

CANAWLERS AT REST

**MICHAEL
D.
REAGAN**

Find-A-Grave # 68893643

**b. September 1825
d. September 13, 1893**

By Carolyn I. Schmidt

Michael D. Reagan was the son of Peter and Bridget (Delaney) Reagan and a native of County Kerry Ireland. Peter was a farmer. Michael was reared on the family farm and educated in County Kerry along with his eight brothers and sisters: Peter, Dennis, Patrick, **Michael**, Margaret, Johannah, Catherine, Bridget and Honora.

In 1852, around the age of 27, Michael came to America and settled at Lawrenceburg, Dearborn county, Indiana. During his first few years as a resident of Dearborn county, he worked as the "water boss" on the "White Water Valley Canal" as the Whitewater Canal was then called. Its southern terminus was in Lawrenceburg. It was completed to Connersville, Indiana in 1845 and Cambridge City in 1846. He worked on the canal after it was completed. He also attended night school under Miss Jennie Beach attempting to improve his station in life.

In 1858, six years after Michael's arrival at Lawrenceburg, his parents Peter and Bridget Reagan came to the United States from County Kerry, Ireland. They too settled in Lawrenceburg and passed away there a few short years later. They had lived long lives. Peter died at age ninety-six and his wife was but a few years younger when she passed away.

Michael married Bridget Hickey, who was born on December 25, 1840. Her parents were Thomas and Mary (Hayes) Hickey also of Ireland. She had one brother, John Hickey. She and John came to American after their father passed away. They lived for a short time in Cincinnati before she moved to Lawrenceburg and became Michael's wife.

Michael and Bridget had several children, but only their son, Peter, grew to manhood. Peter was born at Cochran, now known as West Aurora, Dearborn county, Indiana on May 31, 1870.

Michael was a Catholic. He was the first Irish trustee of St. Lawrence church at Lawrenceburg, and along with a few others, helped to build the church. Since very little money was available at that time, he assisted in its construction by digging out stones from the quarry and carrying them to the building site. Once it was built, he was a faithful attendee.

When Michael learned about the railroad he became interested and took up work there. He continued working on the railroad until his death at age 68 on September 13, 1893.

Michael D. Reagan was laid to rest in Plot E-53 -75, Greendale Cemetery, in Greendale (near Lawrenceburg), Dearborn County, Indiana September 16, 1893, burial permit #1886. He and Bridget were real pioneers of this section of Indiana.

Bridget went on to live until 1919. She told pioneer stories of Lawrenceburg and Aurora. She too was a Catholic. Bridget was laid to rest in Greendale Cemetery. She and Michael share the same grave stone.

Young Peter Reagan, Michael and Bridget's son, was reared in Lawrenceburg. He attended the parochial school until he was thirteen years old. He then went to work in a stove foundry and learned the trade of stone mounter. Following that he worked in a carriage factory, a livery stable and at various other jobs.

Peter married Matilda Adeline Bonfer on July 18, 1893. She was born near Milan, in Ripley county,

Indiana on February 10, 1867 to William and Magdalena (Voss) Bonfer of Hanover, Germany. Magdalena had come to America in 1843 and William in 1848. They were farmers and lived near Sunman. Matilda was one of eleven children.

Peter and Matilda had one son, Charles Michael Reagan. He attended the public and high schools of Lawrenceburg before studying chemistry at the University of Notre Dame in South Bend, Indiana.

For two years Peter was employed by Major Feeney and his sister, Catherine Stevenson, proprietors of the Stevenson Hotel. In 1897 Peter leased the hotel and ran it for three years before selling out. A few months later he started the Regan Hotel (later called the New Central Hotel) and ran it for four years. He then purchased the old Stevenson Hotel, remodeled and refurnished it and ran it as the Regan Hotel. It was described as being lighted with gas and electric lights and heated by a hot water system. "The table is unexcelled by any hotel in southern Indiana, while the rooms are models of neatness and comfort, The cleanliness of the house is remarked by everyone, and the rates are satisfactory to discriminating minds."

The hotel was successful. Peter was very popular with his guests of doctors, lawyers, and preachers, who called him "Pete." He did everything possible to make his hotel a "home" to the traveling man. Matilda, his wife, was the landlady during all of Peter's hotel career.

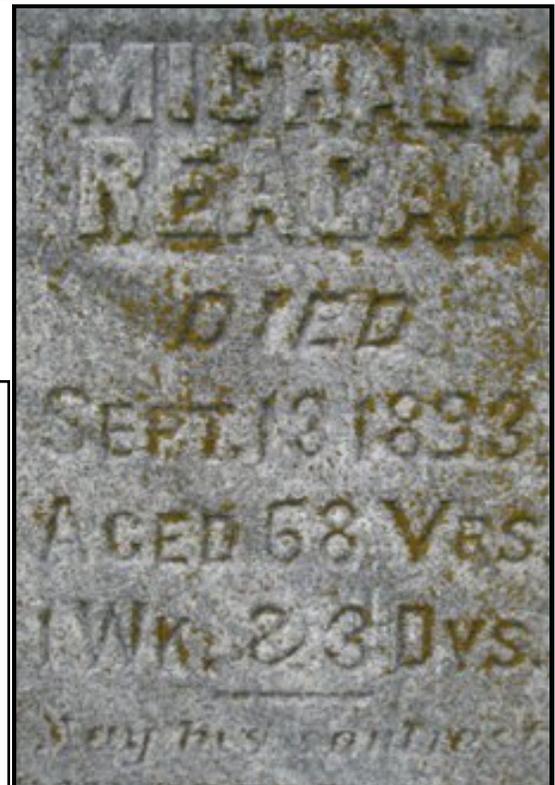
Peter Reagan was a Catholic, his wife a Lutheran. He was a Democrat in politics.

Sources:

- Ancestry.com: Peter Reagan Payne, Smith Family Tree 2011.
- Find-A-Grave: Michael Reagan Shaw, Archibald. *History of Dearborn County, Indiana.* Indianapolis, IN/B. F. Bowen Company, 1915.
- United States Federal Census:



1860



MICHAEL REAGAN
DIED
SEPT. 13, 1893
AGED 68 YRS.
1 WK. & 3 DYS.

BRIDGET REAGAN
1839-1919
 (her birthdate according to the county history is 12-25-1840)
 (She is 79 or 80 years old)

THE HOOSIER PACKET - AUGUST 2016

MICHAEL D. REAGAN'S FAMILY

<u>Name</u>	<u>Birth</u>	<u>Place</u>	<u>Death</u>	<u>Place</u>	<u>Cemetery</u>	<u>Married</u>	<u>Place</u>
Reagan, Peter		Co Kerry Ireland	age 96				
m. Delaney, Bridget		Co Kerry Ireland	in her 90s				
Reagan, Michael	9-?-1825	Co Kerry Ireland	9-13-1893	Lawrenceburg IN	Greendale		
m. Hickey, Bridget	12-25-1840	Co Clare Ireland	1919	L: Lawrenceburg IN	Greendale	7-18-1893	
Reagan, Peter	5-31-1870	Cochran/Aurora IN				7-18-1893	
m. Bonfer, Matilda Adeline	2-10-1867	Milan IN					
Reagan, Charles Michael			in childhood				
Reagan (several children)							
Reagan, Peter							
Reagan, Dennis	1828						
Reagan, Michael	1832						
Reagan, Margaret							
Reagan, Johannah							
Reagan, Catherine							
Reagan, Bridget	1845						
Reagan, Honora							

The following list of charges (probably for a traveling senator) was found in the *Journal of the Senate of the Commonwealth of Kentucky*, Vol. 2, 1914 and mentions the Reagan Hotel in Lawrenceburg, Indiana:

Ticket via C & O Frankfort, Kentucky to Louisville, Kentucky	\$1.65
Ticket & berth in sleeper Louisville, Kentucky to Lawrenceburg, Indiana	3.85
Breakfast at Reagan Hotel , Lawrenceburg, Indiana	.50
Fare on boat Lawrenceburg to Petersburg and return	.25
Ticket Lawrenceburg to Cincinnati, Ohio	.50
Supper at Dennison restaurant, Cincinnati, Ohio	.50