

Introduction

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Almost as soon as Sir Walter Scott set foot on the Glasgow–Belfast steamer in August 1825, he was plunged into the ‘heart of the debatable land’ by the actions of one of his fellow passengers. Having already loudly damned Popery, this Orange ‘squireen’ cajoled the other passengers into toasting the ‘glorious memory’ of, first, William of Orange, and then Oliver Cromwell. Given that the Orange Order had been proscribed only six months earlier (under the Unlawful Societies Act), Scott was one of several travellers who ‘winc’d’ at such a public demonstration of Irish loyalism and he managed to evade the second toast by a convenient fit of coughing.¹ Nor was this Scott’s only encounter with militant Irish Protestantism during his 1825 tour: in Cork he met a ‘savage old mine host of an Orange-man’ who recounted the killing of ‘papist dogs’ at the so-called ‘battle of Skibbereen’ in 1823 as if it had been ‘the natest thing the world’.²

Despite his romanticization of the ‘45, Scott was no Jacobite. In his twenties he had been bound over to keep the peace following a fistfight with anti-royalist Irish students and he was a committed supporter of the House of Hanover throughout his life.³ And, like successive Hanoverian kings, he was publicly opposed to Catholic emancipation until the 1820s and privately remained convinced that another fifty years of vigorous penal legislation would have effectively ‘extinguished’ ‘Popery’ in Ireland.⁴ Notwithstanding all this, he apparently found little in common with the ultra-loyalists he encountered on his tour of the island, regarding them instead as either socially disreputable or comically bloodthirsty.

Scott’s experiences highlight not simply the nuances of Scottish and Irish loyalism; they also belie the cosy roseate glow of pan-Celticism which later coloured his reputation on both sides of the North Channel. Indeed, in the broader sense, they illustrate the fact that the relationship between the inhabitants of Ireland and Scotland could at times be fissile and fractious. While this book is not simply about varieties of Hiberno-Scottish tension, dissonance is one of the central themes to emerge from this collection. In this respect it echoes other recent explorations of the uneasy relationships between Scotland and Ireland in the nineteenth century.⁵

1 John Gibson Lockhart, *Memoirs of the life of Sir Walter Scott, Bart* (7 vols, Edinburgh & London, 1837), vi, 45–7. 2 H.J.C. Grierson, *The letters of Sir Walter Scott, 1825–1826* (12 vols, London, 1935), ix, 211. For the battle itself see *Morning Chronicle*, 8 July 1823. 3 David Hewitt, ‘Scott, Sir Walter (1771–1832)’, *Oxford dictionary of national biography*, Oxford University Press, Sept. 2004; online edn, Jan. 2008 [www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/24928, accessed 9 May 2008]. 4 John Gibson Lockhart, *Life of Sir Walter Scott, Bart* (Edinburgh, 1853), p. 201; idem, *Memoirs of the late Sir Walter Scott* (Edinburgh, 1845), p. 563. 5 David Duff & Catherine Jones (eds), *Scotland, Ireland, and the Romantic Aesthetic* (Cranbury, NJ, 2007).

The essays by Kevin James, Clare Norcio and Karly Kehoe, which open this collection, examine Irish-Scottish relationships which are characterized as much by jealousy, prejudice and alarm as cultural affinity or even Anglophobia. James' chapter explores how Victorian Irish tourist promoters both resented Scotland (patronized as it was by Scott's pen and Victoria's castles) and also saw it as a model to be emulated. His discussion casts new light on Dublin Castle's so-called 'killing home rule with kindness' strategy of the closing decades of the nineteenth century by shifting attention away from the traditional arenas of high politics and congested districts and instead placing greater emphasis on recognizably modern forms of economic activity. Constructive unionists sought to appropriate Irish tourism in defence of the Union since Irish commentators were persuaded that tourism had helped to pacify Scotland. Yet, as James shows, by marketing Ireland on the basis of its relative 'unspoiltness', promoters necessarily also drew attention to the island's limited progress since the Anglo-Irish Union.

Unflattering comparisons between the two countries are also considered in Clare Norcio's study of pre-Famine agricultural patterns in Ulster. Based on a close reading of the Ordnance Survey memoirs from the 1830s, she shows how the surveyors' observations and judgments of the modernity of Protestant farming techniques – relative to their Catholic neighbours – were often inflected, on the one hand, with racialized notions of the Scottish and Irish and on the other with a blindness to the imbalances of successive seventeenth-century land settlements.

Such perceptions were, as Karly Kehoe shows, by no means restricted to those who saw Scotland as a Protestant nation. Even within the Catholic church in Scotland there were deeply-held fears that the large numbers of Irish migrants might subvert its 'Scottish' character and jeopardize its project to be accepted as loyal, conservative and respectable. Kehoe examines how the church sought to cap the number of Irish-born nuns and restrict their promotion opportunities in order to arrest creeping Hibernicization.

It would be unfair to claim that the relationships of Scotland and Ireland were exclusively built on tension and disharmony. In the long history of migrations between the two landmasses the development of Presbyterianism in Ireland has been one of the most profound, if complicated, expressions of Scotland crossing the water. The nineteenth century in particular witnessed enormous changes within the family of Irish Presbyterian church government, organization and cultural expression and these developments (and their implications for Scotland) are charted in a series of essays in this collection.

Andrew Holmes' essay explores Irish Presbyterians' commemorations of their Scottish past from the period 1830 until 1914. His reasons for this are threefold. Irish Presbyterians' choices of events to memorialize distinguish key elements of their religious and ideological linkages to Scotland. It demonstrates also what Holmes argues are important features in the development of an Ulster-Scots identity within the

North of Ireland in the nineteenth century, a cultural construction that has found new popular expression in the present decade in Northern Ireland in the light of the Good Friday Agreement. Holmes' conclusion that this illustrates significant linkages and strong mutual dependence between the churches in the nineteenth century in Ireland and Scotland articulates the transnational sense that many Irish Presbyterians felt at this time.

The complex nature of the Ulster-Scottish cultural expression of northern Presbyterians is explored in Frank Ferguson's discussion of two Co. Antrim poets William Hamilton Drummond and Samuel Thomson. This seeks to complicate our understanding of Ulster poetry in the period after the United Irish rebellion and specifically the verse of writers who were implicated, if not involved, in the '98. Both poets adopt strategies of retreat from their radical personae of the 1790s that invokes a new dialogue with Scottish literature and culture. In Drummond's case his work functions as an intriguing development of Irish responses to James Macpherson's pillaging of medieval bardic verse in his Ossianic poetry. Drummond's *The Giant's Causeway* (1811) projects numerous negative characteristics associated with rebellion and violence onto Scotland's mythic heroes and seeks to write a new form of Irish patriotic epic. Samuel Thomson's articulation of his Irish and Scottish identity is explored through his use of Scot's vernacular language and verse forms. This verse, often denigrated as mere imitation of Burns, is in fact a carefully coded language that permits Thomson to manage his allegiances to Ireland and Britain and distance himself from previous radical incarnations. Both he and Drummond articulate a variety of responses to the concept of union and demonstrate the complicated nature of Ulster-Scottish identity in this period.

Patrick Maume's essay on William McComb recounts the literary career of one who was regarded by his peers as the 'laureate of Presbyterianism'. McComb's roles as a poet, compiler, bookseller and publisher in the service of orthodox Irish Presbyterianism make him one of the most important lay members of the denomination in the nineteenth century. Maume charts the significance of the Scottish Reformation on McComb's work and theology traced through a number of his publications. However, Maume offers an important caveat to the discussion on Irish Presbyterian linkages to Scotland. He argues that for all the significance that Scotland holds in the affections of Irish Presbyterians, their sense of worldwide mission and international alliance with other Presbyterian churches must be seen as a global phenomenon rather than merely part of a tie between two countries in the British archipelago.

The exploration of Irish Presbyterianism underscores this collection's determination to compare the nature of institutional structures (political, ecclesiastical and cultural) within the nation states of Ireland and Scotland. This is a theme that is developed by Peter Gray in his analysis of Thomas Chalmers' role in the debates surrounding poor law provision for Ireland. Chalmers, the leading Scottish Presbyterian evangelical clergyman of his generation, argued that a Scottish-style parochial system be adopted based on moralistic voluntarism in which poor relief was offered only to those incapable of providing for themselves. Despite gaining support

in Ireland from a diverse swathe of opinion formers, for example Daniel O'Connell and Henry Cooke, an English system, driven by central government, was ultimately introduced. Gray's essay demonstrates that crucial differences existed between Ireland and Scotland in this period evidenced by state provision in welfare reform and attitudes regarding welfare and development.

In a broad analytical sweep from the medieval period to the present day, Matthew Potter examines the convergence and divergence of local government institutions within Scotland and Ireland. He perceives the nineteenth century as the period in which Scotland and Ireland began to differ most markedly in their system of local government. Unlike Scotland, where the work of government was devolved to a number of powerful local bodies, Ireland due to its very different political climate tended towards a highly centralized form of governance and service provision.

In a similar way to Potter, Susan Kelly approaches her comparison of Irish and Scottish TB folk cures over a longer time-frame. Although tuberculosis was endemic in both countries, Kelly explores how ordinary people in these two societies responded to the disease in the era before modern pharmaceutical intervention.

The final group of essays provide sidelights on three very different Irish experiences of Scotland. The well-known confrontations of Orange and Green are revisited in the less familiar context of mid-Victorian Dundee by Richard McCready. Dundee witnessed ethnic fractures not only within the Catholic community (along similar lines to those discussed in Kehoe's chapter), but also between Scottish Catholics and Irish nationalists in Scotland. McCready looks at how celebration of St Patrick's Day became highly politicized in the context of an urban landscape contested by a local Orange tradition which existing histories of the Order in Scotland have overlooked.

Commenting on Irish migrants and sectarian violence in the 1830s, one Scottish observer remarked that 'the well behaved of either sort always get out of the way'. Amy O'Reilly's essay explores the place of this 'better sort' within Glasgow's world of clubs, societies and fraternities and argues that there was, albeit briefly, a space in which Irish Protestants and Catholics co-operated. Unlike the Orange and Ribbon societies, the city's Hibernian Society stipulated only that prospective member should be 'Irish' – by birth, descent, residency or even association. By focusing on the mundane business of associational life, O'Reilly draws attention to an articulation of Irish-Scottish identity quieter than the bellicose Orange and Green demonstrations which competed with and ultimately outlived it.

Máirtín Ó Catháin's concluding essay deals neither with ethnic hostility nor fraternalism, but rather indifference. Michael Collins only visited Scotland once during his life and showed little interest in the 'Scottish Brigade' or in militant Scottish nationalists eager for an Irish piggyback. Intriguingly, while Ó Catháin examines the disputes between Collins and the Scottish IRA in great detail, he also hints that the relationship was soured by the former's Anglocentrism and the latter's Anglophobia.