

Peter J. Peel

The Soccer King

Dublin, Ireland.

June 14, 1924



Peter J. Peel

b. Dublin, 1874 d. Chicago, 1969



An Irish Sporting Life

1891 - Limerick rugby football Player

1893 - Soccer player

1894 – First Irishman to play college (American) football

1896 - Sports doctor and therapist

1896 - 1908 Cricketer

1910s - Golfer

1920s - Tennis

1908 - Established the *Peel Cup* - oldest continuous soccer competition in the USA

1913 - Founding Vice-president of the *U.S.F.A.*

1917-1919 & 1923-1925 - President of the *U.S.F.A.*

1924 - Led the USA to the *Paris Olympiad* in 1924

1935 – 1945 Chicago Parks & Recreation Commissioner

1970 – Peel Cup renamed The Governor's Cup



Photos: Peel Family Collection



THE GIBALTARIAN BOHEMIAN

WRITTEN BY GERARD FARRELL
AND MICHAEL KIELTY

Given that Gibraltar is one of the newest members of UEFA you wouldn't expect there to be much of a footballing history between the

tiny British Overseas Territory and Ireland, but what if we told you there was a prominent footballer from Gibraltar playing in Dublin at the very dawn of organised football?

That man was **Gonzalo Canilla OS 1891** and he was a fixture on the Dublin sporting scene of the 1890s, lining for both Bohemian FC and Freebooters FC, as well as excelling on the cricket pitch.

Canilla was born in Gibraltar in 1876, he came from a pious Catholic family, with his uncle and namesake having been made Catholic bishop of Gibraltar in 1881. The younger Gonzalo was sent to England to further his education, where he attended the prestigious Catholic boarding school, Stonhurst College in Lancashire, and this is where his connection with Irish football first emerges.

Among his fellow classmates were many young men from prominent Dublin families, including **Oliver St. John Gogarty OS 1892** and the brothers **George Meldon OS 1896** and **Philip Meldon OS 1887**.

This was quite common at the time and many of his footballing teammates were also colleagues or opponents on the cricket pitch. By 1897 there are reports of Canilla lining out for Freebooters and by the end of the following year he had formalised this by switching his registration to them, from Bohemians. The club, with Canilla in their side at full back, finished in second place in the Leinster Senior League.

By 1899 however, having successfully completed his final examinations in the RCSE, Dr Gonzalo Canilla departed Ireland for his native Gibraltar. Newspaper reports described him as someone "long and favourably associated with cricket and football" and that a "large crowd of sportsmen" gathered to see him off from Westland Row station to the strains of Auld Lang Syne. In total Gonzalo Canilla's Irish sporting career lasted about four years which saw him play at the highest level in Dublin at the time.

Canilla married his wife Antonia in 1904 and they had at least two children. Gonzalo practised medicine in England until 1916 then becoming the Rio Tinto mining company doctor in Huelva, Spain. He played competitive cricket in Spain and then recreational golf until his retirement. He was also said to have been possessed of a fine singing voice. He passed away in 1955.

His great grandson, David Cluett, was also a successful footballer. He won 69 caps as a goalkeeper for Malta, including an appearance in a 2-0 defeat to the Republic of Ireland in 1989 as well as winning numerous honours in the Maltese game, primarily for the Floriana club.

The Bohemian FC Pilgrim & Innovator

Elmer Cotton

The American Footballers of 1891

When soccer football from North America came to Ireland

The Mapping Irish Women's Football Project

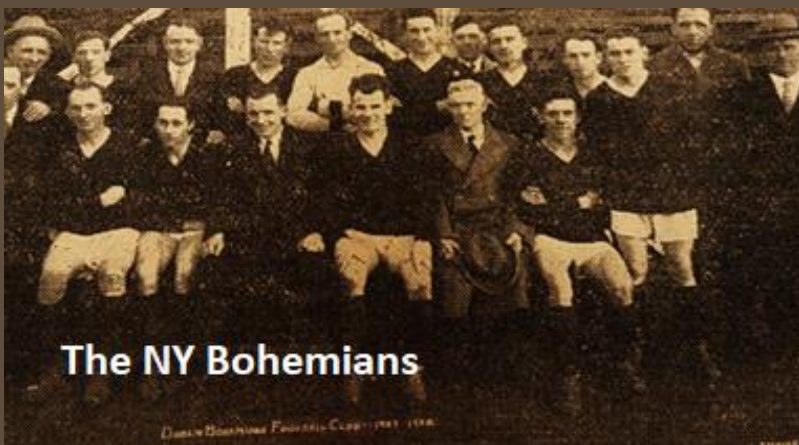


1902-2022 - Metropolitan Cup

A Short History

The Bohemian Three

December, 1930 - The High Court, Dublin Castle.



The NY Bohemians

Detroit's Dublin Soccer Pioneer

George Charles Leech

Shelbourne FC's Billy Synnott

Billy Synnott's 17 years of football in Ireland, England and the USA

Research Methods & Themes

Nature v Nurture

to what extent did circumstances, family context and social-geography play in Peter Peel's life in sports?

Opportunity v Luck v Timing

Was Peel's success a result of luck, timing or destiny?

Resources v Limitations

with limited resources how did our subject succeed?

Research Methods – Lessons learned

Read wildly (and widely) – read context – understand the prevailing social mores of the time – be cautious, be curious



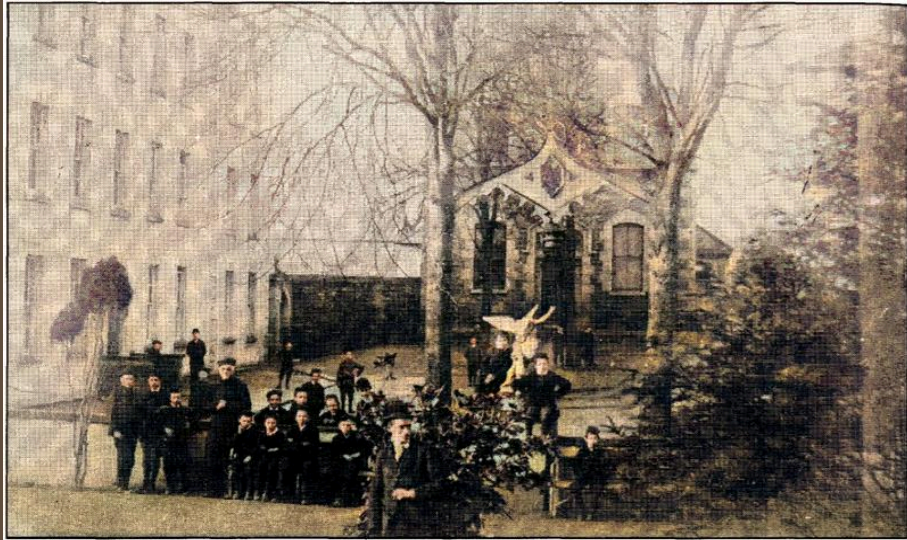
Photo: Market's Field, *Limerick County Museum*



Photo: Limerick 1890s, *NLI Collection*

Nature v Nurture

1875-1892 – Dublin to Limerick



Group at Sexton Street, with the monastery on the left and the orphanage in the background, circa 1892.

Garryowen RFC, 1891 **Photo:** Peel Family Collection



Thomas Peel, Garryowen & Ireland
(Photo: Peel Family Collection)



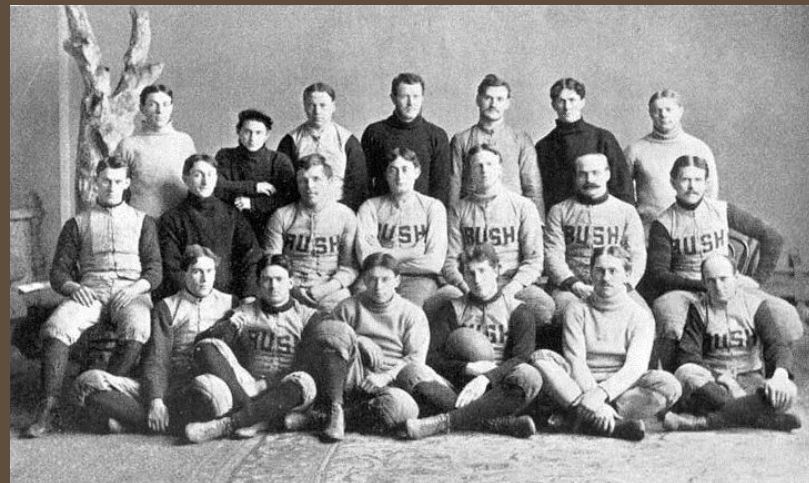
Opportunity v Luck v Timing

1892 – Limerick to Chicago



Opportunity v Luck v Timing

1892 – Limerick to Chicago



Peter J. Peel

President of the Chicago Football Association



Photo: Chicago History Museum



Photo: Wanderers Football Team, Chicago – *Spalding's Football Annual 1908-09*



Photo: Peel Park, *Chicago History Museum*

Resources v Limitations



1906 - Corinthians FC at the Lexington Hotel, Chicago



1909 The Pilgrims Team



1905 Original all Blacks Rugby Team



1905 Publicity Photos, Chicago History Museum





United States Football Association

1913 – Vice-President Peter Peel, Founded April 5th

1913 – FIFA temporary membership granted

1914 – FIFA full membership granted

1916 – First two matches played v *Sweden* and *Norway*

1924 – Team plays at the Paris Olympics

1924 – First game in Ireland

President: Peter J. Peel (1917-1919 & 1923-1925)

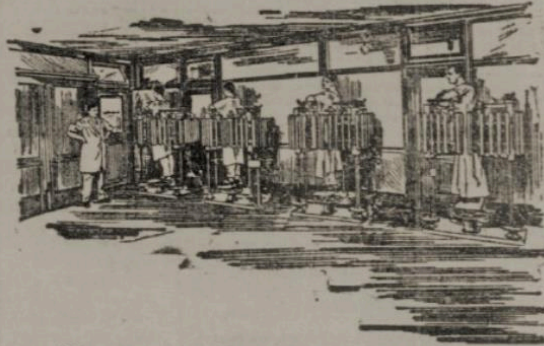


A Life in Medicine



Photo: Rush Archives

"The Personal Indorsement of Peter J. Peel"



We are now privileged to announce that Peter J. Peel gives his unqualified indorsement to the Gardner Reducing and Therapeutic Machine.

Two years ago we selected *Peter J. Peel* to test the Gardner Reducing Machine because we found he was the ideal man. We had been seeking the man who had made the most notable success in the field of physical training. A man who knew the physiology and anatomy of the human body—whose long experience had made him a recognized authority in therapeutics. We found the man in *Peter J. Peel*.

Then We Selected Peter J. Peel

because we found that for twenty-one years he has been the physical adviser to the most prominent men and women in Chicago—that famous physicians and surgeons all over the country called upon him for co-operation and used his services. His establishment in the Great Northern Building has gained nation-wide reputation. We found that doctors, business men and society women confirmed our judgment that *Peter J. Peel* is Chicago's foremost physical therapist.

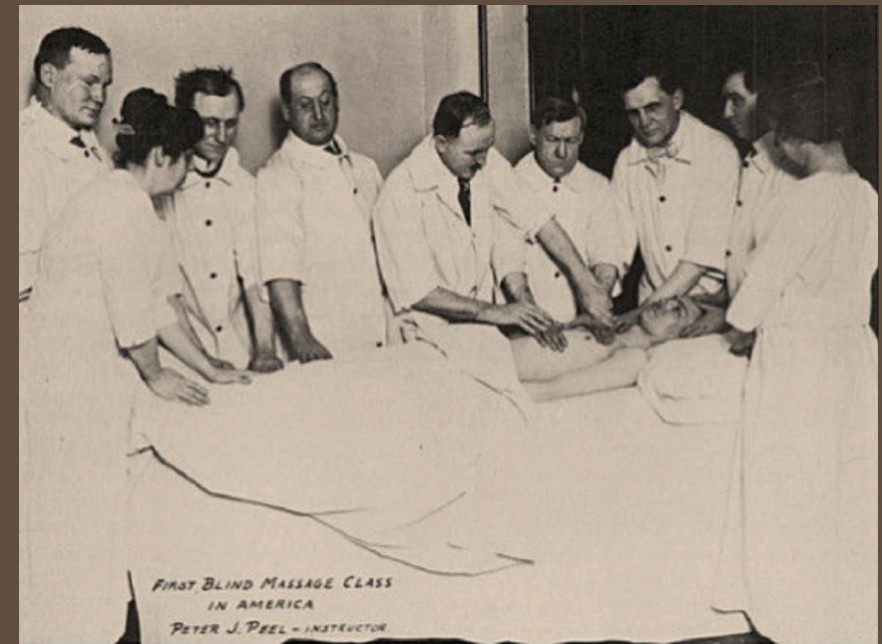


Photo: *Chicago at the Turn of the Century in Photographs: 122*
Historic Views from the Collections of the Chicago Historical Society,
Larry A. Viskochil



Photo: <https://www.baseballhistorycomesalive.com/>

A Political Life



“We, therefore, humbly submit these considerations to you, and respectively petition you, as President of the United States, and the acknowledged leader of the moral forces of the world, if in your wisdom it seems expedient and for the best interests of America, to make such friendly representations to the British Government as the close association of the two nations justify, that it may fulfil its promises, evidence the sincerity of its championship of the rights of small nations and add another ally to our arms by granting self-government to Ireland without further delay.

Most respectfully submitted, **The Irish Fellowship Club of Chicago.**

PETER PEEL, President; JOHN K. MURPHY, Secretary,

April 27th, 1918

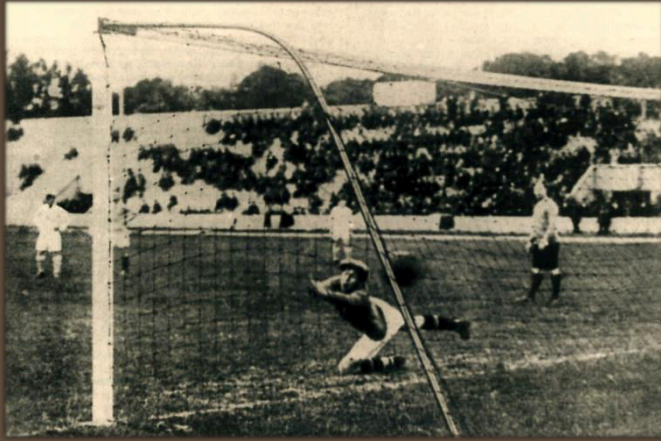


Photo: Library of Congress, Digital Collection



Photo: Peel Family Collection

Olympics - 1924



Round 1 v *Estonia* (1-0)



Round 2 v *Uruguay* (0-3)



Friendly v *Poland* (3-2) (Warsaw)



Round 1 Bye

Round 2 v *Bulgaria* (1-0)

Quarter Finals v *The Netherlands* (1-2) aet

Friendly v *Estonia* (2-0)

Football Association of Ireland



1921 – Founded June 6th 1921

1922 – *Irish Free State* comes into being December 6th

1923 – FIFA preliminary membership granted

1923 – Titled *Football Association of the Irish Free State*

1924 – Team plays in the Paris Olympics

1924 – First home game versus the USA

President: Sir Henry McLaughlin

Peter J. Peel

President of the United States Football Association
1917-1919, 1923-1925

Photo: Peter Peel and President of Ireland, Sean T. O'Kelly in 1959



Peter J. Peel
At rest May 3, 1969
Funeral May 6, 1969
St. Linus Church

PRAYER

O gentlest Heart of Jesus, ever present in the Blessed Sacrament, ever consumed with burning love for the poor captive souls in purgatory, have mercy on the soul of Thy departed servant. Be not severe in Thy Judgement but let some drops of Thy Precious Blood fall upon the devouring flames and do Thou O merciful Saviour send Thy angels to conduct Thy departed servant to a place of refreshment, light and peace. Amen.



Photo: Peter Peel at the Peel Cup final in the 1960s (Peel family collection)



A Public & Charitable Life



- Presented papers at Medical conferences
- Involved in Red Cross charity work
- Active in the Irish community events
- Involved in protests against Ku Klux Klan in Chicago
- Crusader for parks, recreation facilities and amenities for the youth of Chicago
- A Chicago personality
- St Patrick's Day participant



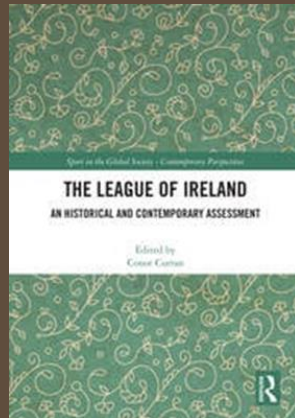
Peter J. Peel

born in Dublin, 1866; died in Chicago, May 3, 1969.



**The League of Ireland : An
Historical and Contemporary
Assessment** Edited By Conor Curran,
December 30, 2022

**Soccer & Society Volume 22,
2021 - Issue 8: The Growth and
Development of Soccer in
Dublin** Edited By Conor Curran, 31 Oct 2021



@MickKielty

Thank You

