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Scotland

R. Scott Spurlock

Dissent is a problematic term not easily accommodated in the history of Scottish Protestantism before the late-seventeenth century. More frequently nonconformity described Presbyterian reactions against Episcopacy. Scotland's reputation for fragmentation and dissent thus rests largely on the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. In 1560 Scotland's Parliament established a Protestant state church emphasising religion's political role: 'true religion and the common welfare of this realm are ... to be entreated, ordered and established to the glory of God and maintenance of the commonwealth'.[1] John Knox had promulgated the political importance of unity in religion even before his return to Scotland and continued to preach it throughout the Reformation.[2] The rapid and largely 'bloodless' nature of Reformation reinforced the theory and William Maitland, addressing the 1567 parliament, declared Scotland's reform as 'a singular testimony of God's favour and a

[1] Sir John Skene, The Lawes and Acts of Parliament maid be King James the First and his Successors Kings of Scotland (Edinburgh, 1597), section 6, ff.3r-9v.

[2] John Knox, The Works of John Knox, ed. David Laing (6 vols, Edinburgh, 1846-64), IV, p. 505.

peculiar benefit granted only to the realm of Scotland'.[3] The inseparable link between nation and right religion became even more explicit in the subscription of the 1581 Negative Confession or 'King's Confession', which rejected all forms of Catholicism and bound the whole nation together in its right religion.[4] Subscription of the confession came to be understood by many as a covenanting or bonding, and the Negative Confession as a 'National Covenant'.

NATIONAL CHURCH

These processes set the expectation for national unity in religion, although the pattern of ecclesial government remained contested. Even in the early days of Protestant Scotland the schismatic impulses evident among English Puritans were emphatically rejected due to two important principles in Scottish Protestantism: 1) an ecclesiology established at the national level, as demonstrated above, and 2) a high regard for local congregation and its endowment with particular rights, particularly the rights of elders to rule.[5] These endowed the Reformed Kirk with a sense of national unity and local autonomy, whereas the impetus in English Puritanism from the 1580s gravitated towards covenanting at the congregational level. While the latter eventually

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[3] Keith M. Brown et al, eds, The Records of the Parliaments of Scotland to 1707, http://www.rps.ac.uk: A1567/12/50 (date accessed throughout: 7 June 2013). Hereafter Brown, RPS.

[4] Gordon Donaldson, ed., Scottish Historical Documents (Edinburgh, 1970), p. 151.

[5] For the rights of the congregation see: James Cameron, The First Book of Discipline (Edinburgh, 1972), *passim*. For the increased emphasis on elders see: James Kirk, ed., The Second Book of Discipline (Edinburgh, 1980), pp. 163–79.

underpinned Puritan ecclesiologies in England and New England locally gathered and covenanted churches, the Scottish Protestants (Episcopal and Presbyterian) held the church to be constituted/covenanted nationally and expressed locally. As a result the arrival of the English separatist Robert Browne in Scotland in 1584 elicited a cold response.[6] While supporters of Episcopacy and Presbyterianism vied for control over the national church during the decades that followed, there is little evidence of godly minorities gathering to the exclusion of all others. In fact, Scotland is notable for its lack of Protestant sectarianism alongside aims for a comprehensive national settlement. Not even the Swiss or Dutch pursued full comprehension of national populations.

However, tensions did run high over church polity. By the 1580s two competing jure divino theories led to serious dissension. Andrew Melville and his supporters advocated a Presbyterian system appointed in Scripture, while the archbishop of St Andrews, Patrick Adamson, credited as architect of the Black Acts (1584), linked episcopacy to the divine nature of the crown and Eusebius's description of Constantine as 'Bishop of Bishops and universall Bishop in his realme'.[7] In the wake of the 1582 Ruthven Raid, in which hardline Protestants seized the young James VI to ensure he would be influenced by Presbyterian-thinking lairds, James Stewart, earl of Arran, became regent. Arran carried out an aggressive policy against proponents of Presbyterianism through the implementation of the Black Acts

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[6] David Calderwood, The History of the Kirk of Scotland (8 vols, Edinburgh, 1843), IV, pp. 2, 3.

[7] Ibid, IV, pp. 263–4; Patrick Adamson, A Declaration made by King James, in Scotland; concerning Church-Government, and Presbyters (London, 1646), pp. 7 – 8.

which set the king as the ultimate authority in both political and spiritual matters, limited ecclesiastical courts, raised episcopal authority, and established legal grounds for removing ministers on 'just causes'.[8] He banished Melville in 1584 and enforcement of the acts caused several other leading Presbyterians into self-exile. When Arran's regency fell apart in 1585, exiled Presbyterians returned and rose to a dominant position. By 1592 support for Presbyterianism ran high, forcing James to pass the so-called 'Golden Act', fully establishing a Presbyterian polity, although he retained the power to call (or not call) General Assemblies.[9] While the contest over church polity led to competing traditions, by and large it did not lead to dissenting traditions. Presbyterian and episcopal sympathisers alike competed for the destiny of the entire national church, not for differentiation or separation from it. Instead Presbyterians simply refused to conform. In fact, the weak implementation of the Black Acts meant that 'before 1606 there was no meaningful episcopate or objectionable polity against which to organise'.[10]

REJECTION OF LITURGICAL INNOVATION

The generally accepted sea change occurred with the implementation of the Articles of Perth in 1618, whereby James strong-armed the General Assembly into significant liturgical innovations including kneeling at communion, the observance of high feast days, and confirmation by a bishop at age 8, while permitting private communion for

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[8] Brown, RPS, 1584/5/7–12, 75–76.

[9] Ibid., 1592/4/26.

[10] Alan MacDonald, The Jacobean Kirk, 1567-1625 (Farnham, 1998), p. 174.

the infirm and private baptism.[11] Dissatisfaction had bubbled away during the previous decade with the reestablishment of diocesan episcopacy in 1606 and the appointment of bishops as permanent moderators of presbyteries, the crown's assertion of authority over clerical dress in 1609 and, more importantly, the full restoration of bishops' secular and ecclesiastical jurisdiction in 1610. But the Articles of Perth represented fundamental innovations many Protestant Scots perceived to be moves back towards Rome. As a result, ministers and their parishioners began meeting in secret gatherings, particularly in Edinburgh, for the first time since before 1560.[12] The grounds of dissatisfaction were largely liturgical, although exacerbated by polity. Theologically, however, the Kirk had unilaterally affirmed its Reformed pedigree in 1616 with the General Assembly confirming the doctrine of double predestination by eternal decree.[13]

Kneeling at communion generated the greatest opposition of all the innovations and many resisted. For instance, a 1620 report claimed only twenty of 1,600 communicants in one Edinburgh church kneeled as instructed. As conformity came to be pushed more aggressively, parishioners refused to go forward for communion or even attend communion services. Alternatively, they attended other parishes which

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[11] Robert Blair and William Row, The Life of Mr Robert Blair, Minister of St Andrews, ed. T. M'Crie (1848), pp. 12–13, 35.

[12] D. Stevenson, 'Conventicles in the Kirk, 1619-37: The Emergence of a Radical Party', Records of the Scottish Church History Society, 18 (1972), 99–114.

[13] D. G. Mullan, 'Theology in the Church of Scotland 1618–c.1640: A Calvinist Consensus?', The Sixteenth Century Journal, 26 (1995), 595–617 (597).

refused to introduce kneeling, which as late as 1622 several country parishes did.[14] Ultimately, alternative religious gatherings began to take place.

Critics accused nonconformists of meeting in ‘conventicles’ during time of public worship and of calling themselves congregations, which resulted in accusations of being ‘Brownists, Anabaptists, Shismaticks, Separatists’.[15] A few scholars have taken these claims to indicate schismatic tendencies within these private gatherings. However, as John Coffey has demonstrated, conventicling did not represent a move toward separation akin to what developed in England.[16] Scottish nonconformists of the 1620s remained thoroughly committed to the principle of a national church, the traditional liturgy of the Reformed Kirk and gathering for private prayer and worship with the intention of reforming the national church and avoiding corruption through liturgical innovations. Nevertheless their opponents did call this ‘rebellion, arrogance and schism’ to the shock of all other Reformed Churches.[17] The claim that meetings regularly took place during Sunday public worship is probably a misinterpretation of evidence. Those missing from Edinburgh’s communion services may have instead attended nearby parishes where kneeling had yet to be imposed. Certainly a number of Edinburghers made their way across the Firth of Forth to Kinghorn and ministers in

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[14] The Register of the Privy Council of Scotland, XII, pp. lxiv, 707. Hereafter RPCS.

[15] Calderwood, History, VII, p. 449, 614.

[16] John Coffey, Politics, Religion and the British Revolution. The mind of Samuel Rutherford (Cambridge, 1997), p. 192.

[17] John Forbes of Corse, The First Book of the Irenicum, trans. and ed. E.G. Selwyn (Cambridge, 1924), pp. 107, 111.

Dunbar, Duns, Haddington, Kirkcaldy and Lasswade refused to introduce kneeling.[18] Samuel Rutherford, known to have participated in 1620s nonconformity in Edinburgh, sheds light on the subject. Writing in 1640 he emphatically denied the lawfulness of choosing private worship during the time of public worship, calling it 'Brownism ... the act of separation'.[19] It is therefore unlikely that this is what happened during the 1620s. Moreover, since the primary issue remained kneeling at communion, the infrequency of the eucharist in Scottish churches meant abstention might only have been an issue as infrequently as once a year – usually at Easter – although royal policy sought to increase its regularity to a minimum of four times a year in burgh parishes and twice in rural ones.[20] Therefore reports from the King's informants claiming thousands missing from communion services did not necessarily mean poor attendance the rest of the year.[21] For many the norm meant partial conformity with attendance at public worship supplemented by private meetings for prayer and scriptural exposition.

A number of factors could affect the experience of nonconformists. Often bishops required a lesser degree of conformity than the king demanded. William Row argued persecution for nonconformity was lax in the 1620s compared to the Restoration. Bishops attempted to moderate royal policies, resisted liturgical

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[18] RPCS, XII, pp. 186, 200.

[19] Samuel Rutherford, The Letters of Samuel Rutherford, ed. A. A. Bonar (Edinburgh, 1904), pp. 578–9.

[20] Calderwood, History, VII, p. 229.

[21] David Laing and Beriah Botfield, ed., Original Letters Relating to the Ecclesiastical Affairs of Scotland (Edinburgh, 1851), II, p. 599.

innovations, ‘deposed very few of the nonconformists’ (only two in Fife) and permitted deposed ministers to preach publicly and assist with communion services.[22] Yet David Lindsay, bishop of Brechin, denied that different practices could be ‘tollerat in the same Kirk’.[23] Some nonconformists expressed equally intolerant attitudes. Although Thomas Sydserff offered a compromise whereby communion could occur with a mixture of standing and kneeling depending on individual consciences, a 1624 pamphlet (probably by David Calderwood) argued it would be unsafe for believers to take communion alongside kneeling communicants.[24] Due to the conflict’s intractable nature the king prohibited private meetings for religious worship in 1624.[25]

James’s policies prompted many nonconformists to leave Scotland for Ulster. By 1622 sixty-four Scots ministers served Irish parishes. While not uniform, the experiences of Robert Blair and John Livingstone are indicative. They worked within the established episcopal Church of Ireland and allowed bishops to attend ordinations on the agreed understanding they represented the equivalent of presbyters or elders. They were also permitted to edit the service book to suit their consciences. Some historians have referred to this system as ‘prescopalian’, but the situation was less

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[22] Blair and Row, Life of Robert Blair, p. 137.

[23] Robert Wodrow, Selections from Wodrow’s Biographical Collections, ed. R. Lippe (Aberdeen, 1890), p. 168.

[24] J. D. Ford, ‘Conformity in Conscience: The Structure of the Perth Articles Debate in Scotland, 1618–38’, JEH 46 (1995), 256–277, p. 264.

[25] Calderwood, History, VII, pp. 611–14.

clearly defined than such a term might suggest.[26] Scots ministers worked reasonably well under Andrew Knox, bishop of Raphoe, and James Ussher, Archbishop of Armagh from 1625, but jarred with other bishops and had little time for the English separatists they encountered in Ireland because 'they did not come to public worship'.[27] Like their colleagues in Scotland, Presbyterians in Ulster rejected schism. However, in 1636 a group probably funded by Sir John Clotworthy attempted to join the Puritan Massachusetts Bay Colony, but bad weather prevented their crossing. Blair and Livingstone, leading figures in the enterprise, interpreted this as a providential judgement against abandoning the Church of Scotland. In conjunction with increasing pressure against nonconformity to the Church of Ireland under Thomas Wentworth, lord deputy of Ireland, they soon returned to Scotland to support the growing Presbyterian reaction against Charles I's policies.

Charles initially did not pursue religious conformity with any great vigour. However, in 1633 – the eighth year of his reign – the king visited Scotland for his first royal visit and coronation. Supporters of Presbyterianism took the opportunity to present a list of grievances to the monarch including the liturgical innovations and the alteration to the role of bishops during his father's reign.[28] Charles's disposition changed and his desire for religious uniformity across his kingdoms led him to

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[26] A. F. S. Pearson, Origins of Irish Presbyterianism (Belfast, 1947), p. 1.

[27] Patrick Adair, A True Narrative of the Rise and Progress of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland, ed. W.D. Killen (Belfast, 1866), pp. 27–28.

[28] John Rushworth, 'Grievances of the Scottish ministers, 1633', in Historical Collections of Private Passages of State: Volume III, 1639–40 (London, 1721), pp. 143–155.

appoint new Scottish bishops friendly to Laudian-style reforms. These bishops reinvigorated the pressure on nonconformist ministers. In 1636, after debating with the recently appointed bishop of Galloway Thomas Sydserff, Samuel Rutherford was deposed from Anwoth and removed to Aberdeen. Though geographically displaced Rutherford continued to encourage churches to 'conference and prayer at private meetings', but rejected the claims of Separatists and Brownists in other places (beyond Scotland) who 'make a kirk in private homes of their own'.[29]

Charles pushed liturgical change through the publication of a Scottish Booke of Common Prayer and Administration of the Sacraments and Other Parts of Divine Service imposed through royal and episcopal authority. Its introduction in St Giles on 23 July 1637 resulted in the outbreak of carefully contrived public riots. In October, nobles, lairds, burgesses, and ministers signed a supplication against the introduction of the Book of Common Prayer and by year's end established an opposition government. 'The Tables' represented the represented traditional constituencies asserting their historic rights and opposed Charles's innovations.

COVENANTED UNIFORMITY?

Once established politically, the Tables sought to solidify popular support and affirm the religious foundations of their actions. They commissioned Alexander Henderson, a minister, and Sir Archibald Johnston of Wariston, a lawyer, to produce a new National Covenant. Besides reasserting the Negative Confession and Scotland's historical anti-Catholic legislation, the document sets out three imperatives: 1) the maintenance of Reformed religion, 2) the rights of the Stewart monarchy, and 3) the

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[29] Coffey, Politics, p. 197; Rutherford, Letters, pp. 561, 564.

political sovereignty of Scotland. These represented the three constitutional (albeit unwritten) pillars upon which nation stood. As such, the document served as 'a band against innovations'.[30]

From February 1638 public subscription began, often accompanied by emotive sermons. In total an estimated that 300,000 Scots signed the covenant. It's broadly inclusive language facilitated widespread subscription – except in the Highlands and the North East. Opposition to subscription rested primarily in questions raised by early critics, such as John Strang, principal of Glasgow University, persisted. Before eventually signing the National Covenant, Strang raised concerns over the legal status of bishops as already established parliamentary legislation and the covenant's prejudicial impact on royal authority. More nuanced and sustained opposition had come in 1638 from the Aberdeen Doctors who queried the legality of mutual bands of defence, the risk the rejection of episcopacy posed to scandalising other Reformed churches, the limitations placed on the monarchy, and the authority the Covenanters had to interpret the Negative Confession as stringently as they had done.[31] The North East of Scotland became a contested space, with both the Aberdeen Doctor and Covenanting leaders printing texts setting out their positions. King Charles sought to capitalise on the groundswell of support for covenanting, and to frame his own claims to royal supremacy in similar fashion. He

[30] Peter Donald, 'The Scottish National Covenant and British Politics, 1638–40', in John Morrill, ed., Scottish National Covenant (Edinburgh, 1990), 90–105, p. 91.

[31] D. Stewart, 'The "Aberdeen Doctors" and the Covenanters', Records of the Scottish Church History Society, 22 (1984), pp. 35-44; G. D. Henderson, Religious Life in Seventeenth-Century Scotland (Cambridge, 1937), pp. 168 – 169.

authorised the production of an alternative document for subscription, which upheld royal authority. The King's Covenant, as it was know, received an estimated 28,000 signatures, primarily in the North East. Among its subscribers were the Aberdeen Doctors. However, this level of subscription paled in comparison to that of the National Covenant.[32]

For William Row, reflecting back years later on the success of the National Covenant, the widespread subscription equated to the whole of the nation. He explains:

> through the whole kingdom or kirk of Scotland, except the Secret Councill and some of the nobility, and except Papists and some few who for base ends adhered to the prelates, the people universally entered into Covenant with God for a reformation of religion against prelates and ceremonies.[33]

His claims raise two important issues. First, despite his claims, no explicit denunciation of episcopacy existed in the original document. This was added at the General Assembly in December 1638 – ten months after subscription began – and became known as the 'Glasgow determination'. The Assembly 'abjured and removed' bishops. Only Robert Baillie registered dissent on the grounds that it should be removed but not abjured. [34] As Alexander Campbell's recent work demonstrates,

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[32] David Stevenson, The Scottish Revolution 1637-44 (Edinburgh, 1973; repr. 2003), pp. 108-12.

[33] Blair and Row, Life of Robert Blair, p. 155.

[34] Alexander D. Campbell, The Life and Works of Robert Baillie (1602-1662): Politics, Religion and Record-Keeping in the British Civil Wars (Woodbridge, 2017), pp. 43–4.

Baillie held a distinctly nuanced view of episcopacy, but his opposition to abjuring the role of bishops no doubt rested in concerns about how such a complete denunciation would be received by other Protestant churches. The Assembly deposed all Scotland's bishops and excommunicated eight (including both archbishops) and renounced all General Assemblies since 1606 as illegal – including the Articles of Perth. In relation to the National Covenant, the General Assembly ordered the universal adoption of the Glasgow Determination, demanded all existing copies be amended and resubscribed with the additional text, and ordered all other copies to be destroyed. However, surviving copies without the alteration indicate this did not always happen. Hence some subscribers to the covenant may not have understood or accepted their commitment to include opposition to episcopacy. Second, although Row glosses over the significant number of Scots who refused the covenant, he reveals the Covenanters ecclesiology had developed to view the nation and the visible church as coterminous.

In many respects the Covenanting tradition represented the fruition of a long process of ecclesiological development. Rooted in Knox's belief that Scotland represented a nation elected and covenanted to God, the nation now represented a visible church. Thus just as Jews born into the Abrahamic covenant were subject to particular religious and political obligations, so too Covenanters understood Scots to be born into covenant promises and obligations. Ironically, whereas opposition to liturgical innovations and aggressive royalist policies in previous decades had not lead to separation, the developments under the Covenanters did sow seeds of division. Fusing a belief in national election with a Reformed doctrine of limited election to salvation created difficult theological and social expectations. For Walter Mathieson, this fundamental tension in Knox's Reformed theology made him the 'parent of

schism' in Scotland.[35] David Mullan, too, argues that Knox 'unwittingly, embraced two distinct covenanting ideas: one, a national, corporate, sociological construct absent from Calvin, the other very much focused on the individual salvation of those elected to grace from eternity.'[36] However, Knox took this two-fold model of individual (internal) and corporate (external) covenanting directly from Calvin. But it was in Scotland that the enormous tensions created by the theological commitment to uphold external holiness corporately, in the face of a largely reprobate and unregenerate population, came to be tested.[37]

The rapid removal of Scotland's bishops left little space for galvanised episcopal resistance. Eight of Scotland's fourteen bishops fled to England within the months that followed. Four died in England before they could secure new appointments: John Spottiswood (St Andrews) and James Wedderburn (Dundee) in 1639, David Lindsay (Edinburgh) 1641, and Patrick Lindsey (Glasgow) in 1644 being noted to have fallen into great poverty. Two took up English parishes (Walter Whitford, Brechin, and Adam Bellenden, Aberdeen), while John Maxwell (Ross) moved to Ireland as bishop of Killala and Ackenry and later archbishop of Tuam. Of the bishops that fled, only Thomas Sydserff (bishop of Galloway) survived until the Restoration to be appointed bishop of Orkney in 1662. While clearly a recognition of

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[35] William Mathieson, Politics and Religion: A Study in Scottish History from the Reformation to the Revolution, 2 vols (Glasgow, 1902), I, p. 115.

[36] David Mullan, Scottish Puritanism, p. 179.

[37] R. Scott Spurlock, 'Polity, Discipline and Theology: the importance of the covenant in Scottish Presbyterianism, 1560-c.1700' in E. Vernon, ed., Church Polity in the British Atlantic, c. 1636-1689 (Manchester, forthcoming).

his loyalty, it was the most remote of all Scotland's dioceses, which may indicate something about Restoration policy. Only John Guthrie (Moray) sought to resist his removal by force, although only briefly, and after a period of house arrest he retired to his private estates until his death in 1649.[38] Scotland's five other bishops submitted to the covenanting regime and renounced their episcopal offices. George Graham (Orkney) retired andd John Abernethy (Caithness) died in 1639, while Neil Campbell (Isles), Alexander Lindsey (Dunkeld) and James Fairlie (Argyll) all continued returned to parish ministry. Thus there were no leading figures remaining to galvanise behind.

Despite the dismantling of the episcopal infrastructure, fears began to grow by 1641 that 'lately deposed episcopall ministers beganne to crowde so thickte at this wicket into ther owne pulpitts againe, by the assistance of ther parishoners, that the following Assemblyes this latitude was restrained'.[39] Authorities were less concerned about resurgent claims of the old polity, than about the undermining of The kirk responded by establishing travelling committees appointed by the General Assembly to carry out visitations. Between 1638 and 1651 these led to the deposition of 236 ministers, some for scandal, but at least ninety-percent for failing 'to support enthusiastically enough, the predominant faction in the Kirk – which might include a lingering affection for episcopacy.'[40] Ministers as well as academics, like John Forbes

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[38] Mullan, Scottish Puritanism, pp. 190–94.

[39] James Gordon, History of Scots Affairs, ed. J. Robertson and G. Grub, 3 vols. (Aberdeen, 1841), III, p. 54.

[40] David Stevenson, 'Deposition of Ministers in the Church of Scotland, 1638-1651', Church History, 44 (1975), 321–335 (324).

of Corse and the Aberdeen Doctors, were among those deposed. By 1640 subscription of the National Covenant had become obligatory by act of parliament, and this required the renunciation of episcopacy. Evidence from Fife and Orkney, however, suggests some deposed ministers and their congregations simply ignored these depositions and continued in open defiance of the Kirk.[41] William Watson, minister of Duthil, expressed his frustration with Covenanting rule in 1646 declaring before the Synod of Moray: 'How can we speak against Sects seing we are the most abominable sect in all the world because of our government'.[42] But those who continued in local ministry did not vocally advocate episcopacy, they simply refused to abrogate their charges, spinning the intervention of the national church as invasive. Such an interpretation could be based on the precepts set out in the First Book of Discipline, and need not be interpreted as anti-presbyterian. They continued to serve within parishes and did not seek to establish alternatives. Thus no dissenting episcopal tradition galvanised in Scotland under the covenanting regime like the non-juring tradition of the eighteenth century. The efficiency Covenanter governance, and antipathy of the Interregum regime, precluded this.

Gradually it became clear early in the Covenanting years that the risk to Covenanted Scotland came not from a resurgent episcopacy, but rather from fragmentation within. Robert Baillie identified Brownist-like tendencies among the parishioners of Glassford, who in 1639 refused a minister tried by the presbytery

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[41] R. Scott Spurlock, Cromwell and Scotland: Conquest and Religion, 1650–1660 (Edinburgh, 2007), pp. 101–4.

[42] William Cramond, ed., Extracts from the Records of the Kirk-Session of Elgin (Elgin, 1897), p. 100.

before the congregation had called him. However, he noted their claims to be attempting to uphold obligations to the covenant and discipline of the Kirk.[43] In 1640 he more specifically identified Scots returning from Ulster perpetuating private meetings and espousing Brownist principles, particularly in Stirling.[44] Two years later Baillie reported small numbers of 'Brownists' in Kilwinning as well as Ayr and Aberdeen in 1643.[45] The Aberdeen reports are corroborated by John Spalding who, like Baillie, made a direct Irish connection. Spalding identifies Othro Ferrendail, 'an Irishman, and ane skynner' as the source and reports his imprisonment for preaching 'Nocturnall doctrein, or Brownism' in private homes.[46] Under pressure Ferrendail appeared in the local kirk, affirmed the national church, denied Brownist doctrines and signed the covenant.[47] Baillie and Spalding's accounts both indicate Ireland as a conduit for new schismatic impulses, albeit returning Scots ministers seem to have been unaffected. Another of Spalding's Brownists, Gilbert Gordon or Gairdin, of Tullifrosky (Tilliefroskie), faced excommunication and later sources identified him as a Baptist.[48]

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[43] Robert Baillie, Letters and Journals, ed. D. Laing, 3 vols (Edinburgh, 1841–2), I, pp. 237–41.

[44] Ibid., I, pp. 249–50.

[45] Ibid., II, pp. 28, 54.

[46] John Spalding, History of the Troubles and Memorable Transactions in Scotland, 2 vols (Edinburgh, 1829), II, p. 81.

[47] Ibid., pp. 94, 95, 107, 114, 126.

[48] Ibid., pp. 94–5, 151.

Except for these notable aberrations, the impression at the national level remained that 'heresy and schism' derived from outside Scotland and remained a largely English problem.[49] In fact the term 'dissenter' only entered Scottish theological discourses in the mid-1640s in relation to events in England, through Robert Baillie and George Gillespie. Both men related the term to the heterodoxy of Revolutionary England and their experiences of the Westminster Assembly.[50] Their concerns pertained to maintaining unity and what constituted the difference between dissent and schism. Gillespie articulated dissent as being limited to disagreements over principles not practices, so as not to create separation. In particular this related to the Dissenting Brethren who sought to formulate a national church settlement of independently gathered congregations, influenced by experiences of some of their number in The Netherlands.[51] While a number of the Scots representatives at Westminster sympathised with their position, they could not reconcile how such a divesting of the national church could produce anything but schism. Scotland's involvement in English political and theological discussions came to be rooted in the Solemn League and Covenant entered into by both nations in 1643. The document committed Scotland to advancing the covenanted obligations already established at home in the National Covenant, into England and Ireland. For David Stevenson, the Solemn League and Covenant represented Scottish ambitions for a federal union with

[49] Brown, RPS, 1648/3/83.

[50] George Gillespie, Wholsome Severity reconciled with Christian Liberty (London, 1645), p. 36; Robert Baillie, Satan the Leader in Chief to all who Resist the Reparation of Sion (London, 1644), sig. A4r.

[51] Hunter Powell, The Crisis of British Protestantism (Manchester, 2015).

England under the conditions of religious uniformity.[52] In Scottish minds, however, this meant a renewed commitment to maintaining the purity of religion and church government at home, alongside a covenanted obligation to support the furthering of reform in England and Ireland. This process was expressed theologically in Scottish contributions to the Westminster Assembly of Divines, and politically through ongoing military involvement in England's Civil Wars – although the latter were hotly disputed and divisive. Thus Mathieson, critical of the fruits of the pan-British covenant, argued: 'Instead of the union of three churches, the Solemn League and Covenant effected only the disunion of one'.[53]

COVENANTING DIVISIONS

By 1648 serious fissures began to form in the Kirk, which found an expression in the Engagement Crisis of 1648. Leading Scottish nobles agreed to assist the King against English's Parliament in exchange for a seven-year trial period of Presbyterianism being introduced in England. Outraged by this, and aided by Oliver Cromwell, the extreme wing of the Covenanters willing to prioritise religious obligations over support for the king, seized control of the Scottish government in the Whiggamore Raid. This Radical Kirk Party, whose roots David Stevenson firmly rooted in the conventicling traditions of Dumfries and Galloway, passed the Act of Classes excluding all participants in the Engagement from government. By 1649 the Radical

[52] David Stevenson, 'The Early Covenanters and the Federal Union of Britain', in Roger A. Mason, ed., Scotland and England 1286-1815 (Edinburgh, 1987), pp. 163-81.

[53] Mathieson, Politics and Religion, II, p. 63.

Kirk Party controlled Scotland and pushed through further religious reforms, including the abolishment of patronage – an issue long contentious for usurping the rights of the congregation. After Charles I's execution in 1649, compelled by covenant obligations to support the Stewart line, Scotland proclaimed Charles II king of all three kingdoms. In response, an English army led by Cromwell crossed the Tweed on 22 July 1650. The Radical Kirk Party, attempting to maintain the purity of their cause, purged the army of all men deemed to be ungodly thereby reducing it by at least 5,000. The devastating defeat that followed at Dunbar on 3 September brought about an internal crisis within the Kirk over the interpretation of God's apparent abandonment of the Covenanting cause.

The moderate majority moved a public resolution to relax and eventually rescind the Act of Classes in January 1651. The populist position became know as the Resolutioners. Opponents from the Radical Kirk Party submitted a remonstrance arguing for the reinstatement of the Act of Classes and the rejection of Charles II. When the Resolutioner-dominated General Assemblies of 1651 and 1652 rejected the remonstrances, formal protests were submitted and the hardline Covenanting faction became known as Protesters. Divisions between the two factions lasted until the Restoration and became manifest in several ways, including whether or not to pray for the King. However, the primary issue was who should govern the Kirk. Protesters struggled with submitting to a Presbyterian government they believed had been usurped by an ungodly majority. Resolutioners responded by condemning their opponents' position as sectarian, stressing – as the Second Book of Discipline explains –the power to rule the Kirk is bestowed directly from Christ to those

appointed to rule the church (ministers, elders and deacons).[54] The division persisted throughout the Interregnum and took its toll. By the end of the 1650s Samuel Rutherford struggled to come to terms with how a national church could be submitted to if it remained under the rule of an ungodly majority.[55] At the Restoration, Robert Baillie suggested the Protesters be banished to Orkney.[56] It seems inconceivable the divisions between Protesters and Resolutioners could have been resolved without the Restoration.

THE FRUITS OF TOLERATION

While Protesters and Resolutioners debated how Scotland failed to uphold the covenants, a number of Scots instead rejected the covenants themselves as the root problem. In Aberdeen, Alexander Jaffray, John Menzies, John Row and a number of faculty members from Aberdeen's two colleges formed an Independent congregation arguing the covenants were idols for Scotland and the national model of the church corrupted the sacraments by distributing them to the godly and reprobate alike. They separated in October 1652 no longer willing to accept a bare confession of faith as sufficient for membership in the visible church. While critics accused the Aberdeen Independents of falling under the influence of New England's Congregationalists, John Row denied ever reading any works on Independency.[57] Jaffray had, however,

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[54] James Wood, A Declaration of the Brethren who are for the Established Government and Judicatories of this Church (Edinburgh, 1658), p. 8.

[55] Coffey, Politics, Religion and the British Revolutions, p. 224.

[56] Baillie, Letters and Journals, III, p. 459.

[57] Row, History of the Kirk, p. 533.

conversed with John Owen while in English custody after the Battle of Dunbar and the English Independent Nicholas Lockyer corresponded with the group. Ultimately, the Aberdeen Independents seem to have been disillusioned by the fruits of the covenants and the failures of a comprehensive state church, rather than won over by imported ideas. As such, they should probably be understood as an indigenous response to the failures of the covenants. The church carried on for uncertain period of time, but by the Restoration all its members either returned to the Kirk or moved on to other separatist traditions.[58]

Further Independent congregations formed in Edinburgh, Fenwick, Stirling, Kirkintilloch/Lenzie, Fenwick, Stonehouse, East Kilbride, Perth, Linlithgow, possibly Birse, Durris, and Kinkellar, and probably elsewhere. In other circumstances, English Independent ministers entered Scottish parishes through a deal brokered by Patrick Gillespie, Principal of Glasgow University, with Cromwell's regime known as 'Gillespie's Charter'. The arrangement established regional commissions for filling vacant charges. Baillie and other Resolutioners bitterly protested against this infringement on the Kirk because a quorum of known Independents gained the power to fill all vacant charges 'north of Angus', while Gillespie's faction controlled the West of Scotland.[59] Such collusion raised questions about Gillespie's Protester credentials and he purportedly declared the covenants 'had served their turn', but 'now it was at an end, and no more obligatory'.[60] Certainly Gillespie's Protester colleagues feared his links with English sectarians. As in England, the religious

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[58] Spurlock, Cromwell and Scotland, pp. 121–37.

[59] Ibid., 116–21, 145–7.

[60] Ibid., p. 230 n. 298.

milieu of Interregnum Scotland is probably better summarised as a series of moments rather than movements.[61] Even among Scots Presbyterians the lines between traditional conventicling and Independency could become blurred. In Skirling, Peeblesshire, the minister attempted to prevent meetings for private worship in 1654 claiming they were against the commands of the General Assembly. The parishioners retorted they would not neglect their 'dewtie', since in 1647 the Kirk commanded: 'Besides the publick worship in congregations, mercifully established in this land in great purity, it is expedient and necessary that secret worship of each person alone, and private worship of families, be pressed and set up'.[62]

Independency could develop in Interregnum Scotland because the Commonwealth regime introduced religious toleration in 1652 to all who would worship in a 'Gospel way'.[63] This represented a complete innovation in Scotland. In this environment occupying English soldiers eagerly preached their preferred religious alternatives and debated with Kirk ministers, viewing Scotland as a 'field white for harvest'.[64] Baptist congregations formed in Leith, Edinburgh, Ayr, Perth,

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[61] Jonathan Scott, 'The English Republican Imagination', in Revolution and Restoration: England in the 1650s, ed. John Morrill (London, 1992), pp. 35-54.

[62] Christopher R. Langley, 'Times of Trouble and Deliverance: Worship in the Kirk of Scotland, 1645–1658' (unpublished PhD thesis, University of Aberdeen, 2012), p. 148. Church of Scotland, Directory of Public Worship (Edinburgh, 1647), p. 1.

[63] C. Innes and T. Thomson, eds, The Acts of the Parliament of Scotland, 11 vols (Edinburgh, 1814-44), VI,II, p. 809.

[64] B. Evans, The Early English Baptists, 2 vols (London, 1862–4), II, p. 190.

Cupar, Aberdeen, Inverness, probably Dundee and likely elsewhere.[65] These were all in close proximity to English garrisons and while Scots did join them, they never developed indigenous infrastructures. As a result, when military authorities lost trust in Baptists – due to their links with Fifth Monarchist unrest – and purged them from the army Scots converts quickly fell prey to Presbyterian opponents. By the Restoration it is unlikely any Baptist gatherings continued to meet in Scotland.[66] Quakers also made inroads during the Interregnum with Quaker activity centred in Edinburgh, Lesmahagow, Douglas, Lenzie, Glassford and Aberdeen.[67] English missionaries poured into the country, with at least fifty visiting Scotland between 1654 and 1657.[68] Experiences varied widely from one location to another, depending on the disposition of the local population and minister, the proximity of an English garrison, the English commander's disposition, and the outlook of the local Justice of the Peace. However, as the Scots Quaker George Weir of Lesmahagow described it, Friends experienced 'Club Law' at the hands of Scots Presbyterians.[69] As a result, convincement always brought the risk of persecution, which ensured the commitment of proselytes. A number of prominent Scots were convinced including Lady Margaret Hamilton (possibly the daughter of the duke of Hamilton), John Swinton of Swinton

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[65] Spurlock, Cromwell and Scotland, p. 161.

[66] Ibid,, 160–73.

[67] Ibid., pp. 174–75.

[68] G.B. Burnet, The Story of Quakerism in Scotland 1650–1850 (London, 1952), p. 15.

[69] George Weare, The Doctrins & Principles of the Priests of Scotland (London, 1657), pp. 79–83.

and Sir Walter Scott of Raeburn – Sir Walter Scott's great-great-grandfather.[70] Whereas Independents and Baptists failed to survive the Interregnum, Quakers became a permanent fixture of the religious landscape. In fact, after the Restoration their numbers increased significantly, especially in Aberdeenshire where they secured an important foothold with the Barclays of Ury. Perhaps the most remarkable aspect of these dissenting traditions in Scotland is not the rapidity of sects in a land unfamiliar with toleration, but rather the mutual support they demonstrated. Just as dissenting traditions turned on one another in late Interregnum England, Scottish Baptists, Quakers and Independents jointly petitioned Westminster to secure their religious toleration. They asked 'for ourselves, and several others in this Nation, That you will take care to provide for our just Liberties; that we may share in those Gospel Priviledges that the truly Godly in England contend for ... And that any Laws or Acts of Parliament of this Nation [Scotland] contrary hereunto may be abolished'.[71] Approximately 200 men and one woman signed the petition, from as far afield as Orkney.[72] In a nation with a population over one million, the signatories represented a drop in the bucket, however they should not be understood to represent a complete list of religious dissenters. The evidence from the period suggests women probably outnumbered men in most of the traditions represented.[73] A more realistic estimate might be attested in James Guthrie's claim that 'scarce' one-in-one-thousand Scots

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[70] Spurlock, Cromwell and Scotland, p. 184.

[71] National Library of Scotland (NLS), Wod.Fol.XXX.(27).

[72] Spurlock, Cromwell and Scotland, pp. 189–94.

[73] Ibid., p. 191.

joined sects.[74] Although small in number, their joint action terrified Scots into supporting the Restoration in hopes of reinstating Presbyterianism and ending toleration.

RESTORATION

Despite widespread hopes for the re-establishment of Presbyterianism, the 1661 Act Recissory rolled the Church of Scotland back to 1618 thereby re-establishing the episcopacy of James VI's reign. By 1661 new bishops consecrated in London filled the sees of St Andrews, Glasgow, Dunblane and Galloway and all ministers entered into charges after 1649 (when patronage was abolished) were required to secure the support of the local patron and be collated by the bishop of their diocese by 20 September 1662 or face deprivation.[75] While the historiography of the period heralds widespread resistance and nonconformity, recent work has demonstrated the reality was much more complex. In total approximately 270 ministers – one-quarter to one-third of the total number in the country – were deprived of their charges by 1662–3, with others hounded out in subsequent years.[76] Yet the majority of ministers and laypeople conformed. Andrew Honyman, a Covenanter who became bishop of

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[74] James Guthrie, Some Considerations Contributing Unto the Discoverie of the Dangers That Threaten Religion and the Work of the Reformation in the Church of Scotland (Edinburgh,1660), pp. 65, 66.

[75] Robert Wodrow, The History Of The Sufferings Of The Church of Scotland, 4 vols (Glasgow, 1828–30), I, p. 283; Brown, RPS, 1662/5/15; 1663/6/19.

[76] Gordon Donaldson, Scotland: James V to James VII (Edinburgh and London, 1965), pp. 365–366

Orkney in 1664, argued the original National Covenant lacked any renunciation of episcopacy and therefore the added Glasgow determination could not be binding. He implored his fellow ministers to consider the rashness of abandoning ministerial work 'for the good and salvation of [God's] people' rather than accept collation (not ordination) from a bishop.[77] Not all his colleagues agreed, but his fellow Covenanter Robert Leighton accepted the bishopric of Dunblane. Leighton could conform because the Covenants needed 'to be repented for', since 'we placd mor religion in opposing ther [episcopal] ceremonies then in the weightiest matters of the law of God'. Moreover, he did not consider liturgy or discipline as weightier matters of faith.[78] Another conforming minister was James Sharp, the great apostate Resolutioner turned Archbishop of St Andrews. According to Julia Buckroyd, Sharp recognised the inevitably of episcopal restoration and conformed to ensure Scots maintained some control over their church.[79] These men may not have been the norm, but it seems likely their positions give a broad range of options to help explain why the majority of ministers opted to continue their ministries rather than abandon their charges. This conformity was eased in Scotland by the lack of re-ordination and the hap-hazard imposition of liturgical standards, as compared with England. Moreover, the legal requirement to repudiate the covenants was ameliorated by diverse practices in administering oaths among Restoration bishops.

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[77] Andrew Honyman, The Seasonable Case of Submission to the Church-Government as Now Re-Established by Law (1662), pp. 8, 36.

[78] David Laing, ed., Correspondence of Sir Robert Kerr, First Earl of Ancram and his son William, Third Earl of Lothians, 2 vols (Edinburgh, 1885), II, p. 456.

[79] Julia Buckroyd, The Life of James Sharp (Edinburgh, 1987), p. 71.

While ministers continued to be hounded out for their dissatisfaction with the shape of the Episcopalian settlement in the early years of the Restoration, the policies of John Maitland, Secretary of Scotland, sought to bring nonconforming clergy into the national church by extending indulgences. These required ministers to be collated by a bishop and attend kirk sessions, presbyteries and synods.[80] The latter point is important. Despite some historians claiming Presbyterian church courts were abolished, this is not the case. In fact, the Restoration reaffirmed sessions, presbyteries and synods, albeit they were temporarily suspended until being organised by the local bishop.[81] The traditional structure at a local level persisted with the local parish church being defined by the roles of the minister, elders and kirk session. Moreover, they resumed their traditional role as the base unit of the national church with legislation forbidding separation from the church or absence from the local parish during time of divine worship for either 'popery or other disaffection to the present government of the church'.[82] Crimes such as slander, adultery and witchcraft, as well as poor relief, remained the jurisdiction of the kirk session.[83] These continuities no doubt aided the conformity of many ministers and aided the success of the indulgences in bringing ministers back into the Kirk: 43 in 1669 and 90 in 1672.

Perhaps more importantly than clerical responses, however, are those of the laity. The complexity of dealing with the dramatic changes of the previous decades cannot be oversimplified. The promises of being a blessed nation under the

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[80] Wodrow, History of the Sufferings, I, p. 305.

[81] Brown, RPS, 1662/5/9; RPCS, Third Series, I, pp. 130–1.

[82] Brown, RPS, 1663/6/19.

[83] RPCS, Third Series, I, pp. lvi, 542, 550, 649,

Covenants, the shock of the Cromwellian conquest and occupation, and the re-establishment of episcopacy made for a challenging interpretation of providence. The wholesale and rapid transformation of the church in 1662–3, according to Alexander Brodie, left men wrestling to come to terms by 'ther oun light'.[84] According to the most recent study of the period, the overwhelming majority (at least two-thirds) of the laity conformed to some degree. In fact, according to Alasdair Raffe, 'only a small number of lay people consistently refused to recognise the episcopalian church' and as such he questions whether any Scots who attended episcopal churches, even occasionally, should be considered Presbyterian. Moreover, he suggests partial conformity in Scotland 'was typically a product of pragmatism, rather than of principle'.[85] This view, as yet untested in Scottish historiography, does not adequately take into account similar experiences in England where analysis of partial conformity is much more nuanced and underappreciates the evidence provided in Brodie's comments, which imply a deep concern for principles.[86] In this respect the situation in Scotland is more difficult to unpick than in England, Wales or Ireland. In Scotland it appears many people attended their local churches and supplemented this with occasional participation in conventicles. Brodie described his conformity as 'complying by titles, fair words, and the lyke' but hoped 'this complacency be no

[84] Alexander Brodie, Diary of Alexander Brodie of Brodie (1652–80) (Aberdeen, 1863), p. 266.

[85] Alasdair Raffe, The Culture of Controversy. Religious Arguments in Scotland 1660–1714 (Woodbridge, 2012), pp. 34, 181.

[86] John D. Ramsbottom, 'Presbyterians and "Partial Conformity" in the Restoration Church of England', Journal of Ecclesiastical History 43 (1992), 249-70.

snare to me, nor may it be to others' – albeit he refused to take communion.[87]. This may typify a large portion of the Scottish population who could not embrace episcopacy wholeheartedly, but neither could he deny – despite its faults – the Kirk remained the legitimate national church.

Mark Mirabello helpfully divides Restoration Presbyterian dissent into three phases: 1663–1668, 1668–1679 and 1680–1687. From 1663 to 1668 very few conventicles formed and instead a widespread dissatisfaction with the covenanting cause led to overwhelming conformity.[88] Between 1668 and 1679 a gradual growth of conventicles occurred and these expressed increasingly militant leanings.[89] To a significant extent the growth owed to the mobilisation and leadership of a younger generation who lacked any first-hand experience of the Covenanting Revolution's failure or the Cromwellian occupation, but which was reared on the radicalised ideology epitomised in James Stewart's *Naphtali* emphatic espousal 'this whole Nation is perpetually joyned unto the Lord' and 'almost as to the number of persons, the Church of Scotland was of equal extent with the Nation'.[90] Yet Stewart stepped beyond corporate responsibility using the Old Testament figure Phineas to justify the

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[87] Brodie, Diary, p. 277.

[88] Mark Mirabello, 'Dissent and the Church of Scotland, 1660-1690', (unpublished PhD thesis, University of Glasgow, 1988), pp. 168–180.

[89] Ibid., pp. 185–206.

[90] James Stewart, Naphtali (1667), sigs. A2r–A3, pp. 183–4. Mark Jardine, 'The United Societies: Militancy, Martyrdom and the Presbyterian Movement in Late-Restoration Scotland, 1679 to 1688' (unpublished PhD thesis, University of Edinburgh, 2009), I, p. 42.

individual serving as God's implement for punishing evil.[91] These developments found further support from an exile community in the Netherlands.[92] The most significant aspects of this period were the assassination of James Sharp in 1679, the mobilisation of an estimated 5–7,000 men in the wake of the Battle of Drumclog (1679) and the 1680 Sanquar Declaration in which Richard Cameron and other covenanting leaders denounced the king as an enemy and excommunicant. In response James, Duke of York, replaced Maitland as the crown's representative in Scotland. He brought both an uncompromising policy against radical Presbyterians and a willingness to extend toleration to Catholics, Quakers and moderate Presbyterians. According to Mirabello, 1680–1687 witnessed an overall reduction of conventicles and widespread conformity due in part to the violent and schismatic tendencies of the Cameronians and United Societies.[93] In 1681 James coerced the Scottish Parliament into passing the Test Oath, which required all public officials and ministers to swear to the crown's supremacy in both political and ecclesiastical matters. This marginalised not only Presbyterians, but also some Episcopalians like James Blair, who was deprived from his charge, moved to England and eventually became commissary to the Virginia Colony and the College of William and Mary's founder.[94] However, this is not what has typified the period in popular memory.

[91] Stewart, Naphtali, pp. 20–5; Coffey, Politics, Religion and the British Revolutions, p. 177.

[92] Ginny Gardiner, The Scottish Exile Community in the Netherlands, 1660–1690 (East Linton, 2004).

[93] Mirabello, 'Dissent', pp. 215–230.

[94] RPCS, VII, pp. 296–7.

Instead, with the help of Robert Wodrow (1679–1734) and Thomas M'Crie (1772–1835), the period between 1681 and 1688 is popularly remembered as the Killing Times. Hagiographical accounts estimate as many as 18,000 Covenanters died.[95] This number is certainly an over estimation no precise figure is possible to confirm. What is certain is approximately 100 men and women faced trial and execution, while another eighty or so were cut down in the fields.[96] Others faced imprisonment or banishment and others chose self-exile in Ireland or the Netherlands. Yet not all who adhered to the covenants through the period were as radical as Cameron's followers. In 1684 the Privy Council examined George Smith as to whether he owned the covenants, opposed the king or condoned violence. Smith replied he held 'all the covenants', rejected violence desiring to live and peace, and would only take up arms in self-defence. He was banished for not swearing off resistance to the crown.[97]

Like earlier periods, Restoration nonconformity needs to be understood as diverse and variable. Despite its numerical minority, it proved fundamental for the development of Scottish identity and at times may have exceeded rates of nonconformity estimated in England in the period of 3–5%, but not consistently. Instead the boundaries between established church and nonconformity were

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[95] 'Covenants', in Collins Encyclopaedia of Scotland (London, 1994); Andrew N. T. Muirhead, Reformation, Dissent and Diversity: The Story of Scotland's Churches, 1560 – 1960) (London, 2015), p. 23. J. Hewison in his The Covenanters, 2 vols (Glasgow, 1913) interpreted 18,000 as including all those who suffered: death, persecution, transportation and banishment (II, p. 512).

[96] Rosalind Mitchison, A History of Scotland (London and New York, 2002), p. 207.

[97] RPCS, Third series, IX, p. 210.

permeable, and nonconforming networks spanned large geographical areas though particularly strong in the West. Moreover, nonconformity should not be limited to Presbyterian traditions, nor should all Scots be understood to have viewed the Restoration in the same way. Despite Quakers being banned by a 1661 Act of Parliament, they tended to see the Restoration as a day of reckoning for their Presbyterian oppressors. Andrew Robeson posited, 'Who shall turn it backwards? Tho breirs, & thorns may now spring up, their comes a day of burning. Hath he not washt away thy laite oppressors [Presbyterians] as with a flood?'[98] He expected the same would eventually happen to the Episcopalian regime. Yet, Quakers did not fair well in the first decades of the Restoration facing public ridicule, dispossession of goods and extended periods of imprisonment without trial. However, James worked to ease their situation from 1681. He used connections at court to support colonial projects, including East New Jersey, which although largely bankrolled by Quakers also found support from the Catholic earl of Perth. The proprietors elected the Aberdonian Robert Barclay as the colony's first governor, though he never visited the colony. Quaker numbers increased throughout the Restoration – especially in Aberdeenshire – and meetinghouses were secured or built in Aberdeen, Edinburgh, Glasgow, Kelso, Gartshore and elsewhere.[99] In 1687 they benefited from a toleration by James VII's royal decree – having succeeded his brother in 1685 – extended to Catholics, Quakers and 'moderate' Presbyterians on condition of an oath upholding the crown's supreme power and authority.[100]

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[98] NLS, MS. 2201, f. 100.

[99] Burnet, The Story of Quakerism, pp. 51–5, 92–108, 134, 173.

[100] Wodrow, History of the Suffering, IV, p. 418.

Despite his leniency in matters of religion, the ascendency of James consolidated opposition to the Stuart monarchy. A flood of high profile conversions to Catholicism – including the Earl of Perth – the establishment of a Jesuit school at Holyrood and toleration of the Mass provoked riots in Edinburgh. Moreover, toleration proved largely unwelcome to many Presbyterians as it put them on equal footing with Quakers and Catholics. Nevertheless, Presbyterians did take advantage and established 72 meetings, mostly in the eastern and central of Scotland.[101] These represented a distinct expression from the United Societies and proved important. When James fled the following year, the Glorious Revolution brought the possibility of restoring Presbyterianism. The Synod of Aberdeen wrote to William of Orange, expressing their hope he would be 'the instrument of our deliverence' for union between 'our Protestant brethren who differ ... only in matters of church government' so that they might 'tolerate one another in these things wherein we may still differ'.[102] Importantly, the path chosen rejected the tradition maintained by the radical covenanters. The 1690 settlement made no mention of the covenants and instead re-established Presbyterianism on the doctrinal grounds of the Westminster Assembly. This marginalised the small number vehemently supporting the covenanted position and they remained outside what they perceived to be an erastian form of Presbyterianism. The settlement also excluded supporters of episcopacy and those who refused an oath of loyalty to William and Mary – including all the Scottish bishops – became known as non-jurors and were outlawed. Five-hundred ministers were removed in 1688 and a further 664 between 1689 and 1719, numbers far

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[101] Jardine, 'The United Societies', I, p. 173.

[102] Brown, RPS, A1689/6/8.

exceeding the Restoration period.[103] In 1695 Scotland's Parliament did extend an indulgence to Episcopalian ministers allowing them to become qualified upon taking the oath of allegiance, albeit they also reassured Presbyterian supremacy by passing an act against irregular marriages and baptisms.[104]

The increasingly British nature of Scottish politics by the late seventeenth century heightened the need for legal parity between England and Scotland, especially after England established religious toleration in 1689. The catalyst for change in Scotland came not from English dissenting traditions, but rather from English Episcopalians and the crown. A draft act of toleration for all forms of Protestant was read before the Scottish Parliament in 1703 at the instigation of Queen Anne, but opposition from the Kirk scuppered it.[105] The 1707 Act of Union made the matter even more urgent, but since both kingdoms retained separate legal and ecclesiastical structures the new united Parliament was understood to have had no remit in religious matters. The issue came to a head in 1711. After being imprisoned for conducting episcopal worship in Scotland James Greenshields petitioned Parliament. In response, Westminster moved to extend the rights of toleration granted to Protestant Dissenters in England to 'North-Britain' through a 1712 Act of Toleration.[106] Despite many Scots viewing this as a fundamental breach of the Union, in May the General Assembly of the Kirk rescinded the 1695 act against irregular marriage and baptism, ratified the Act of Toleration and reintroduced patronage so Episcopalian heritors

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[103] Stevenson, 'Deposition of Ministers', p. 334.

[104] Brown, RPS, 1695/5/118

[105] Ibid., 1703/5/52, 1703/5/56.

[106] Collection of the Laws in Favour of the Reformation in Scotland, pp. 244–5.

could present sympathetic candidates. Although primarily intended to grant religious freedom to juring-Episcopalians these acts signalled a sea change by removing the means for preventing schism. Religious diversity increased with the establishment of Glasite churches (1730), the return of Baptists from 1750 and Presbyterian secessions in 1733 and 1761. While Scottish Protestantism came to be typified by secession and division, that represented a marked change. What typified Protestant Scotland from the Reformation until 1712 were 1) an overarching desire for a united national church, and 2) resistance to authoritarian church governance which usurped congregational rights. Both these principles stretched back to the Reformation. Conflict erupted in Scottish Protestantism when the equilibrium between local rights and national governance became imbalanced – as can be seen in both opposition to jure divino episcopacy and the fragmentation of hard-line Covenanting – but this rarely drifted to the extreme of a congregation challenging a national ecclesiology.

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