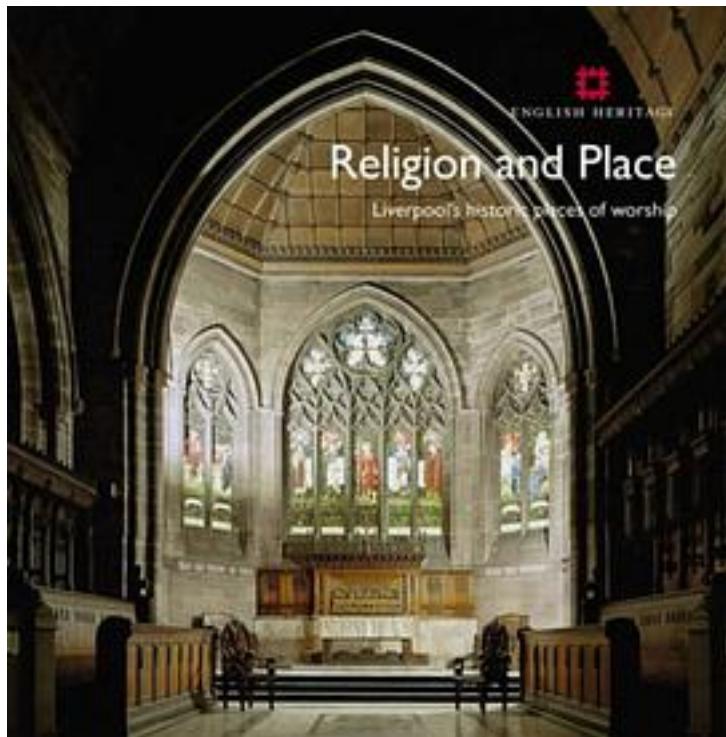


# Religion and Place



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From unpromising beginnings as a small fishing port with only one church, Liverpool grew to be a city of churches and chapels. By 1900, a Liverpool resident need walk no more than a couple of streets from home in order to go to church. While the Church of England built the most ambitious buildings on the most prominent sites, the Nonconformist denominations were all well-represented by the end of the 18th century. It was also in 18th century that this Christian predominance diversified, as Jewish merchants and traders settled in the town in significant numbers, becoming rapidly anglicised and assimilated. In the 20th century, some of the most exciting English churches of the period were built in Liverpool, reflecting the vitality of its

School of Architecture, and some of Liverpool's 20th-century churches were among the first to be listed. However, the depopulation of the inner city, shrinking and aging congregations and the decline in clergy numbers have all taken their toll on Liverpool's aging places of worship. Many have been declared redundant, closed and even demolished. Those that remain face many challenges - crumbling fabric in need of expensive restoration, and fewer people to pay for it. With energy, imagination and the right kind of help, these obstacles can be overcome, and as Liverpool prepares to take on the role of European city of culture, its places of worship, celebrated in this profusely illustrated book, remain one of the most beautiful, exciting and diverse aspects of its historic environment.

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