# AN ENGLISH KIRK? SCOTTISH EPISCOPALIANS AT HOME AND ABROAD

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## *INTRODUCTION*

According to recent census data and its own parish rolls, the Scottish Episcopal Church accounts for less than 1% of the total population of Scotland.[1] While statistically small, it has contributed in recent times a number of public intellectuals to public life, including Richard Holloway, a former bishop of Edinburgh and philosopher. However, its most notable contribution to Scottish national life mythology also casts it in a negative and antagonistic role against a heroic Scottish protagonist. This refers, of course, to the scandalous moment on 23 July 1637 when Jenny Geddes threw her stool at the Dean of St Giles' Cathedral in protest against hearing the Dean using the 1637 *Book of Common Prayer*. She allegedly shouted 'daur ye say Mass in my lug', or 'dare you say the mass in my ear.'[2] The disorder in St Giles' Cathedral is a small moment in a much wider set of controversies in both Scotland and England related to Archbishop Laud and Charles I's church policies, and is a prelude to the Bishops' War, the British Civil Wars, and the collapse of the monarchy after Charles I's execution in 1649. That prayer book to which Jenny Geddes so violently objected was not, however, an English prayer book. Certainly William Laud, the archbishop of Canterbury, was associated with the Commission responsible for its drafting, editing, and printing.[3] However it was a Scottish prayer book, not an English one, and although the Episcopal Church has in some quarters the nickname the 'English Church', that is a misnomer. The mere fact that this small but prominent Scottish denomination can be characterised, but also derided, as English makes it an unexpected but rewarding case study, as it interacted with religious and political impulses in Scotland, in England, and even much further afield in the colonies. These interactions offer space for reflection on the complexities of what can be thought of as cultural certainties about national identity, but which are often more contestable than may be realised. This paper takes a long and broad look at the Episcopal Church, including its complex and fraught history in Scotland, and the occasions it has been of international significance. The first section locates the Church in its domestic and longer historical context and its evolving status as dispossessed and anti-heroic. The second section locates it as equally disparaged in some quarters, as a body of dissenters, whose Episcopal continuities found them few supporters in England, even among English bishops. However, in contrast to its antagonistic, anti-heroic role

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[1] General Synod of the Scottish Episcopal Church, *36th Annual Report* (Edinburgh: Scottish Episcopal Church, 2018), p. 63.

[2] William Meikle, *Illustrated guide to St. Giles' Cathedral, Edinburgh, and the Chapel of the Thistle* (Edinburgh: Pillans and Wilson, 1943), p. 14.

[3] Leonie James, *'This Great Firebrand': William Laud and Scotland, 1617-1645* (London: Boydell and Brewer, 2017), p. 81.

in Scottish national legends, this section also examines the Church's contribution to the establishment of bishoprics in post-Revolutionary American and post-Napoleonic Europe. The history of the Scottish and American episcopates have both received scholarly attention; however, revisiting these histories in terms of how these actions were received and interpreted as more than the creation of bishops for foreign congregations, but through these actions the Scottish episcopate became part of the substance of tensions in how the Church of England itself was to be understood, as an Erastian creature of the state or otherwise.

*THE SCOTTISH CHURCH AT HOME*

The Episcopal Church in Scotland is so called because it has bishops, although none of the modern bishoprics are in direct continuity with the medieval bishoprics. Although some large churches in Scotland such as St Giles' in Edinburgh and St Mungo's in Glasgow are popularly called cathedrals, they are no longer the seat of bishops (they do not contain a cathedra, or bishop's chair), but rather are high kirks. They are not cathedrals because the Church of Scotland is not episcopal, having decisively lost that tier of the ministry by the end of the seventeenth century, for reasons that will be discussed shortly. These buildings are also among the few lucky survivors as many other Scottish cathedrals are in a partial or complete state of ruin, as they became both functionally irrelevant and religiously offensive under comprehensive religious changes in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. By the eighteenth century, their ruinous condition, and the unlikelihood of finding a Scottish cathedral with its roof still on, was the topic of lively discussion between James Boswell and Samuel Johnson when they toured Scotland.[4] Elgin Cathedral and St Andrews are particularly ruinous, and others including Dunkeld and St Machar's in Aberdeen survive in partial or truncated form.[5]

Until the Reformation, the Church in Scotland was part of the universal Church, looking to Rome as its source of doctrinal and legal leadership. It functioned like churches elsewhere in Europe, through dioceses and parishes and with a rich monastic life as well.[6] The bishops of the medieval Scottish Church were in some cases figures of European stature. Like bishops from elsewhere in Christendom, they studied at the Faculty of Theology at the University of Paris and mingled in cosmopolitan international crowds such as the papal court at Avignon and the Roman Curia.[7] Others

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[4] James Boswell, *The Journal of a Tour to the Hebrides, with Samuel Johnson, LL. D.* (London: Henry Baldwin for Charles Dilly, 1785), pp. 396-97.

[5] John Parker Lawson, *The Episcopal Church of Scotland: From the Reformation to the Revolution* (Edinburgh: Gallie and Bayley, 1844), p. 13.

[6] For which see Sybil M. Jack, 'Scottish Monastic Life', *Journal of the Sydney Society for Scottish History* 1 (1993): pp. 18-31.

[7] David Ditchburn, 'Locating Aberdeen and Elgin in the Later Middle Ages: regional, National and International Paradigms', in *Medieval Art, Architecture and Archaeology in the Dioceses of Aberdeen and Moray*, ed. Jane Geddes (London: Routledge: Abingdon, 2016, The British Archaeological Transactions XL), pp. 1-3.

such as Henry de Lichton, the Bishop of Aberdeen from 1422-40 studied at Orleans and served James I as a diplomat.[8] They were great figures of state, serving as advisors to kings and as chancellors of the kingdom, having studied canon and civil law at a European university. They built cathedrals and endowed universities. St Andrews University, for instance, was the foundation of Henry Wardlaw, a fifteenth century bishop.[9] His action there also shows the Scottish bishops as part of a European mainstream as hammers of heretics. Wardlaw suppressed Wycliffite teaching in Scotland (as English bishops did) and wanted his university to be an intellectual powerhouse to counter heresy. Robert Blackadder, archbishop of Glasgow, was a diplomat for King James IV as well as a commissioner.[10] James Beaton, archbishop of St Andrews and Glasgow, served the kingdom by being part of the regency council for James V's childhood. These are prelates of the High Middle Ages, before the Church in Scotland underwent drastic religious reformation.

The Scottish Reformation did not follow a similar trajectory to the English. It was clearer cut than the Tudor convulsions in England, at least when seen in historical perspective, and can be dated to 1560. Following the death of the regent Mary of Guise the *Book of Discipline* came into force and the income of the Church flowed into new destinations.[11] Unlike the English Reformation and the reformations in the Scandinavian kingdoms, it did not proceed as a monarchical affair. Mary Queen of Scots remained Catholic when her government did not. The Scottish parliament separated from Rome in 1560 and the influence of Swiss reformers was felt decisively in the enforcement of public discipline.[12]

Where were Scottish bishops in the midst of this activity? The emergence in the 1570s of the superintendence system complicated Scottish bishoprics but did not destroy them. The appointment of the superintendents, as David Mullan argues in his study of the Scottish episcopate, represents efforts to reform and purify the episcopacy, rather than remove it entirely.[13] King James VI preferred to have them, and as King James I of England he uttered the famous maxim 'no bishop no king.' The Concordat of Leith, a document concerned with the distribution of revenues from the bishoprics and with the acquittal of religious authority during James's minority, gave the monarch

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[8] Michael Brown, *James I* (East Linton: Tuckwell Press, 1994), p. 50.

[9] C.J. Lyon, *History of St. Andrews, episcopal, monastic, academic, and civil; Comprising the principal part of the ecclesiastical history of Scotland* (Edinburgh: William Tait, 1843), p. 202.

[10] George Goodwin, *Fatal Rivalry: Flodden, 1513: Henry VIII and James IV and the Decisive Battle for Renaissance Britain* (New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 2013), p. 39.

[11] G. Donaldson, 'The Scottish Episcopate at the Reformation', *English Historical Review* 60, no. 238 (1945): p. 349.

[12] Alec Ryrie, *The Origins of the Scottish Reformation* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2006), p. 190.

[13] David George Mullan, *Episcopacy in Scotland: The History of an Idea, 1560-1638* (Edinburgh: John Donald Publishers, 1986), p. 24.

the right of appointment to the bishoprics.[14] James' childhood and his adult reign as king of Scotland caused tensions with the Presbyterian ministry. In 1582, James was not able to prevent the definitive abolition of the episcopate. But in 1584 he brought them back, via a statute that was useful to him as upholding episcopacy as a means of restricting the independence of the Scottish clergy from the monarchy.[15] As King of England he retained his connection with the affairs of the Scottish Church. In 1618 the Five Articles again allowed episcopal Church government as well as the sacramental significance of bishops, for instance at confirmation.[16]

The Five Articles, or rather reactions to them, indicate several important points about religion in Scotland by that point. One is that they met with resistance from Covenanters, and like Jenny Geddes with her stool, the Episcopal Church is again part of a Scottish national story by being cast as the agent of un-Scottish Englishness, against which true Scots rebelled. But the picture is more complex. The Scottish Reformation adhered to principles espoused by Jean Calvin, including obedience and submissiveness to external constraints and to civil government and magistracy. Episcopalian clergy could therefore point to the importance of obedience and duty.[17] The Five Articles are important for allowing us to see that Episcopalians, and Presbyterians were now self-identifying and recognisable to each other as distinctive and opposing religious groupings. William Colvill, the principal of Edinburgh University, regretted this division as ultimately destructive of all traditions given that both Episcopalians and Presbyterians were part of the same mystical body, and their division was like 'two sandy stones grateing one upon the other until they be crumbled into nothing.'[18] But the fact he could discern the differences, barriers and antipathies between these religious identities is itself important and demonstrates an awareness that the body of Scottish Christians was by now divided along ecclesial and confessional lines.

That impression, however, is not absolute and the divisions are not black and white. A career such as John Spottiswoode's is instructive. Spottiswoode underwent a curious but always personally beneficial trajectory from being a Presbyterian and moderator of the assembly, to becoming privy counsellor, archbishop, Lord Chancellor and patron of the Five Articles.[19] An Erastian, he flourished in his career advancement as a servant of Charles I's government in the decades before the Civil Wars in the middle of the

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[14] Alan R. MacDonald, *The Jacobean Kirk, 1567–1625: Sovereignty, Polity and Liturgy* (London: Routledge, 2016), pp.10-11.

[15] Alasdair Raffe, 'Presbyterianism, Secularization, and the Scottish Politics after the Revolution of 1688-1690', *Historical Journal* 53, no. 2 (2010): p. 325.

[16] Clare Jackson, *Restoration Scotland, 1660-1690: Royalist Politics, Religion and Ideas* (Woodbridge: Boydell and Brewer, 2003), p. 169.

[17] Jackson, *Restoration Scotland*, p. 169.

[18] Jackson, *Restoration Scotland*, p. 170.

[19] Bob Halliday, *Little Sister: A Second Israel in Seventeenth-Century Scotland* (Eugene: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2014), p. 60.

seventeenth century.[20] He is not the only one to have undergone such metamorphosis. James Sharp, the next archbishop of St Andrews, moved from his initial activity as a resolutioner to being, again, an archbishop and Lord Chancellor. But even if the somewhat self-serving career advancement of individual bishops shows where the lines between Episcopalian and Presbyterian could blur, that does not diminish contemporary awareness of these divisions. Indeed, for Spottiswoode and Sharp were scandalous because they moved from the kirk and assembly into the archiepiscopal palace. These antipathies intensified during the reign of Charles I, whose advisors included Archbishop Spottiswoode. During the British Civil Wars episcopacy was subject to abolition, as was the monarchy. In 1660, the restoration of monarchy in both kingdoms also marked the restoration of episcopacy and in Scotland, also Charles II's repudiation of the Covenant that for expediency he had agreed to during the Interregnum. Reviving the episcopate was coterminous with a number of actions, including a proposed purge of university professors, the annulment of acts of the republican-era parliament, and the distancing of the Scottish government from their wartime action of handing Charles I over to the Cromwellians.[21] In both kingdoms, the revival of episcopacy provoked a particular reaction, as clergy left or lost their benefices rather than swear allegiance to bishops or receive a licence or re-ordination from them, in Scotland under the terms of the Rescissory Act of 1661 and in England the Act of Uniformity of 1662.[22]

Again, the Episcopal Church in Scotland assumes an antipathetic role in Scottish national history. That is most apparent in the so-called Killing Time, between 1680 and 1688. The Killing Time the period of political crisis occurring during the reigns of Charles II and James the VII and II, recalled with such a dramatic name owing to the arrests, torture and executions that comprised the efforts to compel attendance in episcopal churches. From this conflict between Covenanters and the Scottish crown come national heroes and martyrs including the minister James Guthrie, executed for High Treason in 1661, and the Wigtown Martyrs. Later in 1721 and 1722, Robert Wodrow gathered these lives and their testimonies of resistance to episcopacy together in *The History of the Sufferings of the Church of Scotland from the Restoration to the Revolution*.[23] Wodrow's text retold decades of trouble and uncertainty, and his narratives created national heroes that Josephine Tey would pick apart in her historical detective fiction *The Daughter of Time*.[24] That suffering did run in both directions and the Scottish episcopate produced its own martyrs. One of these was Archbishop Sharp, whose carriage was held up by Covenanters who dragged him from his carriage and

[20] Allen B. Birchler, 'Archbishop John Spottiswoode: Chancellor of Scotland, 1635-1638', *Church History* 39 no. 3 (1970), p. 318.

[21] Godfrey Davies and Paul H. Hardacre, 'The Restoration of the Scottish Episcopacy', *Journal of British Studies* 1, no. 2 (1962), pp. 39-40

[22] Davies and Hardacre, 'The Restoration of the Scottish Episcopacy', pp. 32-51.

[23] Robert Wodrow, *The History of The Sufferings of The Church of Scotland From The Restauration to The Revolution: Collected From the Publick Records, Original Papers, and Manuscripts of that Time, and Other Well Attested Narratives* (Edinburgh: James Watson, 1721-22).

[24] Josephine Tey, *The Daughter of Time* (Simon and Schuster, 2013), p. 143.

brutally murdered him while his daughter was forced to watch. But Sharp is not a Scottish national hero, whereas the anti-episcopal victims are.[25]

By the late-seventeenth century a reversal in the religious polity of the kingdoms of England and Scotland prevailed. The episcopate of the Church of England was upheld by law and intrinsic to the state. The Glorious Revolution came about in its defence and the call of the 'Church in Danger' was an electrifying one in late-Stuart English politics.[26] The final Stuart monarch, Queen Anne, was explicitly and forthrightly a daughter of the Church of England and passionately concerned for its welfare and her interventions in its pastoral life in the Queen Anne's bounty endured long after her death.[27] The Episcopal Church in Scotland was by contrast penalised, its clergy dispossessed and it was institutionally proscribed, by the same forces which upheld the Church of England and its episcopate.[28] Scottish Episcopalians were therefore also Scottish Dissenters. These circumstances came about following the so-called Glorious Revolution of 1688, in which William III claimed the thrones of both England and Scotland on contrasting terms and with contrasting implications for established religion in both kingdoms.

In Scotland after 1690, the territorial episcopate was no more, meaning that the Church of Scotland definitively dis-established its bishops, removing government by the episcopate from the Kirk and re-introducing a Presbyterian system.[29] In England, the events from 1688 to 1690 left the English episcopate in some respects disturbed because of non-juring schism among individual bishops, but the powers, status and territorial authority of the episcopate continued.

## *THE CHURCH ABROAD*

Out of this imparity stemming from the late-seventeenth century, this paper now turns to consider certain points of evidence about the actions of the Scottish episcopate from the eighteenth century onwards, and then move to the early nineteenth century. From there emerges a full and intriguing impression of the range of actions of an episcopate without rank or territorial authority, without estates and possessions and which nonetheless was central to particular ecclesiastical controversies from the eighteenth and early-nineteenth centuries. These resonate beyond Scotland including in post-

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[25] Marcus K. Harmes, *'The murder of the Archbishop of St Andrews and its place in the politics of religion in restoration Scotland and England'* in *Celts and their cultures at home and abroad: a festschrift for Malcolm Broun*, eds. Anders Ahlqvist, Pamela O'Neill (Sydney: University of Sydney, Celtic Studies Foundation, 2013), pp. 75-90.

[26] Charles John Abbey, *The English Church in the Eighteenth Century* (London: Longmans, Green, and Company, 1878), p. 387.

[27] Geoffrey Best, *Temporal Pillars: Queen Anne's Bounty, the Ecclesiastical Commissioners, and the Church of England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), pp. 78, 461.

[28] Fred D. Schneider, 'Scottish Episcopalians and English Politicians: The Limits of Toleration', *Historical Magazine of the Protestant Episcopal Church* 45, no.3 (1976): p. 275.

[29] Schneider, 'Scottish Episcopalians and English Politicians', p. 278.

revolutionary America, and in some ways continue to inform fault lines in the modern Anglican Communion.

Several issues present themselves as significant. One is that while Scottish bishops undoubtedly suffered from their dispossession after 1688, the Scottish tactile episcopal succession did not die out. In other words, the succession of bishops consecrating other bishops did not end. Episcopal worship moved from the public sphere of the Scottish churches and cathedrals to the private domain of the parlours of individual households and meeting houses. That change was not immediate after the abolition of territorial episcopacy in 1690 and various local records record episcopal clergy and congregations meeting and using churches into the very early eighteenth century.[30] At the same time, the episcopal clergy in Scotland deviated in significant ways from the episcopate of the Church in England. To start with they were non-jurors, meaning they repudiated the authority of the Hanoverian kings occupying the thrones of England and Scotland. Liturgically the two churches grew apart as well with the different usages in Scotland containing significant points of distinction from the English *Book of Common Prayer*, especially in the Eucharistic prayer. Yet while the Scottish Episcopal Church became numerically insignificant in the overall Scottish population, its actions became central to a number of major questions about the nature of the established Churches in both kingdoms. In this environment two factors converge. One was that the Church of England was experiencing a period of overseas expansion, and any branch of the Church overseas had traditionally been under the jurisdiction of and licenced by the bishop of London, and trading companies had frequently provided a chaplain for English congregations.[31] Simultaneously there arose a particular flashpoint of controversy, the desire in the early nineteenth century to consecrate Dr Matthew Luscombe to the episcopate to serve Anglican congregations in Europe, congregations comprising both British Anglicans and American Episcopalians. This action ran contrary to the Church of England in two respects. One was that a European bishop would undercut the usual authority wielded by the bishop of London over congregations beyond the British Isles. The other was that a bishop outside the kingdom of England was unimaginable in English ecclesiastical thought, but was already part of established practice for the College of Bishops in Scotland. By the 1820s, following the end of the Napoleonic Wars, there may have been about 50,000 English people on the continent, primarily in France, and Dr Luscombe was a chaplain in Paris.[32] However there was no bishop for them, not even an archdeacon. The *Book of Common Prayer* contained rubrical instructions for the administration of confirmation as a follow up to the baptism, and

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[30] Henderson, *Religious Life in Seventeenth-Century Scotland*, p. 232.

[31] Daniel O'Connor, *Chaplains of the East India Company, 1601-1858* (London: Continuum, 2012), chap.4; John E. Pinnington, 'Anglican Chaplaincies in Post-Napoleonic Europe: A Strange Variation on the Pax Britannica', *Church History* 39, no.3 (1970): p. 328.

[32] Edward Luscombe, *Matthew Luscombe Missionary Bishop in Europe of the Scottish Episcopal Church* (Dundee: Burns and Harris Ltd, 1992).

Luscombe complained in particular that English Protestant youth in Europe could not be confirmed and as such they needed a bishop.[33]

Out of this specific flashpoint of controversy emerged a number of challenging questions about the Churches in both kingdoms, their sources of authority, and their relationship with the state. One was the treatment of the dispossessed Scottish episcopal clergy by their English counterparts, which far from being in any way sympathetic tended to derogate the status of the Scottish episcopal clergy. Another was the fraught political disjunction between the Scottish episcopal clergy and the Hanoverian establishment in London. More penetrating still were questions about the very nature of the Church of England, as efforts to consecrate a bishop for congregations in Europe raised questions such as whether the Church of England merely a sect, or part of the Universal Church. Was it purely Erastian, or did it transcend that limit? Walter Hook had preached on themes in 1822, when at an episcopal visitation he had urged that the Church of England could exist connected to the state or severed from it.[34]

Eventually in 1825 Luscombe was consecrated by members of the College of Bishops in Scotland. Therefore, as John L. Speller points out in his study of Luscombe's episcopate, he was an Anglican bishop, but his orders were not recognised by the Church of England, where the then bishop of London, William Howley, and the Foreign Secretary had turned town the idea of the Church of England having a European bishop.[35] In the case of Bishop Luscombe's consecration, and the controversies that cascaded out of it, we can follow the events through the correspondence of Walter Farquhar Hook. Hook was an English clergyman, primarily remembered as the founder of Leeds Parish Church. However, in the 1820s he spent some time in Scotland where he met and enjoyed the company of a number of Scottish bishops. He was also vehemently anti-Presbyterian, rejoicing that he did not carry a drop of blood in his veins from Knox and repeating with relish Dr Johnson's joke about the ruins of St Andrew's Cathedral falling down on a Presbyterian.[36] Luscombe had also known Hook since the latter's childhood.

By the time he visited Scotland, Hook was aware that in the 1820s, a bishop was something of a novelty in Scotland; more than a century had elapsed since their dispossession by William of Orange in 1690. The bishops he met were also mostly very old and, as he discovered, had very long memories, and deeply entrenched hopes that James II and VII, or his heirs, would supplant the Hanoverians. Hook was a voluminous writer on both Church history and current controversial issues. His reflections on the elderly Scottish bishops he met are only a tiny selection of his bibliography, but they are contextualised by works on episcopal history, including his large-scale series of

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[33] Luscombe, *Matthew Luscombe*, p. 2.

[34] Luscombe, *Matthew Luscombe*, p. 5.

[35] John L. Speller, 'A Bishop for Europe: The Appointment of Matthew Henry Thornhill Luscombe', *Historical Magazine of the Protestant Episcopal* Church 50, no. 3 (September, 1981): p. 283-298; Luscombe, *Matthew Luscombe*, p. 5.

[36] See Boswell, *Journal of a Tour to the Hebrides*, pp. 58-59.

lives of the archbishops of Canterbury from the Anglo-Saxon period onwards.[37] His historical scholarship also included commentary on the reformations in England and elsewhere.[38] Part of his writings include his accounts of meeting elderly Scottish bishops. One bishop for example, had a picture of Bonnie Prince Charlie up the wall of his parlour. Another, Bishop Low, was 'old enough to remember when the penal laws, the accursed '46 and '48, as they are called, were in full force; and the marks of the chains are still left upon his mind.'[39] Another historical anecdote Hook collected was about an Episcopal clergyman who had only 'a crust of bread and an onion in his pocket' and who was arrested after 1746 for reading prayers to more than four people and then pressed into the crew of a man o' war. In these recollections Hook was referring to laws which forbad more than four Episcopalians who were outsiders to attend a service in a private home or for more than four people to attend a service in an occupied building. Hook himself was sensitive to the troubled history of the Scottish episcopate. When he visited St Andrew's he noted as a matter of interest and personal impact on him that he ended up in the house once occupied by Archbishop Sharp, who had been murdered by Covenanters in 1678 and visiting the house prompted reflections from Hook on this act of martyrdom.[40] Although the Young Pretender had died in 1788, and possibly the non-juring Scottish clergy began to accept that the Hanoverian establishment was permanent, the Jacobite sympathies of the episcopal clergy remained strong. Hook's recollections of Luscombe's consecration shows the Scottish episcopal Church as a significant thorn in the side of the English Church and deeply attached to the house of Stewart.

Hook was a voluminous letter writer and who sent back to family in England an extensive number of letters detailing a trip to Scotland in the 1820s. Unlike many English clergymen, Hook sympathised with the dispossessed and harried Episcopal Scottish clergy, asking rhetorically in one letter from 1826 'Has it not always been the policy of every government, Whig or Tory, to oppress, persecute, exterminate the Episcopal Church?'[41] At the time of writing, the much sterner penal measures against episcopal worship had been moderated, or had simply lapsed over time, but even here Hook was appalled, referring to the 'Lord Chancellor haranguing vehemently against' any moderation.[42]

However, the core issue that preoccupied Hook, and indeed preoccupied churchmen in both England and Scotland up to the mid-1820s was the issue of a bishop for overseas

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[37] Walter Hook's *Lives of the Archbishops of Canterbury* appeared in multiple volumes, published by Bentley.

[38] Walter Hook, *The Three Reformations: Lutheran-Roman-Anglican* (London: John Murray, 1847).

[39] Walter Hook, *The Life and Letters of Walter Farquhar Hook* (R.Bentley, 1885), p. 58.

[40] Hook, *Life and Letters*, p. 59.

[41] Hook, *Life and Letters*, p. 57.

[42] Hook, *Life and Letters*, p. 76.

territories, a concern that was also expressed in the eighteenth century. To a significant extent, the attempts to consecrate Bishop Luscombe was an incident of Scottish history repeating; in this case the consecration of Bishop Samuel Seabury in 1784 following the American War of Independence, where a clergyman wanting to be a bishop, but unable to take the oath of allegiance to the British monarch, had found Scottish non-juring bishops willing to act when the English Church refused.

The circumstances were a church beyond the English shores and not coincident with the borders of the realm, a church needing a bishop but whose members were not loyal to the Hanoverian monarchy. The issues raised by Luscombe's consecration can be placed within a meaningful frame of reference derived from eighteenth-century Connecticut and Samuel Seabury. Bishops were already controversial and unpopular in colonial and revolutionary America. One of the curiosities of Samuel Seabury is that after he was finally consecrated, after a long period of delay as will shortly be discussed, he opted to wear a mitre. British bishops did not do so except in the imaginations of their critics, which included Paul Revere's engraving in the *Royal American Magazine* the 'Mitred Minuet', a furious response to the Catholic toleration in the Quebec Bill of 1774, which was itself a response to the Boston Tea Party. The illustration showed English prelates in mitres along with Lord North, Lord Bute and the Devil all dancing around a copy of the Bill. Lord Bute is wearing a kilt and playing the bagpipes.[43] The engraving was a Protestant, revolutionary and patriotic criticism of both Church and State, especially the action of English bishops voting for the Bill in the House of Lords and therefore supporting some limited Catholic toleration. Yet once consecrated, Seabury chose to adopt the headdress used in this satire, whereas his close contemporary Charles Inglis, the first Anglican bishop of Nova Scotia distanced himself from mitres and other trappings of lordly episcopacy.[44] Seabury's headwear in fact still exists and has been preserved by historical societies in the Episcopal Church. It also continued to provoke somewhat wry derision and a later American bishop, A. Cleveland Coxe, included a poem 'Seabury's Mitre' in his 1865 collection of *Christian Ballads*. There he referred to it mock heroically as the 'first mitre of the west' but the poem also recollected the connection between Seabury, his mitre as a symbol of episcopal office, and Scotland.[45] But curiously it was English bishops who would prove a stumbling block to Seabury becoming a bishop and Scottish bishops who would provide an alternative pathway.

Connecticut was one of the states where a high proportion of the population were Episcopal.[46] After the defeat of the British, the Church in the colony was cut off from

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[43] Mark Peterson, *The City-State of Boston: The Rise and Fall of an Atlantic Power, 1630-1865* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2019), p. 343.

[44] Ross N. Hebb, 'Bishop Charles Inglis and Bishop Samuel Seabury: High Churchmanship in Varying New World Contexts', *Anglican and Episcopal History* LXXVI, no. 1 (2007): p. 61.

[45] A. Cleveland Cox, *Christian Ballads and Poems* (Oxford: John Henry Parker, 1853), pp. 82-83.

[46] Don R. Gerlach, 'Champions of an American Episcopate: Thomas Secker of Canterbury and Samuel Johnson of Connecticut', *Historical Magazine of the Protestant Episcopal Church* 41, no.4 (1972): p. 381.

the diocese of London and the Kingdom of England and needing bishops of their own. English bishops could not consecrate a bishop who would not take the Oath of Allegiance, at least not without an act of Parliament and that was unlikely to be forthcoming. Nor were bishops desired in all quarters, even in the colonial Church. In the former colony, there were of Episcopalians who detested the 'pageantry of a king and the supercilious hypocrisy of a bishop.'[47]

Pressure for there to be at least one bishop in the colonies predates the revolution and the colonial clergyman and scholar Samuel Johnson had been agitating for such since the 1720s.[48] Opposition from dissenters in the colonies and the obstructions of the Whig government and Walpole in London frustrated action in the years before the revolution.[49] In 1784, after some years asking the English bishops to oblige, Seabury gave up on the Church of England. He had sailed for England in June 1783, after the War was concluded. He found the English episcopal hierarchy unwilling to consecrate him, and finally obtained episcopal ordination in Scotland instead.[50] In Aberdeen non-juring bishops who had not sworn oaths of allegiance to William and Mary shared Seabury's paradoxical status. A churchman cut off from the Church of England and the bishop coadjutor of Aberdeen, along with two other bishops, consecrated him on 14 November, accompanied by a long sermon on the apostolic succession. The action came with conditions attached, including Seabury's and therefore the American Church's use of Eucharistic prayers of oblation and consecration found in the 1549 prayer book and the Scottish prayer book but distinct from the 1662 English *Book of Common Prayer*. Seabury signed a concordat giving Scottish Episcopalians what no English bishop would: a written recognition of the validity of Scottish orders and confirmation that the Scottish Episcopal Church was independent of the British monarchy.[51] Inglis, bishop of Nova Scotia, was meanwhile appointed with Letters Patent.[52] Seabury therefore returned to the United States as the first bishop in the episcopal succession of the post-revolutionary Protestant Episcopal Church in Connecticut.

The Scottishness of Seabury's consecration also almost immediately caused him further problems. In Scotland, the Episcopal minister George Gleig recognised that the primates and bishops of the two established Churches in the British Isles, the Church of England and the Church of Ireland, looked dimly on the actions of the Scottish

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[47] E. Clowes Chorley, 'Samuel Provoost, First Bishop of New York', *Historical Magazine of the Protestant Episcopal Church* II, no.2 (1932): p. 1.

[48] Gerlach, 'Champions of an American Episcopate', pp. 382-3.

[49] Gerlach, 'Champions of an American Episcopate', p. 388.

[50] Herbert Thoms, *Samuel Seabury: Priest and Physician, Bishop of Connecticut* (London: Shoe String Press, 1963), p. 139.

[51] Robert W. Pritchard, *History of the Episcopal Church Revised Edition* (Atlanta: Church Publishing, 1999), p. 88.

[52] Hebb, 'Bishop Charles Inglis', p. 62.

bishops.[53] In an attempt to explain and justify, Gleig drew together and published letters from the *Gentleman's Magazine* that had referred to Seabury's consecration; he hoped to 'remove from the Scotch epiſcopal church those miſts of prejudice' that had formed around it.[54] The collected correspondence represented a number of perspectives, including efforts to note the sincerity of the Scottish bishops' actions, as being a response to 'their duty to their Heavenly Maſter.' The fact that they may have acted incorrectly but sincerely was tactfully acknowledged, but so too was their freedom as they were not 'restrained by an alliance with any state.'[55]

In the new American republic, the Episcopal Conventions in Pennsylvania, New York and Virginia elected bishops, and John Adams was able to achieve diplomatic success in enabling an act of parliament to allow foreign bishops to be consecrated. Passed in the reign of George III, the act empowered the archbishops of Canterbury and York 'to consecrate to the office of Bishop, persons being subjects or citizens of countries out of his majesty's dominions.'[56] King's College, now Columbia University, was led by its president Samuel Johnson, who encouraged the growth of episcopacy. One of first students who graduated at the first commencement in 1758 later became a bishop. That was Samuel Provoost, who was one of the two further bishops were consecrated by the Archbishop of Canterbury in 1787 (even meeting George III while they were in London), and they publicly questioned the validity of Seabury's orders and one of these bishops boycotted a convention.[57] Provoost, unlike Seabury, was steeped in the Church of England having been ordained in the Chapel Royal at St James's Palace by the bishop of London and while he was a Whig not a loyalist, absent from his career is the fraught relationship with Canterbury and the recourse to consecration in Aberdeen that defined Seabury's episcopal journey.[58] Later compromise from all sides about what shape the prayer book would take, using the word Protestant in the Church's name, and about the Scottishness of Seabury's orders, resulted in the decisions ratified at the 1789 General Convention in Philadelphia.[59]

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[53] The Church of Ireland remained established until 1869 and the passing of the Irish Church Act (32 & 33 Vict. c. 42).

[54] George Gleig, *Letters Containing an Apology for the Episcopal Church in Scotland* (C. Elliot, and for G. Robinson, T. Cadell, and T. Payne, London, 1787), p. 73.

[55] Gleig, *Letters*, p. ii.

[56] Episcopal Church General Convention, *Journal of the Proceedings of the Bishops, the Clergy and the Laity of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States of America: 1853* (Philadelphia: S. Potter and Company, 1854), p. 375.

[57] Chorley, 'Bishop Provoost', p. 12.

[58] Episcopal Church General Convention, *Journal of the Proceedings*, p. 376.

[59] William White, *Memoirs of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States of America* (New York: Swords, Stanford and Co., 1836), pp. 28-29.

By the 1820s the situation was, as Hook put it, the need to 'wring from Government permission to send Bishops to our colonies.' However the controversy of whether or not to consecrate Matthew Luscombe to be a bishop in Europe can be reconstructed from Hook's letters as a quarrel larger than the immediate need to provide a bishop for British and American Anglicans who lived in Europe. Hook reconstructs a level of discussion that raised challenging and even impertinent questions about the actions and attitudes of English churchmen and politicians and about the status of the reformed English Church.

One factor of significance is that the framework of controversy was much wider than merely England and Scotland, and the temporal range was also more extensive than even the long memories that stretched back to the bitter years of 1746 and 1748. By consecrating a bishop for Europe, or indeed the earlier consecration of Seabury, the Scottish bishops inadvertently or not raised questions about the links between Church and State, questions which fascinated Walter Hook. By accepting consecration from the Scottish College of Bishops, Luscombe also from that moment disavowed any further ecclesiastical preferment from the Church of England; therefore any possible connection between the bishop for Europe and the Church of England was broken. Yet Hook also appreciated that Luscombe was awkwardly positioned between the Churches in England and Scotland, in a way that pointed to continuity with religious controversies of earlier ages. Noting that prior to his Scottish consecration Luscombe had attempted to gain permission from the Archbishop of Canterbury in England, Hook drew the comparison that 'It is strictly according to the courtesy of the Catholics (true Catholics I mean), not to ordain ministers of another Church without permission from the Bishop at the head of it. As Demetrius, Bishop of Alexandria, was justly offended when the Bishops of Palestine ordained the celebrated Origen.'[60]

Hook's warning that there were 'true' Catholics intersects with a disparaging comment he made about many English bishops that merits quoting at length:

> Will you believe it [he wrote to his father] an application was intended to be made to the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge for assistance with respect to the Highland congregations, when upon sounding previously some of the English Bishops, two of them dared, in the hardihood of ignorance, to start an objection so infamously Erastian as to say that the assistance ought not to be afforded, since the Episcopal Church was a dissenting Church in Scotland. One blushes with indignation and shame, but I much fear that too many on the Bench are little better than Erastians.[61]

The points Hook raise relate to the nature of the Church of England: was it a creature of the state or a true Church? In withholding both spiritual and political assistance from the Scottish episcopate, were English bishops acting as Erastian servants of the state? Hook's view goes some way to help us understand what can seem an unexpected hostility from English bishops to their unfortunate Scottish colleagues. Far from

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[60] Hook, *Life and Letters*, p. 57.

[61] Hook, *Life and Letters*, p. 59.

sympathising, English bishops looked with horror at dissenting Church, one disobedient to monarchy and civil magistracy.

Hook preferred to see Luscombe's episcopal ministry as a longer perspective, likening it as 'similar to that for which Titus was left by St. Paul in Crete, that he may "set in order the things that are wanting" among such of the natives of Great Britain and Ireland as he shall find professing to be members of the United Church of England and Ireland and the Episcopal Church in Scotland, and to these may be added any members of the Episcopal Church of America.'[62] Later commentary on Luscombe's consecration amplified these themes. An anonymous work *Peculiarities of the Scottish Episcopal Church, taken from authentic sources: being the substance of a series of Papers published by Justitia* included Luscombe's consecration among these 'peculiarities', along with the somewhat acid comment 'How congenial the sentiments of Luscombe were to those of Scottish bishops will be seen in reference to the "Analysis of his Letters Commendatory"' elsewhere in the volume.[63] These letters, dated 1842 and sent by Luscombe to 'All Catholic and Orthodox Bishops' indicated Luscombe's expansive and comprehensive vision of an episcopate that was in communion with a universal Church including the 'Eastern Catholic Church', itself part of 'part of the true Orthodox Catholic and Apostolic Church.'[64]

Therefore in contrast to what he viewed as the narrow sect-like Erastianism of the English bishops, Hook saw Luscombe's consecration in wider terms of debate about the origin and validity of the Church of England. Indeed when Luscombe was consecrated, the sermon preached on that occasion engaged directly with these points and was called 'An attempt to demonstrate the Catholicism of the Church of England and the other branches of the Episcopal Church.' The sermon responded to and also pre-empted criticisms from England of Luscombe's consecration that a bishop consecrated by dissenters could exercise ministry over English people in Europe and thus over members of an established Church. As noted above, Hook disapproved not only of the lack of charity shown by English bishops to the Scottish, but also sounded a note of warning that they were acting in an Erastian manner by treating the Episcopal Scottish Church as a dissenting Church from the state. Instead he argued that if they were Catholic rather than sectarian, than distinctions between English, Scottish or for that matter American bishops should not register as significant.

## *CONCLUSION*

Ultimately in the case of Bishop Luscombe we are left with an impression of a storm in a teacup but also some significant implications. The literature on the colonial Church is large and reminds us of the importance of the moment when episcopal succession

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[62] Hook, *Life and Letters*, p. 59.

[63] Anon., *Peculiarities of the Scottish Episcopal Church, taken from authentic sources: being the substance of a series of Papers published by Justitia. To which is prefixed a brief historical outline of Ecclesiastical Affairs in Scotland, with an appendix, containing some characteristic documents* (Aberdeen: John Avery, 1847), p. xix.

[64] Anon., *Peculiarities of the Scottish Episcopal Church*, p. 77.

continued beyond the English kingdom. It was actually a considerable leap of the imagination. Tudor legislation had left the Church of England coterminous with the borders of the kingdom of England and the notion of an Anglican Church overseas unthinkable expect as a licenced offshoot of the diocese of London. Seabury and the Scottish bishops positioned themselves into a distinctive and peculiar situation of creating a bishop for foreign soil not loyal to the crown. In casting his analysis of the Luscombe situation in terms of Patristic precedents, such as his reference to Demetrius and Origen, Hook places his work in a continuum about the validity of the reformed Churches that had resounded throughout polemic in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Hook also took action as well as writing, and it is recorded that he not only visited Scottish clergy but read the service and preached in Scottish episcopal churches alongside Bishop Innes, in a riposte to the view on the English episcopal bench that the Scottish Episcopalians were dissenters. Hook's own interest in the affairs of the Scottish clergy is itself a point of importance in his own later prominence as a Tractarian clergyman and nineteenth century ecclesiastical controversies about the Erastianism of the Church of England.

The actions of the Scottish bishops and Seabury remained a topical issue in the nineteenth century. The clergyman Charles Popham Miles pinpointed the relations between the Scottish bishops and some English tractarians as an enduring source of controversy. His 1857 tract *The Scottish Episcopal Church Antagonistic to the Church of England in Scotland* blamed the 'Tractarian Party' for having 'nourished and protected' the Episcopal Church; for creating a false but popular impression that since some legal restrictions were lifted in 1840 the Scottish bishops were 'in some sense or other, the representatives of the United Church of England and Ireland.' Instead, Miles castigated the bishops as 'subject to no authority – they are irresponsible.'[65] Among their irresponsible acts was consecrating an American bishop. By then Seabury was long dead, and the Church of England was a colonial presence in the British Empire, but this came after a significant conceptual leap and Seabury's embarrassing months spent begging to be made a bishop. The later difficulties with Luscombe echoed these encounters, with the Scottish Episcopal Church again showing itself willing to act when the Church of England would not. Their actions may well have left significant fault lines behind them. The Anglican Communion essentially came into existence after another colonial episcopal controversy, this time in Colenso, South Africa, after which it was thought desirable that Anglican bishops from around the world should meet regularly at Lambeth Palace. Most of these bishoprics are by-products of nineteenth century colonialism, offshoots of Canterbury, and until well into the twentieth century were occupied by men of English birth.

In that mix, the episcopal churches of Scotland and the United States are oddities, older than many other overseas dioceses by several hundred years, always led by native born men not Englishmen abroad, and forged in post-revolutionary fires when they were spurned by Canterbury and Lambeth not bred there. It is tempting therefore to look at the current fractured communion in terms taken from Scottish history. Above the

[65] Charles Popham Miles, *The Scottish Episcopal Church Antagonistic to the Church of England in Scotland* (Glasgow: David Bryce, 1857), pp. iii, 61.

warning from the seventeenth century university principal William Colvill was cited, referring to 'sandy stones grating one upon the other until they be crumbled into nothing.' The quote could easily be applied to the Episcopal Churches, as both the Scottish and the American stand forth from in impaired Communion having taken forthright actions on a number of issues including human sexuality, placing them at odds with Canterbury and its nineteenth century children.[66] They are like the Churches that the Church of England did not want, repudiated and rejected, and only gradually and ungraciously accepted.

[66] Christopher Craig Brittain and Andrew McKinnon, *The Anglican Communion at a Crossroads: The Crises of a Global Church* (University Park: Penn State Press, 2018), chap. 5.