

***Scottish Presbyterianism Re-Established: The Case of Stirling and Dunblane, 1687–1710.* By Andrew T. N. Muirhead. *Scottish Religious Cultures Historical Perspectives.* Edinburgh, UK: Edinburgh University Press, 2021. x + 260 pp. £85 cloth.**

After the overthrow of the Catholic King James VII in 1689, episcopacy was removed from the Church of Scotland and Presbyterianism was re-established. The ecclesiastical settlement of 1690 is a landmark of Scottish history, and its consequences for politics, culture, and intellectual life were profound. Historians who have examined the re-established Church's early years have tended to paint a national picture, prioritizing the general assembly in Edinburgh over the local church courts. Andrew Muirhead's book contributes to a more nuanced understanding of the Church in this period by exploring a compact region of central Scotland: the twenty-three parishes encompassed by the neighboring presbyteries of Stirling and Dunblane.

Muirhead makes a good case that this region constituted a microcosm of late seventeenth-century Scotland. It was home to fervent Jacobites and Episcopalians, but also to many enthusiasts for the Presbyterian settlement. As well as Stirling, a large royal burgh containing an important garrison, the presbyteries had rural parishes of various sizes and degrees of social complexity. Dunblane presbytery included three parishes beyond the highland line, in which Gaelic was the principal language and Presbyterianism enjoyed little support. Because of the diversity within the two presbyteries, Muirhead's study of their records reveals much about the challenges of restoring Presbyterianism across Scotland as a whole.

Though an act of parliament gave Presbyterians control of the Kirk in 1690, they had been reorganizing themselves locally and nationally since King James granted toleration in 1687. Accordingly, Muirhead begins by summarizing the religious politics of the Restoration period and charting the appearance of tolerated Presbyterian meeting houses in parts of the region. This resurgence of Presbyterian activity before the revolution of 1688–1690 contributed to the success of the re-established Church in some parishes, though in others the presbyteries found it very difficult to secure local cooperation with the settling of Presbyterian ministers and the ordination of lay elders. In the highland parish of Aberfoyle, extraordinarily, the marquis of Montrose imposed an Episcopalian minister as late as 1696, despite the abolition of the rights of lay patrons in 1690. The Episcopalian remained in post until 1732.

After the initial scene-setting chapter, the book proceeds thematically, with chapters devoted to such topics as the recruitment of ministers, celebration of the sacraments, preaching, the continuing presence of a few Episcopalian ministers, and the highland parishes. Particularly valuable are Muirhead's discussions of the operation of kirk sessions—the parish-level church courts—and the exercise of discipline. Not only were Episcopalian ministers replaced after the revolution, but many of the elders active in the Restoration period ceased to serve. As such, Muirhead identifies a “general lack of continuity between pre- and post-Revolution kirk sessions” (93). Elders were often of lower social standing after the re-establishment of Presbyterianism. It is typically assumed that the new sessions were harder on sin than their predecessors; an association between episcopacy and moral laxity lingers in the historiography. While Muirhead is commendably reluctant to endorse the idea that Presbyterians were more effective at administering discipline, he presents evidence suggesting that the Presbyterian session of St. Ninians parish might have been more

severe than its Episcopalian forerunner. Further studies of the effects of the Presbyterian settlement on those subject to ecclesiastical discipline would be worthwhile.

Muirhead's main sources are the records of the presbyteries and parishes, to which he adds a wide range of other local records, correspondence, sermons, and the life-writings of the comparatively well-known contemporary clergy George Turnbull and Thomas Boston. Through close attention to these sources, he is able to follow the struggles of ministers and elders to exercise discipline, and the successes and failures of the presbyteries in settling ministers, in pleasing detail. Even when tracking convoluted court cases and dilatory ecclesiastical business, Muirhead's prose is clear and entertaining.

Throughout the book, readers are treated to insights that arise from a mastery of local sources and contexts. This is evident not only in Muirhead's comments about the social status of elders and heritors (landowners), but also in his accounts of religious politics in Stirling, the region's main urban center. The book's final chapter, which assesses local participation in the debates over union with England in 1707, exemplifies the nature of Muirhead's contribution. Residents of Stirlingshire, the members of the presbytery of Dunblane, and inhabitants of the towns of Stirling and Culross and parishes of Tulliallan and St. Ninians submitted addresses to the Scottish parliament against the union. These texts have been edited by Karin Bowie and analyzed in other publications by Bowie and Jeffrey Stephen. Nevertheless, Muirhead's discussion draws on a fuller appreciation of the dynamics of each locality, adding depth to our interpretation of petitioning against the union. In this and other respects, Muirhead's book is valuable not so much for asking new questions as for furnishing sophisticated, local perspectives on familiar historical problems.

To understand the re-establishment of Presbyterianism in appropriate detail, we could do with several other studies like Muirhead's. *Scottish Presbyterianism Re-Established* provides an example for the authors of those books to come.

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***Catholic Social Networks in Early Modern England: Kinship, Gender, and Coexistence.* By Susan M. Cogan. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2021. 296 pp. € 113,00 cloth.**

The confessional divisions and battles of the post-Reformation period are well known. In accounts that now seem *démodé*, emphasis tended to be on the vast gulf that existed between Catholics and Protestants. Scholarship has now long underlined the insufficiency of that analytical framework by, for example, accentuating the differences *within* confessions. In the past couple of decades, much work has also focused on the ways in which neighbors overcame these divisions, either because syncretic dynamics mitigated differences or because there was *de facto* tolerations for those who diverged in matters of ritual and belief. Susan Cogan's book examines this dynamic through the lens of the English Catholic nobility during a time of deep religious tensions at the end of the sixteenth century and early seventeenth centuries. While it is easy to imagine a beleaguered Catholic