

Exiled from glory: Anglo-Indian settlement in nineteenth-century Britain, with special reference to Cheltenham

Tools

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Abstract

The thesis is a study of the Anglo-Indians, many of whom settled in Cheltenham during the major part of the nineteenth century. It includes datasets of Anglo-Indians connected with Cheltenham compiled from a wide variety of sources. A number of conclusions are made about the role of the Anglo-Indians and their position in the middle class. These include estimates of the number of Anglo-Indians in Cheltenham and their contribution to the development of the town. Studies of a number of individuals has provided evidence for an analysis of Anglo-Indian attitudes and values, especially in relation to such issues as identity, status, beliefs and education. Separate chapters deal with the middle-class life-style of the Anglo-Indians as it developed in Cheltenham and elsewhere. The importance of the family and friendship links is examined and compared to the experience of other middle-class people in the Victorian period. The strength of religion and its contribution to Anglo-Indian values is investigated, especially the influence of the evangelical movement. The crucial role of education is highlighted especially with the growth of the public schools. The role of the middle class, and especially the Anglo-Indians, in the rise of voluntary societies and other public work is examined. It is also demonstrated how the Anglo-Indians represented a wide range of incomes, despite the sharing of particular values and beliefs. A study of Anglo-Indian women further develops an understanding of the position of the family and how it differed from the normal middle-class expectations. The study concludes with an appreciation of the circumstances which led many Anglo-Indians to feel alienated to some degree from their fellow countrymen, while at the same time recognising that many of their attitudes and values were very similar to the section of the middle class referred to as the pseudo-gentry .

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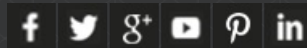
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Surveying the Eighteenth-Century Anglo-Indian Canon. *Literature Compass*, Vol. 7, Issue. 7, p. 597. After the British East India Company conquered the vast province of Bengal, Britons confronted the apparent anomaly of a European trading company acting as an Indian ruler. Responding to a prolonged crisis of imperial legitimacy, British officials in Bengal tried to build their authority on the basis of an 'ancient constitution', supposedly discovered among the remnants of the declining Mughal Empire. In the search for an indigenous constitution, British political concepts were redeployed and redefined on the Indian frontier of empire, while stereotypes about 'oriental despotism' The Anglo-Saxon invasion of Britain meant that the landscape of the Island was to change once again. Where the Romans had built infrastructure and a network of trading settlements, the newly arrived Anglo-Saxons sought a more simple way of living. As early as the second century A.D the Roman rulers decided that the country should be divided into two administrative districts, Britannia Inferior and Britannia Superior. The Viking warriors, having sought treasure and glory across the British Isles and the Anglo-Saxon kingdoms were a prize that the Vikings would exploit. The Danish Vikings saw the potential of the land to support themselves.