The basic premise for this book is the examination of a selection of works written by individuals who recorded their travels through Ireland during the period 1760 to 1860. The motivations and intentions of the writers and the impact of their works are all engaged with, as are the broader dimensions of contemporary travel writing from the European Grand Tour through to the Home Tour on the one hand, and the more adventurous exploits of travellers in Africa and elsewhere on the other. The Irish historical context is also taken into consideration.

The book is divided into four chapters, preceded by an introduction which provides a clear overview of the *raison d’être* behind the selection of a relatively small number of texts from what is "a huge field" (3). The four chapters cover the following periods: 1760-1800; 1800-1820; 1820-1850; and 1850-1860. In each case, at least one change or alteration in the nature of the travel writing genre is identified and contextualised.

Chapter one provides an illuminating discussion of the move away from the Grand Tour towards the Home Tour, and the extent to which such a change in travel fashion resulted in a new focus upon Ireland as a destination worth visiting. While the primary arguments utilised by Glenn Hooper to explain this change in focus are the impact of European war and a "reaction against the more classical standards associated with the Grand Tour" (12), he suggests also that the significance of this change was made all the more important by Edmund Burke's *A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of Our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful* (1757). The two writers examined in detail in chapter one are John Bush and Arthur Young.

The key demarcation between the first two chapters is the Act of Union, which forms the focal point for the writers examined in chapter two. The overriding message appears to be that visitors to Ireland felt compelled to demonstrate that the Union was working, and that Ireland was now on integral part of Great Britain - as British as Wales, Scotland, and, indeed, England itself. While not travel writings as such, a number of texts of a historical and statistical nature are discussed as part of this endeavour. The main travel writers to come under scrutiny in this chapter are Sir Richard Colt Hoare, James Hall, and Anne Plumptre.
In contrast to the enthusiasm and wishful thinking of the writers of the immediate post-Union period, those examined in chapter three are more concerned with the reality that the Union has failed to live up to expectations (as theoretical as those expectations may always have been). Instead, the focus of attention turned to possible dangers, and possible remedies. However, as the 1840s approached, the dangers won out. Famine, warned of in 1831 by Sir John Fox Burgoyne in his own contribution to volumes of travel writings on Ireland, became a tragic reality, resulting in yet another development in the genre: the philanthropic and missionary works.

The philanthropic approach was represented by the writings of Quakers such as William Bennett, Asenath Nicholson, Joseph Crosfield, James Hack Tuke, William Dillwyn Sims, and William Edward Forster. The missionary approach was less edifyingly - or at least less sympathetically - represented by the Anglican rector from Bath, John East. Other writers discussed in chapter three include Kitson Cromwell, James Glasford, J. E. Bicheno, Wriothesley Noel, Henry David Inglis, John Barrow, Leith Richie, Sir George Head, Jonathan Binns, William Makepeace Thackeray, and Alexander Somerville.

Chapter four presents the final shift in the nature of the genre under examination, with the emergence of a style aimed at promoting Ireland as a land of opportunity for the industrious settler. In this case, the death of over a million Irish and the ensuing emigration of hundreds of thousands more was seen as an opportunity for people from England, Wales and Scotland to come over and replace the "disaffected and unthriving" (148) who had left. This view in many ways epitomised the colonial mentality of the writers examined in chapter four - William Bulloch Webster, George Preston White, Francis Bond Head, Henry Coulter, Sir Digby Neave, Charles Richard Weld, John Forbes, Rev. John Hervey Ashworth, Thomas Miller, and Harriet Martineau - all of whom were also, to varying degrees, promoting the nineteenth-century British imperial project.

Overall, the book provides a useful insight into the nature and development of travel writing in the period 1760 to 1860. The excerpts from, and discussion of, individual texts are informative and lively and are always located within considerations of the genre beyond the boundaries of Ireland and Britain.

For the most part, the historical context is woven into the analysis of the texts, though in chapter three there is no explicit mention of the Young Ireland rising of 1848 (though it is briefly referred to in endnote 103). While this may have been because none of the writers examined mentioned that event, it would have been useful to have known this for certain. The book also lacks a conclusion, which leaves the reader with the impression that despite the chronological and thematic coherence, the four chapters are closer to a collection of individual essays than to a single integrated body of work.
Finally, it is somewhat surprising that there is no significant engagement with whether or not these people were competent writers, or whether their recording of places, events and people were accurate or not. In this respect, it seems strange the Maria Edgeworth does not warrant mention, given her strongly-expressed views on the incompetence of John Carr, one of the travel writer's referred to - albeit briefly - in Glenn Hooper's book.

In April 1807, in the *Edinburgh Review* vol. 10, R. L. and Maria Edgeworth reviewed John Carr's *The Stranger in Ireland* (1806), which, in Marilyn Butler's words, they decried as "under-researched, over-written and over-priced". [1] Edgeworth's animosity towards Carr and his book re-surfaced twice in *Ennui* (1809): first, when Lady Geraldine purposely fed false information to the pompous Lord Craiglethorpe, "an English lord travelling through Ireland" and collecting material for an intended travel book [2]; and second, when Lord Glenthorn went on tour to the Giant's Causeway and Killarney. [3]

In light of the existence of such significant literary engagement by Edgeworth with travel writing on Ireland at the start of the nineteenth century, it would have been appropriate to have some consideration of the literary ability and factual accuracy of the authors discussed throughout *Travel Writing and Ireland, 1760-1860*.

Notes:


[2] Ibid., 208, 210-12.