



# **Irish Catholic service and identity in the British armed forces 1793-1815**

by

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## **List of Abbreviations**

|                   |  |
|-------------------|--|
| <i>I.H.S.</i>     | <i>Irish Historical Studies</i>                            |
| <i>J.S.H.A.R.</i> | <i>Journal of the Society for Army Historical Research</i> |
| N.A.I.            | National Archives of Ireland                               |
| N.L.I.            | National Library of Ireland                                |
| P.R.O.N.I.        | Public Record Office of Northern Ireland                   |
| T.N.A.            | The National Archives, Kew                                 |

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**Fig. 1 Portrait of a soldier of the 87<sup>th</sup> Regiment**



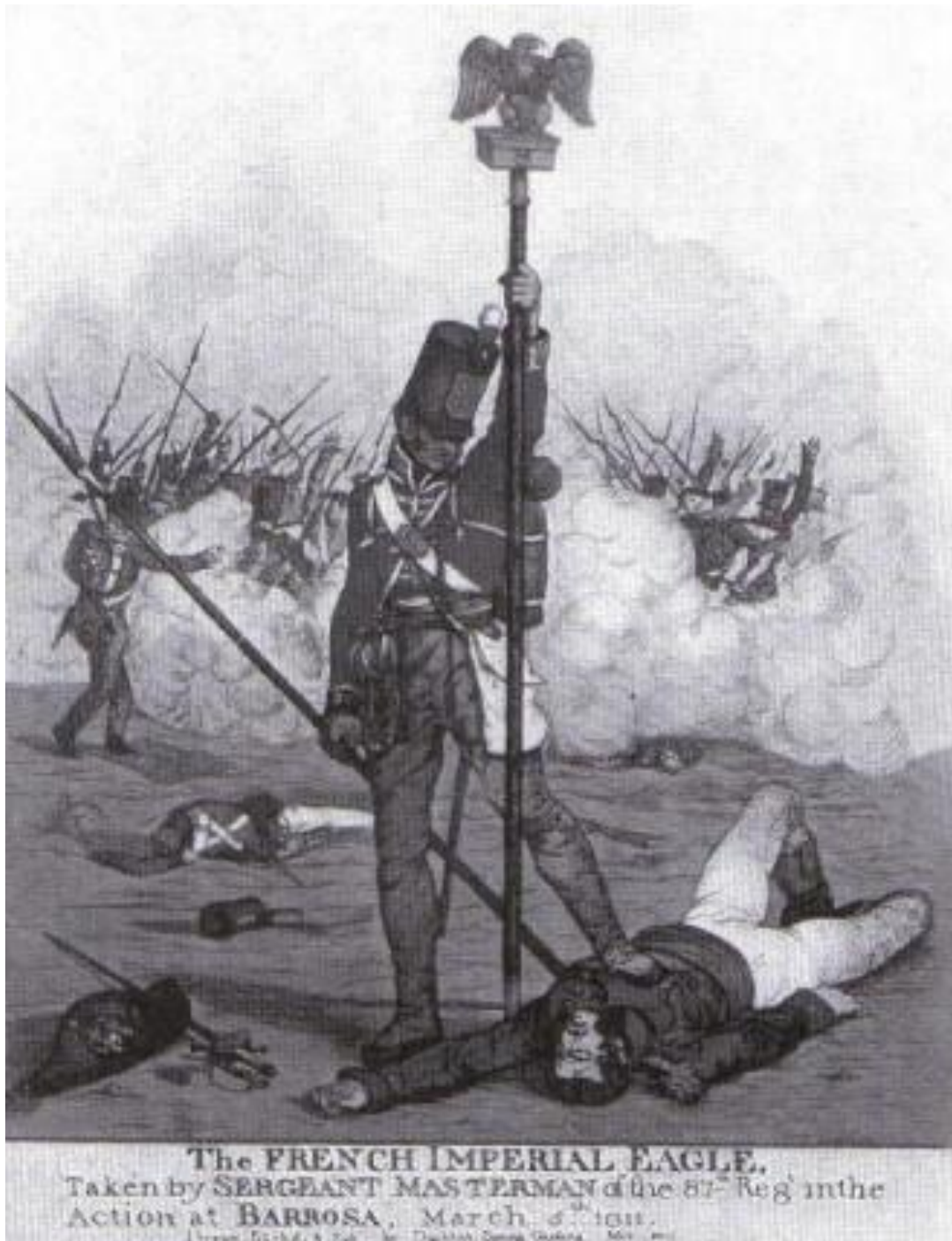
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**Fig. 2 Connaught Ranger - 88<sup>th</sup> Foot at Badajoz, Peninsular War (1812)**



**Source: Painting by Jack Sullivan**

**Fig. 3 The capture of the French imperial eagle by the 87<sup>th</sup> Regiment at the Battle of Barrosa**



Available at [http://www.napoleon-series.org/military/battles/c\\_capturedflags.html](http://www.napoleon-series.org/military/battles/c_capturedflags.html) [29 Oct. 2014]



## **Introduction: Green Redcoats: Irish Catholic service and identity in the British armed forces 1793-1815**

In the army, in contrast to parliament, the monarchy, and the church, the Union as the union of three constituent kingdoms was most evident; the wreath of shamrock, thistle, and rose on every regimental colour, as indeed the Union flag itself [from 1801], exactly and fittingly symbolized the soldiery who marched under them.<sup>1</sup>

The excerpt above reflects the ways in which the British military establishment during the French Revolutionary and Napoleonic period set out to symbolise a closer British identity among the peoples of England, Wales, Scotland and Ireland. More importantly, for this thesis, it signifies the milestone which occurred in 1793 when Irish Catholics were officially able to join the British armed forces and fight alongside Protestant English, Welsh and Scottish servicemen in defence of a British state;<sup>2</sup> although it must be pointed out that Irish Catholics had been serving unofficially from at least the late 1750s. Further discussion will follow on this shortly, but it is worth noting that this period also bore testimony to a number of other transformations:

.....the small professional armies of the eighteenth century quickly gave way to large national armies composed of conscripts. This same period saw artillery transformed from a specialised profession overseen by mechanics into a major service branch capable of dominating battlefields. The wars waged were wars of conquest on a grand scale and were fought by huge armies, which consisted of professional soldiers, mercenaries, and patriotic conscripts.....The rise of nationalism, the institution of universal conscription, the comprehensive economic mobilization of society, and the creation of the 'nation in arms' combined to constitute a revolution in military affairs.<sup>3</sup>

This evolution in warfare which had been steadily building throughout the eighteenth century reached an apogee in 1793 with mass mobilisation in France. Historically it

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<sup>1</sup> J. E. Cookson, *The British armed nation 1793-1815* (New York, 1997), p.171.

<sup>2</sup> It has been estimated that the 'intensive recruitment took place with possibly as many as one in five of the Irish male cohort seeing service of some sort between 1793-1815', see Thomas Bartlett, 'Defence counter-insurgency and rebellion' in Thomas Bartlett and Keith Jeffery (eds), *A military history of Ireland* (Cambridge, 1996), pp 247-93.

<sup>3</sup> Andrew N. Liaropoulos, 'Revolutions in warfare: Theoretical paradigms and historical evidence: The Napoleonic and First World War revolutions in military affairs' in *Journal of Military History*, lxx, no. 2 (Apr., 2006), pp 363-384, available at JSTOR <http://www.jstor.org/stable/4137957> [05 May 2014].

became known as the *levee en masse*, while the type of warfare which followed came to be recognised as 'total war'.<sup>4</sup> Many countries had to respond to this development but none more so than Britain, which had been France's long time adversary.<sup>5</sup> The result of this was that Britain was forced to look more acutely at the available manpower in Ireland. While the French Revolutionary Wars began against a backdrop of a revolution in warfare, the revolution that is considered in this thesis was that 'within a generation the British state had gone from a policy of firm exclusion of Catholic soldiers to one of reliance on them.'<sup>6</sup> It was as Bartlett states 'a revolution almost as startling as anything that France could offer.'<sup>7</sup>

Returning to earlier Irish Catholic participation in the armed forces, it should be pointed out that up until the Williamite wars (1689-91) Irish Catholics had a long history of service to the English/British crown.<sup>8</sup> However, owing to the religious aspect of the conflict, particularly in Ireland, Catholic participation in the British forces ceased officially for over one hundred years.<sup>9</sup> It was not until the Seven Years War as just indicated (1756-63) that Irish Catholics were considered again.<sup>10</sup> During the 1760s, a

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<sup>4</sup> In response to the dangers of foreign war, the committee of public safety [in Paris] established a mass conscription (*levée en masse*) and succeeded in training an army of about 800,000 soldiers in less than a year. This was much larger than any army available to other European states, and laid the basis for Napoleon's domination of Europe. The *levée en masse* represents a turning point in the history of warfare. From then on, war was to become 'total' involving all elements of the population, and all the reserves of the state, see Internet modern history sourcebook: *The levée en masse*, 23 August 1793, available at Fordham University <http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/mod/1793levee.asp> [04 February 2014].

<sup>5</sup> Stephen Conway, 'The mobilisation of manpower for Britain's mid-eighteenth-century wars' in *Historical Research*, lxxvii, no. 197 (2007), pp 377-404.

<sup>6</sup> Bartlett, 'Defence counter-insurgency and rebellion', p. 253.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid*, p. 253.

<sup>8</sup> Elizabeth I and Charles I employed Irish soldiers, see Desmond & Jean Bowen, *The heroic option: The Irish in the British army* (Barnsley, 2005), pp 2-3; In 1680, in Tangiers, Irish Catholic servicemen were employed on behalf of Charles II, see Linda Colley, *Captives: Britain, empire and the world 1600-1850* (London, 2002), p. 39. In 1687, James II employed Irish Catholics *en masse* in his army in Ireland; see A.E.C. Bredin, *A history of the Irish soldier* (Belfast 2007), pp 99-101.

<sup>9</sup> The penal laws excluded Catholics from serving in the army, from education, owning a weapon, holding public office or taking part in elections. However, they were only implemented in a piecemeal fashion, see David L. Smith, *A history of the British Isles, 1603-1707* (Oxford, 1998) p. 334; Irish Protestants were also denied access to the armed forces until 1745 because of a fear that Catholics might slip through, see Bowen, *The heroic option*, p. 13.

<sup>10</sup> Lord Trimleston, one of the most prominent members of the Irish Catholic nobility, proposed the recruitment of Irish Catholics to the British government during the Seven Years War (1756-63) but with the end of the war in sight, the plans lost their urgency. It has been suggested that some Irish Catholics had made

modest but significant decline in anti-Catholic feeling occurred within British government circles.<sup>11</sup> Cautious approval was given to the unofficial recruitment of Catholics in 1771. In 1774 a new oath of allegiance was devised to enable Roman Catholics to swear fealty to the crown in the hope of binding them to the state.<sup>12</sup> By 1775, thousands of Irish were enlisting and of the forty-four battalions serving in the American colonies in 1776, sixteen had come from Ireland. Most contained Irish Catholics; however, this was not widely publicised.<sup>13</sup> Relief measures followed in 1778 and 1782, but in 1793, for the first time in over one hundred years, Irish Catholics were again legally entitled to enter the British forces.<sup>14</sup>

The 1793 act granted Catholics a number of concessions: the right to bear arms; to hold some civil and military offices; to attend Trinity College; and conceded some parliamentary franchise; but still excluded them from sitting in parliament and some other higher offices.<sup>15</sup> In terms of military offices, it is significant that although Irish Catholics could hold commissions in the armed forces up to the rank of colonel in Ireland, once they set foot on English soil, their commissions became invalid.<sup>16</sup> The preamble to the 1793 bill is presented below and makes some allusions to Catholic loyalty at the time:

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their way into the British army at this time, see Thomas Bartlett, *The fall and rise of the Irish nation: The Catholic question 1690-1830* (Dublin, 1992), p. 58.

<sup>11</sup> This has been attributed to the perceived weakness of the papacy, the collapse of the Stuart cause and the papacy's refusal to recognise Charles Edward Stuart's claim to the throne after the death of his father in 1766, see Bartlett, *Fall and rise*, p. 71.

<sup>12</sup> This coincided with the expansion and consolidation of British interests in India, the West Indies and the American War of Independence. Although Catholics were still not legally entitled to join the army, there is evidence that a blind eye was being cast to their enlistment, Bartlett, *Fall and rise*, pp 58-72; Robert Kent Donovan, 'The military origins of the Roman Catholic relief programme of 1778' in *Historical Journal*, xxviii, no. 1 (Mar., 1985), pp 79-102.

Patrick Fagan, *Divided loyalties: The question of an oath for Irish Catholics in the eighteenth century* (Dublin, 1997), pp 142-3; The earl-bishop of Derry, available at <http://fredrickhervey4thearlofbristol.blogspot.ie/2012/09/frederick-hervey-1730-1803-bishop-of.html> [04 February 2014]; The Catholic relief acts (1771-1793) available at [http://members.pcug.org.au/~ppmay/acts/relief\\_acts.htm](http://members.pcug.org.au/~ppmay/acts/relief_acts.htm) [04 February 2014].

<sup>13</sup> Bowen, *The heroic option*, p. 19; This was owing to the crown's sensitivity on the issue of employing Catholic Irish to subdue Protestant Americans, see Bartlett, *Fall and rise*, p. 85.

<sup>14</sup> For the relaxation of the penal laws during this period, see, Bartlett, *Fall and rise* (chs 6-8).

<sup>15</sup> 'The campaign for Catholic Emancipation, 1823–1829' available at Multitext project in Irish history [http://multitext.ucc.ie/d/The\\_campaign\\_for\\_Catholic\\_Emancipation\\_1823ndash1829](http://multitext.ucc.ie/d/The_campaign_for_Catholic_Emancipation_1823ndash1829) [20 April 2014].

<sup>16</sup> It was said that the intention in 1793 had been to introduce parallel legislation in both kingdoms, but only the Irish act had been passed, see J. R. Western, 'Roman Catholics holding military commissions in 1798' in

Whereas various acts of parliament have been passed, imposing on his Majesty's subjects professing the popish or Roman Catholic religion many restraints and disabilities, to which other subjects of this realm are not liable, and from the peaceful and loyal demeanour of his Majesty's popish or Roman Catholic subjects, it is fit that such restraints and disabilities shall be discontinued.<sup>17</sup>

The proposed act, which later became known as Hobart's relief act, drew considerable opposition within Ireland among many Irish Protestants who did not want to see their own powerbase eroded with the granting of more rights to Catholics. However, the effect of Enlightenment beliefs created some enthusiasm for relief both in Ireland and England. More importantly, towards the end of 1792, Britain recognised that it was going to war with France, and it was not going to allow Irish Protestant entrenchment to hold back a resolution of the 'Catholic question' any further, and so as before, 'war would mean opportunity for Irish Catholics.'<sup>18</sup>

Before turning to the make-up of the British armed forces during the period, it is worth giving some brief background to the European dimension as to why the war started in the first place. Throughout most of the century, the European continent was dominated by five great powers: Britain, France, Austria, Russia, and Prussia.<sup>19</sup> Each had either formed alliances or was at war with the other throughout the period.<sup>20</sup> However, both Britain and France had a long standing rivalry which stretched back to the Middle-Ages. During the reign of Louis XIV (1638-1715), this was reinvigorated. The various conflicts between the two countries, especially the Seven Years War (1754/6-1763), saw France greatly suffer. It

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*English Historical Review*, lxx, no. 276 (Jul., 1955), pp 428-432, available at JSTOR <http://www.jstor.org/stable/559074> [21 February 2014].

<sup>17</sup> The Catholic relief act, 1793, and for this and further on the declaration and the oath to be taken by Catholics holding office, see [http://members.pcug.org.au/~ppmay/acts/relief\\_act\\_1793.htm](http://members.pcug.org.au/~ppmay/acts/relief_act_1793.htm) [20 April 2014].

<sup>18</sup> Njål Vigleik Johnsen, 'In the name of God, for the rights of man or in want of potatoes?: An examination into the reasons and motivations behind the continued radicalization of the peasant population in Ireland following the Catholic Relief Act of 1793' (M.A. thesis, University of Oslo, May 2013), p. 22; Bartlett, *Fall and rise*, p. 146.

<sup>19</sup> Lesser powers were Sweden, Spain, Poland, Holland, and Turkey, all of whom had once enjoyed periods of economic, military, or naval greatness. Most of western Germany remained fragmented into hundreds of minor principalities, ecclesiastical cities, and minor states contained within the Holy Roman Empire. Italy, similarly, contained a number of small kingdoms, some independent and others controlled by Austria, see Gregory Fremont Barnes, *The French revolutionary wars* (Oxford, 2001), p. 12.

<sup>20</sup> War of the Spanish Succession (1701-1714); War of the Austrian Succession (1740-1748); The Seven Years War (1754/6-1763) to name three major wars only.

lost many of its overseas possessions. These wars also impacted heavily upon the economic structure within France. The political turmoil which ensued brought about the collapse of both the absolutist monarchy and the old regime under Louis XVI in the revolution of 1789.<sup>21</sup> Austria and Prussia, who had formally been rivals, both expressed anxiety over Louis XVI's predicament. On 27 August 1791, they made a joint declaration (Declaration of Pillnitz) asking for the other royal houses in Europe to assist them in helping Louis.<sup>22</sup> On 7 April 1792, Austrian and Prussian forces marched towards France. On 20 April, France declared war on Austria with hostilities beginning in Flanders on 20 September.<sup>23</sup> On 6 November, following the Austrian defeat at the Battle of Jemappes, the French captured Brussels and laid siege to Antwerp. With this and the execution of Louis XVI on 21 January, there was no escaping Britain entering war, with France's declaration confirming it on 1 February 1793.<sup>24</sup>

Prior to the outset of war, the British regular army consisted of thirty regiments of cavalry, three foot guard regiments and seventy-seven numbered regiments of line infantry with two colonial corps. Its artillery had four battalions of foot artillery, ten companies in the invalid battalion, two independent companies in India, a company of cadets and two new troops of the Royal Horse Artillery.<sup>25</sup> The remainder of the British army was made up of thirty-six independent companies of invalids, known by their captain's name. It had a Corps of Royal Engineers, Invalid Corps of Royal Engineers and a Corps of Royal Military Artificers. There was also the Royal Irish Artillery and the Corps of Royal Engineers in Ireland.<sup>26</sup> In February 1793, following the announcement of hostilities, the British government authorized the army to increase from 5,000 to 15,000 men. In Ireland, as many

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<sup>21</sup> Barnes, *The French revolutionary wars*, pp 13-16.

<sup>22</sup> Georges Lefebvre, *The French revolution: From its origins to 1793* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed., London, 2005), p. 207.

<sup>23</sup> Lefebvre, *The French revolution* p. 214-220.

<sup>24</sup> Barnes, *The French revolutionary wars*, p. 11.

<sup>25</sup> Many countries used invalid corps within their army, most notably, Britain and America. Invalid corps were normally formed from men of disability such as those who had lost limbs during battle. Most invalid corps had light garrison duties comprising roles of various levels of competency; see Sanders Marble, *Scraping the barrel: The military use of sub-standard manpower* (Fordham University Press, 2012).

<sup>26</sup> For a complete list, see Ron McGuigan, 'The British army: 1 February 1793' available at [napoleon-series.org http://www.napoleon-series.org/military/organization/c\\_britarmy1793.html](http://www.napoleon-series.org/military/organization/c_britarmy1793.html) [05 February 2014].

as thirty new regiments were raised from Irish recruits.<sup>27</sup> The newly raised Irish regiments included the 83<sup>rd</sup> Regiment under Colonial William Fitch, while the 86<sup>th</sup> (Shropshire Volunteers), not initially an Irish regiment, having been raised in Shropshire, England, was later transformed from an English designated regiment into an Irish regiment.<sup>28</sup> The 87<sup>th</sup> Regiment was raised by Major John Doyle, and the 89<sup>th</sup> Regiment by Colonel William Crosbie.<sup>29</sup> Of all the regiments raised, the 88<sup>th</sup> Regiment, better known as the Connaught Rangers, was considered to be the most truly Irish. Evidence suggests that some only knew enough English to get by on parade.<sup>30</sup> Nearly all its officers were Irish (the issue of their religion will be discussed below) and many of the regular soldiers were tenants from their estates or communities.<sup>31</sup>

While these were the new regiments formed in 1793, there were also some infantry and cavalry regiments dating back to the Williamite period. These included the 18<sup>th</sup> Royal Regiment of Irish, the 27<sup>th</sup> Inniskilling, the 4<sup>th</sup> Royal Irish Dragoons, the 5<sup>th</sup> Royal Irish Lancers and the 6<sup>th</sup> Iniskilling Dragoons.<sup>32</sup> Altogether, it has been noted that there were no fewer than fourteen Irish regiments.<sup>33</sup> This only partially tells the tale. Irish Catholics and Protestants also served in English and Scottish-designated regular regiments. Some of these included the 1<sup>st</sup> (Royal Scots), the 13<sup>th</sup> (Somerset), 29<sup>th</sup> (Worcestershire), 54<sup>th</sup> (West Norfolk), 57<sup>th</sup> (Middlesex), 64<sup>th</sup> (2<sup>nd</sup> Staffordshire), 68<sup>th</sup>

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<sup>27</sup> D. A. Chart, 'The Irish levies during the great French War' in *English Historical Review*, xxxii (1917), pp 497-509.

<sup>28</sup> The 86<sup>th</sup> was raised by Major General Sir Cornelius Cuyler. In 1795 it took the remnants of the 118<sup>th</sup> Regiment of Foot (Fingall's Regiment) and 121<sup>st</sup> (Loyal Clare). In 1806 it became the 86<sup>th</sup> Leinster Regiment of Foot and in 1812, it became 86<sup>th</sup> Royal County Down Regiment of Foot; see Richard Cannon, *Historical Record of the Eighty-Sixth, or Royal County Down Regiment of Foot* (London, 1842), pp 10; 37; 46; see K.P. Ferguson, 'The army in Ireland from the restoration to the act of Union' (Ph. D thesis, Trinity College, Dublin., 1990), p. 143.

<sup>29</sup> Sir John Doyle (1756–1834). In 1793, Doyle raised the 87<sup>th</sup> Foot styled 'the Prince of Wales's Irish' regiment. He was appointed its lieutenant-colonel and remained regimental colonel all his life, see *Dictionary of National Biography* <http://www.oxforddnb.com.jproxy.nuim.ie/view/article/8002?docPos=1> [09 March 2014].

<sup>30</sup> William Grattan, *Adventures with the Connaught Rangers 1809-1814* edited by C.W.C Oman (London, 1902), p. 127, available at Internet Archive <http://www.archive.org/details/adventureswithco00gratuoft> [01 May 2013].

<sup>31</sup> Bowen, *The heroic option*, pp 2-3; Elizabeth Longford, *Wellington: Years of the sword* (London, 1971), p. 282.

<sup>32</sup> See David Murphy, *The Irish brigades 1685-2006* (Dublin, 2007), pp 109-87.

<sup>33</sup> Bartlett, 'Defence, counter-insurgency and rebellion', p. 257.

(Durham), 71<sup>st</sup> (Highland), 94<sup>th</sup> (Scotch Brigade) regiments. It is reckoned that there was an almost 'thirty per cent' Irish presence in the non Irish-designated regiments.<sup>34</sup>

Some brief discussion also needs to be made in respect of the Irish brigades. Although their experience could have been incorporated into this study,<sup>35</sup> it was not, for the principal reason that they had a very short existence and because they only saw service in the West Indies. The Irish brigades were French regiments that passed from the service of the French Bourbon king into British service during the 1790s. At the time that they transferred, the second battalions of Dillon, Walsh (originally named Ormonde) and Berwick were serving in St. Domingo, while the first battalions were all stationed in France.<sup>36</sup> In 1794, discussions took place between William Pitt and the duke of Portland on the British side and Count O'Connell and the duke of Fitzjames from the Irish brigades about transferring into British service. However, these discussions fell through and the Regiment of Berwick was broken up while the other regiments were sent to the West Indies where death rates were notoriously high, and where 'they were allowed to die out.'<sup>37</sup> While these regiments were allowed to gradually fade out of existence Fitzwilliam, the lord lieutenant of Ireland wrote the following in 1795:

I feel much inclined to give the Irish Brigades a fair chance in (sic) the outset, and to make the experiment of the loyalty and zeal of the Catholicks, and therefore, within the scope of the catholick religion, not to give them any competitors, or in any way to impede their success.<sup>38</sup>

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<sup>34</sup> Bowen, *The heroic option*, pp 2-3; Bartlett, 'Defence, counter-insurgency and rebellion', p. 257; Richard Holmes, *Redcoat: The British soldier in the age of horse and musket* (London, 2001), p. 56; Terence Denman, 'Hibernia, officina militum: Irish recruitment to the British regular army 1660-1815', in *Irish Sword*, xx (1996), pp 148-66.

<sup>35</sup> A recent thesis chose to look at the last years of these regiments, see J.C Phillip Wright-Elliott, 'The officers of the Irish Brigade and the British army, 1789-1798' (Ph. D thesis, University of Leeds, 1997).

<sup>36</sup> A.E.C. Bredin, *A history of the Irish soldier* (Belfast 2007), pp 201-2.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid*, p. 202.

<sup>38</sup> Quoted in Cookson, *The British armed nation*, p. 160.

Evidence would suggest that after the regiment was sent to the West Indies in 1794, it became extinct by 1797.<sup>39</sup>

Turning to the Royal Navy, when Britain entered the French Revolutionary Wars in 1793, she was the world's leading naval power, with 195 ships-of-the-line in commission, 210 frigates, and 256 sloops – a total of over 600 vessels manned by 100,000 men.<sup>40</sup> It has been estimated that there were anything between 11,500 and 25,000 Irishmen serving in the royal navy over the period; again many were believed to be Catholics.<sup>41</sup>

Two other forces, the Irish militia (1793) and yeomanry (1796) were created during this period. With the sapping of men out of the country to fight the French, the government still had to defend Ireland from external attack, and internal civil unrest. Raised in 1793, the Irish militia comprised thirty-eight regiments of infantry. Later in the war, it essentially became a nursery for recruitment to the regular army. Perceived as a Catholic force officered by Protestants, recent research has argued that in proportion to the numbers of Catholics to Protestants within counties, Protestants were proportionately higher. However, overall, Catholics were the dominant grouping.<sup>42</sup> The Irish yeomanry, initially created in 1796 as a voluntary part-time force for local law-and-order duties, had the potential for full military service during invasion or insurrection.<sup>43</sup> Envisaged by Earl Fitzwilliam, the then lord lieutenant in Ireland, to be both a Catholic and Protestant force, during its initial mobilisation it embraced the main components of the broad loyalist constituency, but later came to be identified with the Irish Protestant Ascendancy and more exclusively Protestant loyalist mobilisation.<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>39</sup> Cookson, *The British armed nation*, p. 160.

<sup>40</sup> Barnes, *The French revolutionary wars*, p. 17.

<sup>41</sup> The number of Irishmen in the fleet in 1797 was, roughly, 11,500 sailors and 4,000 marines: W.E.H., Lecky, *A history of England in the eighteenth century* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed. 8 vols, London, 1890), vii, p.248; W. H. Fitchett, *How England saved Europe; the story of the great war 1793-1815* (4 vols, London, 1900), i, p. 239.

<sup>42</sup> See Ivan F. Nelson, *The Irish militia 1793-1802: Ireland's forgotten army* (Dublin, 2007), pp 13-22.

<sup>43</sup> Allan F. Blackstock, 'A dangerous species of ally': Orangeism and the Irish yeomanry in *Irish Historical Studies*, xxx, (1997), pp 393-405, available at JSTOR <http://www.jstor.org/stable/30008627> [03 November 2012].

<sup>44</sup> This included the conservative gentry, some mid-Ulster Orangemen, many constitutional reformers, ex-Volunteers (including Grattan) and some Catholics; see Thomas Bartlett, *Fall and rise*, p. 196.



Regarding the issue of loyalty of Irish Catholics towards the British state during this period, the 1798 rebellion and Emmet's rebellion in 1803 have played a significant part in shaping the assumption that Irish Catholics were disloyal or disaffected subjects. It has however been suggested that during this period 'Catholics contributed to the war effort in three ways: military assistance, encouragement to loyalty, and prayer.'<sup>45</sup> As for military assistance, the rebellion demonstrated the anomaly of an 'Irish speaking militia, many of them Catholics engaging in the slaughter of English speaking rebels many of whom were Protestants'.<sup>46</sup> These issues will be discussed in later chapters.

Issues of national identity are also considered in this thesis. Some of the characteristics recorded of the Irish included: 'aggressiveness and ferocity, internal religious division, humour and invention, and a fondness for drink and sentimentality' while English ideals were equated with 'continence, reasonableness and mature control over one's emotions.'<sup>47</sup> Nationalism and republicanism were also present. With regard to ideals, the emerging importance of respectability will also be considered in relation to the perception of the Irish. As for how Irish Catholic identity fitted in with Britishness, Linda Colley has argued that since Ireland was primarily a Catholic country, and as the invention of Britishness was bound up in Protestantism, Ireland, but particularly Catholic Ireland, could not be equated with Britishness. It is highly relevant to this thesis that Colley predicates her argument upon the 'war with France and with the acquisition of empire.'<sup>48</sup> She contends that 'Ireland was never able or willing to satisfactorily play a part in it.'<sup>49</sup> This argument seems brittle considering that 'one in five of the Irish male cohort' saw 'service of some sort' from 1793-

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<sup>45</sup> See Mary Louise Sanderson, 'Our own Catholic countrymen: Religion, loyalism and subjecthood in Britain and its empire 1755-1829' (Ph. D thesis, Vanderbilt University, Nashville Tennessee, May 2010), p. 191.

<sup>46</sup> J. M. Barry, *Pitchcap and triangle: The Cork militia in the Wexford uprising* (Cork, 1998), p. 1.

<sup>47</sup> Christopher Ian Pockett, 'Soldiers of the king: British soldiers and identity in the Peninsular War, 1808 – 1814' (M.A. thesis Queen's University Kingston, Ontario, Canada August, 1998) available at [http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/obj/s4/f2/dsk2/tape17/PQDD\\_0013/MQ31239.pdf](http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/obj/s4/f2/dsk2/tape17/PQDD_0013/MQ31239.pdf) [24 October 2012], p. 75.

<sup>48</sup> Irish Protestants were also excluded from Colley's consideration even though many Irish Protestant servicemen were at pains to identify themselves as British, Linda Colley. *Britons: forging the nation. 1707 - 1837* (London, 1992), p. 8.

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid*, p. 8.

1815 and evidence of their involvement in the running of the empire.<sup>50</sup> However, Colley also suggests that the relationship ‘was always a deeply ambiguous one’ and that they [the Irish] were effectively cut off by the ‘prejudices of the English, Welsh and Scots as well as the Irish themselves.’<sup>51</sup> These sentiments should be kept in mind when viewing some of the aspects that will be raised later on in this thesis.

Turning to what other historians have written on the subject, David Murphy, Desmond and Jean Bowen, and A.E.C Bredin have each presented detailed studies about the history of the Irish soldier in this period.<sup>52</sup> For the Royal Navy, Ann Veronica Coats, John D. Byrn, Christopher John Doorne, and John H. Dacam have analysed aspects of Irish involvement, particularly during the mutinies in the 1790s.<sup>53</sup> For the military forces serving in Ireland, Ivan F. Nelson, Henry McAnally, and Allan Blackstock have analysed the Irish militia and yeomanry.<sup>54</sup> Political, social and religious aspects which affected Irish Catholics in the various forces are considered, as are some aspects of Catholic loyalty and identity. Thomas Bartlett, Robert Donovan, and Stephen Conway have explored militarisation during the period and have noted how a shortage of manpower for Britain’s war machine and overseas imperial interests forced a realignment of policy towards Catholics which allowed a relaxation of the penal laws.<sup>55</sup> They have also identified many of the political, social and religious implications that arose out of Irish Catholics serving in the British armed forces. Looking at issues concerning loyalty, Patrick Fagan, Allan

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<sup>50</sup> Bartlett, 'Defence, counter-insurgency and rebellion' p. 247; see also Kevin Kenny, *Ireland and the British empire* (Oxford, 2004).

<sup>51</sup> Colley, *Britons*, p. 8.

<sup>52</sup> David Murphy, *The Irish brigades 1685-2006* (Dublin, 2007); Desmond & Jean Bowen, *The heroic option: The Irish in the British army* (Barnsley, 2005); A.E.C. Bredin, *A history of the Irish soldier* (Belfast 2007).

<sup>53</sup> Ann Veronica Coats and Philip McDougall, *The naval mutinies of 1797: Unity and perseverance* (Woolbridge, 2011); John D. Byrn, *Naval courts martial, 1793-1815* (Surrey, 2009); Christopher John Doorne, 'Mutiny and sedition in the home commands of the royal navy 1793-1803' (Ph. D thesis, Royal Holloway College, University of London, 1998); John H. Dacam, 'Wanton and torturing punishments': Patterns of discipline and punishment in the royal navy, 1783-1815' (Ph. D, thesis University of Hull, September 2009).

<sup>54</sup> Ivan F. Nelson, *The Irish militia 1793-1802: Ireland's forgotten army* (Dublin, 2007); Henry McAnally, *The Irish militia 1793-1816: A social and military history* (Dublin, 1949); Allan Blackstock, *An ascendancy army: the Irish yeomanry, 1796-1834* (Dublin, 1998).

<sup>55</sup> Thomas Bartlett, *The fall and rise of the Irish nation: The Catholic question 1690-1830* (Dublin, 1992); Robert Kent Donovan, 'The military origins of the Roman Catholic relief programme of 1778' in *Historical Journal*, xxviii, no. 1 (Mar., 1985), pp 79-102; Stephen Conway, 'The mobilization of manpower for Britain's mid-eighteenth-century wars' in *Historical Research*, lxxvii, 197 (August, 2004), pp 377-404.

Blackstock, and Mary Louise Sanderson have each contributed to an understanding of this area.<sup>56</sup> Fagan has focused on the evolution that occurred within some circles of Irish Catholic society from a dissipation of allegiance to the Stuarts towards the new Hanoverian dynasty. Blackstock has sought to explore varieties of loyalty, and although concentrating on Protestant loyalty, he does probe some areas of Catholic loyalty. Mary Louise Sanderson has addressed the changing position of Catholics in Britain with the aim to re-evaluate the idea of a Catholic in terms of a 'British subject'. While her thesis does examine loyalty, her main concentration centres on identities. As she suggests 'the people of the British Empire (as British subjects) had a range of identities and allegiances, and Britishness did not necessarily trump local or regional attachments even within Britain itself.'<sup>57</sup> Other historians with similar views as Sanderson and who also seek to disentangle the relationship between Irish and British identities during the period include Laurence Brockliss and David Eastwood, Sean J. Connolly, Colin Kidd, and Murray G.H. Pittock.<sup>58</sup>

Jennifer Ridden and Kevin Kenny have examined Irish Catholic identity within the British Empire.<sup>59</sup> Ridden, through the study of a circle of Limerick families, examined the relationship between elite notions of national identity, their religious ideas, and the development of their ideas about citizenship through interaction with the British Empire. In an analysis of identity among both Catholics and Protestants in the years prior to and following the Act of Union, Jacqueline Hill has noted that Ireland 'was deeply divided not only between Catholic and Protestant but between rich and poor, Irish speaking and English

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<sup>56</sup>Patrick Fagan, *Divided loyalties: The question of an oath for Irish Catholics in the eighteenth century* (Dublin, 1997); Allan Blackstock, *Loyalism in Ireland 1789-1829* (Suffolk, 2007); Mary Louise Sanderson, 'Our own Catholic countrymen: Religion, loyalism and subjecthood in Britain and its empire 1755-1829' (Ph. D thesis, Vanderbilt University, Nashville Tennessee, May 2010).

<sup>57</sup> 'By using British subjects, rather than Britons, this dissertation presents a more nuanced approach towards national and imperial identities, see Sanderson, 'Our own Catholic countrymen', pp xi-xiii.

<sup>58</sup> Laurence Brockliss and David Eastwood (eds.), *A union of multiple identities: the British Isles, c. 1750-1850* (Manchester, 1997); S.J. Connolly, *Conflict, identity and economic development: Ireland and Scotland, 1600-1939* (Edinburgh, 1994); Colin Kidd, *British identities before nationalism: Ethnicity and nationhood in the British Atlantic world, 1600-1800* (Cambridge, 1999); Murray G.H. Pittock, *Celtic identity and the British image* (Manchester, 1999).

<sup>59</sup> Jennifer Ridden, 'Making good citizens: National identity, religion, and liberalism among the Irish elite, c. 1800-1850' (Ph. D thesis, King's College, University of London, 1998); Kevin Kenny, *Ireland and the British empire* (Oxford, 2004).

speaking.<sup>60</sup> In terms of exploring the 'lower orders' and middle-class Irish Catholic society and Irish nationalism, Kevin Whelan, Nancy Curtin, and Marianne Elliott have each provided studies which have helped greatly with an understanding of this area, as has Thomas Bartlett.<sup>61</sup> In terms of the stereotyping of Irish Catholics, Kathleen M. Noonan, Michael de Nie, and L. Perry Curtis Jr., have each been foremost in pointing out many of the characteristics that were attributed to the Irish Catholic, while Nicholas Dunne-Lynch has in a recent study explored the stereotyping of humour among Irish soldiers during the Peninsular War.<sup>62</sup> As for historians who have dealt strictly with the religious issues within the British forces at this time, Snape and Fontana have been highly influential in this area.<sup>63</sup> Snape has explored the evolution of religion in the British forces throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, from a predominantly Anglican force, to one in which Presbyterians, Methodists and Catholics were incorporated. More importantly, Snape has examined how Irish Catholic identity impacted on an overwhelmingly Protestant force. Fontana's work is possibly the most all-encompassing in terms of looking at Catholics (English, Scottish and Irish) in nearly all areas of the armed forces except the Irish yeomanry. It presents a serious examination of the way in which Catholics were treated because of their religion and how the laws which affected them began to be rescinded for practical reasons. However, the most relevant studies to the present thesis are Cookson, *A British armed nation*, Pockett, 'Soldiers of the king', and Schwamenfeld, 'The foundation

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<sup>60</sup> Hill has additionally asserted that 'instead of being accepted as a new basis of political identity, the Union itself soon became a new cause of division,' see Jacqueline Hill, 'Irish identities before and after the Act of Union' in *Radharc*, ii, (Nov., 2001), pp 51-73, available at JSTOR <http://www.jstor.org/stable/25122319> [05 February 2014].

<sup>61</sup> Kevin Whelan, *Tree of liberty: Radicalism, Catholicism, and the construction of Irish identity, 1760-1830* (Notre Dame, 1997); Nancy J. Curtin, *The United Irishmen: Popular politics in Ulster and Dublin, 1791-1798* (3rd ed., Oxford, 2004); Marianne Elliott, *Partners in revolution: The United Irishmen and France* (New Haven, 1982); Bartlett, *Fall and rise*.

<sup>62</sup> Kathleen M. Noonan 'The cruel pressure of an enraged, barbarous people: Irish and English identity in seventeenth-century policy and propaganda' in *Historical Journal*, xl, no. 1 (Mar, 1998), pp 151-77; Michael de Nie, *The eternal Paddy: Irish identity and the British press 1798-1882* (London, 2004); L. Perry Curtis Jr. *Apes and angels: The Irish in Victorian caricature* (Devon, 1971). These studies centrally focus on the period before and following the timeline of this thesis and do not look at the characteristics through any analysis of the armed forces; Nicholas Dunne-Lynch, 'Humour and defiance: Irish troops and their humour in the Peninsular War' in *J.S.H.A.R.*, lxxxv, (2007), pp 62-78.

<sup>63</sup> Michael Snape, *The Redcoat and religion: The forgotten history of the British soldier from the age of Marlborough to the eve of the First World War* (Oxford, 2005); Velmo J. L. Fontana, 'Some aspects of Roman Catholic service in the land forces of the British crown, c.1750- c1820' (Ph. D thesis, University of Portsmouth, 2002).

of British strength'.<sup>64</sup> Each of these studies focuses on aspects of British identity and incorporates into their studies Irish Catholic participation in the British army. For example, both Cookson's and Pockett's studies examine Irish Catholic identity in terms of Britishness, while Pockett and Schwamenfeld explore some of the traits that were associated with Irish Catholic identity at the time.

Many of the works noted above explore themes that this thesis will consider, but most fail to look at all of the forces (army, navy, militia and yeomanry) in which Irish Catholics participated as a whole. Most only focus on one force and those that have touched upon the four forces have examined them within a British context rather than an Irish one. They have also missed some vital areas that this study hopes to expand upon. For example, while many of the histories discuss elements of the performance of Irish Catholics in the various forces, none has sought to analyse which of the four forces they performed best in or why. Regarding religious observance, which often drew the most attention and which was apparently one of the most important facets associated with Irish Catholic identity, despite the fact that many of the studies have considered the key areas, they have been slow to indicate whether religion or the religious identity of Irish Catholics was really of central importance to Irish Catholics throughout the armed forces. The stereotypes that were associated with Irish Catholic identity at this time such as drunkenness, a propensity to fighting, thievery, humour, wit and invention and being unkempt to name only the most commonly mentioned, again have often been highlighted. However, these stereotypes have not been given sufficient analysis in terms of their possible causes, how comparable such traits were with other nationalities within the British forces, why Irish Catholics may have been presented in the ways in which they were or how the accounts may have been affected by the prejudices of the time.

Turning to primary sources, the Napoleonic era was the first in which a substantial number of memoirs, diaries and journals came not only from the hands of high ranking

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<sup>64</sup>J. E. Cookson, *The British armed nation 1793-1815* (New York, 1997); Christopher Ian Pockett, 'Soldiers of the king: British soldiers and identity in the Peninsular War, 1808 – 1814' (M.A. thesis Queen's University, Kingston, Ontario, Canada August, 1998); Steven Schwamenfeld, 'The foundation of British strength: National identity and the British common soldier' (Ph. D thesis, Florida State University, Fall, 2007).

officers but also from those of ordinary servicemen. Many were just literate enough to record some of the incidents they witnessed, while others such as Benjamin Harris dictated his memoirs to a third party.<sup>65</sup> These works were significant for they not only recorded military aspects, but also social conditions that went on in the day to day life of the armed forces. While the availability of these types of primary sources helped greatly with this thesis, there were a number of problems associated with them as the excerpt below highlights:

The memoir as Paul Fussell<sup>66</sup> has established, occupies a place between fiction and auto-biography....The further the written narrative shifts away from a diary or the events, the closer the written narrative becomes to a figurative fiction. The recollection of crucial events will be re-evaluated and re-contextualised throughout the life of the author to the point of creating the written record- personal memoirs become influenced by the socio-political, socio-economic environment and experiences of the author will have an impact on how they recall an event. Who the writer is writing to, will also impact on what they say. Writing to parents, the writer will subconsciously edit out a lot of the detail. Writing to a brother, the content may be more graphic. In both cases the writer will concentrate on their regiment's achievements above others. A diary entry will be more candid and honest in what took place. When an author writes about events they cannot have seen or experienced, then we must question the whole content. If the writer has constructed a narrative of events they did not take part in, clearly this is based on what they have been told or read, which may include all of what they have written.<sup>67</sup>

A second significant problem was the lack of written accounts from Irish Catholic servicemen. At the initial stages of research, servicemen with Catholic-sounding names sometimes turned out to be Protestants and vice-versa for some with Protestant-sounding surnames. This proved problematic, and while there were an estimated 159,000 Irish serving in the armed forces during the period, only four works were identified during the

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<sup>65</sup> Benjamin Harris, *Recollections of Rifleman Harris* edited by Henry Curling (London, 1848); Benjamin Harris, *A Dorset rifleman: Recollections of Rifleman Harris* edited by Eileen Hathaway and Bernard Cromwell (Epsom, 1996), p. 11.

<sup>66</sup> Paul Fussell (22 March 1924 – 23 May 2012) American cultural and literary historian, author and university professor is best known for his writings about World War I and II, which explore what he saw as the gap between the romantic myth and reality of war, see <http://www.poemhunter.com/paul-fussell/biography/> [24 March 2014].

<sup>67</sup> Paul Dawson, 'Memoires: Fact or fiction? Research subjects: Eyewitness accounts' available at [http://www.napoleon-series.org/research/eyewitness/c\\_memoires.html](http://www.napoleon-series.org/research/eyewitness/c_memoires.html) [24 March 2014].

current research as being written or possibly written by Irish Catholics, and all four works had difficulties associated with them.<sup>68</sup> One of the men converted to Protestantism; a second soldier's religious background is ambiguous; the third discussed little of his religious observance while in the armed forces; while the last was a strong Catholic. With a scarcity of handwritten material from Irish Catholics themselves, this meant that the majority of memoirs, journals, diaries and auto-biographies were drawn from Irish and British Protestant servicemen. For example, the accounts of Grattan, Bell, Blakeney, Ross-Lewin, and possibly Costello, were all written by Irish Protestants.<sup>69</sup> Again, special note had to be taken of the negative perceptions and prejudices which continued to be held about the Irish Catholic by many Protestant servicemen. On the other hand, there is little doubt that once a comradely spirit had formed within a regiment, authors often wrote impartially about their comrades. Beyond diaries, memoirs and journals, another chief source was the Irish newspapers. These likewise posed problems. The contrasting differences between their political stances were often times quite stark.<sup>70</sup> Other material mentioned was found at the British Army Museum, Chelsea; the National Archives at Kew; the National Library

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<sup>68</sup> Bartlett, *Fall and rise*, p. 13; Anon, *Memoirs of a sergeant, late in the Forty-Third Light Infantry Regiment...during the Peninsula War* (London, 1835); Anthony Hamilton, *Hamilton's campaign with Moore and Wellington* (London, 1847); Charles O'Neil, *The military adventures of Charles O'Neil* (Worcester, 1851); Agnes Fitzgibbon, *A veteran of 1812: The life of James Fitzgibbon* (Montreal, 1894).

<sup>69</sup> William Grattan, *Adventures with the Connaught Rangers 1808-1814*, (2 vols, London, 1847), available at Internet Archive <http://archive.org/stream/adventureswithc01gratgoog#page/n229/mode/2up> [03 May 2013]; George Bell, *Rough notes by an old soldier* (London, 1867), available at Internet Archive <http://archive.org/stream/roughnotesbyano01bellgoog#page/n8/mode/2up> [01 May 2013]; Robert Blakeney, *A boy in the Peninsular War* edited by Julian Sturgis (London, 1899), available at Internet Archive <http://archive.org/stream/aboyinpeninsula00blakgoog#page/n6/mode/2up> [11 May 2013]; Henry Ross-Lewin, *With the Thirty-Second in the Peninsular and other campaigns*, edited by John Wardell (Dublin, 1904), available at Internet Archive <http://archive.org/stream/withthirtysecon00wardgoog#page/n70/mode/2up> [03 May 2013]; Edward Costello, *Adventures of a soldier; or memoirs of Edward Costello*, (London, 1852); available at Internet Archive <http://archive.org/stream/adventuresasold01costgoog#page/n30/mode/2up> [07 May 2013].

<sup>70</sup> Government papers or 'Castle prints' as they were commonly referred could often be quite biased. See Brian Inglis, *The freedom of the press in Ireland, 1784-1841* (London, 1954) pp 254, Review by Asa Briggs in *Irish Historical Studies*, ix, (1955), pp 472-3, available at JSTOR <http://www.jstor.org/stable/30005288> [10 April 2012]. What further compounded the issue of using the newspapers in Ireland during the period was the fact that they could often shift their position from being a liberal paper to a 'Castle' paper [from Dublin Castle] and back again. One example of this would have been the *Freeman's Dublin Journal*, see Inglis, *The freedom of the press in Ireland*, pp 238-41.

of Ireland, the National Archives, Dublin; the Public Record Office of Northern Ireland and at the Internet Archive Database.

The thesis contains three chapters. Chapter one looks at the performance of Irish Catholics in the various forces and seeks to establish in which force their performance was most marked in positive or negative ways. Religious identity will be the focus of chapter two. It was arguably one of the central aspects which set Catholics apart from their fellow comrades from the other nationalities in the British forces. The question has to be asked however, as to what extent religion was important to Irish Catholics serving in the armed forces? Finally, chapter three will explore some of the characteristics that were most commonly attributed to the Irish: propensity to fighting/having a fighting spirit; being unruly; having a fondness for drink; being prone to sentimentality; thievery and stupid; being unkempt and having a proclivity for humour, wit and invention. The conclusion will consider all these elements and indicate how Irish Catholic service in all areas of the British armed forces can be assessed during this period in terms of service and identity.



## **Chapter One: Irish Catholic performance in the British armed forces 1793-1815: the military record**

It may strike readers unfamiliar with Irish history as odd that a country constantly rising in arms against its rulers should continue to supply these rulers with a steady supply of loyal first class fighting men. Irish romantic and nationalistic writers tend to play this down.....<sup>1</sup>

As noted in the introduction, Irish Catholics had a long-established history of military service to the British crown right up until the Williamite Wars (1689-91), following which Catholic enlistment became technically illegal until 1793. In fact, so fearful were British ministers of Irish Catholics enrolling that Irish Protestant recruitment was also suspended until 1745.<sup>2</sup> But Irish Catholic enlistment had been occurring from at least 1750s and during the American War of Independence (1775-1783), of the forty four battalions serving in the American colonies in 1776, sixteen had come from Ireland. Most contained Irish Catholics.<sup>3</sup> However this fact was not widely publicised due to the crown's sensitivity on the issue of employing Catholic Irishmen to subdue Protestant Americans.<sup>4</sup> In the interim, Britain's simmering rivalry with France intensified throughout the eighteenth century.<sup>5</sup> In 1789, following the French revolution, a potential war with France became an ever present possibility. The British prime minister, William Pitt, had realised the importance of the reserves of manpower in Ireland.<sup>6</sup> Discussions had already begun in Britain with the view to granting Catholics in Ireland relief.<sup>7</sup> In Ireland, such concessions were resisted by many among the Irish Protestant Ascendancy. Historically, many of their forbearers had come to Ireland in various waves of conquest, plantation and settlement from the sixteenth century

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<sup>1</sup> See Henry Harris, *The Royal Irish Fusiliers* (London, 1972), p. 9.

<sup>2</sup> Bartlett, *Fall and rise*, p. 57. This only applied to the regular army, although Irish Protestants were still able to serve in local defence forces such as the militia and volunteers, see Neal Garnham, *The militia in eighteenth-century Ireland: In defence of the Protestant interest* (Suffolk, 2012).

<sup>3</sup> Bartlett, *The fall and rise of the Irish nation*, pp 57-85; Desmond & Jean Bowen, *The heroic option: The Irish in the British army* (Barnsley, 2005), p. 19.

<sup>4</sup> Bartlett, *Fall and rise*, p. 85.

<sup>5</sup> Robert Kent Donovan, 'The military origins of the Roman Catholic relief programme of 1778' in *Historical Journal*, xxviii, no. 1 (Mar., 1985), pp 79-102; Stephen Conway, 'The mobilization of manpower for Britain's mid-eighteenth-century wars' in *Historical Research*, lxxvii, no. 197 (August, 2004), pp 377-404.

<sup>6</sup> Ireland had always been seen as a possible place for invasion but Ferguson notes that at the outset of the war it was thought the war would be primarily focused on mainland Europe, see K.P. Ferguson, 'The army in Ireland from the restoration to the act of Union' (Ph. D thesis, Trinity College, Dublin, 1990), p. 138.

<sup>7</sup> Ian McBride, *Eighteenth century Ireland: The isle of slaves* (Dublin, 2009), p. 347.

on. As an entity, they composed the political elite and were determined not to see their own powerbase eroded.<sup>8</sup> However, British military expediency overrode all other concerns. In April 1793, the Catholic relief act in tandem with a militia bill was passed by the Irish parliament.<sup>9</sup> Irish Catholics could now legally serve in the regular army, the royal navy, the newly formed Irish militia and later the yeomanry, and achieve a rank up to that of a general officer.<sup>10</sup> It is worth offering some brief discussion about the operational aspects of each of these four forces in order to provide some context to the central issue of this chapter, respecting the performance of Irish Catholics over the period.

### The Irish forces

In 1793, thirty new Irish regular line regiments were established. However in September 1795, all but five were disbanded and the men were amalgamated into other British infantry regiments.<sup>11</sup> As noted in the introductory chapter, there were also some older Irish regiments dating back to the Williamite period.<sup>12</sup> Altogether, it has been noted that there were no fewer than fourteen Irish infantry and dragoon regiments serving the British crown at the time.<sup>13</sup> It is worth pointing out in relation to the Irish infantry regiments, that once they left the country, many did not return for periods of twenty years or more owing to the perceived potential for being subverted.<sup>14</sup> From 1793 to 1796 alone,

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<sup>8</sup> Wayne Stack, 'Rebellion invasion and occupation: A military history of Ireland 1793-1815' (M.A. thesis, University of Canterbury, 2008), pp 18-19; Bartlett, *Fall and rise*, pp 121-72; Elliott, *Partners in revolution*, p. xvii.

<sup>9</sup> Garnham, *The militia in eighteenth-century Ireland*, pp 155-9; Thomas Bartlett, 'An end to moral economy: The Irish militia disturbances 1793 in *Past and Present*, no. 99, (May, 1983), pp 41-64 available at JSTOR <http://www.jstor.org/stable/650584> [23 November 2011]; It was said that the intention in 1793 had been to introduce parallel legislation in both kingdoms, but only the Irish act had been passed, see J. R. Western, 'Roman Catholics holding military commissions in 1798' in *English Historical Review*, lxx, no. 276 (Jul., 1955), pp 428-432, available at JSTOR <http://www.jstor.org/stable/559074> [21 February 2014].

<sup>10</sup> Allan Blackstock, 'The Union and the military, 1801-c.1830' in *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, x (2000), pp 329-351, available at JSTOR <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3679384> [20 May 2014].

<sup>11</sup> These included the 83<sup>rd</sup> (County of Dublin), the 87<sup>th</sup> (Prince of Wales Irish), 88<sup>th</sup> (Connaught Rangers) and 89<sup>th</sup> (Blayney's Bloodhounds). For a full outline of the numbers of regiments raised at this time, see Ferguson, 'The army in Ireland', pp 140-2. Most of the soldiers from the disbanded regiments were sent to 17<sup>th</sup>, 32<sup>nd</sup>, 39<sup>th</sup>, 56<sup>th</sup>, 67<sup>th</sup>, 93<sup>rd</sup> and 99<sup>th</sup> regiments, see Thomas Bartlett, 'Defence, counter-insurgency and rebellion: Ireland, 1793-1803 in Thomas Bartlett and Keith Jeffery (eds), *A military history of Ireland* (Cambridge, 1996), p. 255; Ferguson, 'Army in Ireland', p. 140.

<sup>12</sup> See introduction to thesis, p. 6.

<sup>13</sup> Bartlett, 'Defence, counter-insurgency and rebellion', p. 257.

<sup>14</sup> The exception was the 89<sup>th</sup> which was active during the suppression of the 1798 rebellion, see David Murphy, *The Irish brigades 1685-2006* (Dublin, 2007), pp 109-87; Edward M. Spiers, 'Army organisation

it is estimated that Ireland sent 50,000 soldiers to the British army.<sup>15</sup> Recruitment was driven by officers and sergeants who targeted street corners and public houses, but recruitment by the beat of a drum was also common.<sup>16</sup> However, finding men was often problematic. Bounties were introduced as a financial incentive but this caused unscrupulous characters known as crimps to trick or abduct men into the army. At other times, crimps and recruits would come to mutual financial arrangements by claiming bounties from multiple enlistments.<sup>17</sup>

As regards the royal navy, there appears to have been two types of sailor over the period: one type was sailors by profession, while others were civilians or landsmen who had no prior knowledge of the seas.<sup>18</sup> Irish Catholics tended to be the latter and primarily served on the lower decks of ships and were often pressed into service.<sup>19</sup> The memoir of Fredrick Hoffman gives a good example of this: an Irish Catholic, while performing agricultural seasonal work in England, he found himself pressed into the navy in 1803.<sup>20</sup> This was not an isolated case. In the same year in Barking, east London, 500 Irish haymakers almost suffered a similar fate but fought off the [press] gang.<sup>21</sup> From 1793 to

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and society in the nineteenth century' in Thomas Bartlett and Keith Jeffery (eds), *A military history of Ireland* (Cambridge, 1996), p. 346.

<sup>15</sup> D.A. Chart, 'Irish levies during the Great French War', in *English Historical Review*, xxxii (1913), pp 79-102; Spiers, 'Army organization and society', pp 335-57.

<sup>16</sup> See Edward J. Coss, *All for the king's shilling: The British soldier under Wellington, 1808-1814* (Oklahoma, 2010), p. 75; Richard Holmes, *Redcoat: The British soldier in the age of horse and musket*, (London, 2001) p. 139. For a good description of this in Ireland, see Benjamin Harris, *Recollections of Rifleman Harris, (old 95th) with anecdotes of his officers and his comrades*, edited by Henry Curling (London, 1914), pp 10-11.

<sup>17</sup> Crimps were often tavern owners who acted as middlemen in the recruiting process. The crimp might often help the serviceman to enlist, and then desert in multiple regiments, see Coss, *All for the king's shilling*, pp 79-80.

<sup>18</sup> Christopher John Doorne, 'Mutiny and sedition in the home commands of the royal navy. 1793-1803' (Ph. D thesis, Royal Holloway College University of London, 1998), p. 147; Peta Steel, *The Spithead and Nore mutinies of 1797: An account of the rebellious activities in London, the south-east, and the east of England in the eighteenth century* (London, 2013), p.4, available at <http://sertucresources.files.wordpress.com/2012/10/spithead-and-nore.pdf> [12 May 2014].

<sup>19</sup> Anthony Gary Brown, 'The Irish sea-officers of the royal navy, 1793-1815' in the *Irish Sword, Journal of the Military History Society of Ireland*, xxi, no. 86 (winter, 1999), pp 393-429.

<sup>20</sup> Fredrick Hoffman, *A sailor of King George: The journals of Captain Fredrick Hoffman R.N 1793-1814* edited by A. Beckford Bevan & H.B. Wolryche-Whitmore (London, 1901), pp 190-1.

<sup>21</sup> Nicholas Rogers, *The press gang: Naval impressment and its opponents in Georgian Britain* (London, 2007), p.40.

1797, Irish courts sent almost 15,000 political prisoners to the navy.<sup>22</sup> If this figure is correct, half of the estimated 24,000 Irishmen serving in the navy were potentially disaffected.<sup>23</sup> This will be considered in more detail below.

Turning to forces based in Ireland, the Irish militia consisted of thirty-eight regiments of infantry, one for each county/county borough in Ireland. During its inception, it had initially been envisaged that it would only act as a part-time force to be called out for twenty-eight days of service per year, but this was changed to full-time service almost as soon as the force was raised.<sup>24</sup> Conceived as both a counter invasion and counter insurgency force, the militia never received adequate training for such roles until 1799.<sup>25</sup> Ivan Nelson, who has made a proficient study of the Irish militia, has demonstrated that like the regular infantry regiments, Irish militia regiments were supposed to undergo individual and collective training. Individual training catered for such duties as wearing and keeping uniforms, followed by the intricacies associated with foot drills such as standing at ease, attention, and turning in different directions. It was hoped that the practice of foot drills would prepare soldiers 'to take part in larger formations and to instil obedience to orders'.<sup>26</sup> The recruit would then move onto learning how to use his firearm, and when this was accomplished having completed 'individual and platoon training', he was then to move on to battalion training. This involved learning how to draw up and fire in larger formations during battle and to know the positions of various ranks of officers during engagements.<sup>27</sup> Ideally, all this training was supposed to take approximately three years to accomplish, but some of the Irish militia regiments were sent out in 1793 with between two and five months training. Coupled with this was the fact that many companies within regiments, and regiments collectively, barely got any formation training with one another owing to the dispersion of different companies and regiments around the country. To put this into

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<sup>22</sup> See Roger Wells, *Insurrection: the British experience 1795-1803* (Gloucester, 1983), pp 81-2; Lawrence James, *Mutiny in the British and commonwealth forces, 1797-1957* (London, 1987), p. 44.

<sup>23</sup> McBride, *Eighteenth century Ireland*, p. 353.

<sup>24</sup> Ivan F. Nelson, *The Irish militia 1793-1802: Ireland's forgotten army* (Dublin, 2007), p. 15; Henry McAnally, *The Irish militia 1793-1816: A social and military history* (Dublin, 1949), p. 52.

<sup>25</sup> See Nelson, *The Irish militia*, pp 24-5.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid*, pp 24-5.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid*, pp 75-77.

context, the Longford regiment, which had six companies and which had come in for a considerable amount of criticism following the rebellion, had changed headquarters four times in two years which gave it no time for training. Summer camps were also supposed to offer the chance for regiments to train together, but over the period 1795 to 1797, twenty one regiments trained in summer camps in 1795, ten in 1796 and only three in 1797. Additionally and of possibly more significance was the fact there was often a continuous rotation of men in and out of the force.<sup>28</sup> These aspects would have had a detrimental effect on performance. Poor leadership, owing to the civilian commitments of many of its officers, also affected performance as many had already 'territorial, civic or parliamentary responsibilities.'<sup>29</sup> In respect of where militia regiments were stationed, owing to a fear of subversion, 'the lower competence of the officers', and 'the strong Catholic component' of some units, regiments were kept outside their home county.<sup>30</sup> Service outside Ireland, although not initially welcomed, had become commonplace by 1811.<sup>31</sup> In fact, by 1800, the militia had essentially become a nursery for the regular army.<sup>32</sup> In July 1793, the militia stood at 5,150, but in July 1802, the force peaked to 25,337.<sup>33</sup>

Turning to the yeomanry, it began its life in 1796 as a local home service force controlled by local gentlemen and magistrates to free the regular army and the militia from domestic peacekeeping and garrison duty.<sup>34</sup> It too became a permanent force and began to serve outside its area. The yeomanry was just as ill-disciplined as the militia, and similarly its training could be considered less than adequate when seen in the context of military operations, as training was often only one to two days per week. Captains often assisted magistrates but when engaged in military operation outside of local policing duties, the

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<sup>28</sup> Nelson, *The Irish militia*, pp 79-83.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid*, pp 24-5.

<sup>30</sup> J. E. Cookson. *The British armed nation, 1793-1815* (Oxford, 1997), pp 155; 164-5.

<sup>31</sup> By 1799, fourteen Irish regiments had volunteered to serve in Britain. Legislation was passed in 1799 allowing these regiments to transfer to Britain, although interchange between English and Irish militia regiments did not occur for another twelve years, *Ibid*, pp 155; 164-5.

<sup>32</sup> Bartlett, 'Defence, counter-insurgency and rebellion' p. 292.

<sup>33</sup> Nelson, *The Irish militia*, p. 248; McAnally, *The Irish militia*, p. 230.

<sup>34</sup> Blackstock, 'The Union and the military', pp 329-351.

captains operated under normal military command.<sup>35</sup> As the yeomanry was initially a more localised force, this may have helped its performance, owing to their captains' good knowledge of the people and the area they served in. However, this may have also worked against it, owing to communal ties. During its inception, Catholic members were included, but as the threat of rebellion grew and 'loyalty' became more claimed by Protestants exclusively, by 1800 Catholic service was all but gone.<sup>36</sup> In December 1796 the yeomanry stood at 21,000, but by March 1810, its members had increased to 85,000.<sup>37</sup> The latter figures are remarkable; almost every eligible Protestant male in Ireland may have been serving. How this may have impacted upon Irish Protestant enlistment to regular regiments is worth considering.

As this period in Irish history has attracted considerable attention, it is worth providing some analysis regarding the historical sources used for the chapter. With regard to the diaries/memoirs/histories published in the wake of many of the events such as the 1798 rebellion, these sources were produced mainly by opponents of the rebellion and their representations are often severely antipathetic and predicated upon the political and religious convictions of those who documented them. Those that concern the campaigns in the Iberian Peninsula from 1808 to 1814 tend to display a less discernibly one-sided attitude. Before proceeding to a discussion of the key sources used in this chapter, it is first worth pointing out that other sources such as letters between government representatives and newspaper reports were likely to have had an official slant and need to be approached carefully. For example, in relation to the newspapers, John Giffard, who was captain of the City of Dublin militia, was also owner of *Faulkner's Dublin Journal*. It must be stated that

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<sup>35</sup> Alan Blackstock, 'A forgotten army: The Irish yeomanry' in *History Ireland*, iv, no. 4 (Winter, 1996), pp 28-33, available at JSTOR <http://www.jstor.org/stable/27724399> [22 May 2014]; Allan Blackstock, *An ascendancy army: The Irish yeomanry, 1796-1834* (Dublin, 1998), pp 101, 127-8, 164-7; Bartlett, 'Defence, counter-insurgency and rebellion' pp 247-93.

<sup>36</sup> Bartlett, 'Counter-insurgency and rebellion' p. 292.

<sup>37</sup> Blackstock, *The Irish yeomanry*, pp 114; 122.

it was not unusual for newspapers over the period to switch back and forth from an official government line.<sup>38</sup>

As for the contemporary sources surrounding the Irish rebellion of 1798, and those of the crown forces, the most widely known are written by Miles Byrne, General Joseph Holt, Rev. James Gordon, Phillip Harwood, Edward Hay, William Maxwell, Sir Richard Musgrave, George Taylor, and Samuel McSkimin.<sup>39</sup> Of these, Miles Byrne was actually a rebel during the rebellion. This no doubt influenced his perception of the event. General Holt's memoir was later edited by Thomas Crofton Croker whose family came to Ireland during the Elizabethan settlements.<sup>40</sup> With respect to Crofton's approach to General Holt's manuscript, it has been argued by Ruan O'Donnell that Crofton depicted Holt as an anti-Catholic bigot.<sup>41</sup> Rev. James Gordon's approach to the rebellion has been described as 'a party work abounding in misrepresentations.'<sup>42</sup> Phillip Harwood, a Unitarian minister and journalist, allegedly adopted a 'sympathetic' appraisal of the events in terms of how he represented the actions of the rebels.<sup>43</sup> Edward Hay was a Catholic who hailed from Wexford. Both he and his brother were jailed for being United Irishmen. This again is

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<sup>38</sup> John Giffard (1746–1819). During the regency crisis Giffard took over the popular *Faulkner's Dublin Journal*. In 1793 Giffard became a lieutenant in the City of Dublin militia. In 1795 he had been present at earlier clashes between Defenders and Peep O' Day Boys, see also *Dictionary of Irish Biography* <http://dib.cambridge.org.jproxy.nuim.ie/quicksearch.do> [31 March 2014]; see also Brian Inglis, *The freedom of the press in Ireland, 1784-1841* (London, 1954) pp 254-7.

<sup>39</sup> Miles Byrne, *Memoirs of Miles Byrne, edited by his widow* (2 vols, Dublin, 1906); T. Crofton Croker (ed.), *Memoirs of Joseph Holt, General of the Irish rebels, in 1798* (2 vols, London, 1838); Rev. James Gordon, *History of the rebellion in Ireland, in the year 1798, &c. containing an impartial account of the proceedings of the Irish revolutionists, from the year 1782, till the suppression of the rebellion* (London, 1803); Philip Harwood, *History of the Irish rebellion of 1798* (London, 1844); Edward Hay, *History of the Irish insurrection of 1798* (New York, 1847); William Hamilton Maxwell, *History of the Irish Rebellion in 1798 with memoirs of the Union and Emmett's Insurrection of 1803* (London, 1854); Sir Richard Musgrave, *Memoirs of the different rebellions in Ireland* (Dublin, 1802); George Taylor, *A History of the rise, progress and suppression of the rebellion in the County of Wexford in the year 1798* (Dublin, 1829); Samuel McSkimin, *Annals of Ulster from 1790-1798* (Belfast, 1906).

<sup>40</sup> B. G. MacCarthy, 'Thomas Crofton Croker 1798-1854' in *An Irish Quarterly Review*, xxxii, no. 128 (Dec., 1943), pp 539-556, available at JSTOR <http://www.jstor.org/stable/30099490> [30 May 2014].

<sup>41</sup> Ruan O'Donnell, "'Keeping up the flame": General Joseph Holt' in *History Ireland*, vi, no. 2, 1798 Rebellion special issue (Summer, 1998), pp 39-43, available at JSTOR <http://www.jstor.org/stable/27724560> [30 May 2014].

<sup>42</sup> James Bentley Gordon (1750–1819) Historian, see *Dictionary of National Biography* <http://www.oxforddnb.com.jproxy.nuim.ie/view/article/11056?docPos=9> [30 May 2014].

<sup>43</sup> Philip Harwood (1811–1887), Unitarian minister and journal editor, was born in Worcester, England, available at *Dictionary of National Biography* <http://www.oxforddnb.com.jproxy.nuim.ie/view/article/12542?docPos=14> [30 May 2014].

likely to have had an influence on his representation of the events.<sup>44</sup> William Maxwell was a Church of Ireland clergyman, and while it has been said that his history ‘is a solid contribution to the history of the period.....,’ his other works betray his ascendancy background.<sup>45</sup> Musgrave came from a strong Protestant tradition. His history fell out of favour in academic circles for its perceived ‘sectarian diatribe’ against Catholics during the rebellion. However, in recent times, he has been ‘praised for his conscientious collection of evidence and his insight into the organizational sophistication of Roman Catholic rebel groups.’<sup>46</sup> George Taylor was an itinerant Methodist minister from Wexford who nearly lost his own life during the affair. He has been described as ‘a zealous "loyalist" with very obvious evangelistic leanings.’<sup>47</sup> Samuel McSkimin was the son of a Unitarian minister who was believed to have acted as ‘a spy in arms against the United Irishmen’ and to have been a member of a yeomanry corps ‘despite not being listed as one.’<sup>48</sup>

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<sup>44</sup> Edward Hay, (c.1761–1826), historian and political activist, was born at Ballinkeele, County Wexford, Ireland. Both his parents were Roman Catholics. During the disturbances in Wexford in 1798, Hay acted as a negotiator between the rebels and the government forces. However, he was arraigned on a charge of treason, and, although acquitted, he suffered protracted imprisonment, available at *Dictionary of National Biography* <http://www.oxforddnb.com.jproxy.nuim.ie/view/article/12714?docPos=1> [30 May 2014]; Anna Kinsella, ‘Perceptions of the insurrection of 1798’ in *North Irish Roots*, ix, no. 1 (1998), pp 17-18, available at JSTOR <http://www.jstor.org/stable/27697170> [30 May 2014].

<sup>45</sup> William Hamilton, Maxwell available at [libraryireland.com](http://www.libraryireland.com) <http://www.libraryireland.com/biography/WilliamHamiltonMaxwell.php> [31 May 2014]; Joseph Spence, ‘Allegories for a Protestant nation: Irish Tory historical fiction, 1820-1850’ in *Religion & Literature*, xxviii, no. 2/3, The endless knot: Literature and religion in Ireland (Summer - Autumn, 1996), pp. 59-78, available at JSTOR <http://www.jstor.org/stable/40059665> [31 May 2014].

<sup>46</sup> David Dickson remarks that much of the evidence reproduced in the book ‘is in a sufficiently raw state to be treated as primary, which is otherwise unavailable’ (p. ii). Others have noted the quality and scope of Musgrave’s information, gathering. Far from being ‘almost worthless,’ the *Memoirs* is now considered, if handled with care, as a valuable historical source, Jim Smyth, ‘Anti-Catholicism, conservatism and conspiracy: Sir Richard Musgrave, *Memoirs of the different rebellions in Ireland*, in *Eighteenth Century Life*, xxii no. 3 (Nov, 1998), pp 62-73 available from Project Muse [http://muse.jhu.edu.jproxy.nuim.ie/journals/eighteenth-century\\_life/v022/22.3smyth.html](http://muse.jhu.edu.jproxy.nuim.ie/journals/eighteenth-century_life/v022/22.3smyth.html) [23 November 2013]. Sir Richard Musgrave, see *Dictionary of National Biography* <http://www.oxforddnb.com.jproxy.nuim.ie/view/article/19663> [28 March 2014].

<sup>47</sup> Séamas S. de Vál ‘George Taylor’s experiences in the insurrection of 1798’ in *The Past: The Organ of the Uí Cinsealaigh Historical Society*, no. 21 (1998), pp 49-57, available at JSTOR <http://www.jstor.org/stable/25520039> [31 May 2014].

<sup>48</sup> Samuel McSkimin (1775–1843) local historian, was born near Ballyclare, County Antrim, available at *Dictionary of Irish biography* <http://dib.cambridge.org.jproxy.nuim.ie/quicksearch.do;jsessionid=7AB5DC18F148A98261234B84321C3FAB> [31 May 2014].



Concerning events during the Peninsula wars, as noted in the introductory chapter, many of the memoirs and diaries that were published came from Irish and British Protestants and display varying degrees of anti-Irish Catholic sentiment. These sentiments would somewhat dissipate as regimental cohesion developed. Most as will be evidenced were written by Irish Protestants such as William Grattan, George Bell, Robert Blakeney, Henry Ross-Lewin, Major General, Lord Blayney, and British and Scottish Protestants such as Benjamin Harris, Joseph Donaldson, and John Shipp.<sup>49</sup> In the introductory chapter, it has been noted that there were some problems associated with testimonies from Catholic soldiers, which will be explored further in the following chapters.

During the nineteenth century, discussions about the 1798 rebellion and the French Revolutionary and Napoleonic wars were frequent among historians. Father Patrick Kavanagh, W.E.H Lecky, and James Anthony Froude were just some of the historians who turned their attention to events in Ireland during the rebellion.<sup>50</sup> Kavanagh was a Franciscan priest whose relations took part in the 1798 rebellion. His evidence was derived from oral sources. It has been argued that he endorsed the position of the rebels.<sup>51</sup> Lecky's study was a retort to Froude's, the latter's being described as 'opinionated, prescriptive and frankly Protestant and Anglo-centric in sympathy' whereas the former strived 'for impartiality, but

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<sup>49</sup> William Grattan, *Adventures with the Connaught Rangers 1808-1814*, (2 vols, London, 1847); George Bell, *Rough notes by an old soldier* (London, 1867); Robert Blakeney, *A boy in the Peninsular War* edited by Julian Sturgis (London, 1899); Henry, Ross-Lewin, *With the Thirty-Second in the Peninsular and other campaigns*, edited by John Wardell (Dublin, 1904); Major-General Lord Blayney, *Narrative of a forced journey through Spain and France as a prisoner of war in the years 1810 to 1814* (2 vols, London, 1814); Benjamin Harris, *Recollections of Rifleman Harris* edited by Henry Curling (London, 1848); Joseph Donaldson, *Recollections of the eventful life of a soldier* (Philadelphia, 1845); John Shipp, *Memoirs of the extraordinary military career of John Shipp* (3 vols, London, 1843).

<sup>50</sup> Fr. Patrick F. Kavanagh, *A popular history of the insurrection of 1798* (Dublin, 1880); W.E.H., Lecky, *A history of Ireland in the eighteenth century* (4 vols, London, 1890); J.A., Froude, *The English in Ireland in the eighteenth century* (3 vols, New York, 1888).

<sup>51</sup> Patrick Fidelis Kavanagh, (1834/8–1918) Franciscan priest and historian, available at *Dictionary of Irish Biography* <http://dib.cambridge.org.jproxy.nuim.ie/viewReadPage.do?articleId=a4387&searchClicked=clicke&quickadvsearch=yes> [31 May 2014]; (William) Edward Hartpole Lecky (1838–1903), historian, was born on 26 March 1838 in Newtownpark, County Dublin. Since 1945, while Irish historians have continued to refer to him as a founding father, there has been little attempt to gauge his importance as a historian of ideas, see *Dictionary of National Biography* <http://www.oxforddnb.com.jproxy.nuim.ie/view/article/34461?docPos=1> [01 August 2014]; James Anthony Froude (1818–1894), historian and man of letters, available at *Dictionary of National Biography* <http://www.oxforddnb.com.jproxy.nuim.ie/view/article/10202?docPos=2> [01 August 2014].

is nonetheless infused with a strong sense of historic Irish grievance.<sup>52</sup> Later histories include those by William Henry Fitchett, J.W. Fortescue, C.W.C. Oman, and Conrad Gill; the latter being the first to re-evaluate the level of Irish involvement in the naval mutinies in England from 1797 to 1799.<sup>53</sup>

Turning to recent histories of the era, historians such as Thomas Bartlett, David Dickson, Dáire Keogh, Kevin Whelan, Marianne Elliott and Daniel Gahan have sought to promote a more detached perspective to the historiography of 1798.<sup>54</sup> While all have published material separately about the event, the collected essays, *1798: A bicentenary perspective*, is a good place to start for anyone wishing to get a broad understanding of the time.<sup>55</sup> A number of local histories were utilised for the chapter including those by Mario Corrigan, Seamus Ó Loingsigh, L.J. Steen, and J.M. Barry.<sup>56</sup> While often scholarly, some were not entirely impartial. For a general history of the Irish soldier throughout the period and beyond, works by A.E.C. Bredin, Desmond & Jean Bowen, and David Murphy are essential reading while Peter Karsten, Terence Denman, and D.A. Chart have given the

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<sup>52</sup> Donal McCartney, *W. E. H. Lecky, historian and politician, 1838-1903*, Review by: Jim Smyth in *Historical Journal*, xxxviii, no. 1 (Mar., 1995), pp. 253-254, available at JSTOR <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2640178> [31 May 2014].

<sup>53</sup> William Henry Fitchett (1841-1928). Clergyman, writer and educator. He said of his stories ... 'There was no attempt at fine writing, no pretence of original research', available at *Australian Dictionary of National Biography* <http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/fitchett-william-henry-6179> [31 May 2014]; W. H. Fitchett, *How England saved Europe; the story of the great war 1793-1815* (London, 1900); J.W. Fortescue, *A history of the British army* (20 vols, London, 1899-1930). Sir John wrote his monumental work on the British Army between 1899 and 1930, starting it after leaving the post of secretary to the Governor of the Windward Islands and during his work as librarian of Windsor Castle (1905-1926), available at [www.fortescue-british-army-history.com](http://www.fortescue-british-army-history.com) [31 May 2014]. C.W.C. Oman, *Wellington's army 1809-1814*, (London, 1909); Sir Charles William Chadwick Oman (1860–1946). 'His *History of the Peninsular War* is unlikely ever to be displaced as the fullest basic military narrative of that conflict. Its first volume is excessively compressed and prejudiced; but the remaining volumes show Oman as a mature post-Victorian historian', available at *Dictionary of National Biography* <http://www.oxforddnb.com.jproxy.nuim.ie/view/article/35312> [17 September 2013]; Conrad Gill, *The mutinies of 1797* (Manchester, 1913).

<sup>54</sup> Bartlett, *Fall and rise*; David Dickson, Dáire Keogh, Kevin Whelan (eds.) *The United Irishmen: Republicanism, and rebellion* (Dublin, 1992); Elliott, *Partners in revolution*; Daniel Gahan, *The people's rising: The Great Wexford Rebellion of 1798* (Dublin, 1995).

<sup>55</sup> Thomas Bartlett, David Dickson, Daire Keogh, and Kevin Whelan (eds.) *1798: A bicentenary perspective*. (Dublin, 2003).

<sup>56</sup> Mario Corrigan, *All that delirium of the brave - Kildare in 1798* (Naas, 1997); Seamus Ó Loingsigh, *The 1798 rebellion in Meath* (Meath, 1997); L. J. Steen, *The battle of the hill of Tara 26th May 1798* (Trim, 1991); J. M. Barry, *Pitchcap and triangle: The Cork militia in the Wexford uprising* (Cork, 1998).

performance of Irish soldiers in the British army some thought.<sup>57</sup> For a general history of the British army during the Peninsular War, Edward Coss, Charles Esdaile, Ian Robertson and Mark Urban have all contributed to the area.<sup>58</sup> In terms of identity, Steven Schwamenfeld's recent thesis, while centrally concerned with the British soldier, has explored Irish Catholic identity and performance within the army.<sup>59</sup> Concerning the mutinies in the Royal Navy, Ann Veronica Coats & Phillip McDougall, John D. Byrn, and Christopher John Doorne, have all demonstrated that Irish involvement was not as conspicuous as first thought and was comparable to that of other nationalities serving aboard the ships at the time.<sup>60</sup> In his assessment of the mutinies, Lawrence James has argued that Irish Catholics became discernible when they threatened to murder Protestants.<sup>61</sup> As for the forces in Ireland, Allan Blackstock, J.E Cookson, Henry McAnally, and Ivan F. Nelson have been central to an understanding of Catholic performance in the militia and the yeomanry.<sup>62</sup> Their work has been complemented by a recent thesis by Wayne Stack which concentrates on both the militia and the yeomanry from 1793 to 1815. However, much of Stack's thesis centres on performance during the period around 1798 and is not strictly Irish Catholic in focus.<sup>63</sup>

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<sup>57</sup> A.E.C. Bredin, *A history of the Irish soldier* (Belfast, 2007); Desmond & Jean Bowen, *The heroic option: The Irish in the British army*, (Barnsley, 2005); David Murphy, *The Irish brigades 1685-2006* (Dublin, 2007). Peter Karsten, 'Irish Soldiers in the British Army, 1792-1922: Suborned or subordinate?' in *Journal of Social History*, xvii, no. 1 (Autumn, 1983), pp 31-64; Terence Denman, 'Hibernia, officina militum: Irish recruitment to the British regular army 1660-1815', in *Irish Sword*, xx (1996), pp 148-66; D.A. Chart, 'Irish levies during the Great French War', in *English Historical Review*., xxxii (1913), pp 79-102.

<sup>58</sup> Edward J. Coss, *All for the king's shilling: The British soldier under Wellington, 1808-1814* (Oklahoma, 2010); Charles Esdaile, *The Peninsular War: A new history* (London, 2002); Ian Robertson, *A commanding presence: Wellington in the Peninsula 1808-1814* (Gloucestershire, 2008); Mark Urban, *Rifles: Six years with Wellington's sharpshooters* (London, 2003).

<sup>59</sup> Steven Schwamenfeld, 'The foundation of British strength: National identity and the British common soldier' (Ph.D thesis, Florida State University, Fall, 2007).

<sup>60</sup> Ann Veronica Coats & Philip McDougall, *The naval mutinies of 1797: Unity and perseverance* (Suffolk, 2011); John. D. Byrn, *Naval courts-martial, 1793-1815* (Surrey, 2009); Christopher John Doorne, 'Mutiny and sedition in the home commands of the royal navy. 1793-1803' (Ph. D thesis, Royal Holloway College University of London, 1998).

<sup>61</sup> Lawrence James, *Mutiny in the British and commonwealth forces, 1797-1957* (London, 1987).

<sup>62</sup> Allan Blackstock, *An ascendancy army: the Irish yeomanry, 1796-1834* (Dublin, 1998); J. E. Cookson, *The British armed nation 1793-1815* (New York, 1997); Henry McAnally, *The Irish militia 1793-1816: A social and military history* (Dublin, 1949); Ivan F. Nelson, *The Irish militia 1793-1802: Ireland's forgotten army* (Dublin, 2007).

<sup>63</sup> Wayne Stack, 'Rebellion invasion and occupation: A military history of Ireland, 1793-1815' (M.A. thesis, University of Canterbury, 2008).

This chapter builds on many of the more recent studies noted in the last paragraph, but unlike them, it focuses particularly on Irish Catholics in each of the forces. Additionally, many existing works only deal with one or two of the forces. In order to get a more comprehensive view of Irish Catholic performance over the period, all of the major forces in which they served must be considered. In this way, a better understanding of Irish Catholic performance can be presented. This is the key task of this chapter: the performance of Irish Catholics in the British armed forces, 1793-1815. Collectively, their performance in these forces has never been given enough consideration. However, attempting to do this presented a number of challenges. Probably the foremost among these was how to distinguish Catholics from Protestants. Recording the religion of servicemen did not occur until well after the Napoleonic Wars. Despite this, an analysis of Irish Catholic performance has been attempted, based on the premise that, for example, in Ireland in 1810, the yeomanry's figures stood somewhere in the region of 85,000. If this is accepted, this would mean that almost every eligible Protestant male could have been performing home service during the early part of the Peninsula campaigns. In the militia, while many of the regiments had a considerable number of Protestant servicemen, especially the northern regiments, most regiments contained a larger percentage of Catholics. In the regular forces, while many of the officers in the Peninsula may have been Protestant, the vast majority of regular Irish troops were Catholic, as Wellington himself attested to.<sup>64</sup>

In order to best determine the performance aspect of Irish Catholic service, the chapter has focused on areas and times that would specifically help with this task. Instances of desertion and mutiny as well as performance during battle have been central to this. Looking at these issues for example in the militia and the yeomanry, the chapter has focused on the period showing the creation of the forces up to the period just following the 1798 rebellion. In the Royal Navy, it has examined principally the period when mutiny was a significant threat to the state, from 1797 to 1799. In the regular army, although it

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<sup>64</sup> 'Yes, my lords, it is mainly to the Irish Catholic that we all owe our proud pre-eminence in our military career'. 'Wellington on Irish Catholics: Speech to the House of Lords, 1828' available at A web of English history <http://www.historyhome.co.uk/polspeech/wellcath.htm> [31 May 2014]; Esdaile, *The Peninsular War*, p. 207.

covers the entire period from 1793 to 1815, the timeframe which is of key importance is 1808 to 1815, which takes in the Peninsular Wars and Waterloo. The central questions this chapter aims to answer are: what can the collective performance of Irish Catholics in the four main forces over the period tell us; and what can a comparison of Irish Catholics in the individual forces tell us about those forces themselves? These are questions that have not been given the requisite consideration by historians. The headings are divided according to the respective forces, which are further subdivided into an initial discussion of desertion and mutiny followed by a consideration of more positive performance.

### **Regular Line Troops**

#### **Desertion**

Between May and July 1794, the 102<sup>nd</sup> Irish Rangers reported a forty per cent desertion rate, while the 113<sup>th</sup>, which was recruiting in Liverpool, was told 'to take care, most of them will be Irishmen, who are likely to desert.'<sup>65</sup> It was also claimed at the time that there was 'no keeping Irish troops in Ireland, they desert so abominably.'<sup>66</sup> The *Belfast News-Letter* in 1797 reported a story about a soldier who had been caught frequently deserting and re-enlisting. When asked by a magistrate as to what trade he led, the man replied, 'An (sic) I please your worship, I am a recruit.'<sup>67</sup> 'Fraudulent enlistment', or 'bounty-jumping', was a lucrative means of livelihood. A recruit might enlist and desert, re-enlist, receive a second bounty, and do so indefinitely.<sup>68</sup> Ross-Lewin, an Irish Protestant in the 32<sup>nd</sup> Regiment, recalled that while stationed in Chatham, Kent in south-east England, Irish recruits 'regarded an attempt at desertion as a very venial offence.'<sup>69</sup> William Dyott,<sup>70</sup> an English Protestant officer from the 25<sup>th</sup> Regiment, noted that while in Clonmel, County Tipperary in 1795, 'desertion from the regiment.....was infamous, and the way we were taken in by rascals enlisting and immediately deserting was the most iniquitous business I

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<sup>65</sup> McAnally, *The Irish militia*, p. 62.

<sup>66</sup> Bartlett, 'Defence, counter-insurgency and rebellion', p. 257.

<sup>67</sup> Denman, *Hibernia, officina militum*, pp 148-66; Chart, 'Irish levies during the Great French War', pp 79-102; T.H. McGuffie, 'The short life and sudden death of an English regiment of foot', in *J.S.A.H.R.*, xxxiii (1955) pp 16-25; 48-56; Ferguson, 'Army in Ireland', p. 142; *Belfast News-Letter*, 27-30 Jan. 1797.

<sup>68</sup> See Denman, *Hibernia, officina militum*, pp 148-66; Cookson, *The British armed nation*, p. 155.

<sup>69</sup> Ross-Lewin, *With the Thirty-Second*, p. 42, available at Internet Archive <http://archive.org/stream/withthirtysecon00wardgoog#page/n70/mode/2up> [03 May 2013].

<sup>70</sup> Dyott opposed Roman Catholic emancipation, available at *Dictionary of National Biography* <http://www.oxforddnb.com.jproxy.nuim.ie/view/article/8370> [18 January 2014].

ever saw.<sup>71</sup> In September of that year, a number of Irishmen deserted from the 104<sup>th</sup> and the 111<sup>th</sup> regiments of foot into the Liberties in Dublin.<sup>72</sup> Evidence points to a fear of being sent to the West Indies as the cause. To demonstrate the problem of being sent to the West Indies; in 1800, the 68<sup>th</sup> Regiment received 2,500 volunteers from the Irish militia. Two battalions were created and shipped out to the West Indies. They had only just arrived when sickness so reduced them that the second battalion was broken up and put into the first. On their return to England in August 1806, only one hundred had survived.<sup>73</sup> Altogether, in 1794, it is believed that 1,853 soldiers of the line deserted while awaiting transport from Ireland.<sup>74</sup>

In the case of the war in the Peninsula 1808-14, the noted Irish Protestant historian, novelist and clergyman William Maxwell, claimed that incidents of desertion were numerous among the Irish.<sup>75</sup> In his study, C.W.C Oman also argued this by alleging that out of 280 soldiers tried at courts-martial for the offence, 'eighty had Irish sounding names and a good many more [he believed] were probably Irish.'<sup>76</sup> Wellington attributed the prevalence of desertion in the regular army to the men drafted in from the Irish militia.<sup>77</sup> Lord Blayney, an Irish Protestant from County Monaghan who commanded the 89<sup>th</sup> Regiment, recorded encountering a number of Irish deserters from the 87<sup>th</sup> regiment who had deserted to the French army while he himself was being marched into France as a

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<sup>71</sup> William Dyott, *Dyott's diary 1781-1845: A selection from the journal of William Dyott, sometime general in the British army and aide de camp to His Majesty George III*, edited by Reginald W. Jeffrey (2 vols, London, 1909), i, p. 78.

<sup>72</sup> It had been alleged that the 104<sup>th</sup> and the 111<sup>th</sup> had plotted to take Dublin Castle, murder the lord lieutenant, Earl Camden, as well as the lord chancellor, John FitzGibbon, see J.A. Froude, *The English in Ireland in the eighteenth century*, (3 vols, New York, 1888), iii, pp 163-5.

<sup>73</sup> Deployment to the West Indies and West Africa was often considered a death sentence, see Holmes, *Redcoat*, p. 138; John Green, *The vicissitudes of a soldier's life: or, A series of occurrences from 1806 to 1815* (Louth, 1827), p. 13.

<sup>74</sup> *Irish Times*, 30 May 1898.

<sup>75</sup> W.H. Maxwell, *The bivouac; or stories of the Peninsular war* (2 vols, Philadelphia, 1837), ii, p. 51; Maxwell's study needs to be approached with caution as he claimed that he was a captain in the 88<sup>th</sup> Connaught Rangers, when in fact he was never in the army, but heard stories from ex soldiers while living in County Mayo, available at *Dictionary of National Biography* <http://www.oxforddnb.com.jproxy.nuim.ie/view/article/18416?docPos=7> [13 July 2014].

<sup>76</sup> Of these, twenty-three were Scots; the nationality of the remaining deserters is unknown, see C.W.C. Oman, *Wellington's army, 1809-1814* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed., London, 1913), p. 214.

<sup>77</sup> J.W. Fortescue, *A history of the British army* (20 vols, London, 1910), vii, p. 422.

prisoner in 1810. He noted that their 'broad [Irish] brogue' gave their origins away.<sup>78</sup> Blayney further added, 'I listened to him [the Irish soldier] with the more satisfaction, as he was overheard by some of our soldiers, who had shewn (sic) symptoms of an intention of entering the French service.'<sup>79</sup> A few months earlier at Andújar in Spain, Blayney had encountered other Irish soldiers from the 87<sup>th</sup> who had deserted to the French army. However, these deserters not only included Irish soldiers, but as Blayney noted, 'some English sailors.'<sup>80</sup> One of these, a boy named Archibald Lindsey belonging to *H.M.S Thames*, reported to Blayney that he had deserted to the French because 'he had been constantly kept in irons, and treated with the greatest cruelty.'<sup>81</sup> It was certainly not unknown for English sailors to desert to the enemy.<sup>82</sup> Joseph Donaldson, a Scottish soldier in the 94<sup>th</sup> Regiment, remembered a soldier of the 83<sup>rd</sup> (County of Dublin) Regiment who had deserted to the French, but was later captured and shot in August 1813.<sup>83</sup> Donaldson explained that prior to his execution, the man confided that he had deserted owing to the tyrannical conduct of the officer commanding the regiment and the paymaster who 'had taken ill-will at him.....and rendered his life so miserable, that he was driven to the desperate step.'<sup>84</sup> Donaldson noted that 'whether this statement was true, I cannot say, but his comrades were inclined to think it was.'<sup>85</sup> While some Irish soldiers may have deserted owing to poor treatment, for better conditions in the army of the enemy,<sup>86</sup> or because they

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<sup>78</sup> Andrew Blayney (11<sup>th</sup> Baron Blayney) was a commander of the 89th Regiment. This regiment hunted down Irish rebels during the 1798 rebellion and became known as 'Blayney's Bloodhounds', see Blayney/Hope papers [http://www.proni.gov.uk/introduction\\_blayney\\_hope\\_.pdf](http://www.proni.gov.uk/introduction_blayney_hope_.pdf) [17 November 2013]; Major-General Lord Blayney, *Narrative of a forced journey through Spain and France as a prisoner of war in the years 1810 to 1814* (2 vols, London, 1814), i, pp 238-9.

<sup>79</sup> Blayney, *Narrative of a forced journey*, i, pp 238-9.

<sup>80</sup> Blayney, *Narrative of a forced journey*, i, p. 162.

<sup>81</sup> *Ibid*, p. 162.

<sup>82</sup> See John H. Dacam, 'Wanton and torturing punishments: Patterns of discipline and punishment in the royal navy, 1783-1815' (Ph. D thesis, University of Hull, September 2009); see also Pagé Sylvain, 'Naval warfare of a new kind during the Napoleonic age: The case of the Anglo-American War of 1812-1814' – part 1, available at [napoleon.org http://www.napoleon.org/en/reading\\_room/articles/files/war\\_1812\\_page.asp](http://www.napoleon.org/en/reading_room/articles/files/war_1812_page.asp) [11 April 2014].

<sup>83</sup> Donaldson, *Recollections*, pp 207-8; E.W. Bray, *Memoirs and services of the Eighty-third Regiment, county of Dublin from 1793 to 1907 including the campaigns of the regiment in the West Indies, Africa, the Peninsula, Ceylon, Canada and India* (London, 1908), available at Internet Archive <https://archive.org/stream/memoirsandservi00riflgoog#page/n8/mode/2up> [18 November 2013].

<sup>84</sup> Donaldson, *Recollections*, p. 208.

<sup>85</sup> *Ibid*, p. 208.

<sup>86</sup> See Esdaile, *The Peninsular War*, p.325.

were disaffected, Charles O'Neil, an Irish Catholic, from Dundalk, County Louth, presented a rather different reason:

Every night, after we had retired to our quarters, I listened to the many tales [of] my comrades...of those who, weary of their lot as soldiers, had deserted, — of their hair breadth escapes, and the cruel punishment to which they were subjected, when discovered. The very romance connected with the undertaking, and the thrilling interest that existed in listening to these adventures, strengthened in my mind my desire to share in their experience.<sup>87</sup>

#### Mutinous behaviour

During the 1798 rebellion, suspicions of disaffection were raised among a number of Irish regular cavalry regiments which included the 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> Dragoons. Members of the Royal Irish Artillery were also believed to have been disaffected.<sup>88</sup> A number of incidents involving the 5<sup>th</sup> Dragoons are worthy of mention.<sup>89</sup> The mutineers had only recently joined the regiment while in Kilkenny, and allegedly ‘almost all of them as the events after evinced were rebel partisans, and had insinuated themselves into the 5<sup>th</sup> Dragoons, agreeable to a preconcerted plan for surprising Lehaunstown [Loughlinstown] camp in south county Dublin.....’<sup>90</sup> Several privates were later found guilty by a general court martial of joining the rebels. In a separate incident a short while later, two brothers called Feney were discovered by the yeomanry at Drogheda trying to procure arms for the rebels. They would have been executed on the spot except that they offered to reveal several other dragoons as rebels. The names handed up included Private James McNassar, Corporal Gallagher, and a Sergeant Ryan. Several men were executed including the two Feneys. McNassar received a sentence of transportation for life, while there was insufficient evidence to convict Gallagher.<sup>91</sup>

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<sup>87</sup> O’Neil, *The military adventures*, p. 19.

<sup>88</sup> Ferguson, ‘The army in Ireland’, pp 171-6.

<sup>89</sup> The formation of the regiment went back to the Battle of the Boyne when it served on the side of William of Orange: Walter Temple Willcox, *The historical records of the Fifth (Royal Irish) Lancers from their foundation as Wynne’s Dragoons (in 1689) to the present day* (London, 1908), p. 1.

<sup>90</sup> Willcox, *Records of the Fifth*, pp 148.

<sup>91</sup> See Willcox, *Records of the Fifth*, pp 148-9; Ferguson, ‘The army in Ireland’, p. 177.



**Positive Performance: The Regular line regiments**

Turning to evidence of more positive service, in 1794, the 27<sup>th</sup>, 87<sup>th</sup>, 88<sup>th</sup> and 89<sup>th</sup> Regiments all saw service in Flanders and Holland with varying degrees of success.<sup>92</sup> But it was during the Peninsula campaigns and Waterloo engagements that the good performance of Irish Catholics was most evident. At the battle of Talavera in July 1809, three Irish foot regiments were engaged. The 1<sup>st</sup>/88<sup>th</sup> (first battalion of the 88<sup>th</sup> Regiment) lost several members in the fighting, but the more severe losses were suffered by the 2<sup>nd</sup>/87<sup>th</sup> (second battalion of the 87<sup>th</sup> Regiment), which had 354 casualties out of 826, of which 111 were killed. The 2<sup>nd</sup>/83<sup>rd</sup>, which had backed up the 2<sup>nd</sup>/87<sup>th</sup> during the battle, received a letter commending their performance.<sup>93</sup> During the battle of Bussaco on 27 September 1810, it was noted that the 88<sup>th</sup> Connaught Rangers on its own fought off a superior French force.<sup>94</sup> Wellington is understood to have remarked to Colonel Wallace, the commander of the 88<sup>th</sup>: 'I never witnessed a more gallant charge than that just now made by your regiment.'<sup>95</sup> A number of engagements occurred between the British and French during 1811.<sup>96</sup> The most widely celebrated involved the 87<sup>th</sup> Regiment at the battle of Barrosa in Spain. This became the first British regiment to capture a coveted French eagle.<sup>97</sup> As was recorded of the engagement:

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<sup>92</sup> The 87<sup>th</sup> was captured after putting up great resistance at Bergen - Op - Zoom and was marched into captivity but was released in 1796. Irish Catholics also played a prominent part in the victory over the French at Aboukir bay in 1801. Among those that took part were battalions of the 18<sup>th</sup>, 27<sup>th</sup>, 87<sup>th</sup> and 89<sup>th</sup>, but Irish Catholics could also be found in English regiments such as 54<sup>th</sup>, (Dorset regiment) whose ranks had been replenished from Irish militiamen from the Antrim, Clare, Limerick, Louth, Mayo and Roscommon regiments, see Bredin, *A history of the Irish soldier*, pp 207-208; 220-221.

<sup>93</sup> 'The conduct of the 83<sup>rd</sup>.....merits the Brigadier-General's warmest thanks,' see Bredin, *A history of the Irish soldier*, p. 236; Bowen, *The heroic option*, p. 44.

<sup>94</sup> Prior to the engagement, their commander Wallace, enjoined them 'to drive the French down the hill....don't give the false touch but push home to the muzzle....', see William Grattan, *Adventures of the Connaught Rangers 1808-1814* (2.vols, London, 1847), ii, p. 65.

<sup>95</sup> It was recorded that 'the dead and wounded of the French, 2<sup>nd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, 15<sup>th</sup> and 36<sup>th</sup> regiments lay thick on the face of the hill', William Grattan, *Adventures with the Connaught Rangers 1809-1814*, edited by Charles Oman (London, 1902), p. 86.

<sup>96</sup> Among these were: 1st Siege of Badajoz (26 January 1811-10 March 1811); Battle of Barrosa (05 March 1811); 2nd Siege of Badajoz (22 April 1811-12 May 1811); Battle of Fuentes de Onoro (05 May 1811); 3<sup>rd</sup> Siege of Badajoz (11 May 1811), see Battles lists of the Peninsular War, available at [napoleonseries.org http://www.napoleon-series.org/military/listings/c\\_peninsular.html](http://www.napoleon-series.org/military/listings/c_peninsular.html) [08 December 2013].

<sup>97</sup> The eagle normally surmounted a French flag pole much in the same way as the Roman eagle did during the height of the Roman empire. Like the Roman eagle, it was a device much coveted by the enemy, see illustrations, p. 147.

They were Irishmen out for a fight; they had suffered some loss when...under fire...the enemy...outnumbered them by at least three to two.....They [the 87<sup>th</sup>].....made unsparing havoc of the 8<sup>th</sup> [French Ligne].....The eagle of the 8th [Ligne] was the centre of a desperate struggle.<sup>98</sup>

Fraser recalled, 'the 87<sup>th</sup> had the rare honour of being toasted by the lord mayor of London at a Guildhall banquet.'<sup>99</sup> One Irish soldier by the name of Tobin of the 52<sup>nd</sup> Regiment who was captured during this battle was brought before the French General Masséna, as the latter wanted to know the strength of the British forces, but Tobin over-exaggerated them. Masséna was so impressed by Tobin's replies during interrogation that he offered to make him a sergeant in the Irish Legion. Tobin cunningly asked for twenty-four hours to consider the offer but escaped back to his own regiment that same night.<sup>100</sup>

On 5 May 1811, the 83<sup>rd</sup> and 88<sup>th</sup> Regiments engaged the French at Fuentes de Onoro, in Spain. The 83<sup>rd</sup> 'were known to have fought with the greatest courage.'<sup>101</sup> So ferocious was the fight that William Grattan was later compelled to defend the complete annihilation by the Connaught Rangers of one group of French soldiers who got caught in a cul-de-sac. Wellington regarded Fuentes de Onoro as a difficult battle, as evidenced by a letter he wrote to his brother William, in which he suggested that had Napoleon been there, he would have been defeated.<sup>102</sup> A few days later, the 57<sup>th</sup>, an English regiment, fought one of the bloodiest battles of the peninsular war at Albuera in Spain. This regiment lost 428 men out of a total of 647; a third was believed to be Irish.<sup>103</sup> At the end of December at Tarifa, on the coast of Spain, the 87<sup>th</sup> Regiment was again involved in a hotly contested fight against the French. The commander of the 87<sup>th</sup>, Hugh Gough, noted, 'every officer

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<sup>98</sup> Fortescue, *A history of the British army*, viii, p. 58.

<sup>99</sup> Fraser noted '[this] was for a long time one of the most popular of our soldier deeds', see Edward Fraser, *The soldiers whom Wellington led: deeds of daring, chivalry, and renown* (London, 1913), p. 144.

<sup>100</sup> The Irish Legion was a regiment of refugee Irish rebels from the rising of '98, enlisted in Napoleon's service: Fraser, *The soldiers whom Wellington led*, pp 311-3.

<sup>101</sup> Bredin, *A history of the Irish soldier*, p. 242.

<sup>102</sup> See Bredin, *A history of the Irish soldier*, p. 242; Cyril Thornton, *Annals of the Peninsular campaigns* (3 vols, Edinburgh and London, 1829), iii, p. 102; Bowen, *The heroic option*, p. 50.

<sup>103</sup> The regiment won the name of 'The Diehards' as a result. In 1809, 34 per cent of the N.C.O.s and men in the 57<sup>th</sup> (East Middlesex) regiment were Irish, see Holmes, *Redcoat*, p. 26. Elizabeth Longford, *Wellington: The years of the sword* (London, 1971), pp 319-20.

and man seemed to out vie one another in acts of heroism.<sup>104</sup> During this period the 87<sup>th</sup> often came in for criticism for having only rudimentary marching skills. One officer who brought this to the attention of the duke of Wellington was met with the response: ‘Yes, general, they do indeed; but they fight like devils.’<sup>105</sup> At Ciudad Rodrigo, in western Spain, the 88<sup>th</sup> Regiment was again pivotal in gaining victory for the British.<sup>106</sup> Edward Costello recorded the devastation inflicted upon the Connaught Rangers:

The sight exhibited was heart-rending....The...Connaught Rangers, had suffered most severely at this spot, and I observed a number of poor Irish women hopelessly endeavouring to distinguish the burnt features of their husbands.<sup>107</sup>

A light company of the 83<sup>rd</sup> Regiment was also involved in this engagement. At the siege of Badajoz (16 March – 6 April 1812) there were a number of Irish foot and cavalry regiments present, but again the Connaught Rangers paid a dear price for British victory.<sup>108</sup> Ross-Lewin noted:

The 88<sup>th</sup> Regiment lost a great number of men in the attack of (sic) the castle....in the attempt to force open the iron gate that obstructed their passage into the town. They made a rush at this impediment....while the French at the other side kept up a galling fire on them.....; but at last a few men, turned round a gun that happened to be near, and blew the gate open. The Rangers then dashed in, and all resistance quickly ceased.<sup>109</sup>

At Salamanca (22 July 1812), the Connaught Rangers were able to capture a device known as the 'Jingling Johnny'. Like the French eagle, this was a coveted device, which marched at the front of the French 101<sup>st</sup> Regiment.<sup>110</sup> Arguably the most significant battle

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<sup>104</sup> Hugh Gough, Viscount, G.C.B., was born at Woodstown, County of Limerick, available at Library Ireland <http://www.libraryireland.com/biography/ViscountHughGough.php> [11 April 2014]; Marcus Cunliffe, *The Royal Irish Fusiliers* (Oxford, 1952), pp 107-8.

<sup>105</sup> Shipp, *Memoirs*, ii, p. 79.

<sup>106</sup> The siege of Ciudad Rodrigo took place from 08 January 1812 to 19 January 1812; See Grattan, *Adventures of the Connaught Rangers*, i, p. 216.

<sup>107</sup> Costello, *Adventures of a soldier*, pp 150-151.

<sup>108</sup> The 4<sup>th</sup> Royal Irish and the 5<sup>th</sup> Dragoon guards for the cavalry and the 27<sup>th</sup>, 83<sup>rd</sup>, 88<sup>th</sup> Foot regiments were engaged in possibly one of the bloodiest affairs of the war.

<sup>109</sup> Lewin, *With the Thirty-Second*, p. 165.

<sup>110</sup> The 'Jingling Johnny' was a musical instrument consisting of a pole ornamented with a canopy, a crescent, and other shapes hung with bells and metal jingling objects, available at *Encyclopaedia Britannica*

for the British forces in 1813 was at Vitoria in Spain where the brave performance of the Irish 88<sup>th</sup> was again noted.<sup>111</sup> Throughout 1813, detachments from the 27<sup>th</sup>, 83<sup>rd</sup>, 87<sup>th</sup> and 88<sup>th</sup>, and Irish soldiers in the English and Scottish regiments, were heavily engaged at San Sebastian; in the Pyrenees; at the battles of Orthez (22 February 1814) and at Toulouse (10 April 1814), despite Napoleon having already abdicated on 6 April.

On 7 March 1815, Napoleon escaped from Elba and the 'Hundred Days' and Waterloo followed.<sup>112</sup> While there were only three regiments of Irish designation at Waterloo, the 1/27<sup>th</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup> Iniskilling Dragoons and the 18<sup>th</sup> (King's Irish) Huzzars, there were a considerable number of Irish in other British regiments. The 1<sup>st</sup>, 28<sup>th</sup>, 32<sup>nd</sup>, 40<sup>th</sup>, and 95<sup>th</sup> all had Irish soldiers serving in their regiments.<sup>113</sup> Of all the Irish engaged at Waterloo, the 27<sup>th</sup> (Inniskilling) regiment arguably suffered the greatest.<sup>114</sup> Of 747 officers, N.C.O.s and men who marched with the regiment to Waterloo, 493 were either killed or wounded.<sup>115</sup> Catholic-sounding surnames seem to dominate the lists of dead and injured.<sup>116</sup> It was noted earlier in the chapter that desertion by Irish servicemen was often considerable, but Grattan recalled that while stationed in Canada in 1814, the Connaught Rangers lost no men by desertion.<sup>117</sup> Similar praises were also sung for the Connaught Rangers while stationed in Quebec earlier in 1812: the regiment received an encomium from its brigadier, Thomas

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<http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/303990/jingling-Johnny> [20 Jan. 2014]. see illustrations p. 148 for a view of this device.

<sup>111</sup> Costello, *Adventures*, p. 155.

<sup>112</sup> The engagements at Lignin and Quatre Bras on 16 June were for the most part inconclusive affairs available at [napoleononline.ca](http://napoleononline.ca) <http://napoleononline.ca/category/the-hundred-days/> [10 December 2013].

<sup>113</sup> See Peter Molloy, 'Ireland and the Waterloo campaign of 1815' (M.A. thesis, National University of Ireland, Maynooth, October 2011), p. 23; Bowen, *The heroic option*, p. 66; see Appendices for a view of the number of Irish names found in the 1<sup>st</sup> Foot and the 32<sup>nd</sup> Foot, pp 136-45.

<sup>114</sup> After capturing the key position of Le Hayed Sainte farm, the French stationed several cannon that poured fires on the Anglo-Allied line at extremely close range, see Molloy, p. 37.

<sup>115</sup> Only the 70<sup>th</sup> (Cameron Highlanders) and 92<sup>nd</sup> (Gordon Highlanders) sustained comparable casualties in the whole of the British army: Michael D. Fox, *The green square: H.M. 27th (Inniskilling) Regiment of Foot at the battle of Waterloo* (Kent, 1990), p. 47; David Hamilton-Williams, *Waterloo - new perspectives: The great battle reappraised* (New York, 1994), pp 336-7.

<sup>116</sup> Fox, *The green square*, pp 60-83.

<sup>117</sup> Several other regiments lost from one to three hundred men to desertion but the Connaught Rangers lost none despite ample opportunity, as they were stationed beside the river bank and only a couple of hundred miles from the American border, see Grattan, *Adventures of the Connaught Rangers*, ii, p. 190.

Brisbane:<sup>118</sup> the brigadier].....'cannot refrain from expressing how.....sincerely, he regrets losing a regiment which has conducted itself so creditably.....the circumstance of the regiment never having lost a man by desertion is highly honourable to it, and can never be forgotten'.<sup>119</sup>

## **The Royal Navy**

### **Desertion and Mutinous Behaviour**

Throughout the period, there were several claims made about the numbers of Irish who deserted from the navy. Most attempts at desertion occurred on occasions of shore leave or when cruising close to home. In a two-month refit of the *Syren* in Portsmouth, Captain Graham Moore attributed the high desertion rate on the *Melampus* to cruising off Ireland with so many Irishmen on board.<sup>120</sup> Turning to the mutinies in the Royal Navy from 1797 to 1799, these were possibly the single greatest threat to the stability of the armed forces. The two most renowned occurred at Spithead and the Nore. The one at Spithead began on 15 April 1797 when Lord Bridport's orders for the fleet to put to sea were rejected in an overwhelming show of solidarity by the sailors aboard the *Royal George* and the *Queen Charlotte*, followed by fourteen other ships.<sup>121</sup> All the men became liable for flogging. More importantly, their action was considered mutinous.<sup>122</sup> This was sparked by

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<sup>118</sup> Sir Thomas Makdougall Brisbane (1773-1860) was born at Brisbane House, near Largs, Ayrshire. In 1789 he was commissioned an ensign in the 38<sup>th</sup> regiment. He struck up a long friendship with a fellow subaltern, Arthur Wellesley. He commanded a brigade in the battles of the Peninsular war from Vitoria to Toulouse, see *Australian Dictionary of National Biography* <http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/brisbane-sir-thomas-makdougall-1827> [20 January 2014].

<sup>119</sup> See Richard Cannon, *The historical record of the Eighty-Eighth regiment or Connaught Rangers* (London, 1858), pp 57-8.

<sup>120</sup> John. H. Dacam, 'Wanton and torturing punishments: Patterns of discipline and punishment in the royal navy, 1783-1815' (Ph. D thesis, University of Hull, September 2009), p. 153; Tom Wareham, *Frigate commander* (South Yorkshire, 2004), pp 95; 157. See Sir Robert Gardner K.C.B, *Memoir of Admiral, Sir Graham Moore*, G.C.B, G.C.M.G (London, 1844), pp 6-14, available at Internet Archive <https://archive.org/stream/memoiradmiralsi00gardgoog#page/n8/mode/2up> [18 November 2013].

<sup>121</sup> Peta Steel, *The Spithead and Nore mutinies of 1797: An account of the rebellious activities in London, the south-east, and the east of England in the eighteenth century* (London, 2013), p. iii, available at <http://sertucresources.files.wordpress.com/2012/10/spithead-and-nore.pdf> [12 May 2014]; see Alexander Hood, Viscount Bridport (1726–1814), naval officer and politician (1726-1814). The Spithead mutiny took Bridport by surprise. Bridport was angry that measures had not been taken earlier to pacify the men. The mutiny was finally settled by 15 May. The delegates expressed to Bridport their gratitude for the 'humanity' with which he employed his authority, available at *Dictionary of National Biography* <http://www.oxforddnb.com.jproxy.nuim.ie/view/article/13671?docPos=1> [17 May 2014].

<sup>122</sup> Robert Harvey, *The war of wars: The great European conflict 1793-1815* (New York, 2006), p. 192.

grievances over seamen's wages which had remained unchanged for almost a hundred years. Other issues included increasingly brutalised working conditions, arrears of pay and bad food.<sup>123</sup> Steel has suggested that the delegates at Spithead had some education, while Doorne argues that many were either fully or partially trained seamen.<sup>124</sup> The government had some sympathy for the demands at Spithead.<sup>125</sup> The Spithead mutiny came to an end on 13 May after the demands of the sailors were met through an intervention from Admiral Howe.<sup>126</sup>

However, in the case of the Nore mutiny, which began on 12 May and ended on 13 June, while some demands were similar, there was revolutionary radicalism in evidence. From the very outset, the mutineers flew a red flag, otherwise known as 'the bloody flag of defiance'. They also declared a kind of 'Floating Republic'.<sup>127</sup> Unlike Spithead, the majority of sailors at the Nore were quota-men or landsmen 'recently recruited into the navy and therefore unused to naval life, discipline and legal procedure.'<sup>128</sup> Irish sailors seem to have been the most politically active. This may have been because from 1793 to 1797, Irish courts had sent thousands of political prisoners to the navy. In 1797, Pelham, the home secretary, estimated this figure to have included 15,000 Defenders and United Irishmen.<sup>129</sup> The demands at the Nore included statutory and generous leave, the right of crews to remove unpopular officers, an indemnity for deserters and modifications to the

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<sup>123</sup> Steel, *The Spithead and Nore mutinies*, p. iii; Harvey, *The war of wars*, p. 199.

<sup>124</sup> Steel, *The Spithead and Nore mutinies*, p. 4; Doorne, 'Mutiny and sedition', p. 147.

<sup>125</sup> The Spithead mutiny ended when 'fifty nine of the most brutal officers in the Spithead Fleet [were] dismissed, better provisions were promised, as was a review into their conditions and terms, and improvements in pay. A royal pardon was given to all those taking part in the mutiny', see Steel, *The Spithead and Nore mutinies*, p. 4; Harvey, *The war of wars*, p. 199.

<sup>126</sup> 'On 11 May Howe arrived at Portsmouth and rowed out to the *Royal George* to win round the confidence of the seamen. Through the following days he visited every ship. On 13 May, on board the *Royal William*, he received petitions from all the ships on individual grievances.....He had little alternative but to agree to the dismissal of fifty-nine officers and warrant officers.....Once the second royal pardon had arrived from London the mutiny at Spithead was over and Howe was the focus of the reconciliation,' see *Dictionary of National Biography* <http://www.oxforddnb.com.jproxy.nuim.ie/view/article/13963?docPos=2> [26 May 2014]; see also Steel, *The Spithead and Nore mutinies*, p. 4.

<sup>127</sup> Niklas Frykman, 'Connections between mutinies in European navies' in Clare Anderson, Niklas Frykman, Lex Heerma van Voss, Marcus Rediker (eds.) *Mutiny and maritime radicalism in the age of revolution: A global survey* (Cambridge, 2013), p. 106.

<sup>128</sup> Doorne, 'Mutiny and sedition', p. 147; Steel, *The Spithead and Nore mutinies*, p. 4.

<sup>129</sup> See Roger Wells, *Insurrection the British experience 1795-1803* (Gloucester, 1983), pp 81-2; James, *Mutiny*, pp 33-75.

Articles of War.<sup>130</sup> The danger posed by the Nore was significant from a military standpoint. The Dutch fleet was known to have been preparing an invasion force.<sup>131</sup> In addition, the ships at the Nore were blocking the River Thames, which facilitated England's supply line to the empire.<sup>132</sup> Outside Spithead and the Nore, while there were smaller intrigues throughout 1797, the most serious occurred aboard the *Hermione* in September.<sup>133</sup>

Irish Catholics and indeed Irish Protestants were implicated in many of these events. A survey of Irish-born sailors at Spithead shows that they made an average of almost 26 per cent of the ships companies (no data for two ships). However, of the thirty-three delegates/mutineers who drew up the demands at Spithead from the sixteen ships listed; 'only four were Irish-born'.<sup>134</sup> At the Nore, by contrast, evidence points to eighty-nine Irishmen being arrested in relation to the affair. This was believed to have amounted to a fifth of all mutineers.<sup>135</sup> Marianne Elliott has argued that the first man who suggested raising 'the red flag' on the *Inflexible* at the Nore was John Blake from County Clare. Half of the seventeen who joined Blake in making a dash for France on the *Inflexible* were Irish, although what percentage of these were Catholic or Protestant is not known.<sup>136</sup> During the mutiny that occurred aboard the *Hermione* off the coast of Puerto Rico on 21 September 1797, the crew rose up and brutally murdered ten officers including the captain, Hugh Pigot. The mutineers then handed the ship over to the Spanish authorities in Caracas.<sup>137</sup> It is known that thirty to forty Irishmen had been sent to the *Hermione* the previous year. However, with regard to Irish involvement, Frykman has argued that there is no definitive evidence of United Irish activity despite the fact that one of the leaders, Lawrence Cronin, was believed to have been a United Irishman.<sup>138</sup>

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<sup>130</sup> See James, *Mutiny*, p. 58.

<sup>131</sup> Pakenham, *The year of liberty*, p. 28.

<sup>132</sup> Peter Hicks, 'The British navy, 1793-1802', available at [napoleon.org](http://www.napoleon.org) [http://www.napoleon.org/en/reading\\_room/articles/files/british\\_navy\\_17921802.asp#ancre6](http://www.napoleon.org/en/reading_room/articles/files/british_navy_17921802.asp#ancre6) [13 May 2014].

<sup>133</sup> Niklas Frykman, 'The mutiny on the *Hermione*: Warfare, revolution, and treason in the Royal Navy' in *Journal of Social History*, xlv, no 1, (Fall 2010), pp 159-187.

<sup>134</sup> See Coats & McDougall, *The naval mutinies of 1797*, pp 59; 136-7.

<sup>135</sup> See Doorne, 'Mutiny and sedition', pp 186-7.

<sup>136</sup> Elliott, *Partners in revolution*, pp 143-4.

<sup>137</sup> Jonathan Neale, 'Forecastle and quarterdeck: Protest, discipline and mutiny in the Royal Navy, 1793-1814' (Ph. D. thesis, University of Warwick, January 1990), p. 2; see also Frykman, 'The mutiny on the *Hermione*', pp 159-187.

<sup>138</sup> Cronin's religion was not recorded, Frykman, 'The mutiny on the *Hermione*', pp 159-187.

The conspiracies throughout the fleet in 1798 and 1799 differed greatly from those at Spithead and the Nore in 1797. The oaths sworn during the plots of 1798 took on a tone whose rebellious intent was clear. Arguably, the most dangerous of these occurred in Earl St Vincent's fleet in June 1798.<sup>139</sup> In early 1798, Admiral St Vincent received information that *H.M.S Marlborough* en route from England to Cadiz had experienced a small scale mutiny prompted by some Irishmen.<sup>140</sup> When the *Marlborough* reached Cadiz off the coast of Spain in May, St. Vincent was swift in quashing any further attempt aboard the ship. On 20 May 1798, St. Vincent compelled the crew of the *Marlborough* to hang one of the mutinous sailors aboard the ship. The boats of the fleet lay in a ring, with loaded cannon and lighted matches, round the vessel, prepared to sink her if the sentence of the court-martial was not instantly carried out. This was significant, as the revolt aboard the *Marlborough* was to spark other mutinies aboard the *Princess Royal* and the *Hector*.<sup>141</sup> It is known that Irish Catholics were the leading instigators aboard the *Princess Royal*. While the fleet lay at Tagus in the Iberian Peninsula, Admiral Sir Isaac Coffin had befriended a Portuguese priest who had become a confessor to 'most of the Roman Catholics in the fleet.'<sup>142</sup> The priest became a spy for Coffin and was able to produce a letter from two [Irish] seamen from the *Ville de Paris*, communicating their intention to assassinate the commander-in-chief once mutiny had broken out.<sup>143</sup> The three principal conspirators were United Irishmen by the names of Michael Connell, Daniel Sweeny, and Thomas Bott, (alias Batt). Their objectives, revealed in a full admission by Bott according to Admiral Vincent were as follows:

The officers were to have been massacred, and if the ships from Ireland, with the *London* and *Hecla*, had joined, I [St Vincent] was to have been hung, with the other admirals, captains, and officers. The

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<sup>139</sup> Doorne, 'Mutiny and sedition', p. 134; see also Fitchett, *How England saved Europe*, i, p. 241.

<sup>140</sup> John Jervis, 1st Earl of St Vincent GCB, PC (9 January 1735 – 14 March 1823). On 1 June 1795, Jervis received command of the Mediterranean Fleet, available at *Dictionary of National Biography*, <http://www.oxforddnb.com.jproxy.nuim.ie/view/article/14794?docPos=1> [26 November 2013]; Jedediah Stephens Tucker, *Memoirs of Admiral, the Right Hon, the earl of St Vincent* (2 vols, London, 1844), i, pp 7-8; James, *Mutiny*, p. 62.

<sup>141</sup> See Fitchett, *How England saved Europe*, i, p. 240; James, *Mutiny*, p. 62.

<sup>142</sup> Tucker, *Memoirs of earl of St. Vincent*, i, p.302.

<sup>143</sup> *Ibid*, i, p.302.



plan afterwards was, to go up and revolutionise your [majesty's] squadron, and then proceed to Ireland.<sup>144</sup>

In a letter to the Admiralty on 5 July 1798, Admiral St Vincent noted that the three mutineers had been executed, while two others were facing execution, and that he distributed 'eighteen other miscreants amongst nine of the best ordered ships here, with orders for them to.....have no communication with the people' [presumably with any of the crew].<sup>145</sup> Other mutinies which were due to break out on 3 August 1798 were delayed until 3 September, but these plots were discovered and the conspirators arrested. Irish sailors aboard the *Caesar*, *Defiance*, *Captain* and *Glory* had been implicated in mutinous behaviour.<sup>146</sup>

Irish Catholic sailors became conspicuous to the historian when they allegedly threatened to murder Protestants. During one incident off the coast of Cadiz, William Oliver, after informing his captain of the mutinous intent of some of the Irishmen aboard the *Caesar*, was later approached by John Mahoney (Mahony) and asked whether he had reported the plans of the Irish to murder Protestants.<sup>147</sup> During the trial (16 to 23 August) Mahony's name was mentioned by Edward Brophy along with those of a number of other conspirators. Many had Irish Catholic-sounding surnames.<sup>148</sup> In another source for the same period, it was claimed that the United Irishmen aboard the *Caesar* had sworn an oath 'to have nothing to do with the king or his government'<sup>149</sup> and to 'murder the officers aboard the ship, to kill the Protestants and carry off the ship to Brest in France.'<sup>150</sup> Six of the crew of the *Caesar* were executed for this plot.<sup>151</sup> On the *Defiance*, a similar oath was allegedly

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<sup>144</sup> Ibid, i, pp 337-8.

<sup>145</sup> Ibid, i, pp 337-8.

<sup>146</sup> *Caesar*, 7 Sept. 1798 (T.N.A., ADM., 1/5346); *Defiance*, 8 Sept. 1798 (T.N.A., 1/5346); *Captain*, 5 Dec. 1798 (T.N.A., ADM., 1/5346); *Glory*, 11 Oct. 1798 (T.N.A., ADM., 1/5346).

<sup>147</sup> *Caesar* 12 Aug. 1798. (T.N.A., ADM 1/5346).

<sup>148</sup> *Caesar*, 16-23 Aug. 1798 (T.N.A., ADM 1/5346): William McGuire, Patrick Purcell, Patrick Gannon, Martin Riely, Bryan Cannon, Owen Carty, James Cronen, Paul Condon, Andrew Neale, James Flannagan, Thomas Dempsey, John Mahony, P. Hanlan, Robert McGee, Morris McGarr, Edward Leonard, Dennis Kilfoyle, John McGuire, John McGarr, John Lacey, Joseph Butler, Farrel Conway, Patrick O'Bryan, Edward McNamara, Owen Kearns,.

<sup>149</sup> Fitchett, *How England saved Europe*, i, p. 241.

<sup>150</sup> Ibid, i, p. 241.

<sup>151</sup> Ibid, i, p. 241.

sworn signed by many Irish members of the crew.<sup>152</sup> Twenty-four of the crew were tried for this plot; nineteen were sentenced to death, while ten sailors aboard the *Captain* were flogged for being implicated in a similar plot.<sup>153</sup> Admiral St Vincent tried to curb any future seditious activity by actively discouraging Irish sailors from conversing in their own language.<sup>154</sup> On 12 October 1798, when a French squadron was intercepted off Tory Island, an Irish sailor named Climey was heard by an English sailor named Gillray to utter the following words:

I wish to God.....they had landed with a hundred thousand.....and I wish to the Lord in heaven that I could join them. The Irish have been under the crown of Great Britain long enough .....I would sooner kill an Englishman than a Frenchman.<sup>155</sup>

Of a total of 719 men charged with mutiny over the period 1797-99, approximately 202 or twenty-eight per cent were Irish. In 1798 alone, it has been claimed that three quarters of those accused with sedition were Irish.<sup>156</sup> However, Frykman has argued in respect of the Irish that they did not hold a monopoly on radicalism. The mutineers came from a range of nationalities, which included Danish, Dutch, French, Canadians, Swiss, free blacks from the West Indies, Africans, Americans, English, and Norwegians.<sup>157</sup> In terms of the numbers of alleged mutineers in British waters, it has been argued that the Irish formed the second largest [nationality] group which included English, Scottish, Welsh, American and French sailors.<sup>158</sup> Significantly, it was found of all these groups, English sailors were most likely to have engaged in mutinous activity.<sup>159</sup>

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<sup>152</sup> Their oath was to 'carry the ship to Brest the next time she looks out ahead at sea and kill every officer and man that shall hinder us except the master, and hoist a green ensign with a harp on it and afterwards to kill and destroy the Protestants', see *Journal of the British House of Commons*, liv (1799), p. 340.

<sup>153</sup> *Captain*, 7 Jan. 1799 (T.N.A. ADM 1/5346); Fitchett, *How England saved Europe*, i, p. 241.

<sup>154</sup> This was stated in a letter to the Hon. George Berkeley dated 2 July 1800; see *Memoirs of earl of St Vincent*, ii, p. 75.

<sup>155</sup> Quoted in James, *Mutiny*, p. 190.

<sup>156</sup> See Doorne, 'Mutiny and sedition', p. 214.

<sup>157</sup> Frykman, 'The mutiny on the *Hermione*', pp 159-187.

<sup>158</sup> See Doorne, 'Mutiny and sedition', p. 214.

<sup>159</sup> *Ibid*, p. 214.

### **Positive Performance: The Royal Navy**

While there was noticeable Irish involvement in mutinous behaviour in the Royal Navy over the period, having examined the mutinies in 1797, Conrad Gill had the following to say with respect to the lack of response by many Irish [presumably Catholic] sailors to mutiny: 'Those who came from Munster would not as a rule be disaffected. The Munster men were conspicuous for their loyalty, or, from the Irish point of view, for their indifference to the welfare of their country.'<sup>160</sup> Another English naval historian, Christopher John Doorne, has suggested that given the numbers of disaffected Irishmen who were sent to the fleet, 'if this is borne in mind, it is surprising that the mutinous incidents of 1798 were not more widespread and serious than they were.'<sup>161</sup> One conclusion that could be drawn is that a large proportion of Irish sailors were either not disaffected or not markedly so. It has been argued that most if not all the plots involving Irishmen were revealed by other 'Irishmen who had joined the conspiracies but had then had second thoughts.'<sup>162</sup> Recent scholarship has concluded that the proportion of Irishmen engaged in mutiny was only about twenty per cent, which matches the proportion of Irishmen in the navy overall; therefore, it does not suggest an Irish predominance in the mutinies.<sup>163</sup> Regarding more positive performance, it was estimated that during the battle of Trafalgar, as many as 220 Irishmen out of a total crew of 718 fought on the much praised H.M.S *Temeraire*,<sup>164</sup> while aboard the *Victory*, one of the most hotly engaged ships in the affair, sixty-three of the crew were listed as Irish.<sup>165</sup> As one historian wrote in response to the Irish contribution to the war effort, 'taken as a whole, indeed, in courage, hardihood, and loyalty, the Irish seamen of that day compared with those of any other nationality in the fleets of Great Britain.'<sup>166</sup>

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<sup>160</sup> Conrad Gill, *The mutinies of 1797* (Manchester, 1913), p. 330.

<sup>161</sup> Doorne, 'Mutiny and sedition', p. 111.

<sup>162</sup> A typical case was that on the *Caesar*, which was revealed to the ship's officers by two Irish marines, Thomas Bryan and Edward Brophy, see Doorne, 'Mutiny and sedition', p. 131.

<sup>163</sup> Dacam, 'Wanton and torturing punishments', p. 187; R.B. McDowell, *Ireland in the age of imperialism and revolution 1760-1801* (Oxford, 1979), p. 495.

<sup>164</sup> Joseph M. W. Turner's painting of the 98-gun *Temeraire* depicted one of the key ships that took part in the Battle of Trafalgar in 1805; see 'The story behind the Fighting *Temeraire*': [http://www.artgallery.co.uk/news/the\\_story\\_behind\\_the\\_fighting\\_temeraire](http://www.artgallery.co.uk/news/the_story_behind_the_fighting_temeraire) [05 December 2013].

<sup>165</sup> J. de Courcy, 'Seamen in the naval warfare of 1793-1815' in *Irish Sword*, iv, no. 14, (Summer, 1959), pp 40-2.

<sup>166</sup> Fitchett, *How England saved Europe*, i, p. 244.

### The Irish militia Desertion

Turning to units serving in Ireland, from the foundation of the militia in May 1793 to the following May there was desertion among the Wexford, Downshire, Tipperary, Meath and City of Dublin regiments.<sup>167</sup> The greatest number occurred within the Meath Regiment. It is feasible that many may have been Catholics, as the county proportion of Catholics to Protestants was as high as forty to one.<sup>168</sup> However, significantly, one of the deserters was recorded as an Englishman from Birmingham.<sup>169</sup> Part of the large desertion rate from the Meath Regiment may have been linked to Defenderism.<sup>170</sup> There were a number of Defender incidents in the run up to and during the embodiment of the militia there.<sup>171</sup> Similar incidents happened throughout the country. Some Catholic militiamen may have deserted because of a fear of reprisals by Catholic Defenders.<sup>172</sup> Bounty jumping was another cause for desertion.<sup>173</sup> In the Armagh Regiment, from 1800 to 1803, an enlistee could receive anything from £3 to £6 depending on the requirement for recruits.<sup>174</sup> With such incentives, men may have been tempted to desert and enlist multiple times in different regiments. Nelson has pointed out that 'some substitutes were making a dangerous living

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<sup>167</sup> Pay lists and Muster rolls (T.N.A, WO/13/2815, 3330, 2776, 3243, 3141). The following are the overall numbers and desertions in each regiment: Wexford (45/207); Downshire (14/649); Tipperary (16/480); Meath (45/298); City of Dublin (14/649); Nelson, *The Irish militia*, p. 73.

<sup>168</sup> Edward Wakefield, *An account of Ireland, statistical and political* (2 vols, London, 1812), ii, pp 630-631.

<sup>169</sup> It is known that there were several Englishmen in the Irish militia, see Bartlett, 'An end to moral economy', pp 41-64, available at JSTOR <http://www.jstor.org/stable/650584> [30 October 2011].

<sup>170</sup> The Defenders had their origins in the sectarian feuding that took place in County Armagh in the 1780s, see Thomas Bartlett, 'Select documents xxxviii: Defenders and defenderism in 1795' in *I.H.S.*, xxiv, no. 95 (May, 1985), pp 373-94 available at JSTOR <http://www.jstor.org/stable/60000013> [09 November 2013]; When Defenderism penetrated the Dublin area in the early 1790s, it has been suggested that it came by way of militia regiments from the northern counties, see Tom Garvin, 'Defenders, ribbonmen and others: Underground political networks in pre-Famine Ireland' in *Past & Present.*, no. 96 (Aug., 1982), pp 133-55, available at JSTOR <http://www.jstor.org/stable/650513> [09 November 2013].

<sup>171</sup> *Hibernian Journal*, 17 May 1793. Late in May it was reported from Meath that, 'the Defenders have risen again in great numbers in various parts of the country and [have] sworn the inhabitants not to enlist in the militia; 'Abstract of information with regard to the militia', 24 May 1793 (T.N.A., HO. 100/43/323-8); Thomas Bartlett, 'An end to moral economy', pp 41-64, available at JSTOR <http://www.jstor.org/stable/650584> [30 October 2011].

<sup>172</sup> See *Saunders Newsletter*, 1 June 1793, insurgents were attacking the militia at Boyle and at Manorhamilton; *Saunders Newsletter*, 3 June 1793, trouble over the swearing in of militia in Sligo and Ballyshannon; *Freeman's Dublin Journal*, 9 Nov. 1793, 'members of the militia attacked'.

<sup>173</sup> Bounty-jumping: the widespread practice of enlisting, collecting the bonus, deserting, reenlisting, see *Encyclopaedia Britannica* <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/75680/bounty-jumping> [28 March 2014].

<sup>174</sup> See McAnally, *Irish militia*, pp 177-8.

by.....collecting the bounty and then deserting.....'<sup>175</sup> Charles O'Neil, an Irish Catholic, acknowledged taking part in this practice. In 1810, he enlisted in the 8<sup>th</sup>, and 64<sup>th</sup> regular line regiments and Louth militia. As he boasted after joining the Louth militia, 'I was quietly ensconced in my quarters.....having the third time received my money from government.'<sup>176</sup> The strict discipline of military life was another motive for desertion. O'Neil also testified to this in his memoirs.<sup>177</sup> Overall, in 1794 alone, there were estimated to have been as many as 558 desertions from the militia.<sup>178</sup> However, to put this into context, McAnally indicates that during the same year, 'desertions from the English and Scotch regiments were six times that of the Irish militia', while further adding that desertions 'from the regular troops and the English and Scottish Fencible units were always in excess of those from the militia.'<sup>179</sup>

In 1796 desertion rates from the Irish militia were not regarded as a major problem, while in 1797 they were recorded as 'exactly equal' to those of English and Scottish militias.<sup>180</sup> This would suggest that desertion was a problem throughout the militia forces and not just in Ireland. A commandant of the 1<sup>st</sup> Devon Local militia confirms this. In a letter forwarded to the Home Office on 14 October 1810, he noted that no fewer than seventy-seven men had deserted from his regiment while serving in England.<sup>181</sup> As might be expected, desertion was rife in Ireland in 1798. On 28 June, the *Freeman's Dublin Journal* reported that eleven privates from the Westmeath Regiment had deserted while based near Skibbereen, County Cork.<sup>182</sup> The British military officer and historian, Herbert Taylor, alleged that following the engagement with the French at Castlebar, County Mayo, on 27 August, the 'greater part' of the men from the Longford and Kilkenny militias

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<sup>175</sup> See Nelson 'The first chapter of 1798?', pp 369-86: available at JSTOR <http://www.jstor.org/stable/30006908> [11 December 2013].

<sup>176</sup> See Charles O'Neil, *The military adventures of Charles O'Neil* (Worcester, 1851), pp 15-27; 137: available at Internet Archive <https://archive.org/stream/militaryadventur00onei#page/n7/mode/2up> [10 October 2013].

<sup>177</sup> See O'Neil, *The military adventures*, p. 19.

<sup>178</sup> *Irish Times*, 30 May 1898.

<sup>179</sup> See McAnally, *Irish militia*, p. 154.

<sup>180</sup> *Irish Times*, 30 May 1898; McAnally, *Irish militia*, see note, p. 154, regarding Herbert Wood, *Guide to the records deposited in the Public Record Office of Ireland* (1919), p. 216 which mentions 'Deserters registers and papers concerning 1777-1838'.

<sup>181</sup> See J.W. Fortescue, *The county lieutenancies and the army, 1803-1814* (London, 1909), p. 143.

<sup>182</sup> *Freeman's Dublin Journal*, 3 July 1798.

deserted to the enemy.<sup>183</sup> However, the aide de camp to the French General, Humbert who led the invasion at Castlebar, believed that only sixty militiamen deserted to the French forces from the Longford and Kilkenny militias.<sup>184</sup> Whatever the correct estimate, it is worth noting that soldiers from Fraser's Fencibles, a Scottish regiment, were also recorded as having deserted during this action.<sup>185</sup> Following the rebellion, the United Irish general, Joseph Holt, when hiding out in the Wicklow Mountains recorded that he had been joined by twenty-eight deserters from the Antrim and King's County militia and the Longford militia. In all, he alleged that among all the deserters/rebels who hid with him following the rebellion, there were deserters from thirteen different regiments.<sup>186</sup> Throughout the period 1794 to 1798 desertion among the following regiments was recorded: City of Dublin (186); Kilkenny (140); Armagh (95); King's County (82); Antrim (42); Monaghan (40); Kerry (32); and North Cork (4). The City of Dublin, King's County, Kilkenny and Kerry Regiments had a significant proportion of Catholics within their ranks.<sup>187</sup>

Desertions on a scale witnessed during the rebellion did not occur again until 1808. From April to December 1808, the militia lost 672 men.<sup>188</sup> This was most likely owing to the fact that many militiamen recognised that they would be called to augment the regular army. With the growing possibility of war in the Iberian Peninsula, militiamen were likely to be tapped as a source of manpower. As of 1805, the Irish militia had already been donating an 'annual tribute' to the regular forces. Some militiamen voiced their hostility at the possibility of such service. Patrick Lynch from Meath declared, 'I would never think of

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<sup>183</sup> Longford (146) , Kilkenny (43), see Sir Herbert Taylor, *Impartial relation of the military operations which took place in Ireland in consequence of the landing of a body of French corps, under General Humbert, 1798* (Dublin, 1799), p. 16; Major-General Herbert Taylor (Siborne) (18 October 1826-?) was a British army officer and military historian. He was the second son of the officer and historian William Siborne and in 1891 edited and published some of the letters his father had received in his research for his *Battle of Waterloo model as 'Waterloo letters: a selection from original and hitherto unpublished letters bearing on the operations of the 16th, 17th, and 18 June 1815, by officers who served in the campaign'*, available at <http://shelf3d.com/i/Herbert%20Taylor%20Siborne> [01 August 2014].

<sup>184</sup> Jean Joseph Amable Humbert, (1767–1823) French general and military adventurer, see Oxford reference <http://www.oxfordreference.com.jproxy.nuim.ie/view/10.1093/acref/9780199891580.001.0001/acref-9780199891580-e-3871> [17 January 2014]; K.P. Ferguson, 'The army in Ireland', p. 195.

<sup>185</sup> See, Fortescue, *British army*, iv, pt i, p. 593.

<sup>186</sup> Croker (ed), *Memoirs of Joseph Holt*, i, pp 144, available at Internet Archive <https://archive.org/stream/memoirsofjosephh01holt#page/n0/mode/2up> [11 November 2013].

<sup>187</sup> For a more detailed account of these militia engagements during the rebellion, see Nelson, *the Irish militia*, pp 183-215.

<sup>188</sup> Monthly returns (T.N.A., WO17/- series).

going', while another private from the Westmeath Regiment, after being unable to find a substitute to take his place, pronounced, 'my mind is very unhappy.'<sup>189</sup> It has been noted by Nelson that most Irish militiamen were married. This would have meant that many would have had to leave their families behind. When men enlisted into the regular regiments only a small percentage of women or children could travel overseas with them. Home service, on the other hand, also offered perks such as schooling for militiamen's children.<sup>190</sup>

Turning to the issue of mutiny within the Irish militia, this threat was ever present throughout the period, partly owing to Defender and United Irish penetration.<sup>191</sup> In 1795 a number of privates from the South Cork Militia were charged with having taken the Defender oath.<sup>192</sup> But 1796 appears to have been relatively quiet compared to the following two years; however, the Reverend William Bristow in Belfast reported to Dublin that year that there had been attempts to seduce the County of Limerick militia. It was noted that 'Barney McMahon, a suspected United Irish emissary, was seen frequently trying to converse with the soldiers of the Limerick militia'.<sup>193</sup> In his letter to Dublin, Bristow made the following remarks:

I...wish that the County of Limerick militia were immediately removed from this town [Belfast].....every art of seduction has been used to convert them.....Some of their officers have acknowledged it....tho'....they have used all means in their power to prevent it... Believe me...it will be highly proper to remove them.....as soon as possible.....<sup>194</sup>

In 1797, a number of militiamen were put on trial for sedition. From 15 to 24 May 1797, five men from the Louth Regiment were tried and found guilty of sedition.<sup>195</sup> In July

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<sup>189</sup> *Faulkner's Dublin Journal*, 30 Aug. 1808; McAnally, *Irish militia*, p. 229.

<sup>190</sup> Nelson, *The Irish militia*, pp 128-9.

<sup>191</sup> Nancy J. Curtin, *The United Irishmen: Popular politics in Ulster and Dublin, 1791-1798* (3<sup>rd</sup> ed, Oxford, 2004), p. 63.

<sup>192</sup> This was believed to have been a strongly Catholic regiment. At the trial, it was alleged that they were coaxed into taking the oath as they would be given tickets/certificates which would allow them to travel unmolested by Defenders throughout the kingdom free of expense and in perfect safety. They would also be supplied with free liquor and board wherever they passed. (T.N.A., HO., 100/58/344-50).

<sup>193</sup> MacNevin to Pelham, 9 May 1796. (N.A.I., R.P., 620/23/101).

<sup>194</sup> Bristow to Pelham, 24 May 1796 (N.A.I., R.P., 620/23/122).

<sup>195</sup> See *Report from the secret committee of the British house of commons* (Dublin, 1798), pp 283-4; Bernard Gilmore, James Mallan, Thomas Wall, Patrick Mc Mullen and Edward Woods). Gilmore, Wall and Woods,

1797, militiamen from the Kildare, City of Dublin, Roscommon, Galway, Wexford, Limerick, Leitrim, Westmeath and Meath regiments at Bandon, County Cork were charged and convicted for attempting to seize armaments for the rebels, to murder General Coote and hold the fort until the French arrived. Sentences ranged from 500-1500 lashes to service in His Majesty's forces of varying duration, while others were executed.<sup>196</sup> Catholic-sounding surnames predominate, but some hint at a Protestant background. Possibly the most notorious case occurred at Blaris Moor military camp near Lisburn, County Down, in 1797.<sup>197</sup> The mutinous plot involved men of the Monaghan Regiment.<sup>198</sup> Daniel Gillan, Owen McCanna, William McCanna, and Peter McCarron were found guilty and on 16 May were executed by firing squad. It has been noted that the sentence of death was a foregone conclusion as an 'example of the determination of the government to counter subversion in the military.'<sup>199</sup> All of these men were evidently Catholics as they were accompanied by a priest to their place of execution.<sup>200</sup>

When the rebellion began on 23 May 1798, twenty-five men from the Wexford Regiment were captured by the rebels at Goresbridge, County Kilkenny and brought back to the rebel camp. Kavanagh recorded, that 'some [were] Orangemen who had formerly treated with great cruelty their Catholic comrades.'<sup>201</sup> The Catholics within the regiment as Kavanagh noted, yielded, 'to the fell spirit of revenge..... [and] murdered their former tyrants' for their previous treatment.<sup>202</sup> Miles Byrne recorded in his history about this same incident that after the Catholic militiamen from the Wexford militia met up with their relatives, some of the Catholic militiamen changed out of their uniforms and executed the

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were all sentenced to serve the rest of their lives in His Majesty's forces outside Ireland, while Mallan and McMullen were to receive 500 and 1,000 lashes respectively, see *Report from the secret committee*, pp 285-6.

<sup>196</sup> See *Report from the secret committee*, pp 289-91.

<sup>197</sup> Brian MacDonald, 'The Monaghan militia & the tragedy of Blaris Moor' in *Clogher Record.*, xvi, no. 2 (1998), pp 123-43, available at JSTOR <http://www.jstor.org/stable/20641353> [20 November 2013].

<sup>198</sup> The men accused of sedition were Pat McCann, Pat Ryan, John Wilson, Owen McCanna, Peter McCarron, Daniel Gillan and William McCanna, Lake to Pelham, 1 May 1797 (P.R.O.N.I., T/755/5/1).

<sup>199</sup> *Report from the secret committee*, p. 281; The affair was witnessed by the Irish Artillery, the 64<sup>th</sup> regiment, the Breadalbane and Argyle Fencibles, and three militia regiments, see Nelson, *the Irish militia*, p. 171.

<sup>200</sup> The priest was a Father Michael Cassidy, see Raymond O'Regan, *Hidden Belfast: Benevolence, blackguards and balloon heads* (Cork, 2010), p. 85.

<sup>201</sup> Kavanagh, 1798, pp 228-9. (Fr Patrick Kavanagh as indicated earlier sympathised with the rebels).

<sup>202</sup> *Ibid*, pp 228-9.



Orange militiamen who had previously tried to have them put to death.<sup>203</sup> This was not an isolated incident. Two similar episodes occurred within the Antrim militia when it was captured at Vinegar Hill, County Wexford, and in the Westmeath militia when stationed at Skibbereen, County Cork. In the first episode regarding members of the Antrim militia, they were rescued by the Armagh Regiment at Vinegar Hill. When the Armagh and the Antrim Regiments returned to barracks, two of the Antrim militiamen were executed for having been allegedly complicit in plans to murder two officers and soldiers from their regiment. In the second episode concerning the Westmeath Regiment at Skibbereen, County Cork, a number of militiamen were executed on 11 July for plotting to murder their officers.<sup>204</sup> While evidence might appear to suggest that Catholic militiamen were the most treacherous, this may not have been the case. On 23 November 1798, Viscount Castlereagh, the chief-secretary in Ireland at the time noted that Northern Presbyterians were especially guilty 'of the treason in which they had very deeply embarked,' while Captain Henry Taylor, aide to Charles Cornwallis, the lord lieutenant and commander-in-chief of the forces in Ireland, recorded on 21 August 1798, that 'conspiracy and desertion' in Irish military units were 'confined in great measure to the northern [Ulster] regiments.'<sup>205</sup>

#### **Positive Performance: The Irish Militia**

While the performance of the militia may have been questionable, there is also testimony that members frequently performed well. On 17 March 1794, *Saunders Newsletter* reported that while in Kinsale, County Cork, the predominantly Catholic Carlow militia 'fired on a number of Defenders causing ten to be killed.'<sup>206</sup> In December of that year, the City of Dublin militia which was captained by John Giffard (Giffard ran the paper from which the report was taken) faced down a number of Defenders at Portadown, County

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<sup>203</sup> Miles Byrne was a rebel during 1798, Byrne, *Memoirs*, i, p. 158.

<sup>204</sup> See John Jones, *An impartial narrative of the most important engagements which took place between His Majesty's forces and the rebels during the Irish rebellion, 1798* (4th ed., Dublin, 1800), p. 78; See *Report from the secret committee*, pp 297-8.

<sup>205</sup> Viscount Castlereagh to William Wickham Esq, 23 November 1798, Charles Ross ed., *Correspondence of Cornwallis* (3 vols, London, 1859), ii, p. 447; Captain Taylor to William Wickham Esq., 21 August 1798 Ross, *Correspondence of Cornwallis*, ii, p. 389.

<sup>206</sup> *Saunders Newsletter*, 17 Mar. 1794.

Armagh.<sup>207</sup> In September 1795, the 105<sup>th</sup> and the 113<sup>th</sup> Regiments mutinied at Cork while awaiting transportation to the West Indies. General Massey dispatched the Meath, Roscommon, King's County and Louth Regiments from Ardfinnan to quell the incident. It was recorded that 'the loyal militia' formed up [on the opposite bank of the harbour] ready to oppose the mutineers.<sup>208</sup> During the ineffectual attempt at landing by the French at Bantry Bay on 22 December 1796, the lord chancellor, John FitzGibbon proclaimed 'that from Dublin to Bantry Bay, not a single man deserted' from the militia.<sup>209</sup> Denys Scully,<sup>210</sup> a prominent Catholic emancipationist activist, later claimed:

loyalty filled the hearts of all men.....Who does not remember, that the poorest amongst us...carried the firelocks and the knapsacks of our fatigued soldiers; they cheered them with songs and smiling welcome - they proved themselves to be truly, truly loyal.<sup>211</sup>

Scully's comments, however, need to be seen in the context of the time when they were written in 1803. They were aimed at urging his fellow Catholics against siding with the French and at demonstrating Irish Catholic fitness for Catholic emancipation. Also, other comments made by Scully in the same source point to signs that not all parts of Ireland were as peaceful as claimed.<sup>212</sup> However, from May to June 1797, loyal declarations from at least twenty regiments were printed in the newspapers.<sup>213</sup>

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<sup>207</sup> For details about John Giffard, see p. 48 above. The Dublin City militia were forced to chase the Defenders through the night before catching up with them. Seven were captured, who were then committed to prison *Faulkner's Dublin Journal*, 3 Jan. 1794.

<sup>208</sup> In 1795, 2,000 raw and undisciplined young soldiers mutinied on Spike Island, available at <http://www.limerickcity.ie/media/Media,4111,en.pdf> [29 November 2013]; General Massey directed two field pieces to flank the mutineers....the matches to be lighted and to load' to prepare to fire, see McAnally, *The Irish militia*, p. 83.

<sup>209</sup> John FitzGibbon (1748-1802) lord chancellor of Ireland, was a powerful opponent of Catholic relief, available at *Dictionary of National Biography* <http://www.oxforddnb.com.jproxy.nuim.ie/view/article/9595?docPos=6> [11 November 2013]; This was in the house of lords in January 1797, *Faulkners Dublin Journal*, 21 Jan. 1797.

<sup>210</sup> Denys Scully (1773-1830) was a prominent leader in the cause of Catholic Emancipation. In 1794 he entered Trinity College, Cambridge, being the first Catholic admitted for two hundred years. Scully served in the Liberty Corps but may have missed the 1798 rebellion, available at Library Ireland.com <http://www.libraryireland.com/biography/DenysScully.php> [01 December 2013].

<sup>211</sup> Brian MacDermot, *The Catholic question in Ireland and England 1798-1822: The papers of Denys Scully* (Dublin, 1988), pp xi-xxi; Denys Scully, *An Irish Catholic's advice to his brethren, how to estimate their present situation and repel French invasion, civil wars and slavery* (London, 1803), pp 42-3.

<sup>212</sup> See Scully, *An Irish Catholic's advice*, p. 42.

<sup>213</sup> Ferguson, 'The army in Ireland', p. 172.

When the rebellion began, the counties of Dublin, Meath, Queen's County, Kilkenny, Carlow, Wicklow and Wexford took centre stage in the south; Down and Antrim were central in the north. From 23 May to 6 July, the following regiments of militia were engaged against the rebels: Armagh, Tyrone, Wicklow, City of Cork, City of Limerick, City of Dublin, North & South Cork, Donegal, Meath, King's County, Clare, Dublin County, Kilkenny, Tipperary, Monaghan, Kerry, Wexford and Antrim. Of the various battles that were fought at Naas and Prosperous (24 May); Oulart Hill (27 May); New Ross (5 June); Antrim (7 June); Kilconnel Hill (26 June); and Whiteheaps (5 July), militia regiments formed the principal force on the government side.<sup>214</sup> These regiments performed well and many had a sizeable representation of Catholics. The Meath Regiment, which had often come to attention over seditious activity, was almost decimated by the rebels at Fox Mills, County Wexford.<sup>215</sup> The slaughter of the North Corks at Oulart Hill, County Wexford is also worth noting. This regiment was believed to have been an 'Orange' regiment owing to some outrages committed, and its overzealous loyalty on the run up to and during the rebellion.<sup>216</sup> However, recent studies suggest a different religious affiliation of the North Corks. Barry, for example, whose sources include contemporaries Hay and Musgrave, has noted that 'among the private soldiers, the proportion of Catholics to Protestants is.....three to one' and that they.....'shouted prayers and had rosaries since many were Catholic.'<sup>217</sup> Pakenham has argued that the North Corks were Catholics 'from one of the poorest and most backward parts of the country.'<sup>218</sup> The battle of New Ross was the deciding engagement. Those engaged on the government side were militia units with sizeable Catholic proportions. Nelson has argued that 'the importance of this victory

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<sup>214</sup> For a more detailed account of the militia engagements during the rebellion, see Nelson, *the Irish militia*, pp 183-215.

<sup>215</sup> Of the sixty-six privates of the Meath regiment, and four officers, under the command of Captain Adams, Three of the Meath officers, with most of their men, were killed, and one taken, see Maxwell, *History of the 1798 rebellion*, pp 105-6.

<sup>216</sup> See J. M. Barry, *Pitchcap and triangle: The Cork militia in the Wexford uprising* (Cork, 1998), p. 236. Harwood recorded that 'there was a great number of Orangemen, who were zealous in....displaying their devices, having medals and orange ribbons triumphantly pendant from their bosoms', Philip Harwood, *History of the Irish rebellion of 1798* (London, 1844), p.167.

<sup>217</sup> 'But they were given no quarter owing to the overzealous nature of loyalty which the regiment demonstrated throughout the campaign and indeed prior to it', see Barry, *Pitchcap and triangle*, p. 236.

<sup>218</sup> Pakenham. *The year of liberty*, pp 152-3.

cannot be under estimated...the militia wavered but were not defeated.'<sup>219</sup> The *Freeman's Dublin Journal* spoke of the bravery and unshaken loyalty of the militia throughout June 1798.<sup>220</sup> The active loyalist, John Beresford, declared, 'no troops on earth have behaved better than our militia and yeomanry, whenever tried, the Roman Catholics as well as the Protestants.'<sup>221</sup> The one-time Catholic priest and convert to Protestantism, Dean William Blake Kirwan, in a sermon in July 1798, commended the militia for its loyalty.<sup>222</sup> Following the landing by the French later in August 1798 at Killala, County Mayo, it has been argued in a recent study of the militia's performance at Castlebar, County Mayo that 'all witnesses agreed that they obeyed orders and did their duty.'<sup>223</sup>

### **The Irish Yeomanry**

#### **Desertion**

Turning to the Irish yeomanry, this became an almost entirely Protestant force, but it contained a significant number of Catholics prior to the 1798 rebellion (possibly as many as ten per cent). It is impossible to know how prevalent desertions were, owing to the fact that the records were destroyed. However, newspaper reports give some idea of the numbers of Catholics who may have deserted. By 1797 desertions were occurring both north and south, but while there is evidence of Catholic desertions, Protestant yeomen seem to have been also been guilty of the practice.<sup>224</sup> When the rebellion broke out, desertions greatly increased. At the Battle of Oulart Hill on 11 May, the leader of the rebels was a Catholic

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<sup>219</sup> Charles Dickson, 'The battle of New Ross' in G.A., Hayes McCoy (ed.), *The Irish at war* (Cork, 1964), pp 71-82; see also Nelson, *the Irish militia*, p. 201.

<sup>220</sup> *Freeman's Dublin Journal*, 9 June 1798, 'County of Dublin militia fought with gallantry'; Ibid, 12 June 1798, Clare and Dublin militia 'entitled to the greatest praise'; Cavan militia behaved 'highly',

<sup>221</sup> John Beresford (1738–1805) Politician. By 1782 Beresford [was] one of the most powerful politicians in Ireland. He played a part in persuading George III in 1795 that his consenting to Catholic relief would infringe his coronation oath, available at *Dictionary of National Biography* <http://www.oxforddnb.com.jproxy.nuim.ie/view/article/2195?docPos=1> [10 April 2014]; *Correspondence and papers of Baron Auckland, many relating to Irish affairs, xliii-iv, 1796-1802*, N.L.I., microfiche (n.884-886, p.766-8).

<sup>222</sup> Quoted from McAnally, *The Irish militia*, p. 129. The lord lieutenant was present. The speech was: 'To the militia of Ireland, I likewise pay a feeble tribute. What an example have they presented of steady and incorruptible loyalty!' Dean William Blake Kirwan was a celebrated Roman Catholic preacher who was educated at the college of English Jesuits at St Omers. In 1787 he resolved to conform to the established religion, see *Sermons by the late Rev. Walter Blake Kirwan, Dean of Killala with a sketch of his life* (Philadelphia, 1816), pp v-ix.

<sup>223</sup> See Nelson, *the Irish militia*, p. 222.

<sup>224</sup> Presbyterians and significantly Anglicans were found to be deserting from the force, see Blackstock, *An ascendancy army*, p. 151.

yeoman named Edward Roche from Garylough, County Wexford, who had deserted from his corps. He had been a sergeant in the Shelmalier Cavalry. Of the twenty-two Catholics in this corps, twenty deserted.<sup>225</sup> On 25 June, two men, Dr John Esmonde and Andrew Farrell, both Catholics, deserted from the Clane-town corps of yeomanry in County Kildare.<sup>226</sup> On 5 September, a number of Catholic yeomen deserted from the Mastrim [Mostrim, Edgeworthstown] yeomanry.<sup>227</sup> How many desertions occurred amongst Catholics in the northern regiments is hard to determine, as although there is evidence of some Catholics deserting from northern regiments, their performance in respect of desertion was not as remarked upon as those in the southern regiments.<sup>228</sup>

#### Mutinous behaviour

Before proceeding with the examination of mutinous behaviour exhibited by Catholics in the yeomanry, it must be remembered that much of the evidence presented in the following paragraph is taken from Musgrave's memoirs, the problems of which source have been discussed previously.<sup>229</sup> Keeping this in mind, it was found that on 13 March 1798, a Mr. Buckley, a Protestant, and noted loyalist, was murdered near Rathcoole, County Kildare.<sup>230</sup> It was alleged at the time that the culprits were Catholics from Mr. Buckley's own yeomanry unit. Evidence for this allegation centred on the fact that a bayonet which was believed to have belonged to one of the Catholic yeomen was found sticking in his body.<sup>231</sup> Musgrave also claimed that during the rebellion, 'nine tenths of the Catholics in the yeomanry were United Irishmen, who had taken an oath to be true to the rebels in direct contradiction to their sworn allegiance.'<sup>232</sup> Also, 'in the city of Dublin, above two thousand catholicks (sic) solicited admittance into several yeomanry corps during the six weeks immediately preceding the insurrection; and ...most of them were

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<sup>225</sup> See Taylor, 1798, p. 38.

<sup>226</sup> Corrigan, *All that delirium*, p. 51.

<sup>227</sup> Maxwell, 1798, p. 265.

<sup>228</sup> In County Londonderry, out of fifty-three privates in Connolly McCausland's Banagher Cavalry, fourteen were marked as Catholic. The Faughan Glen Infantry roll shows a mixed corps with Catholics actually outnumbering Protestants by thirty-four to eighteen in 1798, see Derry muster rolls (P.R.O.N.I., T1021/3); For more on the army's hold on Ulster during the period, see also, Ferguson, 'The army in Ireland', p. 191.

<sup>229</sup> See, p. 24 on the reliability of Musgrave as a source.

<sup>230</sup> Rathcoole now appears to be in County Dublin

<sup>231</sup> Musgrave, *Memoirs*, i, p. 249.

<sup>232</sup> *Ibid*, *Memoirs*, i, p. 268.

proposed by catholic (sic) yeomen who afterwards either proved to be rebels, or were disarmed with strong suspicion.<sup>233</sup> In the Rotunda (County Dublin) Infantry, it is alleged that of twenty-two Catholic yeomen, fourteen were found to have been sworn United Irishmen, while six others were disarmed on suspicion. Some Catholics within the St. Sepulchre's (County Dublin) Corps were also believed to have been engaged in conspiring to murder their Protestant officers and fellow-soldiers, while Catholics in the Coolock (County Dublin) Corps were alleged to have been mutinous to a man.<sup>234</sup>

In his history of the rebellion, Maxwell alleged that on 25 May, the Wicklow light company executed nineteen of the Saunders-Grove and nine of the Nanomore Infantry Corps at Dunlavin, County Wicklow, for being 'notorious traitors'.<sup>235</sup> Most, it was recorded, were Catholics.<sup>236</sup> In Kildare on 25 May, according to Musgrave, all but five out of fifty of the Castledermot corps were implicated in the rebellion, while all of the Catholics in the Rathangan corps 'went over to the rebels'.<sup>237</sup> The Rathangan corps commander, Molloy, along with several others, was later executed.<sup>238</sup> Possibly the most notorious example of treachery recorded concerning a Catholic yeoman occurred at Prosperous, County Kildare on 23 May. John Esmonde, a lieutenant in the Clane-town corps of yeomanry mentioned earlier, murdered a Captain Swayne and slaughtered some members of the North Cork militia while they slept in their beds.<sup>239</sup> Evidence would suggest that some Catholic yeomen may well have been pushed in the direction of mutiny as a result of atrocities carried out on their fellow Catholics by other yeomen. The nineteenth-century Franciscan priest and historian, Patrick Kavanagh, alleged that on 23 May at Dunlavin, County Wicklow, the local yeomanry unit, which contained twenty-eight Catholics from Wexford and Kildare, was surrounded and disarmed by some Protestant yeomen from the area, and after a mock trial, all the Roman Catholics were found guilty

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<sup>233</sup> Ibid, p. 268.

<sup>234</sup> Ibid, pp 268-9.

<sup>235</sup> Maxwell, *1798*, p. 64.

<sup>236</sup> Ibid, p. 64.

<sup>237</sup> Musgrave, *Memoirs*, i, pp 324-5.

<sup>238</sup> Ibid, i, pp 324-5.

<sup>239</sup> As was recorded of Swayne and the North Cork Regiment, 'All the people around Prosperous were roused into resistance by the tyrannical sway of Captain Swayne, who, with his North Cork [militia], plundered and....laid waste the entire district'. Esmonde was later hanged for directing the attack, see Patrick Kavanagh, *1798*, pp 28-33

and killed. The fact of their being 'Papists' was deemed sufficient proof of their disloyalty. This massacre allegedly drove many a Catholic yeomen into the insurgents' arms.<sup>240</sup>

#### **Positive Performance: The Irish Yeomanry**

While there is evidence of some Catholic disaffection in the yeomanry, it would be wrong to think that Catholics did not perform well. For the most part, such Catholics appear to have been led by Catholic magnates such as Lords Fingal, Dunsany, and Gormanston, whose corps were filled with many of their own Catholic tenants.<sup>241</sup> It is known for example that Fingal's Skreen yeomanry had thirty mounted cavalymen. These men most likely came from his wealthier Catholic tenants who could afford the upkeep of a horse, while his supplementary corps, who served without pay, may have been his own personal servants. No figures are available for Lord Gormanston's cavalry, and nothing was found regarding the figures for Dunsany's corps.<sup>242</sup> Fingal's corps garnered considerable praise for its performance at the battle of the hill of Tara, County Meath, in which it gained a decisive victory over the rebels. As was recorded, 'the Catholic Lord Fingal, at the head of some corps of yeomen chiefly of his own persuasion, took a most active part in suppressing the rebellion.'<sup>243</sup> It was also noted: 'these yeomen...[who] formed one of the most efficient corps in the kingdom; were mostly Catholics.'<sup>244</sup> Their victory over the rebels was 'very important, for it completely broke the rebellion in Meath, and reopened the communication between the northern part of the kingdom and the metropolis.'<sup>245</sup> Fingal's yeomen killed 350 rebels and captured all the ammunition and baggage of the rebels.<sup>246</sup> In another engagement five hundred yards from George's Cross courthouse between Navan and King's Court in County Meath, a Catholic yeoman named Thomas Corbally killed a rebel priest named only as Fr Murphy.<sup>247</sup> During another encounter, a Catholic yeoman recorded only as Mr. T. from Navan, County Meath, shot one

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<sup>240</sup> Kavanagh, 1798, pp 28-9.

<sup>241</sup> L. J. Steen, *The battle of the hill of Tara*, p. 7; Ó Loingsigh, *The 1798 rebellion*, p. 21.

<sup>242</sup> John Stockdale, *List of the volunteer and yeomanry corps of the United Kingdom ...* (London, 1804), p. 101. However, many of Gormanston's corps were believed to have been disaffected, see Ó Loingsigh, *The 1798 rebellion*, p. 58.

<sup>243</sup> W.E.H., Lecky, *A history of Ireland in the eighteenth century* (4 vols, London, 1890), iv, p. 325.

<sup>244</sup> Kavanagh, 1798, p. 47.

<sup>245</sup> Lecky, *A history of Ireland*, iv, pp 336-7.

<sup>246</sup> *Ibid*, iv, pp 336-7.

<sup>247</sup> Corbally gave Fr. Murphy 'a mighty cut of a sword on the ride side of the neck' of which the priest later expired, see Kavanagh, 1798, p. 328.

of his Catholic tenants who had joined the rebels.<sup>248</sup> In Kildare, the Monasterevin Yeomanry under Frederick Hoystead engaged 1,300 rebels in the town. This yeomanry contained at least fourteen Catholics.<sup>249</sup> At Kilcock, County Kildare, Catholics in Sir Fenton Aylmer's Donadea Cavalry remained loyal to their Protestant commander, despite the fact that they were captured by the rebels.<sup>250</sup> Also on 23 May, at Monasterevin, it was recorded that Catholic loyalists under Captain Cassidy repulsed the insurgents who attempted to capture the town.<sup>251</sup> As noted earlier, the Shelmalier Cavalry contained a number of Catholics who deserted just prior to the rebellion. Despite this, at the engagement at Oulart Hill, County Wexford, out of nineteen yeomen on the government side, nine were Catholics.<sup>252</sup> In one further case which highlights Catholic performance in the yeomanry, a Catholic named Doyle, in the Healthfield Cavalry, offered to infiltrate the rebels at Wexford town. As the source relates:

He.....put off his uniform.....to dress himself in coloured clothes: but when.....discovered to be a Roman Catholic.....the whisper went about, how could a papist be trusted? The yeoman finding his zeal meet with a reception so contrary to his expectation, again put on his uniform and retreated with his captain; thus proving himself to the full as loyal as any of the others.<sup>253</sup>

### Conclusion

This chapter has provided an analysis of the performance of Irish Catholics within the four central forces of the British crown over the period 1793-1815, by examining instances of desertion and mutiny as being indicative of negative performance, and active engagement during combat as reflective of positive performance. By looking at these four forces, it was hoped that a more comprehensive picture of Irish Catholic performance over the period could be gained. What then has been discovered? With regard to instances of

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<sup>248</sup> Mr. T, who owned the property was a middleman and Catholic gentleman who lived near Navan, see Aidan Cogan, *The diocese of Meath: ancient and modern* (3 vols, Dublin 1867), ii, p. 357.

<sup>249</sup> Corrigan, *All that delirium*, p. 55; Peadar MacSuibne, *Kildare in 1798* (Naas, 1798), pp 85-6, available at toadthac <https://sites.google.com/site/toadthac/surnames/hoysted> [04 December 2013].

<sup>250</sup> Gordon, *History of the rebellion*, pp 25-6.

<sup>251</sup> For more on Captain Cassidy, see the website: *Monasterevin Historical Society* <http://www.kildare.ie/monasterevin-historical-society/introduction.htm> [22 January 2014]; Kavanagh, *1798*, p. 28.

<sup>252</sup> The names of the Catholics in this corps were given as: Nicholas Dixon, Ignatius Rossiter, Walter Redmond, James Lambert, Michael Weddick, Richard Kinselagh, Charles Dunn, Patrick Dixon and a man named Murphy, see Barry, *Pitchcap and triangle*, pp 236-40.

<sup>253</sup> Hay, *History of the Irish insurrection*, p. 156.



desertion, while there was certainly evidence of Irish Catholic desertion in all four forces, it was not always the case that issues of disloyalty were the crucial factor, although it was present in many cases, especially in the yeomanry. In the militia, a possible fear of United Irish and Defender reprisals and bribes seem to have been a contributing cause for desertion. The harsh conditions associated with military and naval life also contributed to desertion. This was particularly so in the navy, as most Irish Catholics were landsmen, and had little experience of the hardships of service at sea. Other servicemen deserted just because they found a thrill of adventure associated with the act. Bounty-jumping arguably induced many to desert, as the financial incentive was often considerable, and some stationed close to home were also tempted to desert. While this chapter has demonstrated that Irish Catholics were often guilty of desertion in all four forces, it has also been argued that over the period, desertion among the English and Scottish militia regiments and regular forces was just as high if not more so.

Turning to mutiny, in the militia, many of the names at the trials appear to suggest that the mutineers were Catholics, although there was a sprinkling of Protestant surnames too. However, evidence from two prominent government sources within Ireland during the 1798 rebellion appears to suggest that when the rebellion broke out, Protestants from the northern regiments were those most engaged in mutinous activity. In spite of some negative comments made about Catholic militiamen engaging in mutinous activity over the period, there was never any serious suggestion from the majority of government sources that the militia ought to be disbanded. As for Catholics in the yeomanry, some joined apparently with mutinous intent in mind, while others mutinied after witnessing outrages committed on their co-religionists. In the navy, conditions and pay proved to be the principal cause of mutiny in 1797, despite the more politically tainted demands at the Nore. The mutinies in the royal navy in 1798 and 1799 did have a noticeable Irish element with about a fifth of the 24,000 Irishmen serving in the navy apparently involved. This was a significant proportion. This may have been because in the previous two years, over 15,000 Defenders had been sent to the royal navy by magistrates in Ireland. However, it could alternatively be argued, that while a fifth may have been disaffected, the majority showed no signs of

disaffection. Significantly, sources indicate among the various nationalities, it was English sailors who formed the principal group most engaged in mutinous activity. As to cases of mutiny by the Irish in the regular line regiments, they were not as numerous as in the other forces and were primarily linked to being sent to the West Indies, which was perceived as a veritable death sentence.

Leaving aside the more negative dimensions associated with Irish Catholic performance just mentioned, it has been suggested that their performance in all of the forces when engaged against the enemy was generally more than adequate. During militia engagements against the Defenders, resistance to the attempted landing of the French at Bantry in 1796, and the principal battles during the 1798 rebellion, most of the militia regiments engaged had a high proportion of Catholics, and in each case, the militia's performance was satisfactory considering the training and leadership the men generally received. As to Catholics in the yeomanry, in spite of being distrusted by many of their fellow yeomen as possible rebels, the good conduct of many Catholic yeomen, especially during the 1798 rebellion, was notable. As to how Irish Catholics performed while in the navy, with so little evidence available beyond their actions during the mutinies, it is more difficult to gauge their roles. Respecting Irish Catholics who served in the regular army, the numbers (an estimated 159,000) not only in Irish designated regiments, but also in British and Scottish regiments throughout the period 1808-15, during the Peninsula campaigns and at Waterloo, is testimony of their performance. Wellington acknowledged this in a speech delivered just prior to the granting of Catholic Emancipation in 1829:

My lords...on the eve of any of those hard-fought days...I...thus addressed my Roman Catholic troops: You well know that your country either so suspects your loyalty, or so dislikes your religion, that she has not yet thought proper to admit you amongst the ranks of her free citizens; if, on that account, you deem it an act of injustice on her part to require you to shed your blood in her defence, you are at liberty to withdraw:.....Yes, my lords, it is mainly to the Irish

Catholic that we all owe our proud pre-eminence in our military career.<sup>254</sup>

Finally, as to which force Irish Catholics can be accredited as having performed best in, the above speech by Wellington indicates that it was arguably in the regular army that their contribution was most appreciated. In terms of home service, both the militia and the yeomanry posed particular problems. The fact that both of these forces often only received limited training and were commanded for the most part by part time or improperly trained soldiers may have impacted on performance. Moreover, the yeomanry usually served close to their homes while the militia could be subject to overtures and or intimidation by Defenders or United Irishmen. The navy too had its problems, the close confinement of a ship, on the one hand breathed solidarity, but also had the potential to breathe discontent. Overall, Irish Catholic performance appears to have measured well by comparison with any of the other nationalities or religious denominations that served in the British forces.

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<sup>254</sup> Available at: A web of English history <http://www.historyhome.co.uk/polspeech/wellcath.htm> [31 May 2014].

## **Chapter two: Aspects of the religious identity of Irish Catholic servicemen in the British armed forces 1793-1815**

They supposed me a good Roman Catholic, because I spoke a little Latin to them, and confessed myself an Irishman. One question they never forget to ask, Are you an Irishman? They consider all Irishmen, Roman Catholics.<sup>1</sup>

This chapter seeks to examine aspects of the religious identity of Irish Catholic servicemen in the armed forces from 1793 to 1815. Before proceeding, a brief consideration of the state of the Catholic church and its priesthood is warranted in order to help contextualise the extent to which religion may have touched upon the lives of Catholics in Ireland over the period. Throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries when penal law legislation was in effect, Mass had been celebrated either in private oratories belonging to the religious orders and the Catholic gentry, or in the open air beside trees and hedges.<sup>2</sup> By 1793, the Catholic church in Ireland was beginning to emerge from the epoch of the penal laws, but it faced two main problems: ‘a crippling shortage of clergy’ and an ‘inadequate supply of space for worship.’<sup>3</sup> This was not helped by the fact that the Catholic population had increased by fifty per cent from the 1750s while the numbers of clergy had decreased by twenty four per cent. In statistical terms, this meant a worsening of the priest-to-people ratio by about ninety per cent. The building of new churches which began in the late 1770s, as a result of more disposable wealth, gained pace in the 1790s due to the war with France and more importantly owing to Britain's more relaxed attitude towards Catholic Ireland.<sup>4</sup>

Looking to the practice of faith in Ireland at the time, the chief obligation for an Irish Catholic before the Famine was not attendance at Mass on Sundays, but fulfilling one's Easter duty. This entailed going to confession and receiving communion annually between Ash Wednesday and Ascension Thursday. Of paramount importance in helping to keep contact open between the church, the priesthood, and the population was the practice of the

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<sup>1</sup> George Bell, *Rough notes by an old soldier* (London, 1867), p.10, available at Internet Archive <http://archive.org/stream/roughnotesbyano01bellgoog#page/n8/mode/2up> [14 January 2012].

<sup>2</sup> Emmet Larkin, *The pastoral role of the church in pre-Famine Ireland 1750-1850* (Dublin, 2006), pp 2-3.

<sup>3</sup> See Larkin, *The pastoral role of the church*, pp 1-29.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid*, pp 1-3.

stations of the cross. Stations also helped to provide the annual income of the parish clergy. Pastorally, 'stations allowed the crucial tenant-farming class to practice, however attenuated in its form, their religion, and thus retain their identity as Catholics.'<sup>5</sup>

Pilgrimage was a custom strongly associated with Irish Catholic society during the period. In a recent study, Laura Shalvey has argued that 'in spite of the threat of punishment under these laws' (the penal laws), pilgrims still continued to flock during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries to places like Lough Derg to 'carry out their stations in harsh circumstances.'<sup>6</sup> Depicted below is a brief description of some of the penitential exercises that pilgrims had to endure:

As soon as the pilgrims come within sight of the holy island they pull off their shoes and stockin[g]s, and uncover their heads, and walk thus with their beads in one hand and sometimes a Cross in the other, to the lakeside.....thousands of men and women of every age and condition....spend nine days living on one meal of oaten bread and water... they rest upon the ground, walk barefoot and their feet are frequently cut and bleeding.... pilgrims go to certain stones and altars where they kneel down, kiss them and repeat numerous prayers. Three such stations were to be completed daily while the pilgrim existed on a diet of bread and water once daily.<sup>7</sup>

Many remarks were made during the era by both British and Irish Protestants about the superstitious practices that some among the lower orders in Irish Catholic society applied in respect of their religion. While the Irish Catholic clergy would often castigate people who continued to engage in some of these customs (which were a continuation of old pagan superstitions), they too were guilty of engaging in such practices, as witnessed in their promotion of miracles related to relics and holy wells.<sup>8</sup>

With regards to the Irish Catholic clergy, Irish Catholic priests often came in for a considerable amount of criticism owing to incidents of drunkenness and avarice. It was noted over the period that not one diocese in Ireland remained unaffected by serious

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<sup>5</sup> Larkin, *The pastoral role of the church*, pp 3-6.

<sup>6</sup> Laura Brigid Shalvey, 'Continuity through change: A study of the pilgrimage to Lough Derg in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries' (M.A. thesis, National University of Ireland, Maynooth, July 2003), p. 3.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid*, pp 14-16.

<sup>8</sup> Raymond Gillespie, 'Popular and unpopular religion: a view from early modern Ireland', in J.S. Donnelly Jnr. and K.A. Miller (eds.), *Irish popular culture 1650-1850* (Dublin, 1998), pp 30-49.

misbehaviour.<sup>9</sup> Reports showed that some priests threatened bishops; struck Protestant ministers; attacked British soldiers; lived with women which resulted in children; and sexually abused female parishioners.<sup>10</sup> Many of the problems that have just been highlighted need to be kept in mind when considering the religiosity of Irish Catholic servicemen during this chapter.

As for Irish Catholic soldiers at the time, in 1793, when the Catholic relief and militia acts were passed in Ireland, provision had been made to allow Irish Catholic servicemen to attend services of their own faith while in Ireland.<sup>11</sup> By 1811, Horse Guards had accepted Mass attendance as the appropriate form of worship for Catholics in the British armed forces wherever they were stationed.<sup>12</sup> In the interim, between 1793 and 1811, Irish Catholic servicemen, outside of Ireland often found that trying to attend their own form of worship was difficult. Most were forced to attend Anglican worship, which was the religion observed in the British armed forces. Even when Irish Catholics were presented with the right to freely worship in the armed forces, many commanders still made it difficult for Irish Catholics to do so, as will be demonstrated later on in the chapter.

Turning to the historians whose studies have addressed some of the religious aspects associated with Irish Catholics serving in the British armed forces over this era, there have been several.<sup>13</sup> However, the most relevant to this chapter are those conducted by Michael Snape and Velmo J. L. Fontana.<sup>14</sup> Both these historians have made religion and the British

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<sup>9</sup> Larkin, *The pastoral role of the church*, p. 64.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid*, pp 72-5.

<sup>11</sup> Cookson, *The armed nation*, pp 173-5.

<sup>12</sup> Horse Guards, Whitehall was the seat of administration of the Army, available at Victorian London.Org <http://www.victorianlondon.org/buildings/horseguards.htm> [30 September 2013].

<sup>13</sup> Thomas Bartlett, *The fall and rise of the Irish nation: The Catholic question 1690-1830* (Dublin, 1992); J. R. Western, 'Roman Catholics holding military commissions in 1798' in *English Historical Review*, lxx, no. 276 (July, 1955), pp 428-432; Mary Louise Sanderson, 'Our own Catholic countrymen: Religion, loyalism and subjecthood in Britain and its empire 1755-1829' (Ph.D thesis, Vanderbilt University, Nashville Tennessee, May 2010); Robert Kent Donovan, 'The military origins of the Roman Catholic relief programme of 1778' in *Historical Journal*, xxviii, no. 1 (March, 1985), pp 79-102.

<sup>14</sup> Michael Snape, *The Redcoat and religion: The forgotten history of the British soldier from the age of Marlborough to the eve of the First World War* (Oxford, 2005); Velmo J. L. Fontana, 'Some aspects of Roman Catholic service in the land forces of the British crown, c.1750- c1820' (Ph.D thesis, University of Portsmouth, 2002).

army their central focus. Snape has looked at the evolution of the religious character of the British force throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, from a predominantly Anglican force, to one that incorporated Presbyterians, Methodists and Catholics. Snape's study has particularly demonstrated the influence of Methodism within the army. He has also established how a Protestant-dominated force impacted upon Irish Catholics in the British army. However, Snape only contemplated aspects of religion in the regular army and did not incorporate the navy, militia and yeomanry into the scope of his discussion. Turning to Fontana, his thesis is possibly the most encompassing in terms of looking at Catholics (English, Scottish and Irish) in nearly all of the forces (army, navy and militia) excepting the Irish yeomanry, although they are mentioned. Fontana's study particularly engages in a statistical analysis of Catholics serving in the armed forces from 1793-1815. It also presents a serious examination of the way that Catholics were often treated or penalised because of their religion and how the laws that affected them began to be rescinded for practical reasons. As it analyses Catholics in the British armed forces, much of Fontana's thesis focuses on the Irish. However, like Snape's study, it does not provide any conclusions on whether religion was intrinsically important to Irish Catholics servicemen. This is the central task that this chapter hopes to answer. To aid with this, the following questions have been posed.

They include: how was the religious identity of Irish Catholics expressed? Is there evidence that they adhered to Catholic worship? Is there evidence that they were stigmatised because of their religion? Were there efforts made to proselytise Irish Catholics? What was the working relationship between the Catholic hierarchy and the British military establishment? Irish Catholics holding commissions will also be considered, as relevance of how far the religious issue still pervaded the mindset of many in the British forces is important. It must be stated that while certain aspects of this chapter have been highlighted by other scholars, the specific aim of this chapter is to determine, firstly whether Irish Catholics in the various areas of the British armed forces displayed, or were endowed with a strong sense of religious identity, and secondly, whether service helped to encourage/discourage one.

Regarding the diaries, memoirs and similar sources that are to be utilised within this chapter, some preliminary discussion is needed. As noted in the introduction, such sources have their problems, but let us re-iterate what some of these problems are. Although used in the context of holocaust survivors, Esther Farbstein has noted the following:

Currently, there is a trend of thought that regards memoirs as predisposed to exaggeration and beautification. Consciously and unconsciously, witnesses tend to overstep their personal experiences and constantly impregnate their remarks with new trends of thought. [There are] tendencies to harmonize, to delete negative descriptions, to prettify, and to insert imitative accounts.....Differences in the degrees of clarity and reliability of human memories at different times result not only from fading recollections and residues of new experiences but also from the process in which strata of memory surface in different contexts and circumstances.<sup>15</sup>

She further adds:

.....we have to read between the lines to determine... [whether].....the author's motive[s]...., when he wrote the memoir, remained those that had prompted him to write the diary, or whether the change in his personal circumstances and those of history caused his motives to change. In other words, we must ask what, in the main, the author wished to commemorate in each of the sources.<sup>16</sup>

Respecting diaries etc. from the Victorian period, Whitford offers the following guidance:

The use and reliability of different sources is a basic part of the study of history.....Why were they written? Who did the author expect to read them...You might need to ask...have the diaries been edited or censored? The interpretation of the diary will change over time as morals, values and popular culture change.....interpretations of a diary can be wildly different depending on who is reading it. Compared to oral testimonies or memoirs, diaries tend to be written very soon after or during an event, so are not distorted by time or retelling. Despite the drawbacks of interpretation and bias, diaries still offer a potentially very honest and personal insight into the day to day lives of individuals and first-hand accounts of events.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> Esther Farbstein, 'Diaries and memoirs as a historical source - The diary and memoir of a rabbi at the Konin House of Bondage' (Aug, 2004) pp 1-38, available at [yadvashem.org http://www.yadvashem.org/odot\\_pdf/Microsoft%20Word%20-%203134.pdf](http://www.yadvashem.org/odot_pdf/Microsoft%20Word%20-%203134.pdf) [22 April 2014].

<sup>16</sup> Farbstein, 'Diaries', pp 1-38.

<sup>17</sup> Katie Whitford, 'Queen Victoria's men and diaries as sources', ii, no. 2.1, (2010), available at *New Histories* <http://newhistories.group.shef.ac.uk/wordpress/wordpress/queen-victoria%E2%80%99s-men-and-diaries-as-sources/> [22 April 2014].



Many of the memoirs and other sources that are the focus of this and the following chapter were published in the mid-Victorian era when temperance and ‘respectability’ were important.<sup>18</sup> Attitudes associated with such values need to be remembered. It also needs to be noted that the moral values of the servicemen may have changed over time. Generally, the older a person becomes, the more conservative his or her outlook. Turning directly to the sources, a brief synopsis of each of those used in this chapter may help with assessing their strengths and weaknesses throughout the chapter.

Of the Catholic sources, in Anon, *Memoirs of a sergeant, late in the Forty-third Light Infantry Regiment* which was published in 1835, Thomas (we are only given his first name) an Irish Catholic, is recorded as having come from the small townland of Enneham, King's County, in the province of Leinster. Following service in the army, Thomas converted to Methodism and became a minister in that church. His conversion occurred after becoming involved with the temperance movement which helped him to overcome his long battle with alcohol addiction. After his conversion, he expressed serious disapproval of many of the ritualistic and theological aspects of Catholicism.<sup>19</sup> The following introductory remarks to his memoir bear testimony to this fact:

My parents, I regret to state, were Roman Catholics. They knew no better, for no other teaching had reached their minds. Their membership with that fallen community was their misfortune rather than their fault. I believe the profession they made was sincere; and that though mingled with the dross of popish superstition, they were possessors of at least some few grains of sterling piety.<sup>20</sup>

Throughout the memoir, which deals with his service in the armed forces, there seems to be a continuous conflict over religion. In a number of remarks relating to his military service, Thomas pronounced, ‘I fell out for the Roman Catholic, [but in].... truth it mattered little by what name my religion was designated; for it was utterly worthless,’ while two lines further down, he declared, ‘I was a mighty advocate for papacy, indeed few were

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<sup>18</sup> See Susan Zieger, 'Temperance, teetotalism, and addiction in the nineteenth century', available at The Victorian Web <http://www.victorianweb.org/science/addiction/temperance.htm> [29 April 2014].

<sup>19</sup> Anon, *Memoirs of a sergeant, late in the Forty-third Light Infantry Regiment* (London, 1835).

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid*, p. 2.

louder than myself if challenged on the score of my religion.’<sup>21</sup> Following his return to Ireland during leave from the army, Thomas recorded his abhorrence at the superstitious rituals associated with Irish Catholicism, declaring; ‘the precepts and practices of Catholicism are utterly at variance with the revealed will of God, and subversive of sound morality.’<sup>22</sup> Of the few memoirs from Irish Catholics, this was the most religiously orientated. But, because Thomas later became a Methodist minister, most of what he says regarding his previous life as a Catholic has to be seen within that context. While Thomas converted to Methodism following his army career, service there and contact with other religions may have had some bearing on his gradual conversion. As he stated at the end of the war in 1815, ‘I was not in the right path.... but being shackled with the trammels of popery which I surveyed with increasing suspicion, I scarcely knew how to proceed.’<sup>23</sup> These statements should be kept in mind when encountering him as a source throughout the chapter.

The biography of Thomas Grant, the first Catholic chaplain-general in the British army, and later bishop of Southwark, details the impact his father, Bernard of the 71<sup>st</sup> Regiment, had on the Catholic upbringing of the future bishop. Kathleen O’Meara, who wrote the biography, appears to have been a devout Irish Catholic herself, and while she might have demonstrated a Catholic bias, her skill as a biographer was well recognised.<sup>24</sup> The biography begins with an account of how Bernard's family were run off the family home in Newry by a band of Protestant ‘incendiaries.’<sup>25</sup> This ‘made an indelible impression on his [Bernard's] young mind.’<sup>26</sup> Bernard's mother was recorded as ‘a Catholic of the right old stock, endowed with a robust, primitive faith, a thoroughgoing allegiance to the church’

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<sup>21</sup> Ibid, p.181.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid, pp 224-5.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid, p. 223.

<sup>24</sup> Kathleen O’Meara (1839-1888) - Novelist and biographer. She was the grand-daughter of Barry Edward O’Meara, surgeon in the British navy and medical attendant to Napoleon at St. Helena, see New Advent <http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/11250b.htm> [11 February 2014]; Kathleen O’Meara *Thomas Grant: first bishop of Southwark* (London, 1874) available at Internet Archive <http://archive.org/stream/thomasgrant00omeauoft#page/n15/mode/2up> [02 February 2012].

<sup>25</sup> O’Meara, *Thomas Grant*, p. 1.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid, p. 1.

which she 'transmitted to her son Bernard.'<sup>27</sup> It was recorded of Bernard's religious instruction that, 'his knowledge in this respect stood him in good service with his comrades, whom he was in the habit of instructing in the truths of the [Catholic] faith.'<sup>28</sup> After Bernard's wife died, he undertook the upbringing of his two sons. His strong Catholic devotion was often remarked upon.<sup>29</sup> Later Bernard brought Thomas, the future bishop, to be trained as an altar boy to a Dr Briggs, the local curate.<sup>30</sup> Briggs was 'surprised to find him (Thomas) so well instructed in his catechism, and was at great pains to complete what Mr Grant (Bernard) had so satisfactorily begun.'<sup>31</sup> Thomas himself later admitted '[he] had been well grounded in theology, because he had had his first lessons in it from his father.'<sup>32</sup> Bernard Grant of the 71<sup>st</sup> Regiment seems to have remained true to his Irish Catholic identity throughout his career in the army, and service does not seem to have affected his devotion to his Catholicism.<sup>33</sup>

Charles O'Neil's memoir was written and published in 1851, quite some time after the end of the Napoleonic Wars.<sup>34</sup> O'Neil was born in Dundalk, County Louth in 1793. Two of his older brothers, Arthur and Jimmie, both served in the armed forces: the former in the navy and the later in the 96<sup>th</sup> Regiment.<sup>35</sup> Nowhere in his early childhood does Charles mention anything of his education or his religious instruction, although he does mention that 'I had been brought up a strict Catholic.'<sup>36</sup> When confronted about being obliged to attend Anglican worship while at Gibraltar, which will be encountered later, he was

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<sup>27</sup> Ibid, pp 2-3.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid, p. 3.

<sup>29</sup> 'The soldier-father and his two little boys became familiar objects in the church at Chester...the devout behaviour of the sergeant and the modest air of the children attracted observation,' Ibid, p. 9.

<sup>30</sup> Father Briggs was born on 20 May 1788. He spent seventeen years at Chester, from 1816 to 1833, available at St Werburgh's Roman Catholic Parish website <http://www.stwerburghchester.co.uk/more-about-st-werburgh's-parish-history/catholicism-in-chester/19th-century-priests-2.aspx> [08 June 2013].

<sup>31</sup> O'Meara, *Thomas Grant*, p. 9.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid, pp 8-9.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid, pp 16-23.

<sup>34</sup> Charles O'Neil, *The military adventures of Charles O'Neil*, (Worcester, 1851), available at Internet Archive <http://archive.org/stream/militaryadventur00onei#page/n7/mode/2up> [02 February 2012].

<sup>35</sup> O'Neil, *Adventures*, pp 10-11.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid, p. 44.

uncompromising in stressing the need to be allowed to attend his own religious service.<sup>37</sup>

However, as one English historical novelist noted about O'Neil as a source:

By 1851, when the book was published, O'Neil was fifty-eight years old. These, then, are the memories of a fairly distant youth.....and they are memories, moreover, which are firmly aimed at a readership that was unfamiliar with the Napoleonic Wars. O'Neil was not a natural historian. Indeed, he shamelessly lifted much of his material from other authors. That plagiarism is most forgivable in his descriptions of battles, where he relies heavily on Sir William Napier's *History of the Peninsular War*.<sup>38</sup>

The modern historian, Bernard Cornwell, also acknowledged in respect of O'Neil that, 'I believe his accounts.....not that O'Neil is always believable.....[but].....even at his most unreliable he is still interesting.'<sup>39</sup> Other sources also regarded his memoir as flawed: 'as a source O'Neil is less than reliable on a number of grounds.'<sup>40</sup> It appears that following his return to Ireland, he was forced to flee to Montreal and had to leave there too, possibly over 'Irish nationalist or anti-British activity.'<sup>41</sup> His claims of being at Waterloo have also been called into question.<sup>42</sup> Molloy has argued, 'by his own admission, O'Neil was a something of a bad apple as a soldier, with a substantial record of desertion and insubordination, and his account is somewhat prone to exaggeration and inaccuracy.'<sup>43</sup> Despite this, historians are prepared to cite evidence from O'Neil. The fact that he was frank about some of his transgressions might actually count in his favour, but his recollections still should be approached with due care.

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<sup>37</sup> Ibid, pp 1-49.

<sup>38</sup> Cornwell made the point: 'it is almost certain that no private soldier, indeed, hardly any soldier including Generals of Division, had much idea of what happened on those peninsular fields.....indeed many soldiers later confessed that at a battle's end they had no idea whether their side had won or lost,' see Charles O'Neil, *The military adventures of Charles O'Neil*, Bernard Cornwell ed. (Kent, 2007), p. ix.

<sup>39</sup> O'Neil, *Adventures*, Cornwell ed. p. xi.

<sup>40</sup> Duncan Ellis 'Recruitment and promotion in the Napoleonic British army: a study of the 28<sup>th</sup> (North Gloucestershire) Regiment of Foot, an English regiment at Waterloo' (unpublished B.A. dissertation, Cheltenham and Gloucester College of Higher Education, 1999), available at Internet Archive Wayback [https://web.archive.org/web/20060511032453/http://www.napoleonicliterature.com/Articles/28th\\_Foot/](https://web.archive.org/web/20060511032453/http://www.napoleonicliterature.com/Articles/28th_Foot/) [23 March 2014].

<sup>41</sup> Ellis, 'Recruitment and promotion in the Napoleonic British army', (No pagination given from internet source, but see chapter three).

<sup>42</sup> Ibid, (No pagination given from internet source, but see chapter three).

<sup>43</sup> See Peter Molloy, 'Ireland and the Waterloo campaign of 1815' (Unpublished thesis, National University of Ireland, Maynooth, October, 2011), p. 16.

Turning to the sources from Irish and British Protestant servicemen, William Grattan, the Irish Protestant who was distantly related to the great Irish politician Henry Grattan, discussed his time with the 88<sup>th</sup> Connaught Rangers.<sup>44</sup> It is possibly one of the most familiar works of the period. Grattan's two volumes were later reduced to one book by the nineteenth century historian, Charles Oman. His edition was published in 1902. Respecting Grattan's memoir, Oman noted:

Of the many memoirs which I have read, I think that his is on the whole the most graphic and picturesque in giving the details of actual conflict....Military diaries are often disappointing from one of two causes. Either the author slips into second-hand and second-rate narratives of [campaigns] which he did not himself witness...or he fails to give us those small traits of the daily life of the regiment which are needed to make us realise the actualities of war. Grattan sometimes falls into the first-named fault, but never into the latter....These, [the first named] are often full of inaccuracies: sometimes (and this is a worse fault) they turn out to be taken almost verbatim from formal histories.<sup>45</sup>

Grattan's memoir, like O'Neil's it has been claimed, borrows battlefield scenes from other historians. While this should make us wary of some of the Grattan's anecdotes, his social descriptions of the inner workings inside of the regiment are particularly valuable for anyone wishing to view the daily life of a regiment.

Another source that has been frequently used from the period is the memoir of Edward Costello. Costello was an Irishman of unknown religious affiliation who served in the 95<sup>th</sup> Rifles.<sup>46</sup> In his introduction, Costello related that after returning home from the First Carlist War in Spain (1833-1839) he encountered anecdotes in 'various periodicals of the time, certain extracts from which I instantly recognised as mine.'<sup>47</sup> Costello seems to have decided to write his own memoir following this discovery. Nothing within his memoir

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<sup>44</sup> William Grattan, *Adventures of the Connaught Rangers 1808-1814* (2 vol, London, 1847), available at Internet Archive <https://archive.org/details/adventureswithc00gratgoog> [04 March 2014].

<sup>45</sup> William Grattan, *Adventures with the Connaught Rangers 1809-1814* edited by C.W.C Oman (London, 1902), p. vi: available at Internet Archive <http://www.archive.org/details/adventureswithco00gratuoft> [01 May 2013]; Such works may have included, Major-General Sir John T. Jones, Bart, *Journals of sieges carried on by the army under the duke of Wellington, in Spain, during the years 1811 to 1814; with notes and additions* (London, 1846); Charles William Vane Londonderry, *Story of the Peninsular War* (New York, Harper, 1854).

<sup>46</sup> Edward Costello, *Adventures of a soldier; or memoirs of Edward Costello*, (London, 1852): available at Internet Archive <http://archive.org/stream/adventuresasold01costgoog#page/n30/mode/2up> [07 May 2013].

<sup>47</sup> Costello, *Adventures*, p. iv.

suggests that it was fabricated and Costello had a quite distinguished life following service.<sup>48</sup>

Joseph Donaldson, a Scottish Presbyterian, began work on his memoir on his return to Glasgow in 1817, and completed it in 1827.<sup>49</sup> However, it was not published until 1845. Donaldson noted in his memoir that as an only surviving child, no expense was spared on his education. He was somewhat unusual in this respect as many of the ordinary soldiers had very little education.

The memoir of Benjamin Harris was published in 1848.<sup>50</sup> Harris was an English Protestant born in Portsea, Portsmouth, on 28 October 1781. His family were shepherds from Stalbridge in North Dorset, where Benjamin remained until 1803.<sup>51</sup> As Harris could not write, he dictated his recollection of the events to a fellow soldier, Henry Curling. Harris's memoir has been widely used by many historians.<sup>52</sup> Harris may have harboured some anti-Irish sympathies initially but these seem to have subsided as he encountered and became friendly with many Irishmen who served in his regiment, the 95<sup>th</sup> Rifles.

The memoir of John Shipp, an English soldier born in Saxmundham in Suffolk in 1785, details his service in the 87<sup>th</sup> Regiment. Shipp's memoir was originally published in 1829 as three volumes. By 1843 it had entered a third edition due to its popularity.<sup>53</sup> These are the central sources utilised in this chapter.

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<sup>48</sup> Following his service with the British Legion, Costello served out the rest of his career as a warder in the Tower of London, see Ian McInnes, *Yeomen of the guard including the body of yeomen warders H. M. Tower of London, members of the sovereign's body guard 1823-1903* (Lancashire, 2002), pp 10-11.

<sup>49</sup> Joseph Donaldson, *Recollections of the eventful life of a soldier* (Philadelphia, 1845), available at Internet Archive <http://archive.org/stream/recollectionsev01donagoog#page/n67/mode/2up> [15 March 2012].

<sup>50</sup> Benjamin Harris, *Recollections of rifleman Harris*, Henry Curling (ed.) (London, 1848).

<sup>51</sup> Benjamin Harris, *Recollections of rifleman Harris*, edited by Eileen Hathaway and Bernard Cornwell (Shinglepicker, 1996), pp i-viii.

<sup>52</sup> Henry Curling (1802/3–1864), novelist, was born in London. Curling served as an infantry officer in the period following the Napoleonic wars. 'A work of enduring significance was his edition of *The recollections of Rifleman Harris*,' see *Dictionary of National Biography* <http://www.oxforddnb.com.jproxy.nuim.ie/view/article/6947> [11 February 2014].

<sup>53</sup> John Shipp, *Memoirs of the extraordinary military career of John Shipp: late a lieutenant in His Majesty's 87th regiment* (3 vols, London, 1843), available at Internet Archive <https://archive.org/stream/memoirsofextraor00ship#page/n5/mode/2up> [04 March 2014].

### Religious Tribalism

It could be argued that the most visible expression of Irish Catholic identity occurred during affrays with Irish Protestant servicemen. In Ireland, sectarianism was a significant feature of Irish society. One piece of evidence which testifies to this was recorded by the British soldier, Benjamin Harris in 1807. Harris had joined the 95<sup>th</sup> Rifles while they were recruiting in Ireland. Having enlisted in the regiment, he boarded a troop ship bound for England from Cork harbour. Just as the ship left the harbour, Harris alleged that the following incident occurred:<sup>54</sup>

No sooner were we out at sea....than.....these hot-headed Paddies.....got up a dreadful quarrel amongst themselves, and a religious row immediately took place, the Catholics reviling the [Irish] Protestants to such a degree that a general fight ensued. The poor Protestants (being few in number) soon got the worst of it, and as fast as we made matters up among them, they (the fights) broke out afresh and began the riot again.<sup>55</sup>

While Harris did not outline what sparked the quarrel between the two sides, he did describe it as a ‘religious row’. Significantly, it was apparently the Catholics who instigated the fracas. After arriving in England, while at Salisbury Plains, Harris noted two further melees which were again instigated by the Catholics. Harris appears to have initially held anti-Irish prejudices and his testimony needs to be treated with care.<sup>56</sup> Confrontations of such a tribal nature especially occurred when some regiments of militia and yeomanry came into contact with one another in Ireland. One incident which appeared to be just a drunken affray between a militiaman and a yeoman was later discovered to be much more. The militiaman, a Captain Hyacinth Bodkin of the Galway corps, was court-martialled in Youghal, County Cork, on 26 August 1800 for beating and imprisoning a yeoman. During Bodkin’s trial, it was alleged that at the time of his arrest, he was heard to declare: ‘The first Orange rascal I meet, I’ll split him.’<sup>57</sup> The strong tribalism within some corps sparked melees between the (Catholic) Tipperary militia and (Protestant) Cavan yeomanry; the

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<sup>54</sup> Harris, edited by Hathaway and Cornwell, pp i-viii.

<sup>55</sup> Harris, *Recollections*, Curling (ed.), pp 12-13.

<sup>56</sup> Prior to embarkation, Harris remarked that the British soldiers were continually bothered by ‘unruly Paddies’, *Ibid*, pp 12-13.

<sup>57</sup> Court martial at Youghal, Lt-Col Peyton, Leitrim Regiment President: N.L.I., Kilmainham Papers MS.1201.

(Catholic) King's County militia and the (Protestant) Omagh yeomanry; and the (Protestant) Fintona yeomanry and the (Catholic) South Mayo militia.<sup>58</sup> Brawls between corps can more accurately be described as tribal rather than religious, although many were possibly instigated as a result of derogatory remarks concerning religion.

Tensions of such a nature were not only visible between Irish Catholics and Protestants, but also between Irish Catholics and British Protestant servicemen in England. On 1 April 1812, the 42<sup>nd</sup> Regiment (Black Watch) met the Dublin militia in a Colchester market. The two regiments ended up in a brawl in which there were many serious injuries.<sup>59</sup> There may have been a religious element which sparked the brawl, as the 42<sup>nd</sup> was very strongly Church of Scotland/Presbyterian while the City of Dublin militia was overwhelmingly Catholic.<sup>60</sup> Although not stated where the following incident occurred, in another case, Theobald Doherty of the 40<sup>th</sup> Regiment was 'compelled' to leave the army after challenging a senior officer to a duel after being provoked 'on the score of his religion.'<sup>61</sup> Irish Catholics were also capable of expressing extreme animosity toward their Protestant shipmates in the royal navy. On the *Caesar* for example, an Irish tailor by the name of John Mahoney/Mahony was alleged to have made threats that he and other Irish Catholics were going to murder all Protestants aboard the vessel.<sup>62</sup> Referring to another incident on board the *Caesar*, an English sailor at the trial of an Irish Catholic by the name of Divine noted:

The prisoner Divine.... [replied] that he was no Briton but a true Irishman and....a true Catholic. [The English sailor replied] 'I am....a true Protestant.' Divine then said 'By the Holy Ghost, I will never be easy but I've washed my hands in their blood.'<sup>63</sup>

Similar views were also expressed aboard the *Defiance* over the same period, as an Irish [Catholic] sailor by the name of John Brady was alleged to have declared that [he] 'would

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<sup>58</sup> Lieutenant-General Gardiner (T.N.A., HO 100/104/53); Stewart to Littlehales, (T.N.A. HO/100/153/366-8); Abstract of Reports, (T.N.A., HO 100/164/291).

<sup>59</sup> *Freeman's Dublin Journal*. 8 April 1812.

<sup>60</sup> Monthly Returns (T.N.A. WO 17/262); Fontana, 'Some aspects of Roman Catholic service', p. 181.

<sup>61</sup> See Butler, *An autobiography*, p. 10.

<sup>62</sup> Court martial papers, 23 July 1798 (T.N.A., ADM 1/5345).

<sup>63</sup> Lawrence James, *Mutiny in the British in Commonwealth forces 1797-1956* (London, 1987), p.193.



think nothing' [of cutting] 'a Presbyterian throat.'<sup>64</sup> From the evidence presented above, it would appear that Irish Catholics were often the instigators of the confrontations.

#### **Religious Observance?**

Before looking at the importance of the religious practice of Irish Catholic servicemen, it must be reiterated that 'for more than half the population, attendance at Mass was by no means frequent.'<sup>65</sup> To clarify, as indicated, Mass on Sundays was not the chief obligation for an Irish Catholic over this period.<sup>66</sup> Generally, it revolved around fulfilling one's Easter duty. This entailed going to confession and receiving communion annually between Ash Wednesday and Ascension Thursday.<sup>67</sup> Contact between the priesthood and the population was generally kept alive through the practice of stations of the cross.<sup>68</sup> Pilgrimages were another feature which helped Irish Catholics to retain a hold on their faith, and keep in contact with the priesthood.<sup>69</sup> But it was mostly the middle-class and tenant farming class which had the most contact with the Catholic priesthood over the period and who arguably were the mostly religiously orientated.<sup>70</sup> Turning to claims of religious indifference exhibited by Irish Catholic servicemen, in a letter to the Right Hon. John Villiers<sup>71</sup> dated 8 September 1809 from Badajoz in Spain, Viscount Wellington made the following comments:

Any man may go to Mass who chooses.....The consequence is, that nobody goes to Mass.....we have whole regiments of Irishmen, and of course Roman Catholics, I have not seen one soldier perform any one

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<sup>64</sup> Court martial papers, 7 Jan. 1799 (T.N.A., ADM 1/5348); see also James, *Mutiny in commonwealth forces*, p.189.

<sup>65</sup> *Priests and people in pre-Famine Ireland 1780-1845* by S. J. Connolly. Review by: Maurice R. O'Connell in *The Catholic Historical Review*, lxx, no. 4 (Oct, 1984), pp 589-590, available at JSTOR <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2502192> [15 February 2014].

<sup>66</sup> Larkin, *The pastoral role of the church*, pp 3-6.

<sup>67</sup> *Ibid*, pp 3-6.

<sup>68</sup> *Ibid*, pp 3-6.

<sup>69</sup> Shalvey, 'A study of the pilgrimage to Lough Derg in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries', p. 3.

<sup>70</sup> Larkin, *The pastoral role of the church*, pp 3-6.

<sup>71</sup> John Charles Villiers, third earl of Clarendon (1757–1838). In 1807, to general astonishment, he was chosen by Canning to be envoy to the Portuguese court. He established a relationship with Wellington and...felt confident to offer advice on policy in the Peninsula, see *Dictionary of National Biography* <http://www.oxforddnb.com.jproxy.nuim.ie/view/article/28301?docPos=3> [08 February 2014].

act of religious worship in these Catholic countries, excepting making the sign of the cross to induce the people...to give them wine.<sup>72</sup>

Another source which lends credence to Wellington's claim was recorded by the Irish Catholic sergeant named Thomas when stationed in Plymouth just following the war:

I recollect that, one wet Sunday morning, it was my turn to march the Catholic party to Stonehouse chapel. The piety of the others was about equal to mine. Finding ourselves rather damp from the rain, it was proposed, that instead of going to Mass, we should adjourn to the next public house. This was agreed without division.<sup>73</sup>

Two further reports confirm the impression presented above. In the first, a Protestant chaplain-general declared 'Irish soldiers...often make their religion a pretext for idleness on Sunday and many who claim the right of going to Mass prefer the alehouse.'<sup>74</sup> In the second, the duke of Richmond, when lord lieutenant, suggested that 'in a Catholic regiment composed of 500 or 600 men, perhaps not 200 attend church.'<sup>75</sup> Youth may have played a part in this. Many men may have considered that a soldier's life was often short, and it would have been better to engage in other pursuits while they had the chance. Fear of being ridiculed may have also been a reason. John Shipp, the English Protestant from Saxmundham in Suffolk, noted just such a case in the Irish 87<sup>th</sup> Regiment in 1805 while it was waiting to start an attack in Bhurtpore, India. He found an Irishman by the name of Murphy praying on his knees. Although Murphy's religion was not given, there is a strong possibility he was Catholic, as much of the 87<sup>th</sup> Regiment hailed from the Kilkenny area. As Shipp recalled:

I entered a wood..., when my attention was arrested by a soldier on his knees, fervently supplicating the aid of Almighty God....The moment he heard my footstep, he suddenly arose, and, seeming ashamed... said, 'Who's that?' I answered, 'Sergeant Shipp; who are you?' He replied, 'Private Murphy.' 'Murphy!' I repeated; 'is it possible that such a blasphemer as you, who, day after day, and hour after hour, boast your own infamy in a wanton disbelief and contempt of every quality that

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<sup>72</sup> Arthur Wellesley, duke of Wellington, to Right Hon, John Viliers, 8 Sept 1809, *The dispatches of field marshal, the duke of Wellington during his various campaigns in India, Denmark, Portugal, Spain, the Low Countries, and France from 1799-1818*, edited by lieut. colonel Gurwood (13 vols, London, 1835) v, pp. 134-135; see also Phillip Guedalla, *The duke* (London, 1997).

<sup>73</sup> This was recorded by Thomas, the Irish Catholic who later converted to Protestantism, Anon, *Sergeant, late in the Forty-third*, p. 181.

<sup>74</sup> John Owen to Secretary at War, 1 Dec 1812. (T.N.A., WO 7/61).

<sup>75</sup> Quoted by Cookson, *The armed nation*, p. 172.

can constitute the man and the Christian.... that you have at this late hour retired to this lonely place, and are found in the act of prayer?' Shipp, he replied..... 'I pray you, do not expose me to my comrades, or I shall become their jeer and ridicule....., you know how religious soldiers are held in derision by some of our comrades.'<sup>76</sup>

Murphy's fear of being ridiculed may have been another reason that impeded many a serviceman from openly expressing any religious feeling.

However, there is also evidence that points to large numbers of Catholics, which must include many Irish, attending Catholic churches in towns such Portsmouth, Sheerness and Woolwich in southern England from 1793 to 1815. The militia interchange act (1811) may have facilitated this process.<sup>77</sup> Another indicator which suggests that not all Irish Catholics were indifferent to their religion can be seen in the way that some servicemen tried to impart Catholic teaching to their comrades in a period when no Catholic chaplains were allowed officiate to Catholic soldiers. Bernard Grant of the Scottish 71<sup>st</sup> Regiment exemplified this.<sup>78</sup> Concerning his religiosity, Kathleen O'Meara made the assertion that:

His knowledge in this respect stood him in good service with his comrades, whom he was in the habit of instructing in the truths of the faith when any of them needed and desired it. He also taught many of them to say the Rosary, a devotion which in those days was almost unknown in England, although to the most illiterate peasant in his own native land it was [as] familiar as the Pater and Ave that make up its divine melody.<sup>79</sup>

However, concerning O'Meara's comments above, they were made during the Victorian period and were most likely the memories of Bernard's son, Thomas Grant, the bishop who was the study of her book. This should be kept in mind when viewing her reliability.

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<sup>76</sup> Shipp, *Memoirs*, i, p. 184.

<sup>77</sup> Snape, *Redcoat and religion*, p. 161; The militia act passed in 1811 witnessed 10,000 men transferred yearly from Ireland to serve in Great Britain, see Thomas Bartlett, 'Defence, counter-insurgency and rebellion: Ireland, 1793-1803' in Thomas Bartlett and Keith Jeffery (eds.) *A military history of Ireland* (Cambridge, 1996), pp 247-93.

<sup>78</sup> See introduction for notes on Bernard Grant.

<sup>79</sup> O'Meara, *Thomas Grant*, pp 1-3.

### Measures affecting religious attendance

In 1793, when the Catholic relief and militia acts were passed in Ireland, provisions had been made to allow Irish Catholic servicemen to attend services of their own faith while in Ireland.<sup>80</sup> By 1811, Horse Guards had accepted Mass attendance as the appropriate form of worship for Catholics in the British armed forces wherever they were stationed.<sup>81</sup> Before this, however, some Irish Catholics found that trying to attend their own religious service was not an altogether easy task. An incident involving Private Charles O'Neil highlights this fact. After landing in Gibraltar in Spain in early 1811, all the men in O'Neil's regiment were ordered to attend the service of the Church of England. When O'Neil was called, he failed to respond to the command. O'Neil noted in his memoir that he 'had been brought up a strict Catholic' and had noticed 'a church of that persuasion in the place' where they were stationed and had thought to attend service there.<sup>82</sup> When O'Neil informed the sergeant of his intention not to attend Anglican service, and that he wanted to attend a religious service of his own faith, he was met with the reply from the sergeant that 'it was a rule of the army, and [he] must submit to it.'<sup>83</sup> Having failed to get O'Neil to budge on the issue, the sergeant called the adjutant, but he too was met with the same response from O'Neil. Having disobeyed orders from two commanding officers, O'Neil was confined to jail until his punishment could be arranged. During his incarceration, O'Neil questioned 'what right has England....to compel those who fight her battles to worship as she worships?'<sup>84</sup> His conscience told him 'that she had none.'<sup>85</sup> The following day O'Neil was given three hundred lashes for refusing orders to attend Anglican service. Punishment was halted twice to see if he would reconsider his position. On both occasions O'Neil declined and received the full three hundred. As O'Neil related, 'I was then taken down, more dead than alive.'<sup>86</sup> O'Neil claims in his memoir, that he reported the incident to the duke of York

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<sup>80</sup> Cookson, *The armed nation*, pp 173-5.

<sup>81</sup> Fontana, 'Some aspects of Roman Catholic service', p. ii. Horse Guards, Whitehall, was the seat of administration of the Army, available at Victorian London.org <http://www.victorianlondon.org/buildings/horseguards.htm> [30 September 2013].

<sup>82</sup> O'Neil, *Adventures*, p. 44.

<sup>83</sup> *Ibid*, p. 44.

<sup>84</sup> *Ibid*, p. 47.

<sup>85</sup> *Ibid*, p. 47.

<sup>86</sup> *Ibid*, pp 44-8.

who was then commander in chief of the army.<sup>87</sup> Later on that year (1811), the laws affecting worship for Catholics serving in the armed forces were changed. How much O'Neil's letter had bearing on the matter cannot be estimated. However, it is quite probable that O'Neil's case was not the only one to have come to the attention of the duke of York.

As to the issue of attending Anglican service; prior to the change in the law in 1811, it has been suggested that the 'refusal to attend Anglican worship was usually seen as disobedience to an order and therefore in contravention of the Mutiny Act.'<sup>88</sup> It was for this reason that a Catholic soldier could be punished, rather than for any refusal to attend Anglican service. Others have argued that commanding officers viewed church attendance on Sunday morning as a way of creating regimental cohesion and loyalty.<sup>89</sup> These arguments no doubt have their validity, but in an armed force, which had been so long the right arm of a Protestant nation, the nature of such statements might require further consideration. Returning to O'Neil's narrative, it is certainly untypical of any other stories encountered. Possibly the most compelling aspect is that he remained resolute to his religious convictions, despite being almost brought to the point of death. What is of further significance is the fact that O'Neil stresses he was brought up a strict Catholic and that he sought out a Catholic church where he was stationed.<sup>90</sup> Based upon this evidence, it might be suggested that O'Neil was a middle-class Catholic. If so, his middle-class background, may have allowed him to have greater contact with the priesthood, as Mass would often be said in middle-class homes. This may have had a bearing on his strong religious convictions. O'Neil was not the only serviceman who encountered difficulties over refusing Anglican service. Private James Spence had been jailed in 1810 for insulting his commanding officer in order to escape Anglican service.<sup>91</sup> This incident was brought to the attention of chief secretary William Wellesley-Pole, and after some representation from Dr Troy, the military authorities agreed to release Spence from his confinement.<sup>92</sup>

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<sup>87</sup> Ibid, p. 48.

<sup>88</sup> Fontana, 'Some aspects of Roman Catholic service', p. 280.

<sup>89</sup> Bartlett, *Fall and rise*, p. 324.

<sup>90</sup> O'Neil, *Adventures*, pp 8-11.

<sup>91</sup> Bartlett, *Fall and rise*, p. 325.

<sup>92</sup> William Wellesley-Pole, (1763–1845) chief secretary for Ireland, available at *Dictionary of Irish biography* <http://dib.cambridge.org.jproxy.nuim.ie/quicksearch.do;jsessionid=CD9AD345E8D225341F47B53AA2909D>

A number of other cases were recorded where Irish Catholics were punished for not attending Anglican service or being denied the right to attend Mass. In the first, a Private Hyland of the 14<sup>th</sup> Light Dragoons was flogged for refusing Protestant worship in 1795.<sup>93</sup> At Ardfinnan camp, County Tipperary in 1796, Sir Edward Bellew, a Catholic officer in the Louth Regiment complained that Catholic soldiers were forced to attend Protestant services.<sup>94</sup> This situation was later resolved, and the men were allowed to attend their own form of worship.<sup>95</sup> Both of these cases happened in Ireland, where the freedom for Catholic servicemen to attend their own worship was recognised from 1793. In another piece of evidence, a Private James Larkin of the 7<sup>th</sup> Division East India Company informed Daniel O'Connell in a letter dated 13 January 1812 from the Isle of Wight that.....'I am a soldier and fully understand the general order in favour of Catholic worship', but noted 'the many methods that are put into practice to have that (general) order contravened.'<sup>96</sup> Larkin also reported 'we are Catholics and dare not complain lest worse might happen', further adding, 'we enjoy our religion by indulgence.'<sup>97</sup> Larkin also informed O'Connell of another case which he encountered, where another Irish soldier by the name of John Moore, an Irish Catholic in the East India Artillery Regiment, had an altercation with a Methodist sergeant by the name of Sutherland of the 50<sup>th</sup> Regiment, over being allowed to attend Catholic worship.<sup>98</sup> From the evidence presented above, it would seem that despite there being permission for Catholics to attend their own form of worship, there were still cases where it was often difficult to do so.

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[40](#) [31 May 2013]; John Thomas Troy, (1739–1823): ordained to the priesthood in 1762. In 1776 appointed as bishop of Ossory. His tenure coincided with the beginnings of the revival of the Catholic Church following the trials of the penal era. He assumed leadership of this process, and throughout his career he sought to bring the Irish church into line with Roman practice, available at [dublindiocese.ie http://www.dublindiocese.ie/content/thomas-troy-1786-1823](http://www.dublindiocese.ie/content/thomas-troy-1786-1823) [31 May 2013]; Bartlett, *Fall and rise*, p. 325.

<sup>93</sup> Bartlett, *Fall and rise*, p. 324; Snape, *Redcoat and religion*, p.163.

<sup>94</sup> Captain Sir Edward Bellew to officer commanding the Louth regiment, 10 Oct 1796 (P.R.O.N.I., T/755/3/145).

<sup>95</sup> Pelham to Duff, 29 Sept 1796 (P.R.O.N.I., T755/3/105-6); Duff to Pelham 2 Oct 1796 (P.R.O.N.I., T755/3/122-30); Military command to Duff, 9 Oct 1796 (P.R.O.N.I., T755/3, 140-1); Bartlett, *Fall and rise*, p. 324; Henry McAnally, *The Irish militia*, (London, 1949), p. 51. Nelson, *The Irish militia*, p. 126.

<sup>96</sup> Larkin to O'Connell, 13 Jan 1812, see *The correspondence of Daniel O'Connell*, edited by Maurice O'Connell (8 vols, Dublin, 1972), i, 278-9.

<sup>97</sup> *O'Connell corr*, i, 278-279.

<sup>98</sup> *Ibid*, i, 278-279.

### Stigmatisation of ritual practices

Irish servicemen could sometimes be stigmatised because of their Catholic identity. Tom Crawley is one case in point. His commanding officer forced him to wear a long smock frock with a green cross painted both front and back because of misbehaviour.<sup>99</sup> When approached as to the reason why he had to wear this garb, Tom made this response: 'Arrah and sure!'.... 'Is it not the new regulation of the duke of York, and mustn't all the likes of me, that are Catholics in our regiment, wear the cross on their dress!'<sup>100</sup> These remarks betray the fact that he knew his Catholic religion was being used as a stigmatising mark to set him apart from the rest of the soldiers in his regiment, and that other Catholics were possibly forced to do the same. While this anecdote is from the memoirs of Edward Costello, which is generally reliable, some caution should still be maintained when viewing the passage above. In another incident, General Picton, who commanded the third division in the Peninsula, was known to have made critical remarks about the religion of the Connaught Rangers in front of the entire third division. The men in the Connaught Rangers never let him forget these remarks.<sup>101</sup>

The ritualistic practices of Irish Catholic servicemen also drew some comment. Joseph Donaldson, a Scottish Presbyterian of the 94<sup>th</sup> Regiment, described the somewhat excessive devoutness of an Irish Catholic comrade called Dennis, when he encountered a Catholic procession in Spain during the Peninsula Wars:<sup>102</sup>

The population seemed composed of monks and friars, for we met them at every step either begging, or walking in procession with the sacrament (or host) to some sick person. On these occasions they were preceded by a bell, which warned the passengers [presumably the spectators in the crowd] of their approach; whenever it was heard, they [the Spanish Catholics who were there to celebrate the affair] were down on their knees in a moment, in the very middle of the mud, and continued praying and beating their breasts until it passed. Poor Dennis was sadly puzzled the first time he met one of these parties: he was a

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<sup>99</sup> Costello, *Adventures*, p. 8.

<sup>100</sup> *Ibid*, p. 8.

<sup>101</sup> *Ibid*, i, p. 18.

<sup>102</sup> Esdaile, *The Peninsular War*, p. 207.

Catholic, and of course could not avoid following the example of the Christians around him.<sup>103</sup>

Donaldson's most significant statement was to point out that Dennis 'was a Catholic, and of course could not avoid following the example of the Christians around him.'<sup>104</sup> The ritual which Donaldson describes was a traditional practice in Spain and Portugal. Wellington took these matters seriously, as he issued orders that at all times when such a procession would pass, every officer or soldier in the army was to pay the utmost respect.<sup>105</sup> Surprisingly, the most critical statements about Catholic ritual came from an Irish Catholic by the name of Thomas of the 43<sup>rd</sup> Regiment.<sup>106</sup> His comments need to be seen in the context of his later conversion to Methodism. In one incident, Thomas recollected that after returning to Ireland on leave, he became ill and was told to go to the priest for confession. This it was believed would 'cleanse his soul and make him better.'<sup>107</sup> He did this on two occasions, but was scandalised by the fact that the priest asked for money, and that his confession was heard in an alehouse. Below he recalls his third encounter with a 'Catholic counsellor':

he stated that about seven miles from my residence were six holy wells; and that, if after twelve months penance, I went round those wells, on my bare knees, devoutly saying an Ave Maria and a Pater Noster, I should find relief.<sup>108</sup>

Thomas also recorded that 'to increase the number of pilgrimages to the spot, booths were erected in the vicinity, under which provisions of various sorts were sold, not forgetting a copious store of whisky.'<sup>109</sup> He added 'this intolerable abuse has, I understand, been suppressed; and the only wander (sic) with me is, that it ever obtained, even among the most credulous.'<sup>110</sup> Thomas's narrative seems to correspond with some of the practices noted in the introduction. His contempt for them is best illustrated in his declaration that:

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<sup>103</sup> Donaldson, *Recollections*, pp 45-6.

<sup>104</sup> *Ibid*, pp 45-6.

<sup>105</sup> Steve Schwamenfeld, 'The foundation of British strength: National identity and the British common soldier' (Ph. D thesis, Florida State University, Fall, 2007), p. 101.

<sup>106</sup> Anon, *Sergeant, late in the Forty-third*, pp 1-2.

<sup>107</sup> *Ibid*, pp 224-5.

<sup>108</sup> *Ibid*, pp 224-5.

<sup>109</sup> *Ibid*, pp 224-5.

<sup>110</sup> *Ibid*, pp 224-5.



‘the practices of Catholicism are utterly at variance with the revealed will of God and subversive of sound morality.’<sup>111</sup> Although the following incident was recorded just after 1815, George Bell (an Irish Protestant) when reporting on the funeral practices of Irish Catholics in the 1<sup>st</sup> European Regiment, paints a picture of the reverence which they paid to the cortege of a fallen comrade which passed by during a football game:

A comrade passed over the ground to his last home at the time, attended by an officer and the usual party, when they all of one accord ceased from their amusement, opened out right and left, took off their hats, and stood motionless until the funeral passed through to the chapel.<sup>112</sup>

This regiment was almost entirely composed of Irishmen and probably strongly Catholic. Bell does not record any other nationality among the British soldiers affording the same courteous behaviour towards a dead soldier. John Green, a British soldier, offered the following comments after attending a funeral at Hythe, of an Irish bugle-major who had died of Walcheren sickness:<sup>113</sup>

To me it appeared so ridiculous, that I know not how to reconcile it to reason and religion.....The wake lasted two nights, on which occasion we had much smoking and drinking....different Irish games were played, and tales were told, and thus the nights were spent: there was no restraint whatever, so that the wake resembled a wedding rather than anything else.<sup>114</sup>

Donaldson expressed similar comments about the Irish when it came to grief, 'it always appeared to me that the Irish either feel more acutely than the Scotch or English, or that they have less restraint on themselves in expressing it.'<sup>115</sup>

#### Superstitious behaviour

Superstition was a trait often associated with the religiosity of Irish Catholics. It must be stressed that there was some historical context to this, as the following passage indicates:

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<sup>111</sup> Ibid, p. 225.

<sup>112</sup> Bell, *Rough notes*, p. 315.

<sup>113</sup> John Green, *The vicissitudes of a soldier's life: or, A series of occurrences from 1806 ...* (London, 1827), p.52, available at Internet Archive <http://archive.org/stream/vicissitudesaso00greegoog#page/n67/mode/2up> [16 January 2012].

<sup>114</sup> The bugle-major's name was not mentioned. His religion was not stated but we can intimate it from the description of the funeral, see Green. *The vicissitudes of a soldier's life*, p.52.

<sup>115</sup> Donaldson, *Recollections*, p. 60.

The Irish Church, born at the beginning of the Dark Ages, was left to develop in comparative isolation and in a long established pagan background.... The continuity of rural society preserves traditions and (so) Irish life in the eighteenth century was permeated with many examples of pre-Christian customs glossed over with a very thin veneer of Christianity.<sup>116</sup>

E.M Johnston has noted that ‘popular Catholicism in pre-Famine Ireland was conceptualised...as a syncretic admixture of official elements promulgated by church elites and pagan elements inherited from a distant past.’<sup>117</sup> Superstitious practices that followed because of a mixture of such beliefs were bound to draw pejorative comments from fellow comrades. In one example, Edward Costello tells an interesting anecdote about Tom Crawley, who after allegedly witnessing a ghost, stormed into the camp where all the men were bedding down for the night and asked for salt and water so as to ward off the evil spirit. As Costello intimated of such practices:

I must explain to the uninitiated, according to a vulgar superstition in Ireland, [the salt and water] is absolutely necessary to be drunk by those who have seen a phantom before seeing light, as a neglect of the precaution was sure to be followed by an evil influence.<sup>118</sup>

However, instead of salt and water, the men gave Tom alcohol to which Costello related, Tom ‘drank...off with as much avidity as if his future salvation depended on it: the men, meanwhile, nearly convulsed with laughter at Tom’s credulity.’<sup>119</sup> Costello believed that such beliefs were ‘vulgar’ while the rest of the men were ‘convulsed with laughter at Tom’s credulity.’<sup>120</sup> In another story, after encountering a comet while in Spain in 1813, Costello noted that Tom believed that it ‘was a sign we ought to leave the country, as it would

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<sup>116</sup> Michael P. Carroll, ‘Rethinking popular Catholicism in pre-famine Ireland’ in *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion*, xxxiv, no. 3 (1995), pp 354-65: available at JSTOR <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1386884> [29 May 2013].

<sup>117</sup> E. M. Johnston, ‘Problems common to both Protestant and Catholic churches in the eighteenth-century Ireland’ in Oliver MacDonagh, (ed.) *Irish culture and nationalism, 1750-1950*, (London, 1983), p. 22.

<sup>118</sup> This happened in Santarem in Portugal in 1809. See Costello, *Adventures*, p. 52.

<sup>119</sup> Upon further research, it was found that Costello was buried in Nunhead cemetery in London. Having contacted ‘Friends of Nunhead cemetery’, a trust which looks after the cemetery, it was discovered that Nunhead was a multi-denominational cemetery. Further research will be required in order to get a definite idea as to Costello’s own religious affiliation and thus his own prejudices regarding such rituals, McInnes, *Yeomen of the guard*, pp 10-11; Costello, *Adventures*, p. 52; Friends of Nunhead cemetery <http://www.fonc.org.uk/> [29 May 2013].

<sup>120</sup> Ibid, p. 52.

shortly drop down and burn up that part of Europe.’<sup>121</sup> Such anecdotes must have confirmed to many the superstitious nature of Irish Catholics.

#### **Relationship between the Irish Catholic church and military establishment**

What of the relationship between Irish Catholic priests and the political and military hierarchy concerning Irish Catholics serving in the armed forces? Bearing in mind the lack of provision for Catholic servicemen outside of Ireland to attend Catholic service before 1811, evidence points to the fact that Irish Catholic bishops made a number of ‘representations on the matter’ of freedom of worship for Catholic troops during the period.<sup>122</sup> Some bishops believed that ‘the failure of the military authorities to address the issue was a sign that the army was trying to proselytise Irish troops.’<sup>123</sup> One source that supports this statement occurred in 1810, when Bishop Moylan wrote that ‘the treatment of (Irish) Catholic soldiers in the forces proves the bigotry of those in power.’<sup>124</sup> As witnessed earlier, there were a number of instances where Irish Catholic servicemen were either forced to attend Anglican service or were denied access to freely practice their own faith. It has already been noted that in 1811, the laws concerning freedom of worship in the armed forces were changed to accommodate Catholic religious service. It would appear that the political hierarchy in Britain was aware of the problems that this was creating, as in 1806, the duke of Bedford wrote to Grenville, criticising ‘the intolerance of Horse Guards’ when it came to allowing Irish Catholics to worship freely.<sup>125</sup> Bedford further added that this intolerance (by Horse Guards) ‘completely checked recruiting in Ireland, where the priests

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<sup>121</sup> Ibid, p. 87.

<sup>122</sup> Moylan to Portland, 28 May 1800 (D.D.A, Troy MSS, 29/8/28); Milner to Troy, 6 Aug 1804; 13 June 1805 (D.D.A, Troy MSS 29, 10/10/6,661).

<sup>123</sup> Bartlett, *Fall and rise*, p. 325.

<sup>124</sup> Moylan to Jerningham, 3 April 1810 (D.D.A, Troy MSS, 29/12/52). Francis Moylan was consecrated Bishop of Kerry. In 1786 he was transferred to the Cork Diocese. Moylan was opposed to the French Revolution and to the new emerging ideas associated with republicanism. He was regarded, by many, as a unionist, available at Diocese of Cork & Ross <http://www.corkandross.org/priests.jsp?priestID=495> [01 October 2013].

<sup>125</sup> Duke of Bedford to Lord Grenville, 14 January 1807, *Fortescue MSS*, ix, pp 4-6. Sir John Russell, 6th duke of Bedford, born on 6 July 1766. He held the office of lord-lieutenant of Ireland 1806-1807, available at Cyberancestors [http://www.cyberancestors.com/cummins/ps100/ps100\\_422.htm](http://www.cyberancestors.com/cummins/ps100/ps100_422.htm) [03 Jun. 2013]; William Wyndham Grenville, (1759–1834) Following the death of Pitt, Grenville became prime minister. This administration lasted just over a year. Attempts to open senior commissions in the army and navy to Catholics met with royal disapproval, Grenville resigned (25 Mar. 1807), available at *Dictionary of Irish Biography* <http://dib.cambridge.org.jproxy.nuim.ie/quicksearch.do> [03 June 2013].

had brought their influence to bear against a system of compulsory proselytism.<sup>126</sup> One piece of evidence that demonstrates the somewhat hostile attitude employed by British military commanders towards Irish priests can be seen in an event in Milazzo in Sicily in April 1809. At the time, five British regiments were stationed at the military fort in the town. These regiments had a high proportion of [presumably Irish] Catholics serving within their ranks. One of the sergeants, Mulcahy of the 27<sup>th</sup> Regiment, wrote to the Jesuits in Palermo asking whether a priest could be sent to hear the soldier's confessions.<sup>127</sup> The Jesuit superior was at first reluctant because he felt that the Protestant officers would show disrespect to Catholic priests, but later assented. On 27 September, a Father Kenney said his first Mass. On the same day Kenney began to hear confessions, and while only one Irish soldier had his confession heard that day, the following day, confessions of many soldiers were heard. However, by 1 October, the Sicilian chief officer of Milazzo informed Kenney that the Scottish general, Sir John Stuart, wanted Kenney to leave the town.<sup>128</sup> When pushed by Kenney as to why, Stuart initially replied that it was 'for particular reasons known to himself...' and when further pressed, 'his orders were not personal or prompted by any complaint, but that he had merely acted upon certain principles of a general nature...'<sup>129</sup> Kenney was subsequently informed that the authorities feared he had 'assembled the soldiers for private instructions and that some Protestants in disguise made an evil report of the meeting.'<sup>130</sup> Kenney took the matter further and made a complaint to the authorities in London which the Irish press seized upon during the heated debates regarding the Catholic question in June 1810. It has been suggested that this was just one in a number of factors which induced the duke of York to issue the following order in 1811:

the commanding officers of regiments [are to be] particularly attentive that no soldier professing the Roman Catholic religion.....be subject to any punishment for not attending divine worship of the Church of England; and that any soldier should be at full liberty to worship according to the terms prescribed by his religion, when military duty does not interfere.<sup>131</sup>

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<sup>126</sup> duke of Bedford to Lord Grenville, 14 January 1807, N.L.I., *Fortescue MSS.* ix, pp 4-6.

<sup>127</sup> See Thomas Morrissey, *As one sent: Peter Kenney, SJ, 1779-1841*(Dublin, 1996), pp 54-5.

<sup>128</sup> Morrissey, *As one sent*, p. 58.

<sup>129</sup> *Ibid*, pp 58- 59.

<sup>130</sup> *Ibid*, p. 58.

<sup>131</sup> *Ibid*, p.62.

As Kenney added, 'an important principle had thus been conceded, though its application thereafter appears to have been left to the discretion of military/naval commanders and officers who were non-Catholic and not infrequently, anti-Catholic.'<sup>132</sup>

These episodes point to a disharmonious relationship between the Catholic church and the military establishment over the period, but this was not always the case. In another letter written by Grenville to the duke of Bedford in 1806 about a proposed regiment which was to be officered and contain only Irish Catholics for service in South America, Grenville, the then prime minister, made enquiries about 'making provisions for Catholic clergy.'<sup>133</sup> Later he made clear his intent to inform both the Catholic hierarchy and clergy that once troops were employed there, 'they would....have.....free exercise of their religion.'<sup>134</sup> In a separate letter, Grenville further stated, 'if three or four priests had assurances that on finding themselves in South America they should receive allowances there, and be permitted to officiate to the regiments, could we not hope in that way to complete a battalion, and afterwards more, in a shorter time than any other?'<sup>135</sup> This was most likely a motive predicated on increasing British manpower but it does show forward thinking, considering that Catholic chaplains did not minister in any official capacity until 1836.<sup>136</sup> Further evidence which might corroborate a more amicable relationship between the church and military authorities can be seen during the Peninsular War.<sup>137</sup> The Irish religious communities in Portugal and Spain rallied against the French and 'were allowed to minister to Catholic Irish soldiers' and 'proved extremely useful in providing intelligence to British military figures such as the duke of Wellington.'<sup>138</sup> One Irish priest who fulfilled

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<sup>132</sup> Ibid, p. 62. Fontana, 'Some aspects of Roman Catholic service', p. 242.

<sup>133</sup> Copy of a letter of Lord Grenville to the duke of Bedford concerning tithes, facilitating the enlistment of Catholics into the army and making provision for the Catholic... 29 December 1806, *Fortescue MSS* (1912), viii, 486-88.

<sup>134</sup> Ibid, 486-88.

<sup>135</sup> Copy of a letter of Lord Grenville to W. Elliot, asking him to consider once more the question of Catholic recruiting for service in South America. 20 December 1806 in *Fortescue MSS* (1912), viii, 480-81.

<sup>136</sup> Terence Denman, 'The Catholic Irish soldier in the First World War', in *Irish Historical Studies*, xxvii, no 108 (Nov, 1991), pp 352-65; Holmes, *Redcoat*. p. 119.

<sup>137</sup> See D. J. O' Doherty, 'Students of the Irish college, Salamanca' in *Archivium Hibernicum*, vi, (1917), pp 1-26, available at JSTOR <http://www.jstor.org/stable/25485509> [11 February 2014].

<sup>138</sup> Snape, *Redcoat and religion*, p. 165.

such a role was Dr. Patrick Curtis of the Irish College at Salamanca. As was recorded of Curtis:

[One] of Wellington's religious irregulars was the 72-year old Reverend Dr Patrick Curtis. He headed his own network which extended throughout occupied Spain and north across the Pyrenees. It was only after the battle of Salamanca (22 July 1812), when Wellington met Curtis, that his cover was blown.<sup>139</sup>

Significantly, Curtis remained on friendly terms with Wellington for the rest of his life. In the extract below, the source relates the interrogation that Curtis underwent by Marshal Auguste de Marmont,<sup>140</sup> the French governor-general of the Iberian Peninsula, over Curtis's alleged relationship with the English spy, Corporal Grant.<sup>141</sup>

You frequently visit the English colonel. Curtis replied: I do. How is it possible, sir, that you do so without having some purpose, some business therein? Curtis replied: The Holy Catholic religion, which you, Marshal, and I profess, enjoins us...to visit the sick and prisoners, and to administer consolation to them. The Marshal rejoined: He is not of your religion; he is a heretic, a Protestant. Dr. Curtis replied: We are both Christians, we follow the precepts of our Saviour; and he is my countryman. The Marshal said: That is false; he is Ecosais, and you Irlandais. You shall immediately go to prison unless you reveal to me secrets which I am informed the English Colonel has confided to you.<sup>142</sup>

Curtis was not the only Irish priest to work for the British military at this time. It is known that there were four other names on the college books, Burke, Shea, O'Grady and

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<sup>139</sup> Patrick Curtis was probably educated at the Irish College of Salamanca. That he gave very valuable information to Wellington there can be no doubt from the duke's frequent mention of his services, but there is no document published which states them in detail, see A web of English history <http://www.historyhome.co.uk/people/curtis.htm> [11 February 2014]; Captain Thomas Henry Browne, *The Napoleonic war journal of Captain Thomas Henry Browne*, edited by Roger Norman Buckley (London, 1987). p.147; Terry Crowdy, *The enemy within: a history of espionage* (Oxford, 2006) p. 155.

<sup>140</sup> Auguste-Frédéric-Louis Viesse de Marmont, duke de Raguse, (1774-1852) Marmont was called to command the French army in Portugal in May 1811 but had little success against the British; he was severely wounded in the Battle of Salamanca (July 22, 1812), available at *Encyclopaedia Britannica* <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/365937/Auguste-Frederic-Louis-Viesse-deMarmont-duke-de-Raguse> [01 October 2013].

<sup>141</sup> Colquhoun Grant, (1780–1829) 'In the Peninsula, Grant undertook intelligence-gathering missions...These tended to be of an overt nature. He was always in uniform. Grant greatly relied on his personal resources of sagacity, courage, and speed. He had a talent for learning languages and dialects', see *Dictionary of Irish Biography* <http://www.oxforddnb.com.jproxy.nuim.ie/view/article/11251?docPos=3> [11 February 2014].

<sup>142</sup> Edward Fraser, *The soldiers whom Wellington led* (London, 1913), p. 85. <http://archive.org/stream/soldierswhomwell00frasuoft#page/n7/mode/2up> [31 January 2012].

O'Kelly — all of whom were absent, working as guides and interpreters for the British army.<sup>143</sup> When Sir John Moore reached Salamanca on 13 November 1808 and retired northwards with his troops on 10 December, Dr. Gartlan (Rector of the college from 1829-70) stated that 'all the Irish students joined his forces as interpreters.'<sup>144</sup>

#### **Issues relating to commissions**

In 1793, when the Catholic relief act was passed in Ireland, Catholics were allowed to obtain and hold a commission as long as they stayed in Ireland. Once they were serving in England and Scotland, it became illegal for them to hold that commission. In 1800, with the signing of the Act of Union between Great Britain and Ireland, under section eight of the Irish act, it became possible for any Irish Catholic to hold a commission elsewhere in the United Kingdom. However, it would appear that the English part of the act failed to incorporate this section. This meant that Irish Catholic commissions outside Ireland were still illegal from a British perspective. In 1813, another act was passed to clarify the situation. It then became legal for any Catholic officer from elsewhere in the United Kingdom to obtain a commission under the Irish act. Significantly, for English and Scottish Catholics, their position was not properly rectified until 1828 in Britain.<sup>145</sup> However, there were attempts made in 1801 and 1807 in terms of opening up the higher ranks on the general staff to Irish Catholics. This would have rectified the tentative position that many Irish Catholics were in with regards to already holding a commission. The higher ranks were of a senior or executive position which meant that they oversaw the administration, operational and logistical positions within the armed forces. However, George III believed that allowing Catholics to attain such a status would infringe upon certain articles of his coronation oath. Grenville's last attempt to remove these restrictions on Catholics in the armed forces resulted in the downfall of his administration in 1807.<sup>146</sup> It is likely that on both occasions, the reforms were introduced with Irish Catholics in mind. This may suggest that a number of Irish Catholics had either reached the threshold at which

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<sup>143</sup> Crowdy, *The enemy within*, p. 155.

<sup>144</sup> Quoted in O' Doherty, 'Students of the Irish college', pp 1-26.

<sup>145</sup> Fontana, 'Some aspects of Roman Catholic service', pp 53-54.

<sup>146</sup> Ibid, p. 48.

they could hold their rank, or had crossed over and were holding higher ranks illegally.<sup>147</sup> One Irish Catholic who had stepped beyond the threshold was Sir Henry Sheehy Keating. Keating's rise, as recorded, was 'all the more remarkable for his being a Catholic – the more so when it is considered that the promotion of a Catholic above the rank of colonel was not permitted by the relief act of 1793 (passed only three months before he was commissioned).'<sup>148</sup> Another such Irishman was Edward Stack.<sup>149</sup> He rose to a prominent position within the British army. At the period of his promotion to major-general, Horse Guards wrote him an official letter to 'know if he was of that religion.'<sup>150</sup> His answer was short but highly significant:

Sir,- I have the honour of acknowledging the receipt of your letter, and beg to acquaint you, for the information of His Royal Highness the Commander-in-Chief that I am of the religion that makes general officers, and have the honour to be your obedient servant.<sup>151</sup>

The marquis of Buckingham also commented on Irish Catholics achieving high ranks at the time, 'Irish Catholics in point of practice here in England and in point of law in Ireland, find no difficulty in getting commissions in the army; and I could name some lately put very high by the duke of York for meritorious service abroad.'<sup>152</sup>

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<sup>147</sup> Grenville and the duke of York were aware of Catholic officers in the army, see Lord Grenville to the duke of Bedford concerning tithes, the facilitating the enlistment of Catholics into the army, 29 December 1806 *Fortescue MSS* (1912), viii, 486-88.

<sup>148</sup> Sir Henry Sheehy Keating, (1777–1847) army officer and colonial governor. The Sheehys were a well-to-do Catholic merchant and landed family from Bansa, County Tipperary, available at *Dictionary of Irish Biography* <http://dib.cambridge.org.jproxy.nuim.ie/quicksearch.do?jsessionid=CB93966D12C0596D96B20934ACC4D080> [04 June 2013].

<sup>149</sup> Edward Stack, (d. 1833) entered the French army and became an aide-de-camp to Louis XV. Stack joined Dillon's regiment in 1779 and remained with it until the French Revolution, when he entered the British service as an officer of the Irish brigade. In 1804 he was detected while performing a secret mission for the British government, and was to have been shot but was reprieved at the last minute. Stack was promoted to the rank of lieutenant-general on 4 January 1813, available at *Dictionary of National Biography* <http://www.oxforddnb.com.jproxy.nuim.ie/view/article/26194> [02 October 2013].

<sup>150</sup> *The Gentleman's Magazine*, edited by Sylvanus Urban clv-clvi, Jan-June (London, 1834), i, p. 226: available at Google books [http://books.google.ie/books?id=1IEKxCJ6swcC&pg=PA226&lpg=PA226&dq=Edward+Stack+major+general+british+army&source=bl&ots=B3uWSjQGVw&sig=i00qLvlvJ2\\_Yr2UxAA-7qo22N70&hl=en&sa=X&ei=Lf1LUuWRFpKShgeamYHoDQ&ved=0CEUQ6AEwBQ#v=onepage&q=Edward%20Stack%20major%20general%20british%20army&f=false](http://books.google.ie/books?id=1IEKxCJ6swcC&pg=PA226&lpg=PA226&dq=Edward+Stack+major+general+british+army&source=bl&ots=B3uWSjQGVw&sig=i00qLvlvJ2_Yr2UxAA-7qo22N70&hl=en&sa=X&ei=Lf1LUuWRFpKShgeamYHoDQ&ved=0CEUQ6AEwBQ#v=onepage&q=Edward%20Stack%20major%20general%20british%20army&f=false) [02 October 2013].

<sup>151</sup> *Ibid*, p. 226.

<sup>152</sup> Quoted by Western, 'Roman Catholics holding commissions', pp 428-32.



There were certain ways in which Irish Catholics could circumvent the legal restrictions in holding commissions outside Ireland. One was ‘not to be known by the king personally’ as a Catholic when he signed off on the commission.<sup>153</sup> The second was through an indemnity act. Indemnity acts allowed a commission to be taken up several months before it was necessary to fulfil the requirements of the test act. Once an officer had joined his regiment and served for some months, the relevant certificates of compliance that were supposed to be handed in were usually forgotten. If an officer kept quiet about his Catholicism, it would appear that no further questions were asked.<sup>154</sup> To clarify, indemnity acts were enacted to afford legal relief to religious nonconformists in Britain from the restrictions placed upon them by the test and corporation acts. Both required the taking of ‘the oaths of supremacy and allegiance’ in addition to the ‘sacrament of the Lord’s Supper according to the usage of the Church of England.’<sup>155</sup> As already indicated, legislation to remove these impediments for Catholics were introduced in 1813, 1817 and the final one in 1828.<sup>156</sup> The significance of the king’s refusal to budge on this crucial issue was, it could be argued, a great chance lost in which the Irish Catholic relationship with Britain could have been strengthened. Grenville seems to have been very aware of this, as Lord Buckingham later recorded in a document on 11 February 1807.<sup>157</sup> In stressing his argument to the king, Grenville argued:

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<sup>153</sup> Ibid, pp 428-432.

<sup>154</sup> The first relevant indemnity act was passed in 1726. It was specifically drafted to allow ‘further time for persons on board the fleet, or beyond the seas in his Majesty’s service to qualify themselves for the legal enjoyment of offices.’ Dissenters might be exonerated for a breach of the acts either by ‘ignorance of the law, or unavoidable accidents’, see Fontana, ‘Some aspects of Roman Catholic service’ p. 50.

<sup>155</sup> K.R.M. Short, ‘The English indemnity acts 1726-1867’, in *Church History*, xlii, no. 3 (1973), pp 366-76.

<sup>156</sup> An act to relieve from the operation of the statute of 25 Charles II, c.33, (Ire.), c. 2 1, intituled ‘An act for the relief of His Majesty’s popish or Roman Catholic subjects of Ireland’, hold exercise or enjoy any civil or military offices or places of trust or profit, or any other office whatsoever, of which His Majesty’s subjects, of which the said Act of Parliament of Ireland: 53 George III, c. 128. (1813); An act to regulate the administration of oaths in His Majesty’s land and sea forces. 57 George III c. 9 2. (1817); ‘An act for repealing as much of several acts as imposes the necessity of receiving the sacrament of the Lord’s Supper as a qualification for certain offices and employments:’ 9 George IV, c. 17, (1828).

<sup>157</sup> [Lord Grenville].....wrote a personal appeal to the king, transmitting and enforcing an appeal from the entire Cabinet that he (the king) should reconsider his decision. It would convert elements of disorder in Ireland into elements of Imperial strength’, (This was a comment believed to have been made by Lord Buckingham on 11 February 1807 that is featured in the introduction to the manuscript), *The manuscripts of J.B. Fortescue, esq: Preserved at Drogheda*, (10 vols, London, 1894-1927), ix, p. xx: available at Internet Archive <https://archive.org/stream/manuportescue08greauoft#page/108/mode/2up> [04 June 2013].

no measure should more effectually promote the general interests of the empire than one which will accustom the gentry of Ireland to look for their promotion and advancement in life to your Majesty's service...by mixing .....with.....your Majesty's officers, [which] will gradually infuse into their minds the same spirit and principles by which that body is animated.<sup>158</sup>

However, in a reply to Grenville the following day, the king responded that 'he could not go one step further,' having alluded particularly to 'what took place in 1793' and 'trusted that he would not be distressed with any further applications of the same character.'<sup>159</sup> Had the king consented, many Irish Catholics might have attained higher ranks, and for those already holding commissions illegally, they would not have needed to conceal their religion while holding one.

What does evidence suggest with regard to how Irish Catholics were treated while holding commissions? In the royal navy, a lieutenant by the name of Edward Whyte who served as a successful officer throughout the war was promoted to a captaincy in 1813.<sup>160</sup> He was required to take the test but refused, and was subsequently dismissed for his troubles. Whyte was later reinstated following the intercession of the prince regent and the 13<sup>th</sup> duke of Norfolk.<sup>161</sup> Similar problems were faced by Irish Catholic officers in the army as evidenced by Captain Uniacke of the 95<sup>th</sup> Rifles.<sup>162</sup> Uniacke had died heroically during the siege of Ciudad Rodrigo in Spain in 1812. Even following his death, Uniacke's holding a commission was still deemed to require a degree of secrecy, as demonstrated by the manner in which a Corporal Fairfoot went about preparing for his funeral:

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<sup>158</sup> Lord Grenville to George III, 11 February 1807, see *Report on the manuscripts of J.B. Fortescue, esq: Preserved at Dropmore*, (10 vols, London, 1894-1927), ix, p.108: available at Internet Archive <https://archive.org/stream/manufortescue08greauoft#page/108/mode/2up> [04 Jun. 2013].

<sup>159</sup> Copies of correspondence between the cabinet and the king, concerning a proposed clause in the mutiny bill to permit Catholics to enter the army and navy, Feb. - March, 1807. N.L.I. microfiche (n.956, p.1044).

<sup>160</sup> Edward Whyte came from a recusant family from County Down. He joined the royal navy 1796 and was appointed a lieutenant in 1804. The incident in question arose when he was 1<sup>st</sup> lieutenant of the *Horatio* in 1813. He appealed successfully to the prince regent and was re-instated in rank. Whyte's commission was granted 4 March 1817, see Fontana, 'Some aspects of Roman Catholic service', p. 55

<sup>161</sup> Fontana, 'Some aspects of Roman Catholic service', p. 56; Bernard Ward, *The eve of Catholic Emancipation* (3 vols. London, 1911), ii, pp 246-7; An act to regulate the administration of oaths in His Majesty's land and sea forces, 57 George III, c. 9 2. (1817).

<sup>162</sup> Uniacke came from a renowned Catholic family from Cloyne, County Cork, Mark Urban, *Rifles: six years with Wellington's sharpshooters* (London, 2003), p. 145.

At first, the priest at Gallegos [a Spanish village] refused to allow the burial, claiming it would be an outrage to inter a heretic [a Protestant] in his place. Fairfoot assured the priest that Uniacke was Irish, thereby hinting at his Catholicism. The corporal transmitted his message without exposing the dissimulation required of Uniacke in life, an evasion made necessary by the British laws against papists holding commissions.<sup>163</sup>

It is clear that religion became a concern the higher Irish Catholics climbed within the ranks, and for this reason, great energy was exerted in trying to keep the matter quiet. Discriminatory feelings were sometimes voiced as a result of Irish Catholics holding commissions. One particular case involved Second-Lieutenant Tommy Sarsfield, again of the 95<sup>th</sup> Rifles. While in Madrid during the Peninsula War, a Scottish Presbyterian officer of the same regiment by the name of Kincaid made comments about Sarsfield's Catholic background and his holding of a commission. As the historian Urban has related, 'evidently the Sarsfields of the world were considered by some to be far too vulgar to act the part of gentleman', or '[to be] a rightful holder of the king's commission.'<sup>164</sup> Another Irish Catholic who experienced problems because he was Catholic and held a king's commission was Captain Theobald Doherty. Although it was not stated when and where the following incident occurred, the distinguished Irish army officer, Sir William Butler (who was a relation of Doherty) wrote in his autobiography:

Theobald had a well nigh unequalled fighting record: he fought at Roleia, Vimeira, Talavera, Busaco, Badajoz, Salamanca, Vitoria, Pyrenees, Orthes, and Toulouse. He only attained the rank of captain; and he was compelled to leave the army years later because, under circumstances of very gross provocation on the score of his religion, he had challenged a senior officer to fight a duel.<sup>165</sup>

Butler reported that Theobald's brother, Richard, also received a commission, but renounced his faith:

Richard got a commission about ten years later; but his name appears as Doherty — the 'O' and the 'g' omitted. What's in a name? A good deal,

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<sup>163</sup> Ibid, p. 157.

<sup>164</sup> It has been suggested that part of the animosity directed at Sarsfield had to do with the fact that 'following the 1798 rebellion, the government in order to pacify the Irish and to curb any further attempt of rebellion, scattered patronages liberally throughout the country. One aspect of this was that commissions were handed out to willing candidates, although no other evidence of this could be found; see Urban, *Rifles*, p. 200.

<sup>165</sup> Sir William Butler, *An autobiography* (London, 1911), p. 10, available at Internet Archive <http://archive.org/stream/sirwilliambutler00butluoft#page/10/mode/2up> [03 June 2013].

sometimes....Richard saw active service only at Guadaloupe and Martinique: he had those two bars to his war medal against his younger brother's [Theobald's] ten; but he gave up his faith as well as the obnoxious 'O' before his name.<sup>166</sup>

### Conclusion

In conclusion, it can be argued that for Irish Catholics of the lower orders, religious identity came in for most comment when it came into contact with Protestantism. This was evidenced on a number of occasions. Harris's narrative of the fracas between Irish Catholics and Protestants at Pill, Bath and Salisbury Plains were some such cases. Doherty's being forced to leave the army after fighting a superior officer was another, while Thomas of the 43<sup>rd</sup> Regiment admitted prior to his conversion that 'indeed few were louder than myself if challenged on the score of my religion.' While tribal confrontations took place between regiments (regular, militia and yeomanry), comments concerning the other's religion may have been the igniting spark. Despite the fact that it was not unknown for Protestant servicemen to initiate such confrontations, it would appear that Irish Catholics were often the primary instigators. Private Bodkin of the Galway corps is one case in point. He allegedly attempted to murder an 'Orange' yeoman,<sup>167</sup> while in the royal navy; Mahoney and Divine were two examples that testify to this.

As to allegations of religious indifference, it was noted at the beginning of the chapter that religious attendance at Mass over the period by Irish Catholics was often infrequent. A number of examples were presented in the chapter that would seem to confirm this in respect of Irish Catholic servicemen. The duke of Wellington and the chaplain-general's comments bore testimony to this, as did Thomas's account (an Irish Catholic at the time he was in the army) of his and his comrade's time in Plymouth where they preferred going to the ale-house than going Mass. A fear of being ridiculed may have been one reason for this, as Shipp's discovery of Murphy indicated. There were, however, a number of instances where Irish Catholics openly sought out places of worship or stressed resolute convictions regarding their Catholicism. O'Neil was the most visible, although his

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<sup>166</sup> O' Dougherty was transformed to Doherty in order to avoid being detected as an Irish Catholic. Butler acknowledged that he owed his service in the 69<sup>th</sup> Regiment to Richard, Butler, *An autobiography*, p. 11.

<sup>167</sup> See p. 70 above.

story may have been exaggerated. Bernard Grant of the 71<sup>st</sup> Regiment also went to great pains to make sure that his fellow comrades were looked after spiritually. Other evidence which challenges suggestions that Irish Catholics may have been less apathetic about practicing their religion can be seen in the flourishing Catholic presence at Catholic churches beside garrisons across southern England from 1793 to 1815. Men such as O'Neil, Mulcahy and Grant appear to have been middle class or tenant farming Catholics. This in turn may have led them to have a greater measure of contact with the Irish clergy at home which in turn may have created a stronger attachment to their faith. However, the biography of Thomas Grant which discusses his father's time in the British armed forces also hints that there may have been a strong religious consciousness among Catholics of all orders in general at this time.

As noted earlier, provisions were made in the 1793 relief act for Irish Catholic servicemen to attend their own form of worship while in Ireland. This was extended to outside Ireland in 1811. Despite this, even in Ireland commanding officers often ignored or tried to force Irish Catholics to attend Anglican worship. The case of the Louth Regiment at Ardfinnan Camp in County Tipperary in 1796 and those of Larkin and Moore are evidence that this occurred. It was also demonstrated the lengths to which some Irish servicemen went to, in order not to have to attend Anglican worship. O'Neil and Private Spence can be noted in this regard.<sup>168</sup> These examples might suggest that there was a strong Catholic consciousness among some Irish servicemen. The relationship between the British political and military hierarchy and that of the Irish Catholic hierarchy and priesthood was sometimes estranged. However, other sources point to a relationship that could often be cordial. Grenville's letters discussing the raising of regiments to be completely composed of Irish Catholics and to be accompanied by Catholic priests suggests a tolerant position; even though it was probably a measure to encourage Catholic enlistment. Evidence has also shown that there was a close working relationship between

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<sup>168</sup> See pp. 19-20.

Irish priests acting as interpreters and spies for the British military while in Spain and Portugal. This relationship may have benefitted the Irish soldiers serving in the Peninsula.

The way in which the ritualistic and superstitious practices of Irish Catholics came to be viewed has also been given some attention. Tom Crawley from the 95<sup>th</sup> Rifles and Dennis from the 71<sup>st</sup> Regiment were highlighted with respect to these issues. Significantly, when it came to these practices, it was an Irish Catholic serviceman by the name of Thomas, who was most critical of them. His disdain of them was particularly expressed after being asked in an alehouse for money to hear his confession, and being told that performing stations around a holy well for a year would cure his ailments. Thomas's comments, however, need to be viewed in terms of his later conversion to Protestantism. Irish Catholic ceremonies such as funerals also received attention by some British servicemen. Evidence of Irish Catholics being stigmatised because of their religion was also present as witnessed in the case of Tom Crawley who was forced to wear a smock frock with a green cross painted front and back. Remarks made by General Picton to the Connaught Rangers also bear testimony to this fact. Commissions also proved problematic. Many who reached quite high positions had to keep their religion quiet. In the case of Uniacke, this even had to be so following his death. Some Protestant officers openly voiced disdain at Irish Catholics holding commissions as demonstrated by Kincaid's remarks about Sarsfield. Others were forced to either to quit the forces or give up their religion because of the issue of commissions. Theobald Doherty was forced to quit while his brother Richard changed his name and his religion in order to keep his commission. Edward Whyte was another Irish Catholic forced to leave the navy because of the regulations respecting commissions. However, the duke of York intervened in the matter and he was reinstated. While there is evidence in the chapter that some Irish Catholics chose to relinquish or remain ambivalent to their Catholic faith while serving in the armed forces, the weight of evidence, it could be argued, favours the argument that there was both a strong religious identity and consciousness exhibited by Irish Catholic servicemen.

### Chapter three: The stereotyping of the Irish Catholic in the British armed forces 1793-1815

I cannot bring myself to think of them, as many did, a parcel of devils, neither will I by any manner of means try to pass them off for so many saints; but whether good or bad, they were always amusing.<sup>1</sup>

Paddy is the only man I ever met who fights for fun; he is, and was at this period, very unruly.<sup>2</sup>

The central aim of this chapter will be to examine some of the ways in which Irish Catholics were characterised during service from 1793-1815. It must be acknowledged that nearly every nationality has at some stage been stereotyped because of its ethnic or cultural characteristics. If we put this into a British context, the English have sometimes been seen as conservative, sophisticated, competitive and egotistical; the Scots tough, cantankerous, and upstanding (except when drunk); while the Welsh have been portrayed as loquacious dissemblers, poets and songwriters.<sup>3</sup> In order to provide some analysis for the way in which Irish Catholics in the armed forces were portrayed over the period, it is worth providing some historical context for when such depictions of the Irish and more particularly Irish Catholics first started to be disseminated.

The first notable historian accredited with constructing a stereotype of the Irish is believed to have been Giraldus Cambrensis in his study *Topographia Hibernica*.<sup>4</sup> Kathleen Noonan has alternatively proposed that many of the characteristics that came to be portrayed about the Irish had their genesis in the post-Reformation era with writers such as

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<sup>1</sup> William Grattan, *Adventures with the Connaught Rangers 1809-1814* edited by C.W.C Oman (London, 1902), p. vi, available at Internet Archive <http://www.archive.org/details/adventureswithco00gratuoft> [01 May 2013].

<sup>2</sup> George Bell, *Rough notes by an old soldier* (London, 1867), p.192, available at Internet Archive <http://archive.org/stream/roughnotesbyano01bellgoog#page/n8/mode/2up> [01 May 2013].

<sup>3</sup> Stephanie Madon, Max Guyll, et al, 'Ethnic and national stereotypes : The Princeton trilogy revisited and revised, available at <http://madon.public.iastate.edu/katz.braly.replication.pdf> [27 April 2013], pp 996-1010; 'Inner-British Stereotypes', available at [http://www.unibielefeld.de/lili/personen/mpaetzold/04sose/britciv/britciv18\\_inner\\_british\\_stereotypes.pdf](http://www.unibielefeld.de/lili/personen/mpaetzold/04sose/britciv/britciv18_inner_british_stereotypes.pdf) [27 Apr. 2013].

<sup>4</sup> Gerald of Wales (Giraldus Cambrensis) (c.1146–c.1223), available at *Dictionary of Irish Biography* <http://dib.cambridge.org.jproxy.nuim.ie/quicksearch.do;jsessionid=F483ACBF5752DA38F9CE273BF812CB14> [07 August 2013].

John Temple, Edmund Spenser, Sir John Davies, and Henry Jones.<sup>5</sup> This was owing to the fact that during the 'seventeenth-century English men and women, caught in the upheaval of the Civil War, sought to understand what it was to be English,' and 'one of the ways they did this was through their encounters with other people' such as the Irish.<sup>6</sup> While late Tudor and Jacobean writers acknowledged some virtues of the Irish, they still stressed English superiority. However, following the 1641 rebellion, the Irish were seen as incompatible with the English.<sup>7</sup> Temple's treatise of the event is thought to have been especially important in terms of shaping stereotypes of the Irish.<sup>8</sup>

Moving towards the period presently under investigation, we can get some impression of the types of stereotypes that were circulated about the Irish through the renowned statesman of the late eighteenth century, Edmund Burke.<sup>9</sup> Burke was often caricatured with Irish Catholic traits by artists such as Gillray, Rowlandson and Dent, owing to his Irish origins and his Catholic connections.<sup>10</sup> In Robinson's study, through the depictions of

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<sup>5</sup> Kathleen M. Noonan 'The cruel pressure of an enraged, barbarous people: Irish and English identity in seventeenth-century policy and propaganda' in *Historical Journal*, xl, no. 1 (1998), pp 151-77, available at JSTOR <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2640148> [25 January 2013]; Sir John Temple; His *History of the Irish Rebellion of 1641* reports that the Irish Catholics, in 1641 and following years, perpetrated frightful atrocities on Protestants, available at Library Ireland <http://www.libraryireland.com/biography/SirJohnTemple.php> [07 August 2013]; Edmund Spenser, (English poet), Spenser's political tract, *A View of the State of Ireland*, is a thoughtful survey of the state of Ireland and its relations with England, available at Library Ireland <http://www.libraryireland.com/biography/EdmundSpenser.php> [07 August 2013]; Sir John Davies, (political writer, historian), His well-known *Discovery of the true cause why Ireland was never entirely subdued till the beginning of His Majesty's reign* was published in 1612, available at Library Ireland <http://www.libraryireland.com/biography/SirJohnDavies.php> [07 August 2013]; Henry Jones, Bishop of Meath wrote *Historical relations of the war of 1641-52*, available at Library Ireland <http://www.libraryireland.com/biography/BishopHenryJones.php> [07 August 2013].

<sup>6</sup> Noonan, 'The cruel pressure of an enraged, barbarous people', pp 151-77.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid, pp 151-77.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid, pp 151-177.

<sup>9</sup> Edmund Burke, (1729/30–1797), politician and author. His mother, Mary came from an impoverished but genteel Roman Catholic family, the Nagles of County Cork. His father, Richard was an attorney of prosperous, professional, Protestant Dublin. Burke spent portions of his childhood with his mother's family in the Blackwater valley. His sister Juliana was brought up and remained a Roman Catholic, see *Dictionary of National Biography* <http://www.oxforddnb.com.jproxy.nuim.ie/view/article/4019?docPos=1> [01 May 2014]; Nicholas K. Robinson, *Edmund Burke: A life in caricature* (Yale, 1996).

<sup>10</sup> James Gillray (1756-1815) was the leading caricaturist of his time, an artist of outstanding inventiveness who continues to influence satirists today, see [tate.org http://www.tate.org.uk/whats-on/tate-britain/exhibition/james-gillray-art-caricature/james-gillray-art-caricature-cast](http://www.tate.org.uk/whats-on/tate-britain/exhibition/james-gillray-art-caricature/james-gillray-art-caricature-cast) [02 May 2014]; Thomas Rowlandson, (1757–1827) He produced, until the end of the 1780s, numerous political as well as social caricatures, though without Gillray's venom and partisanship, see *Dictionary of National Biography*



Burke, the Irish Catholic was already seen as 'penurious', as 'potato eating,' and 'drinking enormous decanters of whisky' (sic) while spouting out Irishisms such as 'arraah' and 'by Jasus'.<sup>11</sup> Many of these traits will be present among accounts of Irish Catholic soldiers throughout this chapter.

British characterisation of the Irish further evolved during the Victorian period (1837-1901). This was the time in which many of the diaries, memoirs, and so on concerning the French Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars were either written or published. It is important to keep this in mind. Victorian attitudes may have transferred into these works. Some of the stereotypes of the Irish at this time included: 'aggressiveness, ferocity, internal religious division, humour and invention, a fondness for drink and sentimentality', and of being 'mercurial and restless', 'charming,' 'untrustworthy and stupid.'<sup>12</sup> Others simply tended to label them as the 'wild Irish.'<sup>13</sup> Curtis has noted respecting Victorian attitudes of the Irish that:

Victorians preferred to see Paddy as a bundle of Celtic contradictions: a creature both happy and melancholy, drunk on whiskey and drunk on dreams, violent and gentle, lazy and capable of working like a black, ignorant and cunning.....<sup>14</sup>

Many of these stereotypes could be found in publications such as *Punch*, and while some of the earlier representations were often harmless, by the late Victorian period, Irish

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<http://www.oxforddnb.com.jproxy.nuim.ie/view/article/24221> [02 May 2014]; William Dent designed and coloured all his plates himself, available at The Britishmuseum [http://www.britishmuseum.org/research/search\\_the\\_collection\\_database/term\\_details.aspx?bioId=127235](http://www.britishmuseum.org/research/search_the_collection_database/term_details.aspx?bioId=127235) [02 May 2014]; William Dent was the first British caricaturist to portray the execution of Louis XVI, see The print shop window archive [http://printshopwindow.blogspot.fr/2012\\_04\\_01\\_archive.html](http://printshopwindow.blogspot.fr/2012_04_01_archive.html) [02 May 2014].

<sup>11</sup> Robinson, *Edmund Burke*, p. 40.

<sup>12</sup> Christopher Ian Pockett, 'Soldiers of the King: British soldiers and identity in the Peninsular War, 1808 – 1814' (M.A. thesis, Queen's University Kuipston, Ontario, Canada August, 1998) [http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/obj/s4/f2/dsk2/tape17/PQDD\\_0013/MQ31239.pdf](http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/obj/s4/f2/dsk2/tape17/PQDD_0013/MQ31239.pdf) [24 October 2012], p. 75; Terence Denman, 'The Catholic Irish soldier in the First World War: The racial environment' in *I.H.S.*, xxvii, no. 108 (1991), pp 352-365, available at JSTOR <http://www.jstor.org/stable/30008415> [18 January 2012].

<sup>13</sup> C.W.C Oman, *Wellington's army 1809-1814*, (London, 1909), p. 246, available at Internet Archive <http://archive.org/stream/wellingtonsarmy100omanuoft#page/n7/mode/2up> [15 May 2013].

<sup>14</sup> L. Perry Curtis Jr., *Apes and angels: The Irish in Victorian caricature* (Washington D.C, 1971), pp vii; 94-5.

Catholics could often be found depicted with siminised features.<sup>15</sup> To be fair, the readership of *Punch* was just as likely to find stereotypes of other nationalities and races as they were of the Irish.<sup>16</sup> It has been argued that ‘perspective is important to a discussion of the identity of Irish soldiers [or servicemen], for many of the characteristics understood as distinctly Irish were in fact English views and stereotypes of the Irish.’<sup>17</sup>

It has been noted that some of the diaries, journals and other sources used in this chapter were only published and some were only written during the Victorian period. In order to provide some context to the attitudes that surface in these sources, a brief discussion needs to be made about the period itself. The Victorian era, which lasted over sixty years, was a time of great social and economic transformation within Britain. Arguably, the most significant driving force behind this change stemmed from the impact of industrialisation. Thousands of people flocked from the countryside to the new industrialised cities seeking employment, but with this influx of people to the newly expanding urban areas, came a whole new range of social issues. In some studies which have focused on these social issues, F.M.L. Thompson and Geoffrey Best have pointed out that this era became synonymous with ideas about ‘respectability’ and ‘sensibility.’<sup>18</sup> Both scholars have considered how thoughts arising out of these concepts impacted upon Victorian society through an analysis of the various social classes and the values which each strata of that society held. Social issues such as drunkenness, begging, thieving, disease and squalor were topics hotly debated in terms of their moral implications. For example, with regard to the perceived prevalence of drinking and drunkenness among the working classes over the period, Thompson has drawn attention to the fact that drinking went on among all classes, ‘but only the working classes went in for public drinking;’ this being the problem. Many groups such as the teetotallers and Evangelicals drew attention to the fact that drink (among

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<sup>15</sup> Ibid, pp vii; 94-5.

<sup>16</sup> During the nineteenth century theories of race were advanced both by the scientific community and in the popular daily and periodical press. Even before Charles Darwin published *On the origin of species* in 1859, mankind was being subjected to a new scientific racism, available at The Victorian Web <http://www.victorianweb.org/history/race/rc5.html> [24 September 2013].

<sup>17</sup> Pockett, ‘Soldiers of the king’, p. 74.

<sup>18</sup> F.M.L. Thompson, *The rise of respectable society: A social history of Victorian Britain, 1830-1900* (London, 1988); Geoffrey Best, *Mid-Victorian Britain, 1851-75* (2nd ed. London, 1971).

the lower orders especially) had the capacity 'to undermine character, religion, the work ethic, and family responsibilities and lead to destitution.'<sup>19</sup> While many of these issues were endemic to, and found among the lower classes in English, Scottish and Welsh cities, they were even more so among Irish immigrants who flocked to Britain during the era. The Irish immigrants were subjected to the most detrimental conditions that the Victorian slums had to offer. Places such as the 'little Ireland' ghetto in Manchester, the Glasgow tenements or the Liverpool cellars, which were all located in either city-centre or dockland areas were open to all manner of dangers. This manifested itself in appalling overcrowding, little or no sanitation, open sewers and cesspools, disease, alcoholism, and a high incidence of casual violence (very often provoked by drink).<sup>20</sup> It could be argued that owing to this, and the fact that the Irish were one of the most recognisable immigrant groups in Britain over the period (due to their numbers), they often became the focal point when it came to a discussion about everything that was anathema to Victorian ideals. As Best noted in his study:

There was also much endemic moral disapproval; there was a lot of drunkenness, violence, harshness and selfishness to disapprove of; there was some plain Marxist class hostility; and there was at least one major race problem; the Irish. The Irish tended to stick together and wherever they occurred were likely to excite hostile comment and worse; many, perhaps most of the really big public disturbances of our period had Irishmen willy-nilly at the bottom of them.<sup>21</sup>

It is worthwhile to keep ideas of Victorian morality in mind when encountering many of the descriptions used in this chapter (especially when it comes to drunkenness, thievery and cleanliness), as it could be argued that the Irish were often seen as one of the groups that were deficient in Victorian respectability.

Turning to the diaries, memoirs, and other similar works, as already stated in the introduction and the previous chapter, there are a number of problems associated with using

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<sup>19</sup> Thompson, *The rise of respectable society*, pp. 308-9.

<sup>20</sup> M. A. G. Ó Tuathaigh, 'The Irish in nineteenth-century Britain: Problems of integration' in *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, fifth series xxxi (1981), pp 149-73, available at <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3679050>. [21 September 2010].

<sup>21</sup> Best, *Mid-Victorian Britain*, pp 232-3.

such sources. Most were written by Irish or English Protestants.<sup>22</sup> Only two of the memoirs are from Irish Catholics, that of Charles O'Neil and Thomas of the 43<sup>rd</sup> Regiment. As in the previous chapter, it is worth providing some background to some of the sources used in this chapter (that have not been used before in this study) in order to help contextualise both the period and the position from which they were written. Below is a short summary of these.

Robert Blakeney of the 28<sup>th</sup> Regiment was an Irish Protestant from Galway.<sup>23</sup> It was recorded in his autobiography that his family originated from Norfolk in England and came over to Ireland during the Elizabethan period. Having quit the army in 1828, he held a number of respectable positions on the Grecian islands. Here he wrote his memoir sometime before his death in 1858.<sup>24</sup> Blakeney did not himself betray any overt prejudices towards his Catholic fellow countrymen, but does highlight cases where other British soldiers did. George Bell, also an Irish Protestant, was born near Lough Erne, County Fermanagh in 1794, and had a long and distinguished career in the army.<sup>25</sup> Bell on two occasions referred to the Irish as 'Paddy'. It cannot be determined whether Bell was speaking about Irish Catholics or Irish Protestants. But, when he does use the term, it is often used in connection with the lower orders in Irish society which at the time often meant Irish Catholics.<sup>26</sup> In the excerpt at the start of the chapter, one of these instances was alluded to, when he referred to the belligerent nature of the Irish 'Paddy'.<sup>27</sup> Bell kept notes during service as he recorded:

I found my bundle of notes closed up in my knapsack.....[and] an old *camarade*,....persuaded me to link them together and send them to the press.....These few words gave me....encouragement. I condensed my bundle of notes into...the following chapters without any varnish!<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> See for example pp 13-15 in the introductory chapter and pp 5-11 in chapter two for a discussion of some of the problems associated with using these sources.

<sup>23</sup> Robert Blakeney, *A boy in the Peninsular War* (London, 1899).

<sup>24</sup> See Blakeney, *A boy in the Peninsular War*, p. xii.

<sup>25</sup> George Bell, *Rough notes by an old soldier during fifty years of service* (London, 1867); Sir George Bell (1794–1877), army officer. George was gazetted an ensign in the 34<sup>th</sup> Foot, on 11 March 1811. In 1859, he became a major-general in the army, see *Dictionary of National Biography* <http://www.oxforddnb.com.jproxy.nuim.ie/view/article/2001?docPos=2> [03 May 2014].

<sup>26</sup> Bell, *Rough notes*, p. 6.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid*, p.192.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid*, p. vii.

Henry Ross-Lewin, also apparently a Protestant, born in 1778, came from Ross Hill, County Clare. His memoir was originally published in 1834, but the only edition that could be found for use in this chapter was published in 1901.<sup>29</sup> The Lewins were recorded as coming from 'that strong Anglo-Irish breed' who dated their coming to Ireland during the campaigns of 1689-91 and who have 'given many gallant soldiers to the British service.'<sup>30</sup> Henry went from the Limerick militia in 1795 to the 32<sup>nd</sup> Regiment. In later life, he became a magistrate and he used to frequently say 'that his knowledge of Irish (language) had enabled him to save many prisoners' in his court.<sup>31</sup> Interestingly, evidence suggests that a number of Irish Protestants could speak the Irish language during this period.<sup>32</sup> This may have proved beneficial to any Irish Protestant officers who commanded Irish Catholics in their regiments or in the British forces in general over the period. On occasion, Lewin, like Bell, often made negative comments about the lower caste of the Irish population by describing them as both 'wild' and 'unruly'.

William Grattan has already been discussed, but to recap, he was an Irish Protestant who seems to have been warmly disposed to his fellow Catholic comrades.<sup>33</sup> John Blakiston, whose family were London merchants, settled in County Limerick.<sup>34</sup> Blakiston's autobiography about his service in the British army and the East India Company is quite balanced. In comments published separately some years later,<sup>35</sup> while acknowledging that 'all my connexions lay with the Orange party', he made the point:

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<sup>29</sup> Henry Ross-Lewin, *With the Thirty-second in the Peninsular and other campaigns* (Dublin, 1901); Lewin's memoir was originally published as 3 vols under the title, *The life of a soldier, by a field officer*, see Ross-Lewin, *With the Thirty-second*, p. vii.

<sup>30</sup> Lewin, p. viii.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid*, pp xviii-xx.

<sup>32</sup> Gordon McCoy, 'A history of Protestant Irish speakers' (2012) pp 1-49, available at ULTACH Trust <http://www.ultach.dsl.pipex.com/ForLearners/A%20history%20of%20Protestant%20Irish%20speakers.pdf> [03 May 2014].

<sup>33</sup> William Grattan, *Adventures of the Connaught Rangers 1808-1814* (2.vol, London, 1847).

<sup>34</sup> John Blakiston, *Twelve years military adventures in three quarters of the globe* (2 vols, London, 1829); Blakiston was an engineer who hailed from Dublin. He served during the period in the Madras engineers and in the 27<sup>th</sup> Regiment (Inniskilling), participated in the battle of Assaye and the capture of Bourbon, Mauritius, and Java, and fought during the Peninsular War, see *Dictionary of National Biography* <http://www.oxforddnb.com.jproxy.nuim.ie/view/article/2598/2597?docPos=2> [25 February 2014].

<sup>35</sup> John Blakiston, *Twenty years in retirement* (2 vols, London, 1836).

we complain of the Irish being a riotous and disorderly people... yet ...I saw enough to convince me of the wrongs of Ireland. I saw the best feelings of the human heart turned to gall and bitterness by party animosity. I saw zeal turned into bigotry; — I saw warmth of heart turned into hatred; — I saw native courage turned into ferocious blood-thirstiness! Can we, then, in the victims of these passions, expect mildness, submission, confidence, and gratitude?...Is there anything in the natural character of the Irish people that should render them inferior to the people of England? No! It is circumstances alone that have reduced them to what they are. They are the victims of Orange ascendancy and of Catholic priestcraft; so that, between the two, their natural dispositions are torn to pieces.<sup>36</sup>

Turning to sources from British Protestant servicemen, there are first the journals of Fredrick Hoffman.<sup>37</sup> Written by Hoffman in 1838 while living in Dover, they were not published until 1901. Hoffman began his career in the navy in 1793. In 1812, having run aground off the French coast at Étapes, he was taken prisoner. While prisoner in France, he superintended a school for midshipmen at Verdun.<sup>38</sup> Sergeant Sean Morris from Middlesex began his military career at sixteen having joined the Loyal Volunteers of St George's, Middlesex in 1812.<sup>39</sup> Shortly after, he joined the 73<sup>rd</sup> Highland Regiment owing to his brother having joined them. Morris, whose family came from humble circumstances, was considerably more travelled than most at the time owing to his father's inclination for adventure. His encounters with a variety of people from different religious and social circumstances at such an early age, no doubt had an influence on his more open minded attitude later in life.<sup>40</sup> The journal of Captain William Webber, an English soldier from Surrey in England, made a number of disparaging remarks about some of the Popish habits which he encountered while in Spain and Portugal.<sup>41</sup> This may offer some insights respecting his attitude to Irish Catholics in his journal. Of Private William Wheeler, little of his early life is known except that he served in 2<sup>nd</sup> Royal Surrey militia before joining the

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<sup>36</sup> Blakiston, *Twenty years in retirement*, ii, pp 210-11.

<sup>37</sup> Fredrick Hoffman, *A sailor of King George: The journals of Captain Fredrick Hoffman R.N 1793-1814* edited by A. Beckford Bevan & H.B Wolryche-Whitmore (London, 1901).

<sup>38</sup> Hoffman, *A sailor of King George*, pp v-viii.

<sup>39</sup> Thomas Morris, *Sergeant Thomas Morris of the 73<sup>rd</sup> Foot: The experiences of a British infantryman during the Napoleonic Wars – including campaigns in Germany and at Waterloo* edited by Thomas Morris (Driffield [Leonaur], 2007).

<sup>40</sup> Morris, *Sergeant Thomas Morris of the 73<sup>rd</sup> foot*, pp 11-36.

<sup>41</sup> Captain William Webber, *With the guns in the Peninsula; The Peninsula war journal of Captain William Webber; Royal Artillery*, edited by Richard Henry Wollocombe (London, 1991), pp 26-7.

51<sup>st</sup> Regiment. Upon completing his service in the army in 1828, he put together the letters he had written home and had them published in 1837. His strong bond to his regiment is one of the main facets evident in his writing.<sup>42</sup>

Given that this chapter is centered on the characteristics that were most commonly attributed to the Irish in the armed forces, the question then follows, what were they? The ones that will be the focus of this chapter include: prone to fighting and being unruly; a fondness for drink and sentimentality; thievery; stupid/dim; dirty/uncleanliness and a proclivity for humour, wit and invention and dishonesty. There has been no study to date which singularly addresses the stereotyping of Irish Catholics in the armed forces at this time, although there have been a number of histories which mention the traits associated with the Irish character.<sup>43</sup> However, one recent study worthy of note conducted by Nicholas Dunne-Lynch has sought to focus centrally on the aspect of the humour of Irish soldiers during the Peninsular War. Some of the conclusions which Lynch has established in his article respecting the aspect of humour and Irish soldiers over the period have similarly been found in this chapter.<sup>44</sup> As the Irish were especially recognised over this period for their penchant for fighting and being unruly, this will be the first aspect visited in this chapter.

#### **Unruly, Rowdiness and Prone to Fighting**

One source that offers an insight into the belligerent aspect of the Irish character comes from one of the works just mentioned, Robert Blakeney, the Irish Protestant from Galway who served in the 28<sup>th</sup> Regiment.<sup>45</sup> On the night prior to the siege of Tarifa in Southern Spain in 1811, he recalled how a Sergeant Turnbull of the Coldstream Guards taunted an Irish sergeant of the 87<sup>th</sup> Regiment by the name of O'Brien by remarking to him that, 'have

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<sup>42</sup> William Wheeler, *The letters of Private Wheeler. 1809 – 1828* edited by Captain B. H. Liddell Hart (4<sup>th</sup> ed. London, 1997).

<sup>43</sup> Several histories of the period mention some aspects related to the Irish character but the following theses offer some discussion on these: see Steven Schwamenfeld, 'The foundation of British strength: National identity and the British common soldier' (Ph. D thesis, Florida State University, Fall, 2007); Christopher Ian Pockett, 'Soldiers of the king: British soldiers and identity in the Peninsular War, 1808 – 1814' (M.A. thesis, Queen's University Kingston, Ontario, Canada August, 1998).

<sup>44</sup> Nicholas Dunne-Lynch, 'Humour and defiance: Irish troops and their humour in the Peninsular War', in *J.S.H.A.R.*, lxxxv, no 347, (2007), pp 62-78.

<sup>45</sup> Blakeney, *A boy in the Peninsular War*, p. xii; and p. 99 above.

you [the Irish] not always been fighting amongst yourselves?'<sup>46</sup> This statement alludes to the fact that the some British servicemen thought all Irishmen, both Catholic and Protestant, had a belligerent nature. A piece of evidence which might corroborate this fact is highlighted in the memoir of the English soldier, Benjamin Harris.<sup>47</sup> In the passage below, Harris recalls the following fight that occurred between Irish Catholics and Protestants after they left Cork in 1807. While both sides were engaged, the Irish Catholics appeared to be the instigators of the fracas:

No sooner were we out at sea, however, than our troubles began afresh with these hot-headed Paddies; for, having now nothing else to do, they got up a dreadful quarrel amongst themselves....the Catholics reviling the Protestants to such a degree that a general fight ensued...and as fast as we made matters up among them, they broke out afresh and began the riot again....when we came upon Salisbury Plain, our Irish friends got up a fresh row. At first they appeared uncommonly pleased... commenced a series of Irish jigs, till at length as one of the Catholics was setting to his partner [a Protestant], he gave a whoop and a leap into the air, and at the same time (as if he couldn't bear the partnership of a heretic any longer), dealt him a tremendous blow with his shillelagh, and stretched him upon the sod. This was quite enough, and the bludgeons immediately began playing away at a tremendous rate. The poor Protestants were again quickly disposed of.<sup>48</sup>

This incident as will be recalled was already mentioned in the previous chapter to note the religious tribalism demonstrated by Irish Catholics when they came into contact with their fellow Protestant countrymen. It is included here in order to demonstrate how Irish Catholics could appear to be the more belligerent of the two. George Bell, the Irish Protestant from the Lough Erne area, when noting this particular aspect of the Irish character in his memoir, recorded that 'Paddy is the only man I ever met who fights for fun; he is, and was at this period, very unruly.'<sup>49</sup> Again 'Paddy' is presented as being 'unruly'. There is some ambiguity surrounding who exactly 'Paddy' is, as Bell does not directly state it, but like many of the other sources, there is an implied sense that it may refer to Irish

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<sup>46</sup> Blakeney, *A boy in the Peninsular War*, p. 173.

<sup>47</sup> Benjamin Harris, *Recollections of Rifleman Harris*, edited by Henry Curling (London, 1848), available at Internet Archive <http://archive.org/stream/recollectionsofr00harr#page/166/mode/2up> [07 May 2013].

<sup>48</sup> This incident apparently occurred after the 95<sup>th</sup> Rifles had just left Cork in Ireland en route to England, see Harris, *Recollections* Curling (ed.) (1848), p. 13.

<sup>49</sup> Bell, *Rough notes*, p. 192, available at Internet Archive <http://archive.org/stream/cu31924005846138#page/n81/mode/2up/search/Irish> [07 May 2013].



Catholics from the lower orders.<sup>50</sup> However, it must be noted that the term ‘Paddy’ could often be applied to both Irish Catholics and Protestants during the period by other British servicemen. Henry Ross-Lewin, the Irish Protestant from Limerick who served in the 32<sup>nd</sup> Regiment also made remarks about 'his countrymen' being an unruly lot.<sup>51</sup> Following the 1798 rebellion, Lewin noted, ‘I received this year a most unpleasant command to go to Jersey with a detachment of my refractory countrymen, fresh arrivals from Duncannon military fort, County Waterford, and principally intended for the 88<sup>th</sup>, Connaught Rangers.’<sup>52</sup> Lewin was making the point that the Irish rebels who had been bound for the 88<sup>th</sup> Connaught Rangers Regiment ended up under his charge in the 32<sup>nd</sup> Regiment. As Lewin noted, ‘it would have spared me a most disagreeable duty had these men been sent with them, for they became very unruly.’<sup>53</sup> As a further testament to their unruliness, Lewin provided the following example after his ship put in for fresh meat off the Kent coast in England:

Upon going between decks, I found all hands engaged in a general row, boxing, yelling, and tearing from each other the meat that the officers had provided for their own mess; and it was with difficulty that I succeeded in restoring something like order and tranquillity. However, when the lights were put out at 9 p.m. hostilities recommenced, and the battle raged with as much fury as ever; the biting of noses, ears, fingers, and toes, the scratching of faces, the pulling of hair, and the cuffing and kicking being kept up with much spirit till a late hour.<sup>54</sup>

Lewin sought the help of a commander of another ship close by who had similar problems with the Irish aboard his ship, but dealt with them in the following manner:

He made up a severe ship-cat, with which he flogged them on their bare legs when they turned out of their berths at night to fight, and he advised me to do the same, adding, that their dispositions had

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<sup>50</sup> Bell, *Rough notes*, p. 192, available at Internet Archive <http://archive.org/stream/cu31924005846138#page/n81/mode/2up/search/Irish> [07 May 2013].

<sup>51</sup> See Lewin, *With the Thirty-Second*, pp xiii-xx.

<sup>52</sup> Lewin, *With the Thirty-Second*, p. 43. After the 1798 rebellion, prisoners were detained at Duncannon, County Wexford pending transfer to Geneva Barracks for trial and sentencing, available at Duncannon fort.com <http://www.duncannonfort.com/> [13 August 2013].

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid*, p. 43.

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid*, p. 44.

undergone a thorough change since they left their own country, as they were now dis-United Irishmen.<sup>55</sup>

While there may have been Protestants among those who ended up aboard such ships following the rebellion in 1798, the majority were probably Catholic, and throughout much of the period, it would seem that the lower class Catholics were often described as being the more 'unruly' of the two religious groupings. One final anecdote from Lewin adds further weight to the 'unruly' moniker often used of the Irish. Lewin was not sure whether the regiment in question was the Carlow Buffs, or the Tipperary Rangers<sup>56</sup> (both counties from which the regiments were raised were largely Catholic areas), but upon withdrawing from Portsmouth in England where they were stationed, he noted:

Various...rows...occurred before those unruly sons of Erin were removed; and, on the day that they marched out, they left one of the ...girls in a state of intoxication, and stuck through a lamp-iron in front of the inn—a sight at which the citizens were.....scandalised.<sup>57</sup>

Such incidents may have re-enforced perceptions of the Irish as a wild and unruly race. Joseph Donaldson, a Scottish soldier in the 94<sup>th</sup> Regiment, recalled an Irish Catholic by the name of Dennis in his regiment also being high spirited. On one occasion when a sergeant came looking for him and Dennis to take them back to the barracks, Donaldson noted that he had great difficulty in preventing Dennis from bringing a spade down on the sergeant's head.<sup>58</sup> When discussing his own time in the Connaught Rangers, William Grattan remembered how volatile his Catholic comrades were while stationed in Cork in 1814:

To say that fighting, not only amongst themselves, but amongst the inhabitants, was a sort of pastime that was carried on with a good deal of life and a good deal of spirit, would be only saying what is too well

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<sup>55</sup> Ibid, p. 44.

<sup>56</sup> The Carlow Buffs. that is, the 119<sup>th</sup>, which was raised by Colonel Rochfort of Clogrennane, available at Roots Web <http://archiver.rootsweb.ancestry.com/th/read/IRL-CARLOW/2013-06/1371836319> [15 February 2014]; 99<sup>th</sup> (or Prince of Wales's Tipperary) Regiment of Foot, available at napoleon-series.org [http://www.napoleonseries.org/research/biographies/GreatBritain/c\\_GeneralsTraining.html](http://www.napoleonseries.org/research/biographies/GreatBritain/c_GeneralsTraining.html) [15 February 2014].

<sup>57</sup> Lewin, *With the Thirty-Second*, p. 44.

<sup>58</sup> Joseph Donaldson, *Recollections of the eventful life of a soldier*, (Philadelphia, 1845), p. 57.

known to need repetition..... their faces told plainly that some handy-work had been in practice.<sup>59</sup>

Grattan's excerpt highlights the fact that fist fighting was an endemic part of Irish society. He also recorded the truculent nature of the Catholic militia recruits who entered the Connaught Rangers en route to Canada in 1814. As he recalled, 'during our voyage of three months, we had more than six or eight combats.'<sup>60</sup> Interestingly, Grattan seems to have condoned such behaviour, 'let the men, I say have their fling on those points when it amuses them.....every regiment in the service should have a boxing and cudgelling school'.<sup>61</sup> Grattan's reasoning for this stemmed from the fact that he believed that this type of behaviour proved valuable when it came to close combat with the enemy.

However, Irish soldiers were not the only members of the British forces who behaved in a rowdy manner. Sir William Maynard Gomm noted about the English that 'John Bull', was 'heartily fond of fighting' while Colonel Augustus Simon Frazer recalled of a Scotchman he knew that he was 'one of those extraordinary characters who really seem to like fighting.'<sup>62</sup> In his memoir, the Irishman, Edward Costello, spoke with fondness when recollecting about how one Wilkie (no other details are given about him), an Englishman he met in Dublin was (always) keen to fight.<sup>63</sup> Thomas, an Irish Catholic of the 43<sup>rd</sup> Regiment recalled that while stationed in Ashford, a small town in Kent in southern England, after the Irish, Scottish, Welsh and Englishmen had got merry 'nothing less than a fight, it mattered

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<sup>59</sup> William Grattan, *Adventures with the Connaught Rangers 1808-1814*, (2 vols, London, 1847), ii, pp. 209-10, available at Internet Archive <http://archive.org/stream/adventureswithc01gratgoog#page/n229/mode/2up> [03 March 2013].

<sup>60</sup> As Grattan stated the Connaught Rangers were often styled 'the most Irish of all the Irish regiments in the British forces', see Grattan, *Adventures*, ii, 218-20.

<sup>61</sup> Grattan, *Adventures*, ii, 218-20.

<sup>62</sup> Sir William Maynard Gomm, *Letters and journals of Field-Marshal Sir William Maynard Gomm... from 1799 to Waterloo, 1815* edited by Francis Culling Carr-Gomm (London, 1881), p. 274, available at Internet Archive <http://archive.org/stream/lettersandjourn00gommgoog#page/n260/mode/2up> [10 September 2013]; Sir Augustus Simon Frazer, *Letters of Colonel Sir Augustus Simon Frazer, K. C. B. commanding the Royal Horse Artillery in the army under the duke of Wellington* edited by Major-General Edward Sabine (London, 1859), p. 316,

available at Internet Archive <http://archive.org/stream/letterscolonels00sabigoog#page/n343/mode/2up> [12 September 2013]; Sir William Maynard Gomm (1784–1875), available at *Dictionary of National Biography* <http://www.oxforddnb.com.jproxy.nuim.ie/view/article/10931?docPos=1> [10 September 2014]; Sir Augustus Simon Frazer (1776–1835), available at *Dictionary of National Biography* <http://www.oxforddnb.com.jproxy.nuim.ie/view/article/10135> [10 September 2013].

<sup>63</sup> Costello, *Adventures*, pp 4-5.

not with whom, would satisfy' their general rowdiness.<sup>64</sup> Following the cessation of hostilities in 1815 when the British forces were in occupation in France, there were instances where English, Welsh and Scottish officers engaged in frequent fist fights with French civilians. These became so numerous that Wellington was forced to remind his officers that the practice of 'striking individuals with their fists' was 'quite inconsistent with their character as British officers.'<sup>65</sup> Wellington's remarks hit at the centre of the issue: British officers and soldiers should not strike with their fists, but show more restraint, a quality not equated with the Irish Catholic. It could be argued that Wellington's comments, which were made a number of years before the beginning of the Victorian era, also demonstrate Victorian sensibilities.

#### **Characterisations of drunkenness**

One of the most common characteristics attributed to the Irish was their propensity for getting drunk. Wellington believed that of all the nationalities in the British forces, it was his Irish Catholics soldiers who went to the most extraordinary lengths to obtain drink. In a letter to Lord Stanhope, Wellington noted that 'Irish Catholic soldiers used to make use of their signs of the cross to get *aguardiente* [spirits] in the villages; for the country people, seeing from this that they were brethren in faith, used to bring out their stores more readily.'<sup>66</sup> It has been argued about the Irish, that unlike the British, they became loud, exuberant and sentimental whilst intoxicated whereas the characteristics of Britishness dictated that men should remain reserved and behave with restraint. Much of this had to do with the idea of masculinity and Britishness.<sup>67</sup> The issue of 'respectability' has also been noted. As indicated earlier, many of the sources used in the chapter were published during the Victorian period and reflect such ideas accordingly.

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<sup>64</sup> Anon, *Memoirs of a sergeant, late in the Forty-Third Light Infantry Regiment....during the Peninsula War* (London, 1835), , p. 14, available at Internet Archive

<http://archive.org/stream/memoirsasergean00memogoog#page/n26/mode/2up> [09 September 2013].

<sup>65</sup> Christopher Hibbert, *Wellington: A personal history* (London, 1998), p. 206.

<sup>66</sup> See Ian Robertson, *A commanding presence: Wellington in the Peninsula 1808-1814* (Gloucestershire, 2008), p. 56.

<sup>67</sup> In his study, Christopher Ian Pockett has suggested that 'to a British soldier, the Irish character was defined by the lack of emotional control. This was perceived as exotic and so different from English ideals of continence, reasonableness, mature control over one's emotions and similar character traits traditionally ascribed to mature masculinity.', see Pockett, 'Soldiers of the king', p. 75.

Regarding instances of how the Irish behaved when it came to consuming alcohol, one soldier who personified the Irish and their over-indulgence in drink was Tom Crawley. In the memoirs of Edward Costello, it was recorded that Crawley used to sneak by the sentries on numerous nights while the men were stationed at Hythe, near Southampton in England, in order to avail of the refreshments the town had to offer.<sup>68</sup> While stationed in Lisbon in Portugal in October 1810, Costello recollected that when Crawley went missing one evening, the rest of the regiment believed he was employed in his favourite amusement: 'looking for wine'. This proved to be correct, but Crawley nearly paid for it with his life as he narrowly escaped being burnt to death after stumbling drunk into a carriage which the soldiers in his regiment had tried to burn for heat. In another episode in Portugal in the same month, Costello noted that he was 'mortified by the merriment' of Crawley's appearance after finding him in a drunken state in the company of a couple of French soldiers.<sup>69</sup> Crawley's drunken behaviour finally forced his captain to stop his daily ration of alcohol. Costello recalled that:

...nothing, not even flogging, damps the spirit of a service-soldier more than stopping his grog, particularly a man of Crawley's temperament, for if he were allowed three wishes, the first would be all the rum in the world, the second all the tobacco, and the third would be for more rum.<sup>70</sup>

However, Crawley was not deterred. The following day, Costello watched Crawley poking his finger into different parts of his ration of bread as he made his way to where the commissary who served the daily ration of rum was standing. Crawley then pretended that a soldier behind him had pushed him forward and sneakily dipped the bread into the barrel of rum. Costello recalled that 'the good-natured commissary thought it was a pure accident and handed Crawley an extra half loaf, which Crawley instantly squeezed against the wet one, lest a drop of the precious liquor be lost,' and walked away humming, 'Oh, love is the

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<sup>68</sup> As noted earlier, Costello was an Irishman, but his religion is unknown, Costello, *Adventures*, p. 8.

<sup>69</sup> Costello, *Adventures*, pp. 48-50.

<sup>70</sup> *Ibid*, p. 53.

soul of a neat Irishman.’<sup>71</sup> As other events in Costello’s memoir appear to be reliable, there is nothing to suggest that these anecdotes about Crawley were invented.

Another Irish soldier to follow the path of the drunken Irishman was Tom Plunkett, also of the 95<sup>th</sup> Rifles. Plunkett was described as ‘a brave soldier’ and as being ‘the soul of every company he mixed in,’ but he was also described as ‘a thirsty soul, and exceedingly fond of a drop.’<sup>72</sup> Arguably the most striking incident arising out of Plunkett’s episodes of drunkenness occurred when he attempted to shoot his captain after the battle of Talavera. Plunkett had arrived on parade very drunk on one of the mornings just following the battle. Plunkett’s captain, seeing how intoxicated Plunkett was, had him escorted off the parade ground and secured in a hut which acted as a place of confinement. Plunkett found a gun in the guard house and in a fit of vengeance attempted to shoot his captain. As Costello noted about Plunkett and this incident, ‘under the influence of intoxication that man, who, when sober, was noted for his good humour and humanity, now conceived the diabolical intention of shooting his captain.’<sup>73</sup> Following the end of hostilities in 1815, Plunkett was granted a parcel of land in Canada for his services. However, his feckless nature forced him to return to London where he ended his days begging and selling matches to feed his thirst.<sup>74</sup> Costello’s story about how Plunkett ended his days because of his alcohol addiction can be juxtaposed with Thompson’s statement made earlier in the chapter about how the Victorians believed that alcohol addiction often led to destitution.<sup>75</sup>

Other Irish soldiers found themselves in similar predicaments. Sergeant Michael Connelly, who worked tending wounded soldiers, was said to have ‘drank like a whale, and did not scruple to adopt as gifts or legacies, the wine rations of both the dying and the dead, until he drank himself out of the world.’<sup>76</sup> Private William Wheeler, the English soldier

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<sup>71</sup> Costello, *Adventures*, pp. 54-5. The words are from a song that was popular during the era called ‘The sprig of shillelagh and shamrock so green’, see Broadside Ballads Online <http://ballads.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/static/images/sheets/10000/07623.gif> [10 September 2013].

<sup>72</sup> Costello, *Adventures*, p. 12.

<sup>73</sup> Costello, *Adventures*, p. 12: see also Urban, *Rifles*, p. 35.

<sup>74</sup> Costello, *Adventures*, pp 18-19.

<sup>75</sup> See p. 5 above.

<sup>76</sup> Connelly had been appointed sergeant to the hospital after the battle of Salamanca in 1812, but apparently was unable to control his urge for drink, Costello, *Adventures*, p. 135.

from Surrey who was noted in the introduction, recollected the following in his memoir about a Private Doherty of the 51<sup>st</sup> Regiment who 'was from the land of the Saints' and was described by his colonel as 'The D\_\_\_\_l [presumably devil] of a boy for a drop of the crature.'<sup>77</sup> Wheeler alleged that the colonel of the 51<sup>st</sup> Regiment had the following exchange with Doherty over one such bout of drunkenness:

How now, Doherty, what is the matter you are not well (?) Not at all your honour, Doherty was never better in his life. I have only just been taking a wee drop to the health of my comrades.....and if that is not the truth of the story then bad luck to me.... (colonel)...But Doherty that wee drop was a large one I am afraid, besides you should have watered it. (Doherty)...Water it, did your honour say, why it is yourself you know that would never again own Doherty for a countryman, if he had been guilty of sich (sic) a thing. (colonel) Well if you would not water it yourself, I must. Sergeant Major get me a rope, and you sir strip. The rope was tied by the centre round Doherty's waist, one end thrown across a ditch, and some men sent across to take hold of it. In Doherty jumped like a Newfoundland dog, and the men each side by puling (sic) him backward and forward, gave him such a complete sousing.<sup>78</sup>

We cannot be absolutely sure whether Plunkett, Connelly, or Doherty were in fact Catholics, although there is a good chance that they were considering the number of regulars in the Peninsula who were Catholic.

Many accounts seem only to validate the stereotypical perception of the Irish; however, many men may have become trapped in a situation which was not entirely of their own making. Charles O'Neil, an Irish Catholic, indicated how this might have been so after leaving Cork bound for England with the Louth militia:

It is the custom, on board ships-of-war, to serve out every day spirit rations to the men. On our ship, this was done at eleven o'clock in the morning. A cask of liquor was rolled on deck, the head knocked out, and the officer whose duty it was served out to each of the mess a measure of raw spirit. They usually came up, one by one, received their measure, and then retired, either to drink it themselves or to dispose of it to others, who could always be found willing to purchase [more]...When I left home, I had never formed the habit of drinking; -

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<sup>77</sup> William Wheeler, *The letters of Private Wheeler. 1809 – 1828* edited by Captain B. H. Liddell Hart (4<sup>th</sup> ed., London, 1997), p. 34.

<sup>78</sup> *Ibid*, p. 34.

the taste of liquor was positively disagreeable to me; though it was in compliance with this custom that I first found a relish for it. I can recall many, who now fill a drunkard's grave, who might trace back the commencement of this sinful and ruinous habit to the same practice.<sup>79</sup>

It might be recalled how Crawley reacted after his daily ration of rum was stopped. It is little wonder that drinking disorders became common when servicemen were getting plied with free drink every day. O'Neil suggested that part of the reason for giving rations of alcohol to men was that it was believed that they became easier to control. O'Neil however, believed differently:

It is my humble opinion that much of the disobedience and disrespectful language from the men might be avoided, and consequently many of the punishments dispensed with, if this custom were wholly discontinued....It is much to be hoped that a decided reform will soon be effected here.<sup>80</sup>

O'Neil's testimony strongly intimates that drink could be the underlying cause of misdemeanours perpetrated by servicemen. Corporal punishment was usually the means in both the army and navy to restore order regarding crimes associated with alcohol. Aboard ships of the navy, the normal punishment for drunkenness was twelve lashes. Prior to the engagement at Trafalgar, between May and mid-October 1805, 5.3 per cent of the sailors on board Captain Freemantle's ship were punished by flogging.<sup>81</sup> Significantly, three were punished twice, two of whom were Irish, Daniel Barry, an ordinary seaman from Limerick, three times and John McGuire, landsman from Kilkenny five times: drunkenness being the offence.<sup>82</sup> Grattan believed the following with regard to the Irish propensity for drink: 'it was not the uncontrolled appetite of the Irish that led them to drink, but the lack of

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<sup>79</sup> Charles O'Neil, *The military adventures of Charles O'Neil* (Worcester, 1851) pp 38-40: available at Internet Archive <http://archive.org/stream/militaryadventur00onei#page/n7/mode/2up> [07 May 2013].

<sup>80</sup> *Ibid*, p. 41.

<sup>81</sup> Tim Clayton and Phil Craig, *Trafalgar: The men, the battle, the storm* (Edinburgh, 2004), p. 68. Sir Thomas Francis Fremantle (1765–1819), naval officer, had a reputation as a disciplinarian, available at *Dictionary of National Biography* <http://www.oxforddnb.com.jproxy.nuim.ie/view/article/10159?docPos=1> [12 September 2013].

<sup>82</sup> *Ibid*, p. 68.



nourishment.<sup>83</sup> Grattan also argued that ‘the English soldier is to the full as drunken as the Irish and not half so pleasant in his liquor.’<sup>84</sup>

Despite so much being made of the Irish Catholic propensity for drinking, the Irish were not the only nationality to have displayed drunkenness on a large scale. In his memoir, Bell recorded the drunken debauchery that could be witnessed among all nationalities in the British forces: ‘Many were Irish, many more were English, several Welshmen were intermingled, and a few Scotchmen came in to complete the whole. Most of these had indulged in ‘excessive drinking.’<sup>85</sup> Captain William Webber remembered similar scenes while occupying Perales in Spain in 1812.<sup>86</sup> He noted that ‘the soldiers were lying about the streets all afternoon – stupefied or completely drunk’ and that while retreating from Valdemore and Pinto in the same year, the British forces from the fourth division,<sup>87</sup> ‘lost about 500-600 men after breaking into a wine store’ where ‘they intoxicated themselves to such a degree, very few were able to follow.’<sup>88</sup> In 1814, Benjamin Harris, an English soldier, had the following to say about all nationalities in the British forces:

thousands of soldiers lining the streets, and lounging about the different public-houses.....The Irishman, shouting and brandishing his crutch; the English soldier, reeling with drink; and the Scot, with grave and melancholy visage, sitting on the steps of the public-house amongst the crowd, listening to the skirl of his comrade’s pipes and thinking of the blue hills of his native land.<sup>89</sup>

This suggests that all of the nationalities within the British forces were liable to drunkenness, but if an Irish soldier was found this way, his nationality was particularly singled out for mention, and rarely was he ever described as British. One soldier, however,

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<sup>83</sup> Grattan, *Adventures*, edited by Oman, p. 85; see also Pockett, ‘Soldiers of the king’, p. 80.

<sup>84</sup> Grattan, *Adventures*, edited by Oman, p. 85.

<sup>85</sup> Bell, *Rough notes*, p.14.

<sup>86</sup> See Webber, *With the guns in the Peninsula*, p. 124.

<sup>87</sup> The 4<sup>th</sup> Division: commanded by Major General (local Lieutenant General) Lowry Cole consisted in terms of the British forces the following: 1st Brigade: commanded by Major General William Anson: 3rd/27th, 1st/40th, Co 5th/60th Foot; 2nd Brigade: commanded by Lieutenant Colonel Ellis: 1st/7th, 1st/23rd, 1st/48, available at British Battles <http://www.britishbattles.com/peninsula/peninsula-salamanca.htm> [22 September 2013].

<sup>88</sup> Webber, *With the guns in the Peninsula*, p. 124.

<sup>89</sup> Harris witnessed these scenes after returning to Chelsea at the end of the Peninsula War, Benjamin Harris, *Recollections of Rifleman Harris*, edited by Henry Curling, John Harris (London, 1970), p. 124.

who did identify the Irish as being British was Sergeant Morris of the 73<sup>rd</sup> Regiment, as his following statement indicates: ‘The British were of course composed of English, Irish and Scotch; of whom it has been humorously said, that an Englishman with a full belly, a Scotchman with a hungry belly and an Irishman half drunk will face the devil.’<sup>90</sup>

#### **Humour, wit and invention**

Drinking may have been one of the most common characteristics associated with the Irish Catholic, but another was his propensity for humour, wit and invention. Grattan indicated that, ‘his [the Irish Catholic’s] second virtue is a lively sense of humour’ and whatever else might be said about them, ‘good or bad, they were always amusing.’<sup>91</sup> Following the retreat from Corunna in Spain, Benjamin Harris of the 95<sup>th</sup> Rifles (Harris was the English soldier noted in the previous chapter) said of an Irishman whose name was only given as MacLauchlan in his regiment that, ‘Nothing could disturb his good-humour and high spirits; and even during a dreadful march, he had ever some piece of Irish humour upon his tongue’s end, whilst he staggered under the weight of his pack.’<sup>92</sup> The most striking part of this was that throughout many of these marches, McLauchlan was continually attacked with racking pains of acute rheumatism. As Harris observed, ‘the men could scarcely refrain from laughter at the extraordinary things he (McLauchlan) gave utterance to.’<sup>93</sup> Joseph Donaldson, the Scottish soldier from the 94<sup>th</sup> Regiment, made similar remarks about his Irish Catholic comrade Dennis:

Dennis, round whom there used to be gathered a host of his comrades, listening to his witticisms or quaint remarks, and whose spirits I had never known to fail, now crestfallen, and moved along with the greatest difficulty. Nothing but death, however, could altogether keep down his buoyant spirits; for if we got a minute’s halt during the march, he made such ludicrous remarks on the wo-begone countenances of himself or his companions, that, although the effort was distressing, they were obliged to smile in spite of their misery.<sup>94</sup>

William Grattan, the Irish Protestant from the 88<sup>th</sup> Connaught Rangers, further acknowledged about the Irish that ‘the rich humour of his country is nowhere else to be

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<sup>90</sup> Morris, *Sergeant Thomas Morris*, p. 164.

<sup>91</sup> Grattan, *Adventures*, edited by Oman, pp vi-vii.

<sup>92</sup> Harris, *Recollections*, edited by Curling (1848), p. 166.

<sup>93</sup> *Ibid*, pp 166-7.

<sup>94</sup> *Ibid*, pp 181-2.

found'.....'we had a few Englishmen in my corps, and I do not remember ever to have heard one of them attempt a joke.'<sup>95</sup> John Blakiston who served in the East India Company, made similar comments about an Irishman named Jack Dillon of the 59<sup>th</sup> Regiment, while stationed at Bangalore in India in 1806:

In this corps there was an Irishman of the name of Dillon, who was the life of our society at Bangalore. Who that was ever in company with Jack Dillon could forget him... Jack's was not the wit that delights some, is envied or feared by others, and comprehended by few; but his was that rich native humour that suits all palates, from the peasant to the king, and is painful to none. He was the best humoured fellow in existence, with no nonsensical pride about him; but ever ready to give you... his joke... In short he was the soul of our festive board. Even in his low spirits...there was something irresistibly comical.....There seemed to be, in such cases, a load of suppressed fun lurking in the sunken comers of his mouth, ready to burst forth at the first glimpse of sunshine, and which you always felt inclined to draw out by some attempt at fun of your own.<sup>96</sup>

Irish humour may have been just an expression of a people who were generally good natured and happy. Yet humour often camouflaged deeper issues. It could be argued, that as at home in Ireland, humour was often used as a coping mechanism for tough situations. It might have also been used as a way of trying to undermine those socially better off than they were. Alternatively, it may have also been used as a device to deflect tricky situations. The following anecdotes seem to suggest that humour was used for these situations. During exchanges between many Irish Catholics and their English and Scottish counterparts, this became especially evident. Robert Blakeney, an Irish Protestant in the 28<sup>th</sup> Regiment, was a spectator to a verbal exchange that occurred at Tarifa in Spain in 1811 between an Irish sergeant by the name of O'Brien of the 87<sup>th</sup> Regiment and an English sergeant by the name of Turnbull of the Guards. Their verbal contest at the time might best have been described as a flyting contest.<sup>97</sup> In today's terms we might consider it a 'slagging' match, much in the

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<sup>95</sup> Grattan, *Adventures*, edited by Oman, p. 85

<sup>96</sup> Blakiston later noted that 'Poor Dillon, with many other fine fellows, not long afterwards fell a victim to the climate of Batavia. Many a breast will join with mine in heaving a sigh to the memory of poor Jack Dillon!' Blakiston, *Twelve years military adventures*, i, pp 322-3.

<sup>97</sup> Carol Clover states 'the single most important attribute ... of flyting contenders is their verbal skill', their ability to use words as weapons, see Irina A. Dumitrescu, 'Verbal duelling', available at Dragons in the sky; English speaking communities at the turn of the millennia, University of Oxford [http://users.ox.ac.uk/~stuart/dits/content\\_verbal.html](http://users.ox.ac.uk/~stuart/dits/content_verbal.html) [13 September 2012].

same way that Afro-Americans rap in verbal contests called dozens.<sup>98</sup> As Blakeney recalled, ‘these were at times rather sharp’ but ‘.....good-humour prevailed throughout’, but ‘each man had a bigoted attachment to his own country, in support of which he poured forth witty and pungent repartees to the great entertainment of the auditors.’<sup>99</sup> Reprinted below is a portion of these exchanges:

**Turnbull** – O, O, O! You are all O’s’ in Ireland!

**O’Brien** – O means from, or the descendant of; therefore I am not surprised at its being ridiculed by persons of your country, where a long line of descent is so difficult to be traced.

**Turnbull** – And pray, Mr. O, from whom are you descended?

**O’Brien** – From Bryan Boro, the Great Boro.<sup>100</sup>

**Turnbull** – And surely “Boro” must be a corruption of the Spanish word “Burro,” which signifies an ass?<sup>101</sup>

Blakeney then recalled how O’Brien went on to decry the ‘demerits of the English of ancient time’ when the Irish gained a victory over the Danes at Clontarf,<sup>102</sup> but Turnbull declared:

**Turnbull** – I like to hear a fellow of your kind, with your beggarly Irish pride, talking of records and historical facts! Look to the history of your own country to learn its disgrace. What have you ever done or achieved except through murders, robbery, cruelty, bloodshed and treachery? Have you not always been fighting amongst yourselves, or against your masters, since we did you the honour of conquering you?

**O’Brien** – If we compare notes about murder and treachery, you need not fear being left in the background.... and as to the honour of being conquered, faith! I cannot cope with you in your dignities there, for I cannot deny that you have been honoured in that way by Romans, and by Danes, and by Saxons, and by Picts, and by Scots.<sup>103</sup>

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<sup>98</sup> The African American dozens tradition are a generally playful kind of verbal contest of stylized insults, sometimes rhymed: Dumitrescu ‘Verbal duelling’ available at [http://users.ox.ac.uk/~stuart/dits/content\\_verbal.html](http://users.ox.ac.uk/~stuart/dits/content_verbal.html) [13 September 2012].

<sup>99</sup> Blakeney, *A boy in the Peninsular War*, p. 172.

<sup>100</sup> Brian Boru was a high king who lived during the heyday of the Vikings, see Roger Chatterton Newton, *Brian Boru: King of Ireland* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Cork 2011), p. 7.

<sup>101</sup> Blakeney, *A boy in the Peninsular War*, pp 172-3.

<sup>102</sup> The Battle of Clontarf pitched the forces of the Munster over-king Brian Boru and his allies against the armies of north Leinster, Dublin, and Viking mercenaries and allies from across the sea, see Clare Downham, *Viking kings of Britain and Ireland: The dynasty of Ívarr to A.D. 1014* (Edinburgh, 1997), pp 59-61.

<sup>103</sup> Blakeney, *A boy in the Peninsular War*, p. 173.

In the final exchange between the two men, Turnbull responded: 'I make you a present of the bull, although there is no necessity for the donation, for all bulls are Irish.'<sup>104</sup> O'Brien's retort was to enquire, 'how are all bulls Irish?' to which Turnbull replied 'because England, your mother-country, has ceded all bulls to you as being legitimately Irish.'<sup>105</sup> Turnbull's jibe about ceding all bulls to the Irish is significant. 'Irish bull' is recorded as 'a statement which is manifestly self-contradictory or inconsistent, especially in humorous effect'.<sup>106</sup> Nicholas Robinson has pointed out that during the regency crisis in 1789, Irish deputations to England were often either caricatured as bulls or as riding on bulls backwards. These depictions were often aimed at demonstrating the credulous nature associated with the Irish.<sup>107</sup> With respect to these types of exchanges between Irish servicemen and British, Sergeant Morris had the following to say:

Though they do now and then at home indulge in national or party squabbles, yet once place them on the field of battle together, with the common enemy in front...all those petty differences subside....long may the rose and thistle continue to twine round the sprig of shillelagh and shamrock so green.<sup>108</sup>

In another display of Irish wit, a young boy of the Connaught Rangers was able to disarm General Picton's scorn after being caught stealing a goat at the Coa river in Portugal in 1809:<sup>109</sup>

**Picton** – 'Pray, sir, what have you got there?'  
**Irish boy** – 'A thieving puckawn, sir.'

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<sup>104</sup> Ibid, p. 173.

<sup>105</sup> Ibid, p. 173.

<sup>106</sup> The 'bull' as described in the article below is a linguistic blunder (conventionally associated with the Irish) that hinges on an incongruity between the usual, accepted meaning of the words said and the intended meaning, see Esther Wohlgenut, 'Maria Edgeworth and the question of national identity' in *Studies in English Literature, 1500-1900*, xxxix, no. 4, (1999), pp 645-658, available at JSTOR <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1556266> [27 February 2014]; One example is as follows: On a recent trial, an Irishman, with characteristic obliquity of speech, after scratching his head, said, 'Please, your Honor, I do not remember-or if I do, I forget it now,' see . Grant Loomis, 'Annotations to the "Irish Bull" in *Western Folklore*, xvi, no. 3 (1957), pp 200-203, available at JSTOR <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1497631> [27 February 2014].

<sup>107</sup> Nicholas Robinson, 'Caricature and the regency crisis: An Irish perspective' in *Eighteenth Century Ireland*, i (1986), pp 157-76, available at JSTOR <http://www.jstor.org/stable/30070821> [15 March 2013].

<sup>108</sup> Morris, *Sergeant Thomas Morris*, p. 165.

<sup>109</sup> Picton became one of Wellington's most able generals, available at Friends of Carmarthen Museum <http://www.carmarthenmuseum.org.uk/articles/picton.html> [04 January 2014]; Grattan, *Adventures*, edited by Oman, p. 17.

**Picton** – 'A what?'

**Irish boy** – 'A goat, sir. In Ireland we call a buck-goat a puckawn. I found the poor baste sthraying, and he looks as if he was as hungry as myself.'

**Picton** – 'What are you going to do with him, sir?'

**Irish boy** – 'Do with him, is it?' 'To bring him with me, to be sure! Do you think I'd lave him here to starve?'

**Picton** – 'Ah! you villain, you are at your old tricks, are you? I know you, though you don't think it!'

**Irish boy** – 'And I know you, sir, and the boys of Connaught know you too, and I'd be sorry to do anything that would be displaing to your honour; and, sure, if you'd only let me, send your sarvent a leg iv him to dhress for your dinner, for by my sow! your honour looks *could* (cold) and angry - hungry I mane' (sic).<sup>110</sup>

The young Irish lad then 'held the goat up by the beard and shook it at Picton's aide-de-camp' Captain Tyler, and taking it for granted that he had made a peace offering to the General was lost sight of amongst a grove of chestnut-trees'.<sup>111</sup> Grattan recalled Picton's response at the cheeky wit of the young Irish boy:<sup>112</sup>

Well, said Picton, turning to Tyler, who was nearly convulsed with laughter, that fellow has some merit. What tact and what humour!!! He would make a good outpost soldier, for he knows, not only how to forage, but to take up a position that is unassailable. Why yes, sir, said Tyler, when he held up the goats head, he seemed to best us to our faces; and his promise of sending you a leg was a capital ruse! It was, faith, replied Picton, and if the fellow is found out, he will, I suppose, endeavour to make me the scapegoat!<sup>113</sup>

Tom Crawley displayed similar wit with his commanding officer, Captain Johnson, when discovered without his correct ration of biscuit when his regiment was camped beside the Biddassoa River in Spain in 1813.<sup>114</sup> This was a serious offence, as the biscuit was to be used in emergencies:

Untie your bag, Crawley.....Tom instantly did as he was ordered, and showed the Captain a very good-looking biscuit a-top. Shake the whole out, said the Captain, until I see if they are getting mouldy. Oh, faith, there is no fear of that, said the astonished Crawley, looking the Captain hard in the face, at the same time casting a woeful eye on his bag. However, the Captain was not to be baulked, and taking the bag

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<sup>110</sup> Grattan, *Adventures*, edited by Oman, pp 20-1.

<sup>111</sup> *Ibid*, pp 20-1.

<sup>112</sup> *Ibid*, pp 20-1.

<sup>113</sup> *Ibid*, pp 20-1.

<sup>114</sup> Costello, *Adventures*, p. 170.

by both ends, emptied out its contents, which turned out to be nothing more nor less than a few dry chips. Poor Tom, as upright as a dart, stood scratching his head, with a countenance that would make a saint laugh. What have you done with your biscuit? Have you eaten it, Sir?.....Do you know it is against orders? To be sure I do, says Tom: but, for God's sake Sir, do you take me for a South American jackass that carries gold and eats straw?<sup>115</sup>

This answer not only set the Captain, but the whole company, in roars of laughter. Crawley could have been severely reprimanded for such an offence had it not been for his quick wit. In many of the memoirs and histories, the Irish were often at their most humorous in tough and challenging situations. One example in a battle field setting was recorded by George Bell who acknowledged that prior to the battle of Toulouse in 1813, the 'Patlanders' in particular 'were cracking their jokes'.<sup>116</sup>

#### **Stupid and slow witted**

Paradoxically, Irish Catholics were also presented as being dim-witted and stupid. The stereotype of the dim-witted Irishman was not a new phenomenon in this era.<sup>117</sup> During the Peninsula War, William Grattan recorded an incident where a boy by the name of Darby Rooney of the Connaught Rangers was unable to tell General MacKinnon what a 'squad' was when asked on parade.<sup>118</sup> As Grattan recalled:

..the general passed on, taking it for granted that the man had never heard of a squad. Not an hour had elapsed when the entire division was made acquainted with the story as groups of officers were seen together laughing at our expense: General MacKinnon inspected them just now; there was not one man in the regiment who knew what a squad was! I would have sworn it, replied a third. An old crone of a

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<sup>115</sup> Ibid, pp 170-1.

<sup>116</sup> Bell, *Rough notes by an old soldier*, p.164.

<sup>117</sup> In 1613, Ben Jonson staged *An Irish masque at court* for King James I. Jonson in the play mocks their accents, manners, and education, see Ben Jonson, 'The Irish masque at court', available at [http://www.wwnorton.com/college/english/nael/17century/topic\\_4/jonson.htm](http://www.wwnorton.com/college/english/nael/17century/topic_4/jonson.htm) [14 May. 2013]; Shakespeare, Dekker, Field, Beaumont, and Fletcher all portrayed the Irish as stupid and uncouth, see Margaret Rose Jaster, 'Staging a stereotype in Gaelic garb: Ben Jonson's "Irish Masque", 1613' in *New Hibernia Review / Iris Éireannach Nua*, ii, no. 4 (1998), pp 86-98 available at JSTOR <http://www.jstor.org.jproxy.nuim.ie/stable/pdfplus/20646259.pdf?acceptTC=true> [14 May. 2013].

<sup>118</sup> Grattan, *Adventures*, edited by Oman, p. 127. A squad is generally the smallest unit in most national armies consisting of 8 to 10 soldiers, available at Army study guide, [http://www.armystudyguide.com/content/Prep\\_For\\_Basic\\_Training/Prep\\_for\\_basic\\_general\\_information/army-organization.shtml](http://www.armystudyguide.com/content/Prep_For_Basic_Training/Prep_for_basic_general_information/army-organization.shtml) [14 September 2013].

major now joined the group, and shaking his head said, Ah! They are a sad set! Poor idiot!<sup>119</sup>

Grattan, however, contended that ‘Darby Rooney understood about as much English as enabled him to get over a parade tolerably.’<sup>120</sup> The excerpt of the incident as retold by Grattan points to the fact that it was of little consequence in the minds of the other soldiers that the boy was only able speak the Irish language.<sup>121</sup> The Irish soldiers in the Connaught Rangers were presented as a dim lot as a result of this episode.<sup>122</sup> In *A sailor of King George*, the memoir of Lieutenant Fredrick Hoffman, Hoffman reported the following story as told to him by an Irish Catholic (whose name was only given as Pat) who was pressed aboard the H.M.S *Minatour*:<sup>123</sup>

I’m all the way from dear ould Ireland.....[where].....I planted praters and tended cows. In the hay season I came to England and was employed in stacking, when one day.....I fell in with four men.....as they were going to a public-house.....After taking the first pot they.....asked me if I could pull an oar. I’ll try, said I. Well, said they, on Saturday, at five o’clock in the evening, be down at Wapping Stairs [in London].....I little thought.....that these spalpeens.....intended anything more than friendship. I was at the place pointed out, and stepped into the boat. I took the second oar, but I caught so many crabs that I was desired to sit in the stern.....the man who steered...had a message to deliver on board a dark-looking vessel we were close to. We got alongside of her. Won’t you go up, Pat? said he; you never was on board so large a vessel.....I went up after him, when a man dressed in a blue coat with yellow buttons came up to me and told me to go below....I found seven more....half-starved looking animals. Two of them were countrymen. Who have we here? said one of them. I am all the way from Ireland... [and]...have come to see this ship.....At this they all laughed. I went to the door, but found a sodjer (sic) there with a drawn sword. Why, what a bother you are making, Pat, said one of my companions; you know you are going to serve the King. And pray, said I, who is the King? I never saw or heard of him before.....That’s a good one...Where were you born and baptized? About the bogs of Ireland....and I was baptized over a bowl of buttermilk and praters by Father Murphy.....have you any dibbs? [asked one of the men] Yes,

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<sup>119</sup> Grattan, *Adventures*, edited by Oman, p. 127.

<sup>120</sup> *Ibid*, p. 126.

<sup>121</sup> *Ibid*, p. 127.

<sup>122</sup> *Ibid*, p. 127.

<sup>123</sup> In 1803, Hoffman was appointed lieutenant of H.M.S. *Minotaur* on the Channel Service, see Captain Fredrick Hoffman, *A sailor of King George: The journals of Captain Fredrick Hoffman R.N 1793-1814* edited by A. Beckford Bevan & H.B Wolryche-Whitmore (London, 1901), pp iv-vii, available at Internet Archive <http://archive.org/stream/asailorkinggeor00bevagoog#page/n220/mode/2up> [14 May 2014].



answered I, have got two shillings and fourpence. That will do. Send for a pot of the right sort, and we'll drink a long life to Ireland.....We had our pot, drew ourselves up like pigs in a trough, and went to sleep. Next morning at daylight we were put on board a tender—not very tenderly...We arrived at Plymouth about a fortnight ago, and here I am, your honour.<sup>124</sup>

If this was not a true story, it was a fine piece of fiction, which targeted a number of facets of the Irish character. As the rest of Hoffman's recollections appear to be generally reliable, it is plausible that aspects of this narrative were true, albeit, maybe with some added embellishments. Another story that presented the Irish in a dim light appeared in the memoirs of Captain J. Kincaid.<sup>125</sup> Kincaid recalled that while marching up a steep mountain on a very hot day, his regiment encountered a clear running spring which contained salt water from the springs of Salinas, near Vitoria in north-eastern Spain. Kincaid noted how 'truly ludicrous' it was to see the face of some of the men of his regiment 'after taking such a voluntary dose,'<sup>126</sup> but added:

an Irishman, who, not satisfied with the first trial, and believing that his cup had been infested by some salt breaking loose in his haversack, washed it carefully and then drank a second, when, finding no change, he exclaimed, 'By Jaysus, boys, we must be near the sea, for the water's getting salt.'<sup>127</sup>

It must be stressed that the majority of Irish Catholics who joined the armed forces were from the lower classes, and many had received little education as their parents could not often afford it. Those that could often paid in butter, potatoes or other commodities.<sup>128</sup> The schools they might attend were known as hedge schools.<sup>129</sup> Between 1782 and 1829, there

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<sup>124</sup> Hoffman, *A sailor of King George*, pp 191-2.

<sup>125</sup> Captain J. Kincaid, *Adventures in the rifle brigade in the Peninsula, France and the Netherlands from 1809-1814*, (London, 1830), available at Internet Archive

<http://archive.org/stream/adventuresinrif00kincgoog#page/n6/mode/2up> [14 September 2013]; Sir John Kincaid, (1787–1862), army officer, born near Stirlingshire. On 27 April 1809, he joined the 95<sup>th</sup> Foot, available at *Dictionary of National Biography*

<http://www.oxforddnb.com.jproxy.nuim.ie/view/article/15550?docPos=2> [17 February 2014].

<sup>126</sup> Kincaid, *Adventures in the rifle brigade*, p. 211.

<sup>127</sup> *Ibid*, p. 211.

<sup>128</sup> Anon, 'Nineteenth-century hedge schools or pay schools in *The past: The organ of the Uí Cinsealaigh Historical Society*, xvi (1988), p. 28, available at JSTOR <http://www.jstor.org/stable/25519978> [14 May. 2013].

<sup>129</sup> The hedge school system, 'had its origins in the days of Cromwell. The system was pursued with rigorous energy by the Catholic teachers in the face of great hardship and persecution. By the beginning of the

was a rapid increase in the population and, as a result, these schools had to cater for more children than ever before. It is interesting to note then that when on his travels in Ireland in 1782, Arthur Young stated that ‘many a ditch was full of scholars.’<sup>130</sup>

#### Thievery and dirtiness

Despite the fact that some accounts present Irish Catholics as dim/stupid, these were probably not the worst characterisations labelled at them. Their perceived thievery and dirtiness drew far more attention. Before turning to the aspect of the thievery of the Irish in the battlefield, all of the nationalities in the British forces were equally as culpable of the offence over the period. William Grattan, the Irish Protestant soldier from the 88<sup>th</sup> Connaught Rangers, presented a disturbing account of the sack of Badajoz following the siege there:

On the 7th of April, all amongst the assaulting columns had ceased, and a scene of plunder and cruelty, that it would be difficult to find a parallel for, took its place. The army, so fine and effective on the preceding day, was now transformed into a vast band of brigands.<sup>131</sup>

As will be demonstrated in the following passages, the Irish, when they were caught stealing, were often caught with foodstuffs. Their actions and those of any of the other nationalities who engaged in stealing need to be seen in the context of how the British army operated at the time. John Bartlett, who has conducted a recent study of the British army over the period, reported the following when it came to soldiers being provisioned with food in 1793:

In supply it [the British army] lacked any co-ordinated structure.....; the transport arrangements were made by a variety of departments and individuals. It [the British army] lacked any semblance of a practical organisation or direction towards a common aim, and with the acquisition

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nineteenth century the hedge school had become the popular school of the people...The schools, as their prefix suggests, were open air ‘academies’.... After 1782 when the laws against them had begun to be relaxed, and even in the nineteenth century, their character did not alter much’, see John I. D. Johnston ‘Hedge schools of Tyrone and Monaghan’ in *Clogher Record*, vii, no. 1 (1969), pp 34-55, available at JSTOR <http://www.jstor.org/stable/27695628> [24 February 2014].

<sup>130</sup> Arthur Young (1741—1820), prolific English writer on agriculture, politics, and economics. On 1 January 1779, he began *A tour in Ireland*. The book appeared in 1780, was well received at the time, and has since become a valuable source as one of the few accounts of conditions in Ireland at this time, see *Dictionary of National Biography* <http://www.oxforddnb.com.jproxy.nuim.ie/view/article/30256?docPos=2> [24 February 2014].

<sup>131</sup> See Grattan, *Adventures*, edited by Oman, p. 208.

of food still being the responsibility of individual soldiers, they were vulnerable to the effects of shortages, which diverted their attention away from their primary purpose. Food was only one of the areas in which the welfare of the British soldier was deficient.<sup>132</sup>

Many of these problems were rectified during the peninsula campaigns, as Wellington ‘had learned the value of painstaking logistical preparation in India.’<sup>133</sup> It has been argued that ‘Wellington's Peninsular Army was probably the best supplied and supported army of its time’ although it still faced problems on a number of occasions when it retreated from Corunna, Talavera and Burgos.<sup>134</sup> It is quite probable that there were many other occasions during the peninsula campaigns when the supply chain became frayed and the men had to fend for themselves. Turning to descriptions of thievery by the Irish, the two regiments described as the worst offenders for plunder and robbery were the Irish 87<sup>th</sup> and 88<sup>th</sup> Regiments. In his memoirs, Auguste Schumann, a German officer, recorded the following at Torres Vedras in Portugal:

one Irishman had lagged behind after they'd passed a peasant's cottage, from which, within minutes the piteous bleats of a goat and the loud clacking of poultry confirmed what had taken place, for the goat's throat had been cut in a twinkling...and it had been hung on to one of the carts in order to be skinned on the march. The turkeys did not fare any better, and were plucked as we went along.<sup>135</sup>

As Schumann later recalled about confronting the Irish soldiers for their thieving nature, ‘I attempted to point out to the fellows how disgraceful their behaviour had been, but as the Irish are a notoriously bloodthirsty and predatory crowd, my remarks made not the slightest impression on them.’<sup>136</sup> One of the most infamous incidents of thievery recorded was told about two men of the Connaught Rangers who were caught stealing a goat on the day that General Picton took over their division. Picton made an example of them in front of the

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<sup>132</sup> John Keith Bartlett, ‘The development of the British army during the wars with France, 1793-1815’ (Ph. D thesis, Hatfield College, University of Durham, 1997), p. 22, available at [http://etheses.dur.ac.uk/699/1/4\\_The\\_Development\\_of\\_the\\_British\\_army\\_during\\_the\\_wars\\_with\\_France.pdf](http://etheses.dur.ac.uk/699/1/4_The_Development_of_the_British_army_during_the_wars_with_France.pdf) [23 September 2014].

<sup>133</sup> Dan Hebditch, ‘To what extent was Napoleonic warfare made possible by solving the problem posed by logistics?’ (2004) pp 1-11, available at <http://www.users.globalnet.co.uk/~dheb/2300/Historical/MA/NapLogistics.pdf> [23 September 2014].

<sup>134</sup> Ibid, pp 1-11

<sup>135</sup> Quoted by Robertson, *A commanding presence*, p. 56.

<sup>136</sup> Ibid, p. 56.

whole division and had the men flogged in his presence. He then proclaimed that they were ‘not known in the army by the name of Connaught Rangers, but by the name of Connaught footpads!’<sup>137</sup> Another account suggests that he called them ‘Connaught robbers’.<sup>138</sup> Significantly, Picton’s biographer noted that:

One regiment in particular, the Eighty-eighth, or Connaught Rangers, as brave and steady a fighting set of fellows as ever handled a musket, were perhaps as determined a band of marauders as ever sacked a city or robbed a poultry yard..... But this irregularity in the regiments of the fighting division was not confined to the Eighty-eighth, although the palm certainly rested with the Rangers of Connaught; and Picton used to remark, that all the light division left in the way of plunder, was sure to be found by his ragged rascals.<sup>139</sup>

Oman tells of an encounter Wellington had with an Irish soldier again named ‘Pat’ (This story he would often retell at dinner parties) from the Connaught Rangers who was also caught in the act of plundering. Wellington was enraged, as the previous day he had issued orders that any man caught plundering would be dealt with severely:

Hullo, sir, where did you get that bee-hive? Pat could not see his interlocutor, having completely shrouded his face to keep off stings: he did not pay sufficient heed to the tone of the question, which should have warned him, and answered in a fine Milesian brogue, just over the hill there, and, by Jaysus, if ye don't make haste they'll be all gone. The blind good-nature of the reply stayed the General's anger; he let Pat pass, and told the story at dinner with a laugh.<sup>140</sup>

In another story outlining the thieving nature of the Irish, in early 1812, it was recorded that a corporal and a private of the Connaught Rangers who were sent to St. Joao da Pesqueira in Portugal with a cart pulled by two fine white bullocks to procure some wine, returned with a cart and two very inferior black bullocks. The commissary forwarded a

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<sup>137</sup> Grattan, *Adventures*, edited by Oman, p. 17.

<sup>138</sup> Blakeney, *A boy in the Peninsular*, p. 268.

<sup>139</sup> Heaton Bowstead Robinson, *Memoirs of Lieutenant-General Sir Thomas Picton: Including his correspondence, from originals in possession of his family* (London, 1836), available at Internet Archive <http://archive.org/stream/memoirsoflieuten00robirich#page/136/mode/2up> [17 September 2013].

<sup>140</sup> Oman, *Wellington's army*, pp 245-6. The general order against plundering from the peasantry was issued at Jaraicejo to the half-starved army on the retreat from Talavera in Spain. ‘The bee-hive stealers of the retreat from Talavera got 700 lashes each; a heavy sentence for such a crime. Much more frequent were the 500, and 300 lash sentences, which were to be numbered by the hundred, and were awarded, as a rule, for casual theft without violence.’

complaint about the incident and the two men were sent for court-martial. When it went to trial, everything was proven except for the money exchanged for the two white bullocks. The president when summing up the evidence turned to the prisoners and said, 'it is quite useless denying the fact; it is conclusive.... you started from hence with a pair of fine white bullocks, and you brought back a pair of lean blacks.....what can you have to say to that?'<sup>141</sup> The following answer was allegedly given by Private Charles Reilly, 'Och! Plaise your honour, and wasn't the white beasts lazy, and didn't we bate them until they were black?'<sup>142</sup> This statement by Private Charles O'Reilly is a good example of the term 'Irish bull' noted earlier. As might be expected, the court was not satisfied with the truth of this explanation. The corporal was demoted in rank and received 700 lashes while Reilly got 500 lashes. However, 'in consideration of the great gallantry displayed by the 88<sup>th</sup> Regiment at the storm of Ciudad Rodrigo a few days earlier, both culprits were pardoned.'<sup>143</sup> Writing about the British army in the Peninsula, Fortescue noted the following about the Irish:

They [the British forces] plundered the Portuguese unmercifully, seizing their horses and cattle in order to make them buy the animals back again, and stealing even the horses of the cavalry to sell them to the commissariat. It is most improbable that these practices extended to the whole army; indeed from Wellington's own language it should seem that they were confined chiefly to stragglers and convalescent invalids.....There were, however, instances in which Wellesley accused complete corps as guilty of these malpractices, and actually threatened to send them into garrison and to report them as unfit for service in the field. The offenders in question were the Eighty-seventh and the Eighty-eighth.<sup>144</sup>

Yet while the Irish were especially tarred with these misdeeds, as noted they were not the only nationality amongst the British forces recorded as engaging in such activity. An episode which might help to contextualise this was recorded by the Scottish soldier of the

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<sup>141</sup> Oman, *Wellington's army*, p. 247.

<sup>142</sup> Ibid, p. 247.

<sup>143</sup> Ibid, p. 247.

<sup>144</sup> It was further stated by Fortescue that 'it appears further that, generally speaking, the men who came from the Irish militia were especially troublesome, J.W. Fortescue, *A history of the British army* (20 vols, London, 1912) vii, pp 191-2: available at Internet Archive <https://archive.org/stream/historyofbritish07fortuoft#page/190/mode/2up> [15 May 2013].

94<sup>th</sup> Regiment, Joseph Donaldson. Donaldson recalled that while at Cada-ciera in Spain in 1812:

We had not long taken up our quarters in the village, where our whole brigade<sup>145</sup> was, when a peasant entered it, driving a flock of sheep before him. In a moment, a race was made amongst them by some of the soldiers. Others, stimulated by their example, followed; and in a few minutes officers and men were seen promiscuously scrambling for the mutton. Dennis [Donaldson's Irish friend] joined in the throng, and had seized one of them [the sheep], at the same moment that an officer of another Irish regiment in the brigade made a grasp of it. The poor Portuguese shepherd stood like a statue, not knowing well what to do. At last, when he found himself relieved from all his charge, he went away lamenting and muttering curses on the ladrones Englese [English robbers].<sup>146</sup>

While all factions (English, Scottish Welsh and Irish) were engaging in looting, the English were getting the blame for it as the most visible item most people saw was the redcoat uniform. Incidents such as these may have generated negative publicity for the English and British forces generally in the Peninsula and elsewhere.

The Irish were also described as being unkempt and dirty, although this may have reflected popular conceptions about them throughout the period. Fortescue noted that 'regiments as had drawn recruits from the Irish militia, paid as little attention to cleanliness, as their officers to duty.'<sup>147</sup> Edward Costello in his memoir observed that a fellow Irish soldier in his regiment 'preferred to turn his shirt inside out than wash it.'<sup>148</sup> While not attacking the Irish directly, another Irish Protestant officer by the name of Buckham<sup>149</sup> when describing the living habits of the Spanish noted that 'the hovels of the lower orders are like those of the Irish; pigs and the family dwelling together and filled with smoke,' but,

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<sup>145</sup> The 94<sup>th</sup> Regiment which was part of the second brigade of the third division which consisted of the 2/5<sup>th</sup>, 2/83<sup>rd</sup> and 2/88<sup>th</sup> Regiments, see British battles <http://www.britishbattles.com/peninsula/fuentes.htm> [24 February 2104].

<sup>146</sup> Donaldson, *Recollections*, pp 101-2.

<sup>147</sup> J.W. Fortescue, *A history of the British army*, (20 vols, London, 1906) iv, pt ii, p.804, available at Internet Archive <http://archive.org/stream/p2historyofbriti04fortuoft#page/n7/mode/2up> [15 May 2013].

<sup>148</sup> Costello, *Adventures*, p. 92

<sup>149</sup> No biographical material on Buckham could be found. However, he was an officer of the British staff corps cavalry. E.W. Buckham, *Personal narrative of adventures in the Peninsula during the war in 1812-1813* (London, 1827) available at Internet Archive <https://archive.org/stream/personalnarrati00buckgoog#page/n337/mode/2up> [25 February 2014].

he did go on to say that ‘the generosity and hospitality of the Irish is however wanting.’<sup>150</sup> Another source notes how some Englishmen accused the Irish of ‘being dirty and verminous, a standard accusation against those at the bottom of the social heap.’<sup>151</sup>

#### Generosity and good nature

In terms of the more redeeming qualities ascribed to the Irish soldier, he was commended for his warm generosity and friendly nature. This aspect came across quite resoundingly in many of the memoirs and histories which came out after the war. Two examples can help to demonstrate this. In the first example, following the storming of Ciudad Rodrigo in January 1812, a number of Portuguese guerrillas had captured a French officer and brought him before General Crauford almost naked. Crauford was recorded as being very distressed at seeing the man’s appearance. Costello recorded that it was at this point that Crawley stepped forward and ‘touching his hat after his own inimitable manner’ approached Crauford and said ‘yer honnor’, ‘I’ll lend him my great coat, if je’ll (sic) allow me.’<sup>152</sup> Crauford appreciated the generous offer and instantly answered ‘you are a very good rifleman; let him have it.’<sup>153</sup> It must be pointed out that this took place in the depths of winter. Joseph Donaldson, the Scottish soldier who has been encountered a number of times throughout the chapter from the 94<sup>th</sup> Regiment, had many good things to say of his Irish friend, Dennis. As he acknowledged ‘during all the time Dennis and I were comrades, I never had a reason to repent it: for he was of a warm hearted and generous disposition and never flinched from me in distress.....besides this, he had a fund of honour that never would allow him to stoop to a mean action.’<sup>154</sup> Donaldson also recalled Dennis making the following comment to him after he had been left without anything apart from his kit following the siege of Cadiz: ‘Och, if that's all, never fear, my boy — you'll never want while Dennis has a shirt in his knapsack, or a cross in his pocket.’<sup>155</sup>

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<sup>150</sup> Buckham, *Personal narrative of adventures*, p. 323.

<sup>151</sup> Richard Holmes, *Redcoat: The British soldier in the age of horse and musket* (London, 2001), p. 59.

<sup>152</sup> Costello, p. 93.

<sup>153</sup> *Ibid*, p. 93.

<sup>154</sup> Donaldson, *Recollections*, p. 49.

<sup>155</sup> *Ibid*, p. 85.

### Conclusion

This chapter has concentrated on the way in which memoirs, journals and histories presented Irish Catholics within the British armed forces over the period. It should be taken into account, however, that many of these sources were not published until well into the Victorian period when stereotypes of the Irish had evolved, and were given a new lease of life in publications such as *Punch*. It may have been that when the Irish were presented the way in which they were, it was to fit socially accepted views already held of them. People expected to see such characterisations and this may have added to further sales. It was also noted in the introduction that perceptions about the Irish did not fit into the ideals of Victorian respectability or sensibility. There was perhaps an economic factor to this. The Irish migrated in huge numbers to Britain during the period when many of these sources were published. Most ended up in the worst slums of Victorian Britain. Many of the ills that could be found within these slums were at odds with how society was supposed to be at the time. However, evidence from British and Irish Protestant servicemen and modern British historians still suggests that Irish servicemen were prone to brawling, acts of thievery, fits of drunkenness, and on occasion being unkempt. That being said, it is also significant to note that many of the negative features for which Irish Catholics were derided were also recorded of the other nationalities within the British forces. So why might have the Irish, or more accurately, Irish Catholics been highlighted for such behaviour? Aside from those factors which have already been noted above, another possible reason may be the fact that it was the British character that came under attack because of Irish behaviour. As such, one of the most identifiable features that distinguished the British forces was their uniform. This meant that when any transgressions occurred, it was usually the British character which was adversely affected. By portraying the Irish as being the nationality within the British forces most prone to such behaviour, it may have allowed the Irish to become the scapegoat for some of the negative press, whilst also re-enforcing perceptions held about them. This, however, is only a hypothesis. Turning to some of the positive stereotypes, the Irish propensity for humour, wit and generosity seems to have helped warm many to them, which in addition helped to break down some of the negative conceptions about them. While the central focus behind the chapter was to discover whether there was



any foundation to the stereotypes of the Irish servicemen, the chapter has also allowed the reader to gain an insight into the Irish Catholic mindset at the time. In this regard, it has shown a hard society where drinking and fighting were the order of the day, and where to survive, thievery was an art that was often necessary. It has also demonstrated that despite Irish servicemen not having much education or wealth, there were often displays of natural intelligence and generous spirit, and the hardships of a tough life were often met with a smile and the crack of a joke.

## Conclusion

On 20 November 2015, two centuries will have passed since the conclusion of the French Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars. These conflicts which occurred over a twenty-year period and which occurred in the four corners of the globe at one time were given the appellation, 'The Great War'. That was until the First World War attained the title a century later. The Irish Catholic presence was considerable in both of these conflicts. It is significant that within an Irish context, as we enter the centenary commemorations of the First World War, there has been a shift away from the enmity and silence which was often felt within Ireland in respect of Irish Catholic servicemen who had chosen to fight in the British armed forces. This has been precipitated by a gradual softening of old attitudes, owing to quite recent events in Northern Ireland, the greater co-operation between Britain and Ireland, and more recently, the Queen of England's visit to Ireland. While the following years will no doubt see a myriad of histories published which will tell the stories of Irish soldiers who served in the British forces during the war of 1914 to 1918, it may be argued that the same will not happen for those Irish Catholics who engaged in the European conflict a century earlier from 1793 to 1815. Most if not all of the attention for the coming celebrations, in respect of the end of the Napoleonic period, will most likely focus on the great historical figures of Wellington, Nelson and Napoleon. This thesis is to some extent an attempt to rectify this position by putting the focus back on those ordinary Irish Catholics who aided not only in securing a British victory, but in doing so helped to secure the freedom of Europe. Their role needs to be analysed in its own right.

In chapter one, the focus centres on an analysis of the performance of Irish Catholics within the four central forces (the regular line regiments, the navy, the militia, and the yeomanry) of the British crown over the period. With regard to instances of desertion, while there was certainly evidence of Irish Catholic desertion in all four forces, it was not always the case that issues of disloyalty were the crucial factor. Fear, reprisals, bribes, harsh conditions, the thrill of adventure, and bounty-jumping were all contributing causes. While Irish Catholics were often guilty of desertion, desertion among the English and Scottish militia regiments and regular forces was apparently just as high if not more so.

Turning to mutiny, in the militia, many of the names at the trials appear to suggest that the mutineers were Catholics, although there was a sprinkling of Protestant surnames too. However, evidence from two prominent government sources within Ireland during the 1798 rebellion appears to suggest that when the rebellion broke out, Protestants from the northern regiments were those most engaged in mutinous activity. In spite of some negative comments made about Catholic militiamen engaging in mutinous activity over the period, there was never any serious suggestion that the militia ought to be disbanded. As for Catholics in the yeomanry, some joined apparently with mutinous intent in mind, while others mutinied after witnessing outrages committed on their co-religionists. In the navy, conditions and pay proved to be the principal cause of mutiny in 1797. The mutinies in the royal navy in 1798 and 1799 did have a noticeable Irish element, with about a fifth of the 24,000 Irishmen serving in the navy at the time apparently involved. However, while a fifth may have been disaffected, the majority showed no signs of disaffection. Significantly, it was argued that English sailors formed the principal group most engaged in mutinous activity. As to cases of mutiny by the Irish in the regular line regiments, these were primarily linked to the prospect of being sent to the West Indies, which was perceived as a veritable death sentence.

It can be argued that on the whole, Irish Catholic performance in all of the forces when engaged against the enemy was more than adequate. The militia demonstrated this during engagements against the Defenders, resistance to the attempted landing of the French at Bantry Bay in 1796, and the principal battles during the 1798 rebellion. In the yeomanry, the good conduct of many Catholic yeomen was also noticeable during the 1798 rebellion. In the navy, it could be argued while a fifth may have been disaffected, that leaves four fifths who showed no signs of disaffection. Respecting Irish Catholics who served in the regular army, Wellington's remarks prior to the granting of Catholic Emancipation in 1829 possibly best exemplify their contribution: 'Yes, my lords, it is mainly to the Irish Catholic

that we all owe our proud pre-eminence in our military career.<sup>1</sup> Finally, as to which force Irish Catholics can be accredited as having performed best in, the above speech by Wellington indicates that it was arguably in the regular army. Overall, it could be argued that Irish Catholic performance was comparable with that of any of the other nationalities or religious denominations that served in the British forces over the period.

Turning to the conclusions outlined in chapter two regarding the religious observance and identity of Irish Catholics while serving in the armed forces, it was argued that Irish Catholic identity was most visible during confrontations with Protestant servicemen. Despite the fact that it was not unknown for Protestant servicemen to initiate such confrontations, it would appear that Irish Catholics were often the primary instigators. As to allegations of religious indifference, it was pointed out that religious attendance at Mass in general over the period by Irish Catholics was often infrequent. This may have had a bearing on their perceived lack of interest in religious observance while serving in the British armed forces. A number of examples were presented in chapter two which confirmed this. Comments by Wellington and the chaplain-general bore testimony to this, as did Thomas's account (an Irish Catholic at the time he was in the army), where his comrades preferred going to the ale-house than going to Mass. A fear of being ridiculed may have been a reason why some chose not to show any sign of religious inclination. However, there were a number of examples where Irish Catholics openly sought out places of worship or stressed resolute convictions regarding their Catholicism. Charles O'Neil and Bernard Grant were two of those who demonstrated a strong affinity with their religion, while the strong flourishing attendance of Catholic servicemen (presumably Irish) at churches situated near garrisons across southern England from 1793 to 1815 also bore testimony to this fact. Servicemen such as O'Neil, Mulcahy and Grant appear to have been middle class or tenant-farming Catholics. This in turn may have led them to have a greater

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<sup>1</sup>Available at: A web of English history <http://www.historyhome.co.uk/polspeech/wellcath.htm> [31 May 2014].

measure of contact with the Irish clergy at home which in turn may have created a stronger attachment to their faith.

As noted in chapter two, while provisions had been made in 1793 (in Ireland) and 1811 (outside Ireland) for Irish Catholic servicemen to attend their own form of worship, commanding officers often ignored or tried to force Irish Catholics to attend Anglican worship. The relationship between the British political and military hierarchy and that of the Irish Catholic hierarchy and priesthood was sometimes estranged. However, other sources point to a relationship that could often be cordial as indicated by the close working relationship between Irish priests acting as interpreters and spies for the British military while in Spain and Portugal.

The way in which the ritualistic and superstitious practices of Irish Catholics came to be viewed was also given some attention. Significantly, when it came to these practices, it was an Irish Catholic serviceman by the name of Thomas, who was most critical of them, especially after being asked for money in an alehouse to have his confession heard. Thomas's comments, however, need to be viewed in terms of his later conversion to Protestantism. Irish Catholic ceremonies, and evidence of Irish Catholics being stigmatised because of their religion was also present. Tom Crawley's being forced to wear a smock frock with a green cross painted front and back was an example of this. Commissions for Irish Catholics were often problematic. Throughout this period, many who reached quite high positions had to keep their religion quiet. Others were forced to either to quit the forces or give up their religion because of the issue of commissions. While there is evidence that some Irish Catholics chose to relinquish or remain ambivalent about their Catholic faith while serving in the armed forces, the weight of evidence favours the argument that there was both a strong religious identity and consciousness exhibited by Irish Catholic servicemen serving in the British armed forces over the period.

The final chapter concentrated on the way in which many of the memoirs and histories presented Irish Catholics within the British armed forces during this period in an often stereotypical way. It should be taken into account, however, that many of these sources

were not published until well into the Victorian period when stereotypes of the Irish had evolved, and were given a new lease of life. It may have been that when the Irish were presented the way in which they were, it was to fit socially accepted views already held of them. However, evidence from British and Irish Protestant servicemen and modern British historians still suggests that Irish servicemen were prone to brawling, acts of thievery, fits of drunkenness, and on occasion being unkempt. That being said, it is also significant to note that many of the negative features for which Irish Catholics were derided were also recorded of the other nationalities within the British forces. It could be argued that as the Irish engaged in many of these behaviours while wearing a British uniform, the British character suffered as a result. By portraying the Irish as being the nationality most prone to such behaviours, this may have allowed the British character to regain some respectability whilst letting the Irish become the scapegoats. This is only a hypothesis though, and would need further study. Turning to the positive stereotypes, the Irish propensity for humour, wit and generosity seems to have helped warm many to them. While the central focus behind chapter three was to discover whether there was any foundation to the stereotypes of Irish servicemen, it also allowed the viewer to gain an insight into the Irish Catholic mindset at the time. In this regard, it has been shown that drinking and fighting were commonplace and thievery was an art that was often necessary. It also demonstrated that despite Irish servicemen not having much education or wealth, there were often displays of natural intelligence and generous spirit, while the hardships of a tough life were often met with a smile and the crack of a joke.

In overall conclusion, the good performance of Irish Catholics to the British crown was clearly demonstrated. Religious identity was also keenly displayed and while there may have been some who latterly chose to convert to Protestantism, there is no definitive evidence that this occurred because they had served in the British armed forces. As to the great many stereotypes that were presented in the memoirs and histories of the Irish at the time, there was much truth in both the good and the bad. While it is probable that some were embellished for popular purposes, it still gives a rare glimpse of Irish Catholic life

almost two hundred years ago. Arguably, the best way to end the study is to hear what those who actually served with them thought about them:

I would say that an army composed exclusively of Irishmen would outmarch any...as I know they would outfight them. The quality which carries....him to overcome obstacles truly formidable in themselves is his gaiety, and his facility of accommodating, not only his demeanour, but his stomach also.... He can live on....little nourishment; give him his pipe of tobacco and he will march for two days without food and without grumbling; give him, in addition, a little spirits and a biscuit, and he will work for a week.....Neither do you find elsewhere the lively thought, the cheerful song or pleasant story, to be met only in an Irish regiment.<sup>2</sup>

I have....observed in that corps (I mean the 87th regiment, or Prince's Own Irish) a degree of liberality amongst the men I have never seen in any other corps— a willingness to share their crust and drop on service with their comrades, an indescribable cheerfulness in obliging and accommodating each other, and an anxiety to serve each other, and to hide each other's faults.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>2</sup>William Grattan, *Adventures with the Connaught Rangers 1808-1814*, (2 vols, London, 1847), i, pp 118-9.

<sup>3</sup> John Shipp, *Memoirs of the extraordinary military career of John Shipp* (3 vols, London, 1843), ii, p. 79.

# Appendices

## Appendix 1

### Irish Waterloo veterans - 3rd Battalion, 1<sup>st</sup> Foot

#### (ii) Irish Waterloo campaign veterans – 3<sup>rd</sup> Battalion, 1<sup>st</sup> Foot

| Name                               | Rank     | Age           | County    | Enlisted         | Trade                       |
|------------------------------------|----------|---------------|-----------|------------------|-----------------------------|
| Adams, Thomas                      | Private  | 31            | Antrim    | July 1808        | Not available               |
| Allen, John                        | Private  | 30            | Monaghan  | March 1807       | Weaver                      |
| Austin, William                    | Private  | 36            | Armagh    | December 1807    | Weaver                      |
| Bell, Isiah                        | Private  | 23            | Armagh    | November 1810    | Weaver                      |
| Benson, James                      | Private  | 34            | Donegal   | July 1807        | Weaver                      |
| Bloxham, Richard                   | Sergeant | 48            | Dublin    | May 1802         | Painter                     |
| Bloxham, William                   | Corporal | Not available | Dublin    | November 1813    | Servant                     |
| Boland, James                      | Private  | 32            | Clare     | January [?] 1808 | Tailor                      |
| Boucher, William                   | Private  | 28            | Dublin    | February 1814    | Shoemaker                   |
| Brannagan /<br>Brannaghan, Matthew | Corporal | 17            | Antrim    | June 1813        | Weaver                      |
| Brown, William                     | Private  | 29            | Antrim    | August 1810      | Weaver                      |
| Buckley, Denis                     | Private  | 18            | Cork      | May 1815         | Labourer                    |
| Burns / Burnes, Edward             | Private  | 30            | Down      | November 1808    | Weaver<br>Cotton<br>Spinner |
| Burns, Bernard                     | Private  | 28            | Antrim    | May 1812         | Labourer                    |
| Burns, James                       | Private  | 26            | Louth     | August 1811      | Labourer                    |
| Burns, Matthew                     | Private  | 24            | Dublin    | May 1812         | Rope Maker                  |
| Canning, Hugh                      | Sergeant | 27            | Derry     | March 1808       | Not available               |
| Carrigan, Hugh                     | Private  | 28            | Fermanagh | June 1811        | Labourer                    |
| Carroll, Edward                    | Private  | 26            | Westmeath | November 1811    | Labourer                    |
| Carroll, Patrick                   | Private  | 21            | Mayo      | May 1813         | Labourer                    |
| Carson, Hill                       | Private  | 23            | Down      | May 1812         | Weaver                      |
| Christie, Robert                   | Private  | 39            | Derry     | September 1806   | Weaver                      |
| Clarke, Charles                    | Private  | 33            | Louth     | April 1812       | Carpenter                   |
| Clarke, Frederick                  | Corporal | 29            | Westmeath | June 1807        | Labourer                    |
| Clarke, John                       | Private  | 27            | Down      | November 1809    | Labourer                    |
| Coates / Coats, John               | Private  | 29            | Antrim    | January 1809     | Weaver                      |
| Coleman, Patrick                   | Private  | 27            | Carlow    | February 1811    | Carpenter                   |
| Colopy / Collopy,<br>Edward        | Private  | 50            | Limerick  | February 1801    | Labourer                    |
| Coogan, Owen                       | Private  | 28            | Monaghan  | October 1807     | Weaver                      |
| Cooly, John                        | Private  | Not available | Dublin    | May 1812         | Labourer                    |
| Corbett, John                      | Private  | 46            | Clare     | November 1807    | Not available<br>Stocking   |
| Cosgrove, Peter                    | Drummer  | 17            | Fermanagh | June 1813        | Weaver                      |
| Craig, John                        | Private  | 26            | Down      | February 1807    | Labourer                    |
| Crawford, Robert                   | Private  | 34            | Fermanagh | February 1808    | Shoemith                    |
| Croagan / Crogan, John             | Private  | Not available | Dublin    | January 1811     | Labourer                    |
| Culbert, Elias                     | Private  | 24            | Antrim    | May 1812         | Weaver                      |
| Cunningham, James                  | Private  | 28            | Donegal   | July 1809        | Weaver                      |
| Curry, James                       | Private  | Not available | Limerick  | September 1808   | Slater                      |
| Curren, Henry                      | Private  | 18            | Tyrone    | January 1812     | Labourer                    |
| Cuthbert, Thomas                   | Private  | 34            | Antrim    | November 1808    | Labourer                    |
| Daley, Jeremiah                    | Private  | 29            | Dublin    | April 1806       | Coffin Maker                |
| Delahunty, Thomas                  | Corporal | 24            | Carlow    | October 1814     | Not available               |
| Delaney, Michael                   | Private  | 31            | Tyrone    | October 1807     | Labourer                    |
| Develin, William                   | Private  | Not available | Tyrone    | November 1814    | Labourer                    |
| Dewart, William                    | Private  | 29            | Down      | May 1808         | Weaver                      |
| Dickey, William                    | Private  | 28            | Antrim    | June 1807        | Weaver                      |

Source: Peter Molloy, 'Ireland and the Waterloo campaign of 1815' (Unpublished thesis, National University of Ireland, Maynooth, October, 2011), p. 68.



|                                 |                      |               |           |                |             |
|---------------------------------|----------------------|---------------|-----------|----------------|-------------|
| Dillon, James                   | Private              | 32            | Kildare   | February 1807  | Labourer    |
| Donaghoe, Michael               | Drummer              | 29            | Tyrone    | August 1806    | Labourer    |
| Donnally, John                  | Private              | 31            | Armagh    | April 1808     | Shoemaker   |
| Dougherty, Hugh                 | Private              | 22            | Donegal   | August 1811    | Labourer    |
| Dougherty, Nicholas             | Private              | Not available | Donegal   | February 1814  | Shoemaker   |
| Downie, Bartholomew             | Private              | 20            | Kerry     | November 1814  | Labourer    |
| Downie, John                    | Corporal             | 22            | Roscommon | August 1813    | Labourer    |
| Downs, Hugh                     | Sergeant             | 35            | Donegal   | August 1811    | Weaver      |
| Enright, Matthew                | Sergeant             | 27            | Limerick  | November 1807  | Shoemaker   |
|                                 | Either<br>Drummer or |               |           |                |             |
| Evans, Thomas                   | Private              | 37            | Limerick  | April 1808     | Labourer    |
| Fair, Michael                   | Corporal             | 26            | Mayo      | December 1811  | Weaver [?]  |
| Farrell, John                   | Private              | 47            | Dublin    | July 1806      | Tailor      |
| Farrell, Robert                 | Private              | 28            | Longford  | November 1807  | Shoemaker   |
| Finley, James                   | Private              | 22            | Monaghan  | June 1812      | Weaver      |
| Fisher, James                   | Private              | 19            | Antrim    | March 1813     | Labourer    |
| Flanagan, John                  | Sergeant             | 34            | Clare     | May 1811       | Labourer    |
| Flynn, Denis                    | Private              | 26            | Mayo      | September 1812 | Labourer    |
| Flynn, Patrick                  | Private              | 30            | Tipperary | September 1812 | Labourer    |
| Fullerty, William               | Private              | 25            | Derry     | February 1810  | Weaver      |
| Fulton, John                    | Private              | 20            | Derry     | September 1814 | Labourer    |
| Gaffney / Gaffrey, John         | Private              | 24            | Dublin    | May 1812       | Carpenter   |
| Gallagher, Martin               | Private              | 27            | Mayo      | July 1812      | Labourer    |
| Gallagher, Terence              | Private              | 25            | Mayo      | Dec 1813       | Weaver      |
| Gallinagh, Daniel               | Private              | 31            | Derry     | May 1808       | Labourer    |
| Galloway / Gallaway,<br>William | Private              | 27            | Antrim    | 1808           | Carpenter   |
| Garvey, Peter                   | Private              | 26            | Longford  | May 1812       | Weaver      |
| Gaughegan, Patrick              | Corporal             | 33            | Longford  | April 1807     | Labourer    |
| Gaven, Michael                  | Private              | 23            | Mayo      | November 1811  | Labourer    |
| Gibson, James                   | Private              | 25            | Monaghan  | November 1807  | Weaver      |
| Gilleland, Robert               | Private              | 27            | Antrim    | May 1808       | Baker       |
| Gillespie, David                | Corporal             | 25            | Down      | September 1814 | Clerk       |
| Gillespie, Samuel               | Private              | Not available | Down      | November 1814  | Weaver      |
| Gleson / Glissane,<br>David     | Private              | 23            | Cork      | September 1810 | Butcher     |
| Gorman, William                 | Private              | 24            | Antrim    | March 1810     | Baker       |
| Gormley, Hugh                   | Private              | 16            | Derry     | April 1814     | Labourer    |
| Graham, Alexander               | Private              | 34            | Down      | November 1810  | Bricklayer  |
| Gray, John                      | Private              | 28            | Down      | August 1811    | Sawyer [?]  |
| Gray, Thomas                    | Private              | 34            | Derry     | August 1808    | Nailer      |
| Gray, William                   | Private              | 24            | Derry     | May 1810       | Coppersmith |
| Green, William                  | Private              | 24            | Antrim    | November 1809  | Weaver      |
| Gribben, John                   | Private              | 24            | Antrim    | May 1812       | Weaver      |
| Gwynn, George                   | Private              | Not available | Tyrone    | August 1812    | Labourer    |
| Hagan, Bernard                  | Private              | 27            | Down      | January 1808   | Weaver      |
| Hagan, James                    | Private              | 26            | Antrim    | July 1808      | Weaver      |
| Hailes / Hails, Henry           | Private              | Not available | Donegal   | Not available  | Labourer    |
| Hall, Francis                   | Private              | 38            | Fermanagh | October 1804   | Carpenter   |
| Hall, Robert                    | Private              | 28            | Monaghan  | October 1807   | Labourer    |
| Hamill, Daniel                  | Private              | 30            | Antrim    | July 1808      | Labourer    |
| Hamill, John                    | Private              | 22            | Antrim    | April 1810     | Weaver      |
| Hamilton, William               | Private              | 22            | Antrim    | May 1812       | Weaver      |

Molloy, 'Ireland and the Waterloo campaign of 1815', p. 69.

|                                     |          |               |           |                |                       |
|-------------------------------------|----------|---------------|-----------|----------------|-----------------------|
| Hanson, Joseph                      | Private  | 30            | Derry     | October 1807   | Labourer              |
| Harkness James                      | Private  | 28            | Down      | August 1807    | Weaver                |
| Harrison, Michael                   | Sergeant | 29            | Fermanagh | February 1812  | Labourer              |
| Hart, Michael                       | Corporal | 30            | Longford  | November 1808  | Labourer              |
| Harvey, Patrick                     | Sergeant | 32            | Donegal   | October 1813   | Labourer<br>Shoemaker |
| Healy / Healey, John                | Private  | 31            | Mayo      | September 1811 | [?]                   |
| Healy, James                        | Private  | 26            | Kerry     | October 1807   | Shoemaker             |
| Heavy, Patrick                      | Private  | 30            | Longford  | July 1811      | Labourer              |
| Henderson, Samuel                   | Private  | 27            | Fermanagh | January 1810   | Labourer              |
| Henery / Henory, John               | Private  | 23            | Derry     | July 1808      | Labourer              |
| Henesay / Hensey,<br>Patrick        | Private  | 21            | Cork      | January 1815   | Labourer              |
| Hill, George                        | Private  | 28            | Antrim    | July 1808      | Labourer              |
| Hobson, Francis                     | Sergeant | 25            | Meath     | February 1815  | Weaver                |
| Hughes, Richard                     | Private  | 22            | Dublin    | July 1811      | Smith                 |
| Hume, William                       | Corporal | 23            | Dublin    | July 1811      | Gardener              |
| Irvine / Irvin, Hugh                | Private  | 24            | Armagh    | July 1809      | Weaver                |
| Irvine / Irvin, John                | Private  | 27            | Antrim    | March 1808     | Weaver                |
| Irvine, Christopher<br>[Christian?] | Private  | 21            | Tyrone    | December 1813  | Labourer              |
| Johnson / Johnston,<br>Samuel       | Private  | 22            | Down      | June 1810      | Cotton<br>Spinner     |
| Johnston, John                      | Sergeant | Not available | Tyrone    | February 1800  | Labourer              |
| Kane, Jackson                       | Private  | 30            | Derry     | September 1807 | Labourer              |
| Kearns / Kerns, John                | Private  | 43            | Longford  | August 1806    | Labourer              |
| Keefe, James                        | Corporal | Not available | Kildare   | May 1812       | Labourer              |
| Kelly / Kelley, James               | Private  | 24            | Donegal   | July 1811      | Labourer              |
| Kiernan, James                      | Private  | 38            | Longford  | October 1807   | Labourer              |
| Lamb, Richard                       | Private  | 19            | Cork      | February 1815  | Tailor                |
| Laughlin, Patrick                   | Private  | Not available | Armagh    | March 1807     | Weaver                |
| Laverty, Thomas                     | Private  | 26            | Antrim    | July 1809      | Weaver                |
| Leary, Patrick                      | Private  | 20            | Cork      | November 1814  | Labourer              |
| Levins, John                        | Private  | 25            | Dublin    | May 1811       | Labourer              |
| Lewis, James                        | Private  | 15            | Tyrone    | February 1810  | Weaver                |
| Lindsay, Alexander                  | Private  | 29            | Tyrone    | September 1809 | Weaver                |
| Madden, Dennis                      | Private  | 35            | Armagh    | August 1806    | Weaver                |
| Magin / McGin, John                 | Corporal | 22            | Down      | August 1812    | Labourer              |
| Mahoney, James                      | Private  | 27            | Limerick  | November 1807  | Weaver                |
| Mallow, Isiah                       | Private  | 23            | Armagh    | October 1812   | Labourer              |
| Marshall, James                     | Private  | 27            | Derry     | July 1814      | Labourer              |
| Mason, Patrick                      | Private  | 26            | Antrim    | January 1810   | Servant               |
| Matthews, Patrick                   | Private  | 43            | Meath     | January 1812   | Labourer              |
| Matthews, Thomas                    | Private  | 25            | Louth     | December 1811  | Labourer              |
| Mawhiney / Mahwinny,<br>David       | Private  | 33            | Derry     | January 1811   | Weaver                |
| McAnally / McNally,<br>Francis      | Private  | 34            | Derry     | November 1808  | Weaver                |
| McCabe, James                       | Private  | 27            | Monaghan  | January 1807   | Labourer              |
| McCaffery, Hugh                     | Private  | 35            | Tyrone    | October 1809   | Weaver                |
| McCann, Edward                      | Private  | 24            | Mayo      | June 1811      | Weaver                |
| McCann, John                        | Private  | Not available | Antrim    | May 1812       | Weaver                |
| McCarroll, Peter                    | Private  | 22            | Tyrone    | August 1814    | Labourer              |
| McCluskey, Andrew                   | Sergeant | 26            | Antrim    | January 1807   | Labourer              |

Molloy, 'Ireland and the Waterloo campaign of 1815', p. 70.

|                                |                               |               |           |                |                     |
|--------------------------------|-------------------------------|---------------|-----------|----------------|---------------------|
| McCluskey, Thomas              | Private                       | 23            | Derry     | December 1807  | Labourer            |
| McDermott, Hugh                | Private                       | 30            | Tyrone    | July 1811      | Labourer            |
| McDonald, William              | Private                       | 22            | Antrim    | January 1810   | Weaver              |
| McDougle /                     |                               |               |           |                |                     |
| McDougall, John                | Private                       | 25            | Down      | August 1808    | Weaver              |
| McElhair, Robert               | Private                       | 23            | Derry     | May 1812       | Weaver              |
| McGarey / McGarry,<br>Malachy  | Private                       | 28            | Longford  | July 1811      | Weaver              |
| McGee / Maghee,<br>James       | Corporal                      | 30            | Donegal   | December 1809  | Weaver              |
| McGeough / McGough,<br>Patrick | Either Sergeant<br>or Private | 18            | Mayo      | February 1812  | Labourer            |
| McGeough, Patrick              | Either Sergeant<br>or Private | Not available | Monaghan  | October 1807   | Cooper              |
| McGowan, Rodger /<br>Roger     | Private                       | 29            | Leitrim   | October 1807   | Labourer            |
| McGrady, James                 | Private                       | Not available | Donegal   | December 1811  | Labourer            |
| McHugo, Richard                | Corporal                      | 18            | Cork      | February 1815  | Carpenter           |
| McKaffery, James               | Private                       | 28            | Fermanagh | March 1812     | Labourer            |
| McKay, Samuel                  | Private                       | 26            | Derry     | October 1807   | Weaver              |
| McLaughlin /                   |                               |               |           |                |                     |
| McLoughlin, William            | Private                       | 25            | Longford  | September 1811 | Labourer            |
| McLaughlin, Samuel             | Private                       | 27            | Derry     | October 1807   | Weaver              |
| McLaughlin, William            | Private                       | Not available | Derry     | October 1807   | Labourer            |
| McLean, David                  | Private                       | 32            | Tyrone    | February 1814  | Labourer            |
| McLean, John                   | Private                       | Not available | Monaghan  | Not available  | Labourer            |
| McLeary, Joseph                | Sergeant                      | 26            | Derry     | October 1807   | Weaver              |
| McManus, Michael               | Sergeant                      | 27            | Fermanagh | November 1807  | Labourer            |
| McMullen / McMullin,<br>John   | Private                       | 27            | Antrim    | April 1811     | Weaver              |
| McNally, Charles               | Private                       | 25            | Donegal   | January 1811   | Labourer            |
| McNanny, John                  | Private                       | Not available | Derry     | February 1808  | Nailer              |
| McQuade, Thomas                | Private                       | 24            | Derry     | April 1808     | Weaver              |
| McRonald, John                 | Private                       | 28            | Derry     | October 1807   | Weaver              |
| McSorley, Bernard              | Private                       | 24            | Tyrone    | January 1812   | Labourer            |
| McSweeney, Michael             | Corporal                      | 25            | Limerick  | August 1810    | Baker               |
| McVey, John                    | Private                       | 27            | Armagh    | October 1808   | Weaver              |
| Mills, Robert                  | Drummer                       | 23            | Antrim    | April 1812     | Labourer            |
| Moore, John                    | Private                       | 28            | Antrim    | August 1807    | Weaver              |
| Mullen / Mullin,<br>Terence    | Private                       | Not available | Armagh    | October 1807   | Weaver              |
| Mullen, Simon                  | Private                       | 31            | Monaghan  | November 1807  | Weaver              |
| Murphy, James                  | Private                       | 26            | Louth     | July 1807      | Tailor              |
| Murray, John                   | Private                       | 22            | Carlow    | May 1812       | Weaver<br>Shoemaker |
| Oats, Michael                  | Sergeant                      | 23            | Donegal   | January 1812   | [?]                 |
| O'Connor, Henry                | Sergeant                      | 38            | Roscommon | May 1811       | Labourer            |
| O'Connor, Patrick              | Private                       | 22            | Mayo      | September 1813 | Labourer<br>Cotton  |
| O'Hara, Robert                 | Private                       | 32 [?]        | Down      | May 1807       | Spinner             |
| Parks / Parkes, George         | Private                       | 37            | Louth     | May 1812       | Slater [?]          |
| Pickett, William               | Private                       | 28            | Derry     | February 1809  | Labourer            |
| Purfield, Patrick              | Sergeant                      | 29            | Dublin    | September 1806 | Tanner              |
| Quinn / Quim, John             | Corporal                      | Not available | Derry     | Not available  | Weaver              |

Molloy, 'Ireland and the Waterloo campaign of 1815', p. 71.

|                              |          |    |           |                |                             |
|------------------------------|----------|----|-----------|----------------|-----------------------------|
| Quinn / Quim, Thomas         | Private  | 25 | Donegal   | June 1812      | Labourer                    |
| Reaside, William             | Private  | 29 | Down      | August 1808    | Cooper<br>Cotton<br>Spinner |
| Reid, Francis                | Private  | 33 | Donegal   | May 1807       | Spinner                     |
| Ritchie, William             | Private  | 38 | Derry     | May 1812       | Weaver                      |
| Rock, Laurence /<br>Lawrence | Private  | 31 | Cavan     | September 1806 | Weaver                      |
| Ross, James                  | Private  | 28 | Armagh    | February 1808  | Weaver                      |
| Rourke, Daniel               | Private  | 32 | Clare     | October 1807   | Labourer                    |
| Rowan, Thomas                | Private  | 23 | Galway    | August 1812    | Joiner                      |
| Saye / Seay, Arthur          | Corporal | 23 | Down      | May 1812       | Weaver                      |
| Scanlon, Patrick             | Private  | 22 | Dublin    | October 1812   | Cork Cutter                 |
| Scott, Fletcher              | Private  | 34 | Monaghan  | October 1807   | Not available               |
| Sheridan, Patrick            | Private  | 23 | Meath     | December 1811  | Labourer                    |
| Shields, John                | Private  | 22 | Donegal   | February 1811  | Labourer                    |
| Slattery, Edward             | Corporal | 34 | Limerick  | October 1807   | Labourer                    |
| Slye, Thomas                 | Private  | 44 | Wexford   | September 1806 | Shoemaker<br>Cotton         |
| Smith, Daniel                | Private  | 31 | Westmeath | August 1807    | Spinner                     |
| Stanley, Michael             | Private  | 25 | Derry     | August 1810    | Labourer                    |
| Stewart, Charles             | Private  | 32 | Armagh    | August 1811    | Weaver                      |
| Strawbridge, William         | Private  | 22 | Antrim    | February 1810  | Bricklayer                  |
| Strong, George               | Sergeant | 22 | Fermanagh | February 1810  | Labourer                    |
| Taylor, William              | Private  | 33 | Donegal   | May 1812       | Weaver                      |
| Tevelin, James               | Private  | 24 | Meath     | September 1811 | Baker                       |
| Thompson, John               | Private  | 25 | Tyrone    | November 1808  | Weaver                      |
| Thompson, Thomas             | Private  | 26 | Donegal   | October 1807   | Labourer                    |
| Tierney, John                | Sergeant | 30 | Limerick  | October 1808   | Draper                      |
| Tookey / Tuckey,<br>Anthony  | Private  | 22 | Galway    | December 1811  | Butcher                     |
| Turley, Peter                | Private  | 25 | Armagh    | March 1808     | Weaver                      |
| Vaughan, David               | Private  | 22 | Cork      | February 1815  | Labourer                    |
| Wall, William                | Private  | 41 | Cork      | October 1807   | Sadler                      |
| Wallace, David               | Sergeant | 22 | Derry     | September 1808 | Weaver                      |
| Walsh, Thomas                | Private  | 24 | Dublin    | July 1811      | Labourer                    |
| Watson, Michael              | Private  | 32 | Derry     | November 1807  | Labourer                    |
| Weir, Patrick                | Private  | 27 | Queen's   | 1804           | Weaver                      |
| White, Sampson               | Private  | 25 | Down      | August 1813    | Weaver                      |
| Williamson, George           | Private  | 24 | Fermanagh | January 1812   | Labourer                    |
| Wilson, Robert               | Corporal | 17 | Down      | July 1813      | Labourer                    |
| Wood, John                   | Corporal | 31 | Dublin    | September 1810 | Weaver                      |

Molloy, 'Ireland and the Waterloo campaign of 1815', p. 72.

## Appendix 2

### Irish Waterloo veterans - 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion 32<sup>nd</sup> Foot

#### (iii) Irish Waterloo veterans – 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion, 32<sup>nd</sup> Foot

| Name                     | Rank                 | Age | County    | Enlisted       | Trade            |
|--------------------------|----------------------|-----|-----------|----------------|------------------|
| Astier, John             | Private              | 19  | King's    | March 1813     | Labourer         |
| Bannon, Daniel           | Private              | 25  | Cavan     | December 1813  | Labourer         |
| Barber, Drew             | Private              | 25  | Antrim    | September 1812 | Tailor           |
| Barnes / Burnes, Patrick | Private<br>Paymaster | 35  | Carlow    | May 1800       | Labourer         |
| Barton, John             | Sgt                  | 34  | Tipperary | June 1801      | Clerk            |
| Beamish, John            | Private              | 25  | Cork      | March 1809     | Labourer         |
| Beatty, William          | Drummer              | 16  | Kildare   | September 1813 | Labourer<br>Silk |
| Benson, Henry            | Private              | 22  | Dublin    | June 1812      | Weaver           |
| Bible, Francis           | Private              | 29  | Waterford | July 1808      | Carpenter        |
| Bingham, Peter           | Sergeant             | 27  | Dublin    | March 1809     | Tailor           |
| Bowel / Bowell, Robert   | Private              | 25  | Wicklow   | April 1803     | Labourer<br>Not  |
| Bowles, John             | Private              | 21  | Cork      | 1812           | available        |
| Boyd / Boyde, Robert     | Private              | 26  | Monaghan  | December 1813  | Labourer         |
| Boyle, Neal / Neale      | Private              | 21  | Antrim    | March 1812     | Weaver           |
| Bray, William            | Private              | 24  | Dublin    | May 1809       | Labourer         |
| Brennan, Andrew          | Private              | 28  | Queen's   | September 1806 | Weaver           |
| Brett / Britt, Patrick   | Corporal             | 20  | Sligo     | May 1812       | Labourer         |
| Brophy, John             | Private              | 18  | Dublin    | April 1813     | Labourer         |
| Browne, James            | Private              | 21  | Cavan     | May 1812       | Labourer         |
| Bryan, Daniel            | Private              | 21  | Cork      | June 1810      | Pipemaker        |
| Bryan, Edward            | Private              | 27  | Queen's   | September 1806 | Labourer         |
| Bryan, John              | Private              | 23  | Cork      | June 1810      | Pipemaker        |
| Burke, John              | Private              | 26  | Roscommon | February 1812  | Labourer         |
| Cadden, Michael          | Private              | 23  | Dublin    | August 1807    | Weaver<br>Not    |
| Cahill, John             | Private              | 19  | Cavan     | November 1813  | available        |
| Cain, James              | Private              | 22  | Dublin    | August 1808    | Labourer         |
| Carr, Peter              | Private              | 24  | Down      | January 1807   | Weaver           |
| Carson, George           | Private              | 20  | Cavan     | January 1813   | Weaver           |
| Carson, Simon            | Private              | 31  | Longford  | June 1804      | Weaver           |
| Carty, Owen              | Private              | 26  | Leitrim   | December 1813  | Labourer         |
| Cavanagh, Lawrence       | Private              | 31  | Carlow    | July 1813      | Labourer         |
| Clarke, Francis          | Sergeant             | 25  | Longford  | May 1810       | Labourer         |
| Coghran / Cockran, James | Private              | 20  | Leitrim   | December 1813  | Labourer         |
| Collier, William         | Private              | 19  | Dublin    | May 1812       | Not              |

Source: Peter Molloy, 'Ireland and the Waterloo campaign of 1815' (Unpublished thesis, National University of Ireland, Maynooth, October, 2011), p. 73.

|                                |          |    |           |                |                     |
|--------------------------------|----------|----|-----------|----------------|---------------------|
| Corcoran, James                | Private  | 18 | Westmeath | May 1812       | available<br>Tailor |
| Costello / Costillo,<br>Thomas | Private  | 20 | Galway    | March 1813     | Labourer            |
| Craig, William                 | Private  | 23 | Cavan     | December 1813  | Weaver              |
| Crowley, William               | Private  | 32 | Cork      | September 1800 | Labourer            |
| Crozier, Robert                | Private  | 20 | Dublin    | April 1814     | Labourer            |
| Dalton, Richard                | Private  | 20 | Kilkenny  | March 1807     | Labourer            |
| Devlin, Henry                  | Private  | 19 | Antrim    | March 1812     | Weaver<br>Not       |
| Doherty, John                  | Private  | 19 | Cavan     | January 1814   | available           |
| Donahue, Edward                | Private  | 21 | Meath     | January 1812   | Labourer            |
| Donlon, Patrick                | Private  | 30 | Dublin    | 1803           | Labourer            |
| Donnelly, John                 | Private  | 26 | Kilkenny  | October 1813   | Labourer            |
| Donovan, Jeremiah              | Private  | 20 | Cork      | February 1810  | Labourer            |
| Dowling, Stephen               | Drummer  | 18 | Galway    | June 1807      | Labourer            |
| Downey, James                  | Private  | 20 | Fermanagh | December 1813  | Weaver              |
| Doyle, John                    | Private  | 21 | Kildare   | February 1809  | Labourer            |
| Drew, Nicholas                 | Drummer  | 24 | Waterford | January 1806   | Labourer            |
| Duffy / Duffey, James          | Sergeant | 34 | Longford  | August 1802    | Labourer            |
| Dumphy, Michael                | Private  | 22 | Kilkenny  | June 1807      | Butcher             |
| Dunbar, John                   | Corporal | 28 | Dublin    | May 1813       | Labourer            |
| Dunne, Lawrence                | Private  | 27 | Dublin    | June 1807      | Millwright          |
| Dunne, William                 | Private  | 26 | Queen's   | December 1813  | Labourer            |
| Dunsheath /<br>Dumheath, James | Private  | 18 | Antrim    | December 1810  | Labourer            |
| Eagan, Gilbert                 | Private  | 17 | Westmeath | May 1813       | Labourer            |
| Elliott, George                | Private  | 30 | Dublin    | March 1803     | Labourer            |
| Fagan, David                   | Sergeant | 22 | Meath     | June 1808      | Labourer            |
| Fagan, Edward                  | Private  | 35 | Westmeath | March 1801     | Labourer            |
| Farrell, Francis               | Private  | 31 | Clare     | October 1814   | Servant             |
| Fitzsimmons, Daniel            | Private  | 26 | Dublin    | August 1812    | Labourer            |
| Flatley, John                  | Private  | 28 | Sligo     | October 1811   | Labourer            |
| Forster, Thomas                | Private  | 22 | Armagh    | July 1811      | Weaver              |
| Gildea / Gilder,<br>Michael    | Private  | 31 | Galway    | September 1806 | Labourer            |
| Glynn, William                 | Sergeant | 28 | Galway    | May 1809       | Labourer            |
| Gordon, Thomas                 | Private  | 20 | Monaghan  | December 1813  | Labourer            |
| Gormly / Gormley,<br>Thomas    | Private  | 23 | Monaghan  | December 1813  | Carpenter           |
| Graham, Robert                 | Corporal | 22 | Monaghan  | October 1813   | Labourer            |
| Grey, Richard                  | Private  | 18 | Dublin    | September 1813 | Weaver              |
| Grier, Patrick                 | Private  | 28 | Monaghan  | December 1813  | Weaver [?]          |
| Grimes, Samuel                 | Private  | 20 | Antrim    | April 1812     | Weaver              |
| Hall, Charles                  | Private  | 19 | Fermanagh | July 1812      | Weaver              |
| Hall, John                     | Private  | 21 | Tyrone    | August 1811    | Weaver<br>Not       |
| Halligan, Stephen              | Private  | 20 | Louth     | December 1813  | available           |
| Hamilton, Francis              | Private  | 20 | Cavan     | December 1813  | Labourer            |
| Hamilton, William              | Private  | 20 | Dublin    | August 1813    | Labourer            |

Molloy, 'Ireland and the Waterloo campaign of 1815', p. 74.

|                                     |          |    |             |                |                   |
|-------------------------------------|----------|----|-------------|----------------|-------------------|
| Hannon, Thomas                      | Private  | 19 | Cork        | November 1810  | Silver<br>Plater  |
| Healy / Healey,<br>Thomas           | Private  | 30 | Dublin      | July 1803      | Labourer          |
| Hennesey, John                      | Private  | 27 | Queen's     | September 1806 | Labourer          |
| Henry, William                      | Corporal | 33 | Tyrone      | January 1804   | Clerk             |
| Hindes / Hinds, James               | Private  | 19 | Louth       | December 1813  | Labourer          |
| Hollant, John                       | Private  | 19 | Cork        | March 1815     | Labourer          |
| Howes, Timothy                      | Private  | 37 | Cork        | February 1803  | Labourer          |
| Hoy, Michael                        | Private  | 25 | Dublin      | February 1814  | Labourer          |
| Hozie, Paul                         | Private  | 27 | Queen's     | September 1806 | Miller            |
| Huson / Huston,<br>Boyle            | Private  | 17 | Dublin      | September 1813 | Labourer          |
| Johnstone, Edgar                    | Private  | 26 | Dublin      | December 1806  | Hosier            |
| Kelly, Dominic /<br>Dominick        | Private  | 24 | Dublin      | November 1812  | Baker             |
| Kennedy, James                      | Private  | 21 | Dublin      | April 1808     | Labourer          |
| Kennedy, John                       | Private  | 34 | Waterford   | July 1801      | Labourer          |
| Kerr, Henry                         | Private  | 21 | Kilkenny    | December 1810  | Labourer          |
| Kiernan, Michael                    | Private  | 23 | Armagh      | December 1813  | Labourer          |
| Kinnon / Kennon,<br>John            | Private  | 22 | Derry       | April 1813     | Weaver            |
| Kirkwood, William                   | Private  | 21 | Derry       | October 1813   | Weaver            |
| Lawler, Daniel                      | Private  | 30 | Carlow      | May 1813       | Labourer          |
| Leonard, Patrick                    | Private  | 24 | Kildare     | September 1808 | Labourer          |
| Little, John                        | Private  | 23 | Cavan       | January 1814   | Labourer          |
| Mackle, Charles                     | Private  | 24 | Derry       | October 1813   | Weaver            |
| Magwood, John                       | Private  | 25 | Monaghan    | December 1813  | Weaver            |
| Martin, Robert                      | Private  | 22 | Monaghan    | December 1813  | Weaver            |
| McAffee, John                       | Private  | 21 | Antrim      | January 1811   | Not<br>available  |
| McCabe, Peter                       | Private  | 24 | Meath       | July 1807      | Cotton<br>Spinner |
| McCann, Terence                     | Private  | 22 | Cavan [sic] | November 1813  | Labourer          |
| McCarroll, James                    | Private  | 21 | Derry       | August 1812    | Weaver            |
| McCarthy, David                     | Private  | 28 | Cork        | April 1805     | Labourer          |
| McCarthy, Jeremiah                  | Private  | 20 | Cork        | February 1815  | Weaver            |
| McCormick, William                  | Sergeant | 27 | Donegal     | August 1805    | Labourer          |
| McDole, Smith                       | Private  | 20 | Antrim      | June 1813      | Weaver            |
| McDonald, Timothy                   | Private  | 35 | Cork        | March 1801     | Brazier           |
| McGowan, John                       | Sergeant | 39 | Fermanagh   | October 1802   | Labourer          |
| McGurn, Michael                     | Private  | 25 | Leitrim     | December 1813  | Weaver            |
| McHood, Edward                      | Private  | 26 | Down        | January 1807   | Weaver            |
| McKenny / McKenry,<br>Patrick       | Private  | 32 | Tyrone      | December 1814  | Not<br>available  |
| McLaughlin, David                   | Private  | 35 | Derry       | March 1801     | Weaver            |
| McManus, Edward                     | Private  | 25 | Armagh      | December 1813  | Weaver            |
| McNamara, John                      | Private  | 26 | Tyrone      | June 1809      | Weaver            |
| McPhatridge /<br>McPhartridge, John | Private  | 20 | Antrim      | May 1813       | Weaver            |

Molloy, 'Ireland and the Waterloo campaign of 1815', p. 75.

|                                    |          |               |           |                |                              |
|------------------------------------|----------|---------------|-----------|----------------|------------------------------|
| McQuade / McQuard,<br>James        | Private  | 22            | Fermanagh | April 1812     | Labourer                     |
| Medcalfe / Metcalfe,<br>Thomas     | Drummer  | 16            | Dublin    | September 1813 | Labourer                     |
| Meighan / Mighan,<br>John          | Private  | 27            | Longford  | September 1811 | Labourer                     |
| Miles, Michael                     | Private  | 22            | Dublin    | September 1808 | Labourer                     |
| Miller, Hugh                       | Corporal | 29            | Longford  | December 1813  | Labourer                     |
| Miller, William                    | Private  | 21            | Cavan     | December 1813  | Weaver                       |
| Montgomery, James                  | Private  | 23            | King's    | June 1812      | Labourer                     |
| Moore, Samuel                      | Private  | 33            | Derry     | October 1808   | Weaver                       |
| Morris, Charles                    | Private  | 19            | Monaghan  | December 1813  | Labourer                     |
| Morris, Matthew                    | Private  | 36            | Louth     | December 1813  | Labourer                     |
| Morrow, William                    | Private  | 21            | Cavan     | January 1814   | Tailor                       |
| Mortimore /<br>Mortimer, Alexander | Private  | 25            | Monaghan  | December 1813  | Weaver                       |
| Mulholland, Arthur                 | Private  | 18            | Antrim    | June 1812      | Labourer                     |
| Mullins, James                     | Private  | 30            | Fermanagh | December 1802  | Labourer<br>Not<br>available |
| Mullins, Thomas                    | Private  | Not available | Fermanagh | Not available  | available                    |
| Murphy, Michael                    | Private  | 20            | Wicklow   | November 1813  | Labourer                     |
| Murphy, Patrick                    | Corporal | 25            | Longford  | May 1810       | Labourer                     |
| Murray, John                       | Private  | 19            | Cork      | June 1811      | Labourer                     |
| Neilly, John                       | Private  | 27            | Tyrone    | July 1813      | Weaver                       |
| Nesbitt, John                      | Private  | 21            | Leitrim   | December 1813  | Weaver                       |
| Nichols, James                     | Sergeant | 29            | Fermanagh | December 1813  | Weaver                       |
| Noonan, Timothy                    | Private  | 19            | Cork      | October 1810   | Tailor                       |
| Nowland, Denis /<br>Dennis         | Corporal | 20            | Carlow    | July 1813      | Labourer                     |
| Nowland, James                     | Corporal | 26            | Longford  | June 1804      | Weaver                       |
| O'Brien, Patrick                   | Sergeant | 27            | Longford  | May 1810       | Labourer                     |
| Peyton, John                       | Private  | 22            | Leitrim   | September 1811 | Labourer                     |
| Pogue / Pongue,<br>George          | Private  | 25            | Monaghan  | December 1813  | Weaver                       |
| Pritchard, Richard                 | Corporal | 27            | Dublin    | January 1803   | Labourer                     |
| Pritchard, William                 | Private  | 19            | Fermanagh | December 1811  | Sawyer                       |
| Ramsay, William                    | Corporal | 31            | Fermanagh | February 1804  | Labourer                     |
| Rea, James                         | Private  | 23            | Antrim    | August 1810    | Weaver                       |
| Reed / Reid, Joseph                | Private  | 21            | Antrim    | December 1813  | Weaver                       |
| Reid / Reed, Samuel                | Private  | 20            | Cavan     | October 1813   | Weaver                       |
| Reilly, John                       | Private  | 20            | Dublin    | April 1813     | Labourer                     |
| Reilly, Miles                      | Private  | 21            | Cavan     | January 1814   | Labourer                     |
| Richardson, George                 | Corporal | 28            | Dublin    | October 1802   | Labourer                     |
| Rodgers, John                      | Private  | 19            | Tyrone    | June 1813      | Weaver                       |
| Rooney, John                       | Private  | 28            | Monaghan  | January 1814   | Weaver                       |
| Rowen / Rowan,<br>Stephen          | Private  | 20            | Monaghan  | December 1813  | Sawyer                       |
| Rutherford, Joseph /<br>Joshua     | Private  | 29            | Monaghan  | December 1813  | Weaver                       |
| Sanders / Saunders,                | Private  | 23            | Galway    | June 1807      | Labourer                     |

Molloy, 'Ireland and the Waterloo campaign of 1815', p. 76.



|                             |          |    |           |                |           |
|-----------------------------|----------|----|-----------|----------------|-----------|
| Thomas                      |          |    |           |                |           |
| Savage, Richard             | Private  | 17 | Antrim    | August 1813    | Weaver    |
| Seery, Patrick              | Sergeant | 24 | Longford  | August 1810    | Weaver    |
| Shanklin, Andrew            | Corporal | 37 | Donegal   | January 1803   | Weaver    |
| Shannon, Samuel             | Private  | 21 | Antrim    | April 1812     | Weaver    |
| Shea, Luke                  | Private  | 29 | Queen's   | August 1810    | Labourer  |
| Sheridan, John              | Private  | 25 | Clare     | March 1815     | Labourer  |
| Sherry, William             | Private  | 21 | Armagh    | May 1812       | Labourer  |
| Sinnott / Sinnott,<br>Moses | Private  | 28 | Dublin    | July 1808      | Carpenter |
| Skelling, William           | Private  | 18 | Meath     | March 1814     | Labourer  |
| Smith, James                | Private  | 20 | Monaghan  | December 1813  | Labourer  |
| Stevenson, Robert           | Sergeant | 29 | Down      | January 1807   | Labourer  |
| Stuart, Thomas              | Private  | 22 | Cavan     | December 1813  | Weaver    |
| Sullivan, James             | Private  | 21 | Cork      | November 1810  | Carpenter |
| Sullivan, Patrick           | Private  | 24 | Cork      | January 1807   | Labourer  |
| Sweeney, John               | Private  | 35 | Kerry     | May 1805       | Labourer  |
|                             |          |    |           |                | Not       |
| Switzer, Christopher        | Sergeant | 34 | Tipperary | September 1806 | available |
| Thornton, Patrick           | Private  | 20 | Louth     | December 1813  | Labourer  |
| Toole, Patrick              | Private  | 34 | Galway    | September 1806 | Labourer  |
| Turner, William             | Corporal | 21 | Derry     | October 1813   | Labourer  |
| Vereker, Denis              | Private  | 22 | Limerick  | September 1808 | Labourer  |
| Wales, Thomas               | Private  | 19 | Monaghan  | December 1813  | Labourer  |
| Willis, William             | Private  | 22 | Meath     | June 1807      | Weaver    |
| Winters, Patrick            | Private  | 20 | Monaghan  | December 1813  | Weaver    |
| Woods, Peter                | Private  | 22 | Galway    | August 1807    | Weaver    |

Molloy, 'Ireland and the Waterloo campaign of 1815', p. 77.

## Illustrations

### Irish Regimental Uniforms

TALAVERA, 1809

- 1: Corporal, Light Company, 1/88th Regt
- 2: Private of centre company, 2/87th Regt
- 3: Company officer, 2/87th Regt



Source: Mike Chappell, *Wellington's Peninsula Regiments: The Irish* (Oxford, 2003), p. 26.

## Irish Regimental Uniforms

BUSACO, BAROSSA AND TARIFA, 1810-11

1: Sergeant, Grenadier Company, 2/87th Regt

2: Drummer, 2/87th Regt

3: Private, 1/88th Regt



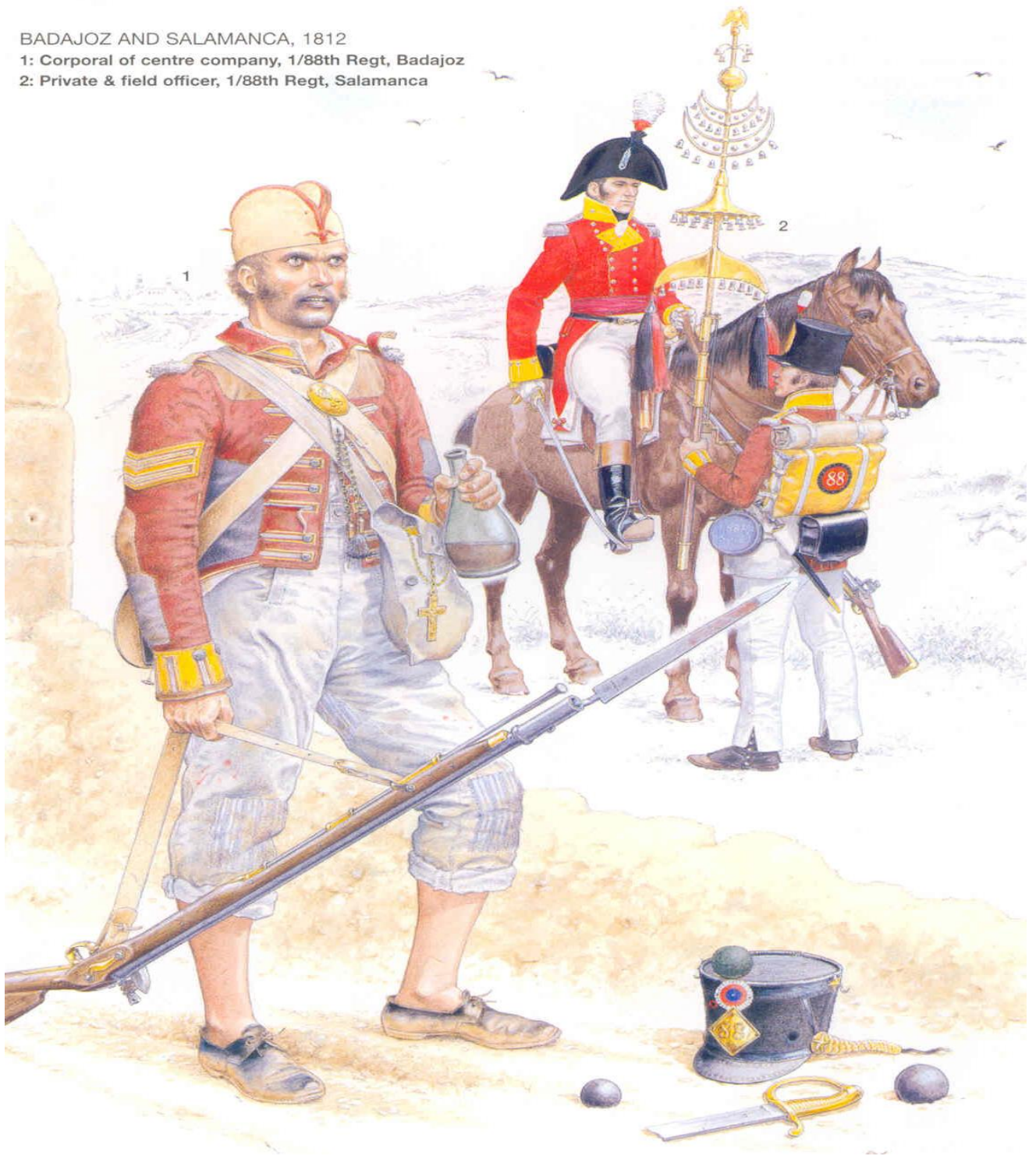
Chappell, *Wellington's Peninsula Regiments*, p. 27.

## Irish Regimental Uniforms

BADAJOS AND SALAMANCA, 1812

1: Corporal of centre company, 1/88th Regt, Badajoz

2: Private & field officer, 1/88th Regt, Salamanca



Chappell, *Wellington's Peninsula Regiments*, p. 28.

## Irish Regimental Uniforms

SOUTH-EASTERN SPAIN, 1813

1: Captain, Grenadier Company, 2/27th Regt, Castalla

2: Captain, Light Company, 2/27th Regt, Alcoy

3: Sergeant, Grenadier Company, 1/27th Regt



Chappell, *Wellington's Peninsula Regiments*, p.29.

# Irish Regimental Uniforms

INSIGNIA -  
see text commentary for details



Chappell, *Wellington's Peninsula Regiments*, p. 32.

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