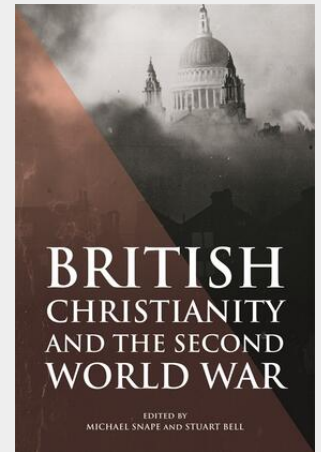


British Christianity and the Second World War

Examines the role of Christianity in British statecraft, politics, media, the armed forces and in the education and socialization of the young during the Second World War. This volume presents a major reappraisal of the role of Christianity in Great Britain between 1939 and 1945, examining the influence of Christianity on British society, statecraft, politics, the media, the armed forces, and on the education and socialization of the young. Its chapters address themes such as the spiritual mobilization of nation and empire; the limitations of Mass Observation's commentary on wartime religious life; Catholic responses to strategic bombing; servicemen and the dilemma of killing; the development of Christian-Jewish relations, and the predicament of British military chaplains in Germany in the summer of 1945. By demonstrating the enduring -even renewed- importance of Christianity in British national life, British Christianity and the Second World War also sets the scene for some major post-war developments. Though the war years triggered a 'resacralization' of British society and culture, inherent racism meant that the exalted self-image of Christian Britain proved sadly deceptive for post-war immigrants from the Caribbean. Wartime confidence in the prospective role of the state in religious education soon transpired to be ill-founded, while the profound upheavals of war -and even the bromides of 'BBC Religion'- were, in the longer term, corrosive of conventional religious practice and traditional denominational loyalties. This volume will be of interest to historians of British society and the Second World War, twentieth-century British religion, and the perennial interplay of religion and conflict.



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