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978-0-521-64318-4 - The Reconstruction of the Church of Ireland: Bishop Bramhall and the Laudian Reforms, 1633-1641

John McCafferty

Excerpt

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CHAPTER I

Prologue: Ireland's English reformation

In 1632 James Spottiswoode was rowed out into the middle of Lough Derg in Co. Donegal. He was a Scot, ordained in the Church of England, who had become Church of Ireland bishop of Clogher in 1621. He bore a mandate issued by the lords justices and privy council of Ireland which permitted him to break down, deface and utterly demolish 'the chapel and all the Irish houses now situate in that island called St Patrick's purgatory, all the buildings, pavements, walls, works, foundations, circles, caves, cells and vaults . . . called St Patrick's bed'. Spottiswoode had a miserable time. The secular arm, in the form of the high sheriff of Donegal, failed to turn up and a pilot could not be found. When one was eventually located, the bishop and his companions were nearly sunk and then narrowly avoided being marooned by a storm. Meanwhile onlookers, the 'country people', stood by and waited for a divine thunderbolt while Spottiswoode dashed about toppling hostels, chapels and other devotional structures erected by the Franciscans only a few years earlier. All of this took place just four years short of the first centenary of the passing of the Act of Supremacy by the Irish parliament. By that date, 1636, Lough Derg was once again open for business as Catholic Ireland's leading pilgrimage site.¹

James Spottiswoode wasted his time and risked the lives of his servants. That this was so may have caused this younger brother of the archbishop of St Andrew's to ask himself, in private, a hard question: 'why did Ireland not become Protestant?' Historians of Ireland have, in one way or another, examined religious change in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries and come to the conclusion that reformation failed. Some scabble for slender examples of success or ambiguity. Others assert failure, but emphasise conditionality and imply that different administrators and a different administration could have led to a national establishment founded

¹ Henry Jones, *St Patrick's Purgatory: containing the description, original, progress and demolition of that superstitious place* (1647), p. 130.

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on the 1536 statute.² Historians of England, by and large, have detected an overall success marred by instances of failure – delay, contingency, evasion, church papistry.³ There is more here, though, than a ready contrast. There is an unexceptionable truth – Ireland got an English reformation. The pace might have been slightly different and the detail slightly varied, but constitutionally and canonically, the kingdom of Ireland got what the kingdom of England got. Ireland did not become Protestant because it underwent an English reformation. Or rather the Irish state-sponsored reformation faltered and failed for the very reasons that the English state-sponsored reformation, for all of its acknowledged slowness and mixed messages, succeeded.

From the very outset, writers in Ireland and writers on Ireland have used the vocabularies of success and failure.⁴ Catholics came to argue that there was something definitive, something innate about the attachment of the people of Ireland to the faith. Their story was one of muscular resistance to any ploy to lure them away from the Apostolic See. Their

² Brendan Bradshaw, 'Edwardian reformation in Ireland', *Archivium Hibernicum* 24 (1976–7), 83–99; 'Sword, word and strategy in the reformation of Ireland', *HJ* 21 (1978), 475–502; 'The English reformation and identity formation in Ireland and Wales' in Brendan Bradshaw and Peter Roberts (eds.), *British consciousness and identity: the making of Britain 1533–1707* (Cambridge, 1998), pp. 43–111; Karl Bottigheimer, 'The failure of the Irish reformation: *une question bien posée*', *JEH* 36 (1985), 196–206; Nicholas Canny, 'Why the Reformation failed in Ireland: *une question mal posée*', *JEH* 30 (1979), 423–50; 'Protestants, planters and apartheid in early modern Ireland', *IHS* 25 (1986); Aidan Clarke, 'Varieties of uniformity – the first century of the Church of Ireland' in W. J. Sheils and Diana Wood (eds.), *The churches, Ireland and the Irish*, Studies in Church History 25 (Oxford, 1989), pp. 105–22; Steven Ellis, 'Economic problems of the church: why the Reformation failed in Ireland', *JEH* 41 (1990), 239–65; Ford, *Protestant*, pp. 105–15; G. A. Hayes-McCoy, 'The royal supremacy and ecclesiastical revolution, 1534–47', *NHI* III, pp. 39–67; 'Conciliation, coercion, and the Protestant Reformation, 1547–71', *NHI* III, pp. 69–92; 'The completion of the Tudor conquest and the advance of the Counter-reformation', *NHI* III, pp. 94–140; Henry A. Jefferies, *Priests and prelates of Armagh in the age of reformations, 1518–1558* (Dublin, 1997); Colm Lennon, 'The counter-reformation in Ireland, 1542–1641' in Ciaran Brady and Raymond Gillespie (eds.), *Natives and newcomers* (Dublin, 1986), pp. 75–92.

³ For an accessible recent survey of the historiography, see Peter Marshall, *Reformation England* (2003). Given the great size of the field, this footnote lists only a selection of monographs: A. G. Dickens, *The English reformation*, 2nd edn (1989); Eamon Duffy, *The stripping of the altars* (1992); Christopher Haigh, *English reformations: religion, politics and society under the Tudors* (Oxford, 1993); Norman Jones, *The English reformation: religion and cultural adaptation* (Oxford, 2002); Diarmaid MacCullough, *Tudor church militant: Edward VI and the English reformation* (1999); Peter Marshall (ed.), *The impact of the English reformation 1500–1640* (1997); Richard Rex, *Henry VIII and the English reformation* (Basingstoke, 1993); J. J. Scarisbrick, *The reformation and the English people* (Oxford, 1984); Lucy Wooding, *Rethinking Catholicism in reformation England* (Oxford, 2000); Alexandra Walsham, *Church papists: Catholicism, conformity and confessional polemic in early modern England* (Woodbridge, 1993).

⁴ Alan Ford, "'Standing one's ground": religion, polemic and Irish history since the Reformation' in Alan Ford, J. I. McGuire and Kenneth Milne (eds.), *As by law established: the Church of Ireland since the reformation* (Dublin, 1995), pp. 1–14.

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triumph was predicated on Protestant defeat. Protestant commentators, depending on their mood and inclination, saw anything from gullibility and pliability to malice and willful obduracy. Popery was superstition and Rome-running the proof of enduring incivility. This sectional analysis of affairs, which occasionally tumbled out in pulpit vitriol, jogged along for centuries. But from the 1960s onwards Irish historians increasingly replaced character with chronology and determinism with contingency. Religious change in early modern Ireland reverted to being the hard problem it had been for contemporaries. The confessional past regained its open future so that incidents such as that of Lent 1542, when Paschase Broet and Alphonse Salmeron became the first two Jesuits to set foot in Ireland, ceased being an early point in a long narrative thread which wound on until Catholic Emancipation in 1829 or Disestablishment in 1869.⁵ The two harbingers of Catholic reformation abandoned their mission after five weeks. In the wake of a cool reception from Conn O'Neill and Manus O'Donnell, they concluded Ireland would follow its sovereign Henry VIII into schism.⁶ Historians, like the legates, became concerned with trajectory. They retained the trope of success and failure while trying to discern whether the outcomes were due to economics or the interplay of colonisation with confessionalisation or even to theological styles. The hard problem has been rendered even harder by the destruction of swathes of records, which made it difficult to employ research strategies that have served other parts of Europe well in any meaningful way beyond broad generalisation. To take one small example, only very few cities, such as Dublin and Limerick, offer anything close to real narrative depth over any appreciable time span.⁷

Bishop Spottiswoode found his lakeside wait for the high sheriff of Donegal an unpleasant business. Had he been asked, he would have said there was only one bishop in Clogher and that was him. If he had been asked the difference between himself and the popish or 'pretended' or 'titular' bishop of Clogher, his answer would have almost certainly contained the phrase 'church as by law established'. As it happened, 'Church of Ireland'

⁵ Edmund Hogan (ed.), *Ibernia Ignatiana* (Dublin, 1880), p. 6.

⁶ Salmeron and Broet to Cardinal Cervini (Santa Crucis), Edinburgh, 9 April 1542, *Epistolae PP. Paschasii Broëti, Claudi Jaji, Joannis Codurii et Simonis Rodericii Societatis Jesu ex autographis vel originalibus exemplis potissimum depromptae, Monumenta Historica Societas Iesu* 24 (Madrid, 1903), pp. 23–31. I wish to thank Brian Jackson for drawing this reference to my attention.

⁷ Brendan Bradshaw, 'The reformation in the cities: Cork, Limerick and Galway, 1534–1603' in John Bradley (ed.), *Settlement and society in medieval Ireland* (Kilkenny, 1988), pp. 445–76; Colm Lennon, *The lords of Dublin in the age of reformation* (Dublin, 1989); *The urban patriciates of early modern Ireland: a case-study of Limerick, the 28th O'Donnell Lecture* (Dublin, 1999).

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came far less readily to contemporary pens and lips than some variant of 'as by law established'. When, in 1603, Lord Deputy Mountjoy arrived outside Waterford city, he found himself looking at a improvised processional crucifix borne by a vested Dr James White, vicar apostolic of Waterford and Lismore. The viceroy promptly opened up dialogue by asking, 'what are you?'⁸

The Church of Ireland was the statutory expression of extension and ratification of English legislation in Ireland. A first glance at statutes for both kingdoms shows apparently identical lists with small intervals – Acts of Supremacy in 1534 and 1536, Acts of Uniformity in 1559 and then 1560. Ireland, and so it seemed to both lay and clerical contemporaries, was England with a little time lag. The more the smaller island proved to be different or difficult, the more it seemed the best solution was to make it England.

Ireland was seductively similar or deceptively different. Which of these it was depended on your point of view. The Irish 'reformation' parliament of 1536–7 put through Acts of Supremacy, Appeals, Slander, First Fruits, Against the authority of the bishop of Rome – all mirroring Westminster.⁹ Apart from cosmetic changes such as replacing 'England' with 'Ireland' in the wording of bills and adjusting official titles, they were virtually identical.¹⁰ The preamble to the Irish bill for supreme headship even remarked on the necessity of following developments across the water by virtue of the dependency of the Irish crown.¹¹ In the same session a snappy little bill (at least by Tudor standards) was passed and received royal assent as an Act for the English Order, Habit and Language. This kind of legislation was not at all unusual as insistence on the speaking of English, as well as English hairstyle and dress, had been parliamentary business in 1297, 1366 and afterwards.¹² If the other acts can be understood as the start of a process

⁸ Anon. (ed.), 'After the death of Queen Elizabeth', *Duffy's Irish Catholic Magazine* (Nov. 1848), p. 275: 'Having presented ourselves before his excellency and paid to him all the customary honours in due form he instantly asked me, "what are you?". I answered that I was a Christian, a firm Catholic, a servant and most loyal subject of His Majesty King James. He interrogated me closely, not only on the meaning but on the etymology of that answer, but after having explained myself to the best of my power, I perceived that his passion was rising and he called me "traitor".'

⁹ 28 Hen. VIII, c. 5, 6, 7, 8, 13.

¹⁰ W. N. Osborough, 'Ecclesiastical law and the Reformation in Ireland' in R. H. Helmholz (ed.), *Canon law in Protestant lands* (Berlin, 1992), pp. 223–52.

¹¹ 28 Hen. VIII, c. 5: 'Forasmuch as this land of Ireland is depending and belonging justly and rightfully to the imperial crown of England'.

¹² 28 Hen. VIII, c. 15; Seán Duffy, 'The problem of degeneracy' in James Lydon (ed.), *Law and disorder in thirteenth-century Ireland: the Dublin parliament of 1297* (Dublin, 1997), pp. 87–106; James Lydon, 'The middle nation' in James Lydon (ed.), *England and Ireland in the later middle ages* (Dublin, 1981), pp. 1–26.

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which eventually led to a Protestant establishment, then this Act can be seen as linking Ireland's medieval past to its future as a Protestant kingdom. The 1537 statute insisted that benefices be given to English speakers unless all efforts to locate one had failed. In that event, each priest was to take an oath at ordination to endeavour to learn the 'English tongue . . . to the uttermost of his power, wit and cunning'. Having done so, he was to instruct his flock in the same, so that the cleric now became an instrument of anglicisation in a church of which Henry and his heirs would be supreme heads. This church made the acquisition and spread of English language and manners a priority. The result was that evangelisation through Irish was regarded as at best maverick but more usually as suspect.¹³ So, from the very outset, Westminster statutes were exported whole and then made law in a neighbouring kingdom which had a very different past and a very different present.

The 1541 Act for Kingly Title offered a new future by superseding the medieval Lordship. The snag was that the future on offer was predicated on England's, not Ireland's, past. Henry VIII attempted by strategy, by policy and by law to turn all of the inhabitants of Ireland into his obedient subjects *and* into Englishmen and Englishwomen *and* lead them into schism with Rome *all at once*. If, as seems the case, it was a 'habit' of obedience that turned English subjects into Protestants in the long term and made religious change there a success, then there was no comparable 'habit' to build on in Ireland. Here was a brand new synthetic kingdom, all head and no body, enjoying no coronation, no coronation oath and no separate proclamation. This made it different from the far older kingdom of England and, in time, the other older kingdom of Scotland. It also threw up another problem which grew steadily more acute over the next hundred years. The infant kingdom was neither fish nor fowl because Irish policy was neither purely domestic policy nor was it purely foreign policy. It was both rolled, maddeningly, into one. Pope Paul III had glimpsed this when he sent his two Jesuits on reconnaissance, and, when *Propaganda Fide* came into existence in 1622, it paid special attention to this overwhelmingly Catholic realm as a key European theatre. Yet dazzled by what was, in relative terms, stunning success in England, lords deputy, judges and clerics moving across the Irish Sea to impose the Henrician and its successor settlements could not usually get beyond the seductive similarity. This meant that a paper kingdom was to get a paper reformation.

¹³ Nicholas Williams, *I bprionta i leabhar: na protastiún agus próis na Gaeilge, 1567–1724* (Baile Átha Cliath, 1986).

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The kingdom of Ireland was at once a jewel of Cromwellian reform and an embarrassing little itch. The itch was an old one begun in the twelfth century as a kind present of the English pope Adrian IV, who was believed to have granted Ireland to Henry II in exchange for overhauling its anachronistic (barbaric, if you were John of Salisbury) church practices.¹⁴ The 1541 statute rather lamely overcame Adrian's *Laudabiliter* by declaring that the 'king of England is and is of right' the king of Ireland. Otherwise English dominion over the smaller island might have been construed as dependent on papal grant. The catch was that the Old English population took *Laudabiliter* to be their charter, their mandate to 'tame' the wild Irish. To their mind, denial of the papal bull might be understood as denial of their right to exist as a community.¹⁵

The twelfth century had other claims on the attention of sixteenth- and seventeenth-century ecclesiastics and governors. Councils convened in 1111 and 1152 had, despite some later unions and amalgamations, given the island over twenty dioceses.¹⁶ The number, size and boundaries of these sees made up a lovely still life of power relations in 1152, but had a deleterious effect on the new Tudor *Ecclesia Hibernicana*. Most bishoprics were poor and many had inchoate or almost vestigial parish structures. It turned into a poisoned chalice for the state church. Places like Killaloe, Cloyne, Ferns, Kilfenora, Leighlin, Dromore – indeed the vast majority of sites – were complete backwaters and usually ruinous by the early modern period. The claim to be a national church, the very title of the Church of Ireland, meant that civil and religious authorities shied away from proposals for extensive unions and relocations of cathedral churches to more populous centres.¹⁷ Inherited canon law carried with it a claim to exclusive jurisdiction.¹⁸ Impoverished bishops began to lease see lands with manic intensity. Residence in the hotspots of four centuries earlier was so unappealing that prelates gravitated to Dublin. Tudor and Stuart monarchs found it almost impossible to give away dioceses like Ardfert and Kilmore. Church of Ireland bishops,

¹⁴ See J. A. Watt, *The church and the two nations in medieval Ireland* (Oxford, 1970), ch. 1, for an overview.

¹⁵ James Murray, 'The diocese of Dublin in the sixteenth century: clerical opposition and the failure of the Reformation' in James Kelly and Dáire Keogh (eds.), *History of the Catholic diocese of Dublin* (Dublin, 2000), pp. 92–111.

¹⁶ It is not surprising that 26 Hen. VIII, c. 14 (Eng.), the suffragan bishops Act of 1534, was not proposed for Ireland.

¹⁷ See chapter 4 below and John McCafferty, 'Protestant prelates or godly pastors? The dilemma of the early Stuart episcopate' in Alan Ford and John McCafferty (eds.), *The origins of sectarianism in early modern Ireland* (Cambridge, 2005), pp. 54–72.

¹⁸ Osborough, 'Ecclesiastical law', pp. 223–52.

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faced with the erosion of landed endowments, proceeded to corrosive abuse of jurisdiction and flagrant pluralism simply to make ends meet. Discredit followed on dilapidation. Catholic commentators, as in the *Annals of the Four Masters*, took delight in declaring that the reformation was propelled by avarice and rapine.¹⁹ Many of the patentee bishops who had no previous Irish career, or had only a very brief one, found themselves strangers in a strange land, disliked and alien. Their troubles were compounded by the defiant existence of vicars apostolic and, worse, from the 1610s onwards, a rival episcopate who used identical titles and had shadow officials and courts all modelled on the exact same medieval structures. The Roman bishops were often locals, sons of the well-connected, who were supported by voluntary contributions; they were not shackled to crumbling cathedrals and were free to work in the towns that counted.²⁰ Many of the old cities possessed chartered liberties which allowed corporations to hamper the state church if they chose – and some chose to do so.²¹ Examples of the ways in which the medieval past turned out to be a noxious inheritance for the Church of Ireland and a balm to the illegal counter-church can easily be multiplied. The moral of the story is that what ended by working well in England often backfired in Ireland. Elizabeth's achievement was, as Conrad Russell has said, the creation of a church 'which looked Catholic and sounded Protestant' by virtue of its resting on so many medieval foundations.²² Her Church of England worked out to be a blend, but her Church of Ireland curdled.

Even dissolution of the monasteries, the great fissure in English religious life, which did so much to secure aristocratic and landed acquiescence, played out in almost farcical reverse on the other side of the water. By the 1570s, as Colm Lennon has shown, Old English impropiators were siphoning off the profits of dissolution to pay for the upkeep of the new seminary clerics. 'Massing' priests in the Dublin area were often better off

¹⁹ John O'Donovan (ed. and trans.), *Annála rioghachta Éireann: Annals of the kingdom of Ireland by the Four Masters from the earliest times to the year 1616*, 7 vols. (Dublin, 1851), p. 1445; RIA MS 23 P7 fols. 54v–55r.

²⁰ Tadhg Ó hAnnracháin, *Catholic reformation in Ireland* (Oxford, 2002), ch. 2, 'Development and reform in the Irish church, 1618–1645'; P. J. Corish, 'The reorganisation of the Irish Church, 1603–1641', *Proceedings of the Irish Catholic Committee* (1957), 9–14; Donal Cregan, 'The social and cultural background of a counter-reformation episcopate 1618–60' in Art Cosgrove and Donal MacCartney (eds.), *Studies in Irish history presented to R. Dudley Edwards* (Dublin, 1979), pp. 85–117.

²¹ A. J. Sheehan, 'The recusancy revolt of 1603: a reinterpretation', *Archivium Hibernicum* 38 (1983), 3–13.

²² Conrad Russell, 'The reformation and the creation of the Church of England, 1500–1640' in John Morrill (ed.), *The Oxford illustrated history of Tudor and Stuart Britain* (1996), p. 280.

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than the established church incumbents. Here at least the pope did better from dissolution than the king.²³

Recusants hugg'd Ireland's medieval practices to themselves. They contrived to 'disremember' the manifold abuses and bitter divisions and so adroitly turn past centuries into an age of faith. The literary expression of this medievalism deserves separate consideration. On the ground it was played out by persistent pilgrimage. A life of St Kevin of Glendalough (surviving in eighteenth-century recension) identifies '4 chief pilgrimages of Erin' – one for each province – St Patrick's Purgatory, Croagh Patrick, Inis na mBeo (the isle of the living) or Monaincha in Co. Tipperary and Glendalough. Gerald of Wales mentions several of them in his *Topographia*.²⁴ Custom and lack of state intervention kept them alive, but the counter-reformation episcopate adroitly colonised them and turned them into statements about survival as well as sanctity. Cornelius O'Devany of Down and Connor (executed in 1612) made his devotions at Monaincha and Francis Kirwan of Killala did the rounds at Lough Derg shortly after Spottiswoode's wrecking.²⁵ In response to lobbying by Irish exiles, popes Paul V and Clement VIII attached plenary indulgences to the four 'national' pilgrimages as well as highly localised ones such as St Gobnait in west Cork.²⁶ Prayers for the extirpation of heresy from Ireland were mandatory for successful receipt of the indulgence. Catholic apologists gleefully pointed out the island's prior freedom from stain of heresy and apparent lack of anti-clericalism. In this view, not only was there no reformation from 'below' but the island also exhibited an exceptional purity of faith which deserved to be guarded at all costs.²⁷

Protestant engagements with the earlier centuries were less assured. Dublin Castle could not erase older practices and readings of medieval authors were beguiling but harmful. Cambrensis remained required reading

²³ Lennon, *The lords of Dublin*, pp. 144–50.

²⁴ Charles Plummer, *Bethada náem na nÉirenn: Lives of Irish saints*, 2 vols. (Oxford, 1922), vol. 2, p. 156.

²⁵ P. F. Moran (ed.), *Analecta Sacra*, p. ciii; C. P. Meehan (ed.), *The portrait of a pious bishop; or the life and death of the Most Reverend Francis Kirwan, bishop of Killala. Translated from the Latin of John Lynch, archdeacon of Tuam* (Dublin, 1864), pp. 83–7.

²⁶ John Hagan (ed.), 'Miscellanea Vaticano-Hibernica', *Archivium Hibernicum* 3 (1914), 263–4; D. Ó hÉaluighthe, 'St Gobnet of Ballyvourney', *Journal of the Cork Historical and Archaeological Society* 72 (1952), 43–61 at p. 51, quoting from Lambeth Palace library, Carew MS, vol. 621.

²⁷ For typical expressions of this sentiment, see B. B. [Robert Rochford], *The life of the glorious S. Patricke apostle and primate together with the lives of the holy virgin S. Bridgit and of the glorious abbot Saint Columbe, Patrons of Ireland* (St Omer, 1625), pp. ii–xvi and I. C. [John Copinger], *The theatre of Catholique and Protestant religion divided into twelue bookes* (St Omer, 1620). John McCafferty, 'Mirabilis in sanctis suis: the communion of saints and Catholic reformation in early seventeenth-century Ireland' in Robert Armstrong and Tadhg Ó hAnnracháin (eds.), *Community in early modern Ireland* (Dublin, 2006), pp. 199–214.

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for administrators, soldiers and settlers, but his writings, especially translated, had a deleterious effect on those readers.²⁸ Gerald made it too easy – too easy to read ‘Catholic’ for ‘barbarian’, too easy to believe the Irish ‘problem’ was one, the same, unchanging. Writing to Laud in winter 1633, Wentworth spelled out a list of ecclesiastical abuses which are so similar to Archbishop Lanfranc’s that there is a temptation to believe in reincarnation.²⁹ The concluding sections of the *Expugnatio* (on how Ireland should be governed) made it far too easy to believe in a quick and easy fix. Viceroy after viceroy read Gerald in Holinshed and Camden and fell under the spell. By the time they had shaken it off they had usually been recalled or burnt out.³⁰ Sir John Davies’s cunning plan to use only pre-reformation statutes in pursuit of the ‘mandates’ campaign did not exactly evoke warm feelings about the ancient legitimacy of the Church of Ireland.³¹ James Ussher’s sophisticated attempt in 1622 to recast Patrick as Protestant and Irish monks as proto-dons caused no known conversions. In 1632, a joint Old English and Gaelic Irish campaign, headed up by the Franciscan scholar Luke Wadding, had Patrick placed in the Roman breviary. Muirchú’s seventh-century Moses of Armagh became a Tridentine Moses for a seventeenth-century Catholic nation. Wadding’s patriarch did far better than Ussher’s puritan.³²

There is a grave temptation to ask when it was ‘all over’ for Protestantism in Ireland. It was never ‘all over’, of course. There have been arguments that the Church of Ireland sank into a state of sulky pessimism, but nobody

²⁸ Hiram Morgan, ‘Giraldus Cambrensis and the Tudor conquest of Ireland’ in Hiram Morgan (ed.), *Political ideology in Ireland, 1541–1641* (Dublin, 1999), pp. 22–44; Nicholas Canny, ‘The attempted anglicisation of Ireland in the seventeenth century: an exemplar of “British history”’ in J. F. Merritt (ed.), *The political world of Thomas Wentworth, Earl of Strafford 1621–1641* (Cambridge, 1996), pp. 157–86; Richard Anthony McCabe, ‘Making history: Holinshed’s Irish *Chronicles*, 1577 and 1587’ in David J. Baker and Willy Maley (eds.), *British identities and English renaissance literature* (Cambridge, 2002), pp. 51–67.

²⁹ Wentworth to Laud, 31 January 1634, Knowler I, p. 187.

³⁰ Ciaran Brady, ‘England’s defence and Ireland’s reform: the dilemma of the Irish viceroys, 1541–1641’ in Brendan Bradshaw and John Morrill (eds.), *The British problem, c.1534–1707: state formation in the Atlantic archipelago* (1996), pp. 89–117.

³¹ John McCavitt, ‘Lord Deputy Chichester and the English government’s “mandates policy” in Ireland 1605–7’, *Recusant History* 20 (1990), 320–55; Hans S. Pawlisch, *Sir John Davies and the conquest of Ireland* (Cambridge, 1985), pp. 103–21.

³² Bernadette Cunningham and Raymond Gillespie, ‘“The most adaptable of saints”: the cult of St Patrick in the seventeenth century’, *Archivium Hibernicum* 49 (1995), 82–104; Alan Ford, ‘James Ussher and the creation of an Irish Protestant identity’ in Brendan Bradshaw and Peter Roberts (eds.), *British consciousness and identity: the making of Britain 1533–1707* (Cambridge, 1998), pp. 185–212; Ute Lotz-Heumann, ‘The Protestant interpretation of the history of Ireland: the case of James Ussher’s Discourse’ in Bruce Gordon (ed.), *Protestant history and identity in sixteenth-century Europe*, vol. II, *The later reformation* (Aldershot, 1996), pp. 107–20; John McCafferty, ‘St Patrick for the Church of Ireland: James Ussher’s *Discourse*’, *Bullán* 3 (1997–8), 87–101.

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was ever going to say, or even think, the reformed future lay exclusively with immigrants, because to do so would have been to undermine its very existence as a Christian church. Timing is important but not as a means of determining *the* year of which it could be said that Ireland was not going to be Protestant. It is important to recall that when James VI acceded to the English throne in 1603 his arrival inaugurated a period of comparative peace lasting up to 1641 and for the first time the state could, if it chose to, contemplate a thorough reformation all across Ireland. It is, however, equally important to remember the relationship between timing and the Englishness of the reformation: England's reformation had its own velocity and its own critical junctures such as 1534, 1559, 1571 and 1611. The outcomes of those dates, the products of England's own journey to Protestantism, were then, respectively, introduced into Ireland at points in its own historical trajectory – 1536, 1560, 1634 and 1611. None of them – Henry's Act of Supremacy, the Prayer Book, the Thirty-Nine articles, the Authorised Version of the Bible – were designed for or were remotely in response to Irish conditions.

Ireland's binary life as foreign and domestic matter had an effect on legal enforcement of the religious settlement. More than once recusants had it both ways. During negotiations for the Spanish match in 1623 James permitted *de facto* toleration, yet in 1625, when his son went to war with Spain, threat of invasion made it imperative to compromise with Old English Catholics, so uniformity went out the window and talks began on concessions.³³ Even the 1607 mandates scheme, which rested on creative use of prerogative powers, was suspended for policy reasons and not for legal ones. As Church of Ireland clergy endlessly pointed out, political goals took precedence. If the Irish kingdom had been more real and the English church settlement less secure, things might have been different but, as it was, the gospel invariably lagged behind government. As a result, the Church of Ireland lacked definition, lacked form for far too long. By the time James began to fill up the vacancies left by Elizabeth, the Catholics had begun on their counter-hierarchy. Until 1615 the Church of Ireland had no formula beyond a Dublin promulgation of Matthew Parker's Eleven articles of 1559. The Thirty-Nine articles were not received until 1634. Translations of scripture and service books were long delayed. A brief catechism was issued in 1567 (really as a response to the apparent Presbyterianism of John Carswell's Gaelic translation of the Book of Common Order). There was no Prayer Book until 1608 and no Old Testament until 1685. This compares, as

³³ Clarke, *Old English*, chs. 2–3.