

Subscribers to Clare Papal Army, 1860

Papal Wars and Tribute Money

- **Brief history of Papal Wars in Italy during the 19th Century**¹ The period is summer of 1860 and the Papal States are at war with Garibaldi's Revolutionary Army. The Papal States straddle Italy around the Rome area and are an obstacle to the unification of Italy and the achievement of freedom for its people.
- **Appeal for Volunteers** An appeal to join the Papal Army in this war is heard by over 1200 Irishmen who make their way across the Continent to join the fight. We know this thanks to a British Intelligence Report ('59th Report of the Duty Keeper of the Public Records of Ireland 1860'²) gleaned from Emigration Records as volunteers left Ireland. The report lists full names of individuals and their place of residence. Thirty seven persons are noted as residents of Clare, all listed as from Ennis; apparently this referred to the Administration Centre in Ennis and not their actual place of residence in Clare.
- **Church Appeal & Parish Collections** An appeal was made throughout Ireland for funds to support the Volunteers in the Irish Papal 'Brigade'. In total, collections of 23 Parishes or Parish parings had been printed in the various newspapers mentioned above. The list of Parishes is published as part of this database. Many additional Parishes contributed but, it would appear, never published in print.
- **Fate of Irish Brigade** The ad-hoc nature of the Papal Army - poorly organised and badly equipped - ensured a short war with surrender to the revolutionary forces in September of that year. It is estimated between 70 and 100 Irish died or were wounded in the brief war. The Irish officers and soldiers were held as prisoners in Genoa for a brief time before their release.
- **Return to Ireland and a Hero's Welcome** Most men returned to Ireland by November of 1860 to a hero's welcome. The '*Clare Journal*' published an article on their homecoming which included the following extract:

"Soiree to the Irish Brigade at Ennis"

"The Catholic Young Men's Association entertained the Ennis section of the returned Crusaders in their large hall in Old Chapel Lane. The room which is a large one, capable of accommodating 1,000 persons, was well filled, and there could not be less than that number present – '*Clare Journal*', 19 November 1860."

- **Commemorative Service Medal** A Commemorative Service Medal, the 'Medaglia di Pro Petri Sede' was presented to each member of the Irish Brigade of the Papal Army.

Notes

¹ *History Ireland*, 'The Pope's Irish battalion, 1860', Robert Doyle, Sept/Oct 2010 Vol. 18. [[link to http://www.historyireland.com/18th-19th-century-history/the-popes-irish-battalion-1860/](http://www.historyireland.com/18th-19th-century-history/the-popes-irish-battalion-1860/)]

2 *Duty Keeper Report* courtesy of Robert Doyle, and Lucille Ellis through the National Archives of Ireland.

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