

Limerick County Militia

P10

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Introduction

The 1793 Militia Act was passed in order to meet the threat of widespread Defender activity and unrest in Ireland and France. It resulted in the raising of the Irish militia, as an infantry force. Thirty-eight different regiments and battalions were formed in Ireland and each corps was allocated a numerical prefix in order of precedence as settled by a ballot of 8 August 1873. The legislation was notable because it gave Irish Catholics, the right to own firearms, which had been forbidden under the penal laws. The officers of the Militia were almost exclusively Protestant, and their ranks were largely Catholic.

The procedure for raising the Militia was that each county and county borough was given a figure for the number of men it had to provide. The lists of adult males were drawn up of men eligible to serve, then a ballot was held until the quota assigned to each area was reached. Substitutes and volunteers were also allowed. Militia men were never stationed in the same area in which they were formed. This measure was to prevent those who enlisted from coming under undue influence of family and friends in the locality.

As an army, the Militia were considered to be poorly trained and their active duties were predominately in the civil sphere. In fact from 1800 the primary role of the Irish Militia was seen as a nursery for the regulars with bounties being offered to encourage militiamen to enter the regular service. The Militia was disembodied in 1802, but were called up again in 1803, and at other times up until 1816. In 1803 the Irish Militia was recreated almost entirely by the enrolment of volunteers directly by the colonels. In 1807-8 and again in 1809-10 militia ranks were formed by ballot. In 1881 the Limerick County Militia became incorporated as the 5th Battalion of the Royal Munster fusiliers,

The collection held by Limerick City Archives consists of two volumes of accounts and volunteer lists (P10/1-2), as well as receipts and bills, and a small correspondence file of the Limerick County Militia. The volumes with volunteer lists and accounts are useful sources for military historians and family historians. They volunteer lists include valuable genealogical information, such as name of volunteer, length of service, and reasons for discharge. Additionally the accounts can help researchers reconstruct the living conditions of the Limerick County militia, as it contains information regarding their food and mess supplies. The Limerick Water

Works Collection (P9) held by Limerick Archives also contains reference to Quarter Master Robert Kane, who acted as an agent for the Limerick Water Works Company.

The National Archives of United Kingdom holds extensive records relating to the Irish Militia and records relating to the Limerick County Militia in the War Office collections under the Militia Ireland sub series (WO/13)

Sources:

Oliver Snoddy, 'Notes on the Volunteers, Militia, Yeomanry, Orangemen, and Fencibles of Co. Limerick', *Irish Sword* p125-140

Sir Henry William Mc Anally, *The Irish Militia 1793-1816: A Social and Military Study* (Dublin, 1949)

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Account Books and Volunteer lists (1797-1845)

- 1 7 February 1797- 3 April 1813 Miscellaneous volume of accounts and volunteer lists. Includes the accounts of Quarter Master Richard Kane (13 March 1803-24 September 1810), Mess Accounts (1797-1810), Band Account (1803-1807) and lists of men recruited of men who joined line regiments, and of casualties (1803-18130. The Mess Account is dated 7 February 1797 to November 1810, arranged under debit and credit headings and includes entries such as 'cash paid for grinding knives', 'cash paid for 2 plate warmers' and 'cash paid for washing and painting mess room'. (6 ff). The Band Account is dated 7 August 1803 to 26 January 1811, arranged under debit and credit headings and includes entries such as 'paid for Master of Bands clothing', and 'paid carriage of Kettle Drum and Long Drum to Antrim' (7 ff). The abstract accounts of Quarter Master Richard Kane are arranged chronologically, and according to 'Sums Paid' and 'Sums received down or required to be remitted'. Entries are generally made monthly under various headings which include 'date', 'day', 'officer', 'men', 'extra allowance to innkeepers in lieu of beer', 'extra price of bread', 'horses', levy money' 'recruiting or bounties paid', 'contingencies', and 'deduct sums over charged' (20ff). The volume includes various lists of returns of volunteers enlisted for from the Limerick County Militia between 1803 and 1813 . The lists are titled according to date and whether volunteers were raised as consequence of an Order or a circular letter and are arranged under headings such as 'no', 'name', 'to what regiment volunteered', 'whether for life or for limited service', 'dates of attestation', 'bounties paid', 'subsistence, beer and monthly money', 'total expenditure for each month', and 'remarks' such as 'deserted and received no pay', and 'enlisted subsequent to the period allowed by the act'. Other details occasionally recorded relate to by whom enlisted, by whom intermediate approval, by which final approval, whether dead, rejected, discharged, or deserted and that date, the date of joining headquarters and pay list, and in what company first charged. The volume also includes various lists of list of casualties and of volunteers enrolled to replace them between 1803-1805 which generally detail the name of the casualty, whether dead, discharged or deceased, the date, bounties paid, and names of replacements.
c.120 pp

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| 2 | 24 March 1811- 8 July 1829 (31 March 1845) | <p>Incomplete volume of accounts which record payments made and items purchased by Limerick County Militia. Includes accounts for the band (24 March 1811-3 February 1818), the Mess (14 April 1811-18 April 1826), newspapers (20 August 1806-20 July 1812), Postage and Stationary (13 September 1808- 24 June 1818), regimental school and clothing for school boys (9 July 1812-24 Dec 1814), mess wine account with the mess man (3 August 1812- 30 March 1816), and with wine merchants 12 July 1813-13 July 181, and a contingent account for postage, stationary and repair of arms (5 August 1818-8 July 1829). Includes loose pages with statements of contingent allowance accounts and generally signed by Richard Kane, Quarter Master. Also includes index to accounts.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">c. 50 ff</p> |
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Receipts and Bills (1801-1810)

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| 3 | 21 May 1801-7 November 1810 | <p>File of receipts and bills from creditors of Limerick County Militia mainly relating to items purchased for Mess. Receipts include acknowledgement of payments for items such as '2 large baskets for packing of ware', '12 yards of 4/4 HB linen', and 'Etruscan table ware'</p> <p style="text-align: right;">24 items</p> |
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Correspondence (1846)

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| 4 | 29 October 1846-30 October 1846 | <p>Correspondence between John de Blaquiere, Adjutant to Colonel K. Fitzgibbon, and Richard Kane, relating to list of plate belonging to County Limerick Militia.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">2 items.</p> |
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