown over ?

Man No! he wasn't.. -So Sherlock Holmes is scenting a mystery.. I tell you it was all quite simple, -

Boy I dont think so..

Man One minute now.- Meagher, a Brigadier-General in

the American army was raising a militia to keep down some Indian trouble.-

Boy -Yes, I know all that -

Man Now, -one minute. Let me put it simply. Meagher had ridden in blazing sun for two days..Reaching Fort benton he was glad to discover his friend, Capt Lyons, of the steamer, G.A. Thompson, and decided to spend the night on board the steamer, with the Capt..

Boy - I wonder why --

Man - Wait til I finish - The Capt. has made it perfectly plain. He and Meagher sat on ~~board~~ deck together, glad to see one another, - talking and reading. Then, July though it was, (they have early darkness out there,) ~~so~~ at half past nine these two went to the cabin they were sharing .. pitch dark then. The Capt. - in charge of the steamer, took a lantern and went down to the lower deck, saying he'd be back in a few minutes. But Meagher, wanting the Lord knows what, came out quickly, out of the cabin, stumbled over a coil of rope, lost his balance, grasped for the guard, the rail that should have been there.. But it had been broken, -- so 'man overboard' and that was all.. ..Strange fate indeed ..for a man who had faced so many dangers, had 'courted death' as they say on the battlefields .. a slip in the dark, a stumble -- no more.

Boy -Well, I've listened, but you've left out half the picture. .. When Meagher and Lyons were on deck together Meagher asked anxiously 'are you armed ?' He said too 'in the town my life is threatened. I heard as I passed 'there he goes! '

Man Meagher had his life threatened often; that wouldn't affect him -

- Boy He was nervous, Capt Lyons said he was over-wrought. Looks as though he knew he was being tracked down ..
- Man Go on, Sherlock, we'll soon have it.
- Boy Mind you, there was something queer. Meagher had been in his berth before the Capt left the cabin, the Capt said 'I locked the door, - but the lock was defective. ' ..I believe he was assassinated.. Someone had slipped on to that steamer..
- Man - That may be .. We'll leave it so.. However he died he lived bravely. I like to remember a man at full life, not in his last struggling moments.. .. I like to remember the picture Mitchell has left to us of Meagher in exile, in Van Dieman's Land, lets call it Tasmania. .. Meagher bounding down the mountain side to meet his friends, all gaiety, laughter, climbing with them, (when they could come) to the heights of Lake Sorel, there to show his cottage, and to introduce his wife.
- Boy Yes- that poor wife: a rough deal for her: a few years sharing life with the convict-exile, then he escapes to America, and she faces a long journey.--
- Man He could not take her, he could not leave her in Lake Sorel.. His father's home was calling for her-
- Boy -A long call, a very long journey, from Tasmania to Ireland she had never known, - to Waterford City How strange for that Australian woman - what a strange fate. There, in Waterford City, having given birth to a son for Meagher she died early.
- Man Oh, young and gloomy !..Before dying she had found a warm welcome, a kindly people and the

hope of reunion with her husband.. If death intervened ..
well, where could she be better laid than near Meagher's
dearly loved city ? .. You'll cheer up, boy, as you
grow older. Life is good.

Boy I forgot my date! How we got talking !

Man Tell the lady you were thinking of a brave and forgotten
woman !

Boy. 'Byee .. uncle

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Thomas T. T. T.

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W. W. W.