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Friend or Foe?

Martial Race Ideology and the Experience of Highland Scottish and Irish Regiments in  
Mid-Victorian Conflicts, 1853-1870

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A thesis

presented to

the faculty of the Department of History

East Tennessee State University

In partial fulfillment

of the requirements for the degree

Master of Arts in History

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by

Adam M. Spivey

May 2017

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Dr. John Rankin, Chair

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Keywords: British Empire, Martial Race, Highland Scots, Fenian, Indian Mutiny, Crimean War

## ABSTRACT

Friend or Foe?

Martial Race Ideology and the Experience of Highland Scottish and Irish Regiments in  
Mid-Victorian Conflicts, 1853-1870

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This thesis examines martial race ideology in the British Army during the mid-nineteenth century. A “martial race” was a group of people that the British considered to excel in the art of warfare due to biological and cultural characteristics. This thesis examines perceived “martial” natures or lack thereof of the Highland Scots and the Irish during this era. Central to this analysis are the Crimean War (1853-1856) and the Indian Mutiny of 1857 which provided opportunities for soldiers to display their “martial” qualities. The Crimean War was the first war where the daily newspapers covered every aspect of the war using correspondents, and it gave soldiers the chance to gain recognition through this medium. The Indian Mutiny represented a crisis for Britain, and it gave soldiers the opportunity to be recognized as “stabilizers of the empire.” However, despite their similarities, the Highland regiments became some of the most revered regiments while the Irish came to be seen as untrustworthy, leading many in the British government to initiate efforts to decrease the role that the Irish played in Britain’s conflicts. This

reluctance was due to the turmoil that erupted as a result of the anti-Union Fenian Brotherhood in Ireland during the 1860s. The difficulty in stabilizing Ireland in the wake of Fenian terrorist attacks also exposed old prejudices of the Irish related to religion, race, and class. This was evidenced through parliamentary debates and British newspapers reporting on the crises.

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## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

In June of 1886, the Liberal government of William Gladstone initiated a Home Rule Bill through Parliament that would have given the Irish self-government and control over local legislative affairs. Parliament remained sharply divided on whether to grant Ireland Home Rule. The debate sparked intense controversy, tended to harden positions, and revived old prejudices that have long colored British perceptions of Ireland. Some argued that the Irish lacked the capability for self-government. While others argued that since Ireland contributed a substantial amount to British defense and fiscal policy, they deserved a separate parliament which governed their local affairs. One side, represented by Bernard Coleridge, MP for Sheffield Attercliffe argued that, “I do not doubt that once you give Ireland the legitimate control of her own affairs, and allow her to choose her own rulers, that those rulers will be the salt of the Irish race.”<sup>1</sup> Opponents of granting self-government to Ireland such as Joseph Chamberlain argued that Home Rule would raise the specter of a resurgent Catholicism in Ireland that would tyrannize the minority Protestants, “It is true—it is absolutely true—that to secure rights has been, and is, the aim of Christian civilization: to destroy them, and to establish the resistless, domineering action of a purely central power is the aim of the Roman policy.”<sup>2</sup> Others emphasized the socio-economic status of the majority of Ireland, arguing that its predominantly in low-income

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<sup>1</sup> Bernard Coleridge, “Second Reading,” in *House of Commons Debates*, vol. 305, 13 May 1886, accessed 15 December 2016, [http://hansard.millbanksystems.com/commons/1886/may/13/second-reading-adjourned-debate#S3V0305P0\\_18860513\\_HOC\\_109](http://hansard.millbanksystems.com/commons/1886/may/13/second-reading-adjourned-debate#S3V0305P0_18860513_HOC_109).

<sup>2</sup> Joseph Chamberlain, “Second Reading,” in *House of Commons Debates*, vol. 306, 1 June 1886, accessed 15 December 2016, [http://hansard.millbanksystems.com/commons/1886/jun/01/second-reading-adjourned-debate-ninth#S3V0306P0\\_18860601\\_HOC\\_62](http://hansard.millbanksystems.com/commons/1886/jun/01/second-reading-adjourned-debate-ninth#S3V0306P0_18860601_HOC_62).

agricultural laborers were not the basis upon which a good and independent government could be built. Some members in Parliament used these class distinctions to make the case that the Irish remained uneducated and susceptible to the influence of Catholicism and nationalist agitators. Ultimately, Parliament was too divided and the Home Rule Bill failed to pass. As such, the Irish problem continued to fester for the next century.

How could such varied opinions of the Irish exist amongst Britain's ruling elite? These viewpoints demonstrate the lens through which the British, as a whole viewed the Irish race, and provides insights into how these stereotypes affected the British Army's attitude toward the Irish. The Irish were not the only group within the British Isles that experienced prejudice. For much of the eighteenth and early nineteenth century, the Highland Scots had also been viewed as inferior. Highland Scots had been viewed with skepticism by the British due to the Jacobite Rebellions that occurred in the north of Scotland in 1715 and 1745 in an attempt to protect Catholicism and restore a Stuart king to the throne. During the revolts and in their immediate aftermath, many caricatures proliferated throughout England which highlighted the "uncivilized" behavior of the Highland Scot, spreading unflattering depictions of Highlanders.

In one of their caricatures, *Sawney in the Bog House*, a Scottish Highlander was depicted attempting to use a public bathroom in London but found himself perplexed as to how to use one. Instead of sitting on the hole designated for the seat, he sits in the space between two and sticks both feet inside the holes.<sup>3</sup> In addition, *The Scots Magazine* published an article in 1753 highlighting a trial for murder committed by a Highlander. In this magazine the prosecutor decided to use the man on trial, James Stewart to characterize Highlanders in general. While he

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<sup>3</sup> "Sawney in the Bog-house." *The British Museum*, 1745, accessed December 15, 2016, [http://www.britishmuseum.org/research/collection\\_online/collection\\_object\\_details.aspx?objectId=1478257&partId=1&people=113806&peoA=113806-2-60&view=list&page=1](http://www.britishmuseum.org/research/collection_online/collection_object_details.aspx?objectId=1478257&partId=1&people=113806&peoA=113806-2-60&view=list&page=1).



noted areas of “improvements” in regards to assimilating the Highland regions within Britain, he still believed them to be “uncivilized.” As the magazine reported, “The highlands of Scotland are in this age less barbarous than they have been in former times; yet, in our own time, there have been such instances of remaining barbarism. These countries stand yet in need of being better civilized.”<sup>4</sup> In this context, race, which included physical appearance, social, and cultural characteristics, became the primary tool that the British used to define the Irish as the “other.” By the late nineteenth century, “advancements” in biology, particularly scientific racism, simply hardened Britain’s negative attitudes towards the Irish.

The development of scientific racism also influenced the way that the British caricatured the Irish as a people. Ever since the Tudor period, when the Irish had been depicted as *woodkarnes*, bandits who lived in forests outside of “civilization,” the British depictions of the Irish had not been favorable.<sup>5</sup> By the latter half of the nineteenth century, British cartoons, inspired by scientific racism, began depicting the Irish as a sub-human species, often as a monkey or an ape. In one cartoon published in 1861, the caricature depicted the Irishman as an ape writing a treatise on treason while a British policeman, ever vigilant, stands over the ape.<sup>6</sup>

While Darwin and his successors created a new paradigm to view others, we must remember that from the very moment the British began to establish colonies in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, various attempts were made to classify and sort through the disparate

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<sup>4</sup> “Extracts of the Trial of James Stewart,” *The Scots Magazine*, 1 October 1753, accessed March 15, 2017, <http://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk/viewer/BL/0000545/17531001/007/0022?browse=true>.

<sup>5</sup> Michael de Nie, *The Eternal Paddy: Irish Identity and the British Press, 1798-1882* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2004), 6.

<sup>6</sup> “The Irish Ape and the British Policeman.” *Punch*, 1861, accessed October 25, 2015, <https://www.quora.com/How-have-attitudes-towards-the-Irish-changed-in-England-over-time>

racial differences between the British and those they colonized. According to John Rankin, the British debated whether or not the “others” they encountered had any similarities to themselves. This is evident in the Age of Exploration through the colonial period, as Europeans attempted to understand how they related culturally and biologically to the rest of the world. During this period, many questioned whether any innate and predetermined differences existed amongst different races, or whether cultural or geographical factors had any role to play.<sup>7</sup>

During the latter half of the century, new advancements in evolutionary biology and the Darwinian theory of natural selection became ingrained in academic discourse and some utilized these arguments to advocate that certain races had an innate deficiency in comparison to others. Such arguments, known as Social Darwinism, usually highlighted white “superiority” over darker skinned Asians and Africans.<sup>8</sup> The Irish occupied an in between position as European, but not Anglo-Saxon. They were sometimes depicted as near equals with the British, but they could just as easily be lumped in with those viewed as “inferior.” Indeed, many argued that the Irish, akin to non-Europeans, had an innate sense of laziness and a proclivity for disobedience and violence. This template served as a stark contrast from what the British believed the hard working and stable Anglo-Saxon possessed.<sup>9</sup> As a result of this classification, many Britons felt

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<sup>7</sup> John Rankin, *Healing the African Body: British Medicine in West Africa* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 2015), 17.

<sup>8</sup> Peter Gay, *The Cultivation of Hatred: The Bourgeois Experience, Victoria to Freud* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1993), 39

<sup>9</sup> Michael de Nie, *The Eternal Paddy: Irish Identity and the British Press, 1798-1882* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2004), 23.

it was their duty to govern the Irish and others with the purpose of spreading their economic and religious values.<sup>10</sup>

According to Linda Colley, the British utilized the differences they saw in others they encountered to define and construct their own national identity. These differences had not necessarily been racial or biological in nature. Colley emphasizes the importance of cultural differences by examining the role that Protestantism played in national identity.<sup>11</sup> Before scientific racism, race served as an umbrella term to define a group of people based on social and cultural characteristics. In the case of the Irish, Michael de Nie has simplified British attitudes by stating that the Irish had always existed in their minds as a Celt, a Catholic, and a peasant.<sup>12</sup> Therefore, by the late nineteenth century, the traditional Darwinian narrative seemed to confirm the stereotypes of the Irish that the British held for centuries.

The two main factions of racial theorists at this time that engaged in this debate were the monogenists and polygenists. Monogenists believed that every racial and ethnic group of humanity had one common ancestor which made them genetically related. Polygenists subscribed to the opposite view which stated that every race came from a series multiple and unrelated ancestors. These two competing factions shaped the construction of nineteenth century race ideology. In the first half of the nineteenth century, monogenists employed the widely accepted story of Adam and Eve to cement their position. This approach was adopted by missionaries who, because of their travels, were some of the most respected voices in the debate

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<sup>10</sup> Ibid., 3

<sup>11</sup> Linda Colley, *Britons: Forging the Nation 1707-1837* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992), 5.

<sup>12</sup> Michael de Nie, *The Eternal Paddy: Irish Identity and the British Press, 1798-1882* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2004), 23.

over race and the origins of humanity. As Catherine Hall has argued, the early nineteenth century represented a time where monogenists, such as the missionaries, viewed people of other races as genetically related despite cultural distinctions. As a result, missionaries believed in a “universal brotherhood” where different racial groups, such as Africans, could be molded in the image of Britons and become just as “civilized” as them.<sup>13</sup>

However, by the mid-nineteenth century, the idea of a “universal brotherhood” began to lose favorability. The main reason for this switch was due to insecurity and a hardening of racial attitudes caused by the Indian Mutiny and the 1865 revolted in Jamaica.<sup>14</sup> These events called into question mutability and improvement, giving rise to a more pessimistic view by the mid nineteenth century. By this point, various mission sites in the British Empire had not yielded the anticipated conversion rates resulting in dissolution and doubt. This rule applied to the mission field as well. During the early half of the nineteenth century, many missionaries that went abroad became disenchanted with their experience of empire building, and they found the natives of their mission fields to be much less docile and malleable than they once believed.<sup>15</sup>

As a result, the mid-nineteenth century engendered a new model of racial thinking that effectively eliminated and severely marginalized the once idealized concept of a “universal brotherhood.” During this time period, many in Britain made the attempt to separate and elevate those of Anglo-Saxon descent from those that they colonized. This attitude was exemplified by

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<sup>13</sup> Catherine Hall, *Civilizing Subjects: Metropole and Colony in the English Imagination* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002), 338.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, 284.

<sup>15</sup> Richard Price, *Making Empire: Colonial Encounters and the Creation of Imperial Rule in Nineteenth-Century Africa* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 77-79. See also Catherine Hall, *Civilizing Subjects: Metropole and Colony in the English Imagination* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002), 360.

Charles Dickens, a famous nineteenth-century English novelist, who wrote an article in 1853 that characterized dark-skinned peoples as noble savages. In his essay, Darwin remarks on what he sees as the condition of Native Americans living in North America. As he stated on the lifestyle of these “savages,”

“To come to the point at once, I beg to say that I have not the least belief in the Noble Savage. I consider him a prodigious nuisance and an enormous superstition. I do not care what he calls me. I call him a savage, and I call a savage something highly desirable to be civilized off the face of the earth.”<sup>16</sup>

However, despite his characterization of the “noble savage,” Dickens later goes on to state that while he still found them to be inferior when compared to Europeans, he still believed in the old monogenist way of thinking which stated that they ought to be treated in a respectful manner and exposed to Christianity and its redemptive qualities. As Dickens stated,

“We have no greater justification for being cruel to the miserable object, than for being cruel to a William Shakespeare or an Isaac Newton; but he passes away before an immeasurably better and higher power [i.e., that of Christianity] than ever ran wild in any earthly woods, and the world will be all the better when this place knows him no more.”<sup>17</sup>

However, when Dickens wrote those words in 1853, he was not alone in sharing the sentiment of inequality between different racial groups. By the 1850s, the idea of a “universal brotherhood” began to fall out of favor amongst many scientists.

In 1850, Scotsman Robert Knox unequivocally stated in *The Races of Man* that different races possessed vastly different characteristics. In *The Races of Man*, Knox asserts that a hierarchy of races existed with the Europeans at the top of the pyramid and groups such as the

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<sup>16</sup> Charles Dickens, *The Works of Charles Dickens: Reprinted Pieces*, vol. xxxiv (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1900), 120.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, 127.

Aborigines of Australia and Africans at the bottom.<sup>18</sup> To some extent, monogenists and missionaries would have subscribe to the viewpoint that the British or Europeans were culturally superior to those they colonized, but Knox took this level of ethnocentrism to another level when he said,

“If anyone insists with me that a Negro or Tasmanian accidentally born in England becomes thereby an Englishman, I yield the point; but should he further insist, that he, the said Negro or Tasmanian, may become also a Saxon or Scandinavian, I must contend against so ludicrous and error.”<sup>19</sup>

This statement would mean that no instruction or training would “civilize” an indigenous subject from the empire. Instead, they would be destined to remain forever inferior. Knox devoted a portion of his book to articulating his views on the Irish as a racial group. He stated, “Seven hundred year of absolute possession has not advanced by a single step the amalgamation of the Irish Celt with the Saxon English.”<sup>20</sup> To Knox, the Irish were a separate race.

The contours of these arguments and the fascination between perceived differences in races culminated in the works of nineteenth-century biologist, Charles Darwin, particularly his 1871 work, *The Descent of Man, and Selection in Relation to Sex*. In this book, Darwin applied the theories of evolution and natural selection to particular segments of the human race, reiterating Knox’s argument that certain segments of the human race had more biological traits in common with other animals of different species.<sup>21</sup> As Darwin stated explicitly in the introduction of his book, “The sole object of this work is to consider, firstly, whether man, like every other

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<sup>18</sup> Robert Knox, *The Races of Men* (Philadelphia: Lea and Blanchard, 1850), 10.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, 13.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, 21

<sup>21</sup> Charles Darwin, *The Descent of Man, and Selection in Relation to Sex* (London: John Murray, 1871), 9

species, is descended from some pre-existing form; secondly, the manner of his development; and thirdly, the value of the differences between the so-called races of man.”<sup>22</sup>

Major European powers of the nineteenth century employed scientific racism to construct a hierarchy of races. In the British mindset, Anglo-Saxons occupied the pinnacle of the racial hierarchy followed by Celtic races such as the Irish and continued all the way down to the so-called darker races that inhabited Asia and Africa. In *Descent of Man*, Darwin contrasted the differences between the Scottish and the Irish when he stated,

“The careless, squalid, unambitious Irishman multiplies like rabbits: the frugal, foreseeing, self-respecting, ambitious Scot, stern in his morality, spiritual in his faith, sagacious and disciplined in his intelligence, passes his best years in struggle and celibacy, marries late, and leaves few behind him. Given a land originally peopled by a thousand Saxons and a thousand Celts-and in a dozen generations five-sixths of the population would be Celts, but five-sixths of the property, of the power, of the intellect, would belong to the one-sixth of the Saxons that remained.”<sup>23</sup>

Darwin was clear that Anglo-Saxons, like the English and Scots, were natural rulers and this justified British involvement, dominance, and rule over Ireland and Irish people. While the British had always held views that labeled Ireland as inferior, they now had a “scientific” way to justify their prejudice against them and to elevate the Scottish.<sup>24</sup>

In another portion of *Descent of Man*, Darwin further explained which races he believed could be categorized as “civilized races.” In this classification, Darwin examined his findings through the context of European imperialism, and he believed that the people which made up the

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<sup>22</sup> Ibid., 3

<sup>23</sup> Charles Darwin, *The Descent of Man, and Selection in Relation to Sex* (London: John Murray, 1871), 167-168.

<sup>24</sup> Michael de Nie, *The Eternal Paddy: Irish Identity and the British Press, 1798-1882* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2004), 7.

“savage races” would eventually die out and be replaced by the “civilized races.” As Darwin explained in *Descent of Man*, “At some future period, not very distant as measured by centuries, the civilized races of man will almost certainly exterminate and replace throughout the world the savage races.”<sup>25</sup>

Prior to the British Army adopting the basic tenets of martial race ideology from the mid-nineteenth century onward, some segments of Western society dating back to at least the eighteenth-century believed that humans living in tribal societies possessed certain characteristics that made them an asset during a time of war. In particular, Jean Jacques Rousseau, a well-known *philosophe* of the Enlightenment period, wrote a discourse celebrating man in its most natural state. Rousseau believed that in the state of nature man is ultimately considered “good” and not inherently “evil.” According to Rousseau, as the stages of nature progress, “civilization” serves as a force that ultimately corrupted man by making them weak and unable to defend themselves.<sup>26</sup> The British Army were clearly influenced by such ideas, preferring rural recruits who had not been polluted and weakened by “modern society” or industrialization. While Rousseau praised man in his natural state, he believed that a fine line had to be achieved between existing in a state where man is completely cut off from civilization and one where civilization has made man weak and decadent.<sup>27</sup> As he stated, “Whereas nothing can

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<sup>25</sup> Charles Darwin, *The Descent of Man, and Selection in Relation to Sex* (London: John Murray, 1871), 193.

<sup>26</sup> Jean Jacques Rousseau, *The Origins of Inequality* (Mineola: Dover Publications, Inc., 2004), 32

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, 32.



be more gentle than he in his primitive state, when placed by nature at an equal distance from the stupidity of brutes, and the pernicious good sense of civilized man.”<sup>28</sup>

Rousseau’s ideas put him at odds with the general notion of the gradual progression of reason and science. While Rousseau argued against immersing oneself in “civilization” and praised many aspects of primitive man, he took his argument to another dimension when he talked about “civilization’s” effect on the military. He believed the evolution of the “state of nature” from the primitive state of the “noble savage” to “civilization” contributed to a loss of “military virtue,” and made society decadent and unable to defend itself if attacked by an outside force.<sup>29</sup> One logical extension of his argument is that the “civilized” and “sophisticated” English would be forced to rely upon so-called “lesser” people for protection.

These ideas played a factor after the 1857 Mutiny in India against native soldiers who had previously fought for the British East India Company. After this conflict, the British Army began classifying certain groups serving in their armed forces as “martial” and “non-martial.” In the Indian subcontinent specifically, the British sought to recruit groups located in the northwest frontier such as the Sikhs and Gurkhas.<sup>30</sup> This preference by the British came at the expense of the Bengali recruits they typically used pre-mutiny. The British believed that the growing urbanization of Bengal had made them weak, effeminate, and incapable of defending Britain’s

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<sup>28</sup> Ibid., 32.

<sup>29</sup> David A. Bell, *The First Total War: Napoleon’s Europe and the Birth of Warfare As We Know It* (New York: Mariner Books, 2008), 79.

<sup>30</sup> Amar Farooqui, “Divide and Rule? Race, Military Recruitment and Society in Late Nineteenth Century Colonial India,” *Social Scientist* 43(2015): 53.

empire.<sup>31</sup> However, the concept of a “martial race” could also be extended to groups within the British Isles that also assisted in suppressing the Indian Mutiny such as the Highland Scots.

While both the Irish and the Highland Scots found themselves at odds with the English, the Highland Scots would see their position within the British Army improve. However, the Irish would continue to see their position stagnate. The events that altered the structural changes within Britain’s hierarchy of races were the Crimean War against Russia that lasted from 1853-1856 and the Sepoy Mutiny in India in 1857. In these conflicts, both Irish and Highland Scots had been present in the British armed forces tasked with taking the Russian naval base, Sevastopol, and suppressing the rebellion. In the aftermath of these conflicts, the Highland Scots found themselves as the most desired soldiers within Britain’s imperial armed forces. Yet despite the fact that the Irish made up a significant portion of the forces in the Crimea and India and had success in both conflicts fighting alongside the Highland Scots, the Irish did not receive the same recognition as the Scots, nor did such sacrifice improve their image.

During the 1860s, both Ireland and Britain became the victims of both conventional and unconventional attacks by the Irish Fenian Brotherhood, an anti-Union terrorist organization whose goal was to establish an Irish republic independent from the parliament at Westminster. While the attempts of the Fenians ultimately failed, Britain’s experience of dealing with the Irish terrorists exposed the prejudice that many in Britain had held for centuries and helps to explain why, after fighting in the Crimean War and the Sepoy armies during the Indian Mutiny, the Irish still were not seen as a “martial race.”

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<sup>31</sup> Mrinalini Sinha, *Colonial Masculinity: The ‘Manly Englishman’ and the ‘Effeminate Bengali’ in the Late Nineteenth Century* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1995), 80.

These allegations specifically dealt with racial allegations which stated that the Irish had a “diminished intellect,” the attempts of “illiberal” Catholic clergy to corrupt the Irish into revolting against the Protestant union, and the inherent poverty that plagued Ireland. As a result, many in the military and the British government sought to rely less on both Irish troops and the Irish militia in efforts at peace-keeping at home and in the empire as well. This study utilizes both parliamentary debates and British newspapers to determine the extent to which Irish prejudice permeated the British government and the public at large and ultimately contributed to the classification of Irish soldiers as an “un-martial” race. This research also seeks to simultaneously demonstrate why the Highland Scots, despite their own disturbances and disloyalty in the previous century, were not only seen as “martial” but became the very backbone of the British Army and the empire. Understanding this difference will provide insights into British cultural attitudes and ultimately expose the ways in which the British not only administered and protected its empire, but how it understood its role.

## CHAPTER 2

### STABILIZING THE EMPIRE: THE HIGHLAND REGIMENTS

First demonstrating their value in the Seven Years War, Highland units became a feared and effective fighting force for the British Army. The expansion of the British Empire in the Seven Years' War provided the impetus for Highland integration in the British Army after the Battle of Quebec in 1759. In this theatre of war, the 78<sup>th</sup> Highland Regiment provided an instrumental role in capturing the city. By accomplishing this feat, the 78<sup>th</sup> helped secure North America for Britain's dominion.<sup>32</sup> By the close of the eighteenth century, Scots overall gained access to and participated in the imperial enterprise by serving as soldiers, tradesmen, and civil servants in the colonies.<sup>33</sup> Initially viewed with skepticism due to the Jacobite Rebellions of 1715 and 1745 that attempted to place a Stuart king back on the throne, Highlanders became an integral part of the British Army. While the British Army held Highlanders in high esteem since the fall of Quebec, the civilian government and public were slower to recognize the value of Highland units.

The importance of Highland units in suppressing the Mutiny, coupled with the expansion of the popular press allowed for a re-evaluation of Highlanders and ultimately Scottish people. From dangerous and rebellious, Scots were still viewed as different, but the fearsome qualities they held were useful to an expanding Empire. For Scots, this led to a reevaluation of Scotland's

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<sup>32</sup> Tim Newark, *Highlander: The History of the Legendary Highland Soldier* (New York, Skyhorse Publishing, 2009), 42-51

<sup>33</sup> Linda Colley, *Britons: Forging the Nation, 1707-1837* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992), 123.

relationship with England and its place within the Empire but ultimately, as will be demonstrated in the following chapter the way in which the Jacobite Rebellions were understood in England.

Increasingly viewed as an elite warrior class, Highlanders came to embody the fighting spirit and masculine culture which drove the British Army. The visibility, praise, and representation of Highlanders, resulted in the Scots being perceived as a martial race. A martial race was a group of people who demonstrated aggressive and masculine conduct that highlighted their perceived abilities as an elite fighting force that could be employed throughout the empire if colonial sites became unstable, as they did during the mid-nineteenth century.<sup>34</sup>

This understanding of Scots as a martial race had ramifications not just for the Empire but how the Jacobite rebellions were understood. Originally understood as an act of betrayal, a century of fighting for the British led to a re-evaluation of the causes. By the mid nineteenth century, the rebellions were increasingly understood, not as an act of betrayal, but natural coming from a martial race. In this context, war was the only way Highland Scots knew how to demonstrate their grievances. Scots were not untrustworthy but victims of their martial tendencies. The same tendencies, when harnessed by Britain, helped secure and protect the Empire.

Prior to the Mutiny, the British East India Company governed the Indian subcontinent. Initially established as a trading enterprise in the early 1600s, the company established its own military force and gradually conquered territory throughout the mid-eighteenth to the early nineteenth century. Once they established control, they took on the role of tax collectors in the numerous provinces that they governed. The earliest settlements were in Bengal, Bombay and

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<sup>34</sup> Heather Streets, *Martial Races: The Military, Race, and Masculinity in Imperial Culture* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2004), 12.

Madras.<sup>35</sup> As their territory expanded, the British decided to centralize their control over the East India Company, and by 1813, an act was passed that stated that the Crown held ultimate authority over all of the Company's territory.<sup>36</sup> However, with greater oversight in the metropole, the British had to determine the extent to which they would intervene in Indian society and change their existing social structure. The government, much more so than the Company, had an interest in reforming India.

The Sepoy Mutiny began on May 10, 1857 in Bengal when opposition to the newly issued Enfield rifle cartridges resulted in a revolt amongst the the 3<sup>rd</sup> Native Calvary unit in Mirath. Eighty-five Indian Sepoys had been jailed the previous day for disobeying orders to use cartridges that required soldiers to bite off one end of the cartridge to load the rifle. The animosity that the Sepoys had to the new equipment had roots in their religious traditions because the grease in the cartridges came from pigs and cows. For Muslims, consuming the pig grease would violate a fundamental tenet of their religion. As for Hindus, the same would occur if they consumed the grease from cows.<sup>37</sup> To some Sepoy's, the cartridges represented a British plot to defile their bodies to others, it demonstrated a lack of respect of their culture, religion, and traditions.

Neither the jailing of the eighty-five Sepoys who refused to fire nor the East Indian Company's decision to replace the cartridges prevented further disruption. As the British scrambled to suppress the uprising, the Sepoys, the day after the initial disturbance at Mirath

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<sup>35</sup> H. V. Bowen, "British India, 1765-1813: The Metropolitan Context," in *The Oxford History of the British Empire: The Eighteenth Century*, ed. P. J. Marshall et al. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), 533.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*, 547.

<sup>37</sup> Jill Bender, *The 1857 British Uprising and the British Empire* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016), 5

captured the old Mughal capital located in Delhi. Thereafter, the Sepoys named Bahadur Shah Zafar, an heir to the Mughal dynasty, emperor and *de-facto* leader of the rebellion.<sup>38</sup>

While the cartridges clearly “sparked” the rebellion, they were one of many reasons why Indians rose in revolt. Salaries from East India Company did not keep up with the rising cost of living. In addition, after the subjugation of the Punjab in the 1840s, Bengali Sepoys were no longer entitled to a pay bonus, known as *batta*, given to Sepoys who they served in areas outside of Company control.<sup>39</sup>

In addition to the loss of income, many Sepoys serving amongst the British in the East India Company in northern India complained of unfair practices served to hinder their ability to gain promotion. While a few Sepoys eventually became officers in the East India Company, their promotions were based off of seniority, not merit. This made it difficult for Sepoys because they had no hope of achieving officer status until they reached old age. However, even those Sepoys fortunate enough to become officers had little attachment or camaraderie with their British counterparts because of the latter holding Company appointments such as civil service jobs in addition to serving in the military. This caused further divisions between army officers and native troops.<sup>40</sup>

After the dual crises of the East India Company filing for bankruptcy as a result of overexpansion and warfare spending and the loss of the American colonies, many in Britain became concerned about the future of British power and reacted by increasing authority over

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<sup>38</sup> Jill Bender, *The 1857 British Uprising and the British Empire* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016), 3.

<sup>39</sup> Streets, *Martial Races*, 27.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*, 26-27.

colonial possessions. Under the leadership of Prime Minister William Pitt the younger, Parliament passed the India Act of 1784 that established a Board of Control which provided government oversight of the Company while still granting it the right to rule on the ground. The British government also believed that Indian merchants and indigenous rulers had a corrupting influence on officials in the Company, and began the process of moving away from earlier policies of inclusion. Soon, going “Native” was no longer tolerated as Indian culture, once admired was characterized as backwards.<sup>41</sup>

The increasing presence of Christian missionaries in the subcontinent added to a tense situation. The Company viewed the Indian subcontinent as a region distinctly separate from Britain and its customs and had the sole objective in India to engage in trade and profit from it, not to force British customs on India. The company saw little value in Christianizing Indian employees. Holding a deep respect for the ancient traditions and ways of life in the subcontinent, the process of acculturation, where it occurred, saw British officials adopting Indian customs. This included dressing in “native” fashions, and many even took several Indian brides at one time which lead to the creation of Anglo-Indian families.<sup>42</sup>

By 1834, the British government stripped the East India Company of its right to control who entered the subcontinent. This allowed Christian missionaries from Britain to evangelize in India for the first time, and their numbers gradually increased throughout the next several decades.<sup>43</sup> During this time period, missionaries mobilized themselves through an extensive

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<sup>41</sup> Christopher Alan Bayly, *Imperial Meridian: The British Empire and the World, 1780-1830* (New York: Pearson, 1989), 148-149.

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*, 78.

<sup>43</sup> John Rosselli, *Lord William Bentinck: The Making of a Liberal Imperialist, 1774-1839* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1974), 126.



network that contributed funds that financed missionary activities. As a result, missionary presence as well as missionary schools and hospitals increased from 1834-1857.<sup>44</sup> Missionaries insisted upon Christianity and adherence to Western culture. All other belief systems were viewed as flawed and backwards. British missionaries, in an attempt to remake India into a Christian and Western nation, exacerbated growing tensions between Britain and its Indian subjects.

This movement also coincided with Utilitarian thinkers who wanted to accelerate reform efforts in India. In 1817, the British economist, James Mill, published a multi volume history on India under British rule. Mill's work marks a decisive break with Orientalist approaches that saw Indian culture as one to be respected arguing essentially the "backwardness" and "inferiority" of Indian culture. Mill attributes most of this "inferiority" to the hot climate and the role it played in shaping Indian character. As he stated: "The Bengalees of all ranks are remarkable for their ingratitude. The climate of the country, and the impurities to which they are daily witnesses, even in their religious ceremonies have conspired to make the Bengalees lascivious in the highest degree."<sup>45</sup> The desire to reform and alter Indian culture and ways of life led to increased friction.

While the initial outbreak of violence that began in in Mirath was directed against the Sepoy's British officers, their revolt took on a new form in the coming months as the Sepoy's made their way across northern India and their targets shifted from military personnel to civilians. Two British encampments in particular, were targeted by the Sepoys, Lucknow and Cawnpore. In Lucknow, the Sepoys centered their frustrations on a government compound that

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<sup>44</sup> Robert Eric Frykenberg, "Christians in India: An Historical Overview of Their Complex Origins," in *Christians and Missionaries in India: Cross Cultural Communication since 1500*, ed. Robert Eric Frykenberg et. al. (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 2003), 55-59.

<sup>45</sup> James Mill, *The History of British India*, vol. III (London: Baldwin, Cradock, and Joy, 1817), 326.

housed British officials and had recently assumed the role of governing the province of Awadh. The Sepoy's immediately put the compound under siege where many British women and children took up residence. A similar situation occurred in Cawnpore as well, with the British civilians in this compound faring even worse. The garrison in Cawnpore, comprising some 300 British soldiers surrendered to the 4000 man Sepoy force. The garrison was massacred along with the 600 women and children that they tried to defend.

While the killing of women and children in Cawnpore in the summer of 1857 put enormous strains and pressures on the British armed forces to relieve the besieged soldiers and civilians at Lucknow, this pressure became more acute as a result of the improved transportation and telegraph networks that allowed information from India to be quickly relayed to Britain. England underwent a media revolution characterized by more robust and available newspapers. By 1814, *The Times* newspaper became more affordable and widespread thanks to new technological advances in steam printing that allowed papers to be printed at a much faster rate and in larger quantities.<sup>46</sup> This coincided with a reduction in taxes which further reduced the prices and increased availability.<sup>47</sup> Readership increased dramatically as penny presses became widely available throughout Britain.<sup>48</sup>

The expansion of the press and public availability of newsprint revolutionized war reporting. This print revolution occurred at a time when conflict loomed on the horizon as Britain, France, and the Ottoman Empire hoped to check Russian encroachment in the Crimean

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<sup>46</sup> John MacKenzie, *Propaganda and Empire: The Manipulation of British Public Opinion, 1880-1960* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1984), 19.

<sup>47</sup> Heather Streets, *Martial Races: The Military, Race, and Masculinity in British Imperial Culture, 1857-1914* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2004), 36

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.*, 36.

Peninsula. During this conflict, the public became much more aware of the daily developments, especially since the telegraph allowed short messages to be transmitted quickly. More detailed developments would be sent by mail.<sup>49</sup> The Crimean War gave rise to special war correspondents stationed on the front, capable of quickly circulating developments back to an eager British public.<sup>50</sup>

The government quickly realized the centrality of the press and determined that the press could be an important means for providing ‘their message’ during the time of the Crimean conflict. As a result, many politicians used the press to their advantage. British Home Secretary, Lord Palmerston, made sure to cultivate a good relationship with the publishers to help further advance his foreign policy. One way to ensure a favorable relationship with the press involved providing government subsidies, especially to *The Times*.<sup>51</sup> While *The Times* catered particularly to a middle class and aristocratic audience, the governments influence over the metropolitan newspapers also spread to several newspapers favored by the working classes such as the *Daily News*.<sup>52</sup>

The expansion of the media in mid-nineteenth century allowed the heroic acts of individual soldiers and groups of soldiers to be celebrated in the popular press. Prior to this, Britain had the occasional patriotic display that accompanied military victories during conflicts of the late eighteenth century and the Napoleonic Wars of the early nineteenth century. In these

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<sup>49</sup> Heather Streets, *Martial Races: The Military, Race, and Masculinity in British Imperial Culture, 1857-1914* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2004), 36

<sup>50</sup> Orlando Figes, *The Crimean War: A History* (New York: Metropolitan Books Henry Holt and Company, 2011), 305.

<sup>51</sup> Muriel Chamberlain, ‘Pax Britannica’? *British Foreign Policy, 1789-1914* (New York: Longman Group, 1988), 105.

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*, 107.

instances statues and paintings were created to commemorate Britain's military victories. However, those displays only celebrated the commanding officers such as the Duke of Wellington.<sup>53</sup> This changed during the Crimean War as the press began to cover how the public reacted to victories. Crucial to these developments were celebrations in honor of fighting men on their leaving or returning from battle. For instance, the *Illustrated London News* depicted a public celebration in Kingstown, Ireland that took place in early 1854 when the 50<sup>th</sup> Regiment of Foot departed for the Crimea.<sup>54</sup> This shifted focus from individual heroics to the people. It democratized press coverage of war by creating space for individual units and common soldiers.

During the Crimean War, Highland regiments served Britain with distinction and proved to be instrumental in winning some of the most critical battles in the conflict. For instance, the 79<sup>th</sup> Highland Scots, who would later play a pivotal role in the Mutiny, served with much distinction. They were under the command of Field Marshall Colin Campbell, a commander who would also play a significant role in recapturing many of the towns taken by the Sepoys in 1857.<sup>55</sup> Part of the original landing force, which arrived in 1854, consisted of Highland regiments. The main objective of the allied forces in the Crimea involved taking the large Russian naval fortress located at Sevastopol.<sup>56</sup> Yet before this could be accomplished, the British had to disable Russian defenses set up across the River Alma. During this battle, the British were

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<sup>53</sup> Heather Streets, *Martial Races: The Military, Race, and Masculinity in British Imperial Culture, 1857-1914* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2004), 21

<sup>54</sup> *The Illustrated London News*, 4 March 1854, accessed December 5, 2015.  
<http://www.paulhuddie.com/ireland-and-the-crimean-war>.

<sup>55</sup> Tim Newark, *Highlander: The History of the Legendary Highland Soldier* (New York: Skyhorse Publishing, 2009), 106.

<sup>56</sup> *Ibid.*, 107.

tasked with capturing defenses located on a hill at the far left flank. Campbell and the Highland regiments he commanded captured Alma.

After the victory at Alma, the British pushed their way farther up the Peninsula and defeated the Russians at Inkerman. With Sevastopol finally within reach, the British hunkered down at Balaklava. As the British put Sevastopol under siege, the Russians, seeing the danger, desperately attempted to break the siege. On October 25, 1854, the Russians made one last attempt to do just that and a battle broke out between the Highland regiments and Russian forces. In a battle that became the epitome of aristocratic military incompetency and provided the impetus for army reform, after the ill-fated Charge of the Light Brigade that consisted of the 17<sup>th</sup> lancers, 8<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> Hussars, and the 13<sup>th</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Light Dragoons. This debacle led to 278 casualties in a force of 670. However, the Highlanders came out relatively unscathed having successfully repelled the Russians. The success of the Highlanders served as a stark contrast to the Light Brigade.

During this battle, the 93<sup>rd</sup> Highlanders distinguished themselves by repulsing a numerically superior force of Russians. Once again, Field Marshall Campbell rallied his Highlanders and ordered the 93<sup>rd</sup> to remain steadfast and not to retreat. As the Russian force inched closer to the British, the 93<sup>rd</sup> returned fire and effectively repulsed the Russian advance.<sup>57</sup> On Saturday November 18<sup>th</sup>, 1854, news of the battle in the form of Campbell's recollection reached the British press. In *The Norfolk News*, Campbell credited the victory at Balaklava to the tenaciousness that the 93<sup>rd</sup> displayed in battle when he said:

“During the rest of the day the troops under my command received no further molestation from the Russians. I beg to call Lord Raglan's attention to the

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<sup>57</sup> Ibid., 112.

gallantry and eagerness of the 93<sup>rd</sup> Highlanders under Lieutenant Colonel Ainslie, of which probably his lordship was an eyewitness.”<sup>58</sup>

The immortal “Thin Red Line” as it became known in the latter portion of the nineteenth century, continued to be celebrated decades after the conclusion of the Crimean War. A famous painting by Robert Glibb, completed in 1881, entitled “Thin Red Line,” helped maintain the memory of the bravery of the 93<sup>rd</sup> in particular and Highlanders in general.<sup>59</sup>

Highlanders demonstrated the importance of Scots within both the Empire and Great Britain and their exploits and dedication were highlighted not just in the press, but in the House of Commons. One Scottish MP in particular, Charles Cowan, highlighted the bravery of Highlanders during the Battles of Alma and Inkerman, especially their refusal to retreat in the heat of battle.<sup>60</sup> While his praise was heartfelt, he also used the opportunity to express his opinion that Highland Scots serving in the Crimean War had not been receiving the proper supplies and equipment to fight the conflict.<sup>61</sup> This kind of lobbying bore fruit in June of 1857. During that month, certain distinguished regiments of the British Army who served during the Crimean War, including the 78<sup>th</sup> regiment were scheduled to be awarded the Victoria Cross.<sup>62</sup> However, one colonel in the British Army, Fitzstephen French, had reservations as to whether the Scottish regiment should qualify for the honor considering they only lost 60 men. French

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<sup>58</sup> “Assault at Balaklava: Official Dispatches,” *Norfolk News*, 18 November 1854, accessed 16 June 2016, <http://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk/viewer/bl/0000247/18541118/034/0011>.

<sup>59</sup> Tim Newark, *Highlander: The History of the Legendary Highland Soldier* (New York: Skyhorse Publishing, 2009), 114.

<sup>60</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>61</sup> Mr. Charles Cowan, “Enlistment of Foreigners Bill,” in *House of Commons Debates*, vol. 136, 22 December 1854, accessed June 2, 2016, [http://hansard.millbanksystems.com/commons/1854/dec/22/enlistment-of-foreigners-bill#S3V0136P0\\_18541222\\_HOC\\_29](http://hansard.millbanksystems.com/commons/1854/dec/22/enlistment-of-foreigners-bill#S3V0136P0_18541222_HOC_29).

<sup>62</sup> Colonel French, “Question,” in *House of Commons Debates*, vol. 146, 25 June 1857, accessed 28 May 2016, [http://hansard.millbanksystems.com/commons/1857/jun/25/question-1#S3V0146P0\\_18570625\\_HOC\\_9](http://hansard.millbanksystems.com/commons/1857/jun/25/question-1#S3V0146P0_18570625_HOC_9).

contrasted their experience with the Irish regiment known as the Connaught Rangers who lost 476 men in the Crimean War.<sup>63</sup> However, despite the back and forth in Parliament, only one soldier representing the Highland Brigade, and no soldiers in the Connaught Rangers went on to receive a Victoria Cross.

Major General Henry Havelock, one of the commanders that assisted Field Marshall Colin Campbell during the expedition to relieve Lucknow, believed that the Highland Scots who served under his command exhibited valor and bravery during the rebellion and should be recognized for it. As a result, Lieutenant-General James Outram, a subordinate of Havelock, went to *The Times* and argued that the men of the 78<sup>th</sup> Highland regiment who served under him should be recognized by the Queen. In Outram's letter, he said, "Good and glorious as your conduct has been, 78th, your goodness and your glory have been nobly emulated by all the troops who have served with you."<sup>64</sup> While the press had given Highlanders their due, government rewards and recognition had still not occurred. This recognition would not come until after the Mutiny. Unlike the Crimean War, the 1857 Sepoy Mutiny had much higher stakes for Britain. The fate of the empire rested on the ability of British military forces to extinguish the fires of rebellion that engulfed the subcontinent.

Approximately two months after the start of the Mutiny, Campbell was called upon to serve in India and supply reinforcements for the beleaguered troops languishing in the subcontinent. When asked to take up the post in India, Campbell said without hesitation that he would embark for India the next day. *The London Evening Standard* recounted this event in their

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<sup>63</sup> Ibid.

<sup>64</sup> General Peel, "The 78<sup>th</sup> Highlanders-Question," in *House of Commons Debates*, vol. 150, 7 June 1858, accessed May 28, 2016, [http://hansard.millbanksystems.com/commons/1858/jun/07/the-78th-highlanders-question#column\\_1612](http://hansard.millbanksystems.com/commons/1858/jun/07/the-78th-highlanders-question#column_1612).

July 14<sup>th</sup> edition describing Campbell as acting with “the simplicity and ardour of a true hero.”<sup>65</sup> While the press saw Campbell as a “true hero,” the government which sent him back into battle had yet to reward him for his services. Worse, Campbell’s unit was prepared in haste and as a consequence, poorly rationed and supplied. George Leveson-Gower, who served as MP for the constituency of Sutherland, criticized the government. In particular, Campbell’s Highland divisions were sent without clothes suitable for the hot climate or without cap covers to hide their black shakos. Without such covering, they would provide an easy target for Sepoy marksmen.<sup>66</sup> Despite being poorly supplied and ill equipped, the Highlanders still carried out their job with great aplomb.

To demonstrate the severity of the Sepoy’s actions, many of the newspapers emphasized atrocities involving British women and children hoping to provoke public outrage. In one account of the massacre in Cawnpore, the *Essex Standard* denounced the actions of the Sepoys for murdering women and children and as a result, made the claim that those who participated in the massacre showed themselves to be less than civilized.<sup>67</sup> The *Standard* emphasized how poorly these women were treated before being executed: “As if this were not the ultimate stretch of faithless atrocity, some accounts add to the horror of the dark deed of the crime, by stating that

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<sup>65</sup> “The Departure of the General Sir Colin Campbell,” *London Evening Standard*, 14 July 1857, accessed 18 June 2016, <http://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk/viewer/bl/0000183/18570714/017/0006>.

<sup>66</sup> George Leveson-Gower, “Questions,” in *House of Commons Debates*, vol. 136, 10 August 1857, accessed 2 June 2016, [http://hansard.millbanksystems.com/commons/1857/aug/10/questions#S3V0147P0\\_18570810\\_HOC\\_59](http://hansard.millbanksystems.com/commons/1857/aug/10/questions#S3V0147P0_18570810_HOC_59).

<sup>67</sup> “Massacre at Cawnpore,” *Essex Standard*, 2 September 1857, accessed 4 June 2016, <http://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk/viewer/bl/0000165/18570902/004/0002>.



the number of the females were reserved, sold by auction to the highest bidder in the rebel camp, and, when done with, ruthlessly put to death.”<sup>68</sup>

While highlighting Indian misdeeds, the British press de-emphasized and sometimes ignored British atrocities. The British themselves also responded with severity and brutality in their campaign against the Sepoys. Many of the POWs that the British captured were tied to the ends of cannons and executed by being blown to bits. After the conflict, members of Parliament justified the actions of British soldiers by reminding others of the atrocities committed against British women and children. As one member stated,

“The English seemed to be now looking on the Natives as if they were mere tigers. I doubt not that had we seen what they had seen, had we stood on the spot where our countrymen with their wives and little ones had been butchered, had we looked into the well at Cawnpore, we should, like them, have been carried away by an irresistible access of indignation. In fact, we had all shared that feeling. Was there any Englishman so cold as not to have joined heart and soul in the cry for vengeance?”<sup>69</sup>

These reports of Sepoys raping and murdering English women contrasted drastically with mid-nineteenth century expectations of British middle class ideals. This code of conduct placed a significant emphasis on moral reform and improvement. In regards to gender “norms,” masculine self-control in sexual matters and feminine chastity and innocence made up the core themes of middle class ideology at the time of the Rebellion.<sup>70</sup>

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<sup>68</sup> Ibid.

<sup>69</sup> Charles Buxton, “Papers Moved For,” in *House of Commons Debates*, vol. 149, 18 March 1858, accessed October 25, 2016, [http://hansard.millbanksystems.com/commons/1858/mar/18/papers-moved-for#S3V0149P0\\_18580318\\_HOC\\_47](http://hansard.millbanksystems.com/commons/1858/mar/18/papers-moved-for#S3V0149P0_18580318_HOC_47).

<sup>70</sup> Leonore Davidoff and Catherine Hall, *Family Fortunes: Men and Women of the English Middle Class, 1780-1850* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1988), 401.

With the attention of the British public fixated on the crisis in India, the desperation and sense of urgency to put down the rebellion became hard to ignore. Indian newspapers such as the *Overland Bombay Times* highlighted the plight that the British Army faced on the ground. As the excerpt stated in the *Cheltenham Chronicle*: “The alarming intelligence which the present mail carries to England has perhaps no parallel in the whole history of our relations with India during the last hundred years.”<sup>71</sup>

Major General Henry Havelock and General Colin Campbell were placed in charge of the relief expedition. While the relief of Lucknow represented one small battle in an overarching campaign to reclaim the north of India, this battle had a dramatic impact on the ways in which the British would reorder their security forces in India. More importantly, it had broader implications as to which of its imperial subjects were best suited to protect national and imperial security. The most prominent group that made up the forces sent to relieve Lucknow was the Highland Scots. Many newspapers back in Britain chronicled the particular actions of the Highland Scots and their contributions that led to the relief of Lucknow. By doing so, the press helped transform the Scots from the feared “other” and enemy to ally and friend. However, in this reporting the old trope of Scottish fearsomeness and bravery was readily apparent. By depicting the Scot as brave and necessary to British defense highlighted English weakness and exacerbated English fears of imperial decline.

After Lucknow, the British press made an effort to single out Highlanders as a race that had a predisposition to loyalty, bravery, and military prowess that could serve Britain and its empire in times of crisis. In particular, the relief of Lucknow and the many British women and

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<sup>71</sup> “Latest Foreign News,” *Cheltenham Chronicle*, 30 June 1857, accessed 4 June 2016, <http://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk/viewer/bl/0000312/18570630/066/0007>.

children that became imprisoned inside the fortress allowed the British press to contrast the actions of groups like the Highland Scots from those of the high caste Hindus who had massacred unarmed British subjects at Cawnpore in the early stages of the mutiny. Due to the battle performance of the Highland Scots, the British media depicted them not only as protectors of British Empire, but women in the subcontinent as well.<sup>72</sup>

In one particular action during the Lucknow campaign, the preliminary capture of Secunderbagh was used to demonstrate the “martial” nature of the Highland Scot. Before Campbell and his forces reached the besieged garrison of Lucknow, they first had to retake Secunderbagh, a large building occupied by enemy Sepoys that provided them with fortified walls for protection. To accomplish this objective, Campbell made use of his artillery to breach the walls of the building. Once this had been achieved, the Highlanders under his command charged into the fortress and defeated the occupying force. Many of Campbell’s dispatches, which highlighted the success of the Highland regiments and their junior officers during the storming of Secunderbagh, eventually made their way into British newspapers.<sup>73</sup>

By December 1857, the British effectively pacified the peripheries of India. These areas included Delhi, Cawnpore, and Lucknow. For the most part, the British reveled in their victories, and they sought to reward their commanding officers. Lord Palmerston advocated establishing a pension of 1,000 pounds a year to honor the service of Henry Havelock for the role he played in

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<sup>72</sup> “State of India,” *Morning Post*, 26 December 1857, accessed 10 June 2016. <http://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk/search/results?basicsearch=lucknow%20highlanders%20women&exactsearch=false&county=london%2c%20england&newspapertitle=morning%2bpost>.

<sup>73</sup> “Sir Colin Campbell’s Account of the Relief of Lucknow,” *Liverpool Mercury*, 15 January 1858, accessed 10 June 2016. <http://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk/viewer/bl/0000081/18580115/033/0009>.

leading the Highland Scots during the campaign to relieve Lucknow.<sup>74</sup> Despite the celebrations in Britain, an ominous feeling lingered throughout the Empire in the aftermath of the mutiny. While the British could celebrate bringing much of India back under its control, the Mutiny brought to the fore questions concerning the vitality of the Empire.

Such concerns have been emphasized amongst imperial historians throughout the last decade. Richard Price has argued that imperial control in the mid-nineteenth century was neither simple nor inevitable. In order to establish what he terms an “imperial culture” in the colonies, the British had to construct imperial rule through acts of violence.<sup>75</sup> In addition, uneasy compromises had to be made between British legal systems and the legal practices of colonized peoples.<sup>76</sup> Jill Bender asserts that empire had to be continuously constructed, and in the aftermath of the Indian Mutiny, British colonies readjusted their security apparatuses to suit their situations. As a result, the empire was not monolithic, and the governance of each colony required a different response to pacify its subjects.<sup>77</sup>

By early 1858, the Sepoy Rebellion had been effectively suppressed and as a result, structural changes were made to the ways in which the British ruled and policed India. The rebellion provided the impetus to complete the process of transferring authority over India from the company to the government. With minds focused on security, one of the first tasks for the government was to determine how to reconstitute the army in the wake of the rebellion. The

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<sup>74</sup> Viscount Palmerston, “The Adjournment-General Havelock’s Pension 11 December 1857,” in *House of Commons Debates*, vol. 148, accessed 2 June 2016, [http://hansard.millbanksystems.com/commons/1857/dec/11/the-adjournment-general-havelocks-pension#S3V0148P0\\_18571211\\_HOC\\_67](http://hansard.millbanksystems.com/commons/1857/dec/11/the-adjournment-general-havelocks-pension#S3V0148P0_18571211_HOC_67).

<sup>75</sup> Richard Price, “One Big Thing: Britain, Empire, and Their Imperial Culture,” *Journal of British Studies* 45 (2006): 625.

<sup>76</sup> *Ibid.*, 626.

<sup>77</sup> Jill Bender, *The 1857 Uprising and the British Empire* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016), 25.

British government tasked the Peel Commission, a parliamentary exploratory commission, with making recommendations as to how to best defend, police, and hold the Indian subcontinent.<sup>78</sup>

The commission made two main recommendations. In light of the devastating effects of the Mutiny and based upon the testimony of British army officers who complained of the lack of British troops which forced an over reliance on Indian troops for security, the Peel Commission recommended that the number of British troops serving in India should be increased to at least 80,000. The number had been set at 40,000 before the Mutiny.<sup>79</sup> As a further security precaution, the commission advised that a two to one standard of Indian troops to British troops should be established.

Before the rebellion, recruitment centered upon particular races of the subcontinent that the British used in the armed forces, especially high caste Bengalis. One reform proposal that became imperative to those in the government and the military was the disbanding of the Bengali regiments made up of high caste Hindus that fomented the rebellion. By the mid-nineteenth century, the British redefined the Bengalis as weak and decadent due to their enthusiastic support of the rebellion.<sup>80</sup> Therefore, many of Bengal's military units had to be purged and disbanded.<sup>81</sup>

The demand for more Highlanders serving in the British Army increased after the Mutiny. In August 1857, London's *Evening Mail* announced that some of the Highland

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<sup>78</sup> Heather Streets, *Martial Races: The Military, Race, and Masculinity in British Imperial Culture, 1857-1914* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2004), 30

<sup>79</sup> *Ibid.*, 34.

<sup>80</sup> Mrinalini Sinha, *Colonial Masculinity: The 'manly Englishman' and the 'effeminate Bengali' in the late nineteenth century* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1995), 17.

<sup>81</sup> Heather Streets, *Martial Races: The Military, Race, and Masculinity in British Imperial Culture, 1857-1914* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2004), 31

regiments currently serving in India would be returning to garrisons at Stirling and Aberdeen. The army hoped that the prominent presence of these units would encourage more Highlanders to join the British Army.<sup>82</sup> Even metropolitan areas that rarely encountered a Highlander in any capacity, such as London, used the press as a vehicle to advocate their utility in the realm of British defense. In an October 1857 edition of the *Evening Mail*, a letter to the editor, emphasized the importance of recruiting more Highlanders into the British Army.<sup>83</sup>

Appeals, such as those made by Lieutenant-General James Outram, a commander at Lucknow, who saw the performance of the Highlanders firsthand, had broader implications outside of the British press. These implications began to permeate into the House of Commons as well. General Jonathan Peel, the Secretary of State for War, had to answer the question of whether the Crown would recognize the services of the 78th Highland Regiment that served under the command of Major General Henry Havelock during a session of parliament. During this session, General Colin Campbell questioned General Jonathan Peel, about rewarding Highland units asking: “In reference to the recent distinguished mark of Her Majesty's favour conferred on the 32nd Foot for their gallant defense of Lucknow, whether or not it is his intention to recommend to the gracious consideration of the Sovereign the claims of the 78th Highlanders, to redeem the pledge given to this regiment by Sir Henry Havelock and Sir James Outram.”<sup>84</sup> General Peel then responded by stating that he would gladly send that

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<sup>82</sup> “Military and Naval,” *Evening Mail*, 5 August 1857, accessed 18 June 2016, <http://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk/viewer/bl/0001316/18570805/032/0007>.

<sup>83</sup> “The Scotch Militia,” *Evening Mail*, 7 October 1857, accessed 18 June 2016, <http://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk/viewer/bl/0001316/18571007/018/0003>.

<sup>84</sup> Colin Campbell, “The 78<sup>th</sup> Highlanders-Question,” in *House of Commons Debates*, vol. 150, 7 June 1858, accessed 28 May 2016, [http://hansard.millbanksystems.com/commons/1858/jun/07/the-78th-highlanders-question#column\\_1612](http://hansard.millbanksystems.com/commons/1858/jun/07/the-78th-highlanders-question#column_1612).

recommendation to the Queen, considering their satisfactory performance protecting India during the Mutiny.<sup>85</sup> By 1858, the mood in the British government went from being one of ambivalence toward the Highland Scot regiments stationed in India to one of admiration. In 1859, the 42<sup>nd</sup> Regiment of Foot that served unrecognized during the Crimean War finally received their first Victoria Crosses for their service during the Mutiny. The first recipient, Lt. Francis Farquharson, received a Victoria Cross for his bravery during the relief of Lucknow.<sup>86</sup> However, their service took a long time to be recognized by the government.

Throughout the eighteenth century and first half of the nineteenth century, the Highland Scots played an important role in the British conflicts. Despite their service, they did not receive a lot of recognition in the government or the public sphere. However, the advances in news printing, developed during the mid-nineteenth century, brought the actions of the Highlanders to the forefront of popular culture. This changed was further demonstrated after the Indian Mutiny of 1857. During this Indian Mutiny, a crucial part of Britain's Empire erupted in chaos, and the Highlanders played an important role in stabilizing the empire. Therefore, by being acknowledged in their crucial role during these military campaigns, the Highland Scottish regiments developed a reputation as fierce warriors that made them increasingly sought after in future colonial conflicts.

Perceived as a martial race, Highlanders were now the preferred choice for expanding, policing, and holding the Empire. As a result of suppressing the Mutiny, many in the military, government, and the media recognized the potential for using the Highland regiments for the

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<sup>85</sup> General Peel, "The 78<sup>th</sup> Highlanders-Question 7 June 1858," in *House of Commons Debates*, vol. 150, accessed May 28, 2016, [http://hansard.millbanksystems.com/commons/1858/jun/07/the-78th-highlanders-question#column\\_1612](http://hansard.millbanksystems.com/commons/1858/jun/07/the-78th-highlanders-question#column_1612).

<sup>86</sup> "War Office," *The London Gazette*, 21 June 1857, accessed 24 September 2016, <https://www.thegazette.co.uk/London/issue/22278/page/2420>.

purpose of imperial defense. As we shall see, the perception of Highlanders as fierce, loyal, dependable effected how all Scots were perceived as well as called for a re-evaluation of the Jacobite Rebellions. To some, it was also worrisome as the reliance on the Scots called into question the English's ability to protect their Empire, exacerbating fears of imperial decline.



## CHAPTER 3

### THE MARTIAL RACE THE NEVER WAS: THE IRISH REGIMENTS

Irish soldiers comprised an important component of the British fighting force. Shortly before the Crimean War (1853-1856), an estimated 40,000 to 50,000 Irish soldiers were in the British Army. These soldiers comprised more than forty percent of the British army.<sup>87</sup> Despite these numbers, Irish soldiers were denied the same sort of respect given to other groups; most notably the Highland Scots. This chapter will evaluate why the Irish were not framed as fearsome fighters from a “martial race.” By doing so, I will discuss some of the tensions between the English and Irish during the mid-nineteenth century conflicts such as the Crimean War and the Indian Mutiny.

The reasons for narrowing the focus on these conflicts are twofold. In the Crimean War, the expansion of the media and the popular press gave Irish soldiers a chance to be recognized amongst the British public, and the Indian Mutiny highlighted the British Empire in crisis, providing Irish soldiers a platform to be recognized as soldiers who participated in saving the empire. Soldiering provided one of the best opportunities of uniting the Irish with the Union. By denying Irish soldiers the respect they deserved the British were once again actively constructing the Irish as the “other,” setting the stage for future tension, violence, and ultimately, separation.

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<sup>87</sup> John Reynolds, “Supply,” in *House of Commons Debates*, vol. 115, 28 March 1851, accessed 18 December 2016, [http://hansard.millbanksystems.com/commons/1851/mar/28/supply#S3V0115P0\\_18510328\\_HOC\\_42](http://hansard.millbanksystems.com/commons/1851/mar/28/supply#S3V0115P0_18510328_HOC_42).

From the time that Ireland joined the Union that bound Ireland with the rest of Britain in 1800 to the end of the Napoleonic Wars in 1815, Irish forces serving in the British Army increased from 50,000 in 1796 to 140,000.<sup>88</sup> By 1830, Irish recruits in the army outnumbered those from any other group. In the first half of the nineteenth century, the British Army used Irish soldiers in various theaters of war in Europe, including the Indian subcontinent and the cape of southern Africa.<sup>89</sup> The number of Irish commanding officers also increased as well. As Peter Karsten points out, “In 1830 no less than 42.2% of all non-commissioned officers and men throughout the British Army were Irish.”<sup>90</sup> Irish soldiers fought alongside the English and fearsome Highland Scots to extend, protect, and serve the Empire. How come the Irish forces, who had always served as a large proportion in the British Army, not become “martial” by the mid nineteenth century? Why were the Highland Scots considered “martial” and celebrated for their bravery while the Irish soldiers received little credit?

Medical examiners in the armed forces believed that Irishmen proved to be more reliable and promising recruits because many recruits came from areas where agriculture dominated. The examiners believed that these occupations made the Irish healthy and physically fit for service. This served as a stark contrast from those who came from industrialized urban areas.<sup>91</sup> While

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<sup>88</sup> E. M. Spiers, “Army Organization and Society in the Nineteenth Century,” in *A Military History of Ireland*, ed. Thomas Bartlett and Keith Jeffery et al. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 335-336.

<sup>89</sup> *Ibid.*, 335-336.

<sup>90</sup> Peter Karsten, “Irish Soldiers in the British Army, 1792-1922: Suborned or Subordinate?” *Journal of Social History* 17 (1983): 36.

<sup>91</sup> E. M. Spiers, “Army Organization and Society in the Nineteenth Century,” in *A Military History of Ireland*, ed. Thomas Bartlett and Keith Jeffery et al. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 337.

these Irish recruits were appreciated and considered healthy, this alone did not automatically make the Irish a candidate for “martial race status.”<sup>92</sup>

The Crimean War received detailed coverage by the press, and it afforded Irish regiments a chance to prove their worth to British authorities. For Irish soldiers and officers desiring to prove their mettle and gain respect, the war came when Irish influence and numbers were low. The reason for the decline of Irishmen in the army reflected an overall trend of decrease in the Irish population that resulted from a combination of high mortality and emigration. Both of these effects served as by products from the Irish Potato Famine that lasted from 1845-1852, and as a result of the decrease in population, many of the rural recruits that the army desired in the past were no longer available. This meant that many recruits came from urban areas. These recruits, due to the twin forces of poverty and industrialization were less desirable and trusted than those who previously came from an agricultural background.<sup>93</sup>

Despite the lower numbers, Irish enthusiasm for serving the empire remained high. This enthusiasm was not shared by the English news outlets. In 1851, the *Morning Chronicle* expressed worry about the adverse effect that emigration and famine had on the quality of Irish recruits. The paper even complained that those serving as high as a Constabulary could not read or write.<sup>94</sup> It also lamented the high death tolls from the famine by saying: “The days of recruiting are gone in Ireland. However, if they paraded the pauper cemeteries and were able to

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<sup>92</sup> Ibid., 337.

<sup>93</sup> Ibid., 340

<sup>94</sup> “Ireland,” *Morning Chronicle*, 28 October 1851, accessed 17 February 2017, <http://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk/viewer/bl/0000082/18511028/008/0002>.

conjure up the famine slain, an army would be raised.”<sup>95</sup> In addition, the Irish as a whole continued to be seen as a backward race of people who lacked any sort of ingenuity or potential for progress. As the *Illustrated London News* stated, “The Irish are neither great on the sea nor in manufacturing. The Irish, consequently, have no agricultural implements of importance, and could not use them if they had them.”<sup>96</sup> In addition, a sense of anxiety continued to linger about events in Ireland. In 1848, at the height of the potato famine, nationalist agitation in the form of the Young Ireland movement increased as a result of the subsistence crisis that culminated in a demonstration calling for a repeal of the Union by force if necessary. While this was not successful, fear of an insurrection that could spread to Britain itself remained. As MP, Richard Cobden stated,

“Last year we were all in a panic, and could not reason on the subject. But we have no longer that excuse, while the trials in the courts of law in reference to the disturbances that did take place have thrown much light upon what has been unworthily dignified by the name of insurrection. It has been clearly shown that neither in England nor Ireland have there been 100 men confederated together with arms to war against the Crown and Government of this country. I believe that that comedy of a revolution was never sustained by meetings of more than 30 men, and of these six or eight were spies. I believe, moreover, if what I have heard from magistrates and others be true, that whatever of revolutionary feeling there was in the disturbance here, came from Hibernian inspiration—that if it had not been for the Irish elements there would have been no turbulence amongst the English population.”<sup>97</sup>

During this time period, when the Irish became increasingly viewed as inferior and increasingly dangerous, Britain, with France as an ally, declared war on Russia. The conflict, known as the Crimean War, ostensibly fought over British fears of Russian aggression, led

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<sup>95</sup> Ibid.

<sup>96</sup> *The Illustrated London News*, 4 October 1851, accessed 16 February 2017, <http://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk/viewer/bl/0001578/18511004/100/0018>.

<sup>97</sup> Richard Cobden, “Financial Reform,” in *House of Commons Debates*, vol. 102, 26 February 1848, accessed February 17, 2017, [http://hansard.millbanksystems.com/commons/1849/feb/26/financial-reform#S3V0102P0\\_18490226\\_HOC\\_27](http://hansard.millbanksystems.com/commons/1849/feb/26/financial-reform#S3V0102P0_18490226_HOC_27).

Britain to launch a series of assaults with the ultimate goal of capturing the naval base at Sevastopol, which would effectively rid Russia of its strategic access on the Black Sea. Initially, the British came close to securing this objective, but ultimately, the Russians dug in and halted their advance. By December of 1854, it was clear that the war would not be as quick and easy as the British government had planned. In response to these military setbacks, the House of Lords held a session to discuss how to bring about victory. One Irish member, The Earl of Glengall, believed the predominately English units fighting in the Crimea were at fault, and the time had come to send Irish and Scottish forces to defeat the Russians. Emphasizing the substantial losses that the first round of English forces suffered to both combat and disease, Glengall suggested that the inclusion of Scottish and Irish units would have been decisive.:

“By the powers which the Government now possessed, they could enrol and embody no less than 40,000 of those Scotch and Irish troops; I very much regret that they had not thought it right to do so in March or April last, for, if they had, in all probability they would now have got 30,000 out of these 40,000 men together, and he did not think it was too much to suppose that, had they been embodied at that early period, one-half at least would have volunteered into the line, and thus they would have been able to add 15,000 trained men to our army in the Crimea. However, that was not done; and now, at the eleventh hour, when they had received news of the losses sustained by our army both by pestilence and in action, it was found necessary to send to Scotland and Ireland to raise soldiers to fight for their country.”<sup>98</sup>

Glengall hoped that by convincing the government to increase the Irish militia regiments for service in the Crimea, they could establish a reputation as an elite fighting force. Glengall also made references to the “sturdiness” of these new recruits when he said, “I, therefore, hoped to see that, instead of the government looking to foreign soldiers, the Irish and Scotch militia would be called out. Our soldiers already in the Crimea would a great deal rather have these sturdy

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<sup>98</sup> The Earl of Glengall, “The Irish and Scotch Militia,” in *House of Lords Debates*, vol. 136, 18 December 1854, accessed 25 October 2015, [http://hansard.millbanksystems.com/lords/1854/dec/18/the-irish-and-scotch-militia#S3V0136P0\\_18541218\\_HOL\\_13](http://hansard.millbanksystems.com/lords/1854/dec/18/the-irish-and-scotch-militia#S3V0136P0_18541218_HOL_13).

young militiamen drafted into their battalions than trust to the aid of foreign troops enlisted in a mercenary spirit.”<sup>99</sup> Ultimately, Glengall and his allies were successful and more Scottish and Irish troops were sent to the Crimea.

In 1855, with the help of the Irish and Scottish regiments, the British finally broke the stalemate at Sevastopol. While the actions of the Highland Scots have already been highlighted, it is important to examine the role that the Irish played in capturing the Russian base. During the final assault, it became imperative that the allied forces capture the trenches that surrounded and protected the base. However, in August of 1855, as the British forces made plans to strike at the base, the Russians launched an attack on the British lines. The offensive was repulsed by the 79<sup>th</sup> Highlanders with the crucial assistance of the Royal Irish or the 18<sup>th</sup> Regiment of Foot.<sup>100</sup> A month later, the British successfully attacked a smaller fortification that provided cover for Sevastopol. After this battle, defeat seemed inevitable for the Russians, and they blew up the base as an act of capitulation.<sup>101</sup> During this campaign, an Irishman, Thomas Esmonde, distinguished himself. He would later receive the Victoria Cross for rescuing wounded comrades from enemy fire and extinguishing Russian fireballs that could have revealed their position.<sup>102</sup> In addition, twenty-eight other Irish soldiers also received this award, but few in the government were willing to concede any other recognition beyond this.<sup>103</sup>

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<sup>99</sup> Ibid.

<sup>100</sup> Tim Newark, *Highlander: The History of the Legendary Highland Soldier* (New York: Skyhorse Publishing, 2010), 116.

<sup>101</sup> Ibid., 117.

<sup>102</sup> “War-Office, 25 September 1857,” *The London Gazette*, September 25, 1857, accessed February 15, 2017, <https://www.thegazette.co.uk/London/issue/22043/page/3194>.

<sup>103</sup> *Victoria Cross Registers, 1856-1944*, accessed January 10, 2017, <http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/help-with-your-research/research-guides/victoria-cross-registers-1856-1944/>

In an effort to rehabilitate their image after the famine period, Irish parliamentarians highlighted Irish bravery and dedication in the Crimea. One of the difficulties for the Irish parliamentarians keen to improve the image of Irish soldiers and Ireland as a whole were a series of allegations levelled at Irish soldiers including disloyalty to the Union. These allegations were based largely on old prejudices which stated Catholics could not be trusted. During a session in 1855, John O’Connell, an Irish MP from Clonmel, dismissed such allegations, asserting instead that a majority of the Irish units got along well, especially when a good officer led the troops.<sup>104</sup> Ultimately, O’Connell stated that, “I believe that my fellow-countrymen were called upon to act in defence of their country, their only thought would be how they could best defend her honour and interests.”<sup>105</sup> O’Connell clearly believed that the duty and sacrifice displayed by the Irish should have garnered them respect and to be seen, not as untrustworthy, but a “martial race” for which the empire could depend upon. Yet again, the statements made by the Irish representatives fell on deaf ears. Sir George Grey summarized the discussion best when he said, “The desultory debate which had taken place upon this subject is a good illustration of the extreme inconvenience of Members bringing important matters under the consideration of the House on the Motion for its adjournment until Monday.”<sup>106</sup> In short, Grey found this debate unimportant and not worth a discussion.

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<sup>104</sup> John O’Connell, “Military Convict Labourers,” in *House of Commons Debates*, vol. 138, 4 May 1855, accessed 25 October 2015, [http://hansard.millbanksystems.com/commons/1855/may/04/military-convict-labourers#S3V0138P0\\_18550504\\_HOC\\_32](http://hansard.millbanksystems.com/commons/1855/may/04/military-convict-labourers#S3V0138P0_18550504_HOC_32).

<sup>105</sup> Ibid.

<sup>106</sup> Sir George Grey, “Military Convict Labourers,” in *House of Commons Debates*, vol. 138, 4 May 1855, accessed 25 October 2015, [http://hansard.millbanksystems.com/commons/1855/may/04/military-convict-labourers#S3V0138P0\\_18550504\\_HOC\\_32](http://hansard.millbanksystems.com/commons/1855/may/04/military-convict-labourers#S3V0138P0_18550504_HOC_32).

Meanwhile, even those at the highest levels of government, such as the Prime Minister, Lord Palmerston, brushed the Irish service aside and refused to give them the same respect and recognition afforded to English and Scottish regiments. In July of 1855, Vincent Scully, MP for County Cork, questioned Palmerston about his intentions of putting the Queens Irish Guards on equal footing when he said, “Having regard to the gallant conduct of Irish soldiers in the Crimea, Her Majesty's Government will recommend that a Royal Regiment of Queen's Irish Guards shall be embodied, with privileges similar to those enjoyed by the English and Scotch regiments of Grenadier, Coldstream, and Fusilier Guards?”<sup>107</sup> While Palmerston acknowledged their service to Britain, he told Scully that the Irish Guards already had privilege, and the British armed services needed to be seen as a more united force that represented the armed forces of the United Kingdom and not simply England, Scotland, and Ireland. As he made clear,

“Those regiments should be considered as belonging to the United Kingdom generally, and not to England, Scotland, or Ireland in particular. They consist of men enlisted indiscriminately from all parts of the United Kingdom, and all the individuals belonging to them should be considered as having an equal share in the glories that may attend the services of those distinguished corps.”<sup>108</sup>

While the reason for his dismissive attitude is not clear in his remarks, the statement made by the Prime Minister demonstrated that no effort was taken to highlight the individual success of the Irish.

The Irish would be presented with another chance to demonstrate their utility in the British army when a revolt in India broke out a year later in 1857. Called the Indian Mutiny by

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<sup>107</sup> Mr. Vincent Scully, “Irish Guards-Question,” in *House of Commons Debates*, vol. 139, 27 July 1855, accessed 25 October 2015, [http://hansard.millbanksystems.com/commons/1855/jul/27/irish-guards-question#S3V0139P0\\_18550727\\_HOC\\_79](http://hansard.millbanksystems.com/commons/1855/jul/27/irish-guards-question#S3V0139P0_18550727_HOC_79).

<sup>108</sup> Viscount Palmerston, “Irish Guards-Question,” in *House of Commons Debates*, vol. 139, 27 July 1855, accessed 25 October 2015, [http://hansard.millbanksystems.com/commons/1855/jul/27/irish-guards-question#S3V0139P0\\_18550727\\_HOC\\_79](http://hansard.millbanksystems.com/commons/1855/jul/27/irish-guards-question#S3V0139P0_18550727_HOC_79).



the British, the revolt began when British trained Indians known as Sepoys attempted to rid themselves of British rule. The Sepoys killed many British civilians, and they came close to ridding the British of their Indian possessions. As recounted in the last chapter, Colin Campbell and his Highland Scottish regiments distinguished themselves in battle during the relief of the fortress in Lucknow, Secunderbagh. In these battles, Irish regiments fought alongside the Highland Scots. At their peak, the Irish comprised some forty percent of the British armed forces serving on the subcontinent.<sup>109</sup>

The Irish did more than simply occupy a significant portion of the soldiers serving in India. They too participated in the relief of Lucknow, the fortress of Secunderbagh, and other battles alongside the Highland Scots. For example, during the storming of Secunderbagh by the 93<sup>rd</sup> Highland Regiment, the Highlanders not only received the assistance of Punjabi Sikhs, who the British also lauded as a “marital race,” but also from the soldiers of the predominantly Irish 53<sup>rd</sup> Light Infantry.<sup>110</sup> In the aftermath of the battle both the Irish and the Highland Scots assembled before Colin Campbell who lavished praise on the Highlanders, but he did not say a word on the Irish regiment. As he stated in his address, “Ninety-Third, you have bravely done your share of this morning’s work, and Cawnpore is avenged! There is more hard work to be done; but unless as a last resource, I will not call on you to storm more positions today.”<sup>111</sup> Yet if Irish soldiers demonstrated their utility on the frontlines of the empire, why did the British government refuse to recognize the long-term aid that Irish soldiers provided the British army

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<sup>109</sup> Jill Bender, *The 1857 Rebellion and the British Empire* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016), 16

<sup>110</sup> Tim Newark, *Highlander: The History of the Legendary Highland Soldier* (New York: Skyhorse Publishing, 2009), 125.

<sup>111</sup> *Ibid.*, 125.

through the nineteenth century, and why did Colin Campbell not write letters to the press praising the Irish for the aid they gave the Highlanders by relieving Lucknow? While the British government provided initial recognition of the Irish, one final question remains. Why did the services of the Irish, particularly after an imperial crisis that put “the jewel of the imperial crown” in jeopardy, did the English not view the Irish as a “martial race” that could be relied upon?

After the British successfully put down the rebellion, the government presented the Victoria Cross to individual soldiers who distinguished themselves during the conflict in India. For the relief of Lucknow alone, seven Scottish Highlanders who served in the 93<sup>rd</sup> regiment received a Victoria Cross for their efforts in that battle, and six from the 78<sup>th</sup> regiment did as well.<sup>112</sup> Irish soldiers too received the recognition for their assistance in relieving Lucknow. By the end of the conflict, fifty-seven Irish soldiers, scattered amongst many regiments within the British army received the Victoria Cross for their instrumental roles in suppressing the revolt. Total Scottish crosses awarded were thirty-two.<sup>113</sup>

While it might seem like a contradiction, part of the explanation for why Irish soldiers did not receive recognition had to do with the popular views on the army as a whole during the Victorian period and the type of Irish recruits that the army received during this inter-war period. During this time, those who enlisted in the army had a social stigma attached to them. Society as a whole viewed many of the recruits as those of the lower orders who could not find any other form of employment, or they joined because they committed a crime and sought to avoid

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<sup>112</sup> *Victoria Cross Registers*, 1856-1944, accessed January 10, 2017, <http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/help-with-your-research/research-guides/victoria-cross-registers-1856-1944/>

<sup>113</sup> *Ibid.*

punishment from authorities.<sup>114</sup> These problems became further aggravated as a result of demographic changes related to the potato famine in Ireland, and the shortfall in rural recruits. While these issues served as one of many push-pull factors that drew the Irish to enlist, others that contributed to Irish enlistment included lack of social mobility and guaranteed pay at regular intervals.<sup>115</sup> Therefore, given the nature of army recruiting as a whole in the United Kingdom by the mid-nineteenth century, the explanation becomes clear why a group such as the Irish, who had a long service record in the British military, had an unfavorable image in the army throughout the nineteenth century.

Ireland in itself represents a paradox in governing the empire. Since 1801, the British government recognized Ireland as a portion of the United Kingdom that united the island with England, Scotland, and Wales. However, despite the amalgamation of Ireland with Great Britain, the bonds that sustained the Union proved tentative at best, and authorities in Britain felt uneasy making the Irish co-equals in their imperial enterprise. For example the British never allowed Irish merchants to engage in direct colonial trades with colonies in the Americas or India.<sup>116</sup> However, the main point of contention, notably religion, went back centuries, and religion, rather than nationalism served to mark the Irish as the “other.”<sup>117</sup> Ever since the Reformation in the sixteenth century, the English, who broke away from the Catholic Church, tried to shore up their

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<sup>114</sup> E. M. Spiers, “Army Organization and Society in the Nineteenth Century,” in *A Military History of Ireland*, ed. Thomas Bartlett and Keith Jeffery et al. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 339.

<sup>115</sup> *Ibid.*, 356.

<sup>116</sup> Thomas Bartlett, “This Famous Island Set in a Virginian Sea: Ireland in the British Empire, 1690-180,” in *The Oxford History of the British Empire: The Eighteenth Century*, ed. P. J. Marshall et al. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), 255. See also, C. A. Bayly, *Imperial Meridian: The British Empire and the World, 1780-1830* (New York: Routledge, 1989), 5.

<sup>117</sup> *Ibid.*, 254.

control of the island by imposing control over the Catholic Irish. This relationship became further strained in the seventeenth century during the establishment of the Ulster Plantation.

For much of the reign of the Tudor dynasty, the Irish had risen up against their English occupiers. By the time James I of the Stuart dynasty ascended to the English throne, the monarch believed that in order to truly pacify the island, he would have to transport some Protestant landlords in the northern Irish region of Ulster with the intention to “civilize” the Catholic population. For the English, Protestantism has been a crucial institution that bound together the British Isles, and these bonds grew stronger when they found themselves at war with a Catholic power from continental Europe. As Linda Colley has stated, “Catholics could still encounter personal abuse and physical injury at the hands of Protestants, particularly in time of war when the enemy was a Catholic state.”<sup>118</sup> During this time period in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, the British resurrected an old fear that had existed since the English first occupied the island in the twelfth century, that a foreign power would exploit security weaknesses in Ireland and use the island as a launch-pad for a potential invasion of Britain itself.<sup>119</sup>

The French attempted this strategy when the ousted Catholic King of Britain, James II asked for their assistance in helping him reclaim the throne in 1690. However, James’s attempt to retake the Crown of England and Scotland failed when the Protestant monarch, William of Orange repulsed him in Ireland during the Battle of the Boyne. Although the battle ensured the Protestant line of succession, it did not assuage William’s fears of the Irish rebelling or that a

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<sup>118</sup> Linda Colley, *Britons: Forging the Nation, 1707-1837* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992), 23

<sup>119</sup> Thomas Bartlett, “This Famous Island Set in a Virginian Sea: Ireland in the British Empire, 1690-1800,” in *The Oxford History of the British Empire: The Eighteenth Century*, ed. P. J. Marshall et al. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), 253.

foreign power would use the island as a springboard to Britain. In the aftermath of the battle, the Protestant Ascendancy, a group of landlords who exercised their political power in the Parliament of Ireland enacted punitive measures known as the Penal Laws. These laws forbade Catholics from engaging in many political and civil liberties such as sitting in Parliament, voting in elections, owning firearms, and from owning a horse worth more than five pounds.

Sectarian conflicts in Ireland consistently plagued British authorities and represented a security concern until the end of the twentieth century. However, the British government gradually lifted some of the restrictive measures imposed in the Penal Laws. The most significant of these measures occurred in 1829 when Catholics finally gained the right to hold office in Britain. Despite these developments, anti-Irish sentiment continued and took on a new form by the mid-nineteenth century. During the seventeenth and eighteenth century, prejudice centered on religious differences between Protestants and Catholics, with Catholicism viewed as a religion of subservience and despotism while Protestantism became framed as a faith of liberty and freedom.<sup>120</sup> By the nineteenth century, religion still inflamed tensions between the British and Irish, but it became a secondary factor to perceived racial differences between the Irish Celt and the British Saxon.<sup>121</sup> This racial divide permeated the British press during the mid-nineteenth century, and many publications believed that the differences further destabilized regions where Irish emigration was high, such as America. As one edition of *The Examiner* stated in 1843,

“The Irish nationality fever, which so strongly and so morbidly affects the political patient with the idea that there are no ties in this world of any value

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<sup>120</sup> Linda Colley, *Britons: Forging the Nation, 1707-1837* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992), 103.

<sup>121</sup> Michael de Nie, *The Eternal Paddy: Irish Identity and the British Press* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2004), 5-6.

except those of birth and race, has gained the other side of the, and is making its usual ravages upon public health and common sense.”<sup>122</sup>

This text demonstrates that to the British, the Irish still represented a security threat more than thirty years after the Act of Union of 1800. However, despite posing a danger to the world as *The Examiner* suggested, the British also determined that the Irish demonstrated themselves to be completely incapable of governing themselves.

During the nineteenth century, the British press produced many political cartoons concerning racial stereotypes that depicted the Irish as inferior. These gained a significant amount of attention during the potato famine that lasted from 1845-1852. During the subsistence crisis, many political cartoons circulated through the British press that painted the Irish in an unflattering light, depicting them as lazy, uneducated, dependent, and child-like. One such cartoon, published in the satirical periodical, *Punch*, depicted a comparison between the personification of the British nation, John Bull and an Irishman whose clothes are tattered, uncleanly, and hunched over in a manner that resembles a monkey rather than a human. John Bull is shown standing upright, his clothes prim and proper, and giving the Irishman a judgmental look of disgust. To further explain the perceived relationship between Ireland and England, the destitute Irishman appears to be begging John Bull for money.<sup>123</sup> Another cartoon, aimed to highlight the differences between the “civilized” British and the “uncivilized” Irish, published in 1843, has a similar well-attired Englishman standing by an Irishman who appears as

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<sup>122</sup> “The Nationality Fever.” *The Examiner*, 9 December 1843, accessed 15 December 2016, <http://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk/viewer/bl/0000054/18431209/001/0002>.

<sup>123</sup> “Height of Impudence.” *Punch*, 1846, accessed 15 December 2016, <http://punch.photoshelter.com/image/I0000z83L7m5hMWQ>.

an overgrown monster with the word “repeal” on his shirt.<sup>124</sup> This sent out the statement that the Irish, despite their grumblings, continued to be unfit for governing their own affairs, and the Union that bound Ireland and Britain together could only be administered by the English. In one 1848 cartoon, a comparison between Britain and Ireland was made by showing Britain as a noble lion. As for the representation of Ireland, the cartoon highlighted the difference by showing a subhuman monkey next to the lion.<sup>125</sup>

Beginning in 1830, the Repeal Association had sought a peaceful solution to Irish independence. By 1848, at the height of the famine, a more violent attempt came from the Young Ireland movement. However, despite its growing tensions with Britain, not everyone in Ireland took up an anti-British stance, and many remained loyal throughout both the Crimean War and the Indian Mutiny. Even in southern Ireland, where the majority of the population consisted of Catholics, support for Britain remained strong. This proved to be the case in Monaghan where a group of philanthropists started a relief fund for those serving abroad in India. To demonstrate not only their loyalty but willingness to submit, it was decided unanimously to place the fund at the discretion of the authorities.<sup>126</sup>

Irish presses attempted to combat the negative attitudes towards the Irish and Irish soldiers in particular by emphasizing Irish dedication and sacrifice. In many Irish papers, lists of fatalities were published to acknowledge those Irishmen who lost their lives in the Mutiny.

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<sup>124</sup> “The Irish Frankenstein,” *Punch*, 4 November 1843, accessed 25 October 2015, <http://punch.photoshelter.com/image/I0000v6KUezEYNok>.

<sup>125</sup> “The British Lion and the Irish Monkey.” *Punch*, 18 April 1848, accessed 25 October 2015, <http://thomasnastcartoons.com/irish-catholic-cartoons/irish-stereotype/>.

<sup>126</sup> “Indian Relief Fund.” *Northern Standard*, December 12, 1857, accessed December 15, 2016, <http://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk/viewer/bl/0001223/18571212/015/0002>.

British presses did not regularly publish lists of Mutiny casualties, let alone Irish casualties. In their articles, the Irish press not only acknowledged the assistance that their native soldiers provided Britain in its colonial wars, but made they also made the Irish public aware of the sacrifices the Irish made on the battlefield.

In one article published in the *Catholic Telegraph*, the paper openly chastised the British for ignoring Irish contributions. To demonstrate the utility of the Irish, they published a list of Irish soldiers killed during the Mutiny. As the article stated in reference to casualties, “Seven-eighths of the number are Irishmen, and, with one or two exceptions, Catholics. This undeniable fact speaks volumes to such journals, as the *Times*, whose vapouring vituperation and blustering knew no bounds when it was asserted that two-thirds of the European soldiers in India were Catholic.”<sup>127</sup> This comment also gives an insight as to the role that the characteristic of the Catholic faith determined the Irish national identity in the nineteenth-century. Many of the Irish killed in the Indian Mutiny lost their lives in the same battles that the Highland Scots fought in such as Lucknow. However, they were not revered by the British press in the same way.

Part of the explanation for the lack of widespread recognition of the Irish soldiers in the mid-nineteenth century had to do with role that Catholicism played in the construction of Irish national identity and the conflicting ideals of Protestantism that the British valued. Due to the fact that many in Britain viewed the Irish as children, they believed that the Irish lacked the capacity to reason on the same level as a Briton. In their minds, they saw the dominance of Catholicism in Ireland as a symptom of this diminished intellect. In other words, they believed that the Irish could not think for themselves because of their perceived inability to reason. The

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<sup>127</sup> “Notice to Irish Catholics At Home and Abroad,” *The Catholic Telegraph*, 19 December 1857, accessed 15 December 2016, <http://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk/viewer/bl/0000821/18571219/052/0004>.



British believed that this supposed deficiency allowed a “subversive force” such as the Catholic faith, which many in Britain saw as an extension of despotism and absolute monarchy that dominated Irish society.<sup>128</sup>

Despite what the British might have hoped, the Indian Mutiny would not signal the end of imperial disturbance. In 1865, the inhabitants of the island of Jamaica rose up in revolt against the British. The causes of the uprising varied, but many of the former African slaves who worked on the sugar plantations fell on hard times in the aftermath of emancipation thirty years earlier as the colony ceased to be economically profitable when other sources of sugar became available.<sup>129</sup> While the uprising occurred on a smaller scale than the Indian Mutiny of 1857, the suppression of this rebellion proved to be just as brutal, perhaps even more so. The rebellion began as a protest outside the Morant Bay courthouse with protesters armed with nothing more than sticks. Nevertheless, the order to fire had been given to the militia in charge of the island’s security, and the crowd dispersed. Despite the fact that the protest had ended, British officials in Jamaica took no chances and proceeded to execute more than four hundred Jamaicans and burn over one thousand homes.<sup>130</sup> Despite the public consternation of large swaths of the British public, the Governor of Jamaica, John Eyre, defended his heavy handed tactics. Public pressure led to a government inquiry into Governor Eyre’s actions. When the committee questioned Eyre, he stated that the actions he took were appropriate for fear that the revolt in Jamaica could gather enough momentum and cripple Britain’s imperial defense in the same manner that the Indian

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<sup>128</sup> Michael de Nie, *Eternal Paddy: Irish Identity and the British Press* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2004), 14.

<sup>129</sup> Catherine Hall, *Civilizing Subjects: Metropole and Colony in the English Imagination, 1830-1867* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002), 70.

<sup>130</sup> *Ibid.*, 23

Mutiny did.<sup>131</sup> The government inquiry ultimately concluded the Governor Eyre could not conclusively be charged in criminal wrongdoing.<sup>132</sup>

The Mutiny clearly loomed large in the British imagination and this should have ensured all, including the Irish, who had fought to protect the empire were given their appropriate due. The precarious situation the British found themselves in in the aftermath of the Mutiny continued into the 1860s. The pressure to maintain the union with Ireland came at a time when stability in Ireland continued to crumble. By the 1860s, the Fenian Brotherhood, a republican organization founded in the United States by Michael Doheny and John O'Mahony, carried out a campaign of terror in Britain in the hopes of establishing an independent Ireland.<sup>133</sup>

As early as 1863, the English *Middlesex Chronicle* reported on Fenian activity in the United States and the ramifications their separatist movement could have on the Union. However, the paper believed that the secretive nature of the society duped many Irish-Americans who had no idea about its ultimate objective of establishing an independent Irish republic. As the paper stated, "We are assured that they were all so thoroughly disciplined and obedient as to represent a formidable army available for immediate service. On a signal given the Brotherhood would have been ready to send from America to Ireland "an armed force of 100,000 men, as well as, munitions, arms, ships, and everything that the Irish nationality would need."<sup>134</sup> Such

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<sup>131</sup> Jill Bender, *The 1857 Uprising and the British Empire* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016), 152.

<sup>132</sup> Catherine Hall, *Civilizing Subjects: Metropole and Colony in the English Imagination, 1830-1867* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002), 25.

<sup>133</sup> Michael de Nie, *The Eternal Paddy: Irish Identity and the British Press, 1798-1882* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2004), 144.

<sup>134</sup> "The 'Fenian Brotherhood!' A Secret Not Known to Themselves," *The Middlesex Chronicle*, 24 October 1863, accessed 16 December 2016, <http://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk/viewer/bl/0000241/18631024/011/0003>

reporting engendered fear and encouraged the English to view the Irish as disloyal and not worthy of their trust.

Unfortunately for the British, who wished to disperse a significant portion of the Fenian Brotherhood, the organization was not in operation in Ireland, but in the United States amongst the Irish immigrant population. This posed a serious security concern for Britain due to the proximity of the American Fenians to British held Canada. The Fenians hoped that invading Canada would intimidate Britain into granting Ireland its independence. In one noteworthy attempt, a segment of Fenians, under the leadership of William Roberts launched a series of raids throughout 1866, while other members unleashed a wave of attacks in the British Isles. Such attacks did little to improve British attitudes towards the Irish.<sup>135</sup>

In 1866, the MP for Peterborough, George Whalley, in a speech to the House of Commons, made such feelings clear arguing that the Irish, driven by the Irish press and Catholic priests, hoped for British defeat during the Crimean War and the Indian Mutiny. As he stated, “The Roman Catholic papers had always sympathized with the enemies of the country in the time of war, but those journals had met with no censure or denunciation from the priests. For instance, in the Crimean war and the Indian mutiny, there were numerous manifestations of that spirit.”<sup>136</sup> Whalley further goes on to state that Highland Scots and Irishmen shared disdain for each other, and they could never be trusted defend the empire in joint cooperation. In his speech,

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<sup>135</sup> Michael de Nie, *The Eternal Paddy: Irish Identity and the British Press, 1798-1882* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2004), 145

<sup>136</sup> George Whalley, “Motion For a Select Committee,” in *House of Commons Debates, vol. 183*, 1 June 1866, accessed 18 December 2016, [http://hansard.millbanksystems.com/commons/1866/jun/01/motion-for-a-select-committee#S3V0183P0\\_18660601\\_HOC\\_40](http://hansard.millbanksystems.com/commons/1866/jun/01/motion-for-a-select-committee#S3V0183P0_18660601_HOC_40).

he mentioned an Irish Catholic newspaper account describing the Highland regiments in an unfavorable light when he said,

“In another paper, *The Tablet*, the editor "wished the Sepoys success." *The Nation* newspaper, a journal receiving its inspiration from Maynooth, called Havelock and his Highlanders fiends who dared call themselves men; and, speaking of the day appointed for fasting and humiliation, said it was a "mockery of devilworship."<sup>137</sup>

He also believed that a direct correlation existed between Catholicism and the actions of the Fenians. For Whalley, Catholicism encouraged the Fenians to commit acts of terror.<sup>138</sup>

After the abortive uprisings in Ireland, the Fenians, beginning in 1867, began focusing their attention upon acts of terror in Britain itself. In the fall of 1867, Thomas Kelley was arrested in England for his role in the Fenian uprising in Cheshire earlier that spring. During the transport of Kelley, the van was attacked in Manchester by a band of Fenians, and one of the law enforcement officers escorting Kelley died as a result. Ultimately, the attack was not a success, and the three men involved in the attempted raid were arrested and executed as a result.<sup>139</sup> When the British press covered the incident, they consistently used the word “cowardly” to describe the attack. *The Gloucester Journal* stated that the Fenians, “committed a cowardly murder, and who will be assuredly hanged for the same.”<sup>140</sup> To describe the ambush attack as an act of cowardice gives insight as to why the British did not see the Irish as “martial.” During the Indian Mutiny, the British Army labeled Bengali’s as “un-martial” because they executed large numbers of

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<sup>137</sup> Ibid.

<sup>138</sup> Ibid.

<sup>139</sup> Michael de Nie, *The Eternal Paddy: Irish Identity and the British Press, 1798-1882* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2004), 146.

<sup>140</sup> “A Usurper at the Home Office,” *The Gloucester Journal*, 23 November 1867, accessed 5 March 2017, <http://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk/viewer/bl/0000532/18671123/031/0006>.

British civilians in India as an attempt to intimidate the civilian population rather than fight the British armed forces head on.<sup>141</sup> Therefore, the Fenian reliance on acts of terror rather than conventional warfare made them inferior in the eyes of the British. However, the Fenians continued to go to greater extremes to free captured Fenians and strike fear into the British.

This became apparent in December 1867 when London became the latest British city to experience an act of terror. In this attack, a group of Fenians bombed Clerkenwell prison with the intent of freeing several of their comrades from captivity. The ultimate goal was to free Richard O'Sullivan Burke, one of the Fenians that participated in the prison van attack. During this attack, the Fenians underestimated the power of the bomb. Initially, the Fenians intended for the explosion to level a wall allowing Burke to escape. However, the explosion, more powerful than they anticipated, not only took out the wall, but killed twelve other people who lived in houses close to the jail.<sup>142</sup> This attack fostered fear and panic throughout Britain. While Parliament passed security measures in relation to Ireland as a result of the attacks, many British Army officers believed that the laws should extend to England as well. Testifying before Parliament, Colonel Fitzstephen French referenced the Fenian attacks to argue for additional security measures in England. As he stated in his testimony,

“Great crimes had been committed at Chester, Manchester, Clerkenwell, and other places. There had been threats of the assassination of Her Majesty's Ministers, and there had been the actual assassination of some of the police. The Government appeared to have taken the subject into consideration, and had adopted certain precautionary measures. They had increased the Metropolitan Police Force, and armed the constabulary with revolvers. It appeared, however, that the constables were not to use them in their own defence, or in carrying out

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<sup>141</sup> Heather Streets, *Martial Races: The Military, Race and Masculinity in British Imperial Culture, 1857-1914* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2004), 24.

<sup>142</sup> Michael de Nie, *The Eternal Paddy: Irish Identity and the British Press, 1798-1882* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2004), 146.

the law; for a constable was expected, according to the newspapers, to have three shots fired at him before he returned fire. That had happened in England.”<sup>143</sup>

In addition to the security measures, the Fenian attacks also had an effect on how those in Britain viewed Irish soldiers as a whole.

Overall, the fragile state of Ireland during the Fenian crisis created reluctance among the British government to employ Irish volunteers for peacekeeping efforts in Ireland to protect the island from what they called a “feeble race.”<sup>144</sup> As the *Whistable Times and Herne Bay Herald* Stated,

“Although the Fenians are a feeble race, they contrive to give us a good deal of trouble; and not the least part thereof consists in their forcing a decision on the delicate question of employing Volunteers in the cases of insurrections. So far as we can judge, the safest plan is to ignore the existence of the Volunteers as a body, and employ them only as special constables.”<sup>145</sup>

These actions outraged Irish MPs, who claimed that it violated their rights as partners in the Union. As one MP from Tralee voiced his opposition when he said,

“Why were not the Irish militia called out to go through their ordinary course of training? Because it was thought that once trained, armed, and equipped, they might disown all allegiance to the Government, and become the nucleus of an Irish national army. Why were not the Irish, like the English and Scotch, allowed to enrol themselves as Volunteers? Because it was feared that, if once enrolled and armed, they might endeavour to obtain by force of arms the concession of demands which had been refused to years of persevering and dutiful supplication.”<sup>146</sup>

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<sup>143</sup> Colonel French, “Bill 28: Second Reading,” in *House of Commons Debates vol. 190*, 17 February 1868, accessed 17 December 2016, [http://hansard.millbanksystems.com/commons/1868/feb/17/bill-28-second-reading#S3V0190P0\\_18680217\\_HOC\\_36](http://hansard.millbanksystems.com/commons/1868/feb/17/bill-28-second-reading#S3V0190P0_18680217_HOC_36).

<sup>144</sup> “The Fenian Insurrection,” *The Whistable Times and Herne Bay Herald*, March 16, 1867, accessed December 17, 2016, <http://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk/viewer/bl/0000338/18670316/013/0002>.

<sup>145</sup> Ibid.

<sup>146</sup> Daniel O’Donoghue, “Adjourned Debate,” in *House of Commons Debates vol. 190*, 13 March 1869, accessed 17 December 2016, [http://hansard.millbanksystems.com/commons/1868/mar/13/adjourned-debate#S3V0190P0\\_18680313\\_HOC\\_23](http://hansard.millbanksystems.com/commons/1868/mar/13/adjourned-debate#S3V0190P0_18680313_HOC_23).

By 1870, it became clear that the Fenians would not be able to stage a successful revolt in either Ireland or Britain. During this time, Prime Minister William Gladstone took measures to temporarily pacify Ireland. The centerpiece of his efforts involved an act, passed in 1869, that effectively disestablished the Protestant Church of Ireland. This meant that the government in Westminster would no longer provide financial support, and the predominately Catholic population of Ireland would no longer have to pay tithes to the institution.<sup>147</sup> Yet despite the temporary calm of the 1870s, the government still had doubts about the reliability of Irish volunteers.

In 1871, the Irish MP from Clonmel, John Bagwell, questioned the Chief Secretary for Ireland, the Marquis of Hartington, about the potential use of Irish Volunteers for military service.<sup>148</sup> Hartington did not believe that the government should be raising any volunteers from Ireland. While he told Bagwell that he did not base his refusal on questions of loyalty to the Union, he did acknowledge that the religious differences between Irish and British Volunteers could contribute to divisions in the army and ultimately complicate the delicate process of peacekeeping in Britain. As Hartington stated, “There was a great danger that the Volunteers might assume a sectarian character, and that the formation of Volunteer corps might be productive of collisions and breaches of the public peace.”<sup>149</sup> By 1883, the decision to raise Volunteers had not changed. During this occasion, Colonel Edward King-Harman also

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<sup>147</sup> Michael de Nie, *The Eternal Paddy: Irish Identity and the British Press, 1798-1882* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2004), 187.

<sup>148</sup> John Bagwell, “Question,” in *House of Commons Debates vol. 204*, 23 February 1871, accessed 18 December 2016, [http://hansard.millbanksystems.com/commons/1871/feb/23/question-12#S3V0204P0\\_18710223\\_HOC\\_47](http://hansard.millbanksystems.com/commons/1871/feb/23/question-12#S3V0204P0_18710223_HOC_47).

<sup>149</sup> The Marquis of Hartington, “Question,” in *House of Commons Debates vol. 204*, 23 February 1871, accessed 18 December 2016, [http://hansard.millbanksystems.com/commons/1871/feb/23/question-12#S3V0204P0\\_18710223\\_HOC\\_47](http://hansard.millbanksystems.com/commons/1871/feb/23/question-12#S3V0204P0_18710223_HOC_47).

questioned Hartington on whether prohibitions existed against enrolling Irish Volunteers with British regiments.<sup>150</sup> While Hartington stated that no act that prohibited their service existed on the books, he believed that the government reserved the right to accept or reject anyone requesting to become a Volunteer. However, he believed that if the Irish wished to serve as Volunteers, they would have to serve and be trained in Britain, not Ireland. He further stated that he had no plans to allow an Irish Volunteer Corps.<sup>151</sup>

Therefore, while the Irish served the British loyally during the Crimean War and the Indian Mutiny, they did not achieve the status as a “martial race.” Despite their role in stabilizing the empire in the Indian subcontinent, the fears associated with the Indian Mutiny made the British fearful of which colony would be the next to revolt. As a result, Ireland became fixated in the minds of those in the British government as unstable due to its tenuous relationship with the colony as a result sectarian strife that stemmed from religious differences. These fears became further aggravated due to the rise of the nationalist Fenians who set about trying to break away from British rule and establish an Irish republic. During their attempts to win independence, they employed violence in Ireland and Britain. Concurrent to these events, Britain’s perceptions of the Irish continued to harden in the late eighteenth-century and nineteenth-century. During this time, the Irish had been increasingly portrayed in the British press as ape-like and docile individuals who lacked rationality and could easily be swayed to take up arms against the British. The

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<sup>150</sup> Colonel King-Harman, “Army (the Auxiliary Forces)- Irish Volunteers,” in *House of Commons Debates*, vol. 276, 8 March 1883, accessed 18 December 2016, [http://hansard.millbanksystems.com/commons/1883/mar/08/army-the-auxiliary-forces-irish#S3V0276P0\\_18830308\\_HOC\\_92](http://hansard.millbanksystems.com/commons/1883/mar/08/army-the-auxiliary-forces-irish#S3V0276P0_18830308_HOC_92).

<sup>151</sup> The Marquis of Hartington, “Army (the Auxiliary Forces)- Irish Volunteers,” in *House of Commons Debates*, vol. 276, 8 March 1883, accessed 18 December 2016, [http://hansard.millbanksystems.com/commons/1883/mar/08/army-the-auxiliary-forces-irish#S3V0276P0\\_18830308\\_HOC\\_92](http://hansard.millbanksystems.com/commons/1883/mar/08/army-the-auxiliary-forces-irish#S3V0276P0_18830308_HOC_92).



common scapegoat that served as the instigator for the turbulence in Ireland, the Catholic Church, the predominant religion in Ireland, had been viewed by the British as “illiberal” and conspiratorial. Therefore, due to Britain’s negative perceptions of the Irish and the multiple upheavals in Ireland throughout the mid-nineteenth century, the Irish could not be trusted for self-government or military service.

## CHAPTER 4

### CONCLUSION

By the latter half of the nineteenth century, the number of Irish soldiers serving in the British armed forces began to diminish as the government became skeptical of deploying the Irish for imperial theaters of war and peacekeeping operations in Britain and Ireland. Despite previously serving with distinction in the in Britain's mid-nineteenth century conflicts, the British never considered the Irish a "martial race." However, when compared to the Scots who were considered a "martial race," it is clear that the Irish deserved the title of being "martial." Their services, particularly in the Crimean War (1853-1856) and the Indian Mutiny in 1857 marked the Irish out for this acclaim. While the term "martial race" did not appear until after the Mutiny, the constant media exposure of the Crimean War, advancements in the telegraph, and the massive circulation of British newspapers allowed the actions by certain regiments and national groups like the Highland Scots and the Irish to conceivably lauded for their sacrifices and highlighted in the popular presses in Britain. This construction of identity is important in a multi-ethnic unit such as the United Kingdom and the British Empire. The manner in which the English viewed the Scots and the Irish and manipulated public opinion on perceptions of the "other" affected how much political power and independence they allowed and how much participation in the lucrative empire was accepted. This ultimately colored understandings of Britain as a political unit.

Therefore, after the conflicts, the Highland Scottish regiments gained notoriety as a "martial race" due to their actions in both the Crimea and India, and they became one the British

Army's most coveted regiments for imperial defense. However, at the battles of Alma and Inkerman in the Crimea and the relief of Lucknow during the Indian Mutiny, the Highland Scots served alongside Irish regiments and received crucial assistance from those forces. While the fragile state of the British Empire during the mid-nineteenth century contributed to designating several groups within the empire as "martial races," the destabilization of various colonial sites also contributed toward many groups being labeled by the British as "un-martial."

The Scots profited from these disturbances becoming, in many areas, the face of the empire. From military commanders, businessmen, to imperial officials, Scots were trusted with the defense and administration of much of the empire. The Irish, on the other hand, despite being in a position to likewise profit and prosper were characterized as the other. Despite their fighting for the empire abroad, calls for independence and home coupled with violence, encouraged the English to view the Irish as untrustworthy rather than martial. This meant, following the Mutiny, less opportunities for Irish soldiers and people abroad. Therefore, Ireland became an unstable colony while the Scots, achieved a role as a junior partner in the imperial project.

The term "un-martial" was bestowed upon the Irish by the British during this time period despite the recognition that individual Irish soldiers received as a result of their services during the Crimean War and Indian Mutiny. The prime reason had to do with the precarious state of Ireland within the British Empire. Throughout the 1860s, Ireland, Canada, and Britain became victims to acts of terror by the Fenian Brotherhood, an Irish nationalist organization that wanted independence from Britain and an Irish republic established. The attacks by the Fenians meant that the Irish could not be considered a "martial race" due to their guerrilla tactics that included ambush attacks and bombings that resulted in civilian deaths. These methods of warfare did not conform to those used by the supposedly "martial races" who demonstrated bravery by facing

their enemies head on and did not resort to terrorizing their enemies through killing those within a civilian population.

These actions sparked debate in Britain as to what contributed to the behavior of the Fenians. Instead of blaming the political situation, the English turned to racial theories which they believed explained not only the actions of the Fenians, but all of the Irish. During the mid-nineteenth century, race was a fluid concept that described not only biological characteristics, but also social and cultural behavior as well. In the case of the Irish, the destabilization of Ireland during the 1860s renewed long held British stereotypes about the Irish. These included an inferior intellect incapable of being rational that many in Britain believed contributed to the predominance of the Catholic faith in Ireland. Many in Britain viewed this institution as an agent of intolerance and tyranny that easily corrupted the “inferior” Irish people. In addition, the agrarian and destitute state of the island further contributed to the negative image of the Irish as “inferior.” Therefore, despite the fact that the British Army boasted a significant number of Irish recruits who served successfully in various conflicts during the early to mid-nineteenth century, the destabilization of the empire as evidenced by the Indian Mutiny and the Fenian terror campaigns that fueled the pre-existing perceptions of the Irish race as a whole. These factors contributed to the apprehensions of British authorities towards Irish recruits and made it impossible for them to be considered a “martial race.”

Although the bestowing of the term “martial race” and the values associated with the term cannot wholly explain the different paths taken by Scots and Irish people after mid-century, it is surely indicative and symptomatic of England’s changing attitudes towards each group. By including soldiers into what has largely been a political narrative allows for further insights into

the complicated process whereby the English included and excluded groups from its imperial designs.

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