

If the pamphlet wars illuminate the changing nature of the Covenant, the subscription returns illustrate the way that English parishioners took the oaths that different regimes foisted on them. Vallance finds evidence of equivocation and reservations, but ultimately (and wisely) refuses to draw strong conclusions from uneven records. What can be said, though, is that the inclusion of unpropertied men and women into these explicitly political tests of loyalty and association constitute “an implicit expansion of the political nation” (129). This was not lost on civil war-era radicals, who interpreted the Covenants through their own circumstances. Diggers and Levellers “saw these documents as not only involving spiritual obligations, but also bestowing extensive political and economic rights upon subscribers” (156). *Revolutionary England and the National Covenant* is based on prodigious archival research, and the arguments derived from the subscription returns may be the most original section of the book.

Be it Scots or English, the millenarian enthusiasm of the mid-seventeenth century did not endure. In his study of oaths from the latter seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, Vallance finds that the nature of the covenants changed. Oaths of association to the Hanoverians were rooted in the “constitutional and commercial considerations “ (214) and consciously avoided discussion of the Covenants of the past. Gone was the nationalism, gone was the impending apocalypse. “England’s Covenant with God” he concludes “had been forgotten” (216).

David A. O’Hara. *English Newsbooks and Irish Rebellion 1641-1649*. Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2006. 236 pp. \$55.00. Review by MICHAEL ROGERS, NORTHEASTERN STATE UNIVERSITY.

This fine contribution to Four Courts Press’s series of monographs on Ireland’s place in the history of the three Stuart kingdoms originated in the author’s PhD dissertation under Michael Perceval-Maxwell’s supervision. The book proceeds chronologically and provides abundant political and military context for O’Hara’s analysis of interest in Irish affairs, the newsbooks, their editors, and the content of their articles. This strong contextualization of English reporting and publishing during the confederate period yields two main theses. First, the birth of the English newsbook owed a great debt to

the tremendous demand for information once word of the Irish rebellion reached England on 1 November 1641. Second, in the process of providing that news, English editors reinforced pre-existing notions of Irish “barbarism” that then became vital ideological weapons in the domestic conflict between parliament and the crown.

Taking cues from Joad Raymond’s *Invention of the Newspaper*, O’Hara begins with events surrounding the appearance of the first newsbook, *Heads of Severall Proceedings* (29 November 1641), and the ways it piqued the nation’s interest in the rebellion. In the explosion of serials that followed (4,600 between 1641 and 1649), ninety-two percent contained articles on Ireland. However, unlike the pamphlet literature that appeared from November, 1641 to August, 1642 the early serials reported the Irish massacres of Protestants much less luridly and propagandistically; moreover, the newsbooks maintained a careful neutrality in reporting growing hostilities between Charles and the parliamentary opposition. Yet, even though English editors began to take opposing positions on the war from the fall of 1642 to the fall of 1643, both royalist and parliamentary newsbooks were of one voice in underscoring the limitless savagery of the Irish rebels. Parliamentary editors, fearful that crown discussion of a cessation of hostilities with the Catholic Confederation of Kilkenny would result in an Irish-Royalist alliance and invasion of England, began printing detailed and gruesome accounts of 1641. Royalist papers also “played the Irish card” with assertions that Parliamentary atrocities at home were even worse than the 1641 massacres. Regardless of political allegiance, Irish savagery and barbarism had become an English moral yardstick.

Needless to say, inaccuracies, exaggeration, and a kind of hysteria saturated Irish news in the two years following the cessation of hostilities between the crown and the confederate Irish in September of 1643. Three events precipitated this reporting: the landing of the first Irish royalist—and Protestant—troops in England; the arrival at Oxford of confederate commissioners presenting permanent peace proposals to the king; and the recruiting of native Irish soldiers by Charles’ chief Irish commander, the Earl of Ormond, in order to bolster royalist forces in England. In addition to several false stories that the Irish troops in England were rebel papists (not royalist Protestants), there were reports of an Irish massacre of a parliamentary garrison that had surrendered and asked for quarter, of horrific torture by rope and fire of

civilians in Pembrokeshire, and of public masses in Bristol's streets, forced upon the populace by 1,500 Irish soldiers accompanying the confederate commissioners to Oxford. Of course, this amounted to more than harmless hyperbole, for MPs used these reports to justify a 1644 ordinance forbidding quarter to Irish soldiers captured in England. In fact, both parliamentary and royalist papers printed accounts of imaginary victories and defeats in Ireland in 1644. Three London serials hailed a great victory by the Ulster Scot commander Robert Monro, who inflicted massive casualties on the Irish rebels, while a royalist newsbook reported Monro's defeat and many dead Scots; in reality both sides had withdrawn to winter quarters rather than fight.

With the end of the first civil war and a royalist peace with the confederate Irish in 1646, a new and less hysterical English interest in reporting what actually happened in Ireland emerged. Yet, inaccuracies and exaggerations persisted, although now driven less by any perceived threats from Ireland and more by domestic English politics, particularly the Presbyterian-Independent conflict over the New Model Army and relief of Irish Protestants. Parliamentary papers increasingly ran atrocity stories similar to those from 1641 and designed to compel the Army to hurry across the Irish Sea. One such report claimed that rebels threw sixty naked Protestants into a deep cave in Kerry, while another contended that the Irish had slit the throats of 40,000 English residents of Down and Armagh. Nor was the royalist press completely silenced in 1647 and 1648, for the three main serials, known collectively as "The Trinity," carried much Irish news, although the editors were careful to "spin" the stories by using ridicule and sexual slander to attack their domestic enemies, the Grandees and Parliament. Lacking the specifics commonplace among Parliamentary papers, the royalist press claimed, for example, that their foes sought to extend the war in Ireland in order to enlarge their English power, and that they minimized casualties in Michael Jones's parliamentary army so as not to frighten potential investors, the "Adventurers," in Ireland's re-conquest.

O'Hara's book ends with a thorough analysis of the period from January to August, 1649, which saw extraordinarily high levels of press coverage of preparations for Cromwell's Irish expedition and its first few days. The heart of this chapter, and of the whole book really, is the author's analysis of the Independent paper, *Moderate Intelligencer*, especially a series of articles refuting point-by-point the anti-invasion arguments of the Leveller tract *Certain Queries*

(April, 1649). This anonymous pamphlet had trumpeted natural rights of the Irish to resist tyranny and choose their own government without outside interference. In its counter-attack, *Moderate Intelligencer* avoided employing the 1641 massacres to justify English re-conquest; rather, the editor stressed that the “godlessness” and savagery of the native Irish—worse even than that of the American Indians—justified forfeiture of any right to select their own laws and forms of government. In addition, *Moderate Intelligencer* reminded readers of England’s vital interests in Ireland and of the harsh measures that might be required. O’Hara strongly suggests that the Commonwealth’s dubious moral bases for the invasion required just such a rationale and that *Moderate Intelligencer* and other serials were preparing the ground for the kind of massacres that would unfold at Drogheda and Wexford.

Although the sheer volume of Irish news in the spring and summer of 1649 reached record levels, accurate reporting attained no such heights. Parliamentary serials boasted that within forty-eight hours of arriving at Dublin, Cromwell’s army had defeated Ormond, while a royalist paper claimed that Ormond’s forces not only defeated the raw recruits of the New Model, but also managed to kill Cromwell’s son. Misreporting and exaggeration thus constituted a continuous characteristic of English news about Ireland from 1641 to 1649.

O’Hara’s organization and prose is clear and straightforward, he provides an excellent summary chapter, and he includes many colorful quotes that capture the flavor of 1640’s reporting. In addition, the book is a valuable contribution to two areas of scholarship. First, it adds to the wider history of early modern reporting and writing by extending to Ireland some of Joad Raymond’s insights into the process of constructing the news in England. Second, the author includes an extraordinary amount of military, political, and diplomatic background on the “Wars of the Three Kingdoms” to explain the changes and continuities in English reporting on Irish affairs. Ultimately the strength of this book is its integration of major English, Scottish, and Irish events into the early history of the English press. Here O’Hara builds on recent work by Jane Ohlmeyer, Nicholas Canny, Aidan Clarke and many others. Perhaps some readers will feel as if they are “drowning” in the book’s historical context. Yet such contextualization remains crucial to understanding the extraordinarily complex interactions between the three kingdoms during

the 1640s and 1650s. And that complexity is, after all, a major source of our fascination with the period.

Teresa Feroli. *Political Speaking Justified: Women Prophets and the English Revolution*. Newark, DE: University of Delaware Press, 2006. 270 pp. index. append. bibl. \$49.50. Review by B. F. PARKER, ISOTHERMAL COMMUNITY COLLEGE.

In her ambitious study of three female prophets (Eleanor Davies, Anna Trapnel, and Margaret Fell), Teresa Feroli argues that women entered the political sphere during the English Revolution and Restoration by claiming authority to speak based on their identity as women. Her aim, in part, is to locate female political consciousness much earlier than has historiographically been supposed. More importantly, however, Feroli suggests that the prophesying of these three women represented not only a powerful call for political change but anchored an acute awareness that ultimately shaped secular feminism (32). In closely analyzing the religious texts of these prophets, Feroli follows through on her promise to assess not only their feminism but also their political thought (31). She also remains mindful in unpacking of selected texts that prophesy was a puritan discourse rooted in self-identification, a genre that lent itself to political representation and activism in a world turned upside down. Along the way Feroli demonstrates how justification of female authority shifted from a patriarchal model under the righteous rule of James I to a model of sexual difference under the tyrannical Charles I, Cromwell, and Charles II.

To her credit, Feroli gives two chapters to Lady Eleanor Davies, whose prophetic works distinguished between the reign of fellow prophet James I and the wicked and unjust Charles. This is carried out by a close textual analysis of Davies' *Warning* (1625) and her anti-Charles tract *All the Kings* (1633), a reading that demonstrates an increasing awareness of Davies' role as the Prophet Daniel under the Babylonian King Belshazzar (51). What Feroli makes of this is illuminating, arguing that Davies came to understand her authority as rightfully inherited from James I, a source of truth and order in a time of an impending apocalypse. Charles' failings are also read in Davies' *The Restitution of Prophecy* (1651), which provides an "extensive meditation on