

CHURCH OF ENGLAND - SELECTED PRACTICES
[common during the reign of ER I]

Church attendance is compulsory on Sundays and Holy Days. Each parish has 3-4 men who enforce this, and report slackers directly to the bishop.

At Service, men are required to uncover and to bow the head at the name of Jesus. "Swiss reformers" [radical Protestants] call this superstitious and generally refuse to do so.

Holy Days are for hearing God's Word and doing godly works [such as visiting the sick/poor]; not to be spent in entertainments. Work, however, is allowed and even encouraged during harvest time.

"Puritan" is a term of abuse for the "hotter sort of Protestant"; reformers refer to themselves as "the godly".

Parishioners are exhorted to remove religious images/shrines from their homes.

No inns or alehouses shall sell meat or drink during the times of Services.

No shops open on Sundays; no showing of wares at market faires falling on Sundays until services are ended.

Clergy are bound to exhort the people to learn the Lord's Prayer, the Creed, and the Ten Commandments by heart; parents and house holders are bound to teach their children and servants the same. Schoolchildren are to learn the Grammar set forth by Henry VIII, and to memorize certain Scripture passages.

All printed material must be licensed by the Queen; or a committee made up of both Archbishops, both university chancellors, the bishop and archdeacon of the locale.

Each parish is to have a large volume of the Bible in English and a “Paraphrases of Erasmus also in English upon the Gospel”, kept in a convenient place in the church, so that anyone can come and read of them during times outside of common Services.

No one may preach without a license from either: the Queen or her visitors; the Archbishop or the Bishop of the diocese. Fourpence charged for paper and wax.

Cathedrals and university churches had elaborate music; some parishes had none at all, except for psalm singing.

At Communion time [during Services on the 1st or 2d Sunday of the month, at least 4 times a year], a procession forward to the Communion Table to receive while kneeling was mandated. Radical congregations used a portable table, set in their midst at Communion time, and passed the elements around for reception while sitting or standing.

Every cleric shall provide himself with his own copy of the New Testament in both Latin and English; and shall daily read one chapter each of the Old and New Testament.

No processions around churchyards, except for the annual “perambulation of the circuits” of the parish [”beating the bounds”] by the curate and landowners, prior to attending Service.

Each parish shall have 2 strongboxes: one requiring 2 keys [curate and lay warden] to store the book recording weddings/christenings/burials; another, permanently fastened down and with a hole in the top, as a poor box, needing 3 keys [curate and 2 honest laymen].

Sources:

Dornan, Susan, Elizabeth I and Religion, 1558-1603, Lancaster Pamphlets (Routledge, London, New York) 1994.

The Injunctions of 1559, Hanover Historical Texts Project (Hanover College) 2001.

The Advertisements of 1559 [1566], Hanover Historical Texts Project (Hanover College) 2001.