repeatedly offers summaries. Perhaps this comes from a self-consciousness of the book's distinctive, even groundbreaking, argument to historians unfamiliar with evolutionary biology. He surely hopes biologists and evolutionary scientists as well will read this, and their lack of familiarity with British history might also require repetition. At times his discussion of the dogs is far more interesting, to this reader, than that of the people (with a few notable exceptions, such as George Walpole, Lord Orford). It does seem, on occasion, that Russell depends on quite mature narrative histories of modern Britain, making me wonder if recent work would be even more suggestive. The role that Christianity, or religion generally, played in defining the ideologies surrounding memes and niches is minimal for Russell.

Historical change is evolution, Russell argues, and greyhounds, like other domesticated animals, are a kind of biotechnology. Biologists should therefore build historical social forces into their models. Modern humans have accelerated evolution in a manner far greater than any previous age. Russell successfully brings evolution down to a human/dog scale, tracing in a kind of microhistorical manner a single thread across a long era. Russell's concentration on the greyhound helps the reader recognize that breed uniformity, due to human intervention, is only recently the case. Modern evolution and history are therefore "two facets of the same coin" (ix). "The frequency of ideas (culture, memes) and behaviors (traits) changed in the population of greyhound owners. The populations evolved. These kinds of changes are familiar to historians. We call them history" (31).

Popular culture continues to borrow from the Frankenstein model to narrate human intercession in evolutionary change. But Russell's account suggests how that intervention has been going on, methodically and mutually, without grand scientific technique. As a scientifically ill-informed historian, I was really pleased with the book, and I hope the historically challenged scientist finds it just as enlightening.

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KEITH J. STRINGER and ANGUS J. L. WINCHESTER, eds. *Northern England and Southern Scotland in the Central Middle Ages*. Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2017. Pp. 369. $99.00 (cloth).
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This collection of essays brings into print several papers presented at a 2012 conference in Durham, the purpose of which was a reassessment in light of recent research of the history of "middle Britain" in the high medieval period. A common theme of the work is that throughout the twelfth and thirteenth centuries (oddly—and inexplicably—labeled here the "central" Middle Ages) southern Scotland and northern England shared features of a single British identity.

In addition to a lucid introduction by co-editor Keith Stringer, the book consists of ten essays. The first five ask fundamental questions about national identity in the context of high medieval secular and ecclesiastical politics. The remaining contributions explore rural and urban medieval settlement patterns and secular and religious landownership. Many of the essays apply to the region of middle Britain methodologies that have informed the recent historiography of English medieval peasant and landscape studies. Each contribution also addresses the challenges of applying the modernist construct of the "transnational" to the medieval period.

Not surprisingly, evidence of closely shared experiences that transcended the political line which marked the boundary between two realms is most compelling in the essays that

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examine the history of the church. Rival royal claims to the territories that had once been part of the kingdoms of Strathclyde/Cumbria and Northumbria complicated the formal establishment of diocesan boundaries north and south of the line, but there were "greater opportunities for innovation" (215) in the laying out of new parishes than those that obtained either in England south of the Humber or in Scotland north of Forth. The reformed religious orders of the high Middle Ages, and the Cistercians in particular, weathered more successfully than did lay landholders the political strife of the period. Additionally, throughout the twelfth and thirteenth centuries there was regular movement across the border of monks, regular canons, and friars.

Greater contrasts between southern Scotland and northern England are apparent in the ways in which secular lords gave expression to their authority. Aristocratic fortunes in middle Britain were in turn closely tied to the ability of the kings of England and Scotland to control the peripheries of their respective realms. Keith Stringer finds that Henry II's legal innovations proved far more "exacting, inflexible and invasive" (130) to landholders of all ranks than do William I and Alexander II of Scotland's earliest efforts to give real force to royal jurisdiction in their own border region. The more effective (and better-funded) reach of a belligerent English crown is apparent also in the architectural sphere: in Northumberland especially, Philip Dixon and Christopher Tabraham show, almost all border fortifications were built at the behest of Norman conquerors as statements of their new overlordship; in southern Scotland, by contrast, "there seems not to have been a military imperative behind the building of … royal and baronial castles" (339). In his study of towns, markets, and trade, David Ditchburn argues convincingly that the tendency of scholars to "nationalize" urban history has obscured the shared corporate experience of townspeople and merchants (great and small) in middle Britain.

The differences between the English and the Sottish experiences that some of the authors find in royal, baronial, and urban power structures are more ambiguous in the essays that examine local conditions, but here, too, the theme of shared cultural practices across the England-Scotland divide enables these authors to revisit old interpretations with fresh eyes. Close scrutiny of onomastic evidence, patterns of land exploitation, and traditions of lord-tenant relationships, leads several authors to demonstrate how artificial the political boundary line might prove on the ground. Thus, place names in southern Scotland and northern England bear similar witness to the multiplicity of languages spoken by the people of the twelfth- and thirteenth-century border region and to the changes wrought to the countryside by the migrations of Norsemen and Gaels into the old kingdoms of Strathclyde/Cumbria and Northumbria. An important legacy from the early medieval past is apparent in the survival on both sides of the border of large-scale royal and noble shires and thanages, which long continued to influence the siting of lordly power centers, as well as the layout of fields, pastures, moors, wastes and shielings. The geography of these ancient land divisions in turn determined the ways in which English and Scottish border lords exploited the labor of their serfs, free and unfree. The border line between Scotland and England is at its most attenuated in these studies. Of significant relevance, by contrast, were the differences between the landscapes of the east and those of the west of middle Britain, and between the upland and lowland economies in each of these sub-regions. While one of the contributors is at pains to argue that the east-west division of middle Britain is by no means "axiomatic" (325), that distinction appears in each and every one of the essays in this book.

Several of the essays have clearly been revised and updated since the 2012 conference. Four of the authors, for example, make thoughtful use of the People of Medieval Scotland database (www.poms.ac.uk), which was not widely available until 2012. Dauvit Broun brings to the collection the first findings of a large (and ongoing) research project, *Models of Authority: Scottish Charters and the Emergence of Government, 1100–1250* (www.modelsofauthority.ac.uk). His essay makes a compelling case for locating in the generation and a half between 1150 and 1190 the genesis of a Scottish *regnum* that included territory both north and south of Forth, and of the kingship of the Scots itself as "an abstract concept that was intrinsically

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equated" with these extensive lands (47). This conclusion represents a revision of much of Broun's own groundbreaking work on the early history of Scottish identity and it has important consequences for the future studies of the polities of high medieval Britain. While the essays in this collection vary in length and quality, collectively they demonstrate the value of studying traditional "national" histories through the lens of new theoretical constructs.

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Padraic X. Scanlan. *Freedom's Debtors: British Antislavery in Sierra Leone in the Age of Revolution*. Lewis Walpole Series in Eighteenth-Century Culture and History. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2017. Pp. 299. $40.00 (cloth).
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In this beautifully written book, Padraic Scanlan brings the ironies of Britain's antislavery colony into sharp focus in innovative ways using new sources. Scanlan has meticulously researched—in archives on three continents—the Sierra Leone Company and the colony's early governors. He demonstrates how the arrival of the company drove up demand for slave labor in the region and how the Slave Trade Act of 1807 created a new economy based on naval prize money and the bodies of Liberated Africans, who were conscripted into military regiments, used to profit antislavery activists, and settled into villages to produce for the colony or for export. Scanlan observes that the campaign to end the slave trade "was always expected to earn money for its champions" (21). At each stage of the colony's history, antislavery produced contradictions, profits, and hierarchies. The lives of former slaves who would come to populate the colony would be "defined by the debts Britons assumed they owned to the British empire in exchange for freedom" (223).

This pathbreaking study is structured around five main chapters, the first of which highlights the paradoxes of the antislavery colony's early reliance on slave traders and slave-produced goods for its survival. Scanlan shows that Sierra Leone, "founded to prove the economic efficiency of wage labor and the potential of the West African market for non-slave goods, became a clearinghouse for goods made by slaves" (30). The young colony was failing until the company connected antislavery with the war effort by admitting maroons from Jamaica and securing a lucrative government contract for their "care" and the protection of the Royal Navy (55–57). From the beginning, African settlers were "expected to listen to European command and grow cash crops for the market" or "forfeit European patronage" (53).

Scanlan demonstrates that the great paradox of Sierra Leone was freedom itself. In the second chapter, he shows how the 1807 Slave Trade Act was "a bright line between slavery and antislavery in Britain," but in Sierra Leone "the line faded into the backdrop of colonial practice and local traditions of slave trading" (66). The Act ensured lucrative bounties for the capturing sailors and much-needed labor for Freetown. Liberated Africans were indentured to European merchants, colonial officials and Maroon and Nova Scotian settlers in what was effectively an "auction" (67–70). When Governor Thompson sent protests back to London, he inadvertently provided officials with "ever more grandiose ambition" and "new possibilities for African empire" (92). Thompson envisioned antislavery as an imperial project and viewed people rescued from slave ships as "blank slates" who could become colonists, pioneers and soldiers in the service of Britain (96).

Freetown's Vice-Admiralty Court—the focus of chapter 3—became the hub of Sierra Leone's economy in 1808 as the Royal Navy brought in captured slave ships and "prize

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