Chapter 2

The Rise of Yellow-White Flags
(1825–1870)

Yellow-White Ensigns

After Pius VII adopted a yellow-white cockade in 1808, many papal flags changed within a generation. His successor introduced new maritime ensigns, and in time new military colors and fort flags arose as well.

For several centuries Papal States flags had borne white fields like those of the French ancien régime. After the French revolution and its attendant expansionism under the *Tricolore*, however, many continental European flags changed. Flags with stripes, both vertical and horizontal, appeared more often, especially in tricolor form. Indeed France twice occupied Italy (including the Papal States) and introduced various tricolor flags for a time.

Pontifical authorities under Leo XII first introduced striped papal flags for a suite of maritime ensigns in 1825. The flags featured the yellow-white colors of the cockade of his predecessor, and took the form of a vertical “bicolor”—a flag with two stripes rather than three. By the fall of papal Rome in 1870, nearly all papal flags of note used the same core pattern (see Appendices I & II).

The 1825 flags now regularized the civil ensign for papal merchant ships, which had often flown the white war ensign to feign armed might and ward off pirates. Similar situations obtained elsewhere. Like its counterparts in Europe, the papal government now sought to standardize its civil ensign in light of new international agreements that ended North African piracy, agreements that followed the fall of Algiers to European forces in 1816.¹

The new papal flags comprised a civil ensign, state ensign, and pilot ensign, as stipulated in a “Notification” of 17 September 1825 by Pierfrancesco Galleffi,² the cardinal chamberlain (*camerlengo*) who oversaw matters of trade and finance (Fig. 2.1 and Appendix IV). Though no actual flag specimens appear to survive,
Figure 2.2. Civil Ensign, 1825 official model
Rome’s Biblioteca Casanatense preserves the original Notification and accompanying “models”, color drawings to guide flagmakers (Figs. 2.2 & 2.4–5). Illustrations also appear in previously-mentioned books or manuscripts of the era, including an undated annex to the 1819 *Pavillons*, the 1834 *Verzameling* dispatches, the Papal States *Quadro*, and the 1858 book by LeGras.

The decree states in part:


Pope Leo XII … having come to the determination of repressing the arbitrary [things] used by some navigators, and of establishing uniformity in the colors and forms of the Papal Flags which are … hoisted by [Papal] State[s] Ships, has commanded …

1st: The Papal Flag which all State commerce and fishing ships must hereafter hoist will be of yellow color for the half attached to the mast, and of white color for the other half in the center of which will be depicted the tiara with the keys, according to the norm of the models deposited in all Port Offices.

2nd: The Flag to be hoisted by Ships attached to the Treasury Service will be of the same form and colors, except that instead of the tiara [there] will be depicted in the white half the Gonfalon with the keys, above which will be placed the initial letters—Reverenda Camera Apostolica [Reverend Apostolic Chamber]—and in the yellow half will be inscribed Servizio di Finanza according to the norm of the models which will be forwarded by the Monsignor Treasurer-General.

3rd: Merchant Ships of the State must furthermore be furnished with a Flag of recognition and to request aid, always to be hoisted at the mainmast, which will be of the same form and colors as that prescribed in the 1st Art. with the addition, however, of a large band of red color around the extremity of the same, excluding that which is attached to the mast.
Figure 2.3. Civil Ensign, 1858 illustration

Figure 2.4. Pilot Ensign, 1825 official model (detail)
4th: The dimensions and expanse of such Flags will be determined by each Owner according to the size and capacity of the Ships.

5th: The Ships [so furnished] at the stern ... will raise it/[them] on the mast, ... and all the other Ships will hoist it/[them] on the main-mast.

6th: It is prohibited to all above-mentioned Ships to hoist on the peak of the masts any streamer with the Papal arms, but ... only ... to make use of a long streamer of white color and without arms.

7th: On each holy day of obligation, every Papal Ship stationed in State or foreign ports will be obliged to have hoisted the above-mentioned Flag from the rising of the sun to [its] setting, unless it is impeded by a vigorous and stormy wind.

8th: All commerce ship Owners will have to furnish themselves with the above-mentioned Flags within ... four months, and those which are fishing Ships within ... two months ....

The official 1825 model for the civil ensign is annotated, “Flag for Merchant and Fishing Ships” (Fig. 2.2). An 1858 LeGras image provides a comparison (Fig. 2.3). Essentially the new design transformed a former white civil ensign variant (with the tiara-and-keys emblem—see Fig. 1.14) into a bicolor format. The new design is noteworthy because after the Papal States fell in 1870, Vatican City State resurrected it in 1929 as its state flag—a choice to be examined later. The design also served as the basis for the Papal States pilot ensign which bore a red border on three sides (Fig. 2.4), and sometimes all four.

The state ensign for customs vessels bore the papal keys beneath the ceremonial umbrella signifying the Roman Church and its temporal power (Figs. 2.5–6). The latter was associated with the cardinal-chamberlain (camerlengo) who oversaw the state treasury. Artwork features the state ensign as early as 1830 (Fig. 2.7). Flag books also report that these vessels flew a long masthead streamer that was yellow at the hoist and white at the fly, with the umbrella-and-keys emblem disposed vertically at the onset of the white (see Fig. 1.3, no. 10). As a coast guard, the customs fleet absorbed the navy in 1856, but whether...
Figure 2.5. State Ensign, official model (detail), 1825

Figure 2.6. State Ensign, 1858 illustration
flag usage changed is unclear. Though captions are lacking for the government chart Quadro (issued between 1855 and 1870), it shows naval ensigns verified by actual flag specimens, as well as (presumably) a modified state ensign, with initials but without inscriptions or streamer (see Fig. 1.4, no. 8).13

A later decree (8 January 1855) created two award flags for distinguished merchant marine captains, featuring yellow-and-white fields with effigies of Ss. Peter and Paul. These re-fashioned the war ensign design in bicolor format. The first-class award was a bicolor bordered in red, with St. Paul on the yellow stripe and St. Peter on the white, each on a grassy mound; the second-class award had a white field bearing the apostles, and bordered in yellow (Fig. 2.8; also see Fig. 1.4, nos. 9–10; and Appendix IV).14

A few years after the 1825 decree, the yellow-white papal colors were clearly employed in land-based flags, to be treated presently. The first known examples are the flags of the Papal Infantry and the Civic Guard.

**Infantry Colors**

By the 19th century European military regiments generally carried two flags. The lesser one represented the unit itself and its fighting traditions. The other was more significant: it was the sovereign’s flag and usually bore his colors or coat of arms.15 In many countries this was called “the King’s color” to honor the monarch, or “the Colonel’s color” in recognition of the officer whose company carried it, or the “national color” in republics, but in the Papal States it was called “the papal flag”.

In the 18th century the papal infantry color was often white with the pope’s personal arms and other adornments.16 These flags are reasonably well-attested by various archival sources. For 19th-century flags, a significant resource is the Piroli Collection—a compilation of watercolors showing Roman military uniforms and flags from 1823 to 1870.

The first 19th-century infantry color is shown in watercolors dated 1826 and 1827, sometimes bearing anachronistic arms. The flag was white with the pontiff’s arms in the center, surmounted by the tiara-and-keys emblem and framed by a green wreath (Fig. 2.9).17 The square field was fringed in gold, and bore a single gold frame-border (which sometimes appears reddish) set
Figure 2.7. State Ensign, 1830, Papal Coast Guard vessel

Figure 2.8. Award Ensigns, 1855–1870
slightly inside the white edges of the flag. Gold six-pointed stars adorned each corner. The staff was spirally red and yellow, and bore golden cords and tassels with a silver lance-head. The basic design likely dates from the pontificate of Pius VII (1800–1823); and since the new papal colors of gold and white are prominent, it was likely created after their adoption (1808) and the restoration of the Papal States (1814–15).

Under Gregory XVI the papal infantry adopted flags with yellow and white stripes disposed diagonally (Fig. 2.10)—a pattern akin to French regiments of the era. The Piroli Collection first attested diagonal bicolors in 1831 for Rome’s Civic Guard, a home militia whose flags are treated later. The infantry likely received theirs at the same time, though first attested by Piroli in 1832. The flag was square and divided diagonally from upper hoist to lower fly, with yellow at the hoist and white at the fly. The stripes were bisected by a red disk bearing a tiara-and-keys emblem (with both keys in gold). The disk was encircled by a white border inscribed in black GREGORIO XVI P.O.M. Its edge was trimmed in black, with rounded serrations. The flagstaff was yellow with
Figure 2.11. Infantry Color, 1846–1849, 2nd Foreign Regiment, Pius IX

Figure 2.12. Infantry Color, 1860, 2nd Foreign Regiment, Pius IX
a lance-head finial, and bore a cravat with two tails, one yellow and one white. Each tail had fringe and bore the tiara-and-keys emblem in miniature toward the bottom—in gold on the white tail and in silver on the yellow one. The fringe on the flag is usually shown as gold, but in one instance is silver along the bottom hem; the lance-head is usually gold, but in one instance silver.

Gregory’s successor, Pius IX, initially authorized the same design, as attested by two infantry colors preserved in Switzerland. One is held by the Nidwalden Museum in Stans (Fig. 2.11), and the other by the Valerian Museum in Sion (Sitten). Both are identified as the “color of the 2nd foreign regiment in service to the Papal States 1846–1849.” They bear inscriptions honoring Pius in his reign’s first year (PIO IX – P.O.M. – ANNO I). Both keys are golden-yellow, bound by a cord of the same color. The flags have golden-yellow fringe, and bear a three-tailed cravat in the Italian colors: one green, one white, and one red, each with gold fringe.

The cravat recalls Pius’s initial empathy for rising pan-Italian nationalism and the Risorgimento. Indeed, early in his reign, pan-Italian sentiments galvanized around him as he pursued political reforms—culminating in the first Papal States constitution on 14 March 1848. In consequence, on 18 March the interior minister, Gaetano Recchi, issued a decree that “the white-yellow papal flag will be adorned by a cravat of the Italian colors.” The decree apparently referred to military colors alone and was followed two days later by a corresponding order from the defense minister.

Shortly thereafter the papal flag bearing the pan-Italian cravat was carried by papal troops commanded by Piedmontese General Giovanni Durando. The detachment was sent to lend moral support to Piedmont amid tension with Austria, whose empire held Italy’s northeast. Indeed, Swiss troops serving Pius’s detachment during the Battle of Vicenza waved their papal flags at Durando’s lodging—presumably the two infantry flags preserved today in Switzerland. Elsewhere other unofficial flags of various designs were carried as auguries of papal favor.

Because Pius resisted actual war against Catholic Austria, he suffered politically and a republican revolution ensued. He fled Rome for Gaeta in November 1848. The revolution collapsed in 1849 as armies from France and Austria invaded the Papal States and restored papal authority on 15 July. The French stayed on to protect the pope’s claim to Rome and the Austrians stayed to protect his jurisdiction over the outlying provinces. Pius returned to Rome on 12
April 1850, residing from then on at the Vatican (a religious center) instead of the Quirinal Palace (the seat of civil government).

Sometime after the Papal States restoration, a new infantry color was introduced without the tricolor cravat, probably upon restructuring from 1849 to June 1852 (when new finials are recorded). It lasted until 1860 and was carried by papal forces against Piedmont’s pan-Italian army at Perugia, Pesaro, San Angelo, Ancona, and Castelfidardo. All flag specimens were lost or destroyed in battle, except for one captured by Piedmontese forces at the Battle of Castelfidardo on 18 September 1860, and now held by the Royal Armory of Turin (Fig. 2.12).

The vertical bicolor is surmounted by a red roundel, charged with Pius’s coat of arms supported by the tiara and keys. Circling the red roundel is a golden inscription with the regiment’s name: FANTERIA DI LINEA SECONDO REGGIMENTO ESTERO. Its ornamental laurel branches are silver on the yellow stripe and gold on the white stripe; the fringe is gold. Its pole bears a
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Figure 2.14. Hand-tinted version of photo in Figure 2.13 (detail; undated)

lancehead finial from which hangs a single remaining yellow cord with a tassel (the other is lost).

On 3 May 1862 the final papal infantry color was blessed by Pius IX and presented to commanders at Anzio.\(^{28}\) It was a plain yellow-white vertical bicolor with no emblem or inscription, and was adorned with gold fringe as well as a fringed cravat composed of two yellow-white tails.\(^{29}\) It was carried on several campaigns, including the Battle of Mentana in 1867, and served until Italy seized papal Rome in 1870. Its simple design reflected the decisive core pattern for bicolor papal flags in place by the time of the Papal States’ demise.

Although no specimen is known to have survived, three contemporary sources confirm its design: a photo from the 1860s, held by Rome’s Archivio Fotografico Comunale, depicting a tableau of papal troops, one of whom holds the color (Figs. 2.13–14);\(^{30}\) a painting of the Battle of Mentana held by the Vatican (1868);\(^{31}\) and a color lithograph in a memoir by Baron de Charette, a Papal Zouave veteran (Fig. 2.15, ca. 1877).\(^{32}\) Further confirmation is found in
Figure 2.15. Final Infantry Color, lithograph, ca. 1877

Figure 2.16. Final Infantry Color, 1920 illustration

Figure 2.17. Final Infantry Color, 1918 watercolor, detail of color-bearers: Line Infantry (left) & Papal Zouaves (right)
two papal military retrospectives: one by the official Italian military historian (Fig. 2.16, 1920); and one by a papal nobleman, featuring dual watercolors showing the regimental flag-bearers of the line infantry and the Papal Zouaves (Fig. 2.17, ca. 1918). The flag also appears in commemorative artwork by Lionel Royer, a Zouave protégé of Charette.

The Papal Zouaves (Les Zouaves Pontificaux) were light infantrymen whose name and uniform derived from Algeria in the 1830s. Formed on 1 January 1861 from a battalion of Franco-Belgian volunteers who fought at Castelfidardo, the Zouaves became a full regiment with recruits from many lands. In 1870 their infantry color was saved from capture by Captain Auguste de Fumel, who hid it within his uniform. Later it was shredded by Charette and distributed among the officers as a talisman for their return home. These fragments are preserved by Zouave descendants today.

Other Zouave flags include a small fanion replica held by the Royal Museum of the Army in Brussels (Fig. 2.18), which also holds a photo of the original. It is white with a yellow border and Pius’s arms in the center. The tiara-and-keys emblem is embroidered in silver; the arms are highlighted in yellow. The reverse is plain yellow, and its frayed edges show traces of fringe. Pius presented it to the Zouaves’ predecessors, a battalion of Franco-Belgian Papal Sharpshooters, who carried it in 1860 at the Battle of Castelfidardo. Pius received another flag in tribute to the Zouaves from some U.S. matrons in 1867; he gave it to the unit on 5 May 1868 (Fig. 2.19). The bicolor is bisected with his arms and adorned with honorary inscriptions and a battle honor recalling their heroism at Castelfidardo.

The Papal Zouaves were a brainchild of the papal army commander, Christophe de Lamoricière. A faded fanion of his squadron staff at Castelfidardo in 1860 was a unique vertical bicolor, with white at the hoist and yellow at the fly (Fig. 2.20). The obverse was bisected by Pius’s arms; the reverse bore the general’s arms (above those of four guides). A bicolor cravat (divided lengthwise) also bore these two arms.

Devotees worldwide preserve artifacts or reenact the exploits of foreign papal volunteers. The Irish “Battalion of St. Patrick” had a green gonfalon with St. Patrick’s image on the obverse, the Madonna’s image on the reverse, and gold inscriptions. Dutch Zouaves had an elaborate gonfalon with St. Michael’s image. Flemish Zouave veterans had a vertical bicolor bisected by Pius’s arms.
Figure 2.18. Fanion replica: Franco-Belgian Sharpshooters

Figure 2.19. Zouaves Tribute Flag, 1867–8: from U.S. Matrons
In Montreal, French-Canadian Zouave recruits received a white flag in 1868. The obverse bore a tiara-and-keys emblem; the reverse bore a unit badge featuring a beaver, maple leaves, and the Zouave motto. After arriving in Rome, the field was altered to yellow-white stripes; but the dual central emblems likely remained—thus bisecting the stripes, as in an old veterans’ flag. Hence one side was a yellow-white vertical bicolor bisected by a tiara-and-keys emblem.

This flag pattern also appears in a painting by Marius Richard (1887) at the Vatican Historical Museum, honoring France’s loyalty to the papacy. In it a fallen Zouave holds a vertical bicolor bisected by a tiara-and-keys emblem in gold; the staff bears a yellow-white cravat. French Zouave descendants carry a similar flag today. Though unconfirmed as a military color, this flag did serve as a papal fort flag.

Fort, Civil, and State Flags

Further yellow-white papal flags were flown in the Papal States at private palaces and forts. These included key fortified garrison sites in each city (termed “fort flags” or “war flags”), and “civil flags” for popular display. These bicolor
Figure 2.21a. Fort flag, 1870

Figure 2.21b. Fort flag, 1870, detail (reverse)
flags were inspired by yellow-and-white military colors used ashore under Gregory XVI and Pius IX, which in turn evolved from bicolor ensigns at sea under Leo XII (see Appendices I & II). Apparently the new fort and civil flags lacked uniformity or legal codification, but were commonly recognized as legitimate. Simple and distinctive, they rivaled Italy’s tricolor during the Risorgimento, especially under Pius IX, who struggled to preserve the Papal States.

Two fort flags from Rome (1870) are still preserved. The first is a vertical bicolor composed of six vertical breadths of wool (three yellow, three white) bisected by a tiara-and-keys emblem. The latter is embroidered, and comprises a white tiara, with colored jewels along its crowns, above two orange-yellow keys bound together by a red cincture; its height is one-third of the flag’s width (Fig. 2.21). It was given to the Vatican Gendarmerie in 2011 by Prince Sforza Ruspoli, a descendant of papal nobility. He asserts that this fort flag (bandiera da fortezza) flew near Rome’s Porta Pia on 20 September 1870. Nearby an army of the Kingdom of Italy breached the city walls and Rome surrendered. The flag was taken for safekeeping to the Villa Bonaparte owned by Cristina Ruspoli, whose descendants preserved it. (The flag’s heading bears a cord that is attached to a blue wooden staff, likely for display from a fixed bracket.)

The same design also appears in a contemporary Spanish illustration of Rome’s surrender, and likely flew at forts elsewhere in 1870. Thus an Italian soldier reported a “white and yellow flag with the gold keys” atop a fort in Civita Castellana at its capture. As early as 1849, a journalist reported it (or a similar flag) at Rome’s Castel Sant’Angelo fortress, when French forces deposed the Roman Republic, restored the Papal States, and ceremoniously re-hoisted “the yellow and white banner, emblazoned with the keys of St. Peter”, upon appeals from papal authorities. In 1866, when the French departed that fort, a correspondent reported it again: “the French tri-color was hauled down … and the Papal flag, white and yellow, with the cross [sic] keys, unfurled in its stead.” Another journalist’s sketch of the ceremony likely records it atop the fort, too (Fig. 2.22).

However a second (and different) fort flag flew at Castel Sant’Angelo in 1870: a plain vertical bicolor with no emblem. Held by the Vatican Historical Museum, each stripe comprises three vertically-conjoined breadths of wool (Fig. 2.23). Nearly square, its design corresponds to the infantry color of the era. Lowered upon the fort’s surrender to Italian forces on 21 September, it was taken by a bersaglieri from Genoa, and then preserved by a papal
Figure 2.22. French depart Castel Sant’Angelo, 1866; Detail below

Detail of papal flag atop Castel Sant’Angelo, 1866
chamberlain; his daughter’s descendants, the Boggiano Pico family, gave it to John Paul II in Genoa in 1985.  

The variance between this flag (without an emblem) and the Ruspoli design (which bears one), suggests that no uniform fort flag existed. Fortress protocols are silent on the matter, and detailed eyewitness descriptions are rare. It may be that precise standardization never evolved, and perhaps further variations existed. We cannot be certain unless future discoveries are made.

Likewise uncertain is precisely when bicolor fort flags replaced traditional white designs (Fig. 2.24). The LeGras book (1858) records only a white fort flag bearing the pope’s personal arms (which at times was replaced by the tiara-and-keys emblem alone; see Figs. 1.12–15). But this is incomplete; for by mid-century, bicolors were gradually replacing white designs—though in disparate
Figure 2.24. Fort flags (variety), Pius IX

Figure 2.25. Undated painting of civil flags (detail): Pius IX in the Piazza del Popolo, 1846
fashion. From 1846 through 1848, white fort flags are depicted in Rome, Civitavecchia, Bologna, and Civita Castellana. In July 1849, however, an official reported a “white and yellow” fort flag at Rome, despite a “white” one at Civitavecchia; other reports in 1849 confirm bicolors at Rome. Forts elsewhere flew bicolors over time, as recorded at Civitavecchia (1862), Porto d’Anzio (1862), and Civita Castellana (1870).

Thus, by 1849 bicolor fort flags clearly replaced white ones in Rome, but elsewhere only later. Indeed the trend may have begun as early as 1815, but this is otherwise unconfirmed, and thus uncertain (see Figs. 1.30–31). In any case, by 1870, all forts likely flew bicolors, especially after the Papal States were reduced to Lazio (1860). They likely bore vertical stripes after Pius IX was restored, as typified by other bicolors of that period (see Appendices I & II). The Ruspoli design was likely preferred: it comprised the simpler white fort flag (i.e., with a tiara-and-keys emblem alone) in bicolor format. It seems the best attested at forts, was used by Papal Zouave veterans and devotees, and served as a proto-national papal flag after 1870. Flags of this period are described later.

Papal civil flags for unofficial, popular use were likewise diverse. These festoon streets and buildings in two paintings of Roman scenes under Pius IX. One is undated but contemporary (Fig. 2.25); and the other dates from 1877. Such flags are well-attested on public occasions by eyewitnesses and historians, who report that yellow-white flags “were used in civil ceremonies to decorate streets in the pontifical colors.” The preferred version was likely a plain bicolor—whether vertical (likely inspired by France’s tricolor) or horizontal (likely inspired by Austria’s Hapsburg bicolor, i.e., black over yellow).

Other civil flag patterns are also documented. A small, yellow-white flag divided quarterly is held by the Museo Civico del Risorgimento in Modena, while diagonal bicolors appear in an 1846 sketch recalling a railway inauguration. The latter pattern recalls an infantry color of the era, and the bicolors bear various charges, such as the tiara-and-keys emblem or honorary inscriptions.

When these civil flags originated is unclear. Perhaps they were known by 1834, when a flag chart identified a plain vertical bicolor (with no emblem) as a “Signal flag for communication with shore interests” (Fig. 2.26). The meaning is unclear, but it was probably semi-official. After 1870 plain bicolors endured as unofficial papal flags in Italy and elsewhere—as also today (to be examined later).
Figure 2.26. “Signal Flag”, 1834

Figure 2.27. State flag, 1900, Argentine papal legation
While fort and civil flags were common, state flags (flags appointed for state offices) cannot be found. Perhaps none existed, and absent clear evidence, presuming their use would be anachronistic. No papal act prescribed the custom, which was still evolving in Europe as state buildings began flying their nation’s fort flag. At times papal state agents were stationed in protected garrison zones flying a fort flag anyway, or at the Quirinal Palace, a papal residence and seat of civil government, the Swiss Guard flag (see Fig. 1.24). By contrast, plaques bearing papal arms are common at state offices (unlike flags). Perhaps they flew civil flags whenever area buildings did likewise, but state flags cannot be ruled out in some sense. Some diplomatic posts likely flew them before 1870, as they did afterward; e.g., Argentina’s papal legation flew the Ruspoli design (1900, Fig. 2.27). More on this later.

As the preceding survey of diverse flags on land further shows, the term “papal flag” evoked a symbolic principle (papal sovereignty) but not a uniform design. Standardized national flags are taken for granted by observers today; but in the Papal States and elsewhere, designs on land were less strictly codified than those at sea. Still, however catalyzed and endorsed, each flag embodied familiar papal symbolism and was readily identified as a “papal flag”.

Civic and Palatine Guard

Other papal forces also carried distinctive flags, many of which were yellow-white bicolors. These included the ceremonial colors of the Civic Guard and the Palatine Honor Guard, as well as those of the civic districts of Rome.

The Civic Guard was a home militia in various Papal States cities—similar to those in other Italian states. In Rome under Pius VII, its initial flag was reportedly blue upon reconstitution in 1815. In 1823 under Leo XII it appears thus in a Piroli Collection watercolor, with his arms (surrounded by a green wreath and surmounted by the tiara-and-keys) and a golden-yellow frame-border set slightly inside the hem, a pattern reminiscent of the white infantry flag of the era. The border is followed by a pattern of interlaced ovals of the same color, and six-pointed stars. The flag has gold fringe and golden cords and tassels attached to the staff, which is red with yellow spikes, all surmounted by a golden statuette of St. Michael the Archangel. In 1829 the same flag appears, but with the arms of Pius VIII. The golden-frame border is omitted, and the finial is a silver lance-head (Fig. 2.28).
Figure 2.28. Civic Guard color, 1829, Pius VIII
Figure 2.29. Civic Guard color, 1831, Gregory XVI
Figure 2.30a. Civic Guard color (obverse), 1846, Pius IX

Figure 2.30b. Civic Guard color (reverse), 1846, Pius IX
In 1831 under Gregory XVI, the Rome Civic Guard was shown with a new, yellow-white flag (Fig. 2.29)\textsuperscript{86}—probably issued at the same time as the infantry, whose earliest yellow-white flag, first attested in 1832, has already been treated. The Guard color was likewise divided diagonally, although in the opposite direction—from upper fly to lower hoist. Otherwise it followed the basic pattern of its predecessors, bearing Gregory’s arms within a green wreath and surmounted by the tiara and keys—all surmounting a bicolor with four six-pointed gold stars in the corners. The staff was yellow with a golden lance-head and yellow cords and tassels, and the flag was fringed in gold. It is uncertain how long this flag was used, for by 1841 the Rome Civic Guard was shown carrying the regular infantry flag of the era instead of its own distinctive flag.\textsuperscript{87}

The Vatican Historical Museum at the Lateran Palace holds a Rome Civic Guard flag gifted by Bologna, early in the reign of Pius IX (Fig. 2.30).\textsuperscript{88} It is quite large and made of white silk. One side bears a black inscription GUARDIA CIVICA DI ROMA 1846 in three lines, within a golden wreath of oak; at the corners are olive branches framing the monogram P.IX. The other side bears the arms of Pius IX surmounted by the tiara and keys (one gold and one silver), within a golden wreath of oak and olive branches, with branches also adorning the edges of the flag. The staff’s finial bears a circular Roman wreath surmounted by a Christian cross. It also bore a cravat which is not displayed.\textsuperscript{89}

Shortly thereafter, Rome’s Civic Guard was assigned a white vexillum bearing Pius’s personal arms within a wreath above the battalion number in
Figure 2.32. Civic Guard labarum, ca. 1848, Pius IX (detail)
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Gold. Its design corresponded to the traditional white fort flag in the form of an unusual labarum. Two specimens from 1847 (or 1848, as sources differ) are held by Rome’s Capitoline Museum, and displayed in the Palazzo Senatorio (Fig. 2.31, shown spread out flat). Its central part was curved at the bottom and straight along the top, where it was held by a horizontal crossbar attached to the staff and ornamented with cords and tassels. Its lateral parts hung down in folds on either side and its reverse was plain yellow. Its finial was a Roman eagle within a wreath, standing on a pedestal marked S.P.Q.R. From at least 18 March 1848, its cravat bore tails in the green-white-and-red Italian colors, to reflect the pan-Italian fervor that swept the Papal States, as noted earlier (Fig. 2.32). On May 8 it was carried at the Battle of Cornuda against Austria. The Civic Guard disbanded in 1849 after the Roman Republic collapsed.

Civic Guard units outside Rome had distinctive flags as well. An 1848 watercolor shows a Frascati Civic Guardsman whose rifle bears a fanion; it is yellow over white with a battalion inscription. For Bologna, a contemporary painting shows a guard with a yellow-white vertical bicolor bisected by the arms of Pius IX; the flag bears a cravat and fringe in the Italian colors (Fig. 2.33). A Bologna student battalion had similar flag, but divided horizontally (white over yellow); and a surviving fragment is bisected by Pius’s arms on one side, and a battalion inscription on the other, with the date 1848 (Fig. 2.34).

The Palatine Honor Guard Corps was founded by Pius IX in December 1850. It comprised loyal volunteers from the defunct Civic Guard and served
Figure 2.35. Palatine Guard color, 1859–1878, Pius IX

Figure 2.36a. Rome District Flag (obverse), 1847, Pius IX
in the Apostolic Palace, at papal ceremonies, and as a security reserve. In September 1859 it received rights to a flag that was blessed on 31 March 1860. It was reminiscent of the era’s infantry color: a vertical yellow-white bicolor with the pontiff’s personal arms bisecting the stripes (Fig. 2.35). Both keys are gold, and metallic-gold oak branches frame the flag’s corners and arms. Fringe alternating in gold and silver adorned the flag, while a two-tailed cravat (white on one side, yellow on the other) bore golden inscriptions: GUARDIA PALATINA on one tail, D’ONORE on the other. The staff’s finial was a golden statuette of St. Michael atop a globe with the motto QUIS UT DEUS?

The Palatine Guard flag was among the few that remained in use after papal Rome collapsed in 1870, because the Corps remained in the pope’s service (along with the Swiss Guard, the Noble Guard, and the Gendarmerie). The color was altered with each new pope, whose arms took the place of his predecessor’s. Each color is preserved at the Vatican Historical Museum; that of Pius IX is newly restored. Paul VI disbanded the Corps on 14 September 1970—his flag being the last.

Figure 2.36b. Rome District Flag (reverse), 1847, Pius IX
Figure 2.37. Artillery color, 1870, Pius IX

Figure 2.38. Dragoons color, 1870, Pius IX
Yellow-white flags for the fourteen historic rioni (civic districts) of Rome were created in 1847 during the reform era that ended in revolution. They are held by the Capitoline Museum in Rome and displayed at the Palazzo Senatorio (examples in Figs. 2.36a and 2.36b). The districts reflected the Civic Guard quarters, and the flags were received when new city councilors were seated on the Capitoline Hill. The silk flags are divided horizontally, white over yellow. An exhibit catalog describes them:

The edges, adorned with lace, are decorated by silver embroidery of oak branches. Also silver is the embroidered laurel wreath that frames the red-amaranth medallion in which the district’s name appears at the center. On the reverse of each is the repeated motif of the [Roman] wolf with the twins [Romulus and Remus]. The [flags] are accompanied by a red ribbon bearing in gold letters the inscription S.P.Q.R. on one side, and PIO IX P.O.M. on the other. The flagstaffs were surmounted by the Roman eagle within a crown of gilded metal with the inscription S.P.Q.R. at the center, surmounted by the name of the Pontiff. On the reverse [of the lance-head appeared] the number of the quarter or of the battalion of the Civic [Guard].

A year later a papal decree reconfirmed that the flags would be carried at civic ceremonies, along with “the vexillum with the inscription S.P.Q.R. [Senatus Populusque Romanum] ... with its standard-bearer”.

**Other Flags**

Several papal forces used flags that were not yellow-white. The flags of the Pontifical Swiss Guards Corps will be treated in the next chapter; the remainder, presently.

The Pontifical Artillery Regiment had a velvet standard, preserved at the Vatican Historical Museum (Fig. 2.37). Disposed vertically from its staff, it was deep blue, and fringed in gold and silver. It was square, and on the obverse bore the arms of Pius IX in the center, accompanied by the golden inscription REGGIMENTO ARTIGLIERIA PONTIFICIA. On the reverse it was simply deep blue. Two golden tassels hung from the bottom corners. It had a deep blue staff and a finial of St. Michael atop a globe.
Figure 2.39. Carabinieri color, Pius VIII

Figure 2.40. Noble Guard color, Gregory XVI
The standard of the Pontifical Dragoons is also preserved at the Vatican Historical Museum (Fig. 2.38).\textsuperscript{102} Disposed vertically from its staff, it was dark green velvet, square, and adorned with fringe (and two bottom tassels) of gold and silver. The reverse was plain green; the obverse bore the arms of Pius IX with the keys and tiara, with the inscription DRAGONI PONTIFICI beneath. Its staff was dark green terminating in a spearhead.

The papal police were restructured on 14 July 1816 as the Pontifical Carbineer Corps, and had a green standard highlighted in gold, with the pontiff’s arms (Fig. 2.39).\textsuperscript{103} After the Roman Republic ended, it was restructured as the Veliti Pontifici in 1850, and renamed the Pontifical Gendarme Corps in 1851. Its square flag was dark blue velvet with gold fringe; it bore Pius’s arms in the center, above the inscription GENDARMERIA PONTIFICIA. The staff’s finial was a statuette of St. Michael atop a globe. Its date of origin is unclear, but it was turned over to Italian forces after the seizure of Papal Rome in 1870. A replica was made under Leo XIII, and the pattern lasted until 1970 (see Fig. 3.45). The final flag is held by the Vatican Historical Museum.\textsuperscript{104}

The Pontifical Noble Guard Corps, founded by Pius VII on 11 May 1801, was the pope’s mounted guard corps of 77 noblemen. Like the Palatine Honor Guard Corps, it was disbanded in 1970. Its last standard, preserved at the Vatican Historical Museum, followed a traditional pattern established by Pope Pius VII on 31 May 1820 (Fig. 2.40).\textsuperscript{105} It was white with the pontiff’s arms in the center, a gold border of interlaced ovals, and gold fringe. Trophies of golden weapons appeared at the inner corners, and the name of the corps appeared on the cravat. Later these elements were rearranged a bit.

One member of the Noble Guard was known as the vexillifer or gonfalonier, and carried the vessillo or Standard of the Holy Roman Church when the pope traveled in ceremonial processions. In past centuries the vexillifer held an office of considerable repute; and the standard, usually red, had various shapes and designs, as noted previously. In the 19th century, it was a two-tailed, red flag bearing the pope’s personal arms surmounted by the tiara-and-keys emblem, and adorned throughout with various golden decorations. The standard used under Pius VII is preserved by the Vatican Historical Museum, and bears an array of golden ornamentations.\textsuperscript{106} The latter also appeared in the standard under Gregory XVI, as shown by the Piroli Collection (Fig. 2.41); but under Pius IX the background was arrayed with six-pointed gold stars instead.\textsuperscript{107}
Figure 2.41. Vexillifer, 1831, Gregory XVI
The Roman Senate and People also had an honorary flag. It appears often in 19th-century sources, and as early as 1705. It was red with a gold-bordered red shield bearing the gold initials SPQR (Senatus Populusque Romanus in Latin). An 1847 decree stated that "the flag of the Roman Senate and People will be hoisted and carried [at] … certain solemn formalities." As noted earlier, a similar vexillum accompanied the civic district flags. The SPQR shield, with a cross added to the canton, still serves as the city’s coat of arms, and often bisects the modern flag of the Commune of Rome—a vertical bicolor of maroon and gold.

During wartime Castel Sant’Angelo supposedly flew a red flag bearing the image of the Archangel Michael—its patron and namesake—but this is not attested in the 1800s. In any case the final flag at that fort was a white flag of surrender, hoisted on 20 September 1870 after Italian forces breached Rome’s walls. Italy’s tricolor, bearing the House of Savoy’s arms, now flew in Rome.

Summary

A survey of 19th century papal flags yields three conclusions, as shown by the charts in Appendices I & II.

First, papal flags varied; and no specific design became the sole, exclusive “papal flag”. That term evoked a symbolic concept (papal sovereignty) more than a uniform design—unlike today’s lone, official Vatican flag.

Second, eventually bicolor flag designs dominated the rest—as this chapter shows. These flags recalled the Petrine keys of gold and silver, since in heraldry, gold correlates with yellow, and silver with white. Inspired by a yellow-white cockade that asserted papal independence from Napoleon in 1808, bicolor flags promoted papal sovereignty over and against the secular nationalism associated with Italy’s tricolor. In time the new flags largely eclipsed the papacy’s older red or white flags (except the navy), refashioning their designs in bicolor format. In this way, yellow and white became the papacy’s modern colors.

Third, despite bicolor variations, vertical stripes soon became the dominant papal flag motif—probably when the Papal States were restored in 1849 after a republican revolt. Indeed by 1870, when the Papal States ended, all bicolor flags bore vertical stripes specifically (with or without emblems)—thus reflecting a “core pattern” (Fig. 2.42).
Figure 2.42. Vertical Bicolor Flags, Pius IX: the core Papal Flag pattern after 1849.
These trends began largely at sea and spread to land. Vertical bicolors flew at sea from 1825, when Leo XII inaugurated new flags for merchant and customs vessels. Diagonal bicolors flew on land from 1831, when Gregory XVI authorized new flags for the Infantry and Civic Guard. Vertical bicolors replaced these under Pius IX, after the Papal States were restored in 1849—for the Infantry from about 1850, and the Palatine Guard from 1859. At some forts bicolor flags may have flown as early as 1815 (perhaps horizontal), and certainly from 1849 to 1870 (probably vertical); two such specimens survive (both vertical).

Among these designs, three are noteworthy. Each was reviewed in 1929 when the Vatican sought a state flag after reconciling with Italy—and each was a vertical bicolor. The first had no emblem. It served the Papal States as a civil flag (by mid-century) and an infantry color (from 1862), and flew from at least one fort (1870). The second had the tiara-and-keys emblem bisecting the stripes. It flew at some Papal States forts; and after Italy seized Rome, it flew at the Vatican as a proto-national papal flag (from at least 1903).

The third design bore the tiara-and-keys emblem in the fly. It was the civil ensign of the papal merchant marine from 1825 to 1870, when it vanished. But only for a time, for in 1929 this flag was revived by the new Vatican City State. The next chapter will explain that process, including a curious twist of fate: the man who recommended its revival, was the son of the papal commander at Castel Sant’Angelo in 1870, where a papal flag was lowered for the last time.
Notes, Chapter 2

1. Ziggioto, “Le bandiere degli stati italiani”, part I, p. 123, n. 28, states that “in that year [1825] the papal flag was ‘set free’ by the mediation of France, i.e., recognized and no longer disturbed by Algerian privateers”, and notes that larger states such as Prussia and Sardinia also had to curb random or whimsical civil ensigns (ibid. n. 27). Cf. Smith, _The Flag Book_, p. 18, regarding France. In an undated, later supplement to its 1819 edition, _Pavillons_, pl. 8-bis, noted that the two white papal civil ensigns had been “suppressed”. Cf. also Le Gras, pl. 22, no. 2, regarding the papal war ensign: “merchant ships cannot carry it anymore”. Cf. also, Bouquet.

2. Illustration from personal photo of manuscript in author’s archives. The text is also found in _Raccolta delle leggi … nello Stato Pontificio_, vol. 9, appendix 1. Cf. also _Bandiere di segnale_, file CS6020 (“Notificazione”).

3. Illustrations from _Bandiere di segnale_, files CS6021 (“Bandiera di riconoscimento”), CS6022 (“Bandiera per i Legni da Commercio e da Pesca”), CS6023 (“Bandiera per Servizio di Finanza”); reproduced with permission of Italy’s Ministry of Cultural Heritage & Activities. The manuscript collection also includes several pilot ensigns of regional powers to aid port authorities.

4. Galleffi, author’s translation. The author could not verify in the papal decrees collection of Rome’s Biblioteca Casanatense a supposedly preceding decree of 8 July 1824 reported (likely erroneously) by Vigevano, (p. 72), Ziggioto (part I, pp. 115–116 and _errata corriger_), Paschini (p. 3), and Holy See Press Office. The decree continues as follows: “9th: Whoever within the prescribed term shall not have provided his Ship with the Flags ordained ... will be punished with the withdrawal of their maritime passport. 10th: Those, furthermore, who permit themselves ... to change in some way the forms and colors prescribed in articles 1, 2, 3, and 6, will be punished with a fine not less than ten scudi, and not more than thirty scudi. 11th: The Msgr. Treasurer-General for the part which regards the Finance Ships, the Inspectors and Officials of State Port[s], and the Consuls, Vice-Consuls and Papal Consular Agents resident in Foreign Ports, respectively, are charged with the observance of the present dispositions.”

5. Illustration from _Bandiere di segnale_, file 006022 (“Bandiera per i Legni da Commercio e da Pesca”). The model illustration is closely followed by _Pavillons_, pl. 8-bis, in an undated supplement, which identifies it as the “ensign for merchant ships and for [those] which [are] fish[ing] vessels.”

6. Illustration from Le Gras, plate 22, no. 5, who calls it the “Flag of Fishing Vessels”, observing (inaccurately?) that “This ensign is that of fishing ships of the States of the Church. Merchant ships can hoist it on feast days, but only on a particular directive.” Its proportions are cited as 3:4.

7. Today’s Vatican City constitution similarly provides an “official model” (illustration) for its ceremonial flag, as will be seen. See pp. 95–98.

8. Illustration from _Bandiere di segnale_, file cs006021 (“Bandiera di riconoscimento”). Three sides are likewise red in the post-1819 supplement to _Pavillons_, plate 8-bis, that closely follows the official model and identifies it as the “ensign of recognition for requesting help”. Three sides are also red in Le Gras, pl. 22, no. 6, whose citation reads: “Pilot Ensign .... Proportions 3:4 .... All ships of the States of the Church must be furnished with this ensign. It is hoisted at the mainmast to call for a pilot, to appeal for help and to identify oneself, when one navigates on the coastline of the Roman States.” Four sides bear the red band in the ensign shown in _Verzameling_, no. 17, and _Quadro_.

The Rise of Yellow-White Flags (1825–1870)

9. Illustrations from *Bandiere di segnale*, file 006023 (“Bandiera per Servizio di Finanza”), followed by that of Le Gras, pl. 22, no. 4, who cites proportions of 3:4 and states: “Finance Ensign .... hoisted at the stern of all ships which belong to the service of the administration of finance (customs, etc.). The three letters R.C.A. signify REVERENDA CAMERA APOSTOLICA.”


11. Illustration from LeGras, pl. 22, no. 10. See also *Verzameling*, no. 14. Ziggioto, “La bandiera della marina pontificia di finanza”, estimates the ensign’s size as about 2 x 2.5 m (6 x 8 ft.), which coincides with existing war ensign specimens; and the streamer about 15 cm x 20 m (6 in. x 66 ft.).


13. Lack of a streamer (unlike the war ensign) may suggest use by small or unarmed state vessels. Or its location alongside the Vacant See ensign, might suggest an association of some kind (along with absence of inscriptions). Indeed, the armed steamer San Pietro is pictured flying the state ensign in 1848 (Pizutti, cover), but flew the war ensign in 1860 (Fig. 1.18).


15. Wise, p. 20. The author has found no significant evidence of distinctive unit flags to accompany the papal flag in the 1800s.


17. Illustration from Piroli, ms. 73/21 (1826 with arms of Leo XII); reproduced with permission (Istituto per la Storia del Risorgimento Italiano). Cf. also ms. 78/57 (1826 with anachronistic arms of Pius VIII), 73/37 (1827 with anachronistic arms of Gregory XVI), 73/38 (1827 with indecipherable arms). Vigevano, p. 72, mistakenly calls the border and stars red. Ales, pp. 86, 382–383 (pl. 106), estimates that the flags were ca. 130 cm (51 in.) square. Piroli, ms. 79/18 (1832), also attests a white flag with golden horns in the corners used early in the reign of Gregory XVI by Cacciatori in Romagna who were named “Zamboni” for their commander; cf. Ales, pp. 87, 384–385 (pl. 107), who changes the flag’s oblong orientation to a square.

18. Illustration from Piroli, ms. 73/102 (1835); reproduced with permission (Istituto per la Storia del Risorgimento Italiano). The flag also appears in ibid. ms. 74/15 (1832 Cacciatore), with Granatieri in mss. 73/99 (1835 and showing silver fringe at the bottom, and gold fringe on the top and side hems), 78/76 (1836), 79/25 (1841), 73/117 (1842); the latter two showing yellow-white alternating fringe. Cf. Vigevano, pp. 73–74; Zara, p. 137; and Ales, pp. 87, 139, and 384–385 (pl. 107, where he mistakenly portrays the flag with a separate reverse, confusing it with a distinct flag used by the Civic Guard early in Gregory’s reign), who estimates the flags’ size as about 90 cm (35 in.) square, which seems too small in light of existing flag specimens of the same design under Pius IX.


22. Decrees in Gazzetta di Roma, 20 March 1848, p. 1; reproduced by Vigevano, pp. 71 & 74–75, n. 4. Cf. Raccolta delle leggi ... nello Stato Pontificio, vol. 2, p. 52. Kertzer, The Pope who would be King, p. 60, reports some cravats in use as early as January. Pizutti says the cravat adorned the state ensign, as shown by an undated painting; but the author has yet to confirm this.

23. Rangoni-Machiavelli, p. 76. Roma 1846–1849, p. 39, states that the exercise was “composed of two divisions, one regular, and one of volunteers.... The representation of the Civic Guards was numerous.”


25. Cf. Ghisi, pp. 233–234, describes a ceremony in which new flags were carried by pant-Italian partisans to be blessed by Pius in advance of a campaign. He also describes a vertical bicolor of white over yellow with a red cross throughout on one side, and Pius’ name on the other, preserved today at the Museo del Risorgimento in Ferrara. Still other augury-flags were based on the Italian tricolor.

26. Ales, p. 88: the new flag probably arose in connection with the restructuring of the papal army after the restoration. Vigevano, pp. 1–5, and Alvarez, pp. 72–73, indicate that this took place between August 1849 and 1 June 1852. Chigi, 11 June 1852 entry, notes that a statuette of St. Michael the Archangel was added to the (already existing?) flags of (some?) papal troops (truppa pontificia) that day; but statuettes seem attested at this point only for the Artillery and Gendarmeria. Cf. Rangoni-Machiavelli, p. 76.

27. Illustration from Fiora, fig. 77; cf. also p. 105. Vigevano, p. 75, describes the two cords as one white and one yellow. Colangeli, fig. 51 and p. 180. Brandani et al, pp. 90–91, mistakenly omits the tiara-and-keys emblem; as does Ales, pp. 88, 390–391 (pl. 110), though he includes it in his description. Both show the finial as a lance-head, and Ales shows both cords as yellow. Ales shows a silver and gold inscription, but describes it only as gold, which seems to match Fiora.


29. Sources differ as to the precise composition of the cravat. Some show one tail in each color; others show each tail as bicolored, either vertically or horizontally.

30. Illustration (black & white) from Rome in Early Photographs, pl. 161 (noted as held by the
Archivio Fotografico Comunale, Rome). Illustration (color) from hand-tinted version in author’s archives, by G. Agustini Ottico (uncertain date). Cf. Brandani et al., frontpiece. The tableau shows (left to right): above, a Swiss Guard, a Noble Guard, a Palatine Guard (holding the color), a Papal Gendarme; below, an artilleryman, a customs officer, a line infantryman, a Zouave, a chasseur, a firefighter, and a dragoon.


32. Illustration from Charette, p. 88 annex, unnumbered color lithograph by F. Appel (“Drapeau du régiment des zouaves pontificaux a Rome”). The book’s first edition was printed in Tours and dates from 1875 or 1876. The author has used the second edition, printed in Paris, ca. 1877.

33. Illustration from Vigevano, pl. 1 (“Bandiera del Reggimento Fanteria di linea e del Reggimento Zuavi”); cf. also p. 75. Cf. Ales, p. 89.


35. Lionel-Noël Royer (1852–1926) befriended Charette and joined the Zouaves after they left papal service and supported France against Prussia in 1871. One of Royer’s artistic tableaus with the flag and its guardians appears as a black-and-white frontispiece in Mathuisieulx (1913); with a color version on the cover of Nouaille-Degorce (2017), available online (1 August 2018) at: <editionedilys.blogspot.com/2016/12/patrick-nouaille-degorce-mentana.html>. His painting, “The Battle Near Mentana” (oil on canvas, ca. 1907, private collection) depicts the flag amid troops, and Charette on horseback. It was exhibited in 1907 in Paris at the Salon de la Société des Artistes Français, no. 1396, and was sold by Sotheby’s in 2007. Cf. Sotheby’s online (retrieved 21 June 2018) at <www.sothebys.com/fr/auctions/ecatalogue/lot.90.html/2007/19th-century-european-paintings-am1030>.


37. Illustration retrieved online (16 July 2018) at: <www.maquetland.com/article-phototheque/5045-vatican-1861-fanion-bataillon-tirailleur>. The replica is held by the Royal Museum of the Armed Forces and Military History, Brussels, in the display, “Les Belges en Italie, 1860–1870.” It also holds a black-and-white photo of the original fanion: “Photo: Drapeau des Tirailleurs Pontificaux Franco-Belges à la Bataille de Castelfidardo le 18 septembre 1860, donné a leur commandant Mr. Le Comte de Becdeliévre par la Sainteté le Pape Pie IX (Italia, 1860)”, inventory no. 506279. Cf. also: Defontaine, pp. 35–37 & pl. 4; Brandani et al., pp. 36, 42; Poli, p. 64; Lorenzo Innocenti, email to author, 8 December 2004; Coulombe, p. 100 (who notes that even after Castelfidardo it was blessed by the pope and served the unit for a time).

It sold the flag to an unnamed buyer ca. 2015 (reference no. 8733). The flag’s inscriptions loosely translate as: “To the Illustrious Army of Zouaves, faithfully safeguarding the Holy See: [given with] the allegiance of the Ladies of America.” The medallion in the fly is the Pro Petri Sede medal, awarded to veterans of the Battle of Castelfidardo (where the Zouaves’ progenitors fought). The flag was made in Rome and was presumably intended to be square until the pole hem was retracted. The flag is recorded in Civiltà Cattolica, anno 18, vol. 11, p. 745f; and anno 19, vol. 2, p. 483f.

39. Illustration from Biteau, p. 16, retrieved online (21 June 2018) at: <lasabretache.fr/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/Les-volontaires-pontificaux-%C3%A0-cheval.pdf>. The motto beneath Pius’ arms is “In hoc signis vinces” (Latin: “Conquer in this sign”)—an echo of the legendary sign of the cross at the Battle of Milvian Bridge. The flag’s fringe appears to alternate gold and silver sections. It was likely carried at the Battle of Castelfidardo, and was photographed by Gérard Picaud in 1985 in Allier, a French department and the home (in Busset) of Louis Joseph Gaspard de Bourbon-Busset, comte de Chalus (1819–1871), the leader of the “squadron guides” (i.e., “Guides formant l’état-major de l’escadron”). Its current whereabouts is not identified.

40. Ales, p. 88. Brandani et al., p. 30. It was once preserved at the Irish College in Rome.


42. Photo, Royal Museum of the Armed Forces and Military History, Brussels, “Drapeau des anciens zouaves pontificaux de la Flandre occidentale, Belgique, ca. 1870 [probably ca. 1900, since a motto beneath the arms of Pius IX includes the date 1897]”, inventory no. 506440, 135 x 170 cm (53 x 67 in.). Cf. also, “Drapeau de la société des anciens zouaves pontificaux du pays de Waes”, inventory no. 506454.


44. Musée de la Civilisation, Québec City, inventory no. 1994.8517. It belonged to the “Union Allet”—a veterans’ association founded in 1899 and later known as the “Zouaves pontificaux canadiens.” Its obverse bears the Zouave badge: a shield with a beaver, maple leaves, and the Zouave motto. Its reverse has yellow-white stripes divided vertically and overlaid by a centered a tiara-and-keys emblem. In all, the museum holds twenty-seven flags and banners preserving the memory of French-Canadian Zouave volunteers. One was created in Montreal in 1868 for Canadian recruits (inventory no. 1994.8507). Its obverse is white with the tiara-and-keys emblem and identifying inscriptions; its reverse bears a beaver and maple leaf emblem. Other flags were produced for Zouave veterans after their return to Canada. Still others replicate the Vatican City flag design, and were perhaps created after 1929 for Zouave descendents and sympathizers. Flag images and collection summary provided by Pauline Grégoire, Documentation Technician, e-mails to author, 22 February 2005 and 28 April 2005.

45. Marius Richard, “La Fedeltà della Francia alla Cattedra di Pietro”, 1887, held by the Vatican Historical Museum at the Lateran Palace. The artist signed and dated the painting.

47. Illustration from author's photo. Prince Sforza Ruspoli, e-mail and photos to author, 22 November 2004, and personal interview and photos, Palazzo Ruspoli, Rome, 3 April 2009. A historian suggested the flag is a fort flag in view of its large size. Each vertical breadth is 18” wide. The proportions of the flag (3:4) correspond with those cited for other papal flags and ensigns by LeGras, pl. 22; although Quadro appears to suggest 2:3 for the civil ensign (unless annotated thus by the owner of the chart).


49. Ruspoli learned the flag’s history from his grandfather, Prince Alessandro Ruspoli (1869–1952), and surmises that it was lowered at the Villa Paolina and taken to the adjoining Villa Bonaparte. Hoffmann, pp. 419–420, recounts the course of battle at the Villa Paolina, where the white flag was waved by Papal Zouaves after the breach there.

50. Ruspoli inherited the staff with the flag but was unsure whether it was original. It may well have been; indeed, inserting a portable flag-and-staff into a bracket is still a technique used at Vatican sites associated with the Gendarmerie, including its headquarters, barracks, fire station, and courthouse. The wooden staff is about 3 m (10 ft.) long and bears an inlaid pulley at the peak.


52. “Siége et capitulation de Civitá-Castellana”, p. 598, where the flag was described by an Italian soldier and eyewitness on 13 September, the day following its surrender. Beauffort, p. 179, reports that Papal Zouaves shredded the fort’s “white and yellow flag” to prevent its capture, and distributed the pieces as relics—as they likewise did with their infantry color after the fall of Rome.

53. “ITALY, the Papal Authority Proclaimed”, New York Daily Tribune, 10 August 1849, p. 2. In Rome the flags were raised to cannon salutes at the Campidoglio tower (where the Republican assembly met) and the Castel Sant’Angelo fortress, on 15 July at 3:30 p.m.; cf. Giornale di Roma, 14 July (p. 29), 16 July (p. 33f), and 17 July (p. 38); Raccolta delle leggi … dello Stato Romano, p. 114; Ghisi, p. 239f. The flag design may also be reflected in a medal presented to foreign troops who aided the Papal States restoration in 1849. It consisted of a bicolor ribbon attached to a medallion with the tiara-and-keys emblem on one side; cf. online (retrieved 21 June 2018) at: <www.mymilitaria.it/liste_03/1850_medaglia_pio_IX.htm>.
Martina, p. 378f, records that in mid-July papal authorities had insisted on the flags to clarify French intentions to restore papal sovereignty, since only French flags were flying in Rome immediately after the occupation. Kertzer, *The Pope who would be King*, records different approaches to the papal flag, taken by the foreign armies of the restoration: pp. 180, 200, 205, 211, 228, 238, 249, 256, 261, 405 (n. 4), 409 (n.15).

“The Pope and His Probable Future”, which reports the handover date as 10 December; but the flag ceremony took place on 11 December at 8:00 a.m. according to *The Times* of London (cf. “Departure of the French Troops from Rome”), and *Civiltà Cattollca*, anno 18, vol. 9, pp. 104 & 123 (which records that the French flag was taken down from the main “door” where a guardhouse stood, while the papal flag was hoisted atop the fort on the mast by the archangel’s statue). Cf. Gregorovius, p. 268; and “The French Leave the Castle of St. Angelo”. In October 1867 French forces returned to help papal forces repel Garibaldi’s, and both French and Papal flags are reported atop the fortress; cf. Gregorovius, p. 302, and Bittard des Portes, p. 138.


Illustration from author’s photo, 2009. Cf. Vatican Historical Museum inventory no. 30615. A linen fragment from a flag taken from the tower (torre) of the same fort may correspond with missing fragments from the one preserved by the Vatican. It is preserved by the Museo Civio del Risorgimento in Modena (catalog no. 811, measuring 15.5 x 20 cm [6 x 8 in.]).

“Italy and the Papacy”, pp. 82 & 93, reports the fort’s surrender on the afternoon of 21 September, when the flag was lowered. This is reflected in the date on the Museum placard too. Kertzer, *Prisoner of the Vatican*, pp. 38–49, 59–62, explains the delayed surrender: Italy initially desired the pope to retain sovereignty over the Leonine City, including the fortress. The bersaglieri is recorded by the Museo Nazionale di Castel Sant’Angelo on Facebook, retrieved online (21 June 2018) at <www.facebook.com/419533098197881/photos/a.422262721258252.1073741829.419533098197881/559804544170735/>.

Corona reports that the flag was preserved by Baron Wilhelm Christian Wedel-Jarlsberg (1852–1909), a Norwegian nobleman who converted to Catholicism, became a papal chamberlain in 1882, and lived in Rome. He gave it to his daughter Carmen (1885–1957) who married Senator Antonio Boggiano Pico (1873–1965). Their family donated it to Pope John Paul II during his visit to Genoa on 22 September 1985.

*Giornale militare officiale*, pp. 839–845, lists fortress protocols from 1866 with directives for “papal flag” use, including occasions for display and cannon salute protocols; but there are no descriptions of the flag’s design or legal origin. Cf. Vigevano, pp. 807–813.

Generic references to the papal flag (with no design details) exist in accounts of unrest nationwide. Rome: Chigi, 26 November 1848 entry, reported that the “papal flag” was hoisted at Castel Sant’Angelo “as usual for the feast day” (Sunday)—one day after Pius IX had departed for exile in Gaeta. Ravenna and Ferrara: Cesare, pp. 235–236, reports that in 1859 the “papal flag” was lowered in major forts and piazzas.

Another variant perhaps bisected the stripes with the arms of Pius IX, akin to similar civil flags and military colors: *Civiltà Cattollca*, anno 12, vol. 11, p. 742, reports similar civil flags during a papal visit to Piazza del Popolo on 8 September 1861; and for military
colors, see Figs. 2.12, 2.19–20, & 2.33–35. A vessel carrying the pontiff in 1842 wears a vertical bicolor bisected by his arms in an anonymous 1842 painting held by the Museo di Roma, “5 settembre 1842, Gregorio XVI visita i primi tre vapori inglesi arrivati al porto di Ripa grande,” retrieved online (21 June 2018) at <https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Pal_Braschi_-_Ripa_Grande_Gregorio_XVI_e_i_primi_3_vapori_inglesi_(ignoto,_1842)_P1090712.JPG>. Perhaps papal Ancona also had its own papal fort flag—see p. 25—although a makeshift yellow-white flag of unspecified design was posted from a lighthouse turret during the Battle of Ancona in 1860 (Quatrebarbes, p. 230f; Alvarez, p. 134f).

63. LeGras, pl. 22, nos. 3 & 8.

64. Don Pirlone a Roma (a polemic on the Roman Revolution) carries satirical sketches that consistently identify the papal fort flag as white with Pius’ pontifical arms: cf. Pinto, vol. 2, pl. 170 (Bologna); and vol. 3, pl. 201 (Rome, Porta San Pancrazio); pl. 206 (Rome, Castel Sant’Angelo—but not the fort flag; rather a vexillum for the bastion); pl. 273 (Civitavecchia). An eyewitness to Roman unrest in the summer of 1848 reported that “the white banner of the Pope” flew from the Capitoline Hill’s Campidoglio tower—but beneath a larger Italian tricolor that was “held high above the white banner” by the tower’s statue (MacFarlane, p. 5).


66. Willes, on 21 July 1849: “The Papal flag (white) was rehoisted here [Civitavecchia] under a salute of 100 guns on the 15th [of July] … I have visited Rome … The Papal flag (white and yellow) was rehoisted on the 15th, and is still flying on the Capitol Quirinal [sic], but the French flag predominates in Rome as far as numbers are concerned.” Bicolors at both the Campidoglio and the Castel Sant’Angelo are also reported by Gazzetta di Mantova, p. 239, and L’Araldo. See also the similar report from the New York Daily Tribune, 10 August 1849, p. 2, as above.


68. Innocenti, p. 44, includes a watercolor signed and dated (29 April 1862) by a Papal Zouave composer. A Zouave encampment is near the fort, which flies a bicolor with white at the hoist (reported correctly?).

69. “Siége et Capitulation de Cività-Castellana”, p. 598, as detailed above.

70. In 1868, Canadian Zouave recruits were told to change their native unit color, from white to yellow-and-white (see p. 51). Were white flags considered obsolete on land? Or did their flag compete with that of the Noble Guard (which also had a white field)?

71. Appendices I & II show consistently vertical bicolors after the Papal States restoration in 1849; including flags of the infantry, Palatine Guard, forts, merchant ships, and state vessels; cf. also Fig. 2.42.

72. See p.52, concerning Canadian Zouaves, French Zouave descendents, and the painting by Marius Richard.
73. See pp. 90–93. In 1929 Italian flagmakers were familiar with both vertical and horizontal yellow-white bicolors, whose stripes were overlaid by a centered tiara-and-keys emblem (see p. 95).

74. Both appeared in a display titled “Roma 1846–1849” held in Rome in 1987 and commemorated in Roma 1846–1849, pp. 23, 39. Illustration from A. Viviani (?), Pio IX si reca alla cappella papale di Santa Maria del Popolo (“Pius IX is borne to the papal chapel of Santa Maria del Popolo”), undated painting of an 8 September 1846 event, Museo di Roma, no. 4202: portrays Pius’ cortege leading him through the Piazza del Popolo, underneath an arch erected in his honor; the surrounding buildings are bedecked in yellow-white vertical bicolors and members of the crowd carry them as well. (A comparable scene is described in Il mondo illustrato, 16 January 1847, p. 40, where bicolors bear the inscription Viva Pio IX) A. Malchiodi, “Ciceruacchio [symbolic figure of the people] announces to the people that Pius IX has conceded the [Fundamental] Statute [i.e., constitution]”, oil-painting dating from 1877, Museo di Roma, no. 131, portrays an event of 14 March 1848, viz. the announcement of the constitution in the same piazza, with similar yellow-white flags (some horizontal) alongside Italian tricolors.

75. “Drapeaux pontificaux”, p. 99 (published in 1909), calls them “merchant flags”—apparently meaning not the civil or state ensigns proper, but yellow-white flags in collective contradistinction to flags “of the pope himself which were white”. Cf. contemporary accounts by Gregorovius, pp. 135 (1861), 150 (1861), 152 (1862), 325 (1869).

76. Cf. Il 12 Aprile 1867 a Roma, esp. pp. 31–32 and a lithograph of a naval salute at Rome’s Porto di Ripeta, where a pavilion is decked out in vertical yellow-white bicolors (between pp. 26 & 27). Vertical bicolors may have predominated where French forces protected papal rule under their vertical tricolor; and horizontal bicolors may have flourished in northern regions where Austrian forces provided protection under their horizontally-striped flag (the Hapsburg civil flag was black over yellow). It may be worth noting that Hanover flew a bicolor of yellow over white.


78. Del danno che avverrebbe allo Stato Pontificio, frontpiece.

79. Illustration from Verzameling, n. 18 (“Romeinsche Signaal-vlag om communicatie met de wal te er langen”). In 1843 Flaggen-Almanack, pl. 15, identified a plain yellow flag as the Papal States “private” flag. Did it intend a plain yellow-white bicolor? Does “private” imply a civil flag? In 1843 Massimo, p. 42, reports two yellow-white flags during a tour of Gregory XVI to Zagarolo in Lazio.

80. Below, Chapter 3.

81. For example, the British Union Flag originated for use at sea. Use on land was first authorized for forts in 1800 (probably confirming existing practice), and only sometime later migrated to state buildings—which was only codified in 1902, amid some uncertainty about flag use ashore. See online (retrieved 21 June 2018) at “Flags of the World”, at <www.crwflags.com/fotw/flags/gb-use.html>.


The flag pictured is in the Argentine proportions (ca. 1:2) and attached to a movable staff. Cardinale, p. 284f, notes that Papal States consuls held naval ranks; might they thus have employed the war ensign or naval jack if a flag was needed?

84. See pp. 90–91, 93.

85. Illustration from Piroli, ms. 72/22 (1829); reproduced with permission (Istituto per la Storia del Risorgimento Italiano). Vigevano, p. 73. Ales, pp. 86–87, 386–387 (pl. 108), states they received a flag “immediately” after being reconstituted under Pius VII on 17 December 1815, but Fedeltà Palatina specifies 1818. Appendix II herein presumes the same flag was used under Leo XII in 1823 (as shown by Piroli), but with his new arms (often painted over the previous pope’s); see Piroli, ms. 72/2 (1823), retrieved online (30 June 2018) at: <www.internetculturale.it/it/16/search/detail?instance=magindice&case=&id=oi%3Awww.internetculturale.sbn.it%2FTeca%3A20%3ANT0000%3ARM0135_DIG_2774&qt>.

86. Illustration from Piroli, ms. 72/33 (1831), reproduced with permission (Istituto per la Storia del Risorgimento Italiano). Cf. also ms. 72/37 (1832). Pace Vigevano, p. 73 (who mistakes the color of the fringe and stars). Pace Ales, pp. 87 & 386–387, pl. 108 (who mistakes the flag’s design: it was divided from upper fly to lower hoist, not vice versa; and its obverse and reverse did not differ in design).

87. Piroli, ms. 72/60 (1841).

88. Illustration from author’s photos, 2009 (the flag’s obverse and reverse sides are indicated differently in the museum inventory, versus the flag as displayed in a double-sided display frame, and as photographed for the museum archive). Cf. Il mondo illustrato, 16 January 1847, pp. 34, 48; and 31 July 1847, p. 484. L’Italia nei cento anni, vol. 45, p. 1266.

89. The white cravat is edged with golden branches. At the bottom, one side bears a rampant lion (as in Bologna’s provincial arms) holding a yellow and red vexillum beneath the inscription I BOLOGNESI; while the other bears the Capitoline wolf beneath the inscription AI ROMANI.


91. Illustration from “Figurini, uniformi ed emblemi della Guardia Civica Romana”, Istituto per la Storia del Risorgimento Italiano, Museo Centrale del Risorgimento di Roma, Sezione Iconografica, Cassetta II (49–51 at 50); reproduced with permission. See also, “Figurini, uniformi ed emblemi della Guardia Civica Romana”, online (retrieved 16 June 2018) at: <www.risorgimento.it/shades/htm/dettaglioCartellaRic.php?idCARTELLA=188164> and <www.risorgimento.it/shades/htm/dettaglioCartellaRic.php?idCARTELLA=188163>. Roma 1846–1849, pp. 14, 36–38. Vigevano, p. 75. Gazzetta di Roma, 20 March 1848, p. 1. Ghisi, p. 232. The Museo del Risorgimento of Forlì also holds a local Civic Guard labarum with a tricolor cravat, as exhibited online (retrieved 29 August 2018) at: <http://bbcc.ibc.regione.emilia-romagna.it/pater/loadcard.do?id_card=125860>. Secondary sources (Ghisi, pl. 17; Colangeli, fig. 18) mistakenly show the labarum with the Italian colors on the reverse—which is unconfirmed by primary sources except when the papal arms were replaced by the Roman wolf during the Roman Republic (e.g., Piroli, ms. 76/70).

Illustration from postcard of work of Faustino Joli, “Sottotenente alfiere della Legione Bolognese (1848–1849)”, ca. 1849, oil on canvas, Museo Civico del Risorgimento, Bologna. Cf. Piroli, ms. 76/28 [Bologna, 1848, same design].

Illustration from “bandiera”, Battaglione Universitario di Bologna, silk fragment, Museo Civico del Risorgimento di Bologna, no. 2537, retrieved online (27 June 2018) at: <bbcc.ibc.regione.emilia-romagna.it/pater/loadcard.do?id_card=177446>. That pictured is one fragment; a second one bears an inscription with the battalion’s name, and the date 1848, framed by a laurel wreath; presumably one is from the obverse and the other is from the reverse. Cf. Catalogo degli oggetti, p. 98.


Illustration from author’s photo, 1987. The flags are displayed in the Palazzo Senatorio, Sala del Sindaco (known as the “Sala delle Bandiere”), retrieved online (21 June 2018) at: <www.museicapitolini.net/records_collocation.xql?structure=Palazzo+Senatorio&substructure=Sala+delle+Bandiere>.

Quoted in Roma 1846–1849, p. 34. The district names as they appear on the flags photographed by the author are Monti, Trevi, Colonna, Campo Marzio, Ponte, Parione, Regola, S. Eustachio, Pigna, Campitelli, S. Angelo, Ripa, Trastevere, and Borgo. Additional flags for Ponte Ricola and Lampirelli included their names on a silverish-blue medallion.

Pius IX, motu proprio, 2 October 1848, art. 40, quoted in Roma 1846–1849, p. 34. The decree also specifies that the district flags “will be displayed as usual on the occurrences and carried … by the fourteen chosen among the most upright inhabitants as named by the magistrature” and to “accompany the solemn procession of the octave of the Most Holy Body of the Lord at the church of St. Mark, and in other circumstances” (Art. 28). For anecdotal mention, cf. Chigi, 17 June 1847 entry, etc.

Illustration from author’s photo, 1993. Vigevano, p. 76 and plate 2, notes that it was vertically disposed, although displayed from an upright staff. Likewise Brandani et al, pp. 90 & 92. Piroli, ms. 79/72 (1853), and Ales, 90, 396–397 (pl. 113), show its design disposed upright instead of vertically. Zara, p. 137. Guide to the Vatican Museums, p. 156.

152 (where he suggests it dates from about 1865). Ales, p. 90 (states that it dates from the 1860s), 396–397 (pl. 113).

103. Illustration from Francisco Gregoric, used with permission. Ales, pp. 396–397 (pl. 113, with the arms of Pius VIII); cf. p. 90 which states that it was 60 cm (24 in.) square. However Piroli, ms. 79/30 (1826, with the arms of Leo XII), shows a small oblong flag. Wise, no. 332 and p. 152. Governatorato, p. 214.


105. Illustration from Francisco Gregoric, used with permission. Lancellotti, La corte pontificia, p. 155, shows the standard under Pius XI, as followed here; the trophy pattern seems to vary in flags afterward, as does the direction of the cravat’s inscription. Ales, pp. 388–389 (pl. 109); cf. p. 91. Piroli, ms. 71/17 (1837). “Drapeaux pontificaux”, p. 98. Guide to the Vatican Museums, pp. 155–156. Museum photos. Governatorato, p. 200. Chigi, 2 April 1848 entry, says the flag bore a cravat in the Italian colors during the events of that period.


107. Illustration from Piroli, ms. 71/8 (1831, Gregory XVI); cf. also ms. 76/3 (1847, Pius IX). Galbreath, p. 60. “Drapeaux pontificaux”, p. 100, states that Pius VII introduced the stars, but this is not verified by the actual standard preserved from his pontificate.

108. Verzameling, no. 7 (1834 illustration from a 1705 Amsterdam chart). Cf. L’Art de Batir (1719), pl. 62; A Display of the Naval Flags, pl. 6; Flaggen-Almanack, pl. 15.


110. Gasbarri, p. 198.

111. Rangoni-Machiavelli, p. 77. Charts attesting this flag are pre-1800: c.f. Banderas; A Display of the Naval Flags, pl. 6.

112. “Italy and the Papacy”, p. 80, reports that white flags were hoisted from the “cross at the apex of the lantern of S. Peter’s [Basilica] … and also on the battlements of S. Angelo, and the lofty campanile of S. Maria Maggiore”, and carried by a “mounted officer to the Porta Pia” (cf. p. 91); pp. 82 & 93 reports that the fortress surrendered on the afternoon of 21 September 1870 (when the papal flag was lowered), while the white flag flew until Italy’s was raised on 29 September. Cf. Innocenti, pp. 118, 122–123.

Figure 3.1. Proto-National Papal Flag, postcard, early 1900s

Figure 3.2. Proto-National Papal Flag, the Vatican, Cortile di San Damaso, Pius X, 1903 (photo & detail)