

judicature' (p. 254). Given the latter circumstance, the author is perhaps fortunate in that many of the judges of the Irish admiralty court were remarkable characters whose various exploits would help to flavour any historical narrative. Among the ingredients found in Costello's reconstruction of the tenures of men such as Adam Loftus, William Petty, Hugh Baillie, Jonah Barrington and Thomas Kelly are madness, corruption and incompetence. The roles played by the inferior officers of the court, if less colourful, are also adequately dealt with.

Because the work and the reputation of the court were inseparable from the character of the successive judges at its head, the appointment of a new judge represented an important landmark in the history of the institution. On this ground it makes sense for Costello's chapter breaks to coincide with such changes of key personnel. At the same time, this chronological approach means that the examination of recurring themes is necessarily scattered across the various chapters. This somewhat fragmentary treatment of such issues as fishing licensing (pp 45–6, 105–6 and 147–8) is, however, rendered less problematic by a consistency of approach and by the use of clear sub-headings.

Another factor which adds to the interest of Costello's study is the recurrent connection between wars and the work of the court of admiralty. The conflicts with France and Spain in the 1620s, the civil wars of the mid-seventeenth century and subsequent upheavals up to the late eighteenth century all feature. The operation of three rival courts of admiralty in Ireland in the 1640s, confederate, royalist and parliamentarian, signals the importance of such an institution to all sides in those troubled years (pp 12–15). Times of war also served to highlight clearly the jurisdictional limits that usually constrained the work of the Irish court, particularly in the area of prizes.

The latter issue was central to one of the dominant themes of this book, the position of the Irish court of admiralty in the context of the constitutional relationship between England and Ireland. It was initially established as a vice-admiralty court inferior to the English court of admiralty. This situation prevailed until the 1780s, when the independence of the Irish court was established and the right of appeal to London abolished. In the interval, some Irish admiralty judges had, either through incompetence or out of a determination to extend their powers, passed judgments on matters that ought to have been reserved to the English court. In the resulting disputes, the English court generally asserted its superior jurisdiction. At the same time, the latter body refused to pay a salary to the Irish judge. The steps taken to set down firm rules to govern this problematic relationship went so far as the inclusion of a relevant clause in the Act of Union of 1800.

Costello also shows how the Irish court faced competition from other Irish law courts, including the provincial admiralty courts, as well as from landowners and town corporations that repeatedly asserted their own admiralty jurisdiction. His treatment of this issue could perhaps have been enhanced by its placement in a wider British and Irish comparative context.

This book will be most useful to the specialist, but its coverage of matters including the Anglo-Irish constitutional relationship ought to be of interest to a wider readership.

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VARIETIES OF SEVENTEENTH- AND EARLY EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY ENGLISH RADICALISM IN CONTEXT. Edited by Ariel Hessayon and David Finnegan. Pp xiv, 271. Farnham: Ashgate. 2011. £65.

The essays combined in this distinguished collection emanate from the conference, 'Rediscovering radicalism in the British Isles and Ireland, c.1550–c.1700' (Goldsmiths

College, University of London, 2006). It represents an attempt to map its contributors' variety of new approaches to the study of early modern radicalism. The editors' introduction offers a survey of the volume, and with frank generosity admits that the essays offer 'no firm conclusions' about the best approach to the subject. Instead, they argue, the essays illustrate 'an emerging consensus that consolidates recent important work' (p. 25) on early modern radicalism, and for the editors 'to have enforced any overarching interpretative frameworks would have gone against the spirit of this enterprise' (p. 29). If there is an overarching argument, however, it emphasises the significance of context, for as many of the contributors suggest, individuals' commitment to positions that were recognisably 'radical' were measured against a 'moderate' mainstream as well as an oppositional conservatism, and the relationship of these positions was constantly being renegotiated throughout this period. Some 'conservatives' could find themselves 'radicalised' without ever having changed their opinions.

Many of the essays in this volume reflect the interdisciplinary approach that is increasingly reflective of scholarly practice in the study of early modernity. Nicholas McDowell's chapter on Richard Crashaw and John Saltmarsh emphasises surprising commonalities between opposed writers, illustrating their shared interest in the language of the Song of Solomon. Jason Peacey's chapter argues for our need to move beyond the binary categories of 'radical' and 'Royalist' by noting active links – if not a shared political platform – between representatives of both camps in the later 1640s. Mario Caricchio's outstanding study of Giles Calvert's radical publishing summarises the findings of his recent book, and scholars who cannot read its Italian will find in this chapter an excellent account of the social networks of radical print culture in the 1640s and 1650s.

Ariel Hessayon's discussion of Gerrard Winstanley substantiates his innovative claim that the Digger writer may best be read in the context of the General Baptist tradition out of which he appears to have emerged. Noam Flinker's account of Abiezer Coppe's midrashic style illuminates important aspects of the literary strategy of this increasingly recognised radical writer. Jim Smyth's consideration of the styles and implications of 'imperial republicanism' offers important new perspectives on the Cromwellian invasions of Ireland and Scotland. Stefano Villani examines Italian responses to the British and Irish civil wars, noting a consistent repudiation of 'radicalism'. Sarah Hutton's account of the Cambridge Platonists argues for their being part of the radical milieu of the mid-century crisis, and rather closer to the younger Milton than might have been anticipated.

Warren Johnston's description of apocalyptic thought in later seventeenth-century England reiterates the claim that millennial thinking was retained within the establishment and among dissenters, with sustained speculation and moderated popular appeal. Giovanni Tarantino's analysis of Anthony Collins's library again makes available to English readers the fruits of his recent research, published in Italian. Jason McElligott's chapter on William Hone pushes the collection beyond the 'early eighteenth-century' scope of its title to offer a significant and nuanced investigation of early nineteenth-century radical print culture. Readers of this journal will be most interested in the editors' claim that, despite its Anglocentrism, the volume aims to stimulate further work on 'the comparatively less-explored varieties of Irish and Scottish radicalism' (p. 29). Perhaps the chapter most relevant to scholars of Irish history is Sandra Hynes's fine documentation of transdenominational and geographically extended friendship networks. Her work on Dublin Presbyterians, and their links to Dutch separatists and English Churchmen, acknowledges the unique situation of Irish Protestants and vividly illustrates our need for the contextual definition of 'radical' that this volume, as a whole, strives towards.

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