

Catholic Schools in Scotland. Myth, Mischief...and History.

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This paper will examine the impact of the Education (Scotland) Act, 1918 on the voluntary and denominational schools that had not transferred under the conditions of the Education (Scotland) Act 1872. The paper will specifically address the transfer of the Roman Catholic schools into the state system of publicly funded school education. The paper will examine some of the myths that have emerged in the popular history of the 1918 Act and in the aftermath of the Act. For example, Catholic schools are not mentioned at any point in the Act and they were not the only schools that had not transferred. The paper will also explore the Church of Scotland campaign to repeal the 1918 Act in the 1920s which was initially connected to the invidious campaign for the restriction of Irish Catholic immigration. The paper will argue that what appeared to be an attempt to change the education legislation evolved into a concerted attempt by the Church of Scotland to recover lost ground under the 1872 Act. The paper will dismiss the popular myths and expose the mischief and, drawing from archives and secondary sources, provide a detailed and nuanced historical account of the impact of the 1918 Act on the Catholic schools and educational community in Scotland.

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