

to derive broader meaning from what all this soldierly protest and defiance meant in regard to comprehending the true character and nature of the American Revolution.

In the old but worthy *Dragnet* television series, the late actor Jack Webb, playing Sergeant Joe Friday of the Los Angeles Police Department, would often repeat his famous investigatory phrase, "Just the Facts, Ma'am." For readers wanting just the unadorned facts, lots and lots of them, *Rebellion in the Ranks* will prove to be a satisfying volume. For those seeking something more, they might well begin with Van Doren's enduringly valuable *Mutiny in January*, originally published in 1943, and go forward from there.

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Susannah Ural Bruce. *The Harp and the Eagle: Irish-American Volunteers and the Union Army, 1861–1865*. (New York: New York University Press, 2006. Pp. xiii, 309, notes, bibliography, index. Cloth, \$75.00; Paper, \$23.00.)

Susannah Ural Bruce has produced a fascinating study by situating the Civil War military service of Irish volunteers in the Union Army within the broader context of Irish Catholic immigrants' tortuous position in American society. Bruce asserts that while loyalty to America influenced Irish Catholics, changes in their support for the Union cause over the course of the war can best be explained by tracing soldiers' and their communities' changing assessments of the war's impact on Irish interests. It must be noted that Bruce conflates loyalties to personal kin and community networks with loyalties to an Irish-Catholic ethnic collectivity in the United States and a commitment to the struggle to free Ireland from English control.

Bruce commences her study by reviewing Irish Catholic immigrants' experiences up to 1860. While noting the presence of Irish Protestants in America and a degree of variation in the circumstances of the Irish Catholic population, she emphasizes both the poverty and the anti-Irish Catholic prejudice that the newcomers so commonly endured. In response, some Irishmen had joined the American military—finding little relief from prejudice but at least securing a rough livelihood. Thus, as the Civil War loomed, service in the U.S. Army was already a known option among the Irish. Having set the context, Bruce addresses Irishmen's motives for volunteering

for the Union Army. Catholic Irish ethnic leaders were in a quandary. Overwhelmingly, they were anti-abolitionist Democrats who distrusted the country's new Republican leadership. Not only were they painfully aware of their group's negative image within the mainstream Protestant culture, more than a few of them prioritized loyalty to Ireland over their attachment to the United States at a time when demands for undivided loyalty became increasingly insistent. The Confederate attack on Fort Sumter in April 1861 raised a ground upon which the Irish-Catholic leadership could find a footing. In April, Irish Catholic spokesmen proclaimed their support for a war to preserve the Union. Bruce focuses on the motivations of men who led and participated in ethnic Irish military units. She cites a mixture of motives which included gaining military training in anticipation of battles to free Ireland, securing the viability of the United States as a refuge for freedom, improving the reputation of the Irish among Americans and thereby improving Irish-American's prospects for success and, finally, meeting sheer economic needs. Irishmen did flock to recruiting stations in the spring of 1861 and the gallant fighting of the sixty-ninth Regiment, New York State Militia at the First Battle of Bull Run in July won praise, albeit condescending, from American opinion leaders. Bruce notes however, that the harmony of interests between Irish Catholic and native-born Americans in the North would be short indeed.

The core of this study lays out Bruce's explanation of a growing rift between Irish Catholics and mainstream American society. Irish volunteers and ethnic leaders complained of poor training, inadequate supplies, misery-inducing and health-destroying camp conditions, incompetent military leadership and, most devastatingly, disastrously high casualty rates which were magnified by poor medical care. Bruce is at her best in creating vivid portrayals of Irish valor, especially during the battles of Antietam, Fredericksburg, and Gettysburg. While Bruce's narration does note the performance of Irishmen in numerous units, including the sixty-ninth Pennsylvania and the one hundred sixteenth Pennsylvania, her battle descriptions center on the heroics of New York's volunteers. Bruce cannot claim that misery, declining morale, pain, and death in the Union Army typified only Irishmen's experiences, although her tight focus on the Irish might leave that impression. Rather, her interpretation traces out the interplay between the perceptions that were dominant among Irish Catholics and those of "native-born" Americans. Irish perceptions of their treatment in the military were conditioned by their earlier experiences of bigotry and discrimination in the civilian world. Their perception of unfair

and uncaring treatment was reinforced by a steady supply of clear instances of the reality of discrimination and prejudice against Irish Catholics. As casualty rates rose, the North's war aims expanded to include the abolition of slavery and the federal government adopted conscription to fill the dwindling ranks of its military. In response, the Irish—along with many others—protested on the home-front. The mainstream press highlighted Irish participation in draft protests, especially the infamous New York City draft riot, as well as Irish Catholic support for the Democratic Party, which promised to preserve the Union but seek an early peace in 1864. Furthermore, the press's harping on the poorer performance of raw Irish recruits in the last period of the war reinforced anti-Irish stereotypes. Thus, Bruce argues that Irish Catholic support for the war dipped in 1864 even as fresh victories reinforced broader support for Lincoln and the war effort. She portrays the Irish in 1864–1865 as inwardly-looking, bruised and isolated—their stunningly heroic earlier performance discounted and the direction of the war under the control of people who had ridiculed and oppressed them. According to Bruce, Irish and American interests had diverged and that explains the decline in Irish Catholic support for the war effort.

Bruce concludes her study by describing a post-war era in which Irish Catholics clustered in dismal economic circumstances and endured continued discrimination reinforced by vicious stereotyping in the mainstream press. Bruce presents a two-pronged Irish response. First, they celebrated their service in the Civil War both to counter caricatures and to secure their place, as Irish Catholics, in the American historical tradition. Second, she argues that the Irish built on their relative isolation to create an autonomous powerbase for themselves by mobilizing supporters in politics and other arenas to take—not request—a degree of power in American society. Finally, she asserts that by the turn of the twentieth century, the competing loyalties to Ireland and America that had characterized Irish-American decision-making in the 1860s had resolved into a comfortable blend of Irish and American loyalties.

Bruce has conducted extensive research in Ireland and the United States to document her study. *The Harp and the Eagle* does incorporate the views of a few Irish Protestants, but for the most part, their perspectives only reinforce the conclusion that they and the Catholic Irish had separated into distinctive cultural groups by the 1860s. Despite her impressive research efforts, her sources primarily reflect the perspectives of Irish Catholic ethnic leaders, Irish nationalists committed to liberating Ireland through

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armed force (Fenians), and officers in self-consciously “Irish” ethnic military units. However, most Irish volunteers served in non-ethnic units and the individual perspectives of myriad ordinary Irish Catholic soldiers are unknowable at this point. Bruce has tried to compensate for representation bias in her sources by relying on broader mid-nineteenth-century accounts of Irish life in the United States and of the behavior of Irish volunteers in the Army. Still, the possibility remains that her interpretation of Irish Catholics’ perspectives overemphasizes commitments to Fenianism and projects more coherence than is warranted onto a cultural grouping that was fractious and porous. Although Bruce may overemphasize Irish Catholic unity, her general point—that one would expect a group dominated by immigrants to have relatively shallow loyalty to an adopted country and deeper loyalties to members of personal networks and, perhaps, to homeland-based collective identifications—makes sense. Bruce also demonstrates fine interpretive judgment in numerous instances. For example, she discusses Thomas F. Meagher’s checkered career with both accuracy and compassion and she does not flinch in presenting the racial views promulgated by many Irish Catholics in the 1860s. Bruce is a superb writer. She leavens her narrative with often poignant vignettes that humanize the individuals caught up in the Civil War. She also integrates well-chosen photographs and illustrations as well as strikingly evocative quotations into her text. In spotlighting the nexus between individual soldiers and their communities, *The Harp and the Eagle* illuminates the conflicted responses of the members of a spurned group when called upon to sacrifice for their new country’s cause. This fine study offers insights into Civil War history, the evolution of Irish ethnicity in the United States, and by extension, the complex positioning of immigrant and minority groups in general.

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Karen Guenther. *Sports in Pennsylvania*. (Harrisburg: Pennsylvania Historical Association, 2007. Pp. 117, illustrations, appendixes, bibliography. Paper, \$12.95.)

The field of American sports history has transformed from a curiosity of fans and buffs to an important extension of academic research into social