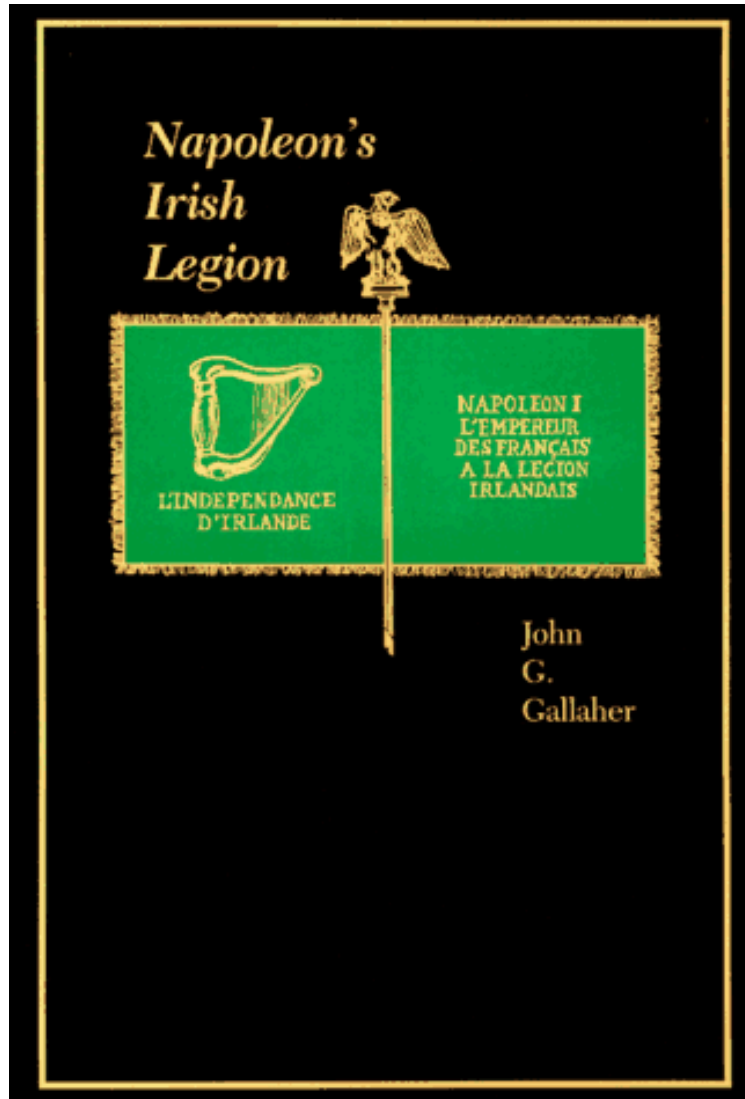


(Ebook pdf) Napoleon's Irish Legion

Napoleon's Irish Legion

Professor John G. Gallaher B.A. M.A. Ph.D.
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Professor John G. Gallaher B.A. M.A. Ph.D. : Napoleon's Irish Legion before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Napoleon's Irish Legion:

6 of 6 people found the following review helpful. NAPOLEON'S IRISH LEGION By DVR Napoleon's Irish Legion is an excellent source of information for anyone who maybe researching the Irish Legion. In fact it is the only guide in English on the Legion next to the memoirs of Miles Byrne, an officer of the Legion. Byrne's memoirs are hard to come by, but Gallaher's book uses Byrne as a reference throughout the book. In my case I discovered my ancestor was a member of the Irish Legion, in fact Jacques Perry appears in this book as he was awarded the Legion of Honour for his

efforts at the Siege of Astorga. Not only the book is an excellent reference, but it mentions the primary sources in France, so from this I was able to find close to 100 French documents on my ancestor, who as it happened was with Napoleon's Irish Legion since day 1 until the end. I recommend this book to anyone who has an interest in Napoleonic history.

Drawing heavily on the original documents of the Archives de la guerre, John G. Gallaher has written the first complete account of the storied Irish Legion, which joined with Napoleon to fight England. Following the failed Rebellion of 1798, hundreds of Irishmen fled to the Continent to avoid imprisonment or execution. As part of his planned campaign against England and Ireland in 1803, Napoleon authorized the creation of an Irish Legion to invade Ireland in order to tie down British forces that could otherwise have been used against the main French invasion of England. The promise of returning to Ireland with the French army at their backs brought many recruits to the Legion. The Irish emigrants who enlisted in this special unit of the French army were Irish nationalists who intended to liberate Ireland and create an Irish republic. When the anticipated expedition to Ireland never took place, some of the Irishmen quit the army though the great majority of them remained to fight for Napoleon. Battalions of the Legion encountered the British at Flushing in 1809, fought Wellington in Portugal in 1810–11, and served with distinction at the Battle of Bautzen and in Silesia, where after heavy losses in lesser engagements with the enemy, the Legion was finally destroyed on the banks of the Bober River in 1813. The Legion was reorganized in the winter of 1813–14, but with a dwindling number of Irishmen. With the passage of time the Irish became Bonapartists, and following the Second Restoration in 1815, the surviving remnants of the Irish Legion were disbanded. Until the end, the men of the Legion did not lose their love for Ireland nor their hope that one day they would return to their native land as part of a French military expedition. The Irish veterans of the Napoleonic wars were retired at half pay and most settled in France. They had become French soldiers of the Napoleonic Empire.

"John G. Gallaher's work is a fine contribution to Napoleonic military history. It is also a peculiarly Irish tragedy—the story of a legion full of heroes and yet doomed—replete with bickering, brawling, officer-politicians, idealists, poets, mercenaries, and starry-eyed boys 'from home.' Napoleon created the Legion—the Irish fervently believed—to serve the cause he had emblazoned on its Eagle: 'Independence 'Independance d 'Irelande.' Instead, it served in Europe, and soon became a foreign legion."—Owen Connelly, University of South Carolina