

# Confounding the Garibaldian Liars: The Letters of Albert Delahoyde, Irish Soldier of the Papal Battalion of St Patrick and Papal Zouave in Italy, 1860-1870

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*Abstract:*

Albert Delahoyde was representative of the strong sense of Irish Catholic nationalism that inspired young Irishmen to volunteer to serve Pope Pius IX in 1860. His experiences aid us in understanding how the Irish viewed Italy during the nineteenth century, especially as his lengthy stay in Italy meant that he witnessed the completion of Italian unification in 1870. In the wider picture, the relationship between Ireland and Italy at this point in the mid-nineteenth century was one of lost possibilities. Despite a number of commonalities in the respective situations of Ireland and Italy, the events of the 1860s demonstrated how the two countries negatively impacted on each other, as, due to the transnational dimension of Catholicism, their respective causes could no longer remain the same.

*Keywords:* Delahoyde, Irish Soldiers, Italy, Letters, Papal Battalion of St Patrick

Dublin-born Albert Delahoyde was not yet nineteen years of age when he volunteered to fight with the Papal Battalion of St Patrick in Italy in 1860. While he has been practically forgotten by Irish history, his experiences in the 1860s are representative, not only of the Irishmen of the Papal Battalion and the later Papal Zouaves, but also of the transnational links between Italy and Ireland in the middle of the nineteenth century. Delahoyde exemplified the youthful sense of adventure, Irish patriotism, and strong Catholic beliefs that motivated many young Irishmen to volunteer to serve Pope Pius IX. In the wider context, the young Irishman's Italian experiences help us understand the Irish view of Italy and of Italians at mid-nineteenth century.

The recent collective work *Nation/Nazione* (Barr, Finelli, O'Connor 2014) examined how the nineteenth century Italian and Irish national movements and peoples interacted, observed, and influenced one another, an area that has witnessed a significant amount of recent scholarship. Furthermore, in her *Risorgimento* (2009), renowned historian Lucy Riall has asserted that one of the aims of Risorgimento scholarship is to establish the political and personal motivations of ordinary men and women who were involved in Italian unification. This essay adds to that scholarship by examining an ordinary Irish man who was involved in Italian unification, albeit in opposition, and whose experience in Italy provides an interesting case study in transnational history. In this essay, I firstly relate the background to the arrival of the Irishmen in Italy in 1860, before recounting briefly the short conflict that followed. I also discuss Delahoyde's service in both the Papal Battalion of St Patrick and the Papal Zouaves. I then move on to examine the letters themselves, in order to ascertain what they tell us about Delahoyde, the Irish soldiers in Italy, and the wider Irish-Italian relations in this period.

Italy at mid-nineteenth century was a patchwork of states and territories, one of which was the Papal States. In Ireland, the notion had been growing since the late 1840s that the Papal States and the Pope were surrounded by enemies in Italy. There was some truth in this assertion, and throughout the 1850s the rift between Italian nationalism and the Catholic Church continued to deepen. The Kingdom of Piedmont-Sardinia, under Prime Minister Count Camillo Cavour, had united with Italian states and duchies such as Tuscany, Parma, Modena, and Romagna by early summer 1860, thereby unifying a significant portion of northern Italy. As Pope Pius IX's territory now bordered the enlarged Kingdom of Piedmont-Sardinia, he feared that the Papal States and possibly Rome itself would be next to be subsumed. Pope Pius IX believed that it was a matter of conscience to preserve intact the Papal States which had been committed to him, and to hand them on to his successor. To protect what he saw as his divinely ordained right, the Pope sent out a call for help to many of the Catholic nations in Europe in January 1860. Priests in all of these countries, such as France, Belgium, Spain, and Austria, preached the Pope's request from the pulpits, encouraging young men to travel to Italy in defence of their spiritual leader.

To this end, in late 1859 and early 1860, the Catholic Church in Ireland launched a campaign, called "The Last Crusade" by some, to raise awareness and assist Pope Pius IX in his fight against the forces working to unite the Italian peninsula (Cryan 2011, 23). This campaign developed in three distinct stages. Firstly, the Catholic Church attempted to make Irish Catholics aware of the situation in which their spiritual leader had found himself. They did this by organising large gatherings at which petitions were signed in favour of Pius IX and his ownership of the Papal States, and also by emphasising the fact that, in the eyes of the Irish Catholic Church, the Pope's

spiritual authority depended on his temporal sovereignty. In other words, the Papacy needed to be politically independent to ensure its spiritual independence. Secondly, the Irish bishops began a fundraising effort that eventually raised the impressive sum of eighty thousand pounds for the Pope, most of it being channelled to the Vatican via the Pontifical Irish College in Rome. The final chapter in their campaign involved the raising of an army, which included amongst its number the individual at the centre of this story, Albert Delahoyde.

At first the Pope was not that keen on having Irish soldiers as part of the Papal Army, as he feared antagonising the British government, who forbade their subjects to serve in any foreign army under the British Foreign Enlistment Act of 1819. He soon changed his mind, however, as the threat to his territory grew. In February 1860, Count Charles McDonnell, an Austrian of Irish descent, was sent to Ireland by Pope Pius IX in the hope of recruiting volunteers for the Papal Army that would attempt to defend the Papal States. McDonnell presented himself to the bishops of Cork, Dublin and Waterford, seeking their approval for his recruitment campaign. Many of the local clergy throughout the country became unofficial recruiting officers, preaching a message from the pulpits about the need for young Irish Catholic men to volunteer to support the Papacy in the upcoming struggle. A wave of patriotic articles, pamphlets and poems also appeared in the national press. In the end, about 1,300 Irishmen were recruited for the Papal Army, to be formed into a unit known as the Papal Battalion of St Patrick. Many more volunteered, but Papal Authorities were unwilling to accept more recruits than they believed they could equip and train in time. The men, travelling in groups of twenty or thirty, began to arrive in Rome from May 1860. On reaching Italy, they officially enlisted in the Papal Battalion of St Patrick. As well as the Irish, the Papal Army included nine other nationalities, all of which were under the overall command of a Frenchman, General Louis Christophe de Lamoricière (O'Carroll 2014, 73-95).

By July of 1860, the Italian nationalist Giuseppe Garibaldi, and a force composed mainly of young men known as "The Thousand", had travelled from Genoa down the west coast of Italy, and taken the island of Sicily. Crossing over to mainland Italy, they fought their way up the peninsula, overwhelming the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies by September. Garibaldi then declared his intention to march on Rome, which was defended by French soldiers, an act that could have triggered a wider European war. On September 11, troops of the northern Kingdom of Piedmont-Sardinia invaded the Papal States in an effort to pre-empt Garibaldi before he could launch his own attack on the Pope's territories. The Piedmontese also aimed to take control of the south of Italy, thereby uniting the peninsula. The Papal Army volunteers' first engagement with the Piedmontese enemy occurred two days later at Perugia. The Papal Army, including about one hundred and fifty Irishmen under the com-

mand of Captain James Blackney, were vastly outnumbered, with the opposition comprising around twelve thousand men. Some of the city's residents opened one of the gates to let the Piedmontese soldiers in, thereby revealing their support for Italian unification. According to Patrick Keyes O'Clery, one of the first historians to write about these events, the Irish soldiers "true to their national character [...] did what they could to secure a continuance of the defence, but it was in vain. Sixteen of them cut their way out, rather than surrender" (O'Clery 1892, 192). The rest of the garrison was forced to capitulate, and the Papal troops were taken prisoner.

Four days later, the Papal Army, including three hundred and fifty Irishmen under Major Myles O'Reilly, fought against two and a half thousand Piedmontese troops at Spoleto. The soldiers withstood repeated attacks for fourteen hours, but were eventually forced to surrender. The most important engagement of this brief conflict took place at Castelfidardo on 18 September. The Papal Army was attempting to reach its base at Ancona, but was intercepted and subsequently defeated by seventeen thousand Piedmontese troops under the command of General Enrico Cialdini (Doyle 2010). Overall success in the battle for possession of the Papal States was assured for the Piedmontese army after their victory at Castelfidardo, as they "crushed the little Papal Army by mere brute strength and force of numbers" (O'Clery 1892, 219). After the siege of Ancona, the entire Papal Army surrendered. At this point, the Piedmontese marched south, avoiding Rome and its French contingent. Garibaldi yielded the territories that he had conquered to King Victor Emanuel II in October at Teano near Naples, and quietly went into temporary retirement.

As regards the Irish soldiers, the majority of them were marched to Genoa and held there as prisoners. A committee was formed in Ireland in September 1860 with the intention of gathering donations in order to repatriate the men back to Ireland. Meetings were held throughout the country in an attempt to raise subscriptions to this end. On 20 October, a Papal owned ship, the *Byzantine*, began to transfer the men from Genoa to Marseilles. From here, they made their way to Paris and on to Le Havre, where eventually a ship was located to take them back to Ireland. Most of the men of the Papal Battalion of St Patrick eventually arrived back to Ireland through Queenstown in Cork (modern day Cobh). On their return, they received a hero's welcome. Alexander Martin Sullivan of *The Nation* felt that "had those men been victors on a hundred fields they could not have been welcomed with more flattering demonstrations" (1878, 285). Trains took the men from Cork City to their various parts of Ireland. At every stop along the way, large groups of people turned out to see them. In the eyes of George Berkeley "they had made sacrifices not only for the Papal cause, but also for the cause of nationality in Ireland" (1929, 220). Albert Delahoyde however, was not amongst them, as he had remained behind in Rome.

Delahoyde had arrived on the Italian mainland in the early summer of 1860 as part of a group intent on enlisting with the Papal Battalion of St Patrick. He had been born in Dublin in 1841 to Robert and Frances Delahoyde and was christened in St Paul's Church in early October that same year. Little is known of his early life until he volunteered to serve in the Papal Battalion. He was educated at Clongowes Wood College near Clane in County Kildare. According to Irish Fenian John Devoy's *Recollections of an Irish Rebel*, the Delahoyde family owned a pharmacy on Queen's Street in the Smithfield area of Dublin (1929, 264). On his way to Rome, he spent some time in Belgium, putting his linguistic skills to good use as an interpreter for many of the recruits gathering there from the various Catholic countries. Delahoyde was garrisoned in Ancona throughout the brief conflict between the Papal Army and the Kingdom of Piedmont-Sardinia, spending his nineteenth birthday under heavy fire, which was his first experience of battle. After the fall of Ancona in late September, Delahoyde was captured with his comrades and later transferred from Genoa to Marseilles in anticipation of a return to Ireland. He chose, however, to return to Rome for the foreseeable future, along with approximately forty other Irish soldiers.

Delahoyde continued his military career in the service of the Papacy in Italy, joining the newly formed Papal Zouaves, and eventually becoming a Second Lieutenant in October 1862. The Zouaves had evolved from the Papal Army, remaining under the leadership of General Louis Christophe de Lamoricière, as part of the ongoing defence of the remnants of the Papal States. Delahoyde became a commissioned officer in 1864 and, as a result, he had a front row seat for the remaining milestones in Italian unification. He fought at the Battle of Mentana in November 1867 as part of the victorious Franco-Papal forces, which included roughly 200 new volunteers from Ireland, against Italian soldiers under Giuseppe Garibaldi who were making an attempt to take Rome. At this battle, he was slightly wounded and was later made a Captain in acknowledgement of his bravery. Delahoyde was also one of the leading individuals involved in the defence of the Porta Pia gate in Rome in 1870, commanding a company in the battle where the Italian Army finally took full possession of the city.

Delahoyde was a prolific letter writer during the ten years he lived in Italy. A number of these letters have survived, and are held at the National Library of Ireland in Dublin. The majority were written in 1860, but there are also letters from the remainder of the decade. Writing to George Berkeley in 1911, 6 years after Albert's death, his brother Dr John Delahoyde stated that Albert had intended his letters as a record of events in order to "confound the Garibaldian liars" (NLI Mss 13,280-13,287). In other words, he wanted to counteract what he saw as propaganda by various sources, mainly Italian and British, which had attempted to discredit the Irishmen who fought in Italy, both at the time and in the ensuing years. Delahoyde's communications are liberally sprinkled

with quotes in foreign languages, a longing for Ireland, religious references, and observations, usually negative and often quite prejudiced, about Italians. I now turn to these letters in order to assess what they tell us about the identity of Albert Delahoyde, what they reveal about the wider contexts of both the Papal Battalion of St Patrick and the Papal Zouaves, and about the contacts between Ireland and Italy in the mid-nineteenth century.

One of the most interesting aspects of Delahoyde's letters is how they showcase his ability with languages. Even at the tender age of eighteen, it was clear that he was already multilingual. In his first letter to his mother on 14 July 1860, he claimed that he spoke both German and French, the former a little more fluently. He also wasted no time in acquiring a knowledge of the Italian language on arrival at his ultimate destination. In July 1860, he spoke of the fact that "I have had no time to learn Italian but my ear is becoming familiarised" (NLI Ms 13,280). Only a couple of months later, in a letter on 12 September 1860 to a friend named Ned, he wrote that "the time for study is small; I'm afraid t'will be some time till I get a command of it" (NLI Ms 13,280). At this point, however, he had already started the habit of adding random Italian phrases to his letters, and this became more common as the 1860s progressed. Throughout the decade, he received letters in other languages, not just in Italian, but also in Spanish and French.

Clearly, Albert Delahoyde was an intelligent young man, with a natural ear for languages. In his linguistic ability, Delahoyde seemed, however, to have been more the exception than the rule. There were at least nine nationalities involved in the Papal Army, including Belgians, French, Austrians, Swiss, Poles and of course Italians. Delahoyde was acutely aware of the problems caused by the fact that the different nationalities could not communicate with each other, or at least struggled to do so. He told his mother that "with the Swiss we agree well but the men cannot talk the language" (NLI Ms 13,280). Unsurprisingly, apart from one or two individuals such as Myles O' Reilly, who spoke French and Italian, the majority of the Irishmen who travelled to Italy in the summer of 1860 could only speak English or Irish. This exacerbated the difficulties that the Irish had in understanding the other ethnicities with which they came in contact, both those they fought against and those they fought with. The ordinary citizens of the Papal States had similar issues understanding the Irish in their midst. There are a number of examples contained in the letters of Delahoyde and others of the astonishment and puzzlement of Papal State residents, both at the Irish taking the side of the Pope, and also at Irish culture and behaviour. This was to lead to a mutual antagonism between both groupings.

Another young Irish soldier, Martin Bulger, found himself based in the town of Macerata in the Marche. This individual wrote to Rector Tobias Kirby of the Pontifical Irish College in Rome in May of 1860. After angry complaints about the lack of supplies and accommodation for the Irish in

the town, he added that the problem was exacerbated by the fact that there was, perhaps unsurprisingly, only one local man in the town who spoke English. To add to Bulger's anger, he stated that "there is not one priest here that understands English" (Cryan 2011, 39). The difficulties in communication were so strong that Canon Lawrence Forde, mediator between the Irish of the Papal Battalion of St Patrick and the Roman hierarchy, produced an eleven page pamphlet in Italian. As Mary Jane Cryan informs us, "the pamphlet was meant to inform the Italian speaking authorities in the Papal government and Italian officers of the best way to treat the new arrivals" (Cryan 2011, 46-47).

Delahoyde was extremely interested in travelling and learning about other parts of the world. In a 24 July 1860 letter to his mother, he was disappointed to admit that he had seen very little of the Italian countryside. He further claimed that "one can live here almost as cheap as Belgium" (NLI Ms 13,280). It is obvious from his other writings that he was interested in learning more about the places he visited. Despite Delahoyde's multilingualism and interest in travel, however, his attitude towards many of the people with whom he came in contact in Italy was overwhelmingly negative, even allowing for nineteenth century racial attitudes. In the copious notes that he compiled during the writing of his work *The Irish Battalion in the Papal Army* (1929), George Berkeley was almost apologetic to the reader on behalf of some of the statements made by Delahoyde, partly excusing him due to his youthfulness and immaturity. In *Nation/Nazione*, Anne O'Connor has stated that there was a lack of understanding and empathy between the two countries of Ireland and Italy in 1860 (O'Connor 2014, 96-109). Delahoyde's attitude often supported this assertion.

An intense dislike of the Italians who lived in the Papal States is apparent from the first letters that Delahoyde sent home in July 1860. Delahoyde wrote that "the people are dirty looking and lazy, the lower class cheat you if they can, indeed I think that there is a great want of principle amongst the Italians comparatively with other countries, and Ireland in particular" (NLI Ms 13,280). In a rather bizarre statement, he further claimed that "the Italians are generally of a dark yellow hue like an old hen's leg" (NLI Ms 13,280). In many of his letters, especially those written in 1860, his first year in Italy, Delahoyde continuously compared Ireland and the Irish people with Italy and the Italians. Again, he was presumably speaking of those who lived in the territories controlled by the Pope, as it was here that Delahoyde spent the majority of his time whilst in Italy. He stated that he did not find Italian women attractive, and instead missed the complexion of Irish girls. Writing to his friend Ned in September 1860, Delahoyde elaborated on this theme, asserting that "our native Coleens they have genuine hearts but here there seems to exist a treacherous undercurrent" (NLI Ms 13,280). Another Dubliner in the Papal Battalion of St Patrick, Richard A. O'Carroll, propagated similar prejudiced sentiments, claiming that:

[...] you may imagine Rome is a grand place but I can tell you Ireland is far in preference to it. There is not a town I have ever seen yet equal to Ireland. The only thing I see is that this is a fine country for growing fruit, clear sky, very warm, and magnificent chapels [...] as for the people they are of a slovenly, lazy race, scarcely ever work. (NLI Ms 21,522)

Delahoyde and O'Carroll's attitudes were partly caused by the effects of living in a state of conflict, and by bitterness towards the perceived enemies of the Pope. Delahoyde described his regiment having rotten fruit thrown at them by the locals and claimed that "we are anything but liked by the lower class" (NLI Ms 13,280). For Delahoyde and O'Carroll, as indeed for other young Irishmen of the Papal Battalion of St Patrick, the unwelcoming reception that they received in Italy seems to have come as a shock. This was apparently exacerbated by the fact that it was the Italian people of the Papal States who were expressing this belligerence. In the eyes of Delahoyde and many other Irish soldiers, they had come to protect these people from the invading Piedmontese, but the citizens of the Papal States seemed to feel differently.

Relations between the Irish and the residents of the Papal States continued to be difficult, not simply because the Irish were in the region in the first place, but also due to the behaviour of some of them while they were there. A particularly troublesome bunch seem to have been a group of young men from County Kerry, known rather unimaginatively as "the Kerry Boys", who had, claimed George Berkeley, "been sent out of their parish by their priest because he wanted to be rid of them" (1929, 21). Another veteran, A.J. Abraham, also asserted that the Kerry Boys had been sent out to Italy because their local bishop wanted to be rid of them. He further claimed that these men were "so ignorant that when they had serviettes on the dinner table asked what the towels were for, and when helped to salad said that they didn't eat raw cabbage" (Cullen Papers, Dublin Diocesan Archives [DDA], 274/12/II/7)! This individual also stated that "some of the Kerry men sold their old clothes and got drunk and we had a lot to do to keep them quiet". Delahoyde himself briefly addressed the issue of Irish-Italian interaction as he described an afternoon spent in a Roman square in 1861. According to him, this consisted of "Paddy amusing himself in the Piazza Santa Maria beside the Cathedral at his favourite football [...] [the people of the Papal States] could not understand our kicking a football under a sun which kept them indoors" (NLI Ms 13,280). It appears that the Irish soldiers were unaware both of the dangers of sunstroke and the benefits of an afternoon siesta!

There is minimal evidence of more positive Italian attitudes towards the Irish soldiers during their stay in Italy. Delahoyde spoke of leaflets which had been scattered all around the barracks at Ancona where many of the Irish soldiers were based during the brief conflict. He was angry that the individual who had distributed these must have somehow managed to make his or her



way into the barracks, as they were clearly not spread by a supporter of Pope Pius IX. The letter, which was written in poor English, attempted to make common cause with the Irish against the Papacy. It was addressed from “the Italians to their Brothers of Ireland”, and asserted that the Irish had been misled by those who had sent them to Italy. It urged the Irish to unite with them against the Pope who was “usurping a temporal power that God did not appoint”. The letter ended with the words “Viva Italy – Viva Ireland – Viva the union of the true followers of Christ” (Cryan 2011, 51-52). The letter was not well received amongst the Irish but it is interesting, as it is indicative of the potential for an alliance between the Irish and at least some Italians. This, however, was the exception rather than the rule.

Clearly, there was both a lack of mutual understanding and strained relations between the Italians of the Papal States and the Irish in this period, as well as the Irish and their enemy the Piedmontese. This was apparent both in the Papal Battalion of St Patrick and later the Papal Zouaves, but also in the wider nineteenth century world. The mutual contempt between the Irish and Italians, specifically those from the Kingdom of Piedmont-Sardinia and the Papal States, comes through clearly from the letters of Delahoyde and his colleagues. Clearly, the wider cultural differences between the Irish and these Italians, and in the broader view the citizens of Ireland and Italy, were exacerbated by the bitterness of a military campaign. Anne O’Connor has stated that this animosity was not just ideological, but was a result of the Irishmen’s experience in Italy. This was true on both sides. The Papal province of Romagna had already voted for annexation to Piedmont-Sardinia, and the remaining citizens of the Papal States had made clear their opposition to Papal rule, dependent as it was on the presence of a French garrison. The Irish were part of a force that stood in the way of the incorporation of the Papal States into a united Italy, therefore discontent with the Papal Army and its Irish soldiers was understandable. In part perhaps to counter this animosity, a growing sense of Irish patriotism and national pride was developing amongst many of the men of the Papal Battalion of St Patrick. Anne O’Connor has written of how the Papal Battalion was viewed as an outlet for Irish nationalism, and a training ground for future military ventures in Ireland (O’Connor 2014, 96-109). This was another topic on which Delahoyde had much to say.

Delahoyde spoke in glowing terms of the Irish soldiers in the Papal Battalion of St Patrick on numerous occasions. In a letter to his mother on 14 July 1860, he claimed that “when properly organised we hope to march on Rome, and I hope we will show, if necessary to Garibaldi and Co. that his chasseurs are no match for Erin’s hardy sinews” (NLI Ms 13,280). Delahoyde stated that General Louis Christophe de Lamoricière took a special interest in the progress of the Papal Battalion of St Patrick. According to him, the General “seems to expect a scrimmage soon. He must take great interest in us, as he has

reviewed us four times already, a thing he never does with the other troops” (Ms 13,280). In early August, Delahoyde asserted that “upwards of a hundred have got arms and turn out every day for target practice. They are very willing, and often drill in their room without orders . . . We are in first-rate order” (Berkeley 1929, 74). He further stated that the Irish soldiers had received much praise from the Papal Army leaders for their performance in the battle at Perugia, which was the first encounter between Piedmontese forces and the Papal Army. In a letter to his mother on 19 September, which was published in the nationalist newspaper *The Nation* the following month, Delahoyde informed her that “the General regrets extremely the want of Irishmen, he was astonished at their conduct yesterday [. . .] he has even said he’d give all his Swiss and natives for 5,000 Irish” (NLI Ms 13,280). He further elaborated by claiming that the Italians and Swiss of the Papal Army refused the order to charge the enemy, and that instead it was left up to the Irish and the Franco-Belgians, as he terms them. Even two years after the end of the brief conflict, writing to his brother Joe from Rome in January 1862, Delahoyde made the claim that “the King of Naples I believe is resolved to have Irish troops if ever he gets his states again” (NLI Ms 13,280). The young Dubliner was clearly proud of the Irishmen in the Papal Army and the later Papal Zouaves, and especially of the positive image that they bestowed upon the country.

Participation in the war generated by the Italian movement for national unification fostered a level of Irish national pride for many Irish soldiers, at least on some level, as it allowed briefly the establishment of a de facto, though limited, Irish army. This is a claim supported by others, such as Captain Frank Russell, who commanded the Irish soldiers in Ancona and revelled in their immense bravery when he asserted that the “sons of St Patrick had retired only when all further advance was impossible” (Berkeley 1929, 198). A.J. Abraham wrote that “you can scarcely imagine the sensation of joy I felt as we followed the band, proud of being with the first to be sworn in for the defence of the Holy See. On every side you looked you saw happy faces” (Cullen Papers, DDA, 274/12/II/7). The events of 1860 in Italy were an expression of this national sentiment and identity, not just for the Irish soldiers who fought in Italy, but also for many of the Irish people at home in Ireland. This would be further exemplified by the fact that a small number of the Irish soldiers who had fought for the Papal Battalion of St Patrick later became members of the Fenian movement on their return to Ireland, as also, in much greater numbers, did some Irish veterans of the American Civil War. This sense of Irish national pride was also very apparent in the letters of Delahoyde through his use of language, his expressions of patriotism and pride in his fellow soldiers, but most of all, his Catholic faith. His strong religious beliefs were shared not only by a large portion of his fellow Irish soldiers, but also by those left at home in Ireland who had supported the endeavour from the outset.

Of all the topics that were discussed in the letters of the men of the Papal Battalion of St Patrick, by far the most prevalent was, unsurprisingly, religion. Delahoyde's writings provided ample proof of his strong Catholic faith. They were littered with religious references, and he spoke often of praying for himself and other members of his family. In a letter written to his mother from Ancona, he enclosed a set of rosary beads which he had been using himself. He also informed her that he had received, from an unknown source, "a coral rosary blessed by the Holy Father, with a cross having attached a plenary indulgence if kissed at the hour of death" (NLI Ms 13,280). Delahoyde regularly attended Mass during his time in Rome, on one occasion in 1861 to commemorate the first anniversary of the battle of Castelfidardo. Writing to his brother Joe from Rome in January 1862, Delahoyde told him that "I will try for the piece of the true cross and I am almost certain of getting it" (NLI Ms 13,280). As there was no further mention of this relic in his letters, we must conclude that he was unsuccessful in his quest.

Delahoyde's tone remained religious throughout the 1860s, but became increasingly more fatalistic as the battles and the decade progressed. In 1860, he stated that he was fearful for his safety "however God's will be done [...] may God bless you and all at home". His tone unsurprisingly became more despondent as the battles progressed, and writing again to his mother in September, he stated that "I fear few of us will live to tell the tale" (NLI Ms 13,280). In a document that George Berkeley named the Mentana Letter, Delahoyde wrote again to his mother on November 8, 1867. He described the scene in a church in Rome which had been ravaged by the Italian Army – "everything plundered, the altar furniture, crucifixes too, smashed and burned, a scene which brought tears to all our eyes [...] God send us happier times for indeed his hand has been heavy on us". Writing to his sister Mary from Monte Rotondo in 1868, he stated simply that "Death is busy everywhere" (NLI Ms 13,280). Before the final battle for Rome in 1870, Delahoyde's tone had become extremely depressed, and it appears that he felt that he would not survive. Again writing to his mother, he stated that:

I cannot say if Divine Providence will spare me in this my third campaign but I am quite resigned to accept death, if such be the Divine Will [...] even should I be called I shall be happier above than here, and God knows we have not much reason to regret this world which for us has not been one of pleasure. (NLI Ms 13,280)

The positive and upbeat young man of 1860 had been replaced with one cognizant of his own mortality and sensing his impending doom after ten years of intermittent warfare.

Contemporaries of Delahoyde also exhibited a strong religious tone in their communications. Richard O'Carroll spoke of a scene in Spoleto where the local priest said mass for the soldiers. He described a shrine "and in it was

a splendid figure of the Blessed Virgin interceding for all sinners to heaven, it is a splendid sight". He visited only Catholic sites during his time in Rome, and proudly described seeing Pope Pius IX in person on a number of occasions. O'Carroll was confident that "God will bless our undertaking with success" (NLI Ms 21,522). Aloysius Howlin, who fought at Perugia, stated that "we had tried as well as we could to defend the rights of the Church, in one word we had fought for the Pope and for Catholic Ireland, that was enough" (NLI Ms 13,282). In a letter reprinted in *The Nation* in October 1860, another soldier, Patrick Clooney, claimed that "by the help of God all we have gone through for Pius the Ninth will yet be told you". Writing about the Papal Battalion of St Patrick over half a century later, another veteran, Michael Smith, was very defensive of the cause for which he had fought. In a letter to George Berkeley, he stated that "I regret to learn at this late date that any reflection should be cast on any of the Papal Brigade who fought for God and right [...] I was fighting to defend my faith and to uphold the temporal power of Pope Pius IX". He described the Papal Battalion of St Patrick as "that noble band of men who fought for their religion and expected no recompense for their services on this side of the grave" (NLI Mss 13,280-13,287). Other writings by men of the Papal Battalion expressed similar sentiments to these.

Clearly, Irish Catholic identity was one of the main reasons why Irishmen such as Albert Delahoyde travelled to Italy in 1860 to join the Papal Battalion of St Patrick. It was also an important reason why a number of Irish soldiers, including Delahoyde, subsequently spent many years in the service of Pope Pius IX as part of the Papal Zouaves. Yet, obviously it was not the only reason. Faith did not rule out other motivations for enlisting. The aid given by the same Pope to the starving Irish during the Great Famine of the 1840s left many of them grateful and feeling that they owed him their lives. The fact that the Irish had a long and proud tradition of fighting on foreign fields was another reason for volunteering. Anger towards Britain also played its part, exacerbated by anti-Catholicism and anti-Papal sentiments in the British press, along with the British support for Garibaldi. There is a possibility that Delahoyde included the British in his list of 'Garibaldian liars'. Some British newspapers, such as *The Times*, saw those in the Papal Army as gullible and naïve, often celebrated defeats for those fighting for the Papacy, and even claimed that the Irish were cowards who had readily surrendered. In fact, the British, eager to assist any movement that would weaken the Catholic powers of France and Austria on the European stage, unofficially backed the Italian unification movement. They appeared neutral, but in reality supported Garibaldi's invasion of Sicily and southern Italy with their navy.

Catholicism, however, was certainly the most important factor in many of the Irishmen's decisions to join the Papal Battalion of St Patrick, and later the Papal Zouaves. Whilst this was predominantly for spiritual reasons, there was also a political motive for many of the men. This involved the protection

of the Pope's temporal sovereignty, as many of the Irish soldiers believed that the earthly power of the Papacy was linked to its political independence. It is also interesting to observe that, though the opponents of the Irish during the brief conflict in Italy were also Catholics, this fact does not appear to have caused many of the Irishmen to doubt the legitimacy of the endeavour. Neither did this fact lead Irish people in Ireland to support fellow Catholics in the Kingdom of Piedmont-Sardinia or those in the Papal States who wished to be part of a united Italy. It is clear from the widespread show of support at home, including the raising of eighty thousand pounds less than a decade after the Famine had ended, that the eyes and support of Irish Catholics were concentrated solely on Rome and the Papacy.

The fall of Rome in 1870 was the final act in the long and complicated process of Italian unification and signalled the end of Delahoyde's soldiering career. Soon after he left the Papal Zouaves and returned to Ireland. In 1871, while living back in his hometown of Dublin, Albert Delahoyde wrote to Monsignor Tobias Kirby, Rector of the Pontifical Irish College in Rome, seeking the pension to which he believed he was entitled from the Papal Authorities. In this letter, he informed Kirby that the majority of his remaining family had emigrated to the United States in June 1871, where soon thereafter they had met with tragedy. Delahoyde's 16 year old brother Robert had drowned shortly after the family's arrival in America. The former Papal Battalion of St Patrick soldier and Papal Zouave was extremely concerned about his late sibling's soul, but consoled himself with the fact that "his last act in Ireland was to make his long delayed First Communion. So I hope Almighty God did allow it, in mercy to him as he had not been reared to obedience" (Pontifical Irish College [PIC], The Kirby Collection [KIR/1871/169]). Even at this late date and after all the setbacks and defeats that had come his way in defence of his religion, Delahoyde appeared to have never wavered in the strength of his religious convictions.

Shortly thereafter, Delahoyde received a position in the Indian mail service, with the duty of travelling with the post from London to Brindisi. At this point in the nineteenth century, mail for India would leave London by train, cross the channel by ferry, and then continue by train across France and Italy until it reached the heel of Italy. Here at Brindisi it would be loaded onto a ship bound for Bombay. Delahoyde travelled this route helping to guard the mail until his retirement. It appears that he married at some point and had at least two children, but again, as with many of the events of Delahoyde's life, details are sketchy. After retiring in 1890, he lived quietly in London until his death at the relatively young age of 63 in 1905. It is fair to say that Delahoyde was emblematic of the many young Irishmen who volunteered to fight in Italy in 1860. His youthful sense of adventure, Irish patriotism, offensive views on the Italians with whom he came in contact, and, most of all, his strong sense of Irish Catholic identity, were characteristics many of the soldiers of the Papal Battalion of St Patrick possessed. In other

ways, however, Delahoyde was an exception. His lengthy stay in Italy and his service in the Papal Zouaves meant that he witnessed the completion of Italian unification, unlike the majority of his Papal Battalion colleagues. His multilingualism and interest in travel also marked him as exceptional, since most of the Irishmen who travelled to Italy in the summer of 1860 could only speak English or Irish, and exhibited no desire to stay in Italy following their service in the Papal Battalion of St Patrick.

In the wider picture, the relationship between Ireland and Italy at this point in the mid-nineteenth century can be said to have been one of lost possibilities. Ireland and Italy had a number of commonalities by the early 1850s. They both sought independence from a dominant neighbour (Britain and Austria), both were attempting to construct a collective national identity, and both were overwhelmingly Catholic. The events of the 1860s in both Ireland and Italy demonstrate how the two countries negatively impacted on each other, however, as, due to the transnational dimension of Catholicism, their respective causes could no longer remain the same. Instead, they took up opposing positions – the anticlerical Kingdom of Piedmont-Sardinia and the later Italian Kingdom versus the most prevalent Irish version of nationalism and identity which embraced Catholicism. The difficulties encountered in understanding the wider cultural discrepancies between Ireland and Italy in the 1860s contributed to, and exacerbated, instances of prejudice on both sides, not just for the soldiers, but also for the Irish and Italian peoples as a whole. The interaction between the two countries and the two national movements at mid-nineteenth century was, therefore, sadly quite negative, as is clear from the surviving writings of Albert Delahoyde, a remarkable, and hitherto relatively unknown, young Irishman.

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