The seemingly inexorable decline of religion in twentieth-century Britain has for long fascinated historians, sociologists and churchmen. They have also been exasperated by their failure to understand its origins or chart its progress adequately. In the light of that failure, a new school of ‘revisionists’ has arisen to challenge the basic premises of decline and its putative causes. Sceptical both of traditional accounts and of their more recent rejection, S.J.D. Green concentrates scholarly attention for the first time on the ‘social history of the chapel’ during the crucial years and in a characteristic industrial urban setting. He demonstrates just why so many churches were built in these years, who built them, who went to them, and why. He evaluates the related ‘associational ideal’ during the years of its greatest success, and explains the causes of its subsequent decline. Finally, he considers the shifting range and altered significance of religious experience, both within and extending beyond religious organisations, at that time. In this way, Religion in the age of decline offers a fresh and cogent interpretation of the extent and the implications of the decline of religion in early twentieth-century Britain.
Religion in the age of decline
Religion in the age of decline

Organisation and experience
in industrial Yorkshire, 1870–1920

S.J.D. Green

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P.W.G. and B.J.G.
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Abbreviations

BDA      West Yorkshire Archive Service, Bradford
CB       County Borough
CDA      West Yorkshire Archive Service, Halifax
KPL      Archive Room, Keighley Public Library
LBD      Local Board District
LDA      West Yorkshire Archive Service, Leeds
MB       Municipal Borough
PP       Parliamentary Papers
PRO      Public Record Office, Census Search Room
RG       Registrar General
WHQ      West Yorkshire Archive Service, Headquarters, Wakefield
incom. arch. ref. Incomplete archive reference; the reference cited is provisional, as the archive consulted is currently being recatalogued
unpub. enum. Ms Unpublished enumerator manuscripts from the Census of England and Wales, 1871
uncat. Ms Uncatalogued manuscript, held in an archive source
uncat. pub(s). Uncatalogued publication, held in an archival source, and consulted there
uncat. type Uncatalogued typescript (unpublished), held in an archival source, and consulted there
n.d.      No date of publication known
n.p.      No place of publication known
ASHHPM   All Soul’s, Haley Hill, Parish Magazine
HDCM     Halifax and District Congregational Magazine
HPCM     Halifax Parish Church Magazine
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<td>KWMCM</td>
<td>Keighley Wesleyan Methodist Circuit Magazine</td>
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<tr>
<td>SPCKCPM</td>
<td>St Paul’s Church, King Cross, Parish Magazine</td>
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<td>THAS</td>
<td>Transactions of the Halifax Antiquarian Society</td>
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Note: References to parish magazines are frequently followed by the instruction ‘(no page number)’. This indicates that the magazine in question was not paginated, and therefore no references to a page number can be given in the footnote.