

the British public really did know (or did not know) during all those years. Indeed, it is symptomatic that the rise of republicanism (chapter 1) is treated as a direct consequence of Easter Week 1916. Arguably, British national newspapers and their correspondents could not always apprehend what was being shouted on election platforms during the four by-elections in 1917 and did not have access to confidential reports drafted by RIC inspectors. Consequently, the author's research may tend to suggest that the "Irish Question" (more precisely the decline of constitutional nationalism) was being debated and played out as a national and domestic political affair of competing aspirations for Ireland, whereas it was perhaps the fear of being railed into the wartime imperial machinery and being compelled to fight which precipitated Sinn Féin's accession to political hegemony in Irish nationalist opinion.

As to the Irish War of Independence (1919–1921), Francis M. Carroll has insisted on the importance of American money in financing the conflict and forcing the British to call for a truce (Francis M. Carroll, *America and the Making of an Independent Ireland. A History*, 2021). Here Scheopner points to the weight of public opinion and the willingness to pressure Westminster to negotiate with the Irish representatives. It is interesting to notice that during the months of the Paris Peace Conference and in its aftermath, the press regularly compared the Irish with other European stateless peoples and did not hesitate to castigate the behavior of British troops in Ireland, further indication that postwar British political culture was haunted by the memory of the First World War.

Academically rigorous, non-partisan, exhaustively researched, and supported by ample evidence, Scheopner's first monograph deserves commendation for its dedication to archival research and dealing with the Irish Revolution as seen through the prism of British public opinion. At the crossroads between History and Media Studies, the book addresses crucial issues hinging on the relations between the press and politics and invites future scholars not to neglect the prominent role of the press in conflict resolution.

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The history of Christianity in Britain during the First World War is an established field, but the same is not true for the Second. *British Christianity and the Second World War* goes some way to filling this gap. The discrepancy, as Michael Snape argues in his introduction, is due in large part to the assumption that Britain was a secular society by 1939. Snape provides examples of this belief, from the work of A. J. P. Taylor, Angus Calder, John Stevenson, Paul Fussell, and others. The editors aim to show that religion was still socially significant during this period, and they succeed. The book therefore makes a valuable contribution to the history of both the parts of its title.

Several contributors show the continued purchase of religion at a national level. In "The British State and Spiritual Mobilization during the Second World War," Philip Williamson looks at the work of the Religious Division of the Ministry of Information, at the empire-wide and multi-faith days of prayer that it organized, and the earnest support of the king and queen for such ventures. He argues that the use of the language of Christian civilization used by Winston Churchill and other government ministers was sincere, with the religious

provisions of the 1944 Education Act as evidence. Hannah Elias's chapter, "Radio Religion: The British Broadcasting Corporation and Faith Propaganda at 'Home' and 'Overseas' in the Second World War," shows how the BBC contributed to this civil religion with the development of a new wireless religious culture. Religious programming tripled, between 1938 and 1941. More importantly, the nature of what the BBC broadcast changed from standard services before the war to content that was ecumenical, accessible, democratic, and practical, with famous contributions by C. S. Lewis and Dorothy L. Sayers. In "Christianity, Culture, and the Universities in Wartime England," Matthew Grimley chronicles the attempts to integrate deeper moral reflection into curricula. The war effort also had the support of religious minorities. The leadership of the Roman Catholic Church in Britain strongly backed the government, even when Catholics in France and elsewhere asked them to protest against British bombing, as Joshua Madrid shows in "Where Loyalties Lie: English Catholic Responses to Allied Strategic Bombing in the Second World War." Jonathan M. Lewis's chapter on "Jewish-Christian Relations in the Second World War" chronicles Jewish support for national days of prayer, as well as the involvement of Jews in the armed forces. At the end of the war, the British army sent hundreds of chaplains to work in its zone of occupation in Germany. Peter Howson tells their story in "Agents of Occupation or Reconciliation? Army Chaplains in Germany in the Summer of 1945," noting that the British were the only occupying force to work formally with the German churches.

When it comes to the religious experience of British citizens during the war, the picture is more complex. Chapters such as "British Christians and the Morality of Killing in the Second World War," by John Broom, and "Principled or Pragmatic? English Nonconformist Opposition to Pacifism in the Inter-War Period," by Stuart Bell, make it clear that there were plenty of devout Christians. However, the overall picture is of a country that found only modest solace in orthodox religion. Most helpful here is Clive D. Field's chapter on "Mass Observation, Religion, and the Second World War: When 'Cooper's Snoopers' Caught the Spirit." Field acknowledges the limitations of Mass Observation, but is still able to draw a picture of widespread religious indifference and confusion. Churchgoing was down, astrology on the rise. Caitriona McCartney's chapter on "British Sunday Schools during the Second World War" tells a slightly different story, as Sunday schools continued to be a fixture of children's lives during the war. Even here, however, the pressure from other forms of leisure, especially the cinema, was starting to undermine this crucial foundation of religious socialization. Philip Williamson records Archbishop William Temple's lament that despite widespread support for the national days of prayer, people were not returning to the pews on Sundays.

As with any edited volume, it is easy to wish for more. Additional chapters on soldiers, on the varied contributions by women, and on the memory of the war would have been especially welcome. Nevertheless, *British Christianity and the Second World War* does much to fill in our understanding of its subject, and makes a compelling case for the ongoing social significance of Christianity in British society in the 1940s. That is not to say that the authors deny the reality of secularization; rather, several discuss wartime challenges that contributed to the religious crisis of the 1960s. Thus, their work coheres with studies by Callum Brown, Hugh McLeod, and others that emphasize the significance of that decade.

One chapter remains to be mentioned. Keith Robbins contributed a paper on "Publishing 'British Christianity' 1939–1943" to the 2017 Durham conference that gave birth to this volume, but died shortly after. Stuart Bell revised the chapter for publication. The book is dedicated to Robbins, and perhaps the best plaudit Snape and Bell could hope for would be that Robbins, who did as much as anyone to demonstrate the importance of religion for the wider history of twentieth-century Britain, would have approved. This reviewer thinks he would have been very glad to see these chapters in print.

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