

of 'primitive' and 'commercial' existence within the context of Celticity and national mythology.

The final section in this volume considers myth and national identity. Jo Esra's chapter looks at captivity narratives in the context of Celtic revivalism in Cornwall. David Hesse's chapter is concerned with European battle re-enactments and the portrayal of Scottish identity, along with female representations and mythical performance. The third chapter, offered by Garry Tregidga, considers representations of Cornish nationalism through an examination of Cornish and Welsh identities during the twentieth century. Andrew Wilson's chapter offers a contemporary study of nationalist discourse with reference to Nordic paganism and racist 'nationalism', emphasising the difficulties of interpreting mystical and cultural origins. Finally, Jason Whittaker considers the writings of William Blake and explores how twentieth century right-wing political movements in England have reformed and adopted Blake's interpretation of British identity. For Whittaker, these identities are constructed on the adoption and variation of cultural forms based on complex and ever-changing notions of historical identity.

Although this work has many positive features, its geographical coverage is limited, and an overemphasis on the development of English Celtic identity dictates the scope of the collection. The overall failure to address notions of Irish Celtic identity, especially during periods of intense change in the nineteenth and twentieth century, is to be regretted. Nevertheless, this book should be commended for its ambitious chronological span, the overall calibre of its essays, and its interdisciplinary approach, which along with its use of an impressive range of sources is certain to attract a readership drawn from different disciplines.

JOHN FULTON

*School of English and History, University of Ulster*

THE IRISH LORD LIEUTENANCY C.1541–1922. Edited by Peter Gray and Olwen Purdue. Pp xii, 244. Dublin: U.C.D. Press. 2012. €50.

Debates on whether or not the British–Irish relationship, from the Tudors to Partition, may usefully be described as 'colonial', seldom advance very far nowadays before that strange constitutional beast, the office of Irish lord lieutenant, hoves into view. The changing role and functions of the monarch's representative in Ireland, from the proclamation of the 'kingdom' in 1541 to the final abolition of the office of lord lieutenant with the settlements of 1920–22, provides an enabling framework or prism, as this volume richly demonstrates, through which wider issues of governance in the long British–Irish relationship may be fruitfully considered.

Studies of particular crisis episodes or of individual viceroys, together with a modest crop of works on the apparatus of government and administration in Ireland in the early modern and modern periods, have ensured that the office of Irish lord lieutenant was never wholly neglected in Irish historiography since the 1930s. However, as the editors of this volume rightly emphasise, in recent years a quickening of scholarly interest in relations between the monarchy and Ireland (notably during the 'long' nineteenth century) and a more diffuse, interdisciplinary debate on models, frameworks, theoretical constructs for considering the British–Irish relationship over the long term, have resulted in closer academic attention being paid to the office of Irish lord lieutenant.

The volume under review originated in a conference on the Irish lord lieutenant held in Dublin in September 2009. It is gratifying to be able to record that the resulting book achieves a thematic coherence and a consistently high quality of analysis and writing seldom found in a volume of such origins.

So far as the structure and chronological coverage of the volume is concerned, of the eleven chapters (including the Introduction), five are concerned with the period of the

Union (1801–1922), with four on the period from the Restoration to 1800. The heavy lifting for the early modern history of the office is accomplished with admirable clarity by Ciaran Brady (not least in explaining the changing circumstances behind the evolving use of various titles – governor, deputy, viceroy and lord lieutenant – for the monarch’s deputy/representative in Ireland throughout this period). The two other essays covering long periods are James Kelly on the eighteenth century and Theo Hoppen’s analytical overview of the union era, 1800–1922.

For shorter periods, Charles Ivar McGrath discusses the evolution of the viceroy’s office in a period of ‘inconsistencies in governing practices’ in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth century; Gillian O’Brien’s focus is on the turbulent 1790s; and the swansong of the vicerealty during 1918–22, under Lords French and FitzAlan, is the subject of Keith Jeffery’s concluding essay. The remaining four essays are more deliberately thematic. Peter Gray offers a timely reevaluation of experiments in ‘popular vicerealty’ (i.e. aimed at enlisting majority nationalist support) in the era of O’Connellite repeal, while James Loughlin and Patrick Maume both explore later interludes and strategies of ‘popular’ vicerealty, between the 1870s and the First World War, with Maume considering the frequently derided populist initiatives of the Aberdeens in the context of recent writing on ‘welfare monarchism’. Toby Barnard’s essay on the lord lieutenancy and cultural and literary patronage c.1660–1780 suggests that the office had limited impact in this particular sphere.

All of the essays are substantial and well-written: a few have exceptional sparkle. Hoppen’s essay, with characteristic *brio* – integrating sharply interpretative commentary, concise character-sketches and apt quotations, in a prose style of effortless fluency – is probably the pick of the volume. The interplay between context, contingency and character in the evolving story of the Irish lord lieutenancy is sustained throughout the book. Yet, for all the rich complexity of context and the changing imperatives and priorities to which the Irish lord lieutenancy had to respond for almost four centuries (resident or absentee, popular or remote, decorative and symbolic or efficiently executive), the stubborn political conclusion to which the reader is repeatedly drawn is that, at the highest level, ‘London’s’ recurring attempts to devise a secure and enduring framework of governance for Ireland within the larger British state were repeatedly undermined by uncertainty, inconsistency and infirmity of purpose and policy.

While one can commend the book’s overall balance of chronological and thematic essays, it is reasonable to regret the absence of an explicitly comparative dimension: an essay or two on a comparable ‘monarch’s representative’ in other territories of the British empire or in subordinate territories of other ‘empire’ states, might have explored further the perceptive, but tantalisingly brief, comparative references contained in the editors’ introductory essay.

However, the volume, as it stands, is substantial and impressive and makes a significant contribution to the historical study of Irish governance and of British–Irish relations. The volume contains a useful appendix, listing holders of the office of Irish lord lieutenant from 1541 to 1922, and a portrait gallery of seventeen holders of the office.

GEARÓID Ó TUATHAIGH

*Moore Institute, National University of Ireland Galway*

IRISH AND ENGLISH: ESSAYS ON THE IRISH LINGUISTIC CULTURAL FRONTIER, 1600–1900.

Edited by James Kelly and Ciarán Mac Murchaidh. Pp 288. Dublin: Four Courts Press. 2012. €49.50.

The remit of this collection of eleven essays is: ‘to explore the moving linguistic frontier that both linked and separated Irish and English during the seventeenth, eighteenth and