

= Scottish religion in the eighteenth century =

Scottish religion in the eighteenth century includes all forms of religious organisation and belief in Scotland in the eighteenth century . This period saw the beginnings of a fragmentation of the Church of Scotland that had been created in the Reformation and established on a fully Presbyterian basis after the Glorious Revolution . These fractures were prompted by issues of government and patronage , but reflected a wider division between the Evangelicals and the Moderate Party . The legal right of lay patrons to present clergymen of their choice to local ecclesiastical livings led to minor schisms from the church . The first in 1733 , known as the First Secession and headed by figures including Ebenezer Erskine , led to the creation of a series of secessionist churches . The second in 1761 led to the foundation of the independent Relief Church .

In 1743 the Cameronians established themselves as the Reformed Presbyterian Church , remaining largely separate from religious and political debate . Of independent churches from England that were established in the seventeenth century only the Quakers managed to endure in to the eighteenth century . Baptist chapels were re @-@ established in the middle of the century and , although Scotland initially appeared fertile ground for Methodism , it failed to expand as quickly as elsewhere in the Great Britain and Ireland . A number of minor Scottish sects developed , such as the Bereans , Buchanites , Daleites and Glassites .

Episcopalianism had retained supporters through the civil wars and changes of regime in the seventeenth century . Since most Episcopalians gave their support to the Jacobite rebellions in the first half of the early eighteenth century , they suffered a decline in fortunes . The remoteness of the Highlands and the lack of a Gaelic @-@ speaking clergy undermined the missionary efforts of the established church . The later eighteenth century saw some success , owing to the efforts of the SSPCK missionaries and to the disruption of traditional society . Catholicism had been reduced to the fringes of the country , particularly the Gaelic @-@ speaking areas of the Highlands and Islands . Conditions grew worse for Catholics after the Jacobite rebellions and Catholicism was reduced to little more than a poorly run mission . There was Evangelical Revival from the 1730s , reaching its peak at the Cambuslang Wark in 1742 . The movement benefited the secessionist churches who gained recruits .

The Kirk had considerable control over the lives of the people , with a major role in the Poor Law and schools and over the morals of the population . Strict Sabbatarianism was vital to Presbyterianism . The sermon was seen as central and the only participation by the congregation the singing of the psalms . Communion was the central occasion of the church , conducted infrequently , at most once a year , often taking a week of festivals as part of a communion season . In the second half of the century there were a series of reforms of church music connected to a choir movement . Episcopalians installed organs and hired musicians , following the practice in English parish churches . Catholic worship was deliberately low key , with musical accompaniment prohibited .

= = Church of Scotland = =

The religious settlement after the Glorious Revolution of 1688 / 9 adopted the legal forms of 1592 , which instituted a fully Presbyterian kirk , and doctrine based on the 1646 Westminster Confession of Faith . The early eighteenth century saw the growth of " praying societies " , who supplemented the services of the established kirk with communal devotions . These often had the approval of parish ministers and their members were generally drawn from the lower ranks of local society . Their outlook varied but they disliked preaching that simply emphasised the Law or that understood the gospel as a new law neonomianism , or that was mere morality , and sought out a gospel that stressed the Grace of God in the sense set out in the Confession of Faith . They often disliked the role of lay patronage in the kirk . The theological division between neonomian and antineonomian tendencies in the kirk were highlighted by the Marrow Controversy . The Marrow of Modern Divinity was a mid @-@ seventeenth century book with an antineonomian perspective that was reprinted in 1718 and promoted by Thomas Boston (1676 ? 1732) and others . The book was condemned by

the General Assembly , giving it widespread publicity . The decision was appealed by 12 " Marrow Men " , but the repudiation was upheld in 1722 and although its supporters were not expelled , they were denied advancement and the controversy continued .

There were growing divisions between the Evangelicals and the Moderate Party . While Evangelicals emphasised the authority of the Bible and the traditions and historical documents of the kirk , the Moderates tended to stress intellectualism in theology , the established hierarchy of the kirk and attempted to raise the social status of the clergy . From the 1760s the Moderates gained an ascendancy in the General Assembly of the Church . They were led by the historian William Robertson (1721 ? 93) , who became principal of the University of Edinburgh and then by his successor George Hill (1750 ? 1819) , who was professor at the University of Aberdeen . Evangelical leaders included John Willison (1680 ? 1750) , John McLaurin (1693 ? 1754) and Alexander Webster (1707 ? 84) . The most important figure was John Erskine (1721 ? 1803) , who was minister of Old Greyfriars Church in Edinburgh from 1768 and for 26 years a friend and colleague to Robertson . He was orthodox in doctrine , but sympathised with the Enlightenment and supported reforms in religious practice . A popular preacher , he corresponded with religious leaders in other countries , including New England theologian Johnathan Edwards (1703 ? 58) , whose ideas were a major influence on the movement in Scotland . Judged by the number of books printed in Scotland , Boston was the most popular theological writer in the movement .

= = Secession = =

The eighteenth century saw the beginnings of a fragmentation of the Church of Scotland that had its foundation in the Reformation . These fractures were prompted by issues of government and patronage , but reflected a wider division between the Evangelicals and the Moderate Party over fears of fanaticism by the former and the acceptance of Enlightenment ideas by the latter . Ecclesiastical patronage , the right of local lairds or other notables to appoint ministers to a parish , had been abolished at the Glorious Revolution , but it was reintroduced in the Patronage Act of 1711 , resulting in frequent protests from the kirk .

The First Secession was over the right to appoint in cases where a patron made no effort to fill a vacancy . The result was that a group of four ministers , led by Ebenezer Erskine , the minister of Stirling , formed a distinct " Associate Presbytery " in 1733 , but were not forced from the kirk until 1740 . This movement was initially very small , but was petitioned by the praying societies with requests for preaching , leading to rapid growth . Although its founding ministers were from Perthshire and Fife , the forty congregations they had established by 1740 were widely spread across the country , mainly among the middle classes of major towns . The Secessionists soon split amongst themselves over the issue of the burgess oath , which was administered after the 1745 rebellion as an anti @-@ Jacobite measure , but which implied that the Church of Scotland was the only true church . The " burghers " , led by Erskine , maintained that the oath could be taken , but they were excommunicated by an " anti @-@ burgher " faction , led by Andrew Gibb , who established a separate General Associate Synod . In the 1790s the Seceders became embroiled in the Old and New Light controversy . The " Old Lights " continued to follow the principles of the Covenanters , while the " New Lights " were more focused on personal salvation , considered the strictures of the Covenants as less binding and that a connection of the church and the state was not warranted .

The second break from the kirk was also prompted by issues of patronage . Minister Thomas Gillespie (1708 ? 74) was deposed by the General Assembly in 1752 after he refused to participate in inducting a minister to the Inverkeithing parish , since the parishioners opposed the appointment . Gillespie was joined by two other ministers and they held the first meeting of the Presbytery of Relief at Colinsburgh in Fife in 1761 . While evangelical in doctrine , the Relief Church did not maintain that it was the only true church , but stated that it was still in communion with the kirk and maintained contact with Episcopalians and Independents . Like the Associate Presbytery , the movement was initially small , but benefited from the Evangelical Revival of the later eighteenth century , which helped it expand rapidly .

= = Episcopalianism = =

Episcopalianism had retained supporters through the civil wars and regime changes in the seventeenth century . Although the bishops had been abolished in the settlement that followed the Glorious Revolution , becoming " non @-@ jurors " , not subscribing to the right of William and Mary to be monarchs , they continued to consecrate Episcopalian clergy . Many clergy were " outed " from their livings , but the king had issued two acts of indulgence in 1693 and 1695 , allowing those who accepted him as king to retain their livings and around a hundred took advantage of the offer . New " meeting houses " sprang up for those who continued to follow the episcopalian clergy . They generally prospered under Queen Anne and all but the hardened Jacobites would be given toleration in 1712 . Since most Episcopalians gave their support to the Jacobite rebellion in 1715 , they suffered a decline in fortunes . A number of the clergy were deprived and in 1719 all meeting houses where prayers were not offered for King George were closed . In 1720 the last surviving bishop died and another was appointed as " primus " , without any particular episcopal see . After the Jacobite rising of 1745 , there was another round of restrictions under the Toleration Act of 1746 and Penal Act of 1748 , and the number of clergy and congregations declined . The church was sustained by the important nobles and gentlemen in its ranks .

This period saw the establishment of Qualified Chapels , where worship was conducted according to the English Book of Common Prayer and where congregations , led by priests ordained by Bishops of the Church of England or the Church of Ireland , were willing to pray for the Hanoverians . Such chapels drew their congregations from English people living in Scotland and from Scottish Episcopalians who were not bound to the Jacobite cause . These two forms of episcopalianism existed side by side until 1788 when the Jacobite claimant Charles Edward Stuart died in exile . Unwilling to recognise his brother Henry Benedict Stuart , who was a cardinal in the Roman Catholic Church , as his heir , the non @-@ juror Episcopalians elected to recognise the House of Hanover and offer allegiance to George III . At the repeal of the penal laws in 1792 there were twenty @-@ four Qualified Chapels in Scotland .

= = Cameronians = =

The Society People , known after one of their leaders as the Cameronians , who had not accepted the restoration of episcopacy in 1660 , remained outside of the established kirk after the Revolution settlement , refusing to rejoin an " un @-@ Covenanted " kirk . However , most of their remaining ministers re @-@ entered the Church of Scotland . After years of persecution their numbers were few and largely confined to the southwest of the country . In the period 1714 ? 43 they had only one minister and were unable to form a presbytery and ordain new clergy . Many joined the Secession Church in order to avoid extinction . In 1743 , having obtained the services of a second minister from the Secession Church , they established themselves as the Reformed Presbyterian Church . Roughly 10 @, @ 000 in number , they remained separate from other denominations and abstained from political involvement , refusing even to vote .

= = Independent churches = =

In the mid @-@ seventeenth century , the extension of toleration to sectaries under the Commonwealth brought a number of independent movements to Scotland . The only one not to collapse after the withdrawal of the army at the Restoration in 1660 were the Quakers . Their numbers remained small in the eighteenth century and they were largely confined to the large cities and the northwest . Baptist churches had been founded in several towns during the Commonwealth , largely consisting of English soldiers and their families . They lapsed when the English occupation ended and the first Scottish Baptist church is usually thought to be founded at Keiss in 1750 by William Sinclair . Occasionally individual Presbyterian ministers led their congregations out of existing churches and into independent churches , leading to the establishment of isolated churches

for groups like the Unitarians . The series of evangelical enterprises undertaken by the brothers James and Robert Haldane in the period 1796 ? 1800 , which led to the foundation of Sunday schools , day schools and tabernacles in parts of the Lowlands , Highlands and Islands , helped strengthen the Baptist and Congregational churches when the brothers later embraced adult Baptism and the congregations divided between the two traditions .

Scotland appeared to be fertile ground for Methodism in the 1740s and 1750s , when visits from figures such as John Wesley and George Whitfield attracted large audiences of presbyterians . Methodist societies were established in textile and fishing villages , particularly in Shetland , where Methodism was to enjoy its greatest relative popularity . Most members were to be in the large cities , with Glasgow and Airdrie accounting for 43 per cent of all members in 1819 . However , in the 1760s the growth of the movement did not keep pace with that elsewhere in the United Kingdom , with an average annual increase of only 0 @. @ 2 per cent , compared with 5 , nearly 6 and nearly 8 per cent in England , Wales and Ireland respectively . The reasons for the relative failure of Methodism in Scotland have been debated by historians . The Scots preferred an ordained clergy , rather than the lay preachers common elsewhere , and when Wesley granted this concession in 1785 membership doubled in four years , but it was rescinded after this death in 1791 and adherence reduced . The middle classes may also have seen the lay positions in the church as not carrying the same status as did offices like that of elder within the presbyterian churches . Allan MacLaren has argued that the doctrinal Arminianism of Methodism conflicted with the dominant Calvinism of Scotland . The place that Methodism occupied elsewhere in the kingdom may also have been taken by the Secession and Relief churches , the last of which were seen as " Scots Methodists " .

= = Minor sects = =

As well as the series of secessionist movements , the eighteenth century saw the formation of a number of minor sects . These included the Glasites , formed by Church of Scotland minister John Glas , who was expelled from his parish of Tealing in 1730 for his objections to the state 's intervention in the affairs of the kirk . He advocated a strong form of biblical literalism . With his son @-@ in @-@ law Robert Sandeman , from whose name they are known as the Sandemanians , he founded a number of churches in Scotland and the sect expanded to England and the United States . Closely involved with the Glasites were the followers of industrialist David Dale who broke with the kirk in the 1760s and formed the Old Scotch Independents , sometimes known as the Daleists . He preached a combination of industry and faith that led him to co @-@ found the cotton @-@ mill at New Lanark and to contribute to the Utopian Socialism associated with his son @-@ in @-@ law Robert Owen .

The Bereans were formed by John Barclay in Edinburgh in 1773 . Barclay was one of the most prominent followers of moral philosopher Archibald Campbell and espoused a rigorous form of pre @-@ destination and insisted on Biblical @-@ based preaching . Having been rejected from various pastorships and by the General Assembly , he founded independent churches in Scotland and then in England , taking the name Bereans from the people mentioned in Acts 17 : 11 . After Barclay 's death in 1798 his followers joined the congregationalists . The Buchanites were a Millenarian cult that broke away from the Relief Church when Hugh White , minister at Irvine , declared Elspeth Buchan to be a special saint identified with the woman described in Revelation 12 . They attracted less than fifty followers and having been expelled by local magistrates they formed a community at a farm known as New Cample in Nithsdale , Dumfriesshire . The sect collapsed after the death of Buchan in 1791 . Other minor sects include the McMillanites , reported as a group of Covenanters who had separated from kirk discipline in Dumfriesshire in 1721 . Another group in the same area , called the Hebronites , were alleged to have sworn at a minister . The Hebronites were later absorbed into the Secession Church with other Covenanters after 1736 .

= = Catholicism = =

By the eighteenth century Catholicism had been reduced to the fringes of the country , particularly the Gaelic @-@ speaking areas of the Highlands and Islands . Numbers probably reduced in the seventeenth century and organisation had deteriorated . Pope Innocent X appointed Thomas Nicolson as the first Vicar Apostolic over the mission in 1694 . The country was organised into districts and by 1703 there were thirty @-@ three Catholic clergy . Conditions grew worse for Catholics after the Jacobite rebellions and Catholicism was reduced to little more than a poorly run mission . In 1733 it was divided into two vicariates , one for the Highlands and one for the Lowlands , each under a bishop . There were six attempts to found a seminary in the Highlands between 1732 and 1838 , all of which floundered on financial issues . Clergy entered the country secretly and although services were illegal they were maintained . In 1755 it was estimated that there were only 16 @,@ 500 communicants , mainly in the north and west , although the number is probably an underestimate . By the end of the century this had probably fallen by a quarter due to emigration . The First Relief Act of 1778 , was designed to bring a measure of toleration to Catholics , but a campaign led by Lord George Gordon , that resulted anti @-@ Catholic riots in Scotland , known after him as the Gordon Riots , meant that it was limited to England . The provisions of the Roman Catholic Relief Act 1791 , which allowed freedom of worship for Catholics who took an oath of allegiance , were extended to Scotland in 1793 . In 1799 the Lowland District seminary was transferred to Aquhorthies , near Inverurie in Aberdeenshire , so that it could serve the entire country . It was secretly funded by the government , who were concerned at the scale of emigration by Highland Catholics .

= = Protestant missions = =

Long after the triumph of the Church of Scotland in the Lowlands , Highlanders and Islanders clung to a form of Christianity infused with animistic folk beliefs and practices . The remoteness of the region and the lack of a Gaelic @-@ speaking clergy undermined missionary efforts . The Scottish Society for the Promotion of Christian Knowledge (SSPCK) was founded by Royal Charter in 1708 . Its aim was partly religious and partly cultural , intending to " wear out " Gaelic and " learn the people the English tongue " . By 1715 it was running 25 schools , by 1755 it was 116 and by 1792 it was 149 , but most were on the edges of the Highlands . The difficulty of promoting Protestantism and English in a Gaelic speaking region , eventually led to a change of policy in the SSPCK and in 1754 it sanctioned the printing of a Bible with Gaelic and English text on facing pages . The government only began to seriously promote Protestantism from 1725 , when it began to make a grant to the General Assembly known as the Royal Bounty . Part of this went towards itinerant ministers , but by 1764 there were only ten . Probably more significant for the spread of Protestantism were the lay catechists , who met the people on the Sabbath , read Scripture , and joined them in Psalms and prayers . They would later be important in the Evangelical revival .

= = Evangelical Revival = =

From the later 1730s Scotland experienced a version of the Evangelical revival that also affected England and Wales and North America . Protestant congregations , usually in a specific locations , experienced intense " awakenings " of enthusiasm , renewed commitment and , sometimes , rapid expansion . This was first seen at Easter Ross in the Highlands in 1739 and most famously in the Cambuslang Wark (work) near Glasgow in 1742 , where intense religious activity culminated in a crowd of perhaps 30 @,@ 000 gathering there to hear English preacher George Whitefield . Scotland was also visited 22 times by John Wesley , the English evangelist and founder of Methodism , between 1751 and 1790 .

Most of the new converts were relatively young and from the lower groups in society , such as small tenants , craftsmen , servants and the unskilled , with a relatively high proportion of unmarried women . This has been seen as a reaction against the oligarchical nature of the established kirk , which was dominated by local lairds and heritors . Unlike awakenings elsewhere , the revival in Scotland did not give rise to a major religious movement , but benefited the secession churches .

The revival was particularly significant in the Highlands , where the lack of a clear parochial structure led to a pattern of spiritual enthusiasm , recession and renewal , often instigated by lay catechists , known as " the Men " , who would occasionally emerge as charismatic leaders . The revival left a legacy of strict Sabbatarianism and local identity .

From the late eighteenth century Scotland gained many of the organisations associated with the revival in England , including Sunday schools , mission schools , ragged schools , Bible societies and improvement classes . Because the revival occurred at the same time as the transformation of the Highlands into a crofting society , Evangelicalism was often linked to popular protest against patronage and the clearances , while the Moderates became identified with the interests of the landholding classes . It laid the ground for the Great Disruption in the mid @-@ nineteenth century , leading to the Evangelicals taking control of the General Assembly and those in the Highlands joining the Free Church of Scotland in large numbers .

= = Popular religion = =

At the beginning of the century , the kirk had considerable control over the lives of the people . It had a major role in the Poor Law and schools , which were administered through the parishes , and over the morals of the population , particularly over sexual offences such as adultery and fornication . A rebuke was necessary for moral offenders to " purge their scandal " . This involved standing or sitting before the congregation for up to three Sundays and enduring a rant by the minister . There was sometimes a special repentance stool near the pulpit for this purpose . In a few places the subject was expected to wear sackcloth . From the 1770s kirk session increasingly administered private rebukes , particularly for men from the social elites , while until the 1820s the poor were almost always give a public rebuke . In the early part of the century the kirk , particularly in the Lowlands , attempted to suppress dancing and events like penny weddings at which secular tunes were played . The oppression of secular music and dancing by the kirk began to ease between about 1715 and 1725 .

Strict Sabbatarianism was vital to Presbyterian culture . For members of separatist churches , the Sunday walk to the meeting house , sometimes as much as thirty miles , marked the intensity of dissent and strict keeping of the Sabbath was a mark of true membership . Fast days were also important , particularly in Seeder culture . They often did not involve actual fasting , but focused on stricter observance of the Sabbath . The established kirk had three a year , but the seeders as many as six .

In Presbyterian worship the sermon , which could be several hours long , was seen as central , meaning that services tended to have a didactic and wordy character . There were also Bible readings and the only participation by the congregation was musical , in the singing of the psalms . From the late seventeenth century the common practice was lining out , by which the precentor sang or read out each line and it was then repeated by the congregation . From the second quarter of the eighteenth century it was argued that this should be abandoned in favour of the practice of singing stanza by stanza . These innovations became linked to a choir movement that included the setting up of schools to teach new tunes and singing in four parts .

Among Presbyterians , communion was the central occasion of the church , conducted infrequently , at most once a year , often taking a week of festivals as part of a communion season . Communicants were examined by a minister and elders , proving their knowledge of the Shorter Catechism . They were then given communion tokens that entitled them to take part in the ceremony . Long tables were set up in the middle of the church at which communicants sat to receive communion . Where ministers refused or neglected parish communion , largely assemblies were carried out in the open air , often combining several parishes . These large gatherings were discouraged by the General Assembly , but continued . They could become mixed with secular activities and were commemorated as such by Robert Burns in the poem Holy Fair . They could also be occasions for evangelical meetings , as at the Cambuslang Wark .

Among Episcopalians , Qualified Chapels used the English Book of Common Prayer . They installed organs and hired musicians , following the practice in English parish churches , singing in

the liturgy as well as metrical psalms , while the non @-@ jurors had to worship covertly and less elaborately . When the two branches united in the 1790s , the non @-@ juring branch soon absorbed the musical and liturgical traditions of the qualified churches .

Catholic worship was deliberately low key , usually in the private houses of recusant landholders or in domestic buildings adapted for services . Surviving chapels from this period are generally austere and simply furnished . Typical worship consisted of a sermon , long vernacular prayers and an unsung Low Mass in Latin . Musical accompaniment was prohibited until the nineteenth century , when organs began to be introduced into chapels .