The conclusive section wraps up the narrative, showing the author's ability to weave sources of different natures into a strong and convincing argument. However, the chapters leading to this point do not display this same dynamism and often fall into repetition. The lack of footnotes and/or endnotes is noticeable in this regard, as they would have proven useful to take out from the main text the abundant load of reminders and references between chapters. In contrast, the book is at its most brilliant when presenting plans and carefully curated images. The single axonometry included proves the potential of this topic for further graphic exploration, synthesizing complex constructive and stylistic descriptions that may present a challenge to the untrained reader.

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Ireland's English Pale, 1470–1550: The Making of a Tudor Region.
Steven G. Ellis.
Irish Historical Monographs. Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2021. xx + 202 pp. $99.

This slim volume (173 pages and four maps) is the culmination of over thirty years of research, teaching, and thought. Though short, it makes up for it in conciseness and laser focus to tell the story of the Pale from its origins to the mid-sixteenth century, and answer the question of whether the Pale was an extended frontier or a military outpost (ix). To do this, Ellis tracks the evolution of the Pale and its place in the minds of English kings and their advisers, from a foothold of English power similar to its counterpart the Pale of Calais, to eventually becoming a militarized frontier. He links this evolution to broader trends in Europe, where the consolidation of power into unitary monarchies required the formalization of borders between powers.

The central debate in the book is whether we should regard the Pale as the launchpad for the English colonization of Ireland, or as a separate English region unto itself. Throughout the Middle Ages, the core areas of English rule in Ireland were the four obedient shires of Dublin, Kildare, Meath, and Louth, where English law and custom were followed. This area, according to Ellis, had three key features to define it as a region, including a clear geographical and topographical identity with a separate and different type of economy based on arable/mixed farming, and the English identity claimed by the inhabitants in contrast to their Gaelic neighbors (38).

Throughout the Middle Ages, the priorities of the English Crown regarding this English lordship in Ireland were conservative: to defend and preserve the region and not expand beyond its borders. It was only with the arrival of Edward Poynings in 1494 that the four obedient shires came to be called the Pale, most likely as a result of Poynings's own experience governing the English Pale of Calais. Redefining the

four obedient shires as the Pale emphasized its growing military significance under the Tudors. Throughout, Ellis illustrates the evolution of this English part of Ireland from self-sustaining region, to militarized borderland, to the core of an expansive English colonial effort to make Ireland English.

The book is divided into three sections. The opening two chapters describe the early history of the Pale to the late fifteenth century, highlighting its political connections with England and its similarities to that other English Pale, of Calais. The middle four chapters are a tour of the four obedient shires that constituted the medieval Pale. Each chapter in this section follows a similar pattern of defining the shire boundaries, noting the geography and relationship with the neighboring Gaelic clans and describing how the shires raised money to build physical defenses and pay for the billeting of soldiers. These four chapters challenge the received wisdom of the historiography by showing that the four obedient shires were not in terminal decline in the later Middle Ages but were experiencing a resurgence under the leadership of local Anglo-Irish magnates such as the earls of Kildare, who successfully defended its borders, even at times reestablishing older manors on the borders that had previously slipped into Gaelic hands, and maintained the economic core of the region.

The final section comprises two chapters discussing the fate of the Pale in the sixteenth century, highlighting the recovery of the Pale under the deputyship of the earls of Kildare, their ultimate fall, and the Crown's difficulties to replace their influence and maintain the region. The final chapter tackles the waning of the Pale in the later sixteenth century as the Crown increasingly intervened directly in Irish affairs through English deputies and armies. Ironically, the extension of English law and administration across the country diminished the very Englishness of the Pale as Gaelic Irish lordships were integrated into the kingdom.

Ireland's English Pale, 1470–1550: The Making of a Tudor Region provides a concise history of the English Pale in Ireland and plots the evolution of the region in a clear and accessible manner that will become a foundational text for students of late medieval and early modern Ireland.

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The English Woollen Industry, c.1200–c.1560. John Oldland.
Routledge Research in Early Modern History. Abingdon: Routledge, 2019. xvi + 358 pp. $160.

John Oldland's comprehensive study of the English woollen industry from the thirteenth to the sixteenth centuries very much means business. Oldham, himself a former