careful attention to the various terms and conditions that must be applied. Finally, I must mention that the Index falls short of normal formatting conventions.

MICHAEL MURPHY
Department of Music, Mary Immaculate College, University of Limerick

WELLINGTON: THE PATH TO VICTORY, 1769–1814. By Rory Muir. Pp xvi, 728. New Haven and London: Yale University Press. 2013. £30.

This study, the first volume of a planned two-volume biography of the duke of Wellington, attempts to rescue its subject from being perceived as both 'a cold haughty aristocrat' and a semi-comic figure of fun, famous for a few pithy quotations, more than his achievements on the battlefield. In a little over 700 pages Muir charts the story of his subject through the first forty-five years of his life, and although some time is spent on his career as an M.P. in the Irish parliament, and later as chief secretary for Ireland, it is clear that Muir, like Wellington himself, is happiest when dealing with matters military. The rise of Arthur Wellesley [formerly Wesley: his elder brother changed the family name to the more archaic form in 1789], from his birth in Ireland in 1769, through to his creation as the duke of Wellington in 1814, was not an easy one. He spent eight years in India, seven while his elder brother was governor-general there, and returned home with a mixed reputation despite having won numerous victories. Many felt, as the king observed, that 'military reputation was easily acquired in India'. Briefly chief secretary for Ireland (1807–9), he was a distracted figure, and took leave so that he could fight abroad. In 1808 he went from hero to villain, and was booed and hissed upon his return to Britain from Portugal, following the disastrous Convention of Cintra which allowed the French to evacuate despite a defeat, and this threatened to destroy his growing reputation. He survived, partly because of his political connections, partly because the blame lay elsewhere, but for a time he was viewed as a coward and a disgrace.

Muir delights in discrediting the most famous lines attributed to Wellington. Perhaps the most famous is the comment about being born in a stable (not attributed here to Daniel O'Connell, who popularised it as a joke in 1843), as well as the famous 'publish and be damned' retort when approached by a blackmailer about some exposures in his private life. The private life of Wellington is explored here, from the son he fathered in Dublin as a young man and on whose behalf he later applied for official patronage, to the memoirs of Harriette Wilson, published in 1824 but referencing an earlier affair, which was the source of the blackmail attempt. Wilson's account, wildly inaccurate as it was, did much to contribute to the public image of Wellington the politician in the 1820s, with the descriptions of him as a 'modern Bluebeard', who looked 'like a rat-catcher'.

Muir is at his best in the military chapters, charting the meticulous planning that went into making the Peninsular Campaign a success. There Wellington fought more than a dozen battles, without a single defeat, establishing his reputation as a self-confident, aggressive fighter who was capable of taking the war to the French. Despite his later reputation for coldness, Wellington could be emotional on the battlefield, especially when counting the cost afterwards. At the siege of Badajoz he ordered a successful assault knowing that the 'butcher's bill', slang for the list of casualties, would be high, and would include the most gallant and daring officers. When an officer reported news of the victory he found Wellington in tears, and Wellington later confirmed that he 'could not help crying. I bit my lips, did everything I could to stop myself for I was ashamed'. As the officer recorded, 'military reputation is not to be purchased without blood, and ambition has nothing to do with humanity'.

That said, Muir does not shy away from Wellington's failings as a leader. He could be a bully, frequently lashing out at his officers, and often showed ingratitude to those who

helped him most. Indeed he could be cruelly dismissive of the very soldiers who made his victories possible, dismissing them in 1812 as 'the scum of the earth', incapable of discipline. Years later he would remember it differently, asserting in 1838 that 'I could have done anything with that army: it was in such splendid order'.

The book ends, perhaps surprisingly, in 1814, after Napoleon had been deposed but before the great battle that would establish Wellington's military reputation for all time. The decision to leave the story in 1814 enables Muir to take stock of his subject at the height of his popularity. Awarded £300,000 by parliament (raised to £400,000 by the opposition eager to show their support), he was promoted in the peerage and given an honorary degree from Oxford. Greeted by crowds of supporters and well-wishers on the streets of England, Wellington revelled in the attention. At one event, when the people parted before him, he turned to Lady Shelley and asked proudly, 'It's a fine thing to be a great man, is it not?' It will be interesting to see how Muir assesses the 'great man' in the challenging second half of his career.

PATRICK GEOGHEGAN
School of Histories and Humanities, Trinity College Dublin

JAMES ANTHONY FROUDE: AN INTELLECTUAL BIOGRAPHY OF A VICTORIAN PROPHET. By Ciaran Brady. Pp. xvi, 500. Oxford: Oxford University Press. 2013. £45.

James Anthony Froude (1818–94) is a figure that many Irish people would find easy to deplore, owing to his perceived racism, bigotry, and support for British imperialism. In this detailed intellectual biography, Ciaran Brady has sought to paint a more complex picture of the Victorian prophet by utilising a contextual, psychologically speculative study. For instance, the cruel experiences Froude endured during his upbringing, which included severe floggings and probable sexual abuse, have been duly taken into account by the author. Nor has Professor Brady painted his subject in a purely negative light; Froude is praised for his courage, intellectual strength, and moral integrity. The author has not, however, overlooked the fact that Froude was a profoundly contradictory figure who embraced views that most modern opinion would find distasteful. So while writing empathetically, Professor Brady has not sought to exonerate his subject. The author claims that he has been motivated neither by a desire to rehabilitate or condemn Froude, but simply by intellectual curiosity.

It may be objected that a scholarly biography of Froude is superfluous as the author admits he had a relatively uneventful public life. This supposition fails to recognise the value of Froude to our understanding the history of ideas in the Victorian world, especially in relation to German Romanticism and Carlylean thought. Professor Brady also reminds us that in his early fictional writing Froude was one of the first to wrestle with several taboo subjects, he was also among the first English historians to base his conclusions upon manuscript primary sources (though he did not claim to be advocating empirical or scientific history), and his biography of Thomas Carlyle stands as a model for all post-Freudian biographers.

In the reviewer's opinion, the discussion of Froude and religion was the most engaging aspect of the book. Although Froude's pleas for free discussion of religious dogma are often seen as being undermined by his attacks on Roman Catholicism, such analysis fails to do justice to Froude's position. From early in his life, Froude disliked religious dogmatism, and he was to highlight what he saw as the deficiencies of orthodoxy in his book, *The nemesis of faith* (1849). Moreover, the study of German higher criticism and Froude's interest in Spinoza's views of the Old Testament effectively reinforced his estrangement from orthodoxy. Hence it is little surprise that Froude defended Bishop John William Colenso of Natal, a noted theological liberal. Notwithstanding his praise of