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 viceroyalty 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 revaluation of experiments in 'popular viceroyalty' (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' viceroyalty, 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 1541to 1922, and a portrait gallery of seventeen holders of the office.

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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

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nineteenth centuries' (p. 24). The chronology of language change from 1600 to 1900 is undoubtedly complicated, given the absence of national census data on the Irish language until 1851, and so the challenge of interpreting an array of less scientific sources of evidence has been undertaken in the editors' introduction, subtitled 'establishing the context'. One reservation to note, in this regard, is that the chronologically top-heavy composition of the volume itself may facilitate a linear deterministic view of language change, there being much less discussion of the nineteenth century than of the two preceding centuries despite the ample material available.

Marc Caball's opening chapter discusses the life of William Bedell (1571– 1642), who enabled the translation of the Old Testament to Irish, and in particular, demonstrates that Bedell's time in Venice (as Anglican chaplain to Sir Henry Wotton between 1607 and 1610) equipped him with cultural and linguistic skills that were key to his evangelical mission to the Gaelic Irish. The second essay, by Bernadette Cunningham and Raymond Gillespie, takes as its theme the circulation of manuscripts between 1625 and 1725, and in so doing gives a most valuable perspective on the uses of literacy across Irish and English, viewing historians writing in Irish as part of a 'multi-lingual sphere that embraced manuscript and print in a variety of languages and for diverse audiences' (p. 94). Vincent Morley's examination of the popular influence of Keating's *Foras feasa ar Éirinn* from the seventeenth to nineteenth century includes a very useful statistical study of manuscript copies of *Foras feasa* pointing to a decline in production after 1725 which Morley ascribes to a process of 'popularization' in Irish literary culture, where Keating's work was summarised in long poems such as Seán Ó Conaill's 'Tuireamh na hÉireann'. Reprising the subject matter of his excellent *Béarla sa Ghaeilge* (2007), Liam Mac Mathúna's study of poetic 'warrants' and macaronic verse in the eighteenth century provides a graphic illustration of the interchange between Irish and English, as presented in bilingual verse and various other forms of literary production. Charles Dillon's survey of south Ulster poets and scribes of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries charts various points of cultural and linguistic change as exemplified in Art Mac Cumhaigh's phrase 'An Ghaeilg nua', referring to the poet's recognition that his own linguistic and literary idiom marked a new era. Dillon succeeds in tracking the key indicators of transition here, particularly where patronage and scribal mediation are concerned. Two chapters by the editors focus on attitudes towards the Irish language during the eighteenth century within the Catholic Church and among Protestants respectively. Ciarán Mac Murchaidh gives a fascinating insight into the formation of Catholic clergy on the continent where college authorities confronted similar challenges to those of contemporary Gaeltacht summer colleges in encouraging the use of Irish. This was particularly true of the *écoliers* who had travelled to the Irish College in Paris as boys. Attitudinal change among Irish Protestants towards the Irish language is carefully mapped in James Kelly's chapter, in which political events and Protestant attitudes to the language bear strong correlation as instanced in a perceivable thaw following the failure of Ireland to rise in tandem with the Scottish Jacobite cause in 1745–6. Lesa Ní Mhunghaile's chapter 'Bilingualism, print culture in Irish and the public sphere, 1700–1830' articulates the case against Joep Leerssen's over simplification of these issues in his essay *Hidden Ireland, public sphere* (2002). Indeed, this entire volume might be said to serve the same purpose, yet Ní Mhunghaile's essay deals most explicitly with Leerssen's claim that Gaelic Ireland had no public sphere. This nuanced study of the relationship between oral, manuscript and print culture in the eighteenth century demands a renegotiation of arbitrarily imposed divisions between the two languages in this period. The case-study of a journey from manuscript to print is the subject of Deirdre Nic Mhathúna's thoroughgoing essay dealing with an elegy entitled 'Mo thraochadh is mo shaoth lém ló thú' by the seventeenth-century poet and military leader, Piaras Feiritéar of the Dingle Peninsula and the final essay, by Niall Ó Ciosáin, considers the evidence of devotional literature in Irish and Scottish Gaelic between 1760 and 1900. This comparative study shows the more settled situation of print culture in Scottish Gaelic against that of Irish which Ó Ciosáin attributes largely to a comparative lack of commitment to the Irish

language on the part of the Catholic Church. One contributing reason for this, not discussed here, is the fractious legacy of Protestant Bible societies in Ireland in the first half of the nineteenth century, leading in many cases to a suspicion of all printed material in Irish.

This is an important and highly commendable volume of essays which, through a deft combination of survey and case-study, allows for a much welcome reappraisal of the historical relationship between Irish and English.

Fionntán de Brún
Scoil Theanga agus Litríocht na Gaeilge, Ollscoil Uladh

Belfast 400: place, people and history. Edited by S. J. Connolly. Pp 392. Liverpool: Liverpool University Press. 2013. £14.95 paperback. £35 hardback.

'Belfast, as a town, has no ancient history.' So began George Benn's *History of the town of Belfast* (1877). Like Benn, most modern scholars dated the place to 1613 when a royal charter was granted to the new city of Belfast. There was, of course, political resonance to denying the medieval precursor of the plantation settlement. As Philip Macdonald tells us in chapter 3, this mentality fitted with the 'Elizabethan colonial myth, which portrayed Ulster as a depopulated wilderness ripe for plantation'. We can certainly date British Belfast to this moment, for this was the root of the city which by the later nineteenth century was so strikingly modern and British that the Victorians – who needed no excuse to declare themselves at the apogee of civilisation – delighted in their imperial citadel.

The rise of a place so singularly different from Cork, or Dublin, and so much greater in its industrial prowess than anywhere else on the island, sets Belfast into a particular United Kingdom framework. This, in turn, underpins its modern dating. Focusing on 1613 makes its subsequent history of conflict inevitable because it was a planted Protestant settlement. In the modern period, inhabitants resisted the socio-economic and cultural incursions of incoming Catholics, as the late Tony Hepburn's path-breaking works of urban demography showed.

Sean Connolly and his team recognise all the modern, post-1600 associations of the immigrant, implanted, sectarian city and write about them lucidly. However, this is not the full story. The editor has put together a distinguished team whose aim is to present a much more nuanced picture. The first three chapters by Connolly himself and Gillian MacIntosh, Ruairí Ó Baoill and Philip Macdonald, in particular, combine to expose a vastly larger vista than can be captured by a post-charter history. The first chapter is a clever attempt at that — a wide-ranging framing movement of history, culture and historical overview: a neat introduction to what comes next. In chapter 2, Ó Baoill shows how, for more 9,000 years, humans have inhabited the area around Belfast. Archaeological digs continue, each piecing together new fragments of the story. Neolithic gems like the Malone hoard of porcellanite axes show what these ancient people were capable of. The same can be said of the stunning gold jewellery of the Bronze Age period. It is here that the financial support of the universities, council and local businesses and individuals come to the fore in allowing beautiful colour reproductions in such a well-priced and lavish book. If the richness of life and art in the early settlements around the lough are established, so too is the pre-1613 presence of a recognisable urban settlement. This dates to the Norman period. Following on, Macdonald's chapter is a fascinating examination of the pre-1600 period, guiding us from seventh-century references to the *Fearsat* – ford – in the Lagan (which subsequently formed part of the name *Bel-fierste*) to 'the earliest historical references to the place that would subsequently become Belfast' in the fifteenth-century *Annales of Ulster*. Politically, the decline of the earlship of Ulster and the rise of the Clandeboyes form key components of this chapter.

From the point of the charter, Raymond Gillespie skillfully analyses the rise of Chichester's Belfast. The chapter meticulously charts the planning and building of the