

## Shaping history: James Ussher and the Church of Ireland

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Throughout early modern Europe, the Reformation and Counter-Reformation gave rise to two hostile intellectual traditions, Protestant and Catholic, as each side marshalled all available scholarly resources to defend their own and demolish their opponents' claims. Universities across the Continent devoted their energies to the new discipline of controversial theology. Protestants laid down the theological gauntlet with ever-longer statements for their beliefs, from the Augsburg (1530) to the Belgic (1561) to the Westminster (1643) confessions, Catholics responded by restating Catholic orthodoxy and anathematizing Protestant heresies in the decrees and canons of the Council of Trent (1563). Calvin's *Institutes* (1559), that compendium of reformed theology, was in turn rebutted by Cardinal Bellarmine's *Controversies* (1581–93). In Magdeburg, the collection of historians known as the Centuriators, led by Matthias Flacius Illyricus, laboured at one and the same time to trace the passage of pure biblical doctrine down to the reformers and record the ever-increasing corruption of the papal church. In Rome, Cardinal Baronius responded by ridiculing Protestant claims while demonstrating the lengthy historical pedigree of the Roman Catholic church in his *Ecclesiastical annals*.<sup>1</sup>

This intellectual warfare, which began in mainland Europe almost as soon as Luther posted his theses, arrived in Ireland somewhat later. In 1519, Luther met his Catholic opponent, Johannes Eck, in a lengthy confrontation at Leipzig. The first formal theological disputation in Ireland did not take place till 1600.<sup>2</sup> The development of polemical theology and history was delayed in Ireland partly because the political and intellectual climate there was for much of the sixteenth century still inchoate, lacking a unitary civil authority, a university, a printing press, or suitable public fora for debate and discussion. It was also a product of the slow pace of religious change: the Irish Reformation from its beginnings in 1536 was more about statutory enactment than Protestant commitment, and you

<sup>1</sup> See above, pp xx. <sup>2</sup> Alan Ford, 'Goliath and the boy David: Henry Fitzsimon, James Ussher and the birth of Irish religious debate' in Salvador Ryan and Clodagh Tait (eds), *Religion and politics in urban Ireland, c.1500–c.1750* (Dublin, 2016), pp 108–33.

could even make a case that the Counter-Reformation got under way in Ireland before the Reformation.

It was not until the first decades of Elizabeth's reign that a reformed community grew up in Dublin, made up of English *émigré* clergy and a small subset of the Anglo-Irish patriciate. As early as 1571 one of these leading native Protestants, John Ussher, had identified as a key priority for the Reformation in Ireland the creation of a university, a goal finally realized with the foundation of Trinity College Dublin in 1592. It was Trinity that provided the crucible in which Irish Protestant intellectual self-awareness was forged. Modelled on puritan Cambridge colleges, the new university focused from the beginning on training reformed clergy for anti-Catholic combat. Its divinity professor was given the title professor of theological controversy, its early fellows focused their intellectual energies on refuting Bellarmine, and its rapidly growing library included all the essential tools for Protestant history writing, from the work of Flacius and the Magdeburg Centuriators to John Foxe's account of the English martyrs.<sup>3</sup>

As luck would have it, the College also attracted amongst its very first student intake a remarkable polymath, James Ussher, from that same Dublin Protestant family. Born in 1581, he entered Trinity in 1594, was ordained and became first a fellow, then from 1607 professor of theological controversies. In 1621, he was appointed bishop of Meath, and in 1625 was promoted to the see of Armagh, a position he retained till his death in 1656.<sup>4</sup> Throughout his career he combined ecclesiastical leadership with path-breaking scholarship across a number of fields, from patristics to biblical languages, from history to chronology. One of his many intellectual achievements was to create, almost singlehandedly, the newly Protestant church's sense of its history and its place in Ireland. In four works spaced throughout his career and ranging from popular to academic, he provided a comprehensive template for the history of the church in Europe and in Ireland, demonstrating both a mastery of the primary sources and a gift for shaping their interpretation in a firmly Protestant direction.

His first book in 1613 tackled the major historical question raised by the European Reformation – where was the Protestant Church before Luther?<sup>5</sup> *An historical account of the most important question concerning the continual succession and standing of the Christian church . . . from the apostles to our time* was, in effect,

<sup>3</sup> Alan Ford, *James Ussher: theology, history, and politics in early modern Ireland and England* (Oxford, 2007), pp 19–27; H.H.W. Robinson-Hammerstein, *Archbishop Adam Loftus: the first provost of Trinity College, Dublin* (Dublin, 1993); Colm Lennon, “‘The bowels of the city’s bounty’: the municipality of Dublin and the foundation of Trinity College in 1592”, *Long Room*, 37 (1992), 10–16; Elizabethanne Boran, ‘Libraries and learning: the early history of Trinity College, Dublin from 1592 to 1641’ (PhD, TCD, 1995). <sup>4</sup> The standard biographies are now those in *ODNB* and *DIB*. <sup>5</sup> James Ussher, *Gravissimae quaestionis, de Christianarum ecclesiarum, in occidentis praesertim partibus, ab apostolicis temporibus, ad nostram usque aetatem, continua successione & statu, historica explicatio* (London, 1613).

Ussher's version of the Magdeburg Centuries. It was a typical Ussherian work: long – 388 pages, written in Latin, packed with quotations from primary sources, but with a clear agenda. It was a classic example of the new Protestant apocalyptic history seeking to achieve two objectives – tracing descent of Protestant doctrine from the early church, while at the same time identifying when and how the papal church had departed from that initial purity. Ussher, in his usual scholarly fashion, broke new ground in his studies of the Cathars and the Waldensians, seeking to show that these medieval groups, condemned as heretics by the papacy, had, in fact, preserved many of the essential truths that had been subsequently abandoned by Rome. The rise of antichrist he dated from around 600, and he offered three alternative dates from which to start the thousand-year binding of Satan, from Christ's birth, his death, or the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 AD, but all ended in the same way – with the reign of a particular pope in the eleventh century marking the beginning of the pre-Reformation decline of the Catholic church.<sup>6</sup>

Ussher's second publication, *A discourse of the religion anciently professed by the Irish*, was a very different work – still based on meticulous original research, but this time shorter (141 pages in the 1631 edition), and written in English, in other words, designed for a lay audience.<sup>7</sup> Ussher's chaplain, Richard Parr, claimed that the *Discourse* was 'writ in English to satisfie the Gentry, and better sort of People'.<sup>8</sup> Ostensibly, its purpose was to convert his Catholic countrymen. As Ussher put it in the dedication to Sir Christopher Sibthorp,

I confess, I somewhat incline to your mind, that if unto the authorities drawn out of scriptures and fathers ... a true discovery were added of the religion which anciently was professed in this kingdom; it might prove a special motive to induce my poor countrymen to consider a little better of the old and true way from which they have hitherto been misled.<sup>9</sup>

Ussher set out to show that the 'ancient' religion was 'for substance the very same with that which now by public authority is maintained therein, against the foreign doctrine brought in thither in latter times by the bishop of Rome's followers'. As Ussher's apocalyptic mindset saw it, St Patrick had introduced a

6 The published volume finishes in 1243 – Ussher never completed the work to bring it up to the Reformation. 7 Published initially in 1622 (and reissued in 1623) as part of a treatise by a theologically minded Irish judge, Sir Christopher Sibthorp, *A friendly advertisement to the pretended Catholickes of Ireland* (Dublin), it was revised by Ussher for publication as part of his collected works, when it gained the title by which it is best known: *A discourse of the religion anciently professed by the Irish and Brittish* (3rd ed. London, 1631); it was reprinted in 1686, 1687, 1739 and 1815; it can most conveniently be consulted as part of vol. 4 of the *Works of Ussher*, pp 235–381, available in print and online. 8 Richard Parr, *The life of the most reverend father in God, James Usher* (London, 1686), p. 40. 9 *Works of Ussher*, iv, p. 237.

pure biblical Christianity; only subsequently did ‘corruptions did creep in little by little, before the devil was let loose to procure that seduction which prevailed so generally in these last times.’<sup>10</sup>

In order to prove this, he combed through the canon of early Irish Christian writings and identified a number of statements about the beliefs and practices of the church that identified it as closer to Protestant than to Counter-Reformation Catholic tenets. Thus it was biblically based: scripture provided the rule of faith; practices which had no authority from the bible were to be condemned; the Greek and Hebrew texts were consulted as well as the Latin Vulgate; the apocrypha were not considered part of the canon; and the bible was discussed and studied by the laity as well as the clergy.<sup>11</sup> The church’s views on predestination, grace and free will were, he claimed, in close accord with those of Augustine and the Protestant reformers.<sup>12</sup> On the subject of purgatory and prayers for the dead, Ussher showed that they were later inventions. Nor, he confidently asserted, did the much-vaunted ‘Patrick’s purgatory’ in Lough Derg have anything to do with Patrick or the sufferings of dead sinners. Indeed, he pointed out, it was only after the loosing of Satan around AD 1000 that one begins to find references in Ireland to either purgatory or praying for the dead.<sup>13</sup>

In his discussion of worship and liturgy, Ussher claimed that the Irish church had no time for images, quoting the warning of the ninth-century Irish grammarian, Sedulius, against the idea that ‘the invisible God might be worshipped by a visible image’.<sup>14</sup> The timing of Easter in the Irish church, Ussher happily noted, differed substantially from that of the papacy.<sup>15</sup> Nor did the early Irish church follow the Roman rite – the liturgy which St Patrick brought into Ireland was, Ussher claimed, of Gallic origin, deriving ultimately from Mark the evangelist. Ussher used the example of Adomnán to demonstrate that their way of celebrating the eucharist was closer to the Protestant lord’s supper than the later Roman mass: the signs – the bread and wine – were distinguished from the reality, with communion being offered in both kinds.<sup>16</sup> This distinctive Irish liturgy continued to be used until the twelfth-century reform brought the Irish church into closer conformity, when St Malachy and Bishop Gilbert of Limerick oversaw the imposition of a standardized Roman rite, a process that was completed at the Council of Cashel in 1152, presided over by a

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, pp 237f.; for discussions of the *Discourse*, see John McCafferty, ‘St Patrick for the Church of Ireland: James Ussher’s *Discourse*’, *Bullán*, 3 (1998), 87–102; Ute Lotz-Heumann, ‘The Protestant interpretation of history in Ireland: the case of James Ussher’s *Discourse*’ in Bruce Gordon (ed.), *Protestant history and identity in sixteenth century Europe: the later Reformation* (Aldershot, 1996), pp 107–21; Ford, *Ussher: theology, history, and politics*, pp 123–32. <sup>11</sup> *Works of Ussher*, iv, pp 241–51. <sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, pp 252–62. <sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, pp 263–72. <sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 273. <sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, pp 336–59. <sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, pp 276f.; accounts of the eucharist in Adomnán’s *Vita* were still a sensitive issue for Catholics and Protestants in the nineteenth century: see ch. 8, below. <sup>17</sup> *Works of Ussher*, iv, pp 274–6.

papal legate.<sup>17</sup> Prior to that, Ussher argued, the Irish church had been independent of the papacy:

from the first legation of Palladius and Patricius, who were sent to plant the faith in this country, it cannot be shewed ... that the bishop of Rome did ever send any of his legates to exercise ... jurisdiction here ... before Gillebertus.<sup>18</sup>

Nor were any of the leaders of the early Irish church appointed or consecrated by the pope. Ussher was clear that ‘the kings and people of this land in those elder times kept the nomination of their archbishops and bishops in their own hands, and depended not upon the pope’s provisions that way’, and cited Giraldus Cambrensis to the effect that there ‘bishops only did consecrate one another, until Johannes ... Paparo ... the pope’s legate bought four pallis thither’ in 1152.<sup>19</sup> There were, it is true, examples of Irish bishops seeking consecration from the archbishops of Canterbury, but these were only bishops from Dublin and other Norse-Irish sees with close ties to England.<sup>20</sup> Ussher could not, of course, deny that the awkward fact that the church consulted the papacy over issues such as the date of Easter. Indeed, he believed that Patrick had been sent to Ireland by the pope. Here he made two points. First, the papacy of the fifth century was very different from the corrupt later institution. And, second, what the Irish bishops were doing was *consultation*, they did not consider the pope an infallible oracle. It was they who made the final decision in matters of controversy:

That they consulted with the bishop of Rome when difficult questions did arise, we easily grant; but that they thought they were bound in conscience to stand to his judgment, whatsoever it should be, and to entertain all his resolutions as oracles of truth, is the point that we would fain see proved.<sup>21</sup>

Nor could he disavow that second-hand but almost certainly genuine papal letter, *Laudabiliter*, in which Adrian granted Ireland to Henry II. This was a difficult challenge for Ussher: the link between Ireland and England, which he so strongly supported, had been originally authorized by that ‘grand usurper’, the pope. His response was to deny the pope’s right to make any such grant, using sound humanist arguments about the authenticity of documents on which the papacy’s claim was based. The English crown’s right to Ireland was instead, Ussher claimed, partly based on conquest, and partly on the submissions made by Irish chieftains to English monarchs. And, Ussher stressed, anxious as always

18 *Ibid.*, p. 319. 19 *Ibid.*, pp 320f. 20 *Ibid.*, pp 325–9. 21 *Ibid.*, p. 333.

to preserve the dignity of his country, it had in medieval times been a separate kingdom before being joined to that of England.<sup>22</sup>

Ussher's *Discourse* is a masterful example of the deployment of first-rate scholarship to achieve a firmly polemical end. In some respects, his task was easy: clerical celibacy was not a feature of the early church; nor is it difficult to show that the eucharistic theology of the early Irish church failed to measure up to the Council of Trent – after all, the key element, transubstantiation, was only defined in the twelfth century. Equally, purgatory was a medieval development (albeit the rationalization of the much older notion of praying for the dead as found on Irish gravestones), and the idea that St Patrick founded his eponymous purgatory belongs in the realm of myth and folklore rather than history. Demonstrating that the early Irish church had not signed up to the Council of Trent was not, in short, a demanding undertaking. But proving that it was a Protestant church – that it had subscribed to the Thirty-Nine Articles, as it were – was more problematic. Here Ussher resorted to selectively reading the sources, identifying those closest to Protestant orthodoxy, leaving out those that were unhelpful, and gathering together the resultant quotations in the pages of the *Discourse*. He was not unaware of the selective nature of what he was doing – in an afterword 'To the reader' added to the 1631 edition, he acknowledged that his purpose was

to produce such evidences as might shew the agreement that was betwixt our ancestors and us in matters of religions, and to leave the instances which might be alleged for the contrary to them unto whom the maintaining of that part did properly belong.<sup>23</sup>

The underlying problem was, of course, that the questions Ussher was asking were, simply, invalid: they were relevant to the seventeenth century, but foreign to the early medieval period and, when asked of the early Irish church, produced largely worthless answers. Indeed, in this regard, he was one of the first exponents of that modern, and very popular, form of wish-fulfilment: reading back into the 'Celtic' church later contemporary, and anachronistic, concerns.<sup>24</sup>

In addition to proving that the Irish church was doctrinally in tune with the reformers, Ussher also sought to detach it from the papacy. Again, he achieved this by careful selection of his facts and use of language. The distance of Ireland from Rome led, unsurprisingly, to differences in practices and traditions, and this, together with the limited contact between the early Irish church and the papacy, enabled Ussher to elide difference into independence. Thus the Irish church repeatedly resisted papal 'subjection' and 'dominion'. Where Irish

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, pp 360–74. <sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, iv, p. 376. <sup>24</sup> Donald Meek, *The quest for Celtic Christianity* (Edinburgh, 2000); Thomas O'Loughlin, *Journeys on the edges: the Celtic tradition* (London, 2000).

bishops or archbishops acted, and there was no evidence of papal involvement, then they were acting independently: when an Irish king is recorded as appointing a bishop, or when Cellach, Malachy's predecessor in Armagh, instituted a new see, this demonstrated that 'in the erection of new archbishopricks and bishopricks, all things were here done at home, without consulting with the see of Rome for the matter'.<sup>25</sup>

What Ussher did in the *Discourse* was to establish the first, and enduring, Protestant periodization of Irish religious history. The island of saints and scholars was a shining example of pure Christianity, independent of the papacy, distinctive in its beliefs and practices, up until the twelfth century. When contacts between periphery and centre intensified – as Malachy literally went over to Rome – Ireland was brought under the direct control of the papacy through the despatch of papal legates with episcopal *pallia*, the convening of councils, and the replacement of the monastic structure with a diocesan one. And, of course, all of this neatly fitted Ussher's apocalyptic framework: the extension of Roman influence coincided with the unbinding of Satan from the eleventh century onwards. The twelfth century thus served as a kind of hinge, the period when the Irish church became subject to papal rule. Before was purity, after corruption, making the Reformation necessary and inevitable.

Obviously, Ussher's *Discourse* did not achieve its self-proclaimed intention of converting the Catholic Irish population to the Church of Ireland. By the time it was published, the majority of the Irish population were committed to Catholicism, and unlikely to be convinced by his arguments. And, indeed, Ussher, in the Preface pessimistically noted its likely failure, quoting one of his favourite apocalyptic passages, 2 Thessalonians 2:10–11:

'Because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved, God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe lies.' The woful experience whereof, we may see daily before our eyes in this poor nation: where, such as are slow of heart to believe the saving truth of God delivered by the prophets and apostles, do with all greediness embrace, and with a most strange kind of credulity entertain those lying legends, wherewith their monks and friars in these latter days have polluted the religion and lives of our ancient saints.<sup>26</sup>

In the face of Catholic hostility, then, the only audience it was likely to appeal to was a Protestant one. Even there, the attitude of the Protestant elite to the nascent Church of Ireland in the early seventeenth century was unclear and ill-defined. For many clergy and lay people recently arrived from England, their

25 *Works of Ussher*, iv, p. 323. 26 *Ibid.*, pp 237–8.

instinctive equation of civility with Englishness and barbarity with Irishness led them to assume that the established church in Ireland was an offshoot, or even a part, of the Church of England. This was certainly the case with Lord Deputy Wentworth and his ecclesiastical henchman, John Bramhall: when they arrived in 1633, they treated it like an *appanage* of the Church of England.<sup>27</sup> But for Ussher, one of that small minority of Irish-born Protestants, proud of his country and its Gaelic heritage, the church was, as we have seen, an independent entity with strong Irish roots.<sup>28</sup> In other words, he was offering his fellow Protestants a ready-made history that allowed them to claim that they, and their church, were truly Irish. For many Protestants over the following centuries, especially those who settled permanently and put down roots in Ireland, it was to prove an attractive option.

Thus, when Wentworth and Bramhall sought, in the 1634 convocation, to bring the Church of Ireland into closer alignment with the Church of England, they were surprised to discover that Ussher insisted that his church was separate and distinct. Had they taken the time to read the *Discourse*, of course, they would have seen how Ussher, when dealing with the contacts between the two churches, was reluctant to portray the Irish as subservient to the English. Always alert to the contemporary relevance of a seemingly ancient historical fact, Ussher had pointedly referred to the response of the majority of the native Irish bishops to the Norse-Irish willingness to seek consecration in England: they had, he said, been hostile to ‘this continuation of their dependence upon a metropolitan of another kingdom, which they conceived to be somewhat derogatory to the dignity of their own primate’.<sup>29</sup>

Ussher’s second work on Irish religious history – *Veterum epistolarum Hibernicarum sylloge* – appeared in 1632, a collection of documents relating to the early Irish church. Starting with two early letters from Pope Gregory I (590–604) to the Irish bishops, Ussher included St Columbanus’ letters to the papacy, Cummián’s treatise on Easter, documents on St Malachy’s efforts to reform the Irish church, late eleventh-century documents relating to the consecration of the Norse-Irish bishops by the archbishop of Canterbury, and finally excerpts from Giraldus Cambrensis, including the papal bull of 1155, *Laudabiliter*.<sup>30</sup> These were pioneering and exemplary editions of many previously unavailable sources, and Ussher’s texts were still cited by historians down to the late twentieth

27 John McCafferty, “‘God bless your free Church of Ireland’: Wentworth, Laud, Bramhall and the Irish convocation of 1634” in J.F. Merritt (ed.), *The political world of Thomas Wentworth, earl of Strafford, 1621–1641* (Cambridge, 1996), pp 187–208; John McCafferty, *The reconstruction of the Church of Ireland: Bishop Bramhall and the Laudian reforms, 1633–1641* (Cambridge, 2007).

28 Alan Ford, ‘Dependent or independent: the Church of Ireland and its colonial context, 1536–1647’, *The Seventeenth Century*, 10 (1995), 163–87.

29 *Works of Ussher*, iv, pp 326–9.  
30 James Ussher, *Veterum epistolarum Hibernicarum sylloge quae partim ab Hibernis, partim ad Hibernos partim de Hibernis vel rebus Hibernicis sunt conscriptae* (Dublin, 1632, later eds Paris, 1665 and Herborn, 1696).



century.<sup>31</sup> But, yet again, they can also be read in a more pointed way. Contact with the papacy, one would assume, began in 600, and reached its peak after 1000, two dates not without significance in Ussher's apocalyptic calendar. The *Sylloge* thus served almost as a source book illustrating the points made in the *Discourse*: emphasizing the independence of the Irish church over issues such as Easter, revealing the robust, even rude, attitude that Columbanus took towards papal authority, and showing how the Irish church came under closer Roman control during the twelfth century.

Ussher's final work on the early history of Ireland was his 1196-page *magnum opus* of 1639, *The antiquities of the British churches*. This was a product of decades of work collecting sources from libraries in Ireland, England and mainland Europe. Its format was the same as Ussher's first two works: a series of quotations from primary texts, strung together by often brief comments, leaving the reader to piece together the author's intentions. Looking back with the benefit of several hundred years of historical scholarship and critical analysis, it is easy to complain of Ussher's gullibility, including stories about Glastonbury, accounts of King Lucius, the first Christian King of England, and early apostolic visits to Britain, but, for the time in which it was written, it was a remarkable achievement. Though he included some dubious sources, Ussher did offer pointers about their validity, introducing quotations with warning phrases such as 'it is claimed that'. Thus Simon the Zealot 'is said to have preached' in Britain; and Joseph of Arimathea 'it is believed' built a church in Glastonbury.<sup>32</sup> And Ussher's own views were still evident in his choice of material. The emphasis upon the presence of Christianity in Britain prior to the papally inspired mission of Augustine in 597 was clearly designed to downplay the importance of Roman origins. Ussher's Calvinist distaste for what he saw as the contemporary plague of Arminianism led to him foregrounding the danger posed by the spread of Pelagianism in the early British church and the attempts to eliminate it. And, finally, Ussher was very clear that he was talking about the British and Irish churches – the Irish church was an independent entity. Taken together with the growth of scholarly interest in the early Irish church on the part of contemporary Irish Catholic historians such as John Colgan (1592–1658), Stephen White (1575–1646) and Mícheál Ó Cléirigh (c.1590–1643), Ussher's works marks the beginning of an historical renaissance in early modern Ireland, applying to Ireland the ideals of humanist historical scholarship. And, from a narrower perspective, through his willingness to take seriously what others had dismissed as barbaric, Ussher forced his fellow Protestants to take seriously the study of the early Irish church.<sup>33</sup>

31 E.g., Katharine Simms, *From kings to warlords: the changing political structures of Gaelic Ireland in the later Middle Ages* (Woodbridge, 1987), p. 168; J.A. Watt, *The church and the two nations in medieval Ireland* (Cambridge, 1970), pp 10, 217. 32 *Works of Ussher*, vi, p. 551. 33 Ford, *Ussher: theology, history, and politics*, ch. 9; Alan Ford, "'Standing one's ground": religion, history

Ussher's account of the history of the Church of Ireland had a remarkably long shelf-life. The *Antiquities* became the standard academic work on the churches in these islands, repeatedly cited (and improved on) by later scholars such as Stillingfleet and Nicholson.<sup>34</sup> The *Discourse* was reprinted four times after his death, the latest being 1815, and, much more significantly, his interpretation was incorporated into the standard Protestant histories of Ireland and the Irish and British churches, and then into the catechisms and school-books used by the Church of Ireland laity. Ussher's friend and pupil, Sir James Ware, in his biographical account of the succession of bishops in each Irish diocese, passed seamlessly from Patrick and his medieval successors, down to Protestant post-Reformation bishops, thus silently laying claim to the episcopal succession for the Church of Ireland.<sup>35</sup> The French Huguenot controversialist, Jean Daillé, writing in 1653, cited Ussher in support of his contention that Christianity and Britain and Ireland had non-Roman roots and was independent of the papacy.<sup>36</sup> Ussher took his place in the long line of Protestant historical witnesses to 'the Errors and Corruptions of the Church of Rome' listed by Samuel Mather, the New England preacher, in 1672:

the Centurists of Magdeburg ... Flacius Illyricus his Catalogus testium veritatis; Morney his History of the Papacy, or Mystery of Iniquity; Fox his Book of Martyrs; Raynolds his Conference with Hart; sundry of our Expositors on the Revelation, see Mr Arthur Dent on Chap. 11; White's way to the Church; Usher against Maloone; and of the Religion anciently professed by the Irish, and British, and De statu & successione Eccles. Britannicarum.<sup>37</sup>

Two key seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Protestant Irish histories popularized the arguments from the *Discourse*. Richard Cox, at the start of his 1687 *History of Ireland*, stated that 'the learned Primate Usher has sufficiently proved' that the ancient religion of Ireland 'was the same which the Protestants now profess', and went on to offer a detailed summary, chapter by chapter, of Ussher's *Discourse*.<sup>38</sup> Cox's eighteenth-century successor, Thomas Leland,

and polemic since the Reformation' in Alan Ford et al. (eds), *As by law established: the Church of Ireland since the Reformation* (Dublin, 1995), pp 1–14; Alan Ford, 'The Irish historical renaissance and the shaping of Irish Protestant history' in Alan Ford and John McCafferty (eds), *The origins of sectarianism in early modern Ireland* (Cambridge, 2005), pp 127–57; Ford, 'Irish historical renaissance'; Salvador Ryan, 'Reconstructing Irish Catholic origins after the Reformation' in Katherine van Liere et al. (eds), *Sacred history: uses of the Christian past in the Renaissance world* (Oxford, 2012), pp 186–208. <sup>34</sup> Ford, *Ussher: theology, history, and politics*, pp 213, 219. <sup>35</sup> See ch. 3, below. <sup>36</sup> Jean Daillé, *An apologie for the Reformed churches wherein is shew'd the necessitie of their separation from the Church of Rome: against those who accuse them of making a schisme in Christendome* (London, 1653), p. 41. <sup>37</sup> Samuel Mather, *A defence of the Protestant Christian religion against popery* (London, 1672), p. 28. <sup>38</sup> Richard Cox, *Hibernia Anglicana*

though he set out in his 1773 *History of Ireland* to write a religiously impartial account, produced an opening little different from Cox, including an even lengthier summary of the *Discourse* which began: ‘Archbishop Usher has shewn that the system of doctrines taught by Patrick were free from the erroneous novelties of the church of Rome.’<sup>39</sup> In short, Ussher’s *Discourse*, in the words of Clare O’Halloran, ‘still exerted a dominant interest’ during the eighteenth century.<sup>40</sup>

The resurgence of interest in ecclesiastical history in the nineteenth century went hand-in-hand, on the Protestant side, with the further elaboration of Ussher’s views. The way was led by the historian, Henry Monck Mason, an enthusiastic exponent of evangelization through Irish. His 1822 work on *The Catholic religion of St Patrick* was addressed to his Catholic countrymen, seeking to convince them that the ‘religion of their ancestors’, as taught by Patrick and Columcille, was not Roman Catholicism, but the ‘religion of the Bible’, ‘very different from that which you now are taught by your Priests’. Monck Mason turned the allegation that Protestantism was a new religion on its head, claiming that

that which is now called the Roman Catholic Religion, is a new thing in this country, that it was not the old religion and faith of St Patrick; that he, and all your ancient saints, were members of a Hierarchy altogether independent of Rome; and that those who would instruct you in the Bible, are your best friends, who would lead you back to the ancient principles of the truly Catholic Church, and of St Patrick, from which you have departed.<sup>41</sup>

In the hope of convincing the Irish population of the truth of his claims, Monck Mason disavowed Ussher, and said he would quote only from early authors who were impeccably Catholic. In fact, the whole enterprise was still based on the *Discourse* and the *Antiquities*, using the same sources and arguments, albeit with significant additional material.

Even the Presbyterian, James Seaton Reid, included in the first volume of his pioneering *History of the Presbyterian church*, published in 1834, an account of the pre-Reformation church that was largely dependent on Ussher, though he could not refrain from pointing out that the organization of the early Irish

(Dublin, 1689). 39 Thomas Leland, *The history of Ireland from the invasion of Henry II*, 3 vols (London, 1773), p. xx; Joseph Liechty, ‘Testing the depth of Catholic/Protestant conflict: the case of Thomas Leland’s “History of Ireland”’, 1773’, *Arch. Hib.*, 42 (1987), 13–28. 40 Clare O’Halloran, *Golden ages and barbarous nations: antiquarian debate and cultural politics in Ireland, c.1750–1800* (Cork, 2004), p. 82. 41 H.J. Monck Mason, *The Catholic religion of St Patrick, and St Columb-Kill, and the other ancient saints of Ireland, truly set forth from Roman Catholic historians, traditions of the country, records, and authentic documents* (2nd ed. Dublin, 1823), pp 6f.

church seemed more Presbyterian than episcopalian.<sup>42</sup> The first major history of the Church of Ireland, published in 1840 by Bishop Mant, though it focused upon the post-Reformation period, took Ussher's account of the early Irish church as a given: until the middle of the twelfth century the Church of Ireland had been 'an independent national church, without acknowledging any pre-eminence, authority, or jurisdiction, of the Church of Rome'. Only following Malachy did the papacy gain a hold, assimilating 'the usages and discipline of the Irish Church more closely to those of Rome'.<sup>43</sup> Equally, in the first popular history of the early Irish church, printed repeatedly around the middle of the nineteenth century, Robert King followed Ussher's arguments, concluding that 'You will see from the whole tenor of this history, how utterly false is the supposition that the church of Rome is the most ancient in this country'.<sup>44</sup>

But the real power of Ussher's origin myth only became evident after 1870 when the Church of Ireland was disestablished and severed from the Church of England and became, reluctantly, an independent, self-governing church. The umbilical cord cut, it had little choice but to acknowledge its Irish roots. The result was a resurgence of interest, academic and popular, in the early Irish church, fuelled also by the post-romantic fascination with all things Celtic.<sup>45</sup> The doyen of Irish Protestant historians, G.T. Stokes, from 1883 to 1898 professor of ecclesiastical history in Trinity College, Dublin, addressed lectures packed with students and interested members of the public on the subject of the 'Celtic church' and popularized the rather dubious idea of the eastern – anything but Roman! – origins of Irish Christianity.<sup>46</sup> John Macbeth, rector of Killeghy in Ferns, published in 1899 a popular illustrated history of the Church of Ireland. Its intellectual thrust was outlined in its opening paragraph:

The Church of Ireland is one of the most ancient Churches in Christendom. The national life of the country for more than fourteen hundred years is reflected in her history. The Story of Ireland and her Church is, therefore, a subject which should interest all Irishmen. Especially should the members of the Church be familiar with her history, and thus have an intelligent appreciation of her position, and her claims on their allegiance.<sup>47</sup>

<sup>42</sup> J.S. Reid, *History of the Presbyterian church in Ireland*, 3 vols (London, 1853); for a later Presbyterian treatment of the same theme, see James Heron, *The Celtic church in Ireland* (London, 1898). <sup>43</sup> Richard Mant, *History of the Church of Ireland*, 2 vols (London, 1840), pp 3–6. <sup>44</sup> Robert King, *A primer of the history of the holy Catholic church in Ireland . . . to the formation of the modern Irish branch of the Church of Rome* (3rd ed. Dublin, 1845), Preface to the second edition, p. xxii; see also Richard Murray, *Ireland and her church* (2nd ed. London, 1845). <sup>45</sup> Meek, *Quest for Celtic Christianity*. <sup>46</sup> David Murphy, 'Stokes, George Thomas' (1846–98), *DIB*; J.I. Peacocke, *Peacocke of Derry and Raphoe: an autobiographical sketch* (Dublin, 1946), p. 18; and see ch. 10, below. <sup>47</sup> John Macbeth, *The story of Ireland and her church from the earliest times to the present day* (Dublin, 1899), p. ix.

The rival claims to ownership of the early Irish church reached their peak in the early 1930s, as the Protestant and Catholic churches celebrated, separately of course, the fifteen-hundredth anniversary of St Patrick's arrival. Amidst the sectarian hostilities, the Church of Ireland produced a lengthy three-volume academic treatment of its history from Patrick down to the present.<sup>48</sup> In 1931, a Trinity-educated cleric, W.S. Kerr, who went on to serve as bishop of Down and Connor (1945–55), published *The independence of the Celtic church in Ireland*, which provides perhaps the fullest modern summary of the Church of Ireland's claims.<sup>49</sup> The religion that Patrick introduced into Ireland was notable for its 'evangelical scriptural fervour and purity'. Nowhere in Patrick's authentic writings, Kerr stressed, did he mention papal authorization for his mission.<sup>50</sup> References to Patrick visiting Rome were, therefore, later inventions.<sup>51</sup> Equally, Columcille never acknowledged the papacy, while Columbanus roundly rejected papal authority.<sup>52</sup> Kerr saw the seventh-century tensions over the dating of Easter as part of the 'conflict that the Celtic church waged against the advancing power of the Church of Rome', which led, he claimed, to it separating from the communion of Rome. The 'independence and isolation' of the 'Celtic church' was also shown in its liturgy, its refusal to abide by clerical celibacy, and its predominantly monastic form of church organization. It was, in short, 'as self-governing as the Church of Ireland today'.<sup>53</sup> The tensions between the 'Celtic' and Roman churches came to a head at the synod of Whitby in 664 which resulted in defeat for the Irish: but rather than submit, the Irish monks left their places in England and returned to Ireland where they 'found refuge when beaten back by the oncoming might of the Church of Rome'.<sup>54</sup>

During the twelfth century this Irish church was finally brought into line with the rest of Europe when 'the jurisdiction of the Bishop of Rome was set up'. The two leading figures were Malachy and the papal legate, Gilbert. The latter had travelled abroad and, as a result, 'became an intense and bigoted admirer of the complete Roman system'.<sup>55</sup> They 'evidently regarded as holy work' the 'destruction of the services, polity and freedom of the Irish Church'.<sup>56</sup> This marked 'the elimination of Celtic Church independence'.<sup>57</sup> 'The Church of Ireland had flourished for over six hundred years ... without ... yielding such subjection. Her days of freedom were ... over and with them her days of glory'.<sup>58</sup> The 'Celtic church' 'had ceased to exist'.<sup>59</sup> Kerr concluded the book with a plea: 'Is the day far off when patriotic Irishmen will unite in a church self-governing, independent, released from foreign jurisdiction, and reviving the freedom and evangelical traditions of the Church of St Patrick?'<sup>60</sup> Unsurprisingly, the Catholic response was scathing.<sup>61</sup>

48 Phillips, *History*; see ch. 11, below. 49 W.S. Kerr, *The independence of the Celtic church in Ireland* (London, 1931). 50 *Ibid.*, pp 15–19. 51 *Ibid.*, pp 26–32. 52 *Ibid.*, p. 123. 53 *Ibid.*, pp 36–9. 54 *Ibid.*, pp 61–8. 55 *Ibid.*, p. 139. 56 *Ibid.*, p. 144. 57 *Ibid.*, p. 132. 58 *Ibid.*, p. 135. 59 *Ibid.*, p. 156. 60 *Ibid.*, p. 160. 61 Eoin MacNeill, 'Protestant writer and

The closing sermon of the 1932 commemoration, preached in St Patrick's Cathedral in Dublin by Archbishop Gregg, brought Ussher's vision of the Irish church up to date:

The Church of Ireland is the most Irish thing there is in Ireland today ... holding its apostolic ministry in unbroken descent from the Celtic bishops who succeeded St Patrick ... Long before the Reformation, the question as to who should appoint bishops in Ireland was for centuries the subject of fierce dispute between Pope and King. Today the Church of Ireland turns neither to Windsor nor to Rome for the appointment of its bishops. It is an Irish, self-governing organization, as free from the intervention of Britain or the Vatican as the Celtic church was in the days of Columba.

It is well that, even if the main body of Irish people refuse to be in communion with us they should, from time to time, have plainly set out before them the historical facts concerning the Church which claims to be their own. Those facts may set some of them thinking and asking pertinent questions.<sup>62</sup>

For the first half of the twentieth century, Ussher's *Discourse* remained the *ur-text* for the Church of Ireland, reiterated alike in popular and scholarly works, in catechisms and school textbooks.<sup>63</sup> It was not till the growth of non-denominational religious history in universities during the second half of the twentieth century, and the advent of ecumenism in the 1960s, that this narrative began to be questioned. As academics left aside sectarian loyalties, a new, more dispassionate form of religious history emerged. In Patrician studies D.A. Binchy's 1962 article – 'as dangerous as a H-bomb' according to his editor – blew up centuries of Protestant and Catholic mythologizing about Patrick, cutting away later accretions and leaving us with the bare minimum of what we can learn from the Confession and the letter to Coroticus.<sup>64</sup> Donald Meek performed a similar task for the historiography of that dubious British and Irish entity, the 'Celtic

St Patrick: Archdeacon's theories that have no foundation in fact', *The Standard*, 16 Jan. 1932; Kerr's own cutting of the review has his handwritten comment 'Piffle': RCBL, MS 813/5/2.

<sup>62</sup> William Bell and N.D. Emerson (eds), *The Church of Ireland AD 432–1932* (Dublin, 1932), pp 235f. <sup>63</sup> Phillips, *History*; T.J. Johnston et al. (eds), *A history of the Church of Ireland* (Dublin, 1953); Henry Kingsmill Moore, *Ireland and her church, a short history of the Church of Ireland* (Dundalk, 1937); H.E. Patton, *History of the Church of Ireland for use in schools* (5th ed. Dublin, 1943); C.M. MacSorley, *The island of saints: a short sketch of the history of the Church of Ireland for children* (Dublin, 1907); *Roman claims; or, An elementary catechism on the chief points of the Roman controversy, prepared by a committee appointed by the Board of Education of the united dioceses of Dublin, Glendalough and Kildare* (2nd ed. Dublin, 1931). <sup>64</sup> D.A. Binchy, 'Patrick and his biographers: ancient and modern', *Studia Hibernica*, 2 (1962), 7–173; letter from Donal Cregan to [Donal?] Nevin – 'confidential', 5 Jan. 1962, original in my possession.

church', tracing how it has been invented by Ussher and then misappropriated by a series of scholars and devotees of various denominations in Ireland, Scotland, England, and beyond.<sup>65</sup> Similarly, Thomas O'Loughlin questioned the 'religious interest groups who use this period as a means of defining difference, and in the process foist on medieval writers concerns and beliefs that never entered their minds'. He has explored at length the rich theological and spiritual diversity of the early Irish church and the ways in which it was indeed distinctive and different, yet also clearly a part of the western European church.<sup>66</sup> The synod of Whitby, which loomed so large in Protestant narratives as the climactic battle between Roman and 'Celtic' traditions, has been downgraded and reassessed, with 'Reformation mythmaking' discarded.<sup>67</sup> For the later period, academics such as Jack Watt and Marie-Therese Flanagan produced accounts of twelfth-century reform that left to one side anachronistic questions, and presented a balanced portrait of how it was driven from within by church and secular leaders, but also closely linked to the wider European movement of church reform, which brought Ireland into closer alignment with the norms of western Christianity.<sup>68</sup>

As relations between the Catholic and Protestant churches thawed, slowly, in the 1960s and 1970s – the celebration of the fifteen-hundredth anniversary of the death of Patrick in 1961 were relatively free of the sectarian point-scoring of 1932 – voices within the Church of Ireland began to suggest that the church founded by St Patrick may have given rise to two Irish churches, not one.<sup>69</sup> In 1989, Dr Kenneth Milne, author of a much-reprinted short history of the Church of Ireland, sought to perform a delicate balancing act

Is it not a shame to look through religious or cultural filters at those who have made their mark for good on this island ... and not to own them? Equally deplorable of course is it to be exclusive, and seek to claim that their contribution is 'ours', and not to be claimed by 'others'.<sup>70</sup>

<sup>65</sup> Meek, *Quest for Celtic Christianity*. <sup>66</sup> Thomas O'Loughlin, *Celtic theology: humanity, world and God in early Irish writings* (London, 2000), p. 203; O'Loughlin, *Journeys on the edges*; Caitlin Corning, *The Celtic and Roman traditions: conflict and consensus in the early medieval church* (Basingstoke, 2006), ch. 10. <sup>67</sup> E.T.A. Dailey, 'Reappraising the synod of Whitby', *History Studies*, 10 (2009), 31–44. <sup>68</sup> Watt, *Church and two nations*; J.A. Watt, *The church in medieval Ireland* (2nd ed. Dublin, 1998); Damian Bracken and Dagmar Ó Riain-Raedel (eds), *Ireland and Europe in the twelfth century: reform and renewal* (Dublin, 2006); Marie Therese Flanagan, *The transformation of the Irish church in the twelfth century* (Woodbridge, 2010). <sup>69</sup> Miriam Moffitt, "'Ireland's destiny is in the making": the impact of the anniversary celebrations of 1929 and 1932 on the religious character of Ireland' in Mel Farrell et al. (eds), *A formative decade: Ireland in the 1920s* (Sallins, 2015), pp 225–46; and see below, p. ZZZ. <sup>70</sup> Address at interdenominational St Patrick's day service, Down Cathedral, 31 Mar. 1989; *CoIG*, 31 Mar. 1989.

Two years later, a correspondent in the *Gazette* pointed out that St Patrick, even if he was ‘not commissioned by any Pope of his day, neither did he appear here with a Church of England Revised Version in his pocket’.<sup>71</sup> In 1999, now with the formal title, Historiographer of the Church of Ireland, Milne argued, in an address in Christ Church Cathedral, that members of the Church of Ireland were

shaped both by our environment and by our past. Similarly with communities and nations. Our perspective on the world around us, our attitudes, our prejudices, how we regard other people, are to a large extent formed by much that has gone before and in particular, by how we interpret what went before ... Many members of the Church of Ireland were taught, inaccurately, that it was only with the coming of the Anglo-Normans, later the English, to Ireland that the bishop of Rome related to the Irish church. This clearly influenced how we saw ourselves, we alone were the original Irish church, free from Roman control, and it produced an ill-founded sense of triumphalism.<sup>72</sup>

Popular histories of the Church of Ireland written by insiders began to reflect this new perspective. As the Dean of St Patrick’s put it, ‘Church of Ireland people are inclined to see the Celtic church through a ... haze and to imagine that it was some early form of Protestantism of which we and we only are the spiritual heirs.’<sup>73</sup> The current official statement of Church of Ireland beliefs deals with the issue briefly and blandly, stating in answer to the question ‘Did the Church of Ireland begin at the Reformation? No – the Church of Ireland is that part of the Irish Church which was influenced by the Reformation, and has its origins in the early Celtic Church of St Patrick.’<sup>74</sup> Though it retains ownership of Patrick and the ‘Celtic church’, the claim is no longer exclusive of the Catholic church, nor does it specify whether the ‘Celtic church’ was independent of the papacy.

The shift in opinion is, of course, slow and partial, with not all, particularly those in the north, sharing Dr Milne’s ecumenical flexibility. In 1991, in a letter in the *Gazette* written from Omagh, it was argued that while the Church of Ireland traced its origins to St Patrick himself, the saint’s connection to the modern Catholic church was ‘very tenuous indeed’.<sup>75</sup> As late as 2013, one Orange Order chaplain and Church of Ireland minister praised Kerr’s

<sup>71</sup> *CoIG*, 29 Mar. 1991. <sup>72</sup> Address given on Sunday 5 Dec. 1999 as part of the Christ Church Cathedral series ‘A faith for the third millennium’: <http://www.tiac.eu/cccdub-no1/dean/sermons/1999/lay-milne.html> (accessed 16 Nov. 2016). <sup>73</sup> R.B. MacCarthy, *Ancient and modern: a short history of the Church of Ireland* (Blackrock, 1995); see also below, p. ZZZ. <sup>74</sup> Church of Ireland website: ‘What we believe’: <https://www.ireland.anglican.org/our-faith/apck> (accessed 21 Dec. 2016). <sup>75</sup> *CoIG*, 19 Apr. 1991.



*Independence of the Celtic church* as still ‘essential reading for those who are concerned about the spurious claims of the Roman Catholic Church to a heritage which is properly that of the Church of Ireland’.<sup>76</sup> And the 2016 Wikipedia entry for the Church of Ireland showed little awareness of any shift in historical sensibility, echoing the views of Kerr and, indeed, Ussher:

It is the contention of the Church of Ireland that in breaking with Rome, the reformed established church was reverting to a condition that had obtained in the church in Ireland prior to the 12th century – the independent character of Celtic Christianity.<sup>77</sup>

Ussher had established three key ‘facts’ that provided the template for Irish Protestant history. The first was that beliefs and practices of the early Irish church were thoroughly in harmony with Protestantism. The second was that it paid little attention to the papacy – it was a largely independent entity, whose ideas and customs differentiated it from Roman uniformity. The third was that the established church was directly and exclusively descended from this church. The papacy, as it had gained control of the Irish church from the twelfth century onwards, had corrupted and deformed it, but the sixteenth-century Reformation had reclaimed its cathedrals and churches and restored the Church of Ireland to its early purity. Ussher’s periodization of Irish church history was, it is true, underpinned by an apocalyptic vision of the interaction between history and the bible that was quietly abandoned by later historians. But, as the power of apocalyptic faded, it was simply replaced by the dismissal of the papacy for other reasons, as an evil ultramontane influence, despotic and anti-democratic, fomenting sedition and rebellion, a ‘foreign church’, usurping the loyalty, political and religious, of its Irish members.<sup>78</sup> It was only in the later twentieth century that the Church of Ireland began to question Ussher’s version of its origins, and view the early Irish church in a less exclusive and proprietorial manner. St Patrick could be claimed equally by Protestants and Catholics.

<sup>76</sup> S.E. Long, *Famous clergy* (Belfast, 2013), p. 148; my thanks to Miriam Moffitt for this reference. <sup>77</sup> This statement was first uploaded to the website in a slightly different form, on 7 Nov. 2011 from a Dublin-based IP address: see [https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Church\\_of\\_Ireland&diff=next&oldid=459518966](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Church_of_Ireland&diff=next&oldid=459518966) (accessed 16 Dec. 2016); the version quoted was uploaded on 20 Nov. 2011 also by an Irish contributor: see [https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Church\\_of\\_Ireland&diff=next&oldid=459541449](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Church_of_Ireland&diff=next&oldid=459541449) (accessed 16 Dec. 2016). <sup>78</sup> Alan Ford, ‘Apocalyptic Ireland: 1580–1641’, *Irish Theological Quarterly*, 78 (2013), 147–8.

9 Knox, Robert Buick, James Ussher, archbishop of Armagh (Cardiff, 1967), pp. 27, 33â€“5Google Scholar; Calendar of State Papers, Domestic, 1623â€“1625 (C. S. P. D.), 12 Feb. 1625, p. 472Google Scholar; a separate and detailed account of Ussher's movements in the early 1620s is to be found in Capern, â€“Slippery times and dangerous daysâ€“â€™, ch. 3. 10.Â 13 The protestation of the archbishops and bishops of Ireland, against the toleration of poperie, agreed upon, and subscribed by them at Dublin the 26 of Novemb., in the year of our Lord 1626 (London, 1641 â€“ this was printed for propagandist reasons at the outbreak of the Irish rebellion)Google Scholar, Sig.Â the Scottish presbyterian church fold â€“ see Reid, James Seaton, History of the presbyterian "James Ussher and the Creation of an Irish Protestant Identity." In British Consciousness and Identity, edited by B. I. Bradshaw and Peter Roberts. 1998.Â Ussher was a distinguished scholar, contributing to early Irish history and biblical chronology: his argument that the world was created in 4004 bc held the field for decades. Revd Dr William M. Marshall. The Oxford Companion to British History JOHN CANNON.Â Church Of Ireland , The Anglican church in Ireland, in communion with the Church of England, claims succession from the Roman Catholic Church established in Ireland in tâ€| James Connolly , Connolly, James Both socialist and nationalist revolutionary, James Connolly (1868â€“1916) was born to an Irish immigrant family in Edinburgh, Scotlandâ€| Bishop James Ussher came from a very long line in Ireland. If you go way back in his family line, you will find that his ancestor was named Ussher because of his occupationâ€“he was usher to the king. When James had come of age, he was ready to go off to college. He was sent to Dublin and became one of the first graduates of the newly established Trinity College at the University of Dublin. He studied theology and biblical studies, and after his graduation he was appointed professor of theology.Â This was largely due to King James VI and I and King Charles I. They were not interested in the reforms and the desires of the Puritans. They were only interested in extending their reach in Great Britain and also to Ireland.