'This Great Firebrand'

William Laud and Scotland

1617-1645



Leonie James

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'THIS GREAT FIREBRAND' WILLIAM LAUD AND SCOTLAND, 1617–1645

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'THIS GREAT FIREBRAND' WILLIAM LAUD AND SCOTLAND, 1617–1645

LEONIE JAMES

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For Hamish, Freya and Lois

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subject in the late 1990s that I first became interested in the politics of religion and it was Ken who introduced me to Laud. The final title for this book also came from Ken, when I was feeling uninspired and, after twenty years, I just hope that there's still space for it on his shelves.

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Abbreviations and Conventions

APS Thomas Thomson and Cosmo Innes (eds), Acts of the Parliaments of Scotland, 12 vols (Edinburgh, 1814–75) David Laing (ed.), The Letters and Journals of Robert Baillie, L&J Baillie, A.M, Principal of the University of Glasgow 1638–1662, 2 vols (Edinburgh, 1841) Balcanguhal, Large Declaration Walter Balcanguhal, A large declaration concerning the late tumults in Scotland, from their first originalls: together with a particular deduction of the seditious practices of the prime leaders of the Covenanters: collected out of their owne foule acts and writings ... By the King (London, 1639) BL British Library, London Calderwood, *History* Thomas Thomson (ed.), The History of the Kirk of Scotland by Mr David Calderwood, sometime minister of Crailing, 8 vols (Edinburgh, 1842–49) The Journals of the House of Commons CJEdward Hyde, The History of the Rebellion and Civil Clarendon, History Wars in England, 2 vols (Oxford, 1849–88) **CSPD** W. D. Hamilton et al. (eds), Calendar of State Papers Domestic Series, 23 vols (London, 1863–77) **CSPI** Robert Pentland Mahaffy (ed.), Calendar of State Papers relating to Ireland of the reign of Charles I, 2 vols (London, 1900–01) **CSPV** H. Brown et al. (eds), Calendar of State Papers and Manuscripts relating to English Affairs, existing in the archives and collections of Venice and in other libraries of Northern Italy, 5 vols (1900–07) Henry Guthry, Memoirs of Henry Guthry, late Bishop Guthry, Memoirs of Dunkeld in Scotland, wherein the Conspiracies and Rebellion against King Charles I of Blessed Memory to the time of the Murther of that Monarch, are briefly and faithfully related (London, 1702) Heylyn, Cyprianus Anglicus Peter Heylyn, Cyprianus Anglicus or the History of the Life and Death of Archbishop William Laud, including an ecclesiastical history of the three kingdoms

(London, 1668)

ABBREVIATIONS AND CONVENTIONS

HMC Historical Manuscripts Commission LJJournals of the House of Lords

LPL Lambeth Palace Library National Library of Scotland NLS

Wallace Notestein (ed.), The Journal of Sir Simonds Notestein, D'Ewes

D'Ewes from the beginning of the Long Parliament to the opening of the trial of the earl of Strafford (New

Haven, 1923)

National Records of Scotland (formerly National NRS

Archives of Scotland)

ODNBOxford Dictionary of National Biography

Rothes, Relation James Nairne (ed.), A Relation of Proceedings concerning

the Affairs of the Kirk of Scotland from August 1637 to July 1638 by John Earl of Rothes (Edinburgh, 1830)

David Laing (ed.), The History of the Kirk of Scot-Row, History

land from the year 1558 to August 1637 by John Row, minister of Carnock, with a continuation to July 1639 by his son, John Row, Principal of King's College Aberdeen

(Edinburgh, 1842)

Peter Hume Brown et al. (eds), Register of the Privv **RPCS**

Council of Scotland, 2nd series, 6 vols (Edinburgh,

1900-06)

RSTC Revised Short Title Catalogue

Scally, 'Hamilton thesis' John Scally, 'The Political Career of James, Third

> Marguis and First Duke of Hamilton (1606–1649), to 1643', University of Cambridge, PhD thesis, 1992

John Spalding, Memorialls of the Trubles in Scotland Spalding, Memorialls

and in England AD 1624-AD 1645, 2 vols (Aberdeen,

1801)

Spottiswoode, History John Spottiswoode, The History of the Church of Scot-

land beginning in the year of our Lord 203 and continued to the end of the Reign of King James the VI (London,

1655)

Stirling's Register Charles Rogers (ed.), The Earl of Stirling's Register

of Royal Letters relative to the affairs of Scotland and *Nova Scotia 1615 to 1635*, 2 vols (Edinburgh, 1885)

Strafford Papers, Wentworth Woodhouse Muniments, Str. P.

Sheffield City Archives

TNA The National Archives, Kew

WWLJames Bliss and William Scott (eds), The Works of

William Laud, Sometime Lord Archbishop of Canter-

bury, 7 vols (Oxford, 1847–60)

ABBREVIATIONS AND CONVENTIONS

Conventions

Throughout this book, the first day of the year is taken to be 1 January, rather than 25 March. Original spelling, both English and Scottish, has been retained throughout, although for ease of reading, 'th' has been substituted for 'p' (thorn).

The Communion. and specially buto them which are of the housbold as Godlinelle is great riches, if a man bee content with 1. Tim. 6. that he hath : for we brought nothing into the world. neither may we cary any thing out. Charge them which are rich in this world, that they 1, Tim. 6. be ready to gine, and glad to diffribute, laying by in flore for themselves a good foundation against the time to come that they may attaine eternall life. God is not burighteous, that hee will forget your Heb.6. worker and labour that proceedeth of love, which love vehaue wed for his Pames fake, which have minis fired buto the Saints, and yet doe minifter. Codoe good and to diftribute forget not , for with Heb.12. fuch facrifices God is pleafed. pho to bath this worlds good and feeth his brother 1. John 3. baue need, and futteth bp his compation from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him: Give almes of thy goods, and turne never thy face Tob.4. from any poore man, and then the face of the Lord thall not be turned away from thee. er about Bee mercifull afterthy power. If thou haft much Tob.4. bich wait giue plenteoufly. If thou haft little, doe thy biligence . Counto gladly to give of that little: for so gatherest thou the part this felfe a good reward in the day of necessity. He that hath pitie boon the pooze, lendeth buto the Prou. 1.92 and but this Lord: and tooke what he layeth out, it shall be payed Let out him againe. s beart, t Bleffed bee the man that prouideth for the licke, Pfal.41? a cheerd and needy: the Lord chall deliver him in the time of trouble. Then shall the Churchwardens, or some other by them inifer D lot deceib appointed, gather the devotion of the people, and que & the fare into the poore mans boxe, and vpon the offeinmeth, th ring day'es appointed, euer man and woman shall pay nto all mo ended that which profester and the Churchwardens, whereof one Profester to prouds him Bookes of Holy Divinity aithfully kept and imployed on fome pious or charitable y of yt Hurch or ye publike reliefe of they Poore at yodife and the Murch wardens.

Amendments to the 1632 English prayer book in the hands of Laud (above) and Charles (below) (unfoliated, MS540, Christ Church College, Oxford). Photograph © Governing Body of Christ Church, Oxford.

Introduction

Scholars of early modern Britain are fortunate in inhabiting a landscape shaped by some great minds. The words of Edward Hyde, Earl of Clarendon, Samuel Rawson Gardiner, Hugh Trevor-Roper, Christopher Hill, David Stevenson, Conrad Russell and John Morrill, *inter alia*, have sculpted an impressive legacy: it is rare to find oneself in such prestigious company. When faced with predecessors of this calibre, the temptation for less well-known scholars might be to view their every word as molten gold. *Timor reverentialis* must not, however, halt the critical interrogation of arguments put forward by our eminent forerunners. Sometimes, small statements by big names can open up avenues of investigation that might otherwise appear to be blind alleys or dead ends. This book is based on one such statement, by one such name.

In 1994, in an influential essay on 'ecclesiastical imperialism', Professor John Morrill considered the relationship between the British churches within the early Stuart composite monarchy. Morrill's argument was that, across their dominions, both James VI&I and Charles I sought religious 'congruity' rather than uniformity. In this, they were motivated less by a drive to anglicise, or 'anglicanise', than by sheer authoritarianism. Responding to Conrad Russell's contention that Charles I and William Laud had sought to 'construct a new programme of British uniformity', based on English hegemony- with Laud acting as 'a sort of secretary for ecclesiastical affairs for all three kingdoms' – Morrill viewed Laud's ostensible reticence in Scotland and the minor policy variations across the kingdoms as weakening the case for the existence of a 'British programme' aimed at anglocentric integration. While claiming that there was no formal attempt to extend the archbishop of Canterbury's jurisdiction beyond England, Morrill also highlighted the apparent inconsistency in approach, in all three kingdoms, of Archbishop William Laud, Charles I's chief ecclesiastical adviser. Laud's continuous, direct and flagrant 'interference' in the Irish church was juxtaposed with his more 'circumspect' engagement in Scottish ecclesiastical affairs.² It is this small statement, by a big name, that lies at the heart of this book. Tangential to Morrill's overall argument, the nature of Laud's agency

¹ John Morrill, 'A British Patriarchy? Ecclesiastical Imperialism under the Early Stuarts', in Anthony Fletcher and Peter Roberts (eds), *Religion, Culture and Society in Early Modern Britain* (Cambridge, 1994), pp. 223, 231; Conrad Russell, 'The British Problem and the English Civil War', *History*, 72 (1987), pp. 395–415; 400.

² Morrill, 'Ecclesiastical Imperialism', pp. 223, 231.

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in Scotland is central to this work, which is framed around two overarching contentions. First, that Laud's *modus operandi* in Scotland was very similar, in character as well as aim, to his approach in England and Ireland. Of course, there were differences, but these were to be expected, given the distinct historical trajectory of each church. Secondly, that the boundaries which circumscribed Laud's archiepiscopal jurisdiction were not impenetrable. Although he lacked official entitlement to intervene in churches and, indeed, aspects of crown policy that lay beyond his formal authority, this did not render him powerless outside England. In weaving these two contentions into the first comprehensive analysis of Laud and Scotland – from his initial step across the border during the Jacobean royal visit in 1617, to his last step onto the scaffold in 1645 – this book hopes to demonstrate that there was more to Laud's Scottish-related activities than has met the eye.

Laud and Scotland: Historiographical Overview

Few, if any, archbishops of Canterbury could claim a tenure in office as controversial, or as significant, as that of William Laud. While he held the reins of ecclesiastical government, the Church of England experienced one of the most painful periods of adjustment and re-alignment since the Henrician Reformation of the 1530s. Laud's appointment as archbishop of Canterbury in 1633 cemented his position as Charles I's chief ecclesiastical adviser and presaged the acceleration of an ambitious programme of religious reform. In England, this programme – to which Laud brought his impressive energy and vigour – undermined the practices of a predominantly Calvinist mainstream and sought a radical redefinition of Protestant orthodoxy along ceremonial lines. Accompanied by policies intended to increase the fiscal health and repair the architectural fabric of the church, these reforms have been described as invoking the 'beauty of holiness'.3 The distinguishing feature of Laud's archiepiscopate, however, was his unprecedented capacity for activity in churches - those of Ireland and Scotland – that were technically beyond his formal jurisdiction. Both the Scottish and the Irish church underwent similar agonies to the Church of England on account of the reforms pushed by the king and Laud from London. In Scotland and Ireland, although financial and material improvements to the church were a core concern, the main intention behind royal policy was to harmonise religious practice in these two divergent churches with English rites and ceremonies.⁴ The use of the English prayer book was endorsed in Ireland, where the introduction of the 39 Articles was underpinned by new Irish canons in 1634. New Scottish

³ Peter Lake, 'The Laudian Style: Order, Uniformity and the Pursuit of the Beauty of Holiness in the Sixteen-Thirties', in Kenneth Fincham (ed.), *The Early Stuart Church 1603–42* (Basingstoke, 1993), pp. 161–85.

⁴ Ian Atherton, 'Cathedrals, Laudianism and the British Churches', *Historical Journal*, 53 (2010), pp. 815–918; John McCafferty, *The Reconstruction of the Church of Ireland: Bishop Bramhall and the Laudian Reforms*, 1633–41 (Cambridge, 2007).

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canons, published in 1636, were followed a year later by a new prayer book, which led to the famous riots in St Giles' Cathedral in Edinburgh on 23 July 1637. The reverberations of this reform programme were felt across all three of the Stuart kingdoms, which would experience revolt, rebellion and civil war by 1642.

A range of scholars have debated whether religion was, in fact, the core source of conflict in Scotland, Ireland and England in the five stormy years after the prayer book was launched in 1637. David Stevenson has argued that, although much of the discontent in Scotland in the late 1630s stemmed from Charles I's religious policies, the king's Scottish troubles had a range of causes.⁵ Allan MacInnes has also put forward the case for the interdependence of political, economic, social and religious developments in the making of the 1638 Covenanting movement in Scotland.⁶ The intentions behind the policies of James VI&I and Charles I in Scotland have also been disputed. Earlier interpretations held that the rupture between Charles and his Scottish subjects was caused by the king's personal inadequacies and lack of respect for Scottish institutions and traditions, which coalesced in his religious policies.7 Thus, James VI&I avoided the problems that his son would later encounter, because James had left the church in a reasonably settled state. This view has now been challenged by Alan MacDonald, as has the notion that James did not seek to anglicise his northern kingdom.8 Laura Stewart's scholarship demonstrates that the church inherited by Charles in Scotland was far from quiescent and that the debate over the 1618 Perth Articles – which sought to introduce English ceremonies into Scottish churches - was very much ongoing in 1625. Therefore, while they may have come as a shock to the king, the 1637 riots in Edinburgh 'surprised almost nobody' in Scotland.9 Indeed, the riots - orchestrated by local

David Stevenson, The Scottish Revolution 1637–1644: The Triumph of the Covenanters (Edinburgh, 1973), p. 51. An excellent reinterpretation of the Scottish Revolution can be found in Laura Stewart, Rethinking the Scottish Revolution: Covenanted Scotland 1637–1651 (Oxford, 2016).
Allan MacInnes, Charles I and the Making of the Covenanting Movement 1625–1641 (Edinburgh, 1991).

Gordon Donaldson, Scotland: James V to James VII (Edinburgh, 1965), p. 211; Maurice Lee, 'Scotland and the General Crisis of the Seventeenth Century', Scottish Historical Review, 63 (1984), pp. 136–54; 150–1; Maurice Lee, The Road to Revolution: Scotland under Charles I, 1625–37 (Chicago, 1985), p. 4; Jenny Wormald, 'James VI and I: Two Kings, or One?', History, 68 (1983), pp. 187–209. A bold defence of Charles's character and reputation has been posited by the late Mark Kishlansky in 'Charles I: A Case of Mistaken Identity', Past and Present, 189 (2005), pp. 41–80, esp. p. 71 onwards, which relates to Scotland. For substantial replies by Clive Holmes, Julian Goodare and Richard Cust, see 'Debate – Charles I: A Case of Mistaken Identity', Past and Present, 205 (2009), pp. 177–212.

⁸ Alan MacDonald, *The Jacobean Kirk, 1567–1625: Sovereignty, Polity and Liturgy* (Aldershot, 1998), p. 184; Alan MacDonald, 'James VI and I, the Church of Scotland and British Ecclesiastical Convergence', *Historical Journal*, 48 (2005), pp. 885–903; Julian Goodare, 'Scottish Politics in the Reign of James VI', in Julian Goodare and Michael Lynch (eds), *The Reign of James VI* (East Lothian, 2000), pp. 32–54; 52; cf. Morrill, 'Ecclesiastical Imperialism', p. 216.

⁹ Laura Stewart, *Urban Politics and the British Civil Wars* 1617–53 (Leiden, 2006), pp. 172–3; 218. The political crisis created in the wake of the passage of the Perth articles through the assembly in August 1618 was left unresolved on James's death in March 1625. Laura Stewart, 'The

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magnates disillusioned by a decade or more of royal rule – cannot be explained simply as 'a sudden and spontaneous' elite reaction to the policies of Charles I. On the contrary, the initial protests were inspired by people brought up in a deeply rooted tradition of dissent, and men and women from all walks of life were involved. 10 The Scottish troubles spilled over into Ireland, where preexisting political, social, economic and religious tensions between New English Protestants, Old English Catholics and 'native' Irish communities were exacerbated by the authoritarian rule of Thomas Wentworth, the Lord Deputy. In late 1641, encouraged by the example of Scottish resistance to Charles, but fearful of invasion by an Anglo-Scottish Covenanting force, leading members of the Catholic nobility mounted a *coup d'état* which sparked a rebellion in Ireland.¹¹ In England, the eventual outbreak of civil war in August 1642 – described famously by Morrill as 'the last of the Wars of Religion' – intersected religious, political, constitutional, legal and local concerns. What was once seen as the 'English Civil War' is now widely accepted to have had its roots in the prior revolts in Scotland and Ireland, a position that was first advanced by Conrad Russell and has been developed subsequently by others. 12 Thus, religion was a

Political Repercussions of the Five Articles of Perth: A Reassessment of James VI and I's Religious Policies in Scotland', *Sixteenth Century Journal*, 38 (2007), pp. 1018–36. For further studies of religion in Scotland in the pre- and post-Covenanting era, see Walter Foster, *The Church before the Covenants: The Church of Scotland 1596*–1638 (London, 1975); Walter Makey, *The Church of the Covenant 1637–1651* (Edinburgh, 1979); David Mullan, *The Episcopacy in Scotland 1560–1638: The History of an Idea* (Edinburgh, 1986); David Mullan, 'Arminianism in the Lord's Assembly: Glasgow, 1638', *Records of the Scottish History Society*,1996, pp. 1–30; David Mullan, 'Masked Poperty and Pyrrhonian Uncertainty: The Early Scottish Covenanters on Arminianism', *Journal of Religious History*, 21 (1997), pp. 159–77; David Mullan (ed.), *Religious Controversy in Scotland 1625–1639* (Edinburgh, 1998).

- ¹⁰ This important point is made by Laura Stewart in *Rethinking the Scottish Revolution*, p. 38. ¹¹ Nicholas Canny, 'Religion, Politics and the Irish Rising of 1641', in Judith Devlin and Ronan Fanning (eds), *Religion and Rebellion* (Dublin, 1997), pp. 40–70; Conrad Russell, 'The British Background to the Irish Rebellion of 1641', *Historical Research*, 145 (1988), pp. 166–82. See also Michael Siochrú and Jane Ohlmeyer (eds), *Ireland: 1641 Contexts and Reactions* (Manchester, 2013).
- 12 John Morrill, 'The Religious Context of the English Civil War', Transactions of the Royal Historical Society 34 (1984), pp. 155-78; 178; Glen Burgess, 'Was the English Civil War a War of Religion?', Huntington Library Quarterly 61 (1998), pp. 173-201; Conrad Russell, The Fall of the British Monarchies 1637-42 (Oxford, 1991); Conrad Russell, The Causes of the English Civil War (Oxford, 1990), esp. chapters 2 and 5. The full range of interpretations of the causes of war are too numerous to list here, but recent work includes, for instance, Julian Davies, The Caroline Captivity of the Church: Charles I and the Remoulding of Anglicanism, 1625–1641 (Oxford, 1992), pp. 313-18; Richard Cust and Ann Hughes (eds), The English Civil War (London, 1997); John Adamson, The Noble Revolt (London, 2007); Tim Harris, Rebellion: Britain's First Stuart Kings 1567–1642 (Oxford, 2014). Harris acknowledges the centrality of religion to the conflicts in three kingdoms, but also states the case for political, constitutional and, ultimately, military explanations for war. The 'three kingdoms' context and a discussion of problems associated with the 'New British Histories' can be found in 'Introduction: Awkward Neighbours?', in Allan MacInnes and Jane Ohlmeyer (eds), The Stuart Kingdoms in the Seventeenth Century: Awkward Neighbours (Dublin, 2002), pp. 15-36. See also John Morrill, The Scottish National Covenant in its British Context 1638-51 (Edinburgh, 1990); Austin Woolrych, Britain in Revolution 1625-1660 (Oxford, 2002). For a broader geographical and contextual analysis, see Jonathan Scott, England's Troubles: Seventeenth-Century English Political Instability in European Context (Cambridge, 2000).

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major, but not the sole, reason why Charles I faced armed resistance in all three of his kingdoms by 1642.

Alongside broader issues relating to the ultimate nature of the conflict, the relative responsibility of Charles I and William Laud for the reforms that led to the collapse of royal government across Britain has long been on the minds of scholars and commentators. Writing in the 1640s, Edward Hyde, Earl of Clarendon, first described how Laud's 'heart was set upon the advancement of the church' and that this was an endeavour in which 'he had the king's full concurrence' 13 To less appreciative contemporaries, however. Laud was the 'evil counsellor', pushing an irresolute monarch into implementing reforms that spoke to the king's own anti-Calvinist tendencies. Naturally, directing accusations at a senior royal adviser, rather than the king, was politically expedient in an age in which it was still treasonous to defame the monarch, but the true nature of the relationship between Charles and Laud must lie at the heart of any attempt to understand religio-political developments in early seventeenth-century Britain. Still, opinions remain divided over whether Laud was the power behind the throne. Both Kevin Sharpe and Julian Davies have maintained that the archbishop was happy to receive royal instructions and follow orders, but that it was the king who was ultimately driving the pace of ecclesiastical change. Sharpe argued that Laud's political 'power and control ... may have been exaggerated' and Davies has suggested that the term 'Carolinism' rather than 'Laudianism' is a more accurate description of the distinctive, sacramental style of kingship that characterised the 1630s. 14 Thus, there has been a tendency to perceive the contribution of Laud and Charles in mutually exclusive terms – if the king was the driving force behind religious policy, then the archbishop must always be cast in the role of mere servant. Other scholars, conversely, have suggested that the partnership between Laud and Charles is best conceived as 'symbiotic'. The relationship was one in which the king depended on his archbishop to enact the minutiae of religious policy, while the archbishop himself required the stamp of royal approval before moving forward.¹⁵ Taking this position, Nicholas Tyacke, Kenneth Fincham and Peter Lake have shown that it is often very difficult to attribute greater responsibility to either figure, not only because the pair worked closely together, but also because Laud was increasingly effective at distancing

¹³ Edward Hyde, *The History of the Rebellion and Civil Wars in England* (Oxford, 1888) (hereafter Clarendon, *History*), I, p. 130.

¹⁴ Kevin Sharpe, *The Personal Rule of Charles I* (Yale, 1992), pp. 143, 279–85; 333–5; Davies, *Caroline Captivity*, *passim*, esp. pp. 295–305. See also Brian Quintrell, 'A Church Triumphant? The Emergence of a Spiritual Lord Treasurer, 1635–1636', in Julia Merritt (ed.), *The Political World of Thomas Wentworth*, *Earl of Strafford*, *1621–1641* (Cambridge, 1996), pp. 81–108. It has also been argued that Laud only ever had a tenuous hold on royal power and was never a royal favourite. See Laurence Brockliss, 'The Anatomy of the Minister-favourite', in John Elliott and Laurence Brockliss (eds), *The World of the Favourite* (London, 1999), p. 281.

¹⁵ An apposite example of the way in which king and archbishop worked together can be found in Kenneth Fincham, 'Annual Accounts of the Church of England 1632–1639', in Melanie Barber, Stephen Taylor and Gabriel Sewell (eds), *From the Reformation to the Permissive Society* (Woodbridge, 2010), pp. 79–87.