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| Nota di contenuto | 1. Introduction -- 2. 'That Woman that Shall Succeed Her': Formal Pew-Renting up to 1818 -- 3. 'Free from Tractarian Error': Formal Pew-Renting Churches after 1818 -- 4. 'Drive-A-Good-Bargain': The Mechanics of Formal Pew-Renting Since 1818 -- 5. 'Cobblers and Rat-Catchers': Formal Pew-Renters -- 6. 'Pew-Opener's Muscle': Informal Pew-renting and Pew-Openers -- 7. 'The Morphine Velvet, Lavender-Kid-Glove School of Theology': Private Pew-letting -- 8. 'To Hinder Such Abomination': Supporters and Opponents -- 9. 'Seats We So Seldom Use': Formal Pew-Renting's Demise. 10. Conclusion. |
| Sommario/riassunto | This book is a comprehensive study of the history of pew-renting in the church of England, from the first known rented sittings in the fifteenth century to the system's collapse in the twentieth. The book's significance is partly its originality; no book and very few articles or portions of books have appeared solely on pew-renting since the nineteenth century, and even those of that time were not histories – they were polemical works that generally attacked pew-renting on religious grounds. This work encompasses the distinction between formal letting of seats – which involved the methodical letting of sittings by church authorities with set rents – and informal pew-letting, |

in which congregants tipped pew-openers and sidesmen for favourable seats for one service. It also details the concomitant difficulties and hindrances encountered by churches and renters, the means of setting the rents and collecting the proceeds, the types of congregants who rented pews, the controversy the practice provoked, and the deception and bending – and sometimes outright breaking – of the applicable law. J.C. Bennett received his PhD in History from the University of Birmingham in 2011. He has currently an appellate attorney in Texas, USA.
