

The Church in Liverpool

Session 3



Catholics and Puritans

Catholics and Puritans

Roman Catholics

- Hierarchy – The head of the Church is the Pope and below him bishops and priests.



Puritans

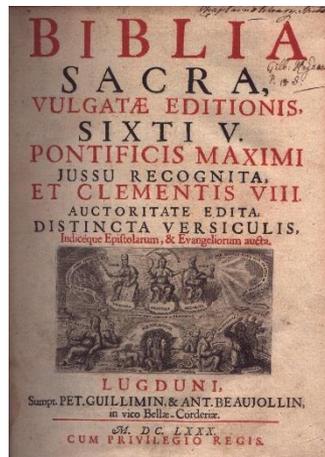
- Hierarchy – The head of the Church is Christ. Local control. Each congregation can elect its own leader.



Catholics and Puritans

Roman Catholics

- Scripture – Bible should be in Latin.



Puritans

- Scripture – Bible should be in the vernacular.



Catholics and Puritans

Roman Catholics

- Saints – It is possible to pray to saints who have merit that means they can intercede on behalf of the person praying.



Puritans

- Saints – No one stands between the person praying and God. To pray to saints is a form of idolatry.



Catholics and Puritans

Roman Catholics

- Worship – Worship was elaborate and full of ritual.



Puritans

- Worship – Services were plain, without elaborate ceremony. Focus was placed directly on learning and studying the Bible.



Catholics and Puritans

Roman Catholics

- Getting to Heaven – Forgiveness of sins is possible through the sacraments of the Church, including private confession and penance.



Puritans

- Getting to Heaven – Puritans were Calvinists and so they believe that people were born saved or not saved. Your status is shown in the way you behave. Confession of sins should be public.

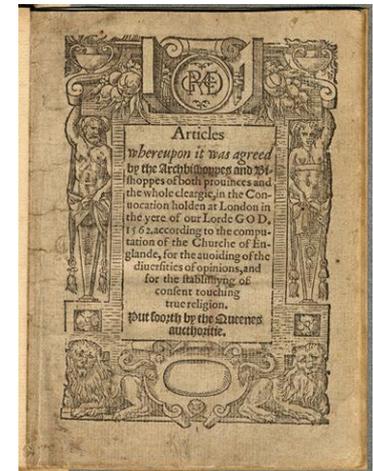
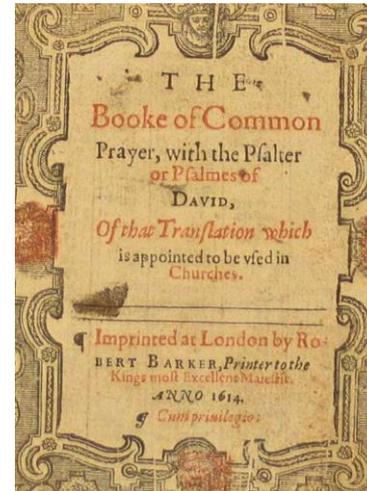
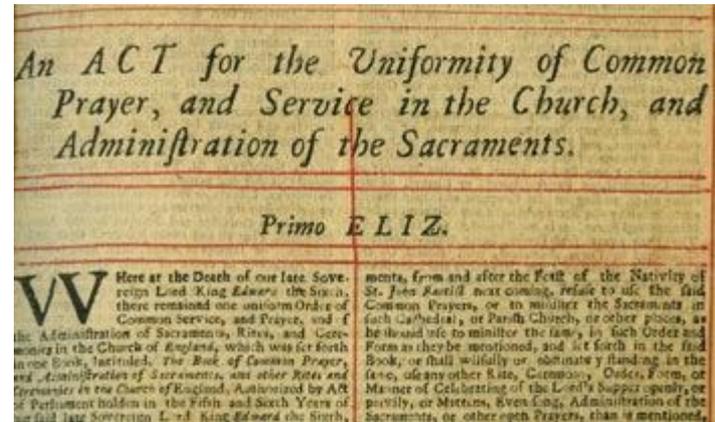




Background History

About Puritans

- The Elizabethan religious settlement consisted of:
 - the Acts of Uniformity and Supremacy (1559),
 - The Prayer Book of 1559, and
 - the Thirty-nine Articles of 1563.



About Puritans

- The Church of England retained various traditional forms of worship that some Protestants found offensive, in particular:
 - Clerical vestments - particularly the surplice (a white wide-sleeved gown worn to officiate in church services) and (to a lesser degree) the square cap (worn outdoors by ministers)
 - Kneeling to receive communion
 - Making the sign of the cross in baptism
 - Bowing at the name of "Jesus"
 - Using the wedding-ring in marriage services
 - Church bells



About Puritans

- Some zealous Protestants wanted to purify the church of such "popish remnants".
- These "puritans" became very important both in the Church of England and in the founding of English settlements in America.



About Puritans

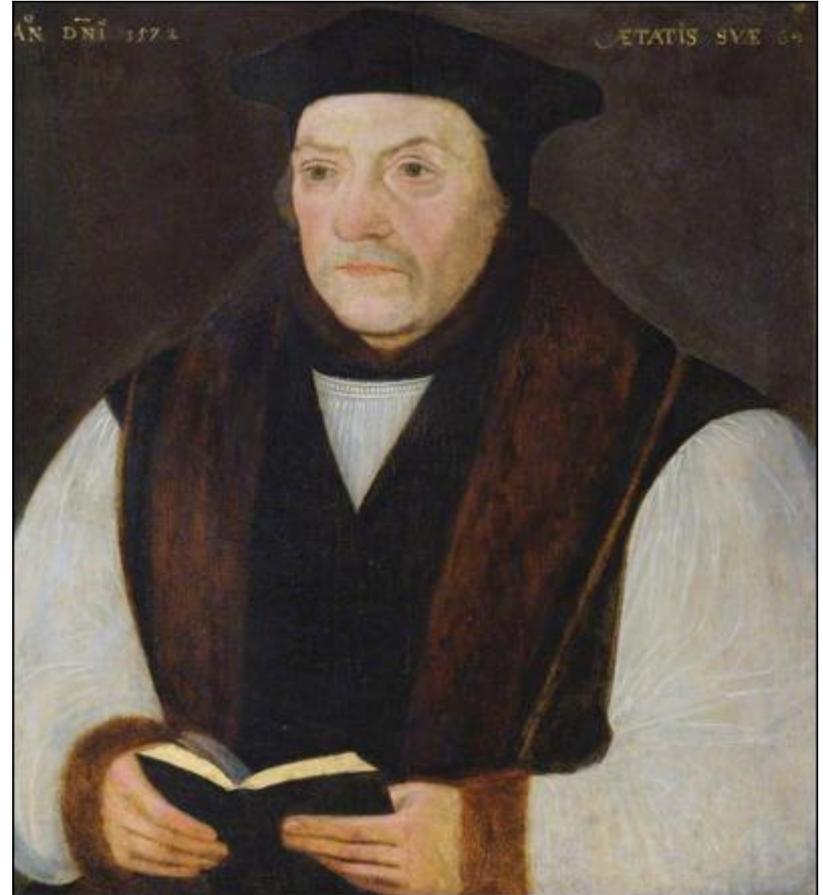
- The ideas of Jean Calvin and his successor at Geneva, Theodore Beza, were very influential in England.
- The Genevan church had replaced bishops with presbyters and elders, and had stripped worship of all ornamentation.



Theodore Beza

About Puritans

- Initially, few attempts were made to enforce the wearing of clerical dress.
- Many senior clergymen had little taste for these garments themselves.
- However, increasingly Elizabeth and her Archbishop of Canterbury, Matthew Parker came to see the refusal to wear clerical dress as an attack on their authority.



About Puritans

- In 1566, Matthew Parker issued *the Advertisements* requiring conformity in clerical dress.
- In London, thirty-seven ministers refused to obey.
- A number were deprived of their livings when they would not submit.
- Puritans in England wrote to Geneva for advice.
- The Zurich Reformers did not fully approve of the ceremonies.
- They insisted, however, that they were not so bad that any minister should risk dismissal by refusing to conform.



Heinrich Bullinger was one of the more influential Geneva Reformers

About Puritans

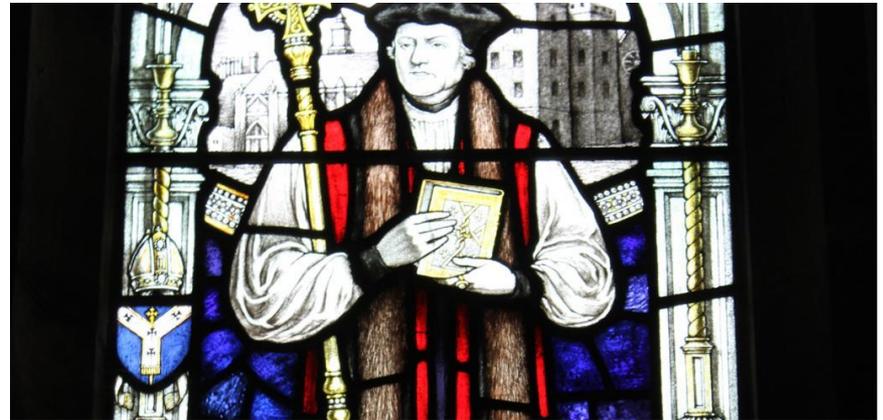
- A number of bishops, including Edmund Grindal, Bishop of London wrote to key Continental Reformers asking their views on the vestments and ceremonies.
- The Zurich Reformers did not fully approve of the ceremonies.
- They insisted, however, that they were not so bad that any minister should risk dismissal by refusing to conform.



Edmund Grindal

About Puritans

- Many of the critics of the 1560s abandoned opposition and conformed.
- A hard core of radicals continued to protest at the ceremonies, however.
- They came to see the retention of the vestments and ceremonies as a sign that the Church of England's government was flawed.
- They believed that worship would never be properly reformed until government by bishops was ended.



About Puritans

- During the 1570's a few London ministers kept the Presbyterian cause alive.
- But they had little chance of changing the English church as a whole.
- Ironically, the puritan cause received a form of support from the new Archbishop of Canterbury, Edmund Grindal
- Grindal (who had been exiled by the Catholic Queen Mary) saw Catholicism as the greatest threat to true religion.



About Puritans

- In 1576, Grindal conducted a metropolitan visitation (a sort of survey of standards in the archbishopric).
- He was shocked by how few ministers preached regularly to their flocks.
- He decided to try and rectify the problem by encouraging prophesyings (preaching services).



About Puritans

- Prophesyings had begun spontaneously in various parts of the South-East in about 1571.
- They were meetings of clergy in the localities for prayer and sermons.
- These were followed by mutual criticism and discussions about the state of the church.



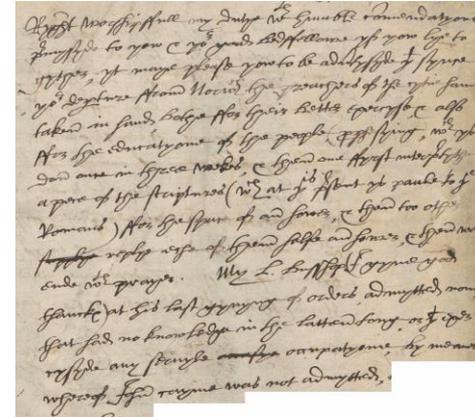
About Puritans

- Prophesyings rapidly became very popular, and were often attended by zealous laymen.
- Elizabeth (who thought that four or five preachers per county were quite enough) saw them as inherently disruptive and a covert attack on royal control of the church.



About Puritans

- Elizabeth wanted prophesyings stopped, but Grindal merely issued orders for regulating their conduct.
- Elizabeth was furious - particularly when Grindal refused a direct order to suppress them.
- He wrote her a letter saying that it was his duty to obey God rather than her.
- She wanted to deprive him immediately of his post as Archbishop but was prevailed on by her Privy Council merely to suspend him until he submitted.
- He never did.



Edward Gaston to Mr Haddon, 16 October, 1564

... it may please you to be advertise that since your departure from Norwich the preachers of the city have taken in hand both for their better exercise & also for the education of the people, prophesying, which is done once in three weeks, & then one first interprets a piece of the scriptures (which at this present is Paul to the Romans) for the space of an hour, & then too other supply reply each of themselves an hour, & then we end with prayer. My Lord Bishop (I give god thanks) at his last giving of orders admitted none that had no knowledge in the Latin tongue, or that exercised any civil occupation, by means where of John Caine was not admitted ...

About Puritans

- Grindal's suspension marked a significant deterioration in relations between puritans and the English Church.
- Many of those involved in the prophesying movement continued to meet secretly and espouse Presbyterian ideas.



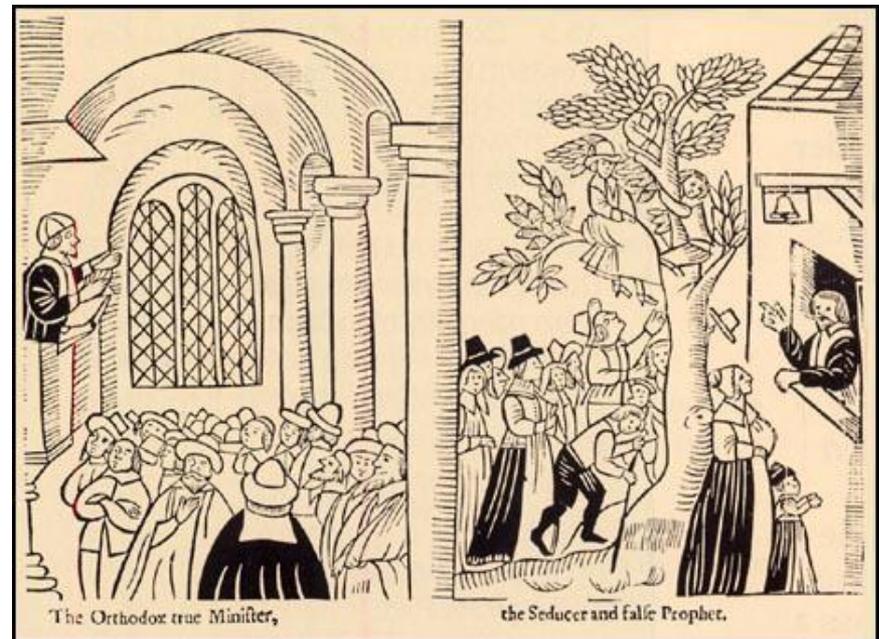
About Puritans

- In Presbyterian theory, each congregation would send representative ministers and elders to a classis of several local congregations in order to decide matters of worship and discipline.
- Above this classis were to be regional and national synods.
- If fully implemented, it would have left little place for the Queen and none for the bishops.



About Puritans

- The puritan cause had some support in high quarters (Francis Walsingham and Robert Dudley Earl of Leicester, for example)
- The gentry, however, had little taste for a basically clericalist system that would undermine their rights.



About Puritans

- The failure of Presbyterian attempts to reshape the Church of England led to some puritans opting out altogether.
- These Separatists argued that the godly should leave the Church and set up their own pure assemblies to which only "saints" should be admitted.
- Worship and doctrine would be purged of all "superstition".



About Puritans

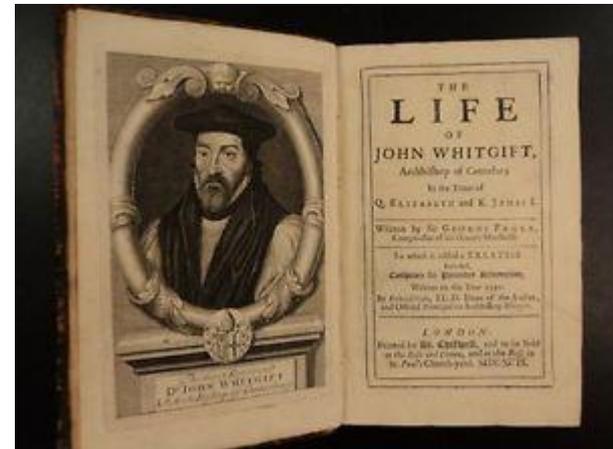
- 1583, John Whitgift was appointed Archbishop of Canterbury.
- He was a long-time foe of puritans.
- In September 1583 he issued (with the Queen's assent) certain "articles touching preachers and other orders for the church."
- These aimed to stop nonconformity once and for all.



John Whitgift

About Puritans

- The articles forbade all recusancy, unlicensed preaching and religious exercises.
- They also ordered that no minister should be permitted to exercise any ecclesiastical functions unless he first accepted (i) the Oath of Supremacy, (ii) that the Prayer Book contained nothing contrary to the word of God, and (iii) that the Thirty-Nine Articles were agreeable to the word of God.



About Puritans

- These articles were to be enforced by the newly established High Commission court.
- This Commission had far more extensive power to fine and imprison than other ecclesiastical courts.
- The High Commission used an "oath ex officio."
- Those called before the court had to swear that they would truthfully answer all questions that might be asked.
- Those who refused to take the oath were guilty of contempt of court and could be imprisoned indefinitely.



About Puritans

- Not all English puritans were Presbyterians.
- The moderate puritan tradition in the Church of England:
 - emphasized sermons (the preaching of God's word)
 - was extremely anti-papist (they saw the pope as the Antichrist foretold in the Book of Revelation)
 - disapproved of clerical vestments, traditional ceremonies, and stress on the efficacy of the sacraments (all - in their view - a hangover of popish superstition)
 - placed the doctrine of predestination at the centre of theology
 - insisted on strict observation of the Lord's Day (this sabbatarianism was especially important from the mid 1590's).



About Puritans

- In 1603, English puritans had high hopes that James I would bring about church reform.
- As James proceeded south to assume the throne they presented him with the Millenary Petition, asking for reforms to the Church of England's worship and organisation.



About Puritans

- James responded by setting up the Hampton Court Conference between representatives of the puritan cause and the Church's bishops.
- James himself chaired the conference, which met in January 1604.
- James I sided with the bishops and - apart from a few insignificant changes to the Book of Common Prayer - no real changes were made.



About Puritans

- James did authorise a new translation of the Bible.
- This appeared in 1611, and the King James Bible became the standard version in English for many centuries.



About Puritans

- After the Conference, a Convocation of the Church was called to pass canons enforcing clerical obedience to the established religion.
- Most puritans bowed before James I's firm rejection of reform, but a few formed their own congregations.
- Many moved to the Netherlands and later established a colony in Massachusetts where they could worship according to their own lights.
- The most famous were the Pilgrim Fathers in 1620.

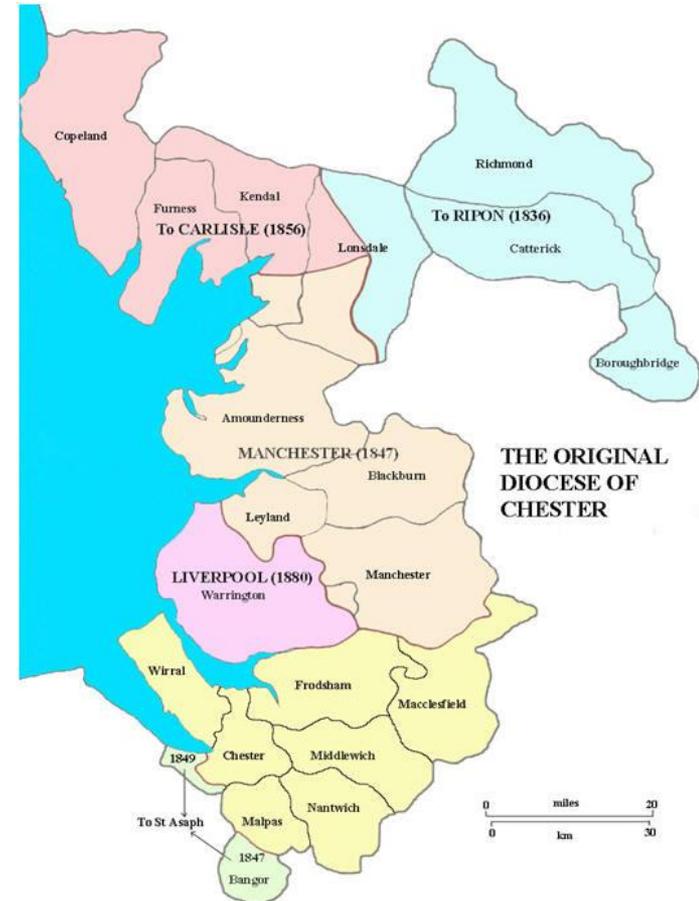




Puritans in Liverpool

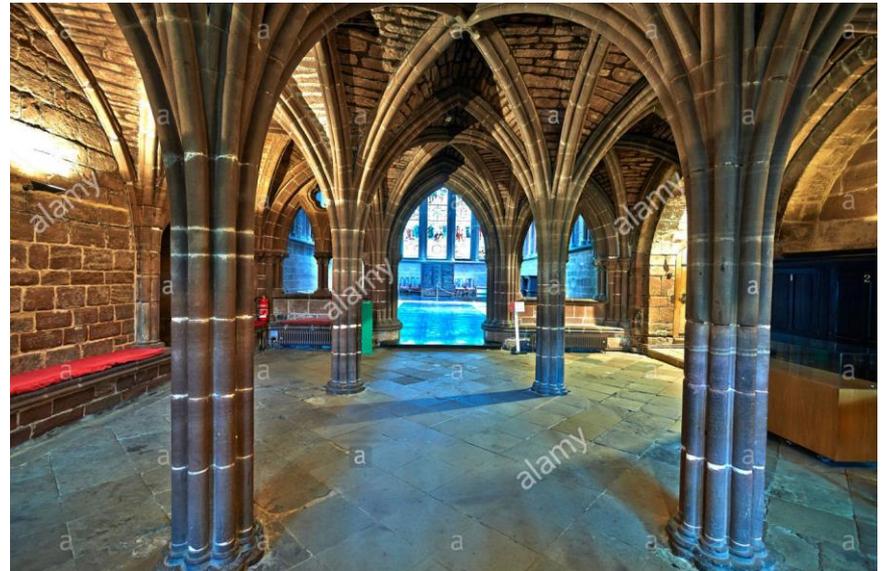
Puritans in Liverpool

- Due to the changes of the English Reformation, Liverpool became part of the newly established Diocese of Chester in 1541.
- From the start it was impossibly large and impoverished.
- As a result it had poorly educated clergy.



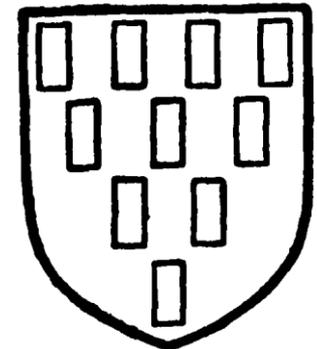
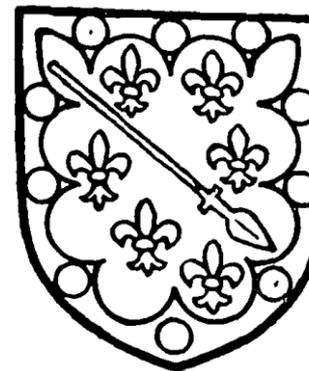
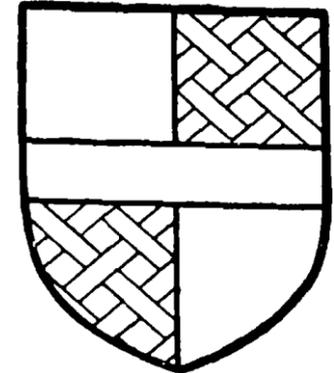
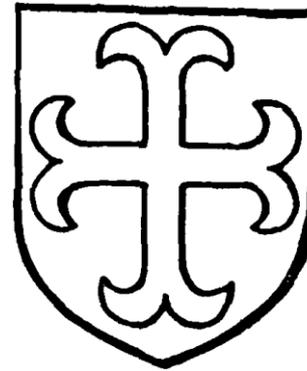
Puritans in Liverpool

- With such a widely dispersed population, teaching was the exception rather than the norm.
- The new religion was very slow to catch on as a result.



Puritans in Liverpool

- Catholicism remained strong particularly in the north and the west.
 - Norris family – Speke
 - Molyneux family – Sefton
 - Blundell family – Ince and Crosby
 - Ireland family – Lydiate.



Puritans in Liverpool

- There was also a lot of ignorance and remaining pagan belief.
- This included witchcraft.
- In 1605 the wife of William Webster of Maghull was charged as a witch.
- She had claimed that “she had cursed Leonard Martin and that there was none that she had cursed that had escaped [sickness] or death.”



Puritans in Liverpool



- Puritanism was more common in the east and south of the diocese – especially Manchester.
- Liverpool was an exception in the west.
- This was probably as a result of the influence of merchants and tradesmen.

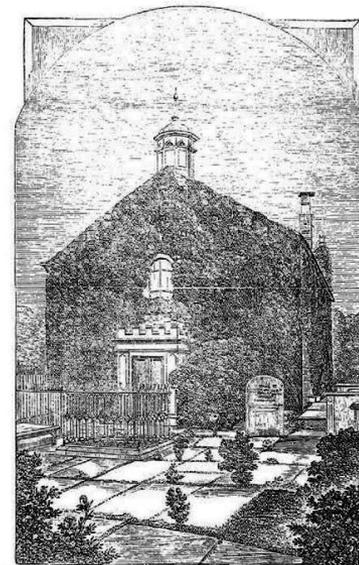
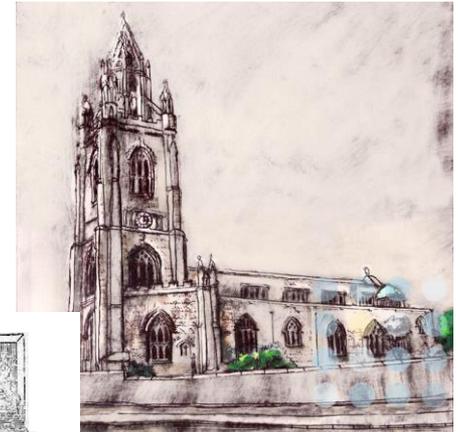
Puritans in Liverpool

- London was important in the spread of Puritan ideas.
- Most parts of Lancashire would not have had any dealing with the capital.
- Manchester and Liverpool, however, had direct trading links with the metropolis.



Puritans in Liverpool

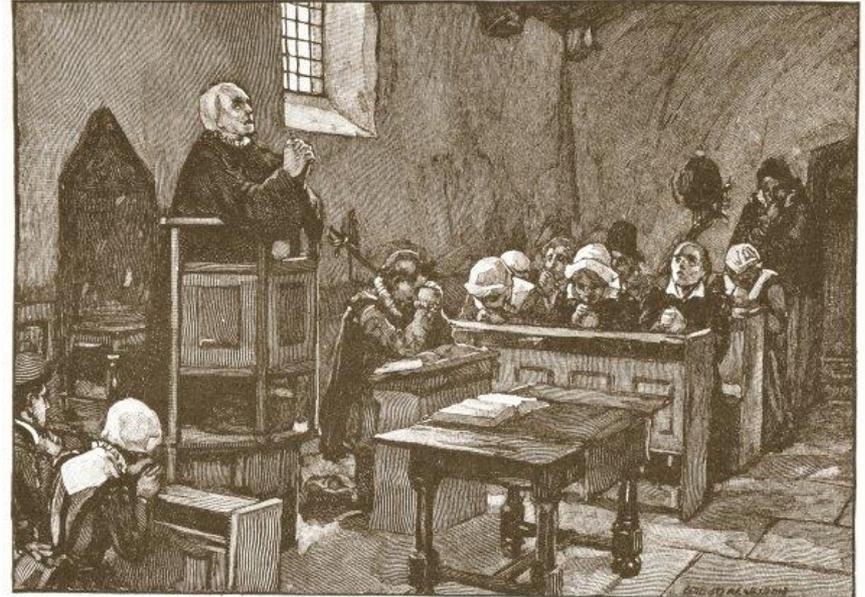
- Parishes were very large and so had little influence.
- Chapelries, however, had more immediate influence.
- They tended to be quite independent and not easily influenced by gentry.
- In Walton, it was not in the vicinity of the parish church that puritanism took hold but in the chapelries of Liverpool and Toxteth.



Ancient Chapel of Toxteth, Park Rd., LIVERPOOL (Lancs.)

Puritans in Liverpool

- The diocese of Chester tolerated Puritans more than other dioceses because they were a useful source of preachers and teachers.
- In Lancashire, in particular, they were necessary to combat Catholicism and ignorance.



Puritans in Liverpool

- Although there were attempts at control, Puritans were mainly tolerated.
- In 1599 four Queen's Preachers were appointed for Lancashire .
- They were part of the official effort to win Lancashire over to the reformed religion.
- Three of the four were inclined towards Puritanism.



Puritans in Liverpool

- The chapelry at Toxteth was founded some time around 1600.
- Toxteth had been part of the Derby estate.
- At this time it was disparted and settlers were introduced.
- It seems that they came from puritan Bolton.



Puritans in Liverpool

- Toxteth soon became a centre of religious enthusiasm.
- The whole area became known as “the holy land”.
- A stream running through it was called “Jordan” and a farm “Jericho”.
- Prominent landmarks acquired Biblical names such as “David’s Throne” and “Adam’s Buttery”.



Dingle Glen and David's Throne (a rocky outcrop) to the far left of image

Puritans in Liverpool

- In 1618 the local community erected a puritan chapel on the corner of today's Park Road and Dingle Lane.
- Since the 1830s it has been known as The Ancient Chapel of Toxteth.
- It later became a Unitarian chapel.



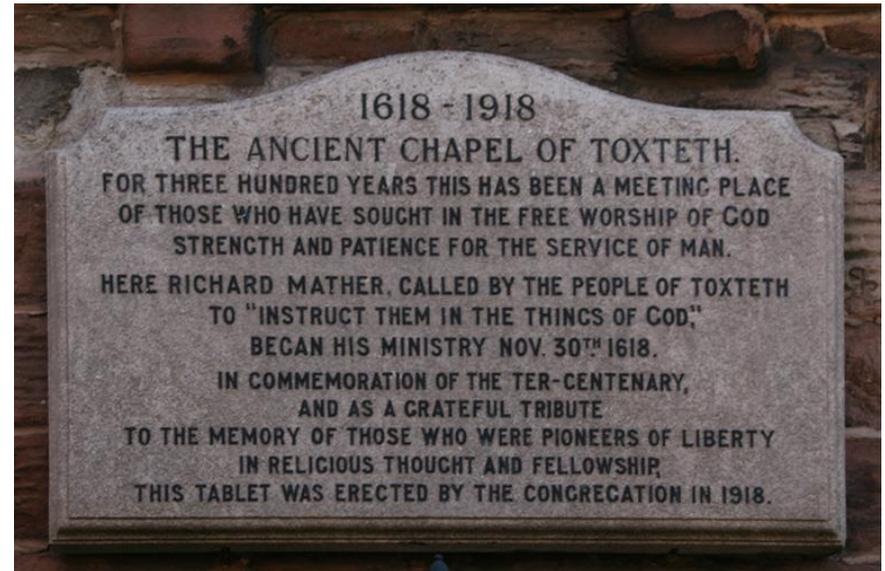
Puritans in Liverpool

- The chapel's first minister was a man by the name of Richard Mather who eventually emigrated to Boston, Massachusetts in North America.
- Mather's son Increase Mather and grandson Cotton Mather later became known for their involvement in the infamous Salem Witch Trials of the 1690s.



Puritans in Liverpool

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- Mather's son Increase Mather and grandson Cotton Mather later became known for their involvement in the infamous Salem Witch Trials of the 1690s.
- Local legend has it that Oliver Cromwell's troops camped in the Chapel's graveyard when they came to Liverpool during the Civil War.



Puritans in Liverpool

- In Liverpool the town corporation was financially responsible for the maintenance of their curates.
- They were thus in a position to secure the type of puritan preaching they preferred.
- It was an officially sponsored puritanism which developed in the town.
- The corporation strictly regulated observance of the Sabbath.



Puritans in Liverpool

- They also controlled their chosen clergy.
- In 1612 one curate was instructed “to cut his hair of a comely and seemly length as best besets a man in his place.”
- It has been suggested that the growth of puritanism in urban areas was related to the growing insistence on corporate independence.



Puritans in Liverpool



Richard Mather from
Toxteth was one of the
weekly lecturers in
Liverpool

About Puritans

- Throughout the reign of the next king, Charles I, there was ongoing tension with parliament over money.
- In addition, Charles favoured a High Anglican form of worship, and his wife was Catholic - both made many of his subjects suspicious, particularly the Puritans.



About Puritans

- During the early 1600s the Puritans became the main movers and shakers in the political arena.
- During the 1630's they began to dominate English Parliament.
- This was a time when the middle class in England was starting to prosper and assert itself.
- Under the emerging leadership of Oliver Cromwell the Puritans in Parliament went head to head against King Charles I over issues of taxation and the representation of the people.



About Puritans

- Charles dissolved parliament three times between 1625 and 1629.
- In 1629, he dismissed parliament and resolved to rule alone.
- This forced him to raise revenue by non-parliamentary means which made him increasingly unpopular.
- At the same time, there was a crackdown on Puritans and Catholics and many emigrated to the American colonies.



About Puritans

- Charles attempted to force a new prayer book in Scotland and this resulted in the country ending his personal rule.
- He was forced to call parliament to obtain funds to fight the Scots.
- Charles attempted to have five members of parliament arrested and in August 1642, raised the royal standard at Nottingham.
- Civil war began.
- Charles lost and was executed in 1649.



England under the Puritans.





From Puritans to Nonconformists

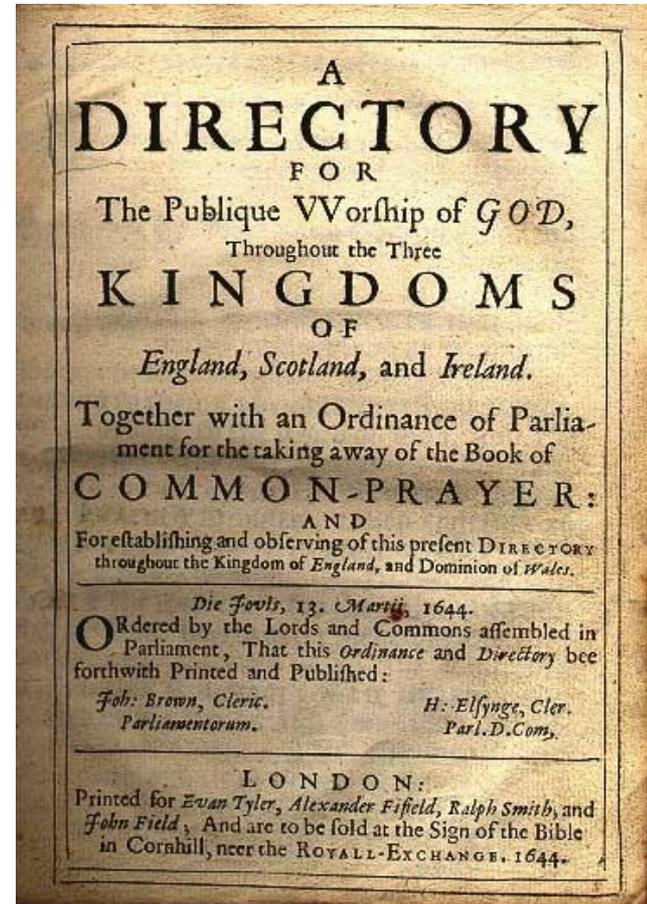
Nonconformism

- The English Interregnum was a period of religious diversity in England.
- In 1650, at Cromwell's behest, the Rump Parliament abolished the Act of Uniformity 1558.
- While England now had an officially established church organised in a Presbyterian fashion, there was no legal requirement that anyone attend services in the established church.



Nonconformism

- In 1646, the Parliament had abolished episcopacy in the Church of England and replaced it with a presbyterian system.
- It also voted to replace the Book of Common Prayer with the Directory of Public Worship.
- The actual implementation of these reforms in the church proceeded slowly for a number of reasons:
 - A lot of people didn't agree with the abolition of bishops,
 - Even among the Presbyterians, there were differences of opinion, and,
 - Without bishops there was no one to enforce conformity.



Nonconformism

- The Presbyterians were dominant (at least theoretically) within the established church.
- But those who opposed Presbyterianism were in fact free to start conducting themselves in the way they wanted.
- Separatists, who had previously organized themselves underground, were able to worship openly.



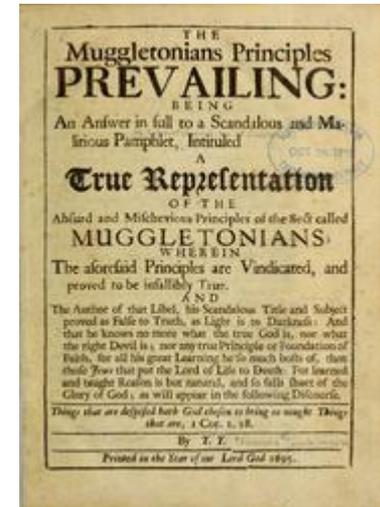
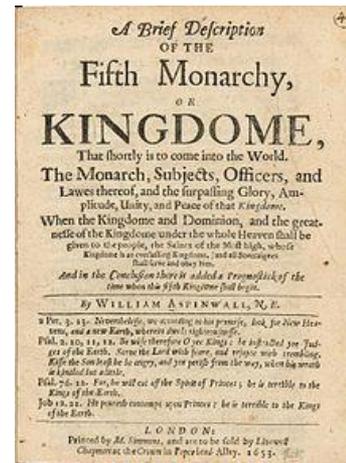
Nonconformism

- For example, as early as 1616, the first English Baptists had organized themselves in secret, under the leadership of Henry Jacob, John Lothrop, and Henry Jessey.
- Now, however, they were less secretive.
- Other ministers - who favoured the congregationalist New England Way - also began setting up their own congregations outside of the established church.



Nonconformism

- Many sects were also organised during this time.
- It is not clear that they should be called "Puritan" sects since they placed less emphasis on the Bible than is characteristic of Puritans.
- Instead they insisted on the role of direct contact with the Holy Spirit.
- These groups included the Ranters, the Fifth Monarchists, the Seekers, the Muggletonians, and - most prominently and most lastingly - the Quakers.



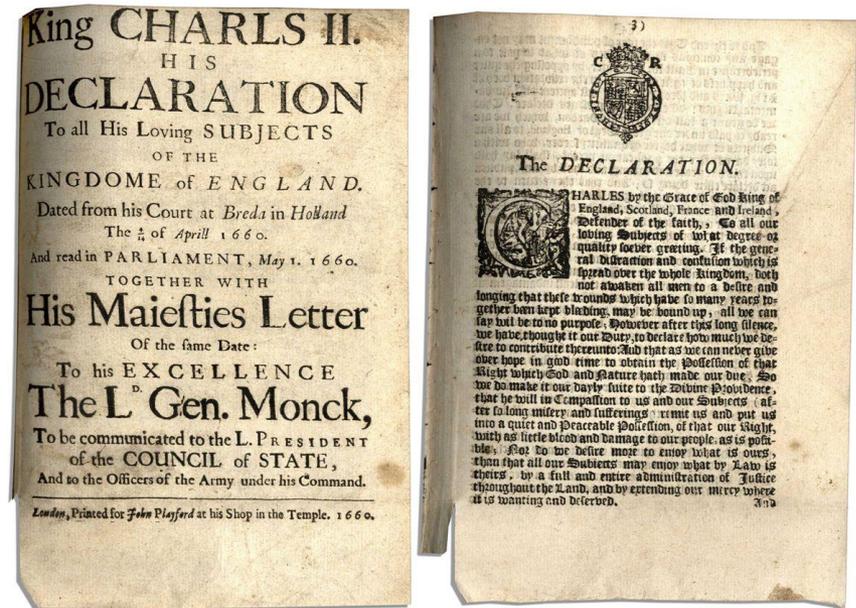
Nonconformism

- The largest Puritan faction - the Presbyterians - had been deeply dissatisfied with the state of the church under Cromwell.
- They wanted to restore religious uniformity throughout England.
- They came to believe that only a restoration of the English monarchy could achieve this and suppress the sectaries.
- Most Presbyterians were therefore supportive of the Restoration of Charles II.



Nonconformism

- Charles II's most loyal followers - those who had followed him into exile on the continent, - had fought the English Civil War largely in defense of episcopacy and insisted that episcopacy be restored in the Church of England.
- In the Declaration of Breda, issued in April 1660, a month before Charles II's return to England, Charles II proclaimed that while he intended to restore the Church of England, he would also pursue a policy of religious toleration for non-adherents of the Church of England.



Nonconformism

- Shortly after Charles II's return to England, in early 1661, Fifth Monarchists Vavasor Powell and Thomas Venner attempted a coup against Charles II.
- Thus, elections were held for Parliament in a heated atmosphere of anxiety about a further Puritan uprising.

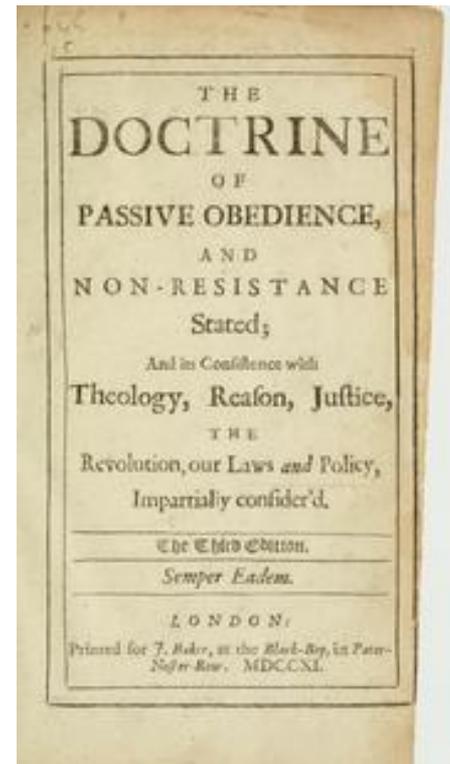


THO' VENNER

Pub. by Caulfield & Herbert 1794.

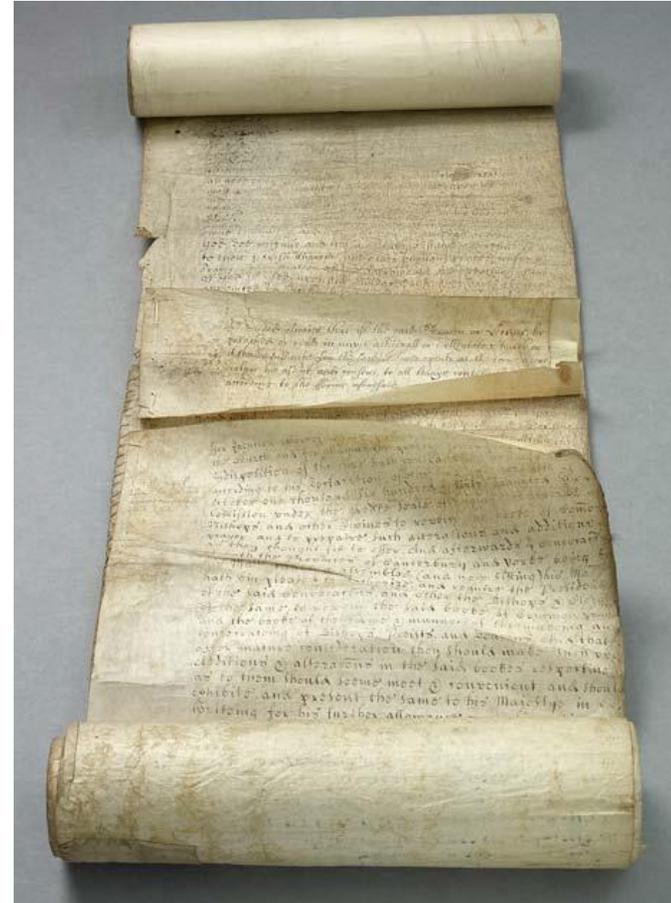
Nonconformism

- When the Parliament met in May 1661, its first action, largely a reaction to the Fifth Monarchist uprising, was to pass the Corporation Act of 1661.
- This barred anyone who had not received communion in the Church of England in the past twelve months from holding office in a city or corporation.
- It also required officeholders to swear the Oath of Allegiance and Oath of Supremacy, to swear belief in the Doctrine of Passive Obedience, and to renounce the Covenant.



Nonconformism

- In 1662, the Parliament passed the Act of Uniformity of 1662.
- This restored the Book of Common Prayer as the official liturgy.
- The Act of Uniformity prescribed that any minister who refused to conform to the Book of Common Prayer by St. Bartholomew's Day 1662 would be ejected from the Church of England.



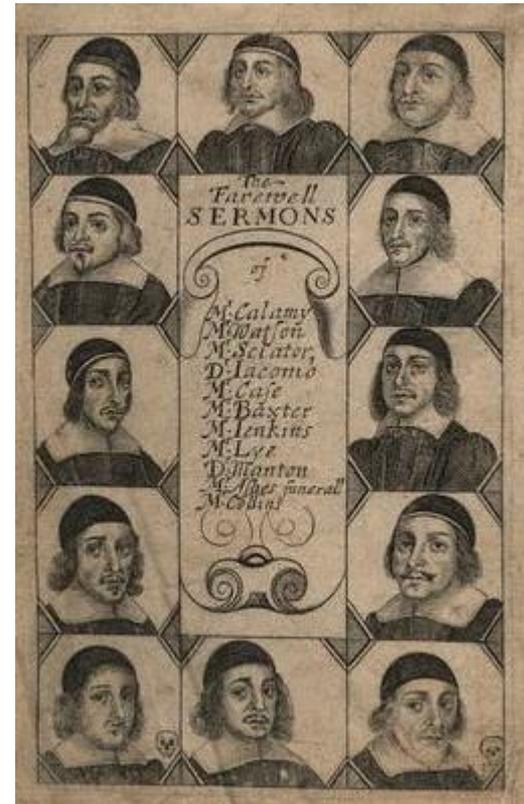
Nonconformism

- The majority of ministers who had served in Cromwell's state church conformed to the Book of Common Prayer.
- The Puritan movement had become fractured in the course of the 1640s and 1650s.
- It now became even further fractured.



Nonconformism

- Around two thousand Puritan ministers resigned from their positions as Church of England clergy.
- After 1662, the term "Puritan" was generally supplanted by "Nonconformist" or "Dissenter" to describe those Puritans who had refused to conform in 1662.



Title page of a collection of Farewell Sermons preached by ministers ejected from their parishes in 1662

Nonconformism

- Though expelled from their pulpits in 1662, many of the non-conforming ministers continued to preach to their followers in private homes and other locations.
- These private meetings were known as conventicles.
- The congregations that they formed around the non-conforming ministers at this time form the nucleus for the later English Presbyterian, Congregationalist, and Baptist denominations.



Nonconformism

- Parliament responded hostilely to the continued influence of the non-conforming ministers.
- In 1664, it passed the Conventicle Act banning religious assemblies of more than five people outside of the Church of England.
- In 1665, it passed the Five Mile Act, forbidding ejected ministers from living within five miles of a parish from which they had been banned, unless they swore an oath never to resist the king, or attempt to alter the government of Church or State.



Nonconformism

- Under the penal laws forbidding religious dissent (generally known to history as the Clarendon Code), many ministers were imprisoned in the latter half of the 1660s.
- One of the most notable victims of the penal laws during this period (though he was not himself an ejected minister) was John Bunyan, a Baptist, who was imprisoned from 1660 to 1672.





Nonconformism in Liverpool

Nonconformist Churches in Liverpool

- At the end of the 17th century a Nonconformist congregation from the Ancient Chapel of Toxteth began meeting in Liverpool.
- At first they met in the house of one of their members, David Poole, in Lord Street.
- The minister of Toxteth Park is said to have preached there on alternate Sundays from 1689.
- These became known as the Lord Street Meeting House and stood near to where Doran's Lane cuts through to Harrington Street.



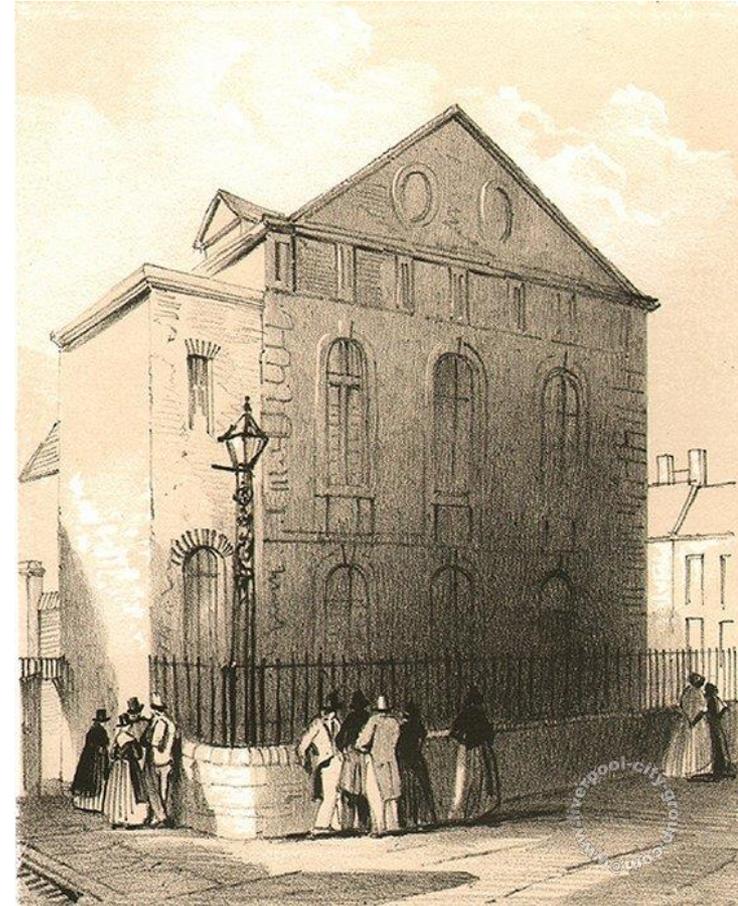
Nonconformist Churches in Liverpool

- As the rooms became too small for use, it is probable that the congregation built a chapel on the other end.
- This may have been a structure in the garden.
- It now faced Castle Hey, now called Harrington Street.
- Castle Hey Chapel opened in 1687 and survived as the Dissenters' chapel until 1707.
- This was replaced by Benn's Gardens Chapel in 1727, from which the congregation, which had become Unitarian, moved to Renshaw Street in 1811, and from this recently to Ullet Road, Toxteth.



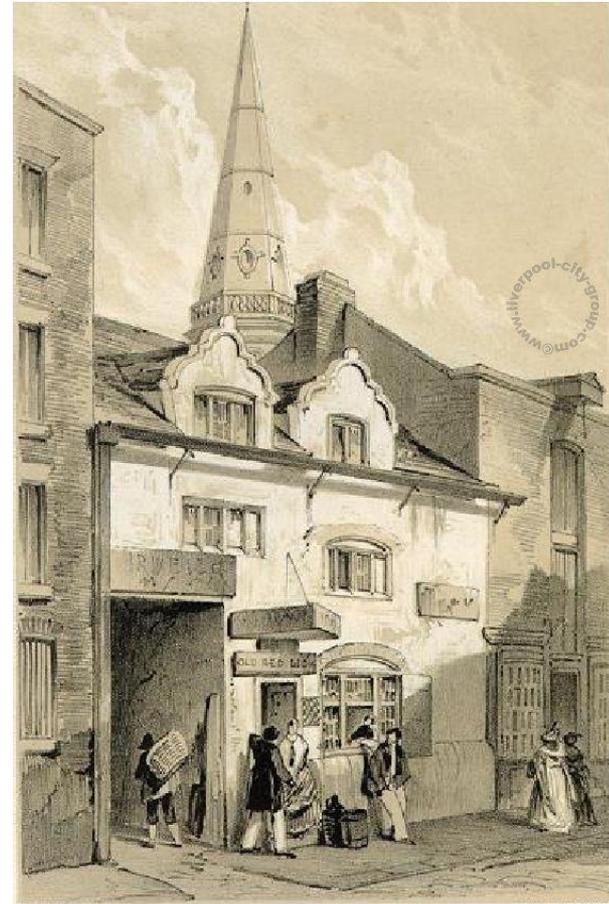
Nonconformist Churches in Liverpool

- In 1727 a new chapel, Benn's Gardens Chapel, was opened in 172.
- Benn's Garden was a tiny street, one of a maze of streets and alleyways, which stood on the site of the modern law courts.
- The streets here were too narrow for carts to pass.
- Many of the congregations had to be dropped off in Pool Lane or Redcross Street and walk the rest of the way to the chapel.



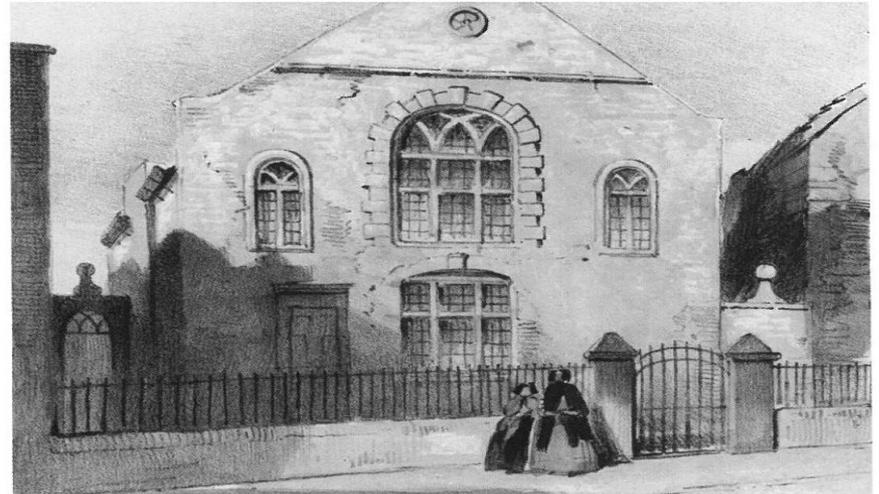
Nonconformist Churches in Liverpool

- Due to the inconvenience and the deterioration of the neighbourhood they sold the chapel to the Welsh Methodists in 1811.
- They moved to Renshaw Street and later went back to Toxteth.



Nonconformist Churches in Liverpool

- Another Presbyterian chapel was built in Key Street in 1707.
- It was the first building to be erected in Key Street.
- At the time the street was called Pit Hey.



Key Street Chapel, Tithebarn Street
This important chapel in the history of the Nonconformists in

Nonconformist Churches in Liverpool

- It was built by the congregation from Castle Hey because that chapel had become too small.
- The population of Liverpool was rising, including an influx from Scotland and Ireland.
- The new chapel was “substantial, though plain in its appearance ... with considerable flagged space at the front.”



Nonconformist Churches in Liverpool

- In 1791 the Nonconformist congregation moved to a new chapel on the corner of Paradise Street and School Lane.
- The Key Street Chapel was sold to the Church of England.
- It opened the following year as St Matthew's.
- In 1849 it was sold to the railway company for the expansion of Exchange Station.

