Scottish influences upon the Reformed churches in north-west England, c. 1689-1829: a study of the ministry within the Congregational and Presbyterian churches in Lancashire, Cumberland and Westmorland


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Abstract

This thesis examines developments within the ministry of the Congregational churches of the north-west of England in the period 1689-1829, with a number of aims in mind. In focusing on the role of Scottish-born and Scottish-trained ministers within these churches the attempt had been made to get away from the narrow national and denominational dogmas that have constrained our understanding of English Congregationalism. In line with recent historiographical attempts to produce historical explanations that recognise the inter-connectedness of the nations of the Union, this study attempts to assess the contribution of other national church traditions within one English region and to understand the development of British Evangelicalism amongst British Reformed churches, of which the Congregational Churches of Lancashire in the 1830s were such examples. After providing the historical background of the Protestant Dissenting churches of Lancashire, an attempt to quantify the number of churches within emerging church traditions in the eighteenth century will be made and to assess the survival of orthodox Reformed churchmanship. The argument followed here, in contradistinction to the vast majority of denominational historians, is that denominational theories are poor in explaining the survival of orthodox piety amongst Dissent and that the social and economic profile of congregations provides a far better explanation of the ecclesiology of these churches. Cumberland and Westmorland are examined and an understanding of the geographical spread of Dissent is attempted, noting particularly the survival of orthodox piety in the rural north of the region and in particular the dependence of the churches of Cumberland on Scottish ministers, without whom Protestant Dissent in that county would have disappeared. Finally an attempt is made to assess the contribution of Scottish-born and Scottish-trained ministers in the emergent Congregational tradition in Lancashire in the period 1770-1829. Throughout the study an attempt is made to test all assumptions concerning the ministry by utilising a database of biographical information on ministers within these churches and thus providing figures on nationality and training, attempting to see whether the Scottish cohort within the sample was statistically significant before moving on to more qualitative assessments of their influence.

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An introduction to the United Reformed Church, a Trinitarian church found in England, Scotland and Wales: its structure and history in the British Reformation and Evangelical Revival. On this page. United Reformed Church. It is part of the worldwide family of Reformed Churches, which has a total membership of around 70 million people. It has a strong commitment to church union and the ecumenical movement. Its local churches are often partnerships with other denominations, and in some parts of England, local United Reformed and Methodist churches work together in what is termed a United Area. History. The Reformed Presbyterian churches are a communion of Presbyterian origin in Scotland in 1690 when its members declined to be part of the establishment of the Church of Scotland. The Reformed Presbyterian churches collectively have a little over 9,538 members worldwide in Northern Ireland, the Republic of Ireland, Scotland, France, the United States of America, Canada, Japan, South Sudan and Australia. Religion in Scotland. Religion in Scotland includes all forms of religious organisation and practice. The Church of England is considered the original church of the Anglican Communion, which represents over 85 million people in more than 165 countries. While the Church upholds many of the customs of Roman Catholicism, it also embraces fundamental ideas adopted during the Protestant Reformation. The Church claims to be both Catholic and Reformed. It upholds teachings found in early Christian doctrines, such as the Apostles Creed and the Nicene Creed. The Church also reveres 16th century Protestant Reformation ideas outlined in texts, such as the Thirty-Nine Articles and the Book of Common Prayer. The Church of England sustains a traditional Catholic order system that includes ordained bishops, priests and deacons.