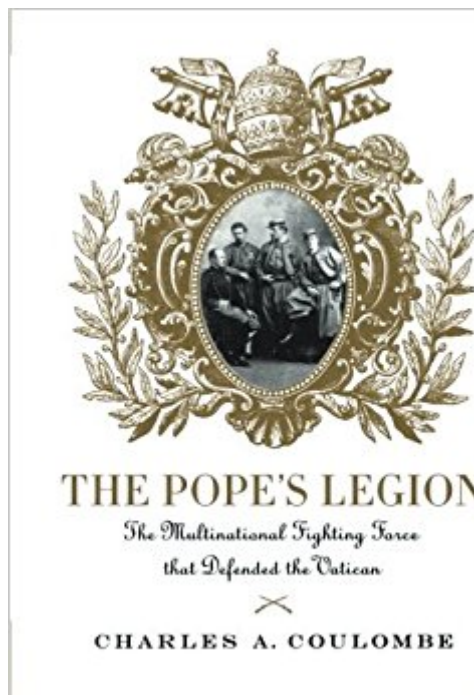




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The Pope's Legion: The Multinational Fighting Force That Defended The Vatican



Synopsis

With Arthurian grandeur the Papal Zouaves marched into Italy in the mid-nineteenth century, summoned by the Pope under siege as the Wars of the Risorgimento raged. Motivated by wanderlust, a sense of duty and the call of faith, some 20,000 Catholic men from around the world rallied to Vatican City to defend her gates against Sardinian marauders. Volunteers came from France, Belgium, Spain, Ireland, Austria, and many other countries, including the United States. The battles that ensued lasted over 10 years, among a shifting array of allies and enemies and are among history's most fascinating yet largely overlooked episodes. Napoleon, Pius IX, and Bismarck all make appearances in the story, but at the center were the Zouaves--steeped in a knightly code of honor, and unflinching in battle as any modern warrior--as the Church they vowed to defend to the death teetered at the brink of destruction.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

With a makeup and passion reminiscent of the forces that fought the armies of Mordor in Tolkien's Return of the King, the Pontifical Zouaves occupy a little-known chapter in Catholic Church history. Coulombe (Vicars of Christ) tells their story in detail, claiming this is the first time it has been related in such depth in English. The Zouaves, who took their name and style of dress from Algerian tribesmen, came from four continents and at least 17 countries to fight a 10-year war that began with the Sardinian seizure of Romagna in 1860 and Pope Pius IX's decision to resist the emerging Italian nationalist movement. Although the Zouaves' quest ultimately failed, their history is replete with many heroic moments, and their deep spirituality later influenced Catholics in other military

units. Coulombe acknowledges that few today treasure the Zouaves' memory because of a general disdain for Catholic militancy, but he is heartened by a recent revival of interest in their story. Military aficionados will enjoy this as much as readers attracted by the Zouaves' connection to Catholic history. Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

“Like an Indiana Jones movie, The Pope’s Legion starts moving from the get-go and doesn’t stop until the very last.”
• National Catholic Register
“With a makeup and passion reminiscent of the forces that fought the armies of Mordor in Tolkein’s Return of the King, the Pontifical Zouaves occupy a little-known chapter in Catholic Church history. Coulombe tells their story in detail”
| Military aficionados will enjoy this as much as readers attracted by the Zouaves’ connection to Catholic history.
• Publisher’s Weekly
“The Papal Zouaves constitute a fascinating, if previously neglected, chapter of the Church’s history. The Pope’s Legion tells a thrilling story superbly, and with the literary elegance and historical expertise we expect from Charles Coulombe.”
• Thomas E. Woods, Jr, Ph.D., bestselling author of How the Catholic Church Built Western Civilization
“In The Pope’s Legion Charles Coulombe brings to life one of history’s overlooked and more colorful chapters, evoking deeds of honor, sacrifice, and the deepest impulses of faith.”
• H. Paul Jeffers, bestselling author of Freemasons and The Napoleon of New York
“Charles Coulombe’s fast-paced, compelling book, is a fitting tribute to the many Catholics from all over the world who offered their lives to preserve the independence of the Holy Father. It is a monument to their faith and to their ideals and a must-read for anyone interested in Papal history.”
• Msgr. Ignacio Barreiro Carfagna, Director, Human Life International, Rome
“This is a unique, original look at an often neglected part of our history. It’s a good read - meticulously researched, well written, and full of exciting narrative detail.”
• John Prizer, former National Catholic Register film critic and film and television producer
“Like his earlier book on the papacy, this volume by Charles Coulombe is thoroughly researched, attractively written and historically accurate.”
• Msgr. Francis J. Weber, archivist for the Archdiocese of Los Angeles and author of numerous historical works

This is the first review for anything I have purchased on before. I have to say Mr. Coulombe is by far one of the greatest Catholic writers of all time. He effectively gets his point across and writes about topics that are forgotten by the majority, especially with this book. A Paladin of the counter

revolution, Mr. Coulombe's works are worth \$100 dollars each. This is an absolute steal, I would have paid a lot more money for this book. Highly recommend. We need more men like Mr. Coulombe.

This is a fascinating book; there is no question about that. But it contains no maps whatsoever and the discussion of the Papal Zouaves is not always well situated within the larger strategic and tactical context. There are more than a couple of typographical and similar editing errors. The book is recommended; the author treats the topic with great care and sympathy, and there aren't other works on the topic. But grab a map, and if you want a systematic history of the Risorgimento against the Papal States, this is not the only book you should read.

An interesting and very readable account of the Risorgimento in general, and the men who defended the Papal States in particular. This was an area of history of which I had previously known little, and which ought to be more widely known. I do suggest, however, that you keep a map of Italy near by, as there are no maps provided (at least not in the Kindle Version) and the geographical references can be confusing for one unfamiliar with Italian political divisions.

The book is an excellent read of the story of these brave men, who joined a cause that was opposed by so many even today. It depicts many of the revolutionaries in Italy honestly, instead of the cardboard party line of a secularist. I particularly enjoy the way the author weaves the story of the men with the story of the unit, and the relation between the Church, the governance of the region, and the duplicity of the nascent Italian state. The Papal Zouaves have a tragic story; they were under-supplied, opposed by many governments as reactionary, and treated with derision after capture. That is part of the point, despite this these men maintained personal piety, regimental discipline and stood their ground for their cause.

Absolutely amazing book!! Incredibly fascinating and keeps you engaged from start to finish. I would highly recommend

Interesting as something I knew little about and had ancestor who was a member

Coulombe does a brilliant job of bringing these Heros back to life. Clearly chivalry didn't die in the Middle Ages but was only extinguish with the passing of the last Zouave.

The Pope's Legion is exactly what a book of popular military history should be: accurate, well written, concise, and entertaining. It begs comparison to Douglas Porch's History of the French Foreign Legion, which is high praise indeed. Coulombe's work is excellent all around: a story of rogues and saints, fighting in a cause they believed was well worth dying for. Particularly moving are the direct quotations from letters of the Zouaves who expressed their zeal and ardor in such a heartfelt and thrilling manner. I have purchased several additional copies of this book to give to teenagers I know as it is an exciting work showing that there were--and still are--causes bigger than oneself. For those of us romantics who lift a glass on April 16 to toast the memory of those who died at Culloden, or heartily believe in the fourfold motto of Carlism, this is a seminal text. And to those who simply want a great story, finely told: this is a wonderful book for you, as well.

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