Later Reformation In England 1547 1603 British History In Perspective

The Reformation in Rhyme
The Reign of Elizabeth
The Age of Elizabeth
England’s Long Reformation
Reformation in England
Scriptural Perspicuity in the Early English Reformation
Documents of the English Reformation
Early Modern Kent, 1540-1640
Reformation Unbound
Ruin and Reformation in Spenser, Shakespeare, and Marvell
The Reformation in England: Introduction of the reformation into England, Edward VI (1547-1553)
The Oxford Illustrated History of the Reformation
Priesthood in the English Reformation
The Senses and the English Reformation
Reformation: A History
The Reformation World
Children of Wrath: Possession, Prophecy and the Young in Early Modern England
Defending Royal Supremacy and Discerning God’s Will in Tudor England
Rethinking Catholicism in Reformation England
The Oxford History of Protestant Dissenting Traditions, Volume I
Religious Space in Reformation England
The Reformation in England
Not Angels, But Anglicans
Early Modern England 1485-1714
Popular Religion in Sixteenth-Century England
The Boy King
The Later Parliaments of Henry VIII
Church Music and Protestantism in Post-Reformation England
Thomas Cromwell
Lollardy and Orthodox Religion in Pre-Reformation England
The Later Reformation in England 1547–1603
Women, Reform and Community in Early Modern England
Reformation in Britain and Ireland
Tyndale Bible From Icons to Idols
Reformation England 1480-1642
Spenser and the Discourses of Reformation England

Spenser and the Discourses of Reformation England is a wide-ranging exploration of the relationships among literature, religion, and politics in Renaissance England. Richard Mallette demonstrates how one of the great masterpieces of English literature, Edmund Spenser’s The Faerie Queene, reproduces, criticizes, parodies, and transforms the discourses of England during that remarkable political and literary era. According to Mallette, The Faerie Queene not only represents Reformation values but also challenges, questions, and frequently undermines Protestant assumptions. Building upon recent scholarship, particularly new historicism, Protestant poetics, feminism, and gender theory, this ambitious study traces The Faerie Queene’s linkage of religion to political and social realms. Mallette’s study expands traditional theological conceptions of Renaissance England, showing how the poem incorporates and transmutes religious discourses and thereby tests, appraises, and questions their avowals and assurances. The book’s focus on religious discourses leads Mallette to examine how such matters as marriage, gender, the body, revenge, sexuality, and foreign policy were represented?in both traditional and subversive ways?in Spenser’s influential masterpiece. A bold and finely argued contribution to our understanding of Spenser, Reformation thought, and Renaissance literature and society, Mallette’s study will add to the ongoing reassessment of England during this important period.

How was the Reformation received by the majority of England’s people? How did parishioners negotiate a pathway through this period of rapid and repeated change, maintaining a positive attitude to the church? Why, by the early seventeenth century, did most people consider themselves Protestant? In this lively and accessible introduction to English religious life during the century of the Reformation, Marsh attempts to
answer these key questions and build a distinctive interpretation of religious developments during the period. Drawing together a wide range of recent research and making extensive use of colourful contemporary evidence, the involvement of ordinary people within, alongside and beyond the Church is explained. Topics such as liturgical practice, church office, relations with the clergy, festivity, religious fellowships, chea print, 'magical' religion and dissent are all considered. The author concludes that the popular response was resourceful, creative and flexible though dependent upon the strength of ideas about Christian neighbourliness, and upon the numerous links that existed between pre- and post-Reformation religion. This continuity of community was a powerful force and reflected an instinctive compromise between the old and the new rather than the victory of one over the other. This book is about the construction of that compromise. -- Book cover.

The Reformation era has long been seen as crucial in developing the institutions and society of the English-speaking peoples, and study of the Tudor and Stuart era is at the heart of most courses in English history. The influence of the Book of Common Prayer and the King James version of the Bible created the modern English language, but until the publication of Gerald Bray's Documents of the English Reformation there had been no collection of contemporary documents available to show how these momentous social and political changes took place. This comprehensive collection covers the period from 1526 to 1700 and contains many texts previously relatively inaccessible, along with others more widely known. The book also provides informative appendixes, including comparative tables of the different articles and confessions, showing their mutual relationships and dependence. With fifty-eight documents covering all the main Statutes, Injunctions and Orders, Prefaces to prayer books, Biblical translations and other relevant texts, this third edition of Documents of the English R

Covering the period from 1558–1603, The Reign of Elizabeth I looks at all the important aspects of the reign of the last of the Tudor monarchs. The volume gives students the critical tools to enable them to perform to their best ability, drawing together the main issues on each topic and providing an accessible guide to the period. Using extensive sources and historiography, Stephen J. Lee explores: the religious settlement government and foreign policy the economy Elizabeth's relationship with Parliament society and culture. Also including a glossary of key terms and a helpful chronology, this is an essential tool for any student of British history.

A consistent, indigenous English doctrine of scriptural perspicuity correlates with a commitment to the availability of the vernacular scriptures in English and supports the English roots of the Early English Reformation (EER). Although political events and figures dominate the EER, its religious component springing from John Wyclif and streaming throughout the tradition must be recognized more widely. This book critically surveys the doctrine of scriptural perspicuity from the beginning of the Church in the first century (noted as early as John Chrysostom) through the seventeenth century, examining its impact on the current debates concerning competing hermeneutical systems, reader response hermeneutics, and the debates in conservative American Presbyterianism and Reformed theology on subscription to the Westminster Confession of Faith, the length of «creation days», and other issues.

The Oxford History of Protestant Dissenting Traditions, Volume I traces the emergence
of Anglophone Protestant Dissent in the post-Reformation era between the Act of Uniformity (1559) and the Act of Toleration (1689). It reassesses the relationship between establishment and Dissent, emphasising that Presbyterians and Congregationalists were serious contenders in the struggle for religious hegemony. Under Elizabeth I and the early Stuarts, separatists were few in number, and Dissent was largely contained within the Church of England, as nonconformists sought to reform the national Church from within. During the English Revolution (1640-60), Puritan reformers seized control of the state but splintered into rival factions with competing programmes of ecclesiastical reform. Only after the Restoration, following the ejection of two thousand Puritan clergy from the Church, did most Puritans become Dissenters, often with great reluctance. Dissent was not the inevitable terminus of Puritanism, but the contingent and unintended consequence of the Puritan drive for further reformation. The story of Dissent is thus bound up with the contest for the established Church, not simply a heroic tale of persecuted minorities contending for religious toleration. Nevertheless, in the half century after 1640, religious pluralism became a fact of English life, as denominations formed and toleration was widely advocated. The volume explores how Presbyterians, Congregationalists, Baptists, and Quakers began to forge distinct identities as the four major denominational traditions of English Dissent. It tracks the proliferation of Anglophone Protestant Dissent beyond England—in Wales, Scotland, Ireland, the Dutch Republic, New England, Pennsylvania, and the Caribbean. And it presents the latest research on the culture of Dissenting congregations, including their relations with the parish, their worship, preaching, gender relations, and lay experience.

The Reformation was a seismic event in history, whose consequences are still working themselves out in Europe and across the world. The protests against the marketing of indulgences staged by the German monk Martin Luther in 1517 belonged to a long-standing pattern of calls for internal reform and renewal in the Christian Church. But they rapidly took a radical and unexpected turn, engulfing first Germany and then Europe as a whole in furious arguments about how God’s will was to be 'saved'. However, these debates did not remain confined to a narrow sphere of theology. They came to reshape politics and international relations; social, cultural, and artistic developments; relations between the sexes; and the patterns and performances of everyday life. They were also the stimulus for Christianity’s transformation into a truly global religion, as agents of the Roman Catholic Church sought to compensate for losses in Europe with new conversions in Asia and the Americas. Covering both Protestant and Catholic reform movements, in Europe and across the wider world, this beautifully illustrated volume tells the story of the Reformation from its immediate, explosive beginnings, through to its profound longer-term consequences and legacy for the modern world. The story is not one of an inevitable triumph of liberty over oppression, enlightenment over ignorance. Rather, it tells how a multitude of rival groups and individuals, with or without the support of political power, strove after visions of 'reform'. And how, in spite of themselves, they laid the foundations for the plural and conflicted world we now inhabit.

Royal Priesthood in the English Reformation assesses the understandings of the Christian doctrine of royal priesthood, long considered one of the three major Reformation teachings, as held by an array of royal, clerical, and popular theologians during the English Reformation. Historians and theologians often present the doctrine according to more recent debates rather than the contextual understandings manifested
by the historical figures under consideration. Beginning with a radical reevaluation of John Wyclif and an incisive survey of late medieval accounts, the book challenges the predominant presentation of the doctrine of royal priesthood as primarily individualistic and anticlerical, in the process clarifying these other concepts. It also demonstrates that the late medieval period located more religious authority within the monarchy than is typically appreciated. After the revolutionary use of the doctrine by Martin Luther in early modern Germany, it was wielded variously between and within diverse English royal, clerical, and lay factions under Henry VIII and Edward VI, yet the Old and New Testament passages behind the doctrine were definitely construed in a monarchical direction. With Thomas Cranmer, the English evangelical presentation of the universal priesthood largely received its enduring official shape, but challenges came from within the English magisterium as well as from both radical and conservative religious thinkers. Under the sacred Tudor queens, who subtly and successfully maintained their own sacred authority, the various doctrinal positions hardened into a range of early modern forms with surprising permutations.

The Reformation and Counter-Reformation represented the greatest upheaval in Western society since the collapse of the Roman Empire. In this masterful history, MacCulloch conveys the drama, complexity, and continuing relevance of these events.

This famous book was the first up-to-date survey of its field for a generation; even today, when work on early modern social history proliferates, it remains the only general economic history of the age. This second edition, substantially revised and expanded, is clear in outline, rich in detail, stressing continuity as well as change, balancing the glamour of privilege with the misery and privation of the poor, and dealing with the dark side of Tudor life -- vagabondage, starvation, superstition and cruelty -- as well as its heroic achievements.

The spiritual status of the early modern child was often confused and uncertain, and yet in the wake of the English Reformation became an issue of urgent interest. This book explores questions surrounding early modern childhood, focusing especially on some of the extreme religious experiences in which children are documented: those of demonic possession and godly prophecy. Dr French argues that despite the fact that these occurrences were not typical childhood experiences, they provide us with a window through which to glimpse the world of early modern children. The work introduces its readers to the dualistic nature of early modern perceptions of their young - they were seen to be both close to devilish temptations and to God’s divine finger, as illustrated by published accounts of possession and prophecy. These cases reveal to us moments in which children could be granted authority or in which writers and publishers framed children in positions of spiritual agency. This can tell us much about how early modern society perceived, imagined and depicted their young, and helps us to revise the notion that early modern children’s lives, which were often fleeting, may have gone unregarded. Both contributing to, and informed by, some of the most recent historiographical directions taken by early modern history, this book engages with three key areas: the history of extreme spiritual experience such as demonic possession, the ‘lived experience’ of early modern religion and the history of childhood. In this way, it offers the first scholarly exploration of the dialogue between these three areas of current and widespread historical interest which have, perhaps surprisingly, not yet
been considered together.

Ruin and Reformation in Spenser, Shakespeare, and Marvell explores writerly responses to the religious violence of the long reformation in England and Wales, spanning over a century of literature and history, from the establishment of the national church under Henry VIII (1534), to its disestablishment under Oliver Cromwell (1653). It focuses on representations of ruined churches, monasteries, and cathedrals in the works of a range of English Protestant writers, including Spenser, Shakespeare, Jonson, Herbert, Denham, and Marvell, reading literature alongside episodes in English reformation history: from the dissolution of the monasteries and the destruction of church icons and images, to the puritan reforms of the 1640s. The study departs from previous responses to literature's 'bare ruined choirs', which tend to read writerly ambivalence towards the dissolution of the monasteries as evidence of traditionalist, catholic, or Laudian nostalgia for the pre-reformation church. Instead, Ruin and Reformation shows how English protestants of all varieties—from Laudians to Presbyterians—could, and did, feel ambivalence towards, and anxiety about, the violence that accompanied the dissolution of the monasteries and other acts of protestant reform. The study therefore demonstrates that writerly misgivings about ruin and reformation need not necessarily signal an author's opposition to England’s reformation project. In so doing, Ruin and Reformation makes an important contribution to cross-disciplinary debates about the character of English Protestantism in its formative century, revealing that doubts about religious destruction were as much a part of the experience of English protestantism as expressions of popular support for iconoclasm in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

Fundamentally revising our understanding of the nature and intellectual contours of early English Protestantism, Karl Gunther argues that sixteenth-century English evangelicals were calling for reforms and envisioning godly life in ways that were far more radical than have hitherto been appreciated. Typically such ideas have been seen as later historical developments, associated especially with radical Puritanism, but Gunther's work draws attention to their development in the earliest decades of the English Reformation. Along the way, the book offers new interpretations of central episodes in this period of England's history, such as the 'Troubles at Frankfurt' under Mary and the Elizabethan vestments controversy. By shedding new light on early English Protestantism, the book ultimately casts the later development of Puritanism in a new light, enabling us to re-situate it in a history of radical Protestant thought that reaches back to the beginnings of the English Reformation itself.

Aspects of Kent history from Henry VIII to Charles I: politics, economics, agriculture, society, religion - and witchcraft.

A study of Parliament during the period between the dissolution of the Reformation Parliament in 1536 and the death of Henry VIII in 1547, this book is a sequel to Professor Lehmberg's The Reformation Parliament (1970). As in the earlier volume, the membership of both Houses of Parliament is analysed and the events in Parliament and in the concurrent meetings of Convocation, together with all pieces of legislation passed in these years, are discussed. A concluding chapter describes the records of Parliament and the development of parliamentary procedure during the reign of Henry VIII.
The most ambitious one-volume survey of the Reformation yet, this book is beautifully illustrated throughout. The strength of this work is its breadth and originality, covering the Church, art, Calvinism and Luther.

The long-awaited biography of the genius who masterminded Henry VIII's bloody revolution in the English government, which reveals at last Cromwell's role in the downfall of Anne Boleyn "This a book that - and it's not often you can say this - we have been awaiting for four hundred years." --Hilary Mantel, author of Wolf Hall Since the sixteenth century we have been fascinated by Henry VIII and the man who stood beside him, guiding him, enriching him, and enduring the king's insatiable appetites and violent outbursts until Henry ordered his beheading in July 1540. After a decade of sleuthing in the royal archives, Diarmaid MacCulloch has emerged with a tantalizing new understanding of Henry's mercurial chief minister, the inscrutable and utterly compelling Thomas Cromwell. History has not been kind to the son of a Putney brewer who became the architect of England’s split with Rome. Where past biographies portrayed him as a scheming operator with blood on his hands, Hilary Mantel reimagined him as a far more sympathetic figure buffered by the whims of his master. So which was he--the villain of history or the victim of her creation? MacCulloch sifted through letters and court records for answers and found Cromwell's fingerprints on some of the most transformative decisions of Henry's turbulent reign. But he also found Cromwell the man, an administrative genius, rescuing him from myth and slander. The real Cromwell was a deeply loving father who took his biggest risks to secure the future of his son, Gregory. He was also a man of faith and a quiet revolutionary. In the end, he could not appease or control the man whose humors were so violent and unpredictable. But he made his mark on England, setting her on the path to religious awakening and indelibly transforming the system of government of the English-speaking world.

Early modern governments constantly faced the challenge of reconciling their own authority with the will of God. Most acknowledged that an individual's first loyalty must be to God's law, but were understandably reluctant to allow this as an excuse to challenge their own powers where interpretations differed. As such, contemporaries gave much thought to how this potentially destabilising situation could be reconciled, preserving secular authority without compromising conscience. In this book, the particular relationship between the Tudor supremacy over the Church and the hermeneutics of discerning God's will is highlighted and explored. This topic is addressed by considering defences of the Henrician and Elizabethan royal supremacies over the English church, with particular reference to the thoughts and writings of Christopher St. German, and Richard Hooker. Both of these men were in broad agreement that it was the responsibility of English Christians to subordinate their subjective understandings of God's will to the interpretation of God's will propounded by the church authorities. St. German originally put forward the proposition that king in parliament, as the voice of the community of Christians in England, was authorized to definitively pronounce regarding God’s will; and that obedience to the crown was in all circumstances commensurate with obedience to God's will. Salvation, as envisioned by St. German and Hooker, was thus not dependent upon adherence to a single true faith. Rather it was conditional upon a sincere effort to try to discern the true faith using the means that God had made available to the individual, particularly the collective wisdom of one’s church speaking through its representatives. In tackling this fascinating dichotomy at the heart of early modern government, this study emphasizes an aspect of the defence of royal supremacy that has not heretofore been sufficiently appreciated by
modern scholars, and invites consideration of how this aspect of hermeneutics is relevant to wider discussions relating to the nature of secular and divine authority.

This book provides an introduction to the latest research on the English Reformation from Edward VI's accession to the death of Elizabeth I. It highlights the difference between the official Reformation - what those in power wanted to happen - and the actual impact on clergy and people throughout the nation, including those Catholics and Protestants whom the official Elizabethan settlement ultimately failed to satisfy or include. It describes the growth of barriers between a world of literate, articulate religion and patterns of illiterate belief and magical practice; it assesses the ambiguities, the failures and the achievements of late Tudor religious structures.

The Whole Booke of Psalmes was one of the most published and widely read books of early modern England, running to over 1000 editions between the 1570s and the early eighteenth century. It offered all of the Psalms paraphrased in verse with appropriate tunes, together with an assortment of other scriptural and non-scriptual hymns, and prose prayers for domestic use. Because the Elizabethan Church rapidly and pervasively (if unofficially) adopted this metrical psalter for congregational singing, and because it had in practical terms no rivals for church use until the end of the seventeenth century, essentially the entire conforming population of early modern England after 1570 would have been familiar with its psalms and hymns as elements of both public worship and private devotion. Yet, despite the significant impact of The Whole Booke of Psalmes upon English culture and literature, this is the first book-length study of it, and the first sustained critical examination of the texts of which it comprises. In large part this neglect is due to the reputation it gained after the mid-seventeenth century as a work of poor poetry mainly valued by vulgar and/or sectarian audiences. This later reception, however, was the product of not only changing literary tastes but an ideological desire to reshape the history of the Reformation. This study focuses on the actual aims of its authors and editors over the course of its gradual composition during the tumultuous religious changes of the mid-sixteenth century, and recovers its significant influence on the English church and literary practice. By tracing the ways in which historical contingency, religious fervor and the print marketplace together created and were changed by one of the most successful books of English verse ever printed, this study opens a new window through which to view the intellectual and ecclesiastical culture of Tudor England. It also shows how, in metrical psalmody, Protestant reformers discovered what turned out to be a uniquely flexible and effective instrument for advancing their vision of a godly society.
In 1547, the young King Edward VI issued a series of religious injunctions that were intended to reform the Churches in England. Religious imagery was a tangible and permanent aspect of the landscape, both inside and outside churches. For many people, it was one of the first aspects of the Church to be reformed, and the degree to which it was reformed often was indicative of an individual's or community's theological leanings. Behind this destruction lay a longstanding debate over the nature, purpose, and appropriate uses of images, particularly in relation to worship and devotion. The Reformation lines between icon and idol, however, are much more difficult to identify than any single debate, event, or royal injunction would suggest. From Icons to Idols tracks the image debate from the perspectives of both Protestants and Catholics across the period of religious change in England from 1525 to 1625. For scholars of the English Reformation, iconoclasm has played a major role in the historiographical disputes over the nature, length, and efficacy of Protestant reform. The fresh perspective of David J. Davis incorporates geography historical use and abuse, popular appeal, size, dimensions and what was represented.

A study of one of the most influential women of her day has much to reveal about the developments which shaped the English Reformation.

Reformation England 1480-1642 provides a clear and accessible narrative account of the English Reformation, explaining how historical interpretations of its major themes have changed and developed over the past few decades, where they currently stand - and where they seem likely to go. A great deal of interesting and important new work on the English Reformation has appeared recently, such as lively debates on Queen Mary's role, work on the divisive character of Puritanism, and studies on music and its part in the Reformation. The spate of new material indicates the importance and vibrancy of the topic, and also of the continued need for students and lecturers to have some means of orientating themselves among its thickets and by-ways. This revised edition takes into account new contributions to the subject and offers the author's expert judgment on their meaning and significance.

'Church Music and Protestantism in Post-Reformation England' breaks new ground in the religious history of Elizabethan England, through a closely focused study of the relationship between the practice of religious music and the complex process of Protestant identity formation. Hearing was of vital importance in the early modern period, and music was one of the most prominent, powerful and emotive elements of religious worship. But in large part, traditional historical narratives of the English Reformation have been distinctly tone deaf. Recent scholarship has begun to take increasing notice of some elements of Reformed musical practice, such as the congregational singing of psalms in meter. This book marks a significant advance in that area, combining an understanding of theory as expressed in contemporary
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religious and musical discourse, with a detailed study of the practice of church music in key sites of religious worship. Divided into three sections - ‘Discourses’, ‘Sites’, and ‘Identities’ - the book begins with an exploration of the classical and religious discourses which underpinned sixteenth-century understandings of music, and its use in religious worship. It then moves on to an investigation of the actual practice of church music in parish and cathedral churches, before shifting its attention to the people of Elizabethan England, and the ways in which music both served and shaped the difficult process of Protestantisation. Through an exploration of these issues, and by reintegrating music back into the Elizabethan church, we gain an expanded and enriched understanding of the complex evolution of religious identities, and of what it actually meant to be Protestant in post-Reformation England.

The author writes this book with a concentration and an almost ascetic discipline which result in a clarity and purposefulness rare in any work and especially in a history. The book primarily tells what happened to English ecclesiastical life with 1509 and 1547, and how it happened. Reformation and schism are separated, and the 'supreme head of the Church of England' is separately explained. The division into chapters and the organization of the whole material is planned to clarify individually these three contrasting motives, which, during the reign of Henry VIII, maintained individuality. The chapters on the divorce, royal supremacy and the champions of Catholic unity, and the discussions of international policy build up with great interest and authority the role of the king. The chapters on the advanced party, on the Henricians and on dogma, with liberal but most purposeful use of biography, distinguish the heretical and schismatical strands. -- Back cover.

Tyndale’s Bible is credited with being the first English translation to work directly from Hebrew and Greek texts. Furthermore, it was the first English biblical translation that was mass-produced as a result of new advances in the art of printing. The term Tyndale's Bible is not strictly correct, because Tyndale never published a complete Bible.

The dissolution of the monasteries in England during the 1530s began a turbulent period of religious restructuring. Focusing on the counties of Wiltshire and Cheshire, Guinn-Chipman looks at the changing nature of religion over the next two centuries.

An account of how, in certain parts of sixteenth-century England, challenges to conventional piety anticipated the Reformation.

It is a commonly held belief that medieval Catholics were focussed on the 'bells and whistles' of religious practices, the smoke, images, sights and sounds that dazzled pre-modern churchgoers. Protestantism, in contrast, has been cast as Catholicism's austere, intellective and less sensual rival sibling. With its white-washed walls, lack of incense (and often music) Protestantism worship emphasised preaching and scripture, making the new religion a drab and disengaged sensual experience. In order to challenge such entrenched assumptions, this book examines Tudor views on the senses to create a new lens through which to explore the English Reformation. Divided into two sections, the book begins with an examination of pre-Reformation beliefs and practices, establishing intellectual views on the senses in fifteenth-century England, and situating them within their contemporary philosophical and cultural tensions. Having established the parameters for the role of sense before the Reformation, the
second half of the book mirrors these concerns in the post-1520 world, looking at how, and to what degree, the relationship between religious practices and sensation changed as a result of the Reformation. By taking this long-term, binary approach, the study is able to tackle fundamental questions regarding the role of the senses in late-medieval and early modern English Christianity. By looking at what English men and women thought about sight, hearing, smell, taste and touch, the stereotype that Protestantism was not sensual, and that Catholicism was overly sensualised is wholly undermined. Through this examination of how worship was transformed in its textual and liturgical forms, the book illustrates how English religion sought to reflect changing ideas surrounding the senses and their place in religious life. Worship had to be 'sensible', and following how reformers and their opponents built liturgy around experience of the sacred through the physical allows us to tease out the tensions and pressures which shaped religious reform.

"This is Reformation history as it should be written, not least because it resembles its subject matter: learned, argumentative, and, even when mistaken, never dull."--Eamon Duffy, author of The Stripping of the Altars: Traditional Religion in England, 1400-1580

From its beginnings in a troubled corner of the Mediterranean, Christianity spread to Britain with astonishing speed, reaching some parts even before the Romans imposed their rule. A little more than a century later, it appears that there were British bishops (and conferences abroad for them to attend), a shrine to a local martyr, and public disputes about doctrine. Not Angels But Anglicans tells the story of 2000 years of Christianity in the British Isles. The tale is inspiring and shameful by turns, as the Christian faith has been embraced. appropriated or ignored by saints and sinners, archbishops and monarchs, clerics and the people of Britain. Here is a rich story of political intrigue, artistic genius, martyrdom, overseas endeavour, reform and counter-reform, complacency and generosity, written with the affection and exasperation that the Anglican Church generally evokes. These and many more contributors trace the progress or stalling of the faith across the centuries up to the present day. Attractively illustrated throughout, Not Angels But Anglicans is a timely reminder to today's Church that many of its current concerns are deeply embedded in its history.

England's Long Reformation" brings together a distinguished team of scholars, who seek to advance beyond current debates concerning the English Reformation. It puts the religious changes of the 16th century in longer perspective than has been traditional and counters the recent emphasis on the popularity of pre-Reformation Catholicism. Instead the case is argued for an underlying trajectory of evangelical activity from the 1520s. The contributors also examine some of the hybrid religious forms which developed and the propagation of the more uncompromising messages of Puritanism and Counter-Reformed Catholicism.; Taking their cue from continental historians, the authors demonstrate the insights which can be derived by taking a long view of the Reformation in England. The processes of Protestantization and indeed Christianization were involved, with each new generation needing to be won over or at least re-educated. The interaction of religion and society - particularly as regards the so-called "reformation of manners" - is another central theme. Ranging from Tudor Norwich to Hanoverian Bristol, the work collectively breaks down some of the artificial barriers created by periodization and encourages a new way of looking at the English Reformation. This volume should prove valuable reading for those interested in the making of a Protestant nation.
This book considers the ideological development of English Catholicism in the sixteenth century, from the complementary perspectives of history, theology, and literature. Lucy Wooding argues that Erasmian humanism had laid the foundations for Catholic reformation in England, but that it was Henry VIII who turned an intellectual trend into an actual reform programme, reshaping English Catholicism in the process. The reformist strand within Catholic thought remained influential during the reign of Mary I, and in the early Elizabethan period, but was then reconfigured by the experience of exile and the onset of the drive for Counter-Reformation uniformity. Dr Wooding shows that Catholicism in this period was neither a defunct tradition, nor one merely reacting to Protestantism, but a vigorous intellectual movement responding to the reformist impulse of the age. Its development illustrates the English Reformation in microcosm: scholarly, humanist, didactic, and preserving its own peculiarities independent of European trends. Rethinking Catholicism in Reformation England makes an important contribution to the intellectual history of the Reformation.

This text draws upon the growing genre of writing about British History to construct an innovative narrative of religious change in the four countries/three kingdoms.

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